

BULLY PREVENTION, PEER MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: IMPACT OF
PREVENTION PROGRAMS ON REDUCING SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

by

ALICE M. FROST

B.A., Washburn University, 1995
M.S., Emporia State University, 2003

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Special Education, Counseling, and Student Affairs
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2012

ABSTRACT

Previous research examined various factors of program design, specific program curriculum, and student and faculty attitudes, but repeated studies and methodology questions have been raised with some of the research. Much of the research in the field has examined specific program effectiveness where the researcher is the author of the program or curriculum being used. This study examines the effects of programs designed to reduce school violence and the impact they have on reducing out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). The three programs examined are bully prevention programs, peer mediation programs, and conflict resolution programs used in middle schools. This study does not focus on a specific curriculum, but has chosen independent measures that have been identified to reduce out of school suspensions. The independent variables for this study are: 1) type of programming, 2) number of lessons being taught, 3) administration, 4) counselor to student ratio, and 5) interaction effects. The research questions guiding this study were: 1) Which, if any, violence prevention programs are used in middle schools in the state of Kansas? 2) Is there a main effect for violence reduction program on violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported? 3) Is there a main effect for the number of counselors to students on the number of violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported? 4) Are there main effects or interaction effects for number of lessons and method of administration on the number of violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported? 5) Are there interaction effects for violence reduction program and each of the following variables: counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and method of administration?

All 231 middle schools in the State were surveyed to obtain information regarding type of prevention programs being offered and how these programs are administered. The return of 129

surveys resulted in a data set of 122 schools participating once incomplete surveys were eliminated. State Department of Education data from the Discipline Incident System provided the dependent variable data on school suspensions (injury and non-injury) for a three year period from 2008-2011. The only significant finding related to schools that had a counselor to student ratio of less than 1:500. These schools reported significantly fewer out-of-school suspensions (injury and non-injury) than those schools with a counselor to student ratio of more than 1:500. The findings from this study will provide middle schools with data to improve violence prevention programming.

BULLY PREVENTION, PEER MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: IMPACT OF
PREVENTION PROGRAMS ON REDUCING SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

by

ALICE M. FROST

B.A., Washburn University, 1995
M.S., Emporia State University, 2003

A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Special Education, Counseling, and Student Affairs
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2012

Approved by:

Major Professor
DR. LINDA THURSTON

Copyright

ALICE M. FROST

2012

ABSTRACT

Previous research examined various factors of program design, specific program curriculum, and student and faculty attitudes, but repeated studies and methodology questions have been raised with some of the research. Much of the research in the field has examined specific program effectiveness where the researcher is the author of the program or curriculum being used. This study examines the effects of programs designed to reduce school violence and the impact they have on reducing out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). The three programs examined are bully prevention programs, peer mediation programs, and conflict resolution programs used in middle schools. This study does not focus on a specific curriculum, but has chosen independent measures that have been identified to reduce out of school suspensions. The independent variables for this study are: 1) type of programming, 2) number of lessons being taught, 3) administration, 4) counselor to student ratio, and 5) interaction effects. The research questions guiding this study were: 1) Which, if any, violence prevention programs are used in middle schools in the state of Kansas? 2) Is there a main effect for violence reduction program on violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported? 3) Is there a main effect for the number of counselors to students on the number of violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported? 4) Are there main effects or interaction effects for number of lessons and method of administration on the number of violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported? 5) Are there interaction effects for violence reduction program and each of the following variables: counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and method of administration?

All 231 middle schools in the State were surveyed to obtain information regarding type of prevention programs being offered and how these programs are administered. The return of 129

surveys resulted in a data set of 122 schools participating once incomplete surveys were eliminated. State Department of Education data from the Discipline Incident System provided the dependent variable data on school suspensions (injury and non-injury) for a three year period from 2008-2011. The only significant finding related to schools that had a counselor to student ratio of less than 1:500. These schools reported significantly fewer out-of-school suspensions (injury and non-injury) than those schools with a counselor to student ratio of more than 1:500. The findings from this study will provide middle schools with data to improve violence prevention programming.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	xii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xiii
DEDICATION	xiv
CHAPTER 1	1
Statement of Problem.....	1
Bully Prevention	4
Peer Mediation	5
Conflict Resolution	6
Methodological Issues	6
Research Questions	7
Limitations	9
Significance of Study	9
CHAPTER 2	11
Review of Literature	11
Bullying and Violent Behaviors.....	11
Risk Factors of Teen Violent Behavior	12
Risk factor one	13
Risk factor two.....	14
Risk factor three	14
Risk factor four	14
Summary.....	15
Theoretical Foundations of Prevention Programs.....	16

Field theory	17
Motivational psychology theory	17
Social cubism theory.....	18
Developmental psychology.....	18
Bully Prevention Programs	19
Description	19
Research	20
Theoretical foundation	21
Problems	21
Peer Mediation Programs.....	22
Description	22
Research	22
Theoretical foundation	24
Problems	24
Conflict Resolution Programs.....	25
Description	25
Research	25
Theoretical foundation	26
Problems	27
Summary of Research on Impact of Prevention Programs	27
CHAPTER 3	29
Methods.....	29
Research Question and Hypotheses	29

Data Collection	31
Online Survey	31
KAN-DIS Report	36
Plan for Analysis.....	36
Limitations of the Research Method.....	38
Summary	40
CHAPTER 4	41
Results.....	41
Research question 1	41
Hypothesis 1.....	42
Research question 2	42
Hypothesis 2.....	42
Research question 3	44
Hypothesis 3.....	44
Research question 4	45
Hypothesis 4.....	45
Research question 5	47
Hypothesis 5.....	47
Summary.....	49
CHAPTER 5	50
Purpose of the Study	50
Overview of Methodology	50
Summary of Results	51

Discussion of the Research Questions	51
Research question 1	51
Research question 2	52
Research question 3	54
Research question 4	54
Research question 5	56
Implications for Research	56
Implications for the Field.....	58
Recommendations for Practice	58
Recommendations for prevention programming	58
Recommendations for improved delivery and administration of prevention programs	59
Recommendations for student involvement.....	60
Conclusion	61
References.....	63
 APPENDICES	
Appendix A.....	71
Appendix B.....	78
Appendix C.....	79
Appendix D.....	80

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Out of School Suspensions (Injury and Non-Injury).....3

Table 2: Alignment of Research Question and Survey Questions.....33

Table 3: Data Categories and Coding.....34

Table 4: Demographics of Respondents & Non-Respondents35

Table 5: Survey Data Results.....41

Table 6: Type of Programming.....42

Table 7: Independent-Samples t Tests for Bully Prevention43

Table 8: Independent-Samples t Tests for Counselor to Student Ratio44

Table 9: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects46

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Aaron Carlstrom, my initial advisor, for guiding me through the initial phases of my proposal. His guidance was instrumental in getting me prepared and ready for, and the successful completion of, my proposal meeting. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Linda Thurston for her willingness to pick up where Dr. Carlstrom left off and guide me through the final stages of my dissertation defense. Her feedback and guidance were invaluable in preparation for final defense. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Fred Bradley, Dr. Judith Hughey, Terrie McCants, and Dr. Spencer Wood, for their excellent feedback and encouragement throughout both proposal and final defense. I would further like to acknowledge the excellent instruction and challenges provided to me during my doctoral studies and thank Dr. Bradley, Dr. Kenneth Hughey, Dr. Doris Carroll-Wright, Dr. Dan Wilcox, and Dr. Sheryl Hodge.

Acknowledging my colleagues Dr. Dennis Pelsma, Julie Elson, and Dr. Jim Costello is necessary for their words of encouragement and their constant support. This is a great group of colleagues to work with and learn from, and I feel very fortunate to have them as both friends and colleagues.

My family has been my cheering section throughout my program, and I regret my parents, Jim and Mae Robinson, could not be here to celebrate this accomplishment with me. Their belief in me, their encouragement, and their teaching me that if you work hard and don't give up, you can accomplish anything certainly served me well. My companion through this journey, Don Rush, has been my rock, and he has certainly experienced the worst of me along this path. My children, Phil Frost and Anna Deriada, always believed mom could do it, even when I had doubts. Thanks guys for being so understanding of my busy schedule. I also need to acknowledge the role my therapy dog, Bogey, played in this journey. He was always there to play when I needed to take a break, provide funny antics to make me laugh and reduce my stress, and he provided unconditional love and a good ear when I just needed to talk.

Dedication

I dedicate this to my parents, Jim and Mae Robinson, for their love, support and unbelievable strength of character. I feel like I learned from the best examples in the world how to live, work, and love. I lost both of you throughout this process, and it did make it harder to finish, but knowing how the two of you never gave up was what kept me going. Thanks mom and dad.

Chapter 1

Statement of the Problem

School violence is a topic that continues to be in the news. School districts are challenged to reduce school violence in response to school shootings, bullying, and physical altercations both on and off school property. Even though most school violence does not result in death, from 2009-2010 there were 28 school-aged students who died from school violence (Robers, Zhang, & Truman, 2011).

Bemak and Keys' (2000) research of school violence indicate adolescents, ages 12-17 years, report the largest number of violent incidents. National statistics (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2009) show thirty-two percent of adolescents 14-17 years report involvement in physical fighting at school and 5.6 percent of this age group also reported carrying weapons to school. The type of weapons carried most often are knives (50%) and firearms (25%). One of the primary issues for teens is to protect one's dignity and sense of self-respect (Bemak and Keys, 2000) which contributes to the violent incidents being reported in schools today.

The Kansas Community That Cares Survey (2012) indicates sixth and eighth grade students report the greatest number of violent acts occurring on school property. This survey is administered to sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade students and measures student opinions about school, home and community risk factors, but school districts are not required to participate in this survey. When asked the question, "How many times in the past year (the last 12 months) have you attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting them?," nine percent of sixth graders responded once, eight percent of sixth graders responded two to three times, twenty-six percent of eighth graders responded once, and eleven percent of eighth graders

responded two to three times. When asked the questions, “During this school year, how often have you been bullied at school?,” twenty-four percent of sixth graders responded one to two times per month, eight percent of sixth graders responded one to two times per week, and four percent of sixth graders reported being bullied daily. Eighth graders reported twenty-four percent were being bullied one to two times per month, six percent reported one to two times per week, and four percent reported being bullied daily. Student data indicates the problem may be even more severe than what school districts are reporting.

The type of intimidating or violent behaviors most often reported by students grades 7-12 are: verbally insulted (66%), something stolen (33%), pushed, shoved or grabbed (33%), threatened (25%), and kicked, bitten or hit with a fist (20%) (Bemak & Keys, 2000). Bemak and Keys (2000) also indicate that many of the trouble spots are areas within the school that are not monitored as closely by staff such as bathrooms, locker rooms, cafeteria, and buses. A more recent study of sixth grade students found teasing to be the most common form of aggression followed by pushing, shoving or hitting, then name-calling, excluding someone on purpose, making up stories, and finally threatening to hit someone (Calaguas, 2011).

The Kansas State Department of Education (2001) reported the number of students committing violent acts against other students dropped from 2.7/100 students in 1995 to 1.76/100 students in 2000, but this data is from an older reporting system that did not define violent incidents in a way that all schools were reporting incidents accurately and consistently. The new reporting system utilized in Kansas is the Kansas Discipline Incident System (KAN-DIS). This report was developed in 2005, piloted in 2007, and fully implemented in 2008. This report is used to report incidents of illicit drugs, alcohol, weapons, violent incidents (injury and non-

injury) and the number of students placed on out of school suspension or expelled due to each type of incident. KAN-DIS data from 2008-2011 is represented in Table 1:

Table 1

Out of School Suspensions (Injury and Non-Injury)

School Year	Incidents of Injury OSS		Incidents of Non-Injury OSS	
	Total for all Schools with >10	# Schools With <10	Total for all Schools with >10	# Schools With <10
2008-2009	25	15	1543	87
2009-2010	0	14	1594	82
2010-2011	0	15	1078	71

Note. OSS = out of school suspension

This data is for all 231 public middle schools in Kansas. Those schools with less than ten incidents do not provide a specific number due to privacy of identifiable data, therefore, an accurate count of total incidents is difficult to ascertain. The data indicates a reduction of injury producing incidents from 2008-2011, and the non-injury incidents show a substantial reduction from 2009-2010 to 2010-2011.

At the same time the KAN-DIS reporting system was tested and finally implemented in 2008, KSDE mandated all schools must have a bully prevention plan. The requirements for a prevention plan states that school districts must have outlined how they will handle incidents of bullying or violent acts. Having a bully prevention plan did not include a requirement for prevention programming until 2011. The 2011 Official Board Statement (KSDE, 2011) says, “The State Board recognizes bullying as a serious issue that creates a negative school environment and inhibits students’ ability to learn. For this reason, the state board supports current state statute requiring each local board of education to adopt and implement a plan to address bullying, including a provision for the training and education of school staff members and students.” There is a bullying prevention toolbox available through KSDE (2010) which is

based primarily on curriculum from *The Bully Free Classroom* (Beane, 1999), but schools are not required to use this program when developing their plan.

