ABSTRACT

EFFECTS OF PEER-MONITORED SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING
ON MEASURES OF SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE

by Elizabeth Ann Shaffer

The purpose of this study was to measure the effect that intensive social-skills training, peer monitoring and role modeling has on elementary students’ prosocial behavior. Twelve students in grades 3 – 5 served as participants in this intervention. Participants first received social-skills instruction, peer modeled during classroom skits, and peer monitored at recess while dispersing coupons to children demonstrating positive social-skills. Increases in positive social behavior in the classroom were found across all grade level participants.
EFFECTS OF PEER-MONITORED SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING ON MEASURES OF SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Faculty of Miami University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Educational Specialist
Department of Educational Psychology
by
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Miami University
Oxford, Ohio
2009

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Introduction

Schools are continually faced with the challenge of how to reduce problem behaviors in order to keep our schools safe. Student behaviors such as getting into fights, inability to make friends, refusal to comply with a teacher instructions, acting out in multiple settings, or suspension from school can develop into more serious, delinquent behaviors (Wilson, Lipsey, Derzon, 2003). As reports of violence in schools continue to increase, finding ways to curb antisocial behavior in children has increasingly become a focus in school districts (Lien-Thorne & Kamps, 2005). In particular, educational research has begun to explore ways to prevent antisocial behavior in young children identified as being at risk for behavioral disorders with hopes that such measures will decrease violent behaviors as children age.

According to Beard and Sugai (2004), common patterns of antisocial behaviors in young, or elementary school age children include non-compliance in the classroom, such as touching other students, talking back, and fighting. In later elementary school years, behaviors may include lying, cheating, or petty theft. The authors postulate that if such behavior patterns are not remediated while the children are young, they can continue to escalate into far more problematic behaviors such as serious aggression towards others (Beard & Sugai, 2004). Their research found that these behavior patterns become more difficult to reverse as children get older, and the more pronounced they become, the more children and adolescents are at risk for social rejection by peers and adults, delinquency, and dropping out of school (Beard & Sugai, 2004).

Similar findings are also supported by another study that examined academic and behavioral outcomes for adolescents who were identified as exhibiting antisocial behaviors while they were in kindergarten and first grade (Montague, Enders, & Castro, 2005). The researchers assessed a large sample of kindergarten and first graders attending two urban schools for antisocial behaviors that put them at risk for developing a behavioral disorder using a scale that rated their risk level. The portion of the sample that was determined to be at risk was then reassessed on a yearly basis through middle school. The researchers examined both academic and social outcomes for the students and found that early academic achievement ratings were highly predictive of middle school reading achievement, and that teacher ratings of behavior were consistent and reliable across time. The researchers argue that these findings show that
academic and behavioral problems in childhood will continue to persist into adolescence; thus it is critical that successful intervention for antisocial behaviors occur as early in a child’s academic years as possible (Montague, Enders, & Castro, 2005).

**Tiered Model of Service Delivery**

Research has explored a variety of treatments for antisocial behaviors in the school setting and has consistently supported the importance of designing a treatment plan targeting student needs. In order for schools to develop the appropriate behavioral intervention strategies for at risk students, behaviors must be specifically and thoroughly evaluated (Christensen, Young, & Marchant, 2004). Functional Based Assessment (FBA) is a systematic procedure which gathers information about a child’s behavior and the situations that instigate and maintain the problem behavior (Steege & Watson, 2004). The obtained information is then used in establishing a detailed behavioral plan to target the problem behavior in the context which it is exhibited. Alongside FBA, an approach commonly used in schools for preventing and intervening in behavior problems is Positive Behavior Support (PBS). PBS involves school wide systematic and individualized plans which promote desired learning and social results in students while preventing undesired behaviors (Turnbull et. al, 2002). This problem solving method provides data-based decision making and a functional technique to remediate the inappropriate behaviors of students similar to applied behavior analysis.

