A Comparison And Contrast Of Two Middle School Classrooms With One Using Conflict Resolution And One Not Using Conflict Resolution

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A Comparison And Contrast Of Two
Middle School Classrooms With One
Using Conflict Resolution And One
Not Using Conflict Resolution

A Research Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF EDUCATION
to the faculty of the department of
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at
LYNN UNIVERSITY
Boca Raton, Florida
by
KELLI ANN EICH

Submitted Date: 

Approved Date: 5/96

(Student's signature) (Mentor's Signature)
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Conflict Resolution

Introduction

Conflict is an essential as well as a normal aspect of our lives. It is how we choose to deal with conflict that delineates whether the conflict is resolved or not. The nature of our environment in addition to "increasing global interdependence" places new demands on our ability to confront these problems and develop an ability to work harmoniously together.

Research shows that students seem to "center around the absence of knowledge and skills needed to resolve conflict positively" (Cassell, 1993, p. 9). Children need to acquire a repertoire of options to enable them to respond to conflict within the school setting. Because data shows that children are not being adequately equipped with appropriate responses to conflict, conflict resolution accompanied by peer mediation has been mandated and included in many school systems and curriculums across the United States.
Educators agree that resolving conflict peacefully in America's schools may be a primary challenge but an essential one. Recurrent violence coupled with societal and racial turmoil continue to entrap educators' classrooms (Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, p. 279). Thus, a closer look at creating harmony within our schools becomes a vital national issue.

Definition of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to investigate if conflict resolution and peer mediation are effectively integrated in classrooms.

The following problems will be addressed by the writer:

- Are students able to learn rational and non-violent methods and strategies for dealing with conflict?
- Are schools able to participate in and contribute to integrating conflict resolution?
Do conflict resolution and peer mediation belong in schools, or is this an ethical subject to be dealt with only in the home?

Do Conflict resolution and peer mediation programs actually promote positive interaction between students and their peers?

Is there evidence proving conflict resolution and peer mediation actually are beneficial in the classroom?

Conflict Resolution

School violence is on the rise; consequently, educators are concerned and are searching for a helpful program to create unity throughout the school. A program must be implemented in the schools or classrooms to aid students in communicating when disputes occur. Schools do not want to become another source for fatality statistics because "more and more disputes that once ended in playground shouting matches are now ending in shooting matches" (Williams, 1991, p. 22). Because the potential for conflict is enormous,
educators, teachers, and schools are attempting to prevent disputes by implementing a conflict resolution program. Williams (1991) states, "the goal of such programs is to help students control their anger before anyone raises a fist or reaches for a weapon" (p. 22).

Lipriti (1994) confirms that a program such as conflict resolution aids in preventing "... more prevalent, inappropriate methods used to settle disputes" (p. 29). She goes on to propose that these disputes occurring in larger communities "are mirrored in schoolyard behavior" (p. 29). Examples of such behavior are "name-calling, physical violence, and racist remarks" which appear to be everyday occurrences in many schools. It is imperative that children be taught to respond to conflict in a constructive manner rather than with the "fight or flight" response.

Although conflict resolution programs may only represent one solution to this growing problem, the program enables students to mediate their own disputes. By doing this, students are experiencing incidental
learning that may aid them not only in the classroom or playground, but also, off the school premises. Members of the Children's Creative Response to Conflict Program's staff concur that, "... the programs work because they give students skills and readily accessible tools for dealing with in-school conflicts" (Children's Creative Response to Conflict Program Staff, 1988, p. 19). Conflict resolution teaches students a myriad of problem-solving approaches to conflict. These skills are integral to every student's future. In addition to acquiring knowledge regarding approaches and skills to handle conflict, students learn "communication skills, such as speaking clearly and concisely, getting the message across, and becoming an active listener" (LiPreti, 1994, p. 19).

Laura Parker Roerden notes nine key concepts (Table 1) that mirror the Educators for Social Responsibility Conflict Resolution Program (Table 1). Conflict exists in our lives. When we choose to handle conflict constructively we may benefit regarding
personal growth, development, and knowledge. It is imperative to remember that with conflict resolution there is no need for a "win-win" solution. When a conflict is not resolvable, we must be creative and resourceful. "Conflict resolution is best taught in the context of a caring community characterized by cooperation, effective communication, emotional strength, appreciation of differences, recognition of common purposes, and shared decision making" (Roerden, p. 5).

Our knowing how to negotiate is just as important as caring and empathy. To appropriately deal with differences, we must be capable of viewing divergent perspectives. Dialogue demonstrates an intricate role in conflict resolution. Unlike a debate, dialogue permits an individual to continue conversing which, in turn, "increases the chances of creative responses to conflict" (Roerden, p. 9). Because "differences" is often synonymous with separation and distance, we need to become aware, as well as appreciate, all types of
disparity. Lastly, inequity and injustice may be thought of as the roots of violence as well as social conflict. In order for these sources of violence to diminish, we must attempt to understand and confront these issues and feelings.

Table 1

Conflict Resolution: Nine Key Concepts

Dealing with Differences

Conflict Resolution in Our Schools

1. Accepting conflict is part of life.
2. Accepting conflict situations with or without win-win solutions.
3. Primary goal is creativity and resourcefulness in conflict.
4. Resolutions taught in context of caring community.
5. Ability to enter other perspectives.
6. Dialogue as an effective form of achieving
resolution.

7. Intervention is used in interpersonal conflicts.

8. Cultivate awareness and appreciation of differences.

9. Learning to induce and confront inequity and injustice.

Note. From "Dealing with Differences Conflict Resolution in Our Schools" by Laura Parker Roerden, Educators for Social Responsibility.

Williams, Jenkins, and Rowan (1989, p. 3) state:

To Be or Not To Be!

Is Not the Question.

The Question is how to be!

In the diverse surroundings in which we find ourselves, we expect to encounter conflict. However, it is necessary for us to be equipped with the skills to resolve conflict or create harmony. By integrating conflict resolution in classrooms and schools, these
skills may be taught and may improve children’s abilities to cope with and resolve conflict.

Peer Mediation

Conflict resolution and peer mediation are often used in conjunction. According to Stomfay-Stitz, peer mediation is a program based on "a foundation of applied conflict resolution" (Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, p. 279). When combining the two programs, students are empowered to take "responsibility for creating a safe, secure school environment" (Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, p. 299). By using mediation, problems can be assessed, summarized and their possible solutions puzzled out. The primary object in peer mediation is to "ensure that all students have learned the basic skills required to resolve conflict" (Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, p. 180). Peer mediators are either chosen by a teacher or by the student’s peers, and the guidance counselor and/or teacher supervises the training sessions for intervals of 15-20 hours. Stomfay-Stitz notes that Johnson and Johnson (1991) point out that peer mediators are "on
call" to handle conflicts that arise throughout the school.

"It is felt to have a successful program as well as a harmonious classroom environment teachers need to include teaching respects for the differences of others and encouraging attitudes and values to contribute to a placement setting" (Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, p.180).

Schmidt and Friedman in Fighting Fair for Families, list the basic skills for peer mediation: a. listen without interrupting; b. be willing to solve the problem; c. tell the truth; d. no fouls (1994, p. 21).

Schmidt and Friedman (1994, p.5) define fouls as "weapons which attack people, not problems." These fouls may cause damage to a relationship and even destroy it. "Fouls cause conflict to escalate" (Schmidt and Friedman, 1994, p. 5). Examples of fouls include:

- Name Calling
- Blaming
- Sneering
- Not Listening
- Getting Even
- Pushing
- Hitting
- Putting others down
- Bossing
- Making Excuses
• Bringing up the Past
• Not Taking Responsibility

• Threats

(Schmidt & Friedman, 1994, p. 5)

Schmidt and Friedman (1994, p. 20) propose that there are times when individuals cannot "solve problems on their own." It is during these times that a mediator can be of great assistance. Schmidt and Friedman explain that a "mediator listens to both sides and helps the people in a conflict come to a fair agreement." The role of a mediator is one who attempts to "solve the problem, not to blame or punish" those who seek his or her services (1994, p. 20).

Stomfay-Stitz write of the benefits of peer mediation. The table below, taken from his article "Pathways to Safer Schools," indicates programs that have been initiated into schools and gives examples of how the school, students, teachers, and others have benefited.
Table 2

Benefits of Peer Mediation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Intention of Program</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York City's Project SMART</td>
<td>teaches alternatives to violence, focusing on student/teacher conflicts.</td>
<td>Fewer incidents of vandalism and class reported to police.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Manager Program</td>
<td>Teaches students to reach an understanding of a victim's viewpoint and how one's behavior may harm that individual.</td>
<td>Aided a boy after acting as a peer mediator, described as a &quot;bully&quot; to understand how his behavior harmed weaker and smaller students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greer Elementary School in</td>
<td>To aid teacher and student relationships.</td>
<td>&quot;Pressure of teachers to serve as disciplinarian&quot; decreased as a result of the program. Decrease in behavior problems in the classroom, on the playground and in referrals to the principal's office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlottesville, VA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacemaker Program (pilot program)</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Frequency of student-student conflicts ... dropped 80 percent&quot;, while conflicts referred to the principal were reduced to zero.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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Note. From "Pathways to Safer Schools" by Aline M. Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, Annual Theme.
Review of Literature

History

Stomfay-Stitz defines conflict resolution as "...a method or strategy that enables people to interact with each other in positive ways in order to resolve their differences" (1994, p. 279).