School violence exists at all levels as evidenced by both the Kansas Community That Cares Survey (2012) and the Kansas State Department of Education's annual KAN-DIS reports. The three programs designed to reduce school violence are bully prevention programs (BPPs), peer mediation programs (PMPs), and conflict resolution curriculum (CRCs). Bully prevention programs are designed to eliminate bullying, prevent development of new bullying incidents, and create a school environment that improves peer relations (Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, 2001). Peer mediation programs are often a component of a school's conflict resolution programming and utilize students who have been trained in mediation and problem solving strategies to facilitate conflicts between peers to reach a mutually beneficial resolution (Chittooran & Hoenig, 2005). Conflict resolution curriculum is seen as a school wide program that teaches students skills in cooperation, communication, appreciation for diversity, healthy expression of feelings, responsible decision making, and how to resolve conflicts (Kreidler, 1997). There are methodological problems existing in research that cause difficulties in evaluating the potential effects of the different programs on school violence.

Bully Prevention

Dan Olweus, one of the early researchers in bully prevention programs, began publishing his results in the 1970s. His findings (Olweus, 1978) found that students who are bullied tend to be bullied for several years, and students who tend to be aggressive are also more likely to be aggressive in the future. These findings led Olweus to develop strategies to help schools reduce the levels of bullying. Many of the suggested strategies have been adopted by schools, such as; class rules about bullying, class meetings, cooperative learning, more supervision at recess and

on busses, and parent programs (Olweus, 1993). These strategies reduced the number of reported bullying incidents, but more recent results (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2009; Kansas Dept. of Education, 2010) have shown that bully prevention alone does not reduce the number of violent incidents that lead to out of school suspensions.

Peer Mediation

In the 1980s peer mediation programs (PMP) were established in many schools. These programs trained students as peer mediators to handle the day-to-day conflicts occurring between students. The rationale is that the programs will reduce out of school suspensions and acts of school violence. Van Slyck and Stern's (1991) research looked at the impact on peer mediators' self-esteem and the impact on the student body by measuring the number of reported acts of violence pre- and post-intervention. They found the reported acts of violence are significantly reduced after implementing a PMP. Lam (1989) conducted a review of the literature on peer mediation programs and found the biggest challenges to internal validity and generalizability are the inconsistent methods used in the research and the low reliability of measures being used. The inconsistencies involved researchers focus on assessing the effects of a specific aspect of the PMP (e.g., peer mediator self-esteem, reduction in school violence, out of school suspensions, and specific programs/curriculum), and there were no replication studies that could support their findings. Also, the dependent measures used by various researchers were not defined clearly and there was inconsistency in what dependent measure was being evaluated. Although there is some empirical support for the positive effects of PMP, there are meaningful methodological issues with this research due to the variety of both independent and dependent measures being utilized and how those measures are defined.

Conflict Resolution

In the 1990s, schools located in the eastern United States began to add conflict resolution curriculum (CRC) to address the needs of all students and not just selected groups. Johnson and Johnson (1996) conducted a thorough review of these programs focusing on those that had both PMP and CRC in place. Their findings support the earlier research that peer mediators demonstrate improved self-esteem after training, and they found reported acts of violence were reduced. However, they did not compare programs with just PMP to those with both PMP and CRC to see if the impact of adding CRC has a significant impact on reported acts of violence, nor did they look at schools that were utilizing bully prevention programs. They also did not look at the type of program or curriculum being utilized or the administration of the programs. Another concern with these findings is that Johnson and Johnson were marketing their own conflict resolution program and researcher bias might exist.

Methodological Issues

Methodological issues with this type of research are: 1) most of the data available in the school environment is self-reported data either from administration or students and may not be reported the same from school to school, 2) independent and dependent variables are not consistent between studies, nor are they defined in the same way, and 3) replication of studies using the same independent and dependent variables is difficult to find. To make comparisons between schools is difficult because there is no assurance that everyone is reporting and defining violent acts in the same way. The federal government tried to remedy this inconsistency by requiring States develop reports like the KAN-DIS reporting system.

This study looks at Kansas middle schools' data post-implementation of the revised 2008 KAN-DIS report to see if prevention programs have had the desired effect of reducing violent incidents that resulted in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

Research Questions

Therefore, the following research questions are examined in the proposed study:

1. Which, if any, violence prevention programs are used in middle schools in the state of Kansas?
2. What is the relationship between violence reduction program (i.e., BPP vs BPP+PMP vs. BPP+PMP+CRC) and violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?
3. Is there a relationship between the number of counselors to students and the number of violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?
4. Are there relationships or interaction effects for number of lessons and method of administration and the number of violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?
5. Are there interaction effects for violence reduction program and each of the following variables: counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and method of administration?

Definitions

This project defines a BPP as any program that addresses the three domains of physical, emotional and social bullying behaviors. Using the level system outlined in the Atlantic Prevention Resources (taken from KSDE Bully Prevention Toolbox), the following descriptions of bullying behaviors were used: Level One involves those behaviors that are intimidating in nature – blaming, threatening gestures, insults and teasing, dirty looks, gossiping, or ignoring and

excluding; Level Two includes a higher level of threat and some may involve police referral such as threatening physical harm, stealing, damaging property, assaulting, harassing phone calls, using technology to ostracize or slander, and purposeful mean tricks to embarrass someone; Level Three involves those incidents typically reported to police, such as extortion, threatening to silence someone, setting fires, physical cruelty, assault with a weapon, writing of graffiti, destroying personal property, arranged public humiliation, enforcing group compliance of exclusionary tactics, or harassing due to an ethnic, racial, or other exceptionality,.

PMP is defined as a training program that selects students from a cross section of the population and provides a minimum of 10-15 hours of training (Skiba & Peterson, 2000a). This training includes verbal and nonverbal communication, active listening, problem analysis, identifying common interests, and resolution plan development (Davies, 2001). Peer mediators provide an impartial third party to facilitate the problem solving process between peers who are in conflict and help the parties come to a mutually beneficial resolution (Crawford & Bodine, 2001).

A CRC is defined as a school wide program that teaches students to problem solve disputes or disagreements between two or more people (Kreidler, 1997). These programs should consist of a minimum of 10-20 sessions which focus on nonviolent resolution, meeting the needs of the people involved (Lawler, 2000), and improving or at least maintaining the relationship of the people involved (Weeks, 1992). The six themes outlined by Kreidler (1997) include; cooperation, communication, appreciation for diversity, healthy expression of feelings, responsible decision making, and conflict resolution. The goal is to create caring communities within classrooms and schools.

Limitations

This study involved self-reported data from the schools using the KAN-DIS reporting system; therefore, there is a limitation to how accurately the data may be reported from one school to another. The KAN-DIS reporting system improved the data from schools by defining specific acts of violence to reduce confusion and under-reporting of incidents. Also, some of the schools may have established bully prevention, peer mediation, and conflict resolution programs prior to the KAN-DIS reporting system; therefore, the initial effects of interventions may not be seen if the programs have been in place prior to 2008.

Another potential problem for this study was finding schools in Kansas that are actually using Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution Curriculum. The available research indicates this type of intervention appears to be more prevalent on the East coast (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). The study may be limited in scope due to the lack of available samples.

Significance of the Study

There is little information in research that has looked at the results of prevention programming from a State level. There is also little research that has looked at multiple independent variables that have been reported, from past research, to impact violent incidents. Past researchers have often focused on a specific curriculum, often created by the researchers, which creates questions of bias and generalizability. A final consideration is whether or not the ratio of counselors to students shows any influence on the number of violent incidents reported, something not currently present in current research.

The results of this study provides information that could have programming implications for middle schools by providing evidence that could be used to improve existing prevention programs and providing data to support the implementation of prevention programs not currently

being utilized. Counselors are often the coordinators of prevention programs, so the results of this study could provide information for schools with regard to staffing ratios of counselors to students. This study also provides information from a state wide perspective with a much larger pool of samples than past research.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The literature review presented establishes the background of the three programs most often used in schools to reduce violence: bully prevention, peer mediation, and conflict resolution. There are specific strategies and implementation methods supported by research involving each of these prevention programs. Defining these three types of programs and providing research to support their use provides the framework for this study's research approach.

Bullying and Violent Behaviors

Bullying is defined as aggressive behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power or strength. These aggressive behaviors are repeated over time and include such behaviors as hitting, punching, teasing, name calling, intimidation by gesture or exclusion, and cyber-bullying (Olweus, 1993). Olweus (1993) describes bullying based on the Scandinavian and original English word stem "mob." He clarifies it is not only a term to be used when a group is harassing or pestering someone (55-60 percent of all incidents, p. 8), but also those situations where a single person (35-40 percent of all incidents, p. 9) is doing the bullying. The distinction between bullying and violence is blurred because, as Olweus points out, bullying is a "negative action when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon another" (p. 9). When the term "violence" is used, it most often refers to physical force used to damage or injure (Webster, 1993). The grey line between the two terms seems to be physical damage (which would fall under both bullying and violence) and, teasing, name calling, intimidation by gesture or exclusion, and cyber-bullying (which fall under bullying behavior but not usually violence). This study used the KAN-DIS definition of violent behavior as assaults

that are severe enough to cause out of school suspensions and may include both injury and non-injury incidents (KSDE, 2012).

Bullying behavior is shown to be a learned behavior (Bandura, 1973). Children raised with an aggressive cultural model learn to respond aggressively (Horne & Orpinas, 2003). These behaviors may be learned and reinforced in the cultural, societal, school, familial, or individual environment (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). Students who exhibit bullying behavior by age eight are six times more likely to be convicted of crime by age 24, and are five times more likely to have a serious criminal record by age 30 (Olweus, 1991). Banks (1997) found bullying behavior and verbal abuse have not declined and that seven percent of seventh grade students are missing at least one day per month to avoid bullying. Bullying crosses socio-economic backgrounds, racial groups, and different population densities (urban, suburban, and rural) (Nansel, Overpeck, Ruan, Simons-Morton, & Scheidt, 2001). A study conducted by Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O'Brennan (2009) found that, "a larger school size is associated with higher rates of aggressive behavior and that the number of students to teachers within a building is a better predictor of the school environment than is the overall school size" (p. 204). With larger student to teacher ratios, teachers have a more difficult time managing student behavior and may provide more opportunity for bullying to occur (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2009).

Risk Factors of Teen Violent Behavior

Risk factors associated with violent behavior in teens can be classified into four areas, an individual's predisposition or personality, family environment, school environment, and the community in which they reside (Bemak & Keys, 2000). The American Psychological Association's statement (APA, 2012) posts the "reasons for violence" which include; peer pressure, need for attention or respect, feelings of low self-worth, early childhood abuse or

neglect, witnessing violence at home, in the community or in the media, and easy access to weapons. DuRant, Treiber, Goodman, and Woods (1996) use the cultural transmission theory to explain teen behavior when resolving conflicts, achieving personal goals or acquiring money or possessions as, “learned within intimate primary groups such as families, peer groups, and other sources of modeling such as gangs” (p. 1107). A study examining the school shootings from 1996-1999 (Englander, 2007) found all shooters were male, all had an interest in violent media (including violent video games), all had suffered some type of rejection or public humiliation prior to the shooting, most were from intact families, and consistent with earlier reported findings, all had either mental health issues, were suffering with depression, had poor coping skills, and had displayed acts of aggression prior to the shooting incident. This demonstrates there are multiple factors involved in the development of violent behaviors that cross all four of these categories, but the only factors in the school’s control are the school environment and role modeling of effective conflict resolution strategies.

Risk factor one. The individual predisposition or personality tendencies for violence include impulsivity, lack of empathy (Bemak & Keys, 2000), history of being a victim of violence, belief that factors beyond one’s control are responsible for behavior, and depression (DuRant, et al., 1996). Students at risk of dropping out are even more at risk of school violence because the social bond to school is weakened, and it has been shown that reactive interventions (suspensions or alternative programs) do not teach effective conflict resolution skills or pro-social behaviors (Daunic, Smith, Robinson, Miller, and Landry, 2000). A study conducted by Sontag, Clemans, Graber, and Lyndon (2011) looked at the psychosocial characteristics of both aggressors and victims of traditional and cyber bullying and found that students who participated in both traditional and cyber bullying had the poorest psychosocial profile. They also found that

those who were victims of cyber only or a combination of cyber and traditional bullying reported higher levels of reactive aggression and were more likely to be a cyber-aggressor themselves (p. 392). Another point made by Skiba and Peterson (2000b) is that children are developmentally egocentric, and to shape this type of behavior requires socialization and correction to develop appropriate interpersonal skills that will facilitate successful interactions.

Risk factor two. Family risk factors contributing to student violence include parents who demonstrate poor self-control, aggressive and violent behavior, harsh and inconsistent discipline, poor supervision, and acceptance of their child's use of aggression to solve problems (Bemak & Keys, 2000). Another family risk factor that impact students is poverty, and Englander (2007) reports poverty increases the likelihood that children, both male and female, would commit violent acts. There is a mediating factor for families in poverty and that is the parent's expectations for their children's academic achievement (Nettles, Mucherah, & Jones, 2000). Even though the familial factors may influence violent behavior, Englander (2007) indicates social factors are the more immediate influence on adolescent violent behavior.

Risk factor three. The school environment has shown to play a role in violent acts as well, particularly in schools that are overcrowded or those that enforce a rigid conformity of rules (Bemak & Keys, 2000). As mentioned previously, the zero tolerance policies have been questioned as to whether they increase school safety (Skiba & Peterson, 2000b). Shores, Gunter, and Jack (1993) researched classroom factors and report punishment and exclusion promote a negative school climate.