Proactive prevention and intervention strategies have also led today’s schools to a three-tiered service delivery model which is driven by positive behavior support plans (Lane et al, 2007). School wide PBS, Tier 1, is a primary intervention for all students focused on the prevention of harm. Tier 1 interventions cover a variety of specific behaviors such as school violence and pro-social skills. Typically 80% of the all students respond to the school wide interventions (Lane & Menzies, 2004). Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, and Feinberg (2005) evaluated the impact of a whole school intervention on the number of office referrals and suspensions. The Tier 1 intervention elements were (a) formation of faculty behavior support teams, (b) refinement of the discipline referral process, (c) including positive behavior expectations in the handbook, and (d) providing token reinforcements for students. The results showed a decrease in office discipline referrals and an improvement in academic performance after the use of the school wide positive behavior support program (Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, & Feinberg, 2005).
The children who do not respond to primary prevention/intervention efforts are targeted in Tier 2 or secondary intervention. At this level, specialized interventions occur in smaller groups and utilize evidence-based strategies for specific behaviors or social skills. About 15% of students need this level of intervention (Lane & Menzies, 2004). Students that are unresponsive to this level of intervention are individually targeted at the Tier 3 or tertiary intervention level. Turnbull et. al (2002) outline the detailed implementation of an effective single case PBS plan for a student who did not respond to primary or secondary interventions. The school PBS team used functional behavior assessment (FBA) to identify the problem behaviors of the student and what directly activated those behaviors. After identifying the antecedents from the FBA, a PBS plan was created to target specific behavioral interventions such as modeling appropriate behaviors, teach self-management talk-outs, and role play of appropriate interactions with peers for a variety of settings in order to decrease the occurrence of problem behaviors (Turnbull, et al., 2002). Since problem behaviors do not typically lend themselves to one arena, providing services in various settings can have further impact on behavioral growth. Establishing support for a child across multiple settings is a more comprehensive approach which can be applied within the school (lunchroom, playground, classroom) or outside in the community. Research has documented that this tactic of combining additional support is even more effective for decreasing and preventing problem behaviors in a child (Turnbull, et al., 2002). Luiselli et. al. (2005) used a whole school (tier 1) PBS program for all students across all school settings in aim to reduce problem behaviors. In this study, teachers and administrators used a token reinforcement system to encourage desirable behaviors. Students were given “Caught in the Act” slips for displaying appropriate behavior in various school settings. With these slips, students had the opportunity to win prizes. Results from this study showed that decline of office referrals in the school over 22 months using this approach (Luiselli et. al, 2005).

TREATMENT OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Through the years, research has explored a variety of strategies to remedy problem behaviors. Extensive research has been conducted regarding social skills training as a method of treating and intervening for antisocial behavior (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006). Social skills competence is vital for a student’s interpersonal development (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006). Children who exhibit areas of social skill deficits are at risk for a behavioral disorder (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006). In a social skills training program, deficit skills are taught in a coached
environment that is easily generalized across natural environments such as the classroom or playground (Quinn, Kavale, Mathur, Rutherford, & Forness, 1999). Social skill training has become a primary intervention for students with behavior disorders and research has documented a great deal of success with such programs. For example, Gresham, Van, and Cook (2006) examined the effects of a 60-hour social skills training program spanning 20 weeks on four students at risk for a behavioral disorder. The intervention also included consulting with parents and teachers of the four students in delivery a treatment based on differential reinforcement of other behaviors (DRO). The small group, student pullout program incorporated social skill acquisition through coaching, modeling, and rehearsal of behaviors. Reinforcing feedback was also incorporated in the training. Their findings indicated a decrease in competing problem behaviors following the intensive training. For three out of the four students the high intensity intervention had large decreasing effects on their total disruptive behavior and time spent alone. Their results suggest that a higher intensity of social skills training yields higher impacts on student behavior than lower intensity. This result supports that case that more training in social skills with students will attain more desirable outcomes (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006).

Gresham, Van, and Cook (2006) research build upon previous research in the study of social skills training displaying the effectiveness of increase intensity of social skills training for at-risk students (Gresham, Van, & Cook 2006).