The root of conflict resolution was identified by Mary Parker Follett in the 1920s. Stomfay-Stitz notes Follett's (1941) and Fogg's (1985) areas of concentration regarding conflict resolution were on "problem solving as integration of the needs of the bargainers" (1994, p. 279). At present, conflict resolution has expanded and acts as a tool for many groups.

In reviewing the literature, Stomfay-Stitz writes that the following theorists played a part in the research base for the use of conflict resolution and peer mediation. The theorists are Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Albert Bandura, and Kurt Lewin. Morton Deutsch and David Roger Johnson, along with other
individuals, played an important part in clarifying "the effects of cooperative and competitive classroom settings" (Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, p. 279). (See Table 3)

Table 3

Research Base for Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Accomplishments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piaget</td>
<td>Cognitive development theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vygotsky</td>
<td>Emphasized through theories on children’s thinking a process in which children shared problem-solving experiences with a teacher, parent, or peer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandura</td>
<td>Emphasized that children are essentially actors. Their behavior, through modeling, observation duplicates responses to a social situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewin</td>
<td>Believed that the student in a school setting is affected by personal and environmental variables that have an impact on his/her behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deutsch &amp; Johnson</td>
<td>Emphasized that cooperative, rather than competitive, relationships within the classroom’s social milieu create the constructive, positive environment that fosters true learning and conflict resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson &amp; Johnson</td>
<td>Believed that students can learn to respect others’ viewpoints by experiencing controversial experiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. From "Pathways to Safer Schools" by Aline M. Stomfay-Stitz, 1994, Annual Theme.
The strategy known as conflict resolution originated in "collective bargaining and the peace movement of the 1960s" (Williams, 1991, p. 22). It was utilized to resolve disputes nonviolently. Formal procedures were called upon to "improve communication and to cool tempers" (Williams, 1991, p. 22). Programs that dealt with conflict resolution were not introduced until the early 1980s. It was then that the curriculum to teach life skills necessary for positive solutions to conflict was initiated. "Earlier, behavioral scientists began to look at aggressive behaviors in children and to determine the cause" (Cassell, 1993, p. 8). "The credit for this new agenda, at the time, may be given to the efforts of groups such as San Francisco (Conflict Manager Program) and Children’s Creative Response Conflict in Nyack, New York" (Williams, 1991, p. 22). Williams feels that conflict resolution programs fall into three categories: those that train teachers; those that train students; and those that use
a special conflict resolution curriculum in the classroom.

Research Findings

A review of the literature shows that schools may no longer be considered parallel to a "safe haven for nurturing the future leaders of America" (Boothe, et. al, 1994, p. 1). Instead, one is summoned to experience the perils that lurk beyond the schoolyard. Educational philosopher John Dewey once stated that a school mirrors the merit and problems constitutionalized in society. It is evident that conflict of all kinds is on the rise, and concern is valid and warranted, for violence appears to be an intrinsic part of our day to day lives. "Dramatic instances of violence in American society inundate our consciousness" (Booth, et al, 1994, p. 1). It does not really make a difference to which of the above grim acts one refers, but rather it becomes the manner in which one can promote the prevention of tragedy. A research team from Xavier University, in conjunction
with the National School Boards Association, conducted a national survey of school executives. The purpose of the study was to demarcate the degree of violence in the nation's schools. The results showed that: "... violence is impacting schools across the land from large urban centers to back country Texas towns to upscale suburban districts. All schools are vulnerable" (Booth, et. al, 1994, p. 2).

These acts of violence may be caused by a myriad of factors. However, the most frightening fact is as Bill Hardy, of the American Federation of Teachers, suggests "that principals do not report the full extent of school violence because they fear the negative image it might reflect on their own performance" (Boothe, et. al, 1994, p. 2).

Joan R. Cassell conducted a study of decreased physical and verbal aggression in fifth grade students. This study was done by using conflict resolution training. Cassell's intentions were "... to decrease the number of aggressive responses to conflict,
increase students’ awareness of ways to achieve peaceful resolutions and decrease the number of teacher interventions in student conflict” (1993, i).

Cassell conducted her study where she worked in a small elementary school located in the Mid-Atlantic area. At the time, the region consisted of affluent suburban sections of a primarily metropolitan city. The large community consisted of mostly single family homes occupied by diplomats, those in foreign service, or military families. The area appeared to be "fairly transient and culturally diverse" (Cassell, 1993, p. 1).

The fifth grade students were not equipped with the correct skills or strategies to respond to conflict. Consequently, the students displayed an inability to communicate with their peers. This left students upset and angry with one another. Because of this, the teacher spent time addressing the problem, hence, losing instructional time. Even though many attempts to reconcile the classroom program were
attempted (i.e. small and large group discussions, parental notification, and sending students to the principal for discipline), the problem still persisted.

Cassell collected data to discover the extent of the problem. A "frequency chart" (see Appendix A) was used for observation, as well as a student self-report, and teacher questionnaire to help with the study. By using a frequency chart, the researcher was able to identify that most physical aggression occurred on the playground while more verbal aggression took place in the cafeteria.

After having students complete a self-report (see Appendix B), indications showed that 42 out of 83 students felt "that physical violence is sometimes necessary to solve problems" (Cassell, 1993, p. 5). Out of 83 students, only 31 felt that if confronted with conflict they could find a peaceful solution.

Cassell gave the teachers a questionnaire (see Appendix C) which implied that "they must intervene at least once a day in Student to Student Conflict"
When the principal was interviewed, she concurred with the teachers' findings. The principal indicated that "all the students in the school needed to work on their peer relations and specifically communication and problem solving" (Cassell, 1993, p. 7). The researchers suggested that inappropriate behavior is due to a lack of options for responding to conflict as well as the developmental needs of preadolescent children. The fifth grade students' self-report confirms that they do not feel confident to handle conflict peacefully.

Cassell notes Bandura's (1977) findings that "children learn most of their social behaviors through deliberate or accidental imitation" (1993, p. 11). Children imitate what they see and to what they are exposed. It is this continuous susceptibility to violence that causes children to develop a method of aggressive behavior.

Cassell's outcome from her study with fifth grade students, using the Community Board Curriculum for
Conflict Resolution as well as other activities, showed a 15% decrease in physical and verbal aggression. "The results indicated a 25% decrease in physically aggressive responses and a 15% decrease in verbally aggressive responses" (1993, p. 33). The next outcome was that of a 15% increase in the number of positive responses to the following statement of 16 students' self-report: "When people start arguments with me I know how to solve things peacefully." Before the implementation of the program only 31 out of 83 responded positively to the above question on 16 student self-reports. The third and final anticipated outcome was a "15% decrease in teacher intervention in student conflicts." Cassell's findings imply that the implementation of the program was a success in two major ways by reducing the number of aggressive verbal and physical responses by the students; and increasing the number of students who believe they can solve conflicts peacefully.
It is important to note that the program was not successful in decreasing the number of teacher interventions in student conflict. The results of this study show that integrating conflict resolution programs into schools does work if the concepts of the program can be understood by the students.

Myra S. Locke, of Nova University, conducted a study for the purpose of improving "conflict resolution skills among third and fourth grade students through strategies that utilized group introduction" (Locke, 1993, p. vi). The research took place in a public elementary school in a multi-ethnic community. Because of great need to expand the school, the capacity was 750 enrolled students. The school was located in the western part of a large sprawling county. The community has grown, and the original white-collar professionals and some blue-collar workers are concerned about the community expansion. The dominant Caucasian population has experienced a sudden shift as residents of Hispanic heritage (primarily from Cuba)
have increased. The political discontent in the Caribbean and hostility toward Fidel Castro's regime have resulted in the community consisting of residents who obtained a lower economic base than the previous middle-class families.

The school in which the researcher carried out the study has a moderate-sized faculty. Locke (1993) notes that "the staff includes a counselor, 26 classroom teachers and 12 special teachers" (p. 4).

The participants of the researcher's study were children in third and fourth grade classrooms. Locke (1993) concluded that the problem was that the students' experienced "a difficulty getting along with each other" (Locke, 1993, p. 6). "They verbally abused each other by using foul language and insulting remarks" (Locke, 1993, p. 6). Examples of such behavior were: a. kicking one another while seated at desks; b. throwing rocks at each other on the playground; c. stealing of objects; d. making insulting remarks about other children's families; e. minor
sexual assaults made on female students. In addition, "the children in both grades blamed each other for minor occurrences" (Locke, 1993, p. 6-7). Daily complaints by the students included that:

... the desks were so close together that they could not be opened easily. They dropped their pencils and then accused other students who picked them up of stealing. They blamed each other for wrong answers and they blamed each other for minor accidents, such as milk spills in the cafeteria (Locke, 1993, p. 7).

The students in third grade "defaced each others work" (Locke, 1993, p. 7). Children did not follow rules set by the classroom teacher or by the school. Students "mistreated their classmates by calling them names, insulting members of their families, taking things that did not belong to them, and performing acts of physical aggression" (Locke, 1993, p. 7). The researcher found the "children showed a lack of respect for their teachers and their school by defacing property, ignoring the rights of others, and disrupting the normal classroom environment" (Locke, 1993, p. 7). Because the children lacked the "needed skills of
cooperative learning that require a mutual respect for others, they were unable to work collaboratively together" (Locke, 1993, p. 7). Locke observed that these "behaviors impeded and prevented learning from occurring" (Locke, 1993, p. 7).