Risk factor four. The final area of influence on adolescent violence is the community in which they live. The community is where they gain access to firearms, alcohol and drugs, and they struggle with inadequate housing, poverty, high unemployment, high rates of crime and

violence, and limited access to community services (public transportation, day care, job training) (Bemak & Keys, 2000). An intervention involving adolescents in their religious community has shown to be a protective factor for violence prevention (DuRant, et al., 1996; Jessor, 1991). A study conducted in two low-income urban middle schools that had populations of 88% African American, 10% Caucasian, and less than 1% Native American found exposure to violence, marijuana use, or alcohol and/or tobacco use are associated with greater probability to use violence to solve conflicts (DuRant, et al., 1996). Media violence, whether in the form of movies, television, music, or video games, has been shown to influence adolescents thinking in concrete terms of winners and losers or good guys and bad guys. Thus, adolescents are surrounded by images that show it is acceptable to use force to win and images that personify the “tough guy” as being the winner (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1992).

Summary. Knowing the four risk factors influencing adolescent’s violent behavior, an individual’s predisposition or personality, family environment, school environment, and the community in which they reside (Bemak & Keys, 2000), schools should look at which of these factors they can influence in a positive way when developing prevention programs. Bemak and Keys have outlined a number of programs/interventions developed to address the issues of adolescent conflict and violence in schools:

1. School safety plans that focus on controlling access to schools through the use of metal detectors, random drug checks and security guards are some interventions used to control what and who comes into the school environment in an attempt to eliminate substances and people that might provoke violence.
2. Utilizing peer mediation programs and student courts to assist students with resolving their own conflicts without adult intervention is another approach used in many schools.

Transition programs that assist with the middle school students transitioning successfully to the high school environment have been shown to reduce adolescent tensions.

3. Another approach is to provide skills training in the form of teaching problem solving, conflict resolution, communication skills, assertiveness, anger management, and social skills.
4. Some schools have also attempted to get parents more involved through connecting to the community resources for health care and social services and also joint recreation ventures to keep adolescents off the streets.

All of these prevention and intervention strategies are summed up by Bemak and Keys (2000) for those working with students in the school environment when they say, “change for an individual student is closely connected to major changes in the student’s world” (p. 90). Trying to separate the school environment from the other environments is not addressing the entire picture, but rather a portion of the picture.

School counselors work with individuals and small groups of students to develop better coping strategies and personal/social skills, and some schools offer parenting classes to help improve family life. Prevention programs targeting community improvement are often beyond the scope of the school environment, but schools that require community service hours for graduation can get teens involved in community projects. The school environment is the focus for this study and the three types of programs used to improve students’ skills and behaviors; bully prevention programs, peer mediation programs, and conflict resolution curriculum.

Theoretical Foundations of Prevention Programs

The three intervention strategies (bully prevention, peer mediation and conflict resolution) reviewed in this study have the framework of the field theory (Lewin, 1931, 1944),

the cooperation competition theory (Deutsch, 1949), and the social cubism theory (Byrne & Carter, 1996) to look at the dynamics of conflict based on social and motivational psychology perspectives, and the developmental psychology theory (Berger, 1994) to look at how people develop new cognitive structures when learning a new way to respond.

Field Theory. Lewin's (1931 & 1944) field theory work identifies three basic types of psychological conflict styles: approach-approach, avoidance-avoidance, and approach-avoidance. The field theory proposes that human behavior is the function of both the person and the environment. This means that one's behavior is related both to one's personal characteristics and to the social situation in which one finds oneself. Lewin believed behavior was purposeful and visualized the individual as existing in a field of forces which included forces which attract people, and forces which repel people. The blending of these fields produces an approach/avoidance dynamic. For the adolescent, this can create many problems. They are attracted to their peers for social interaction, but are also driven to avoid those peers who do not fit their definition of an equal. According to Lewin's theory, learning is essential to coping with these opposing force fields. Changes in attitude and values are important to the learner's ability to deal with ongoing situations. Lewin also believed that a holistic investigation of human behavior and learning must include the environment in which the learning is taking place, including the psychological environment of the learner and others with whom they interact.

Motivational psychology theory. Deutsch (1949) used Lewin's (1931 & 1944) work to expand the interpersonal processes to that occurring within and between groups. Duetsch's work in 1994 also included the motivational psychology theory of cooperation, accommodation, and competition when conflict resolving styles are discussed. He proposed that most conflicts consist of both cooperative and competitive motives or interests and depending on how these two

vary during a conflict will determine whether or not the conflict is constructive or destructive. If neither party in a conflict can accommodate at least some of the other person's needs, interests, or values (Weeks, 1992), the conflict will usually end destructively. Deutsch's model of conflict resolution describes three types of motivation: cooperative – concern for the welfare of self and of the other person; individualistic – concern for self and unconcerned about the welfare of the other; and competitive – concern for doing better than the other and doing as well as they can for self. He also pointed out that conflicting parties are often satisfying internal needs of avoidance or projecting onto others their own insecurities, therefore, conflicts may be perpetuated for other than personal gains.

Social cubism theory. Social cubism theory, as proposed by Byrne and Carter (1996), use both social and psychological theories to present their view of social conflict as a cube that represents, “six interrelated facets or forces: history, religion, demographics, political institutions and non-institutional behavior, economics, and psychocultural factors” (p. 53). They conclude it is the interaction of these forces that produce “patterns of intergroup behavior” (p. 53). This theory uses a much broader definition of conflict and looks at multiple factors that might be contributing to conflict.

Developmental psychology theory. A fourth approach comes from developmental psychology theory and Piaget's stage theory of development in children's cognitive development (Piaget, 1983). Piaget's theory about the process children use to learn involves developing schemas or categories which help them interpret and understand the world around them. As new knowledge is presented to them, they use the process of assimilation to add this new knowledge to the previous schemas. Piaget theorized that as more information is provided and new experiences occur, children are then capable of changing their behavior by accommodating this

new information and forming new thoughts and ideas. This theory was the basis for Berger's (1994) work on accommodation whereby people create new cognitive structures when coping with new and challenging situations when old patterns of responding are no longer effective. Her work, in the classroom setting, demonstrates the use of cognitive restructuring when teaching new behaviors such as conflict resolution. Another factor that has been found to be influential in adolescent development of cognitive problem solving skills is the impact of peers (Tate, 2001). Tate pointed out that adolescence is the developmental point where teens are learning how to develop close relationships and solve problems outside the family. If these skills are not learned effectively, problems such as delinquency, substance abuse and psychological disorders can occur. These two studies would indicate a potential benefit for teaching cognitive problem solving skills.

Utilizing field, motivational, social cubism, and developmental psychology theories with the four risk factors associated with violent behavior in adolescents (an individual's predisposition or personality, family environment, school environment, and the community in which they reside), researchers have developed three prevention programs to work with students in the school environment; bully prevention programs, peer mediation programs and conflict resolution curriculum. Each of these programs requires teaching of skills, practice of the skills, and reflecting on how well the strategies have been implemented and whether or not some re-teaching might be needed. A review of each program type follows.

Bully Prevention Programs

Description. This project defines a BPP as any program that addresses the three domains of physical, emotional and social bullying behaviors. Using the level system outlined in the Atlantic Prevention Resources (taken from KSDE Bully Prevention Toolbox), the following

descriptions of bullying behaviors were used: Level One involves those behaviors that are intimidating in nature – blaming, threatening gestures, insults and teasing, dirty looks, gossiping, or ignoring and excluding; Level Two includes a higher level of threat and some may involve police referral such as threatening physical harm, stealing, damaging property, assaulting, harassing phone calls, using technology to ostracize or slander, and purposeful mean tricks to embarrass someone; Level Three involves those incidents typically reported to police, such as extortion, threatening to silence someone, setting fires, physical cruelty, assault with a weapon, writing of graffiti, destroying personal property, arranged public humiliation, enforcing group compliance of exclusionary tactics, or harassing due to an ethnic, racial, or other exceptionalities.

Research. Bully prevention and intervention strategies recommended in the KSDE Bullying Prevention Toolbox include: mentoring programs, teacher advisor program, peer helper program, newcomer's club. A key element recommended by Olweus (1991) is to include staff development. Craig, Pepler, and Atlas (2000) found that teachers only intercede 15 to 18% of the time in classroom bullying incidents. Since the majority of incidents are covert actions and occur outside the classroom setting in unsupervised locations such as hallways, cafeteria, playground, and on busses (Olweus, 1993), Olweus (1991) recommends staff development include increasing supervision, applying stronger sanctions for bullying behavior, and creating a positive environment.

After implementing this type of program, Olweus (1993) found there was a fifty percent reduction in the frequency of bullying and also a reduction in the number of new victims. Olweus (1993) also recommends involving the parents of both the bully and victim in the discussions. It has been found that boys and older grades within a school gained more from

bully prevention instruction than younger grades, girls, or control groups (Craig, Pepler & Atlas, 2000).

For those students who are at risk for developing antisocial behavior or conduct disorder, Reid (1993) suggests adding a comprehensive programming component to deal with the more serious personality problems. The recommended programming might include conflict resolution and anger management to prevent these antisocial behaviors (Walker, Horner, Sugai, Bullis, Sprague, Bricker, & Kaufman, 1996).

Theoretical foundation. Bully prevention programs utilize all four psychological theories (field, motivational, social cubism, and developmental) to work with students in their social environment to help them learn developmentally appropriate skills to identify and deal with situations where they might be experiencing conflict with their peers. These programs would address the risk factors of personality development an individual's predisposition or personality, family environment, school environment, and the community in which they reside and the school environment.

Problems. Research on the effectiveness of bully prevention programs is not current in research literature. What is most common in current research articles is trying to find the reasons for bullying behavior and not measuring the effectiveness of what is currently being done. Kalman (2011) has written about the need for better research in the field using "scientific truth" rather than "politics" to find a new approach that will actually work. Kalman is also critical of the "gold standard" of programs created by Olweus and states this program "rarely reduces bullying and often results in an increase" (p 1). Kalman feels the industry has accepted the "Olweus paradigm" as the answer to bullying, and he feels this has deterred other research into improving upon the Olweus model.

Peer Mediation Programs

Description. PMP is defined as a training program that selects students from a cross section of the population and provides a minimum of 10-15 hours of training (Skiba & Peterson, 2000a). This training includes verbal and nonverbal communication, active listening, problem analysis, identifying common interests, and resolution plan development (Davies, 2001). Peer mediators provide an impartial third party to facilitate the problem solving process between peers who are in conflict and help the parties come to a mutually beneficial resolution (Crawford & Bodine, 2001).

Research. Peer mediation programs have a somewhat longer history as an intervention for school violence than do conflict resolution programs; however, when the topic of conflict resolution programs are discussed in research, they usually include peer mediation as a component of an effective conflict resolution curriculum (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). Peer mediation programs will be presented both from the research on stand-alone peer mediation programs and as an inclusionary component of a comprehensive conflict resolution curriculum.

Peer mediation programs provide student negotiation-based resolution to everyday conflicts within the school environment. Selected students are trained in problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies to assist peers with resolving disputes before they become disciplinary matters (Skiba & Peterson, 2000a).

Some of the positive outcomes of peer mediation programs include: a reduction of administrator and teacher time working with conflicts, reduction in the level of violence and crime, and enhanced self-esteem, grades, and attendance for the trained mediators (Benson & Benson, 1993). Peer mediation programs have also shown to provide a framework for resolving conflicts (Deutsch, 1994), teaching win-win conflict resolution (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1992;

Weeks, 1992), helping students recognize the effects of cultural diversity on communication (Girard & Koch, 1996), teaching students to become active participants in resolving their own conflicts (Van Slyck & Stern, 1991), and promoting positive peer interactions (Schellenberg, Parks-Savage, & Rehfuss, 2007). One study, utilizing the SMART program, found that fighting decreased by fifty percent in the first year after implementation and another fifty percent in the second year (Davis, 1986). Peer mediation programs have also been implemented successfully with Native American, Hispanic, African American, Hawaiian, and Anglo students (Van Slyck & Stern, 1991), demonstrating the program's applicability to cross-cultural settings.

The foundation of a peer mediation program is to include an understanding of conflict styles, learning how to interpret nonverbal communication and auditory cues (volume, speed, tone, and inflection), and developing reflective listening skills (Morse & Andrea, 1994). Selection of peer mediators is also shown to be more effective when selection reflects the student population and not just the "best" students (Daunic, et al., 2000). Daunic, et al. (2000) also recommend initial and on-going training for all staff that include the above skills, but also include instruction on the mediation process and how to use role play to facilitate the acquisition of mediation skills for all students. Davies (2001) outlines three different models of peer mediation programs: school-wide trained mediators, a classroom model that has mediators trained for each classroom, and a whole class model that encourages resolving conflicts together as a group.

The types of mediations most commonly addressed through peer mediation are fighting and verbal abuse (name calling, threatening, and teasing) at the elementary and middle school levels. At the high school level arguments regarding friendships and dating are additional issues identified with verbal abuse incidents (Hanson, 1994).

Theoretical foundation. Peer mediation programs utilize the four different psychological theories (field, motivational, social cubism, and developmental) in resolving conflicts by utilizing a group of peers to mediate (social and field), teaching conflict styles and how they can be used to improve successful resolution of conflicts (developmental), and mediations are used prior to making office referrals (motivational). The risk factors addressed are the improved personal skills gained in conflict resolution practice, improved school environment, and if the skills are transferred into the family and community (social and field), these environments may see improvement as well.