**Group Contingencies**

The use of reinforcement in treating antisocial behavior has also been explored as a way to intervene for behavior. Children who exhibit problem behaviors are at risk of obtaining less positive acknowledgement in school than their peers (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2000). Incorporating rewards for appropriate behaviors and social skills into a student’s PBS plan can be an effective element. Lewis, Powers, Kely, and Newcomer (2002) combined group contingencies with the teaching of rules, routines, and desire behaviors in a school-wide PBS program. During recess, students who were engaging in appropriate behavior were given an elastic loop by the playground monitor. This token reinforcement was established to decrease undesired behaviors and increase appropriate behavior. Upon returning to the classroom students would place their loops in a jar. When the jar was full the class voted on a contingency for the group. Results indicated that combining social skills instruction with group contingencies was effective in reducing the frequency of problem behaviors. Lewis and Garrison-Hall (1999)
studied the impact of incorporating group contingencies in a school-wide Positive Behavior Support program. Students were taught a list of rules and corresponding social skills created by a school-based team. A token economy was used to promote compliance. Group contingencies were incorporated in addition to typical supervision and precorrection. Groups of student received rewards or prizes for following the rules in a particular setting. Using a multiple baseline design across settings found that the combine three-behavior interventions were effective in reducing undesired behaviors (Lewis & Garrison-Hall, 1999).

Self-Management

A goal of behavioral intervention is to help students manage their own behavior (Hoff & DuPaul, 1998). Self-management is an additional aspect of PBS that research has been shown to effect classroom behavior by decreasing disruptive behavior (Hoff & DuPaul, 1998). Self-management is defined as the actions a student takes to maintain or manipulate their own behavior (Hoff & DuPaul, 1998). Hoff and DuPaul (1998) examined the effectiveness of self-evaluation in decreasing the disruptive behavior of students at risk for a behavioral disorder. The students were trained in self-evaluation in three 20 minute sessions. A 5-point rating scale ranging from 0 (totally unacceptable) to 5 (excellent) of the child’s behavior was used by both the teacher and student during the first phase of intervention. Initially teacher and student ratings were “matched” following each observation interval. The student received a backup reinforcer each time his/her rating matched the teacher’s rating. The teacher matching schedule was eventually faded to only self-evaluation by the student. The intervention was also generalized to the playground. The results of their study found that self-management was an effective intervention in decreasing disruptive behavior in both the classroom and recess setting.

Christensen, Young, and Marchant (2004) also incorporated self-management as an element in their PBS “package” and found it was effective in changing undesired behaviors. In their case study, two third grade students from an urban setting, at-risk for behavior disorders received a behavior intervention “package” incorporating skill development, peer-mediated self-management, peer and teacher monitoring a reinforcement. Self-monitoring consisted of the students being taught to be more aware of the skills and behavior they were using. Students were taught to rate their behavior and match their rating to a peer rating. It was noted that improved peer relationships was a continuous theme found from the teacher, student, and peer questionnaires (Christensen, Young, & Marchant, 2004).
Peer Mediation

Peer mediation and peer monitoring is another component of many treatments for antisocial behavior. In peer mediation, peers aid or mediate the intervention with the targeted student. Through peer monitoring, peers act as a monitor or observer of another as an agent of change within an intervention plan (Christensen, Young, & Marchant, 2004). Incorporating peers into the intervention process is cost/time effective and saves teacher time. Similar to Hoff and DuPaul’s (1998) use of self-management, Christensen, Young, & Marchant coupled peer mediation and peer monitoring of a targeted student with self-evaluation. The targeted student rated his behavior and then match it his peer partner. Behavior ratings were taken in two-minute intervals then progressed to 15 minute intervals by the end of the study. The student received points when his rating matched the peer partner. Peer monitoring was implemented in the form of reinforcement and praise from a peer partner. A second targeted student received positive peer feedback at regular intervals during an academic period. This study found that the use of same age peers was effective for mediating self-management skills in targeted students. Questionnaire results also revealed that the peer partners found the program to be enjoyable and helpful for the academic improvement the participants (Christensen, Young, & Marchant, 2004). Teachers also reported that the participants work completion and social interactions improved during the intervention. Teachers also mentioned that the use of peer partners being beneficial. Christensen, Young, and Marchant, noted that further research should explore other ways in which peers can be implemented as behavior change agents (Christensen, Young, & Marchant, 2004).