The research documented the problem by observing the teacher for two weeks. These observations revealed "that the children called each other names, insulted one another, committed aggressive acts against each other, and defaced one another's property" (Locke, 1993, p. 8). (See Appendix E, Table 2 and 3: Observations of Social Infractions for a Two Week Period). The researcher administered surveys to the students that "revealed attitudes that reflected hostile feelings among students in third and fourth grade" (Locke, 1993, p. 9). (See Appendix D, Table X: Children’s Attitude Responses in Grade 3 and 4).

Table 4 summarizes the writer’s conclusion for the causes of the stated problem.
Table 4

**Causative Analysis**

1. Children who did not reach their full potential suffered feelings of frustration and low self-esteem.

2. Children lacked confidence necessary to take risks and achieve at higher levels.

3. Students sought attention through negative means.

4. Students who suffered from material and emotional deprivations as a result of poverty or physical neglect, felt alienated and disenfranchised from peer groups.

5. Children sought out immediate gratification as a solution and were unwilling to prolong the rewards of recognition that would be associated with goal-setting and decision-making.

6. Children who did not learn self-management skills were unable to set goals and make good choices.

7. Children with poor coping strategies were unable to
care about themselves and others, creating an environment of disrespect (Locke, 1993, p. 10-11).

Note. From "Improving Conflict Resolution among Third and Fourth Grade Students through Interaction," 1993, Nova University.

This type of negative behavior was an "outgrowth of those problems" (Locke, 1993, p. 11). Due to this type of behavior, the classroom atmosphere was not conducive to learning. Locke states that the "children who engaged in negative behaviors did so because of poor self-esteem, anger, frustration and an inability to cope with stressful situations in and out of the classroom" (1993, p. 11). Locke notes Levin & Nolans' (1991) statement that most "behavior problems include arguing, teaching, vulgarity, and name calling. These are surface behaviors that are not linked to deep-seated emotional problems" (Locke, 1993, p. 12).

Locke shares Duke's (1940) conclusion that effective schools need to address the problem of how
students choose to interact. Duke (1990) feels this problem behavior should be dealt with consistently by teachers and administrators. Supplee (1990) believes children who struggle throughout school perceive school to be uncomfortable, stressful, frustrating; hence, it becomes an environment to vent their emotional problems. Many factors disturb or influence children's behavior in the classroom and/or school. Locke lists the following as factors contributing to the unwanted behavior: "personality variables, school setting, learning disabilities, family problems, and many more" (1993, p. 12). Locke feels that "children who do not have good self-management skills are unable to channel their personal energy in a productive manner" (Locke, 1993, p. 12). Locke shares Gottfredson's (1990) conclusion that "discipline problems occur when there is a breakdown in communication among teachers and administrators, teachers and students and among children themselves" (Locke, 1993, p. 12). The researcher cites Knapp & Shieldo's (1990) research that
"children of poverty have a higher rate of emotional distress and behavioral disorders" (Locke, 1993, p. 13). The writer shares Lewis' (1990) concern that television portrays "fictional values and violence for the children to watch" (Locke, 1993, p. 13).

Locke points out that misbehavior alters children's ability to learn in the classroom environment because these children who do not care about themselves do not care about other people; "they do not allow themselves to become involved in positive personal interactions with others and are unable to avail themselves of the learning that takes place from this" (Locke, 1993, p. 13). Therefore, it is cooperative grouping that will aid this group of children to perform better, handle problems, and create a more peaceful classroom environment.

The researcher's goals and expectations for her research was two-fold:

... to help the students acquire better self-management skills in order to improve their behavior toward one another. It was anticipated that the students would develop an understanding
of the ideology concerning peace and mediation skills; that these concepts would help in solving problems that would otherwise erupt in conflict behaviors. The writer expected students in third and fourth grade to learn how to enjoy group interaction in a positive and cooperative manner and learn to solve problems using conflict resolution strategies (Locke, 1993, p. 15).

The researcher indicates four behavioral objectives outlined for the third and fourth grade students. They include:

a. Eighty percent of the students would be able to communicate more effectively with their fellow classmates.
b. Eighty percent of the students would be able to interact in a more positive manner.
c. Eighty percent of the students would be able to work in a cooperative classroom environment.
d. Eighty percent of the students, when given a scenario depicting a possible conflict, would be able to solve the problem peacefully using learned conflict resolution strategies (Locke, 1993, p. 15-16).

The writer conducted her study over an eight month duration period. Four teachers were involved in Locke’s research. "Each month, the four teachers who were involved in the project were asked to fill out an observation checklist constructed by the writer" (Locke, 1993, p. 16). The checklist for the teachers
that were to be involved consisted of four areas
"necessary for developing improved conflict resolution
skills" (Locke, 1993, p. 16). The four objectives to
be measured were:

- effective communication,
- more positive student interaction,
- children's ability to work well together during
class meetings, and
- ability of children to solve their problems
peacefully (Locke, 1993, p. 16-17).

At the "bottom of the monthly checklist teachers would
be asked to comment on how the children communicated,
interacted, cooperated, and more effectively solved
problems during the class meeting" (Locke, 1993, p.
17). The writer recorded the results of the checklists
on a monthly table.

Observations made by the researcher "showed that
children in the third and fourth grade classrooms had
difficulty getting along with each other" (Locke, 1993,
p. 19). Children must feel they belong to the
community or family in order to learn how to care for
others. The children need to understand that "their
valid needs and desires may differ from those of
Conflict Resolution 32

others" (Locke, 1993, p. 23). During class meetings, the students were permitted to share problems, concerns, or ideas they might have. According to Locke "this activity allows children the experience of learning how to resolve problems and ask for advice" (Locke, 1993, p. 23). The researcher noted that children need to be equipped with the ability to appreciate that there are differences among themselves and the individuals whom they may encounter. Also, "they need to have their unique qualities affirmed and be able to affirm human qualities in others" (Locke, 1993, p. 24). Students need to be aware of violent behavior. Hence, "they need to be involved in activities that teach and reinforce the use of mediation to peacefully resolve conflict" (Locke, 1993, p. 24). They need to be taught and to develop strategies to resolve conflict in acceptable ways. By using these learned strategies conflicts do not arise.

The strategies chosen for implementation follow: "Two third grade and two fourth grade classes were kept
in their own classrooms in order to provide a community atmosphere. Each of the four classes participated in cooperative grouping within the classroom" (Locke, 1993, p. 24). Each of the groups met in class meetings for each week over eight months. The children experienced strategies that had to do with conflict resolution while participating in class meetings. The "meetings were designed to allow children an opportunity to explore their feelings about themselves" (Locke, 1993, p. 24). The researcher explains that "activities were designed to allow the children to reflect on how they could set goals and make significant choices that would lead to conflict resolution" (Locke, 1993, p. 24). The writer’s goals set forth for the two third grade and fourth grade classes, at the beginning of the study, were achieved. The following table displays how each goal was attained.
Table 5

**Results from Locke's Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>How Achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help students acquire better self-management skills in order to improve their behavior toward one another.</td>
<td>Class meetings which consisted of techniques for solving problems, role playing, and interactive group participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help students communicate more effectively with their classmates.</td>
<td>Students were encouraged to give voice to their feelings and tell their classmates how they felt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students interact in a more positive manner with each other.</td>
<td>Students worked together in cooperative groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce a cooperative classroom environment.</td>
<td>Teamwork and peer tutoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empower students to solve problems in peaceful ways using conflict resolution strategies.</td>
<td>Role playing, observations, discussions and mediation. (Locke, 1993, P. 44-45)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Improving Resolution among Third and Fourth Grade Students through Interaction, 1993, Nova University.
This study allowed the children in the two third grade and two fourth grade classes to learn how to communicate with one another, "work with one another harmoniously, respect each other's unique qualities and develop an awareness of non-violent behavior" (Locke, 1993, p. 19). The conflict resolution strategies used in this study were meant to "help children share their thoughts and help them relate to each other" (Locke, 1993, p. 51). The writer reports that "teachers and administrators were pleasantly surprised when they visited classrooms where conflict resolution strategies were being implemented" (Locke, 1993, p. 58). The researchers shared that the "... children were always busy on task, working in groups or with a peer tutor. Children were completing their work satisfactorily and making good progress academically" (Locke, 1993, p. 58).

The writer expressed her opinion saying that "the lessons learned in conflict resolution strategies will
Conflict Resolution Programs

Many schools across the country are integrating conflict resolution programs into the school curriculum in hopes that the students may learn strategies to better cope and deal with conflict more harmoniously. Lyon raises many points as to why children are experiencing conflict in Milwaukee's School Systems:

- The age is a vulnerable one.
- Families are in danger in the city.
- More than 50% of students come from single-parent families.
- Milwaukee leads the country in black teenage pregnancy.
- Milwaukee ranks high in child abuse and neglect.
- The church and the middle class have either declined in importance or have fled.
- Children between 11 and 15 years of age care deeply about peer opinions.
- In the middle and early high school years there is a cultural gap that exists between the teaching staff and the students (1991, p. 127).
Because of the continued problems occurring in the Milwaukee Public Schools, a pilot program was selected for the middle school for the spring of 1988.