Problems. Even though peer mediation programs have face validity, there are very few studies to show their effectiveness in reducing school violence (Theberge & Karan, 2004). The dependent measures are often not formalized data collection addressing violence, such as grades, student self-esteem, and mediator attendance.

Theberge and Karan (2004) found six factors that inhibit the use of peer mediation:

1. Students' attitudes, feelings, and behaviors regarding mediation
2. Students' methods of dealing with conflict
3. Students' attitudes, feelings and behavior in school (lack of respect)
4. School climate
5. Structure of mediation program
6. Societal issues

Their recommendations include making sure the adults in the school environment model good mediation skills and that programs begin in elementary school by the fourth and fifth grades.

Guanci (2002) would add that administrative support is critical to the success of any peer mediation program.

Conflict Resolution Programs

Description. A CRC is defined as a school wide program that teaches students to problem solve disputes or disagreements between two or more people (Kreidler, 1997). These programs should consist of a minimum of 10-20 sessions which focus on nonviolent resolution, meeting the needs of the people involved (Lawler, 2000), and improving or at least maintaining the relationship of the people involved (Weeks, 1992). The six themes outlined by Kreidler (1997) include; cooperation, communication, appreciation for diversity, healthy expression of feelings, responsible decision making, and conflict resolution. The goal is to create caring communities within classrooms and schools.

Research. The addition of conflict resolution programming started in the late 1980s and early 1990s when researchers proposed educating the entire community both in and outside the school (Townley, 1995; Van Slyck, Stern, & Elbedour, 1995). This movement was prompted by monies from social justice agencies being funneled into the schools for programming. Townley (1995) recommended adopting a mediation and conflict resolution curriculum as a means to resolve conflicts for students, staff, administration, and parents. It was further recommended that rather than stand-alone programs, conflict resolution curriculum could be incorporated into the regular curriculum in both social studies and literature courses (Hanson, 1994; Stevahn, Johnson, Johnson, & Real, 1996).

The goals of conflict resolution curriculum are to teach effective communication skills, anger management techniques (Daunic, et al., 2000), and coping strategies that enhance resiliency and an internal locus of control (Siddique & D'Arcy, 1984; Van Slyck, et al., 1995). Acquiring the ability to use effective coping strategies to solve problems and manage life

stressors has shown to produce greater resilience and adjustment in adolescents (Compas, Worsham, & Ely, 1992) and greater success in adulthood (Valliant, 1977).

Critical elements of an effective conflict resolution curriculum should include: committed leadership, consistency in handling disputes and consequences, insured quality of peer mediators through training and supervision, well established protocol and logistics, follow-up with disputants, and on-going publicity within the school and community (Daunic, et al., 2000). Johnson and Johnson (1996) did a very thorough review of the research on conflict resolution programs and found the most effective programs included an education, training, and practice component. An effective conflict resolution curriculum includes teaching communication skills which has shown to improve interactions with family members as well as peers (Stern, Van Slyck, & Newland, 1992), teaching students how to view a conflict from the perception of others, and establishing an anger management component to deal with the more aggressive students (Daunic, et al., 2000). Van Slyck, et al. (1995) recommend consideration be given to the cultural life, gender, and age of the students when designing a comprehensive intervention program to make sure the program addresses the needs of the specific population. When using a comprehensive approach, it has been found to impact both attitudes and behaviors of students when prevention and remediation strategies are combined (Weissberg, et al., 1991).

Theoretical foundation. Conflict resolution programs are designed to use all four psychological (field, motivational, social cubism, and developmental) theories to work with all students in the school environment (social, field, and developmental) to assess their personal conflict resolution style and how that might help or hinder them when trying to resolve conflicts with their peers. Since the programs train staff, students, and sometimes even parents, the motivational and field psychology theories would be helping all parties involved in the

adolescent's life become better problem and conflict solvers. The programs address all of the risk factors by improving personal knowledge and skill, training all members of the school environment, offering family training to improve the home environment, and the community environment should be improved if students and their families have improved skills in resolving conflicts peacefully.

Problems. As with bully prevention programs, the research available for schools using conflict resolution programming is very limited and more than ten years old. There are peer mediation programs that often include a component of conflict resolution, but the research does not speak to whether or not the addition of school-wide conflict resolution impacted the violent incidents being reported.

Summary of Research on Impact of Prevention Programs

The primary research demonstrates most of the data collected has methodology issues and lack in actual data being reported. The lack of reported findings is a critical missing link for the body of research conducted with regard to bully prevention, peer mediation and conflict resolution programming. Since there is a lack of current data to show the effectiveness of bully prevention programs (Kalman, 2011), peer mediation programs (Theberge & Karan, 2004), and conflict resolution programs, further research is needed to determine whether or not stand alone programs are needed, or a combination of programming to reduce the reported acts of violence. Also, there is a need for researchers to test specific curriculums in each of these areas to see if there is generalizability of curriculum, or if it needs to be designed for specific populations.

Bully prevention programs are the most prevalent type of programming, but research does support the layering of programs to not only address bullying behaviors (Weissberg, et al., 1991), but teach both faculty and students how to resolve conflicts peacefully and learn better

communication and problem solving skills (Townley, 1995). The violent incidents reported are not going down in either the state or the nation as a whole, so trying something different is needed.

Chapter 3

Methods

This study differs from other research available for several reasons: it looks at a specific level of student (middle school), it looks at a state-wide perspective, and it looks at a wider spectrum of programming and not one specific type of program. This research looks at the effect of programming on the reported acts of violence associated with school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

The intent of this research is to address some of the problems associated with previous prevention programming research which include: dependent variable data that is not measuring violent incidents, measuring the impact of one specific program rather than prevention programming as a whole, and also focusing on the population shown to have the highest levels of violent incidents reported (middle school). To further the research with regard to school violence, the following research questions were developed for this study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1. Which, if any, violence prevention programs are used in middle schools in the state of Kansas?

Hypothesis 1. It is hypothesized that many middle schools in Kansas will not have violence prevention programs.

Research Question 2. What is the relationship between violence reduction programs and violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?

Hypothesis 2. It is hypothesized that schools utilizing a bully prevention program alone will see less reduction of violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury)

than schools utilizing a bully prevention program and peer mediation program, and schools that utilize a bully prevention program, peer mediation program, and conflict resolution program.

Research Question 3. Is there a relationship between the number of counselors to students and the violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?

Hypothesis 3. It is hypothesized that the ratio of counselors to students will impact the reported violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) positively when the number of counselors to students is less than 1:500.

Research Question 4. Are there relationships or interaction effects for number of lessons and method of administration and violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?

Hypothesis 4. It is hypothesized that schools utilizing a formal program/curriculum, offering a minimum of ten lessons, and training programs for both counselors and staff will report a greater reduction in reported acts of violence involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) than schools not using formal program/curriculum, offering less than ten sessions, and no training for both counselors and staff. This hypothesis is based on earlier research supporting consistency in training of staff, peer mediators and the student body as a whole (Davis & Porter, 1985, Johnson & Johnson, 1996).

Research Question 5. Are there interaction effects for violence reduction program and each of the following variables: counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and method of administration?

Hypothesis 5. It is hypothesized that schools with at least one counselor per 500 students who is conducting a minimum of ten sessions of bully prevention and conflict resolution curriculum, with a peer mediation program that uses a cross-section of peer mediators who have been trained

and receive on-going training, and with a trained and supportive administration and staff would see the greatest reduction in violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

Data Collection

Data was gathered through two sources. First, school counselors of all public middle schools in Kansas were asked to complete an online survey (Appendix A) about programming used to reduce school violence. The KSDE website was used to identify the 231 public middle schools in Kansas. Individual school websites were used to obtain information for school counselors and their contact information. Second, information about school violence at Kansas' middle schools was gathered from a secondary data set provided by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) known as the KAN-DIS report.

Online Survey

The online survey (Appendix A) was developed for this study to collect data for the independent variables. The purpose of the survey is to identify middle schools using programs to reduce school violence, and gather information about the school and the implementation of the programs.

The survey was developed using Dillman, Smyth, and Christian's (2009) guidelines for web surveys. Several key elements from this resource were incorporated in the development: 1) grouping questions by topic (demographics and specific programming); 2) asking one question at a time; 3) using language familiar to respondents; 4) using specific words to specify concepts clearly; 5) providing skips between sections when the answer was "no" to a particular program type so respondents didn't have to read through questions that were not applicable; and 6) allowed respondents to stop and complete the survey at another time.

A pre-testing of the survey, in paper format, was conducted at the fall counselor's conference. The draft survey instrument was completed by practicing school counselors and faculty in school counseling programs. Revisions were made to the survey based on the respondent's feedback. Rewording of some questions was necessary to clarify and improve accuracy of responses.

The survey was conducted between March 12, 2012 and May 18, 2012. Again, Dillman, et al. (2009) guidelines for conducting web survey research were used. The 231 schools were divided into seven groups to avoid spam filters, and the subject line of the email cover letters did not use the word "survey" to further avoid spam filters. The email included a letter of introduction (Appendix B). To increase response rate to the email, a follow-up was sent at two weeks (Appendix C), again at four weeks (Appendix D), and a final attempt was made at six weeks with an incentive of a drawing for a \$50 gift certificate. The incentive was offered with the final request because Dillman, et al. (2009) indicated, "incentives have an important role to play in obtaining responses to certain establishment surveys" (p. 437). The survey deployment arrived during the time period when counselors were involved with state testing, therefore, the incentive was used to increase response rates.

Prior to deployment it was determined that any bounced emails would be followed up to determine the reason for rejection and corrections would be made and the survey resent. Prior approval from some of the larger districts was required before counselors were allowed to participate. Those districts required a formal request be made to the director of counseling programs along with a hardcopy of the survey for their review. All of these districts eventually approved the survey and allowed their counselors to participate.

Table 2 outlines the specific research questions for this study and the corresponding questions from the survey and items from the KAN-DIS that were used in data analysis:

Table 2

Alignment of Research Question and Survey Questions

Research Question	Survey Question/Data Source
1. Which, if any violence prevention programs are used in middle schools in the state of Kansas?	Q10. Do you have a bully prevention program? Q17. Do you have peer mediation program? Q28. Do you have a conflict resolution program?
2. What is the relationship between violence reduction program and violent incidents involving out-of-school suspensions?	Q10, Q17, Q28 (listed above) KAN-DIS 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011 – out of school suspensions reported
3. Is there a relationship between the number of counselors to students and the violent incidents involving out of school suspensions reported?	KSDE School Data – population & number of counselors in each building KAN-DIS 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011 – out of school suspensions reported
4. Are there relationships or interaction effects for number of lessons and method of administration on violent incidents involving out of school suspensions reported?	Q13. How many bully prevention lessons are taught to each grade level per academic year? Q14. Do teachers receive training in bully prevention strategies? Q20. How many sessions are used for training mediators? Q21. Are teachers trained in conflict resolutions strategies? Q32. How many conflict resolution lessons are taught to each grade level per academic year? Q33. Does staff receive training in conflict resolution strategies? KAN-DIS 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011 – out of school suspensions reported
5. Are there interaction effects for violence prevention program and each of the following variables: counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and method of administration?	Q10, Q 13, Q 14, Q17, Q 20, Q21, Q28, Q32, Q33 (listed above) KAN-DIS 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011 – out of school suspensions reported

The survey has four sections: demographics, bully prevention program information, peer mediation program information, and conflict resolution program information. The demographic section has questions that address: number of students enrolled, racial/ethnic composition of student population, changes in racial/ethnic composition of student population over the past five

and ten years, which grade levels were included in the population, and location of school (i.e., rural, urban, suburban). Some of the demographic data was not utilized for this study because of changes made to the initial research questions. This data may be analyzed in further analysis at a later time.

The sections of the survey that address each type of programming (i.e., bully prevention, peer mediation, conflict resolution) have questions that inquire about: type of curriculum, how long the programs have been in place, number of sessions being taught, and method of delivery. The section on Peer Mediation also asks about how the mediators are selected, how often they are changed, and the number of mediations conducted each academic year.

The data collected from the survey was transferred to an excel spreadsheet with the following categories:

Table 3

Data Categories and Coding

Demographics	Bully Prevention Programs	Peer Mediation Programs	Conflict Resolution Programs	KAN-DIS Out of school suspensions
School District #	BP Program	PM Program	CR Program	Yearly Reports
# of Counselors	1=Y 2=N	1-Y 2=N	1=Y 2=N	2008-2009
1= <1:500	Lessons/Yr.	#Training sessions	Lessons/Yr.	2009-2010
2= >1:500	0=None, 1= <10, 2= >10	0=None, 1= <10, 2= >10	0=None, 1= <10, 2= >10	2010-2011
	Teachers trained	Teachers trained	Teachers trained	
	0=None, 1= Counselors & staff, 2=Counselors only	0=None, 1= Counselors & staff, 2= Counselors only	0=None, 1= Counselors & staff, 2= Counselors only	

Demographics comparing respondents to non-respondents are outlined in Table 4:

Table 4

Demographics of Respondents & Non-Respondents

	Respondents	Non-Respondents
Size of School		
0-250	31	61
251-500	28	34
501-750	47	12
751+	16	3
Location of School ^f		
Urban	38	10
Suburban	47	31
Rural	37	68
Counselor:Student		
<1:500	81	96
>1:500	41	13
# of Schools with:		
2008-2009		
Zero Incidents	41	54
<10 incidents	40	39
>10 incidents	41	16
2009-2010		
Zero Incidents	40	54
<10 incidents	44	39
>10 incidents	38	16
2010-2011		
Zero Incidents	50	68
<10 incidents	48	25
>10 incidents	24	16

^aUrban includes: Kansas City, Lawrence, Manhattan, Topeka, Wichita. Suburban includes counties of: Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Johnson, Douglas, Jefferson, Franklin, Riley, Doniphan, Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Osage, Jackson, Sedgwick, Butler, Harvey, Sumner. Rural includes all other counties.