Summary

Purpose of the Study

Despite the wealth of information on the effects of social skills and other techniques such as peer monitoring and mediation, there have not yet been any studies in which recipients of social skills interventions also act as change agents. The aim of this study was to address this missing piece in the literature by measuring the effect that participating in an intensive social skills training program and then acting as a peer monitor and role model has on critical measures of prosocial behavior. Based on results from previous studies in which social skills training, peer monitoring, peer mediation, and reinforcement were used, it is hypothesized that children participating in the Please Officers, positive social skills training program and subsequently
demonstrating those skills by participating in a skit and acting as a peer monitor on the playground will increase critical measures of prosocial behavior and acceptance among peers and school staff.

Method

Participants

Each cohort of participants included two to five students in the 3rd through 5th grades attending the same local elementary school. Four different elementary schools participated in the program, resulting in four separate cohorts of participants. The total number of participants was twelve; ten boys and two girls. Eight participants were from the fifth grade, one participant was in the fourth grade, and three participants were third graders. These students were given the title of “Please Officer” through the participation in the program. The participating students were selected if they met the following criteria: 1) the school principal nominated students 2) each child met literature-based criteria for being “at-risk” for emotional behavioral disorders, based on number of office referrals, psychopathology ratings, and class-wide sociometric ratings; and 3) parent consent and child assent were obtained for each participant (see Appendix F). The twelve participating students accounted for seven different teachers who participated in the study. Five participants at one school and two participants in a second school were from the same classroom.

Setting

The social skills training sessions took place in a private location in the school such as an empty classroom, an empty hallway, or the library. The performance of skits occurred in selected classrooms in the school. Peer-monitoring took place on the playgrounds at the schools during recess time.

Dependent Measures

A number of different methods have been developed to measure both the presence of antisocial behaviors and the impact antisocial behavior can have on academic and social outcomes. Research has examined teacher attitudes towards behavior problems and teachers’ specific behavioral expectations in the classroom. Lane, Pierson, and Givner (2003) studied the extent to which elementary, middle, and high school teachers’ value assertion, cooperation, and self-control related behaviors. Results among the participants showed that cooperation and self-control were rated as being both equally important and highly desirable. Overall, assertion was rated significantly less important than self-control and cooperation skills. Similar trends were
seen across elementary, middle, and high school teacher responses (Lane, Pierson, & Givner, 2003). One successful and increasingly popular method of assessing problem behaviors and desirable behaviors such as self-control and cooperation in the classroom is a system called direct behavior rating (DBR). DBR refers to the systematic direct observation (often by a teacher) and evaluation of targeted behaviors during brief and specific observation periods, such as one school day or using a behavior rating scale. DBR has be shown to be a feasible tool both for assessment and to aid in the development and progress-monitoring of empirically based interventions, particularly those aimed at decreasing anti-social behaviors as the behavior rating scales can be easily tailored to meet specific needs (Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, Christ, & Sugai, 2002).

**Weekly report card (WRC).** Direct behavior ratings were incorporated in this study with a weekly behavior report card completed by each participant’s primary teacher. An abbreviated class-wide WRC (see Appendix A) was completed each week by the teacher throughout the study, beginning during the baseline phase. The teacher rated each student’s class behavior, classwork, and social behavior on a scale from 1 to 5. The social areas assessed were based on several skills that elementary teachers feel are vital, including ability to cooperate and use of self-control skills (Lane, Pierson, & Givner). The WRC measure was used to gain information about the participants’ academic and social performance in the classroom