According to the writer, "the model was derived from materials developed in several videos on the 'transescent student' and from pamphlets that originated in other environs" (Lyons, 1991, p. 128). A guidance counselor at the school was in charge of "setting up a group counseling program and alternative methods of dispute resolution" (Lyons, 1991, p. 128). The participants in this pilot study were eight students in grade 8 (four boys, and four girls). The four girls represented "a relatively homogenous group who were rather bright, very active, and very socially aware" (Lyons, 1991, p. 128). Although they displayed serious problems, they "had shown some movement in the right direction and could benefit academically rather immediately from this opportunity" (Lyons, 1991, p. 128). However, the four boys represented different levels. They represented "two from the upper half, one
from the lower half, and one from the eighth grade learning disabled class" (Lyon, 1991, p. 128). The writer cited Schmidt & Friedman's (1987) explanation of the counselor's approach as follows:

The counselor decided to take an informal group approach and to use the materials in a pamphlet titled "Creative Problem Solving for Kids". Each unit in the pamphlet involves an active approach to conflict resolution including such activities as student mediation, role-playing, student brain storming sessions, and modeling by students and the staff member (Lyons, 1991, p. 128).

The results of the counselor's informal group sessions showed how conflict resolution can benefit students exhibiting conflict-solving problems and how they can be resolved. Out of the eight participants, two did not benefit from the program. However, "the other six students were totally free of incidents" when participating in group counseling for the four week period (Lyons, 1991, p. 129). The writer suggests that "this was a truly significant result" (Lyons, 1991, p. 129).

As in Lyon's research, Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce also utilized counseling as a tool to aid students in
learning strategies to confront and handle conflict more appropriately. The researchers mentioned above describe a classroom discussion model that is referred to as the Inside-Outside Model, "designed to be used with large or small groups of adolescents" (Nelson, Thomas and Pierce, 1995, p. 399). The writers refer to Nappier and Gershenfeld (1973) who explain that "when the size of the group addressed limits the interaction, a fishbowl arrangement can be used" (Nelson, Thomas and Pierce, 1995, p. 399). The researchers discuss "how essential structure of the fishbowl has been extended for use in a middle school setting to address the group and community needs of students and faculty there" (Nelson, Thomas and Pierce, 1995, p. 399). The writers clarify how a fishbowl arrangement is conducted:

The fishbowl organization permits a group leader to engage a small group within the large group in focused discussion while the remainder of the large group observes and listens. At the end of the time-limited discussion, the larger group is invited to enter the discussion and, according to their task, provide a critique of the group process or add comments relating to the content discussed by the small group. Sometimes provisions are made for individuals from the large
group to enter the small group to make comments and then return to the large group (Nelson, Thomas and Pierce, 1995, p. 399).

Fishbowl groups have been used by counselors and teachers. The researchers cite Kreig’s (1988) statements for why it is used "... improving listening skills, heightening multicultural awareness, and for adolescent group counseling" (Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 399).

Alfred Adler’s concepts represent the makeup and premise for the Inside-Outside Model. The researcher explains that the Inside-Outside Model allows students to "gain a sense of belonging and discover that their contribution on serious issues is significant" (Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 400). Adler also coined the notion of "social interest". This deals with the fact that "social interest is not inborn but it is innate potentiality which has to be consciously developed" (Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 400).

The writer raises the point that:

Schools provide group settings in which problems develop. It is logical that students in those
groups should also confront and resolve those problems where they were created. When a group undergoes homeostatic imbalance, the Inside-Outside Model can be used to define problems and discover solutions (Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 400).

The classroom represents a team made up of a group of leaders, followers, and observers who will evolve and experience development together. This metamorphosis is essential to the classroom and that of the environment. However, the writer notes that "without proper training and appropriate social skills, many students struggle in their attempt to accomplish these tasks" (Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 400).

Long term goals as well as short term goals were established for this study. The short term goals were as follows: students will learn how to express themselves and to confront others in a positive and acceptable manner; teachers and other school personnel are able to facilitate an active learning process (Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 400).

The long term goal was for students to develop the interpersonal skills necessary for working together in
Conflict Resolution 42

groups to plan, discuss, decide, and resolve troublesome issues (Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 400).

The Inside-Outside Model represents a democratic rather than an autocratic approach to solving conflict. The writer notes that by "using the Inside-Outside Model" it "promotes the development of mutual respect, empathy, genuineness, acceptance, responsibility, and the social skills necessary for students to become productive members of their communities" (Nelson, Thomas and Pierce, 1995, p. 400). This program allows for students to feel empowered and aids in their decision-making process.

The Inside-Outside Model consists of three components. They are the panel, the facilitator, and the audience. This model may be modified for the user’s needs. The researcher writes that the "model assists students in self-expression, confrontation, and the interpersonal skills necessary to successfully resolve conflicts within the classroom" (Nelson,
Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 403). The writer notes that "the Inside Outside Model presents a cooperative, respectful, and resourceful experience for students to learn to speak, listen, explore alternatives, and discover possible solutions to classroom difficulties" (Nelson, Thomas, and Pierce, 1995, p. 404). Another program that is used throughout schools is one present in Palm Beach County Schools in Florida.

The Conflict Resolutions program consists of three phases and is a three-year initiative program "between the Prevention Center of the School District of Palm Beach County and the Peace Education Foundation of Miami.

Phase I (first year)

... is the establishment of the Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Training. School and community personnel have been provided two separate training opportunities. Conflict Resolution was offered first to establish the skills necessary to build a caring, peaceful community. School staff then began the process of training students in the skills necessary to de-escalate their anger, communicate effectively, and handle their own disputes. While some schools had
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proceeded in starting mediation centers, the majority of schools began this phase of implementation in February 1994. Students were selected and trained as mediators so that they can help their peers to settle their own disputes. The establishment of mediation centers is a secondary focus of the program and will be phased in over time. Teaching all students mediation skills will be at the individual school’s option.

Phase II

(second year)

... of the Program will be two-pronged: the continued implementation of Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation in the schools and the introduction of the "Fighting Fair for Families" program. The "Fighting Fair for Families" program offers parents an opportunity to learn the same Conflict Resolution skills that their children are learning in school so that they can support and reinforce the application of these "peace making strategies" at home. Both school personnel and community representatives will be trained to deliver this program throughout the district.

Phase III

(third year)

... will see the establishment of the service learning/community service component. Students who are skilled in Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation will be offered opportunities to practice those skills at school and in the community and to earn community service hours. They will be able to mediate disputes at day care centers, after-school programs, recreational areas, etc.
The researcher defines conflict resolution as "a lifestyle, a process to be learned and applied, not a subject to be taught. It is the building of a community between and among adults and young people where pro-social skills are learned and applied to solve life's inevitable conflicts creatively and non-violently" (Adler, 1994-1995). The target audience for Conflict Resolution programs in the Palm Beach County School District are students in "K-12; teaching staff, support staff including administrators, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and parents" (Adler, 1994-1995). (Primary components of Conflict Resolution in the Palm Beach County School District, Appendix F).
Chapter 3
Methodology

The research findings from this study will aid in the understanding of how conflict resolution contributes to the environment of a middle school classroom.

The writer will be conducting a qualitative data research analysis. The reasoning behind a qualitative research method is as Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest "... a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts" (p. 15). By using a qualitative data method, "one can preserve chronological flow, assess local causality, and derive fruitful explanations" (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 15). With qualitative research, the researcher is challenged and is more likely to discover "serendipitous findings" (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 15). Furthermore, it is Smith's (1978) opinion that "qualitative studies have a quality of undeniability" (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 15). Miles and Huberman
also suggest that "words, especially when they are organized into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that often proves far more convincing to a reader" (p. 15). Qualitative research is now considered a part of a "multisite, multimethod" effort (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 15).

The writer began her research and study by interviewing Dr. Alison Adler, director of Palm Beach County Safe Schools Center. (Questions from interview with Dr. Adler, Appendix F). Dr. Adler’s professional history is emersed in the field of education. She was a teacher for seven years and then became an administrator for a dropout program. She later became an assistant principal. It was five years ago that Adler became intrigued with the notion of conflict resolution. She was participating as a Drug-Free Specialist for Palm Beach County at a workshop. Many principals from various schools attended and expressed their concern regarding the growing violence present in the schools. Adler took her interest in resiliency and
began researching the relationship between resiliency and social skill development. She soon became the Director of Palm Beach County Safe Schools Center. Her main responsibility is to supervise the implementation of conflict resolution and peer mediation as well as other safety related projects in the district schools for students in grades K-12. She also writes grants to support the programs.

The writer will be observing two separate middle schools. At one of the schools, the writer will observe a Varying Exceptionalities (VE) classroom that uses conflict resolution to another VE classroom that does not use conflict resolution. The researcher's rationale is to compare and contrast the climate of the classroom using conflict resolution to the one not using conflict resolution. In doing this, the writer will be able to determine the following:

- Are the students equipped with skills and strategies to use when conflict arises?
Is conflict resolution and peer mediation successful in the classroom?

What are the positive and negative attributes of using conflict resolution to that of not using conflict resolution?

What is the difference in the classroom environments of one classroom that uses conflict resolution and one that does not?

How do the teachers' teaching styles differ and how does this affect the classroom environment?