KAN-DIS Report

Data about the out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) in schools was obtained from the secondary data set provided by the Kansas Department of Education referred to as the KAN-DIS report and was used as the dependent measure of violence.

The Kansas Discipline Incident System (KAN-DIS) is an online web application that schools use to provide information required under No Child Left Behind and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. For incident-level reporting, there are three categories of discipline incidents that are required for state-level reports. These are as follows:

- All incidents involving violence (assault), weapons (firearms), and/or substance abuse (alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, other illicit drugs).
- All incidents resulting in a suspension (in-school or out-of-school) or expulsion.
- All incidents resulting in a referral to local law enforcement.

The categories utilized by this study are the out of school suspensions due to injury and non-injury incidents. The data set used does not include weapons and/or substance abuse because fewer than ten incidents in any category are not part of the public record and would not provide enough data samples to analyze. Out of school suspensions were also selected as the dependent measure because previous research has used this measure, and the intent of the study is to further that research.

Plan for Analysis

Analyses of the various independent variables (programming, number of lessons taught, administration, and counselor to student ratio) and their impact on the dependent variable (out of school suspensions) were planned to determine if any statistically significant impact existed.

The following questions were used to guide the analyses.

Question 1: Which, if any, violence prevention programs are used in middle schools in the State of Kansas?

Descriptive statistics are provided to show the number of schools utilizing prevention programs and the types of programs being used.

Question 2: What is the relationship between violence reduction programs and violent incidents involving out-of-school suspensions?

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to test for a main effect for intervention type on reported acts of violence. The independent variables are type of program (BPP vs. BPP + PMP vs. BPP + PMP + CRC), and the number of out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) is the dependent variable. Omega (ω) and Cohen's d is reported as effect size estimates.

Question 3: Is there a relationship between the number of counselors to students and the violent incidents involving out of school suspensions reported?

One separate-samples t-test was conducted to test for a main effect for ratio of counselors to students. The independent variable is ratio of counselors to students (equal to or less than 1:500 or greater than 1:500), and the dependent variable is the number of out-school-suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported. Cohen's d is reported as effect size estimates.

Question 4: Are there relationships or interaction effects for number of lessons and method of administration and violent incidents involving out of school suspensions reported?

A two-way ANOVA was used to test for main and interaction effects for number of lessons taught and the method of administration. The independent variables are number of lessons taught (fewer than 10 lessons vs. 10 or more lessons) and method of administration (none, counselors and staff, and only counselors), and the dependent variable is out of school

suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported. Omega (ω) and Cohen's d are reported as effect size estimates.

Question 5: Are there interaction effects for violence prevention program and each of the following variables: counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and method of administration?

Four two-way ANOVAs were used to test for the main effects of program type (BPP vs. BPP + PMP vs. BPP + PMP + CRC), school size (equal to 500 or fewer students vs. more than 500 students), counselor to student ratio (fewer than 1:500 or more than 1:500), number of lessons taught (none, less than 10 sessions and, 10 sessions or more), and method of administration (no training, only counselor trained, and both counselors and staff trained), as well as the interaction effect of program type with school size, counselor to student ratio, number of lessons taught, and method of administration, separately. For all ANOVAs, one of the independent variables is type of violence prevention program (BPP vs. BPP + PMP vs. BPP + PMP + CRC), and the dependent variable is out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported. Then, each of the following variables served as another independent variable in a respective ANOVA: school size, counselor to student ratio, number of lessons taught, and method of administration. Omega (ω) and Cohen's d are reported as effect size estimates.

Limitations of the Research Method

A potential threat to internal validity is the instrumentation used to measure violent incidents (KAN-DIS) and the consistency of defining bullying behavior and violent behavior. Also, because this study is looking at many different school districts, the consistency of reporting incidents in the same way from district to district could affect the internal validity of the instrumentation used to measure violent incidents.

Another internal validity concern with instrumentation is whether or not selected groups of students are being suspended more or less than other groups for the same behavior. This is a concern because the reporting system used prior to KAN-DIS was the Kansas Building Report Card (KSDE, 2001) which indicated the largest percentage of violent incidents involved students who are identified as special needs and have individual education plans. The KAN-DIS reporting system does not split out those students with IEP's from those that don't have IEP's.

A third threat to internal validity based on instrumentation is a potential for lack of reporting incidents that are handled without office referral. When teachers intervene to stop conflicts during the school day, these incidents might not be reported to the office, thus reducing the number of incidents being reported.

Another potential threat to internal validity is selection bias since those schools responding were not randomly selected. Table 4 details the demographics for those schools responding and those schools who did not respond, and based on this data, the biggest disparity between responders and non-responders was with schools that had zero incidents, and schools with a population between 0-250. When comparing this to the location of schools responding, this also correlates with the lower incidents of violence and smaller populations being the schools in rural areas. Those schools who were not experiencing problems with violent incidents were less inclined to respond to the survey request, therefore, this group might be under-represented in the data.

A potential threat to external validity is the focus on only middle schools in Kansas. This study did not look at whether or not the elementary schools in the district were utilizing prevention programs or not, and this could have an impact on middle schools' reported violent incidents.

The study is also limited in external validity based on the number of schools responding to the survey. Table 4 does show the representation of respondents to non-respondents, and it does appear that each of the various groups is well represented in the respondents.

Another potential threat to external validity of this study is finding programs that are similar enough in programming provided to make comparisons. This is of less concern to this researcher because the intended use of the dependent variable data is to show whether or not violence prevention programming has the intended effect of reducing the out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

Summary

This research study incorporated the key elements of what previous research had indicated were factors that positively impacted the reduction of school violence. The key elements included in this study were: type of programming, number of lessons being taught, administration of programming, and the counselor to student ratio.

One primary difference between this study and previous studies is the broader spectrum of using a state-wide approach to look at a bigger sampling. Several previous studies were looking at a specific school, a specific district, or a specific curriculum. The intent of this study is to focus on what national and state data indicates is the prime age group for school violence, those students between the ages of 12-16.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter presents results from the statistical analyses conducted to answer the research questions and hypotheses proposed in the previous chapters. An initial analysis of the survey data was necessary to ascertain whether or not the proposed analyses would be possible.

Table 5 presents the total number of middle schools in each of the three categories used for violent incident data (2008-2011): zero incidents, less than 10 incidents, and greater than ten incidents. Also, Table 1 indicates the number of respondents from the survey and where those schools fit into the three categories of violent incident data (2008-2011). Of the 129 responses, only 122 were used in the final analysis due to partially completed information on seven surveys.

Table 5

Survey Data Results

# Incidents Reported	# of Middle Schools	# of Respondents	% of Respondents
2008-2011			
Zero incidents	52	20	38%
<10 incidents	81	50	62%
>10 incidents	98	59	60%
TOTALS	231	129*	56%

*Of the 129 surveys received, only 122 were fully completed and included in the analysis.

Survey results led to changes in the proposed research questions and the proposed analysis regarding different types of prevention programs. There were not enough samples available to include prevention programs in both the peer mediation and conflict resolution categories. Bully prevention programs were the only category analyzed for the impact on violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

Research question 1. Which, if any, violence prevention programs are used in middle schools in the state of Kansas?

Hypothesis 1. It was hypothesized that middle schools in Kansas would have bully prevention programs, but few would have peer mediation or conflict resolution programs. The hypothesis was accepted.

Table 6

Type of Programming

No Programming	# of Middle Schools by Type of Programming			
	Bully Prevention	Peer Mediation	BP & PM	BP & CR
49 (40%)	58 (48%)	1 (1%)	4 (3%)	10 (8%)

N = 122

As Table 6 indicates, bully prevention alone was the most prevalent of prevention programming (49%), and there were forty-seven schools with no programming (39%). Because there were only five peer mediation programs and ten conflict resolution programs, there were not enough samples to analyze. The original research questions were changed to reflect sample data, and bully prevention programs were the only prevention programming analyzed.

Research question 2. What is the relationship between violence reduction program (bully prevention programs) and violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?

Hypothesis 2. It was hypothesized that schools utilizing a bully prevention program alone would see less reduction of violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) than schools utilizing a bully prevention and peer mediation or conflict resolution programs. Since this comparison could not be made due to lack of samples, the hypothesis was that bully prevention programs would have a significant impact on violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

Table 7

Independent-Samples t Tests for Bully Prevention

Year/Program Type	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
2008-2009:				
No Programming	50	15.12	19.06	.26
Bully Prevention	72	10.38	18.16	
2009-2010:				
No Programming	50	15.34	18.53	.23
Bully Prevention	72	11.00	19.73	
2020-2011:				
No Programming	50	8.84	14.95	.00
Bully Prevention	72	8.46	15.59	

An independent-samples *t* test was conducted to test for a main effect for bully prevention intervention on reported acts of violence. The independent variable is BPP with two levels, those receiving BPP and those who did not receive BPP, and the number of out-of-school suspensions (injury and non-injury) is the dependent variable. Cohen's *d* is reported as effect size estimates. No significant difference was found ($t(120) = -1.39, p > .05$) for 2008-2009. The mean of those receiving bully prevention programming for 2008-2009 ($m = 10.38, sd = 18.16$) was not significantly different from those not receiving prevention programming ($m = 15.12, sd = 19.06$) and Cohen's *d* effect size is small at .26. No significant difference was found ($t(120) = -1.23, p > .05$) for 2009-2010. The mean of those receiving bully prevention programming for 2009-2010 ($m = 11.00, sd 19.73$) was not significantly different from those not receiving prevention programming ($m = 15.34, sd = 18.53$) and Cohen's *d* effect size is small at .23. No significant difference was found ($t(120) = -1.35, p > .05$) for 2010-2011. The mean of those receiving bully prevention programming for 2010-2011 ($m = 8.46, sd = 15.59$) was not significantly different from those not receiving prevention programming ($m = 8.84, sd = 14.95$) and Cohen's *d* effect size is small at .00. These findings support rejecting the hypothesis because

there were no statistically significant differences found between those students receiving bully prevention programming and those who were not receiving programming.

Research question 3. Is there a relationship between the number of counselors to students and the violent incidents involving out-of-school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?

Hypothesis 3. It was hypothesized that the ratio of counselors to students will impact the reported violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) positively when the number of counselors to students is less than 1:500.

Table 8

Independent-Samples t Tests for Counselor to Student Ratio

Year/Counselor to Student Ratio	N	M	SD	Cohen's d
2008-2009:				
Less than 1:500	81	8.33	14.48	.67
Greater than 1:500	41	20.20	23.06	
2009-2010:				
Less than 1:500	81	8.72	16.32	.65
Greater than 1:500	41	20.80	22.22	
2020-2011:				
Less than 1:500	81	5.51	9.62	.63
Greater than 1:500	41	14.76	21.50	

An independent samples *t* test was conducted to test for a main effect for ratio of counselors to students. The independent variable is ratio of counselors to students (equal to or less than 1:500 or greater than 1:500), and the dependent variable is the number of out-school-suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported. Cohen's *d* is reported as effect size estimates.

When comparing the mean scores of schools with a counselor to student ratio of equal to or less than 1:500 and those with a ratio of greater than 1:500 a significant difference was found between the means of the two groups for 2008-2009 ($t(120) = -3.48, p < .05$). The mean scores

of the schools with a ratio of counselor to student greater than 1:500 was significantly higher for 2008-2009 ($m = 20.20$, $sd = 23.06$) than the mean scores of the schools with a ratio of counselor to student equal to or less than 1:500 ($m = 8.33$, $sd = 14.48$) Cohen's d effect size is medium to large at .67. A significant difference was found for 2009-2010 ($t(120) = -3.41$, $p < .05$). The mean scores of the schools with a ratio of counselor to student greater than 1:500 was significantly higher for 2009-2010 ($m = 20.80$, $sd = 22.22$) than the mean scores of the schools with a ratio of counselor to student equal to or less than 1:500 ($m = 8.72$, $sd = 16.32$) and Cohen's d effect size is medium to large at .65. A significant difference was found for 2010-2011 ($t(120) = -3.29$, $p < .05$). The mean scores of the schools with a ratio of counselor to student greater than 1:500 was significantly higher for 2010-2011 ($m = 14.76$, $sd = 21.50$) than the mean scores of the schools with a ratio of counselor to student equal to or less than 1:500 ($m = 5.51$, $sd = 9.62$) and Cohen's d effect size is medium to large at .63.

These findings support accepting the hypothesis because a statistical significance was found when the counselor to student ratio was less than 1:500.

Research question 4. Are there relationships or interaction effects for number of lessons and method of administration and violent incidents involving out-of-school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?

Hypothesis 4. It was hypothesized that schools utilizing a formal program or curriculum, offering a minimum of ten lessons, and training programs for both counselors and staff will report a greater reduction in reported acts of violence involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) than schools not using formal programs or curriculum, offering less than ten sessions, and no training for both counselors and staff.

Table 9

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Year/Lessons & Admin	<i>M Square</i>	<i>F</i>	Omega (ω^2)
2008-2009:			
Lessons Taught	438.48	1.26	.001
Administration	156.21	.45	.001
Lessons/Admin	1.17	.003	.003
2009-2010:			
Lessons Taught	123.45	.33	.001
Administration	367.48	.99	.000
Lessons/Admin	186.59	.50	.002
2020-2011:			
Lessons Taught	23.42	.10	.002
Administration	31.28	.13	.002
Lessons/Admin	146.83	.62	.001

A 3 (lessons taught) x 3 (type of administration) repeated-measures ANOVA was calculated to test for main and interaction effects for number of lessons taught and the method of administration. The independent variables are number of lessons taught (none, fewer than 10 lessons, and 10 or more lessons) and method of administration (none, counselors and staff, and only counselors), and the dependent variable is out-of-school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported. Omega (ω^2) will be reported as effect size estimates.

For 2008-2009 the main effect for number of lessons was not significant ($F(1,117) = 1.26, p = > .05, \omega^2 = .001$). The main effect for type of administration was not significant ($F(1,117) = .45, p = > .05, \omega^2 = .001$). Finally, the interaction was also not significant ($F(1,117) = .003, p = > .05, \omega^2 = .003$). Thus, it appears that neither the number of lessons taught nor the type of administration has any significant effect on the number of violent incidents reported.

For 2009-2010 the main effect for number of lessons was not significant ($F(1,117) = .33, p = > .05, \omega^2 = .001$). The main effect for type of administration was not significant ($F(1,117) = .99, p = > .05, \omega^2 = .000$). Finally, the interaction was also not significant ($F(1,117) = .50, p = >$

.05, $\omega^2 = .002$). Thus, it appears that neither the number of lessons taught nor the type of administration has any significant effect on the number of violent incidents reported.

For 2010-2011, the main effect for number of lessons was not significant ($F(1,117) = .10$, $p = > .05$, $\omega^2 = .002$). The main effect for type of administration was not significant ($F(1,117) = .13$, $p = > .05$, $\omega^2 = .002$). Finally, the interaction was also not significant ($F(1,117) = .62$, $p = > .05$, $\omega^2 = .001$). Thus, it appears that neither the number of lessons taught nor the type of administration has any significant effect on the number of violent incidents reported.

These findings support rejecting the hypothesis because there were no statistically significant differences found between schools offering a minimum of ten lessons and those offering less than 10 lessons, and there were no statistically significant differences between schools that include administrative training programs for both counselors and staff and those that train only counselors. Further, there were no statistically significant interaction effects between these two variables and the impact on the reported acts of violence involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

Research question 5. Are there interaction effects for violence reduction program and each of the following variables: counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and method of administration?

Hypothesis 5. It was hypothesized that schools with at least one counselor per 500 students that are conducting a minimum of ten sessions of bully prevention with both counselors and staff being trained would see a greater reduction in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) than those schools with one counselor for more than 500 students that are not conducting a minimum of ten lessons of bully prevention and only counselors are being trained

and the impact on reduction in violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

A repeated measures ANOVA was used to test for the main effects of program type (BPP vs. nothing), school size (500 or fewer students vs. more than 500 students), counselor to student ratio (equal to or fewer than 1:500 or more than 1:500), number of lessons taught (none, less than 10 sessions, and 10 sessions or more), and method of administration (no training, only counselors trained, and counselor and staff trained), as well as the interaction effect of program type with school size, counselor to student ratio, number of lessons taught, and method of administration, separately. For all ANOVAs, one of the independent variables was type of violence prevention program (BPP vs. nothing), and the dependent variable was out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported. Then, each of the following variables served as another independent variable in a respective ANOVA: school size, counselor to student ratio, number of lessons taught, and method of administration. Omega (ω) and Cohen's d will be reported as effect size estimates.

The statistical analysis did not show any significant interaction effects between any of the variables included in the analyses, and due to an unresolved error with the SPSS analysis, the main effect of bully prevention programs produced an error. To resolve the issue, three different statistics professors were consulted without a resolution to the problem. The final consensus was that since each of these variables had been tested in previous analyses, it was unlikely there would be interaction effects.

These findings support rejecting the hypothesis because there were no statistically significant interactions between schools with at least one counselor per 500 students that are conducting a minimum of ten sessions of bully prevention with both counselors and staff being

trained compared to those schools with one counselor for more than 500 students that are not conducting a minimum of ten lessons of bully prevention and only counselors are being trained and the impact on reduction in violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

Summary

This chapter presents findings of the analyses conducted to address the research questions and hypotheses. The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. Bully preventions programs are the primary source of prevention programming being utilized in Kansas middle schools.
2. Bully Prevention programs did not show a statistically significant impact on the number of reported out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) when comparing those students who received prevention programming to those who did not receive programming.
3. The number of out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported were statistically significant less in schools that had a counselor to student ratio of less than 1:500.
4. The number of lessons being taught and the type of administration did not significantly impact the number of reported out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).
5. Interactions of bully prevention programming, counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and school size did not show a significant impact on reducing out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury).

Chapter 5

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of prevention programming on reducing out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) in middle schools. Other factors considered to have an impact on prevention programming success were reviewed: number of lessons being taught and type of administration. Additionally, two other factors were considered as possible factors affecting violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury): size of school and the counselor to student ratio.

The findings of this study provide information for the Department of Education, school districts, counselors, and curriculum planning committees that will help them redesign and improve prevention programming at the middle school level to have a greater impact on reducing school violence. The look at state wide data is a different approach than other research in the field and will aid in looking at a larger population base.

Overview of the Methodology

The data used in the study came from building level reports of violence incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) provided by the KAN-DIS reporting system. Other data was collected from an online survey sent to all middle schools in the state to ascertain: whether or not they were providing prevention programming, the types of prevention programming being utilized, how often they were presenting prevention material to students, whether staff was trained along with counselors to administer programming, and what was the counselor to student ratio. A third source of data, KSDE website, was used to obtain school population.

All analyses were performed using the statistical software package SPSS 18.0.

Descriptive statistics, parametric measures, and repeated measures analyses were used to test the research hypotheses.

Summary of Results

The results of this study can be summarized as follows: first, very few schools were utilizing more than one type of prevention programming; second, bully prevention programming was the primary source of prevention programming being provided; third, bully prevention programs are not significantly impacting the violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) in middle schools in Kansas; fourth, the only factor that seemed to have any significant relationship to lower incidents of violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) was the counselor to student ratio when the ratio was less than 1:500; fifth, there was a reduction found from year one (2008-2009) to year three (2010-2011) in the reported acts of violence and the reduction out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). In the following section, the findings regarding each research question are discussed along with implications for research and practice.

Discussion of the Research Questions

Research question 1. Which, if any, violence prevention programs are used in middle schools in the state of Kansas?

The survey results provided valuable information, and it was discovered that only 58% of the respondents are using prevention programming: 49% are using bully prevention programs alone, 1% peer mediation alone, and 8% are utilizing both bully prevention programming and conflict resolution programming. Discovering 39% of responding schools did not have any type of bully prevention program at all was surprising. With 60% of respondents falling in the

category of more than ten violent incidents that resulted in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury), it was even more surprising to find prevention programming was not utilized at a greater rate.

A change has occurred in the state of Kansas, and as of 2011, bully prevention programs are mandated in the state of Kansas. Continued research is recommended to see if this mandate has the desired effect of reducing violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). The results from this study would indicate that bully prevention programming alone will not produce the desired results. Bemak and Keys (2000) support prevention programs, but support a multi-layered approach that includes: school safety plans, peer mediation programs, transition programs, skills training that includes conflict resolution and communications skills, anger management, and social skills training.

Research question 2. What is the relationship between bully prevention programming and violent incidents resulting in out-of-school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported?

There was not a main effect found for bully prevention programs. When comparing those students who received programming with those who did not, there was not a significant difference in the means of these two groups. This finding does not support the state's decision to make bully prevention programs mandatory. If these programs are not having the desired effect on reducing violent acts, doing more of the same will most likely not improve the statistics presented in this study.

Overall, the number of violent incidents do seem to be declining based on a reduction that was found when comparing year one (2008-2009) to year three (2010-2011). Bully prevention programs may be part of the reason for this reduction, but the analysis conducted did not indicate a significant impact from bully prevention programming. Part of the change could be due to

improved programming at the elementary level which impacts the students who entered middle school in the school year 2010-2011. A study of elementary schools would add to this research and provide an even larger pool of students to examine for effectiveness of bully prevention programs in the state. Another variable to consider would be socio-economic levels of particular schools to see if the impact of prevention programming was more effect in certain environments. Englander (2007) reported that poverty increases the likelihood that children, both male and female, would commit violent acts. This was not a factor examined in this study, but might be something to consider in future research.

The results of this study would indicate that bully prevention plans alone are not doing what school districts had hoped or intended. Van Slyck, et al. (1995) indicated that schools with low levels of violent incidents have shown that an education and development program were adequate interventions, but in schools with higher levels of violent incidents, the program should initially be focused on prevention and remediation. As mentioned by Craig, et al. (2000), Johnson and Johnson (1996), Reid (1993), and Walker, et al. (1996), additional programming in the form of peer mediation, conflict resolution, and anger management might be necessary with the middle school population to address the problem of violent incidents. Rethinking the approach to conflict resolution from a social cubism model (Byrne & Carter, 1996) or a restorative justice model (Umbreit, Vos, Coates, & Lightfoot, 2006) would bring some different aspects to teen conflict that could help provide a message more relevant for middle school students. The message needs to change from the elementary to the middle school because the developmental needs change and stressors are different at each of these levels. Factors such as peer pressure, need for attention or respect, and feelings of low self-worth (American

Psychological Association, 2012) have been identified as reasons why violence is more prevalent with middle school age students.

Research question 3. Is there a relationship between the number of counselors to students and the violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) reported? When the counselor to student ratio is less than 1:500 there was a significant main effect found.

This supports the American School Counseling Association's National Model (2012) that states, "To achieve maximum program effectiveness, the American School Counselor Association recommends a school counselor to student ratio of 1:250 and that school counselors spend 80 percent or more of their time in direct and indirect services to students" (pg. 1).

Out of the 122 surveys used for this study, 81 had a counselor to student ratio less than 1:500 and 41 had a counselor to student ratio of greater than 1:500. This study used the ratio of less than 1:500 and more than 1:500 as the cut-off because Kansas schools have not adopted the standards set by ASCA and 1:500 appeared to be more the norm. School funding cuts and a lack of legislation that require school districts to have school counselors at every level has increased the number of students per counselor. School counselors need to do more research on the effect counselors have on academic performance, but also on reducing violence in schools. So much of the school focus is on academics, but if students are dealing with other stressors such as depression, peer group conflicts, poor coping skills, or mental health issues (Englander, 2007), then improving academic performance becomes more than just improving cognitive abilities and needs to also focus on personal/social skills.

Research question 4. Are there relationships or interaction effects for number of lessons and method of administration on violent incidents involving out of school suspensions (injury

and non-injury) reported? When comparing schools that are utilizing less than ten lessons to those using ten or more lessons, there is not a significant difference between the two. Further analysis also did not find a significant difference between schools that are training just counselors from those that are training both counselors and staff. The interaction effects are not significant as well.

These findings are not consistent with past research conducted by Kreidler (1997), Olweus (1991), and Skiba & Peterson (2000) indicating the number of training sessions utilized did have an impact on reducing bullying, conflicts, and out of school suspensions. It has also been reported in previous research by Daunic, et al. (2000), Davis and Porter (1995), Guanci (2002), Johnson and Johnson (1996), and Olweus (1991) that reductions in bullying, conflicts, and out of school suspensions are improved when both students and faculty are trained in the techniques.

Several schools responding to the survey indicated they had conducted staff training in the past, but they did not often revisit the training. This would indicate that new staff does not receive the benefit of the training, and current staff is not reminded of the strategies on a regular basis. One of the major concerns expressed by school counselors is the reluctance staff members have to intervene when they witness students in conflict. The reluctance can be due to fear of being hurt, fear of retribution from the students involved, lack of administrative support, and lack of confidence in their ability to intervene effectively. Having more opportunities to review and practice the conflict resolution strategies would increase staff self-efficacy to intervene when situations arise.

Olweus (1991 & 1993) reported the majority of incidents of bullying are covert actions and occur outside the classroom setting in unsupervised locations such as hallways, cafeteria,

and on busses. His recommendation is to increase supervision in these locations. Bemak and Keys (2000) include bathrooms and locker rooms as additional places that increased supervision is needed. A presence by staff in these various locations does seem to be a simple and effective solution to some of the incidents of school violence.

Research question 5. Are there interaction effects for violence prevention program and each of the following variables: school size, counselor to student ratio, number of lessons, and method of administration? There were no significant findings for interaction effects for the variables included in this analysis.

Without significant findings, it is impossible to draw any conclusions about these factors and how they might interact to reduce violent acts resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). The analysis of this question was also hindered by the SPSS software not producing results for the prevention programming data and did not allow for comparisons between all the other factors in the study. Consultation with faculty members who teach statistics indicated the results would most likely not have been significant, because the results from the other analyses had not shown significance for prevention programming.