How is the VE program set up and implemented in both middle schools? Are there similarities and/or differences?

How does the teacher handle problems?

How do the students interact with one another as well as the teacher?

What are the dynamics as to how the classroom is set up and/or organized?
Conflict resolution represents a new program to the district as well as the South Florida area. Dr. Adler spoke about the fact "that no one in the district had expressed the idea of implementing conflict resolution in the school systems." She said, "it was primarily a new topic until roughly five years ago." The Peace Education Foundation, Inc., in Miami, Florida, was contacted and this group referred providers of conflict resolution throughout the United States to Dr. Adler. Hence, she contacted the following cities: San Francisco, New Mexico, Cambridge, and Atlanta. Dr. Adler added that it was then "she began working with the Peace Education Foundation, Inc." At this time, Dr. Adler presented a report to the school board to secure funding for this program.

Interestingly enough, Dr. Adler noted that an elementary school in Delray Beach, Florida, "was the
first school in Palm Beach County to use conflict resolution."

Dr. Adler believes that "by implementing conflict resolution programs into schools, the following will occur: fewer referrals, less time spent on discipline, better classroom climate, more harmony in the classroom, and more strategies and skills for the students to use." Dr. Adler explains, "that training for conflict resolution takes place through the Palm Beach County Safe Schools Center."

One of the most important aspects of conflict resolution is how a teacher disseminates the information to the students. Dr. Adler indicates that "this must take place by teachers modeling to the students what the teacher wants to see in return." She states: body language, attitude, and language consist of attributes that a teacher must model. Other qualities Dr. Adler mentions that must be present are "coaching and encouraging as well as application. The primary responsibility is for the teacher to teach
conflict resolution." Dr. Adler noted "that ninety-five percent of what a student learns is from the modeling of a teacher." In closing, Dr. Adler shared a statistical research finding, "three years ago one school had 124 referrals. Three years later, after implementing the conflict resolution program, there were only five referrals."

During the interview, Dr. Adler expressed interest in doing research regarding conflict resolution and the VE population. She stated that there is little if any research findings that prove or disprove that conflict resolution aids in the classroom environment when implemented in the curriculum. It was at this point that the writer finalized the purpose for her topic for observation. The purpose is to observe one middle school classroom that does not use conflict resolution against another middle school classroom that does use conflict resolution. Each classroom was observed for one hour four times.
Setting

School A

School A was a middle school for grades six through eight. It is a well groomed institute that holds 1,300 plus students, of whom 55-60 are in the VE program.

The VE classroom is in the portable building, which is located at the back of the school. There is central air conditioning; however, the room appears to always be warm. The portable VE classroom appears to lack many of the amenities found in the main building. It is also located parallel to two fields. One of which housed a physical education class in which the participating students could be heard from afar.

The teacher of this classroom will be referred to as Teacher A. Teacher A teaches math. She does not use conflict resolution in her classroom. Her class consists of few students, the ages of whom range from nine to between twelve and fifteen. There are a
mixture of races, ethnicities, and genders in the class.

The four VE classrooms have mixed populations of sixth through eighth graders. Each classroom is specifically grouped according to ability. The students observed were a severely learning disabled albeit they were with the highest functioning students in School A’s VE classroom. See Figure 1.

**Classroom Environment**

**School A**

The arrangement of the classroom is illustrated in Figure 1.

The classroom rules, rewards, and consequences are posted on the wall in the back corner of the room. The list consists of the following:

**Classroom Rules**

Be in classroom and seated when the bell rings.

Have all supplies in class everyday.

Raise hand and be recognized before speaking.

Follow directions the first time they are given.
Respect individuals and property.

Rewards

Praise

Positive

There were no conflict resolution posters on any walls in the classroom. Conflict resolution is not used in this class, and no materials are evident or to be found that are associated with conflict resolution.

Figure 1

Arrangement of Classroom A
Setting

School B

School B was a middle school in which I observed a varying exceptionality classroom that did use conflict resolution. The classrooms in this school are separated by grade level. However, all types of students with disabilities are found in the class. For example, Severely Learning Disabled (SLD), Educably Mentally Handicapped (EMH), Emotionally Handicapped (EH), Varying Exceptionalities (VE), and English as a Second Language (ESL) students are mixed together. The mixture of the students is done differently than in School A.

The classroom as well as the four other VE classes are located in the main building. They are spacious rooms with lots of cabinets, clean carpeting, TV/VCR and central air conditioning. The classroom is esthetically pleasing.
Classroom Environment

School B

The researcher was very impressed with the classroom and how attractive it was as well as conducive to learning. The classroom was quiet, and no disturbances could be heard from outside. The classroom was organized as shown in Figure 2:

Figure 2

Arrangement of Classroom B

Teacher B teaches history. She chose to display walls that were plentiful with all types of conflict
resolution posters as well as other types of wall hangings. Rules and Regulations were listed as follows:

**Class Rules:**

1. Listen carefully.
2. Follow directions.
3. Work quietly. Do not disturb others who are working.
4. Respect others. Be kind with your words and actions.
5. Respect school and personal property.

**Cooperative Group Rules:**

1. Take turns talking quietly.
2. Listen to each other's ideas.
3. Praise each other's ideas.
4. Help each other when asked.
5. Stay together until everyone is done.
6. Talk about how you worked well together and how you can improve.
I Have a Dream
(wall hanging from Martin Luther King’s Speech)

Self-Affirmations
I believe I am ... A unique and precious human being.
My own best friend and my worst enemy.
A lovable and loving person.
Capable of realizing my potential.
Self-respecting.
Responsible for my own behavior.
Learning from my own mistakes.
Creating a joyful life.
An important part of the universe.

Once in the classroom, the rules for fighting fair may be found on the closet door, visible for all to see. There is also a bulletin board with the caption "Hooray for Families". This was a conflict resolution activity presented in teacher B’s last class. Students learned about conflict resolution and participated in
conflict resolution activities. This particular activity dealt with family importance. Each student was to interview a family member, explain what he or she liked to do with his or her family, draw pictures of his or her family, and cut out pictures of families from magazines. This was a one week to two week project. The result was a bulletin board that displayed all of the different families, which helped to create a knowledge not only of family, but also of cultural differences.

The intent of the writer's classroom observations was to uncover the classroom environment with and without conflict resolution.

**Observation Findings**

**School A**

At the first school, School A, the writer observed that the teacher was soft spoken and quiet. She rarely smiled or exhibited expressions on her face. However, when she did, one would notice and it was pleasant to see. She played the role of an authoritarian or leader.
in the class. Her students always sat at their desk and faced the board where math problems were to be discussed and/or completed. Interaction, grouping, or cooperative learning groups were not viewed or observed in this classroom. With time, the classroom academic presentation and lessons became predictable, ritualistic, sterile, and hum drum. Teacher A did not follow her rules stated on the wall of the classroom, nor did she use the consequences that were also listed on the board. She appears to ignore much of the unwanted behavior in the classroom. She hears and sees what the students say and do, but chooses to ignore it because it was done behind her back.

Day 1

The students entered the classroom loudly and were very much engaged in conversation with their peers. Slowly, they found a desk and chair but not without continuing to talk. Many of the boys had items (balls, CD's, baseball card, etc.) that they focused their attention upon. The teacher began to call role and
continued as the students still talk among themselves. Teacher A became frustrated and a bit annoyed and told them to "be quiet." At one point, she began to call role again because the loud chatter made it difficult to differentiate who was present or absent.

After this, the teacher handed the students a paper to complete. She walked around the room to make sure the students were completing the assignment. (Many of them were still off task.) The teacher offered positive words of encouragement if the student was doing a nice job. She also verbally rewarded students for questions she felt were thought out. When the students had completed their work, they were permitted to "talk silently together."

One student appeared to be having a difficult time with his math assignment, and the teacher suggested that he join another boy in the back of the class so they could work together, similar to a peer tutoring situation. Neither objected and both worked together diligently until the problems were completed.
The teacher seemed to lack total control of her classroom. In order to keep students quiet or on task she often called out the student's name, waited for the student's attention, and then responded with "thank you."

The bell rang and the class gathered their belongings and exited.

**Day 2**

Although the researcher was observing another class, the students entered the classroom similarly to the Day 1 class. The children entered loudly and disruptively, playing hackysack, repeating whatever the teacher said, and basically ignoring that it was time to become focused and on task. Teacher A began to call role but, because the students were so boisterous, she intervened by calling "1, 2, 3 eyes up here." She does this with a raised voice and then continued the roll call.

Teacher A began the class by asking the students "to get out their homework." Many of the students
continued to exhibit off task behavior by playing with CD's or balls and turning around in their seats to talk to classmates. Teacher A ignored the off task behavior and continued to teach the class by introducing six problems on the chalkboard. The teacher asked for a volunteer to solve problem one. The class responded by calling out, "I'll do it." The teacher answered by asking the students "to be respectful." However, the students continued to call out without raising their hands. While class was in session, two students raised their hands but did not wait to be called on and blurted out, "I need to go to the bathroom." Teacher A told them to "Shhh" by putting her finger to her lips.

After about fifteen minutes, the class began to quiet down. The students began to become engaged in active learning by involving themselves with the math fraction lessons. However, a couple of boys continued to chatter and stay off task.