Implications for Research

The following recommendations are made for future research:

1. A quantitative study should be conducted to examine whether utilization of a multilayered approach to prevention programming would significantly reduce violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). Since very few schools in this study were using a multilayered approach to prevention programming, a study that looks at using multiple approaches would allow schools to make better programming decisions.

2. A quantitative study should be conducted to examine correlations between school reported violent incidents and those reported by students. This study would provide additional information regarding the possible under-reported incidents. This would address one of the limitations to instrumentation and whether or not schools are reporting consistently the violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions. It would also help address another limitation regarding the potential number of incidents that might not result in office referrals and impact the number of incidents actually being reported.
3. A quantitative study should be conducted to examine how many of the schools are actually using the ASCA National Model for school counselors and whether or not those schools show a greater reduction in violent incidents resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) when compared to schools not utilizing the National Model. This type of study should enrich the body of literature regarding counselor impact when utilizing a structured programming approach.
4. A quantitative study should be conducted to examine whether or not location (urban, suburban or rural) of a school impacts school violence. This study would provide information that might identify a need for specific programming needs based on the location of the school.
5. To follow up the previous quantitative study, another study could be conducted where specific programming is tested in various locations to test the effectiveness based on location (urban, suburban or rural). This study would further the research in prevention programming and possibly help identify different needs based on the location of the school. A study like this would help address concerns with generalizability of program design in various populations.

6. A qualitative study should be conducted to gather information about student attitude regarding prevention programming. This information would provide feedback on current programming practice and could provide student opinion about what they feel would have the greatest effect on reducing school violence.

Implications for the Field

The findings from this research provides information that can help the Department of Education, school districts, and school counselors looking at the types of programming they are currently offering and the effectiveness of those programs to determine if changes need to be made to what is currently being offered. Having the knowledge that bully prevention programs are not having the desired effect of reducing violent incidents that are resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury) will help to focus on other programming options available, how the services are currently being delivered, and examine the problem of violence from a qualitative perspective of the student.

Davis (2011) and Brown, Birch, and Kancheria (2005) have interviewed students to gain an understanding from their perspective. Students report the most effective strategy is to seek help from others in the form of friends or adults, yet only about a fourth of the students who reported being bullied actually used this strategy. This would indicate a reluctance to seek help, and since this seems to be the most effective strategy, the next step would be to find out the reasons for not using this strategy more. Both of these research articles indicate there just was not enough research available from the student perspective to impact changes in current programming.

Recommendations for Practice

Recommendations for prevention programming. Bullying is not the only type of violence present in schools, but receives the majority of attention due to school shootings that

have taken place due to bullying incidents. Thinking about violence in a larger context than just bullying, as recommended by the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Center for the Prevention of School Violence in North Carolina (2002), would change the focus from strictly bully prevention programming to programs that focus on conflict management. North Carolina educators use the term conflict management to include bullying, but also any type of conflict that might result in violence. Their pilot program called, “Reach in, Reach out, Reach over,” focuses not only on working with students, but training all staff working in the school: cooks, janitors, administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals. Their approach focuses on training the adults on how to handle conflicts effectively so they have the tools necessary to intervene when encountering students in conflict. Craig, et al. (2000) found that teachers only intercede 15 to 18% of the time in classroom bullying incidents. They said teachers were reluctant to intervene because they didn’t feel they had the skill to handle the situation. Johnson and Johnson (1996) also support the training of all staff in the techniques of conflict management, and would include the addition of a peer mediation program involving students in the facilitative role of helping peers solve problems.

Recommendations for improved delivery and administration of prevention

programs. As stated in the recommendations for prevention programming, training of students and staff is recommended. This was not found to be occurring in the present study at the recommended level of 10-20 lessons per year. Since the level of counselor to student ratio is recommended to be 1:250 by the American School Counseling Association model (2012), it would benefit schools to: 1) use counselor’s time as recommended by the National Model which means 80% of their time should be spent on delivery of service allowing for increased programming time; 2) reduce the ratio of students to counselors so there would be time to meet

the other responsibilities as outlined in the National Model; and 3) provide on-going and consistent training for all staff in conflict management techniques.

Training outcomes should include: a framework for resolving conflicts (Deutsch, 1994), teaching win-win conflict resolution (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1992; Weeks, 1992), helping students to become active participants in resolving their own conflicts (Van Slyck & Stern, 1991), helping students recognize the effects of cultural diversity on communication (Girard & Koch, 1996), teach effective communication and anger management techniques (Daunic, et al., 2000), teach coping strategies that enhance resiliency and an internal locus of control (Siddique & D'Arcy, 1984; Van Slyck, et al., 1996), and promoting positive peer interactions (Schellenberg, et al., 2007). These outcomes go beyond the current bully prevention program outcomes and would provide a much more in-depth approach to the multiple factors involved in conflicts as outlined in Bryne and Carter's (1996) social cubism approach.

Recommendations for student involvement. Daunic, et al. (2000) found that utilizing a cross section of the population in a school to be the most effective way to gain student support for a peer mediation program and produced the best results. Teens want to be involved in making their own decisions and want to feel like they are represented by someone from their social group, but there wasn't any evidence of this being considered in the research involving bullying and conflict resolution.

An advisory board is part of the process to evaluate and make decisions about programs within a school counseling program (ASCA National Model, 2012). It is also recommended by the National ASCA Model that students be a part of the decision making process. Therefore, student involvement will be enhanced if they are part of the solution rather than being seen only as the problem. An informal query with a group of school counselors was conducted at the

annual counseling conference and the general consensus was that students have become deaf to the message being delivered by most bully prevention programming. It is believed that student involvement and using their creativity would enhance the delivery of the messages.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it appears that to address the violent incidents that are resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury), there needs to be something done to improve the bully prevention programming currently being offered, or possibly adding some additional prevention programs that could reach students in a different way. By adding some type of conflict resolution curriculum, schools would not only be addressing the boarder perspective of conflict, but also incorporate more life skill training that would benefit students into adulthood.

The positive impact of counselors seemed to be the only factor this study found to have a potential impact on violent incident reduction. A key element is to provide enough counselors to maintain a counselor to student ratio either at the ASCA ratio of 1:250, or at the minimum 1:500 which this study found a significance level that was statistically better than when the ratio was greater than 1:500. Having enough counselors available to meet the needs of the student body with individual, group, and small group interventions is a commitment school districts might need to consider as an intervention for reducing acts of violence.

Programming for the middle school population needs to be different than the programming designed for elementary school. Involvement of teens in the process of developing prevention programming would be better than trying to think one approach or one program will fit all schools and all populations. Teens also are much more tuned in to what is really going on in the school and could provide some great insight into what is happening in places the staff

sometimes avoid. Prevention programs need to be flexible enough to change with the times. Ten years ago cyber-bullying and other forms of internet violence were not a problem, but teen access to all forms of technology has changed the face of school violence, and prevention programs need to change as well. Keeping current is one of the biggest challenges.

References

American Psychological Association. *APA resolution on bullying among children and youth.*

Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/about/policy/bullying.pdf>

American School Counseling Association. *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs.* Retrieved from <http://www.schoolcounselor.org>

Bandura, A. (1973). *Aggression: A social learning analysis.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Banks, R. (1997). *Bullying in schools.* Champaign, IL: University of Colorado.

Beane, A. L. (1999). *Bully free classroom: Over 100 tips and strategies for teachers K-8.* Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.

Bemak, F., & Keys, S. (2000). *Violent and aggressive youth: Intervention and prevention strategies for changing times.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Benson, A. J., & Benson, J. M. (1993). Peer mediation: Conflict resolution in schools. *Journal of Social Psychology, 31,* 427-430.

Berger, K. S. (1994). *The developing person through the life span.* (3rd ed.). New York: Worth.

Bradshaw C. P., Sawyer, A. L., & O'Brennan, L. M. (2009). A social disorganization perspective on bullying-related attitudes and behaviors: The influence of school context. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 43,* 204-220. doi:10.1007/s10464-009-9240-1

Brown, S. L., Birch, D. A., & Kancheria, V. (2005). Bullying perspectives: Experiences, attitudes, and recommendations of 9 to 13 year-olds attending health education centers in the United States. *The Journal of School Health, 75,* 384-392.

Byrne, S., & Carter, N. (1996). Social cubism: Six social forces of ethnoterritorial politics in

- northern Ireland and Quebec. *Journal of Peace Resolution*, 38, 53-75.
- Calaguas, G. M. (2011). Forms and frequency of peer aggression and peer victimization among sixth graders. *Researchers World*, 2.2, 108-113.
- Carlson-Paige, N., & Levin, D. E. (1992). When push comes to shove – reconsidering children’s conflicts. *Child Care Information Exchange*, 84, 34-37.
- Chittooran, M. M., & Hoenig, G. A. (2005). Mediating a better solution. *Professional Leadership*, March, 11-15.
- Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (2001). Safe communities, safe schools fact sheet: Bullying prevention: Recommendation for schools. Retrieved from <http://www.colorado.edu/cspv>
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (2009). Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov>
- Compas, B. E., Worsham, N. L., & Ely. S. (1992). Conceptual and developmental issues in children’s coping with stress. In A. La Greca, L. Siegel, J. Wallender, & E. Walker (Eds.), *Stress and coping in child health* (pp. 7-24). New York: Guilford.
- Craig, W. M., Pepler, D., & Atlas, R. (2000). Observations of bullying in the playground and in the classroom (Special Issue: Bullies and victims). *School Psychology International*, 21, 22-36.
- Crawford, D. K., & Bodine, R. J. (2001). Conflict resolution education: Preparing youth for the future. *Juvenile Justice*, 8(1), 21-29.
- Daunic, A. P., Smith, S. W., Robinson, T. R., Miller, M. D., & Landry, K. L. (2000). School-wide conflict resolution and peer mediation programs: Experiences in three middle schools. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 26, 94-100.
- Davies, L. (2001). Solutions through peer mediation. Retrieved from <http://www.kellybear.com/>

TeacherArticles/TeacherTip13.html

- Davis, A. (1986). Dispute resolution at an early age. *Negotiation Journal*, 2, 287-297.
- Davis, A., & Porter, K. (1985). Dispute resolution: The fourth 'R'. *Missouri Journal of Dispute Resolution*, 1, 121-139.
- Davis, S. (2011). What students say about bullying. *Educational Leadership*, 69, 18-23.
- Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Center (State of North Carolina) for the Prevention of School Violence. *NC DJJDP – Center for the prevention of school violence's "Reach In, Reach Out, Reach Over" educator training project prompts positive reactions and next steps in other states*. Retrieved from <http://www.cpsv.org>
- Deutsch, M. (1949). A theory of cooperation and competition. *Human Relations*, 2, 129-152.
- Deutsch, M. (1973). *The resolution of conflict: Constructive and destructive processes*. New Haven, CN: Yale University Press.
- Deutsch, M. (1994). Constructive conflict resolution: Principles, training, and research. *Journal of Social Issues*, 50, 13-32.
- Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2009). *Internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method (3rd Ed.)*. John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ.
- DuRant, R. H., Treiber, F., Goodman, E., & Woods, E. R. (1996). Intentions to use violence among young adolescents. *Pediatrics*, 1104-1108.
- Englander, E. K. (2007). *Understanding violence*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc.
- Girard, K. & Koch, S. J. (1996). *Conflict resolution in the schools: A manual for educators*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Guanci, J. A. (2002). Peer mediation: A winning solution to conflict resolution. *The Education Digest*, 26-33.

- Hanson, M. K. (1994). A conflict resolution/student mediation program: Effects on student attitudes and behaviors. *ERS Spectrum, 12*, 9-14.
- Horne, A. M., & Orpinas, P. (2003). Bullying childhood. In T. P. Gullotta & M. Bloom (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of primary prevention and health promotion (pp 233-240)*. New York: Kluwer.
- Jessor, R. (1991). Risk behavior in adolescence: A psychosocial framework for understanding and action. *Adolescent Health, 12*, 597-605.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1996). Conflict resolution and peer mediation programs in elementary and secondary schools: A review of the research. *Review of Educational Research, 66*, 459-506.
- Kalman, I. (2011). Help wanted: Bullying researchers with true grit. *A Psychological Solution to Bullying*. Retrieved from <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/psychological-solution-bullying>
- Kansas Communities That Care Survey. (2012). Retrieved from www.ctcdata.org
- Kansas Dept. of Education. (2001). *Building report card*. Retrieved from <http://www.ksde.org>
- Kansas Dept. of Education. *KSDE bullying prevention toolbox*. Topeka, KS: Author.
- Kansas Dept. of Education. *Kansas Discipline Incident System*. Retrieved from <http://www.ksde.org>
- Kansas Dept. of Education. *Official statement on bullying*. Retrieved from <http://www.ksde.org>
- Kreidler, W. J. (1997). *Conflict resolution in the middle school*. Cambridge, MA: Educators for Social Responsibility.
- Lam, J. (1989). *The impact of conflict resolution programs on schools: A review and synthesis of the evidence*. Amherst, MA: National Association for Mediation in Education.