Teacher A asked volunteers to come to the board and work on math problems. One boy offered to complete
the problem in front of the class at the chalkboard. When he was finished, he returned to his seat to find that his neighbor had propped his feet up on the seat part of the chair. The boy became agitated and yanked the chair from under the other boy's feet and began mumbling under his breath. The two boys became aggravated while sitting next to one another, and they began to antagonize each other by using their pencil erasers to pretend they were erasing on their arms. After some time, the boys left each other alone as if nothing ever took place.

Meanwhile another boy expressed his concerns to the teacher. After teacher A passed out a math handout, the boys told her, "I have not learned this." The teacher responded by saying, "Relax, I will be here to help you."

When the students had completed the handout assignment, many of them were proud that they were able to do the work. One student in particular stood up and
began to dance. The teacher quickly said her name and the student sat down.

In the back of the room, four boys were sitting together. Three of the boys appeared to be having a relatively easy time completing the handout assignment. However, one boy was not having the same experience. He exhibited signs of frustration and confusion. Once two of the boys sitting in the front of this group realized this, and the others began making fun of the boy who was having difficulty. They began to laugh at him and call him a "retard". Teacher A overheard the two boys and responded by adding that the "only thing I should hear is something positive out of your mouth." A boy in the group sitting next to the one who was having a hard time offered his help and, although he smiled and chuckled a little with the other two boys, he did not join them in calling him names.

While this is taking place another boy spoke out to tell the teacher he was unable to "concentrate" because of all of the talking taking place in the
classroom. Another boy told a girl she was a "slow poke." The teacher reacted by asking, "Is that something positive?"

Towards the end of the class, a student asked if the class might go outside once everyone had completed the handout. (going outside during the last few minutes of class is a form of a reward). However, the teacher said, "No," and added that "I have had to continue to reprimand you." Many of the students began to talk back to teacher A, but it was not clear what they were saying because they talked over one another.

Day 3

The writer entered the classroom twenty minutes early. However, Teacher A was present and began to explain why she felt the class was so loud, disruptive, and off task the day before. She said that in the first semester of school she had had a student teacher. The student teacher was not a positive contribution to the classroom and was "released because she was confrontational with the students." Consequently, the
students thought the writer/observer was a new student teacher and were convinced that the observer returned they would act awful and, hence, the observer would never want to come back. These were the students' feelings, and Teacher A said they felt strongly about it. However, Teacher A explained that the observer was not a student teacher. The observer, from the county, was merely there to observe teacher A. The writer and Teacher A went on to discuss some of the teacher’s feelings about her class. Teacher A explained that she "believes in allowing the students to express themselves" and is "extremely understanding with the students." She stated that she "accepts behavior" but also asks the students "to correct it." She used the example of a boy who had just said a curse word. She said that she accepted his mood and understood that no one always has a great day. But she did approach him and kindly asked him "to use another word next time."

The students entered the classroom in a clamor but materialized into a more on task class then the day
before. Teacher A resumed her lesson as she reviewed the previous two days. The students were much more calm and attentive. Teacher A began reviewing for the following week's exam on fractions. One boy was called on to explain what a numerator and denominator were. He was not able to answer. His classmates were quick to help him by directing him to a poster hanging above the chalkboard that would equip him with the correct answer. For the next ten to fifteen minutes the teacher reviewed for the exam with the students. When a student offered the correct answer, she rewarded them with verbal reinforcement. For example, she said to one student who had given the correct answer, "good, very good."

After the review, Teacher A handed out a worksheet and asked the students to complete the problems. After the students finished the worksheet, the teacher went around to each student's desk to sign their agenda. (An agenda is set up similar to a calendar and allows the students to see what assignments are due and what
homework they have. The teacher signs it to make sure they have written all the information down, and it is in the correct slot.) The teacher closed the class by restating what took place in the classroom and what the homework was as well as other assignments. The students were rewarded for their good behavior and were allowed to go outside for the remaining twelve minutes of class.

**Playground**

The class immediately separated into groups. Four boys played basketball together. Two were Caucasian and two were African American. One of the African American boys began to laugh at one of the Caucasian boys for making a bad play. The Caucasian boy, while retrieving the basketball, yelled out to him that he was a "sand nigger." The teacher heard the response and called out the Caucasian boy’s name twice to get his attention. The student and the teacher made quick eye contact and nothing else was said. When the Caucasian boy reached the court again, all four boys
resumed playing ball and not another word was mentioned about the prior incident.

On another court three Latin boys were playing basketball together. On one side of both of the basketball courts it appeared that the older students of the class were congregated. There were three boys and two girls. All of them were Caucasian. They were standing around talking to one another. One of the boys was playing with another one of the boy’s hackysack. After playing with it for a few minutes, he threw the sack on top of a small building about the size of a shed. Both boys began to laugh. The boy that threw the sack on top of the building climbed up on top of the building which was approximately twelve feet high. At this point, the teacher saw the boy on top of the building and told him to come down because he could get hurt. The boy retrieved the sack and jumped down. At another area further away from the building, two African American girls were playing basketball together. See Figure 3.
When the bell rang, the students returned the borrowed balls to the classroom and made their way to the main building.

Teacher A explained to the writer that the "students are often made fun of by their peers when they walk to and from class." She stated that many have "a difficult time." She said that they "appear to get along together in class." She added that "they don't have a choice."

The teacher informed the writer that Friday is "Fun Friday" a reinforcement for those students really making attempts to stay focused and on task. In order
to participate on Fun Friday a student must achieve a certain amount of points on his or her agenda during the week. If the student earned the required number of points, he or she is rewarded the last class period on Friday. The following are examples of previous rewards: taco party, outside play, ice-skating, and bowling. Teacher A tells the writer the outside play is the students’ favorite Friday reward.

The writer will observe a taco party for the Fun Friday reward on the fourth day of observations.

**Day 4**

The writer joined the class to walk to the teacher’s cafeteria where the party would be held. Two other classes joined our class as well as one other teacher. The students who did not earn their points stayed with the third VE teacher in the portable building. When walking to the teacher’s cafeteria, the students began to get very loud. Teacher A counted "1,2,3" to prompt silence -- which did not work.
The students were then asked to line up which did not occur. The students were somewhat out of control and disregarded any instruction given by Teacher A or the other accompanying VE teacher. While walking, an African American boy and a Caucasian boy began to argue. (The writer did not hear what started the argument but did hear what occurred next). The Caucasian boy threatened to pull off the African American boy’s gold chian. The African-American boy dared him. The boys continued this back and forth for a minute longer. The two boys separated in line and the argument was forgotten.

Many of the other students walking to the cafeteria picked on one another and antagonized each other. Many displayed little self-control. Once the group reached the teacher’s cafeteria, the students were to find a seat at a table. See Figure 4.

The following is a description of the students grouped at each tables:
One student had a boombox (radio) and turned it on.
The room began to fill with noise from the students yelling to which station the radio should be tuned.
The students sat at nine different tables. Many of Teacher A's students sat with the same students they were with on the playground the day before. Two Caucasian boys from Teacher A's classroom offered to help her set up the food and serve drinks. One of the boys offered to help take orders and serve the students their drinks. He was very rude and impolite to his peers. If the students had not made up their minds regarding their drink preference, the boy got angry and started mumbling under his breath. One boy who had a facial disfigurement told the boy what he wanted to drink. When the boy who was helping responded in a
nasty tone, the student questioned this. The boy who was helping talked back to him and walked off. When the boy was passing out the drinks, he made no attempt to keep the Cokes separate from the Dr. Pepper and gave his peers the wrong drinks. However, he did not appear to care about the matter.

Table three with the Hispanic boys and table four with the African-American boys interacted very nicely together. Table four was curious to learn Spanish words from table three. In time, the writer noticed the words which they were learning were curse words. At any rate, it was positive to see two cultures interacting. At times, the Hispanic boys used their native language to their advantage when they did not want the boys at table three to understand what they were saying.

A little later, two of the boys sitting at table three began to argue. One of the boys said that he was from the United States while the boy sitting next to him responded by saying, "You are from Mexico." The
boy became upset and tried to explain that he was "from here" and started to speak to the boy in Spanish.

During this, there was a problem with the electricity and Teacher A went to try and heat the food in the kitchen while the other teacher passed out chips and salsa. Twenty minutes later the students were still not able to make their tacos due to the problem. The entire party seemed chaotic, disorganized, and was poorly supervised.

When teacher A returned she instructed each table to come to the main table to prepare his or her taco and then return. At table eight one of the girls was having a difficult time eating her soft taco. She was not able to keep the tortilla wrapped so the filling would not come out. The girl sitting next to her said that she knew how to eat one and she would fix it for the girl. She took it from the girl who was having trouble, who seemed unsure she wanted the girl’s help, and began to use her fingers and saliva to mold the taco. She returned the taco and continued to help the
two remaining girls at the table. The first girl was still having a hard time so she took the taco directly from her friend’s hand and placed a napkin around it and returned it. It seemed like the girl who helped her friends felt good about herself and enjoyed playing the caretaker role.

While all the students were seated at their tables eating their tacos, the Caucasian boy at table one yelled to an African American boy at table four, calling him a "cotton head." He waited for a response, but the boy at table four was not sure if he was being called a name or not. However, the boy sitting next to him assured him it was he at whom the name was directed. Once again, the boy sitting at table one called out to the boy at table four and this time called him a "broccoli head." An African-American boy from table four walked over to the boy who was being called names and asked him if he heard what was said. The boy at table four turned around, ignored it, and never called the other boy anything. This seemed to
perturb the Caucasian boy, so he continued to call him "broccoli head." Soon the boy stopped calling him names and began to speak to the boys at his table. About this time, there was only one to two minutes until the bell rang and the observer left the room.