- Lawler, M. (2000). School-based violence prevention programs: What works? In D. Sandhu & C. Aspy (Eds.), *Violence in American schools: A practical guide for counselors* (p. 247-266). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Lewin, K. (1931). Environmental forces in child behavior and development. In C. Murchison (Ed.), *A handbook of child psychology*. Worcester, MA: Clark University Press, 1931.
- Lewin, K. (1944). Experimental studies in conflict. In J. M. Hunt (Ed.), *Personality and the behavior disorders*. Vol. 1. New York: Ronald Press.
- Morse, P. S., & Andrea, R. (1994). Teaching kids to be peer mediators. *Education Digest*, 60, 53-57.
- Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behavior among U.S. youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial Adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 285, 2094-2100.
- Nettles, S., Mucherah, W., & Jones, D. S. (2000). Understanding resilience: The role of social resources. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 5, 47-61.
- New Webster's dictionary*. (1993). Danbury, CT: Lexicon Pub.
- Newman-Carlson, D., & Horne, A. M. (2004). Bully busters: A psychoeducational intervention for reducing bullying behavior in middle school students. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, p. 259-267.
- Olweus, D. (1978). *Aggression in the schools: Bullies and whipping boys*. Washington, DC: Hemisphere.
- Olweus, D. (1991). Bully/victim problems among schoolchildren: Basic facts and effects of a school-based intervention program. In D. Pepler & K. Rubin (Eds.), *The development and treatment of childhood aggression* (pp. 411-448). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Pub.
- Piaget, J. (1983). Piaget's theory. In P. Mussen (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology*, 4th edition, Vol. 1. New York: Wiley.
- Reid, J. B. (1993). Prevention of conduct disorder before and after school entry: Related interventions to developmental findings. *Developmental and Psychopathology*, 5, 243-262.
- Robers, S., Zhang, J., & Truman, J. (2011). Indicators of school crime and safety; 2011, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education Justice.
- Schellenberg, R. C., Parks-Savage, A., & Rehfuss, M. (2007). Reducing levels of elementary school violence with peer mediation. *Professional School Counselor (June)*, 475-481.
- Shores, R. E., Gunter, P. L., & Jack, S. L. (1993). Classroom management strategies: Are they setting events for coercion? *Behavioral Disorders*, 18, 92-102.
- Siddique, C., & D'Arcy, C. (1984). Adolescence, stress, and psychological well-being. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 13, 459-473.
- Skiba, R. J., & Peterson, R. L. (2000a). Creating a positive climate: Peer Mediation. Safe & Responsive Schools Project.
- Skiba, R. J., & Peterson, R. L. (2000b). School discipline at a crossroads: From zero tolerance to early response. *Exceptional Children*, 66, 335-347.
- Sontag, L. J., Clemans, K. H., Graber, J. A., & Lyndon, S. T. (2011). Traditional and cyber aggressors and victims: A comparison of psychosocial characteristics. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 40, 392-404.
- Stern, M., Van Slyck, M. R., & Newland, L. (1992). Adolescent development and family

- dynamics: Delineating a knowledge base for family mediation. *Mediation Quarterly*, 9, 301-322.
- Stevahn, I., Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Real, D. (1996). The impact of a cooperative or individualistic context on the effectiveness of conflict resolution training. *American Educational Research Journal*, 33, 801-823.
- Tate, T. F. (2001). Peer influences and positive cognitive restructuring. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 9.4, 215-218.
- Theberge, S. K., & Karan, O. C. (2004). Six factors inhibiting the use of peer mediation in a junior high school. *Professional School Counseling*, 7, 283-290.
- Townley, A. (1995). Changing school culture. *Education Leadership*, 52, 80.
- Umbreit, M. S., Vos, B., Coates, R. B., & Lightfoot, E. (2006). Restorative justice in the twenty-first century: A social movement full of opportunities and pitfalls. *Marquette Law Review*, 89, 251-304.
- Valliant, G. (1977). *Adaptation to life*. Boston: Little Brown.
- Van Slyck, M. R., & Stern, M. (1991). Conflict resolution in educational settings: Assessing the Impact of peer mediation programs. In K. Duffy, J. Grosch, & P. Olczak (Eds.), *Community mediation: A handbook for practitioners and researchers* (pp. 257-274). New York: Guilford.
- Van Slyck, M. R., Stern, M. & Elbedour, S. (1995). Altering conflict attitudes and behaviors: Peace education in the Middle East. Invited paper presented at the meetings of the American Psychological Assoc., New York, NY.
- Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J., Bricker, D., & Kaufman, M. J. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-

aged children and youth. *Journal of Emotional & Behavioral Disorders*, 4, 194-209.

Weeks, D. (1992). *The eight essential steps to conflict resolution: Preserving relationships at work, at home, and in the community*. New York: Penguin Putnam.

Weissberg, R. P., Caplan, M., & Harwood, R. L. (1991). Promoting competent young people in competence-enhancing environments: A systems-based perspective on primary prevention. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 59, 830-841.

APPENDIX A

Bully Prevention, Peer Mediation & Conflict Resolution Programs - Frost

Created: October 10 2011, 6:40 AM
Last Modified: October 10 2011, 10:11 AM
Design Theme: Blue Gradient
Language: English
Button Options: Custom: Start Survey: "Start Survey!" Submit: "Submit"
Disable Browser "Back" Button: False

Bully Prevention, Peer Mediation & Conflict Resolution Programs

Page 1 - Heading

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Page 1 - Question 1 - Open Ended - One Line

School Name

Page 1 - Question 2 - Open Ended - One Line

District #

Page 1 - Question 3 - Open Ended - One Line

What is the total enrollment of your middle school?

Page 1 - Question 4 - Open Ended - One or More Lines with Prompt

What are the percentages of students in each of the following racial/ethnic groups at your middle school? (Please enter "0" if there are no students from a specific group at your school).

- % African-American
- %Asian
- %White
- %American Indian or Alaskan Native
- %Hispanic
- %Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- %Multiracial

Page 1 - Question 5 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

For which of the following racial/ethnic groups did the school population change by more than 5% in the last 5 years? (Check all that apply).

- African-American
- Asian
- White
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

- Multiracial

Page 1 - Question 6 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

For which of the following racial/ethnic groups did the school population change by more than 5% in the last 10 years? (Check all that apply).

- African-American
- Asian
- White
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Multiracial

Page 1 - Question 7 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

What grade levels are included in your middle school? (Check all that apply).

- 6th grade
- 7th grade
- 8th grade
- Other, please specify

Page 1 - Question 8 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Is your school considered: (choose one)

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

Page 1 - Question 9 - Yes or No

Does your school participate in the Kansas Communities That Care survey?

- Yes
- No
- If yes, how many years have you participated?

Page 1 - Question 10 - Yes or No

[Mandatory]

Do you have a Bully Prevention Program?

- Yes [Skip to 2]
- No [Skip to 3]
- If yes, what type of program?

Page 2 - Heading

BULLY PREVENTION PROGRAM INFORMATION

Page 2 - Question 11 - Open Ended - Comments Box

What Bully Prevention Program curriculum do you use?

Page 2 - Question 12 - Open Ended - One Line

How many years has this Bully Prevention Program been utilized in your school?

Page 2 - Question 13 - Open Ended - Comments Box

How many bully prevention lessons are taught to each grade level per academic year?

Page 2 - Question 14 - Yes or No

Do teachers receive training in bully prevention strategies?

- Yes
- No

Page 2 - Question 15 - Yes or No

Have you collected data to support the effectiveness of your program? (Examples include, but not limited to, reductions in office referrals and out of school suspensions.)

- Yes
- No

Page 2 - Question 16 - Open Ended - Comments Box

What type of data has been collected?

Page 3 - Question 17 - Yes or No

[Mandatory]

Do you have a Peer Mediation Program?

- Yes [Skip to 4]
- No [Skip to 5]

Page 4 - Heading

PEER MEDIATION PROGRAM INFORMATION

Page 4 - Question 18 - Open Ended - Comments Box

What Peer Mediation Program curriculum do you use?

Page 4 - Question 19 - Open Ended - One Line

How many years has this program been utilized?

Page 4 - Question 20 - Open Ended - One Line

How many sessions are used for training mediators?

Page 4 - Question 21 - Yes or No

Are teachers trained in conflict resolution strategies?

- Yes
- No

Page 4 - Question 22 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

How are mediators selected? (Choose one)

- By counselor
- By teacher(s)
- By student(s)
- Other, please specify

Page 4 - Question 23 - Yes or No

Are mediators selected based on equal representation of the student body?

- Yes
- No

Page 4 - Question 24 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

How often are mediators changed (Choose one)

- Every semester
- Yearly
- As students graduate
- Other, please specify

Page 4 - Question 25 - Yes or No

Is there a scheduled time for mediations?

- Yes
- No

Page 4 - Question 26 - Open Ended - One Line

How many mediations are conducted per academic year?

Page 4 - Question 27 - Yes or No

Have you collected data to support the use of your program? (Examples include, but not limited to, reductions in office referrals and out of school suspensions.)

- Yes
 - No
 - What type of data has been gathered?
-

Page 5 - Question 28 - Yes or No

[Mandatory]

Do you have a Conflict Resolution Program?

- Yes [Skip to 6]
- No [Skip to End]

Page 6 - Heading

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM INFORMATION

Page 6 - Question 29 - Open Ended - Comments Box

What Conflict Resolution Program curriculum do you use?

Page 6 - Question 30 - Open Ended - One Line

How many years has this program been utilized?

Page 6 - Question 31 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Who is responsible for delivering the lessons?

- Counselor
 - Classroom teachers
 - Other, please specify
-

Page 6 - Question 32 - Open Ended - Comments Box

How many conflict resolution lessons are taught to each grade level per academic year?

Page 6 - Question 33 - Yes or No

Does the staff receive training in conflict resolution strategies?

- Yes
- No

Page 6 - Question 34 - Yes or No

Have you collected data to support the use of your program? (Examples include, but not limited to, reductions in office referrals and out of school suspensions.)

- Yes
- No

Page 6 - Question 35 - Open Ended - Comments Box

What type of data has been gathered?

.....

.....

.....

Thank You Page

Standard

Screen Out Page

Standard

Over Quota Page

Standard

Survey Closed Page

Standard

APPENDIX B

Dear Fellow School Counselor:

My name is Alice Frost and I am a doctoral candidate at Kansas State University in the Counselor Education program, and I teach at Emporia State University in the School Counseling Program. I am contacting you to ask for your assistance in furthering research with regard to the impact of prevention programs on violent incidents in middle schools that result in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). I will be using data from the KAN-DIS report, but what I need from you is information about the type of programs you are currently using and how they are administered. This is valuable information that currently is not available for the middle schools in Kansas.

I would appreciate your time in completing the survey/questionnaire with regard to the programs you offer in your school. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. If you have questions about the information requested, please get in touch with me at the email or phone number listed below. Please use the following link to access the survey:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22CXJ2W5F89/>

The survey results will remain confidential. Data will not be reported by specific districts, even though I am requesting that information. The need for your district number is so the information you provide can be matched to the KAN-DIS data provided by the Kansas Department of Education. This project has been reviewed and approved by the Internal Review Board at Kansas State University, and if you should have questions, you may contact my advisor, Aaron Carlstrom, Ph.D., at the email or phone number listed below.

Once the final results of the survey and research project are compiled, I will send you a copy so you can use the information to evaluate your current prevention programming using the findings of this research.

Alice Frost, M.S., ABD
Kansas State Univ. Doctoral Candidate
Email: afrost@k-state.edu
Phone: 620/341-5796

Aaron Carlstrom, Ph.D.
Email: acarlst@k-state.edu
Phone: 785/532-5836

APPENDIX C

Subject: Important Information Needed

Dear Fellow School Counselor:

A couple of weeks ago you received an email requesting your participation in a research project regarding prevention programs in Kansas Middle Schools. If you have responded to the previous request, thank you very much. If, however, you set it aside thinking you would do it later, now is the time. The information requested in this survey is not available elsewhere or I would not be bothering you at this very busy time of the year.

Middle schools in Kansas show the highest rates of violent acts resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). This research will hopefully provide information to help middle school counselors design better and more effect prevention programs to reduce the rates of violence and make school a safer place for all students.

Here is the link to this very important research survey, and I urge you to take 15 minutes to complete it right now. <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22CXJ2W5F89/> You will receive the results once they are published, so the part you play is extremely valuable. Thank you for your time, and if you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my advisor for this project.

Researcher:

Alice Frost, M.S., ABD

Kansas State Univ. Doctoral Candidate

Email: afrost@k-state.edu

Phone: 620/341-5796

Advisor:

Aaron Carlstrom, Ph.D.

Email: acarlstr@k-state.edu

Phone: 785/532-5836

APPENDIX D

Subject: Final Chance to Participate

Dear Fellow School Counselor:

A couple of weeks ago you received a second request for your participation in a research project regarding prevention programs in Kansas Middle Schools and the impact they have on violence prevention. I am making one last email attempt to obtain this information.

Middle schools in Kansas show the highest rates of violent acts resulting in out of school suspensions (injury and non-injury). Making school a safer place for all students has been a goal for every school in the State. By providing your school's prevention program information, you can be a part of this change.

Here is the link to this very important research survey, and I urge you to take 15 minutes to complete it now. <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22CXJ2W5F89/> You will receive the results once they are published, so the part you play is extremely valuable. Thank you for your time, and if you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my advisor for this project.

Researcher:

Alice Frost, M.S., ABD
Kansas State Univ. Doctoral Candidate
Email: afrost@k-state.edu
Phone: 620/341-5796

Advisor:

Aaron Carlstrom, Ph.D.
Email: acarlstr@k-state.edu
Phone: 785/532-5836