Response

The description of the above days spent observing the middle school which does not utilize a conflict resolution program differs enormously from that of the middle school that does use conflict resolution. Teacher A strikes one as a low key, calm, accepting individual who does not exhibit a strong personality. She appears to employ a type of ignorance factor regarding her students' behavior that according to her posted rules would not be acceptable. The writer was under the impression that although her students were fond of her she lacked little control of the classroom or situations that arose in the classroom. Many times Teacher A attempted to get control of the classroom by calling a student's name, using the "shh" motion, or
calling out 1,2,3 but these did not seem to be effective measures.

The students did not demonstrate that they were equipped to express themselves when they were either angry or upset. During the observations, most times the students responded to their feelings in an inexpressive fashion and then dropped the entire occurrence as if nothing had ever taken place. A good example of this was when the boy who was attempting to complete his inclass assignment was exhibiting difficulty and the boys seated in front of him called him a "retard." Another instance occurred when the two boys started arguing on their way to the teachers' cafeteria, and one of the boys acted as if he were going to pull his friends gold chain from his neck. Other examples may be represented by the name calling, discriminating against another's race.

If these students were furnished with tools and strategies they may have handled these situations completely differently.
Observation Finding

School B

Teacher B teaches history to all the VE classrooms. She differed in many ways from Teacher A. She is firm, in total control, straightforward, demanding of the students' attention, interactive, and hands on. The students respond well to her and are very clear about what is expected of them as well as what is and is not permitted in her classroom.

Day 1

The first day the writer observed a half day. The teacher explained that because of this it would be a bit "chaotic." The class observed today was made up of four boys and one girl, all of whom were African-American. Apparently, a few students were not present at school this day. This particular class was completing their study of the Constitution. They had been studying this subject for the past two weeks, and today was to be the final test, except Teacher B did
not want to administer the test for two reasons. First, so many students were absent, and second a couple of the students present were not exhibiting the acquired knowledge of the subject matter acceptable to the teacher. Because of this, the class and Teacher B conducted a study session.

The teacher began by asking, "What is the Constitution?" A student answered by saying it is "written laws." One of the boys called out, "I don’t agree." Teacher B responded by asking, "Why do you feel that is wrong?" The boy responded, "it is my life; I’ll do what I want."

Teacher B accepted the student’s answer and continued to ask questions. One particular boy continued to call out without being called upon. Teacher B stated this behavior was unacceptable and made it difficult for the other students. She said that she was going to make an "I care statement." Teacher B stated to the boy, "I feel frustrated when you continue to call out." The boy responded, "I feel
mad when I have to take a test because I did not study." The teacher shared with the class that yesterday she gave the class twenty minutes of silent time to study in addition to the previous night and the past two weeks.

After this, Teacher B continued to ask questions and made sure that the students raise their hands. The only time the writer observed Teacher B ignoring the students was when they continued to call out.

It did not appear that the students argued with one another in class. They interacted pretty well and seemed to be equipped with tools to help them express their feelings.

Teacher B tried to show the students an important date in history. She wrote the year 1996 over a minus 1987 and asked the students what the answer was. One student became sarcastic towards the teacher implying that it was not possible to solve it correctly. The teacher then asked the boy, "Can you subtract 7 from 6?" The boy responded, "Yes, because I can go buy a
pencil." The boy who continued calling out earlier told the boy "to be serious," and the teacher agreed with him saying, "He is wasting my time."

Teacher B put one of the students in the middle of the class. She explained that the students would each ask him one question, so he would be able to learn the information for the test. The writer observed the teacher whispering in each of the student's ears what to ask the boy in the middle. Then the teacher called on the first student to ask a question, as well as the second. By the time the third student started to ask his question, all of the students began blurting out, and all of them started talking at once. Teacher B sent the boy in the middle back to his desk. She turned to the boy and asked him if he could hear all the questions. He sarcastically said, "Yes." She then asked, "Would it be easier if we would raise our hands to ask questions or to just answer them?" Teacher B was using role play to illustrate and make a point that "In order to hear one another one must raise his or her
hand." After this, the teacher put the students in pairs to study for the history test. The pairs were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Number</th>
<th>Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>boy - boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>girl - boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>teacher - boy (one calling out)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group two began to have a problem. One boy laughed at a girl and told her she talked too much. The girl responded by saying, "I care when you tell me that I talk too much." The teacher intervened and explained that one person needs to talk at a time.

Group three did well together. This may be because the teacher was part of the group. Group one seemed to be studying well together. However, one boy was more involved than the other. Group two began to get off task and laugh. The boy told the girl to "shut up." The girls said to the boy, "I care when you tell me to shut up." Then the boy grabbed her paper from her
desk. She told him, "I care when you grab my paper." After this "I care statement ..." he handed her paper back to her. Then she nicely returned it to him because he wanted to look at it. Group two continued to play practical jokes on one another. The boy in the group looked over at the writer and then continued laughing with the girl. The boy could have been acting up to impress or show off in front of the writer. (The teacher explained this to the writer at the end of class).

Teacher B asked the students to return to their desk and clean up. She also asked them to take out their organizer. One boy said "No." But the girl in the class said to him, "Cooperate." The remainder of the class was used silently thinking how the class can improve their behavior for the next day.

Day 2

Teacher B opened the class by asking the students to take out their homework. If they completed the assignment, they received a tangible reward. The class
interacted together for a continuous twenty minutes reading and answering questions about Africa. The students (3 African American girls, one Caucasian girl, and two African American boys) were on task and helped each other pronounce difficult words. The next twenty minutes the class watched a video tape that discussed the climate, culture, geographics, and other aspects of Africa. To close the class lesson, the teacher read a Shry book about Africa. The students sat in a circle while Teacher B read for about five to ten minutes before the bell rang. The students in this class were the youngest out of all of the classes. Teacher B referred to them as a well-behaved class. The students in this class were attentive, focused, and stayed on task.

Day 3

The teacher began her class by checking homework assignments from the previous day. (There are six African American males, one African American female, and two Hispanic females in the class). The class was
studying Ben Franklin in history and Teacher B wanted to review vocabulary words with the students. One vocabulary word was "getting along." The students defined the term as an example. These examples were "helping older women" and "playing together." The students were involved with the lesson about Ben Franklin. Some were more willing to share answers than others, though off task behavior for this class was engaging in laughter for a few seconds and then returning to the lesson.

After the vocabulary review, the class was asked to read chapter summaries and answer questions silently on paper. During the last five minutes of class, the students were permitted to talk together, draw on the chalkboard, or do something of their own at their desk. The students were interacting with one another and socializing without arguing or exchanging any hurtful words. The following was the arrangement of the students in the classroom during the five minute free time:
• Two African-American males and one Hispanic female were drawing on the chalkboard;

• One African-American male was filing papers for the teacher;

• Four African-American males and one Hispanic female were engaged in conversation at their desks; and

• One Hispanic female (who spoke broken English) watched all of her classmates and occasionally spoke to the five students mentioned above.

After the class ended, Teacher B told the writer that Friday would be a great day to observe because it would be "Friday Fun Day." This reward in the class at the end of the day on Friday is for those students who earn eighty percent of their one hundred points for the week. A weekly point sheet is used to keep count of points earned each week. (See Appendix F)
Day 4

All of the students who earned their points gathered in one room together to participate in the fun. The students who did not earn their points stayed in another room separated from "Friday Fun Day." The students came into the room and immediately took a seat at a desk in the classroom next to Teacher B’s. The students were excited but in control and attentive to what Teacher B’s and the other teacher’s instructions. While Teacher B kept an eye on the students, the other teacher prepared "goodie bags." These "goodie bags" consisted of popcorn, cereal, pretzels, mini rice cakes, candy, and crackers. The class began to break into groups. The groups were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Number</th>
<th>Group Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Two African-American girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>One African-American girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>One African-American girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>One African-American boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>One African-American boy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three Hispanic girls (playing cards)

Four African-American boys and one Hispanic boy (playing Uno)

Two African-American boys, one Hispanic boy, and one Caucasian boy (playing Uno)

The students in groups one through five started "Friday Fun Day" by watching their classmates. However, Teacher B offered them copies of tic tac toe to play, and the students paired off to play this together. This group of five students appeared to be more timid.

The writer's experience with School A and School B and the similar "Fun Friday" and "Friday Fun Day" was extremely dissimilar. School B was much more organized and calm. The students were on task, engaged in an activity, and pleasant. The teachers had control of the classroom and there were minimal arguments or unkind words directed towards anyone in the class. The
students kept their voices low except for a few isolated times when they became overly excited. When Teacher B asked the students to get back on task or to discontinue inappropriate behavior, they did so. The old cliché, "different as night and day" demonstrates a perfect analogy for these two classrooms.

There were only two incidents of misbehavior that the writer observed. The first was from group number seven. Apparently, the boys in this group enjoyed "slapping" the card down to show what they had. Teacher B did not care for them doing this because it destroys the cards. One boy in the group told teacher B that another boy in his group was "slapping cards." This made the boy extremely angry, and he called his friend who told on him a "lying bitch." He later added, that "My brother will beat you up." Within a few minutes the entire group was singing songs and talking about new popular music. The other occurrence was when a boy in group number eight told one of his group members to "shut up." However, this did not
bother the boy; he simply smiled at him and laughed. After this, the boys continued to play their card game.

Before the bell is to rang, both teachers asked the students to please begin cleaning up the room. All the students stopped what they were doing and began to straighten up the classroom. A few students even asked if they could take out the trash and clean the boards. Before the writer left "Fun Friday" at School A, no student had thrown away his or her trash and the teacher had not yet instructed them to do so with only three minutes remaining until the end of the day.

The difference in the classrooms at School A and School B was amazing. The classroom environment was different in each class. School A was more teacher-focused. The teacher taught and instructed from the chalkboard while the students faced her in single rows. But at school B, the teacher sat or stood in the middle of all the desks and interacted with the students. The lesson was never instructed the same, and there was a great deal of variety. The make up of the teachers'
teaching styles differed greatly as well. As mentioned earlier, Teacher A was quiet, soft spoken, and tended to utilize selective hearing regarding her students. On the other hand, Teacher B was active, had a strong personality, and had great control of her classroom. School B’s students appeared to be able to express themselves regarding expressing their feelings openly, whether it was to the teacher or their classmates. However, in School A the writer did not observe examples of this except for the name calling.

When reflecting on the questions posed in chapter three, the writer would answer them as such. The students in School B appeared to be better equipped with skills and strategies to use when a conflict arose than did the students in the classroom in School A. However, one must keep in mind that School B has had conflict resolution training and experiences, whereas, School A has not. Conflict resolution appeared to be successful in School B according to what the writer observed. However, the writer did not observe any form
of peer mediation. When discussing the positive attributes of using conflict resolution in a classroom from the writer’s observations, there seem to be many. A few attributes are that students learn how to deal with their inner feelings and how to express these feelings to other individuals. Learning conflict resolution aids in their socialization process, helping them become secure in how to express their remarks to people outside of their home and school. The only negative attribute the writer can foresee is that it takes time to organize and teach conflict resolution to students as well as patience.
Chapter 5

Results, Discussion and Recommendations

Results

The problem presented in this resource paper concerned two middle school classrooms, one that was familiar with conflict resolution and one that was not. The results of the observations showed that the students in Teacher B’s classroom who have been surrounded by conflict resolution materials and lessons appear to be better equipped with knowledge to express themselves and channel their feelings. The students in Teacher A’s classroom do not seem to be able to convey their feelings expressively to their classmates. Instead, the students in Teacher A’s classroom called each other names or engaged in arguments and then walked away as if nothing happened. No recourse was taken for School A’s classroom arguments.

Discussion

In reading the observations that were made for four days in Classroom A and Classroom B, it was quite
easy to see the classroom environments differed enormously. Although the students in School B were familiar with conflict resolution, the writer felt there was another determining factor that influenced the environment of both of these classrooms. This factor was the teachers' method of teaching but, even more importantly, the teachers' differing personalities, tone, and mannerisms. Another pivotal aspect that must be taken into consideration is the way the teacher did or did not control the students in classroom.

Because conflict resolution was used in Classroom B, it appeared to this writer to be the major reason for better communication, openness, on task behavior, and ability to express one's feelings. The teacher was also an important ingredient with regards to the classroom environment. Teacher B was firm, strict, and followed her rules that were set at the beginning of the school year. However, she still smiled, expressed herself, reinforced the students (both positively and
negatively), and created a classroom atmosphere that was exciting and conducive to learning. On the other hand, Teacher A demonstrated little control over her classroom, did not follow her rules that were established at the beginning of the year, seldom expressed herself, ignored the students' off task behavior, and reinforced the children very little. Because of the two extreme types of teachers, one must take into consideration that the teachers' personalities and the way in which the instructors chose to conduct their classes had a great deal to do with the classroom environment in addition to whether conflict resolution was or was not taught.

The writer was not able to see peer mediation in School B. However, information regarding peer mediation as well as a few tables have remained in the first chapter because it represents an integral part of conflict resolution.
Summary

Outcomes of the observations indicated that teaching students ways to handle and deal with conflict peacefully results in a more controlled, on task, and expressive classroom environment. In addition, the students are better equipped with the tools to resolve conflict peacefully.

Recommendations

After completing the observations at School A and School B, the writer has the following recommendation: The study completed by the writer, although interesting and comprehensive must be looked at in broader terms. This writer believes a longitudinal study of one to one and one half years should be conducted and should involve many more schools, to discover the validity of conflict resolution in VE classrooms. This would allow the teachers and students to behave in a more naturalistic manner since a familiarity could be established by the researcher while observing the classroom. The writer feels that, perhaps a more in
depth study would allow for more reliability. In the future, the writer would like to see research dealing primarily with peer mediation. Since this is such an important aspect of conflict resolution, a study about to this topic would be constructive.

**Summary**

Conflict resolution allows one to become versed in how to handle conflict peacefully. Due to our changing society as well as our changing nation, many feel it is cardinal that school systems integrate conflict resolution into the curriculum. A seventeen year old girl from Boston wrote the following:

"A Chance To Live"

I find trying to survive in this world very hard, but when there's violence on the streets, it makes survival even harder. I think about how many innocent people get killed every day. I think about kids getting killed at young ages. I think about the elderly people, who have no one to do things for them. I think about the fear that they have each time they come out of their homes. I think about how some old people have to stay locked up in their own homes, because they are afraid to stay inside, and they are even more afraid to come out. I don't think life should be this way.
I think about all these different gangs that are out on the streets, trying to take over different turfs, which don’t even belong to any of them. Every day we hear that someone has been shot or stabbed. Why can’t these young kids understand that they also are a part of this human race? Each day when I come home from school I stay in the house until the next morning, when it’s time to go to school again. It’s getting so it’s not even safe to stay inside of your own home. When I leave school in the afternoon, I try to find a safer way to walk home. But there’s no safe way to come. No matter which way you come, you always have that fear inside. I wish that everybody could stick together, as brothers and sisters. I wish that the day would come when people could walk the streets without fear of being shot, stabbed, robbed, or just plain molested.

Tomorrow is another day. And I wonder what it will bring. But deep down inside I already know that it will be another day of trying to find a safe route home from school, seeing the kids on the streets trying to be bad, seeing some old person walking in fear, seeing the police cars, with their lights flashing, and their sirens on, seeing the ambulance coming and going, and seeing the youth of America being shot down, and killed, before they even had a chance to live.

(Lockwood, 1993, p. 3)

It appears that not only researchers see and feel the need for change in the classrooms, but so do the students.
One mark (/) indicates one observed occurrence of the behavior.

**FREQUENCY CHART FOR PHYSICAL AND VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERBAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREQUENCY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREQUENCY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

STUDENT SELF-REPORT

INDICATE YOUR CHOICE BY CIRCLING THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

1. I can explain the word conflict.
   YES  NO  NOT SURE

2. I usually know why I feel the way I do.
   YES  NO  NOT SURE

3. I get in an argument at least once a day.
   YES  NO  NOT SURE

4. I get along well with everyone in my class.
   YES  NO  NOT SURE

5. Sometimes physical violence is necessary to solve arguments.
   YES  NO  NOT SURE

6. I can usually express how I feel about something.
   YES  NO  NOT SURE
7. I am not the person who usually starts arguments in our classroom.

   YES  NO  NOT SURE

8. I know how to help people solve their problems.

   YES  NO  NOT SURE

9. I think world peace is possible.

   YES  NO  NOT SURE

10. I can explain the term mediation.

    YES  NO  NOT SURE

11. Our school is a peaceful place.

    YES  NO  NOT SURE

12. When people start arguments with me I know how to solve things peacefully.

    YES  NO  NOT SURE
Appendix C

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Indicate your choice by circling the appropriate letter next to the statement you select.

1. I intervene in conflicts between my students:
   A. not at all
   B. at least once a day
   C. 3 to 5 times a day
   D. more than 5 times a day

2. When I do intervene in conflicts between my students they react by:
   A. arguing
   B. blaming others
   C. listening to each other
   D. making an effort to compromise
Appendix D

Problem Documentation

Teacher observations for two weeks revealed that children called each other names, insulted one another, committed aggressive acts against each other, and defaced one another's property.

Table 1

Table of Observations of Social Infractions for a Two Week Period

Week 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mon.</th>
<th>Tue.</th>
<th>Wed.</th>
<th>Thurs.</th>
<th>Fri.</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Calling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive Acts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defacing Property</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Week 2.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Mon.</th>
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<th>Wed.</th>
<th>Thurs.</th>
<th>Fri.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insults</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Calling</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defacing Property</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

Student surveys revealed attitudes that reflected hostile feelings among students in third and fourth grades.

Table 2

Table of Children’s Attitude Responses in Grade 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive statements regarding school</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative statements regarding school</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive statements regarding self</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative statements regarding self</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements about engaging in conflict</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3

Table of Children’s Attitude Responses in Grade 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive statements regarding school</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative statements regarding school</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive statements regarding self</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative statements regarding self</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements about engaging in conflict</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F
Appendix G
Conflict Resolution 112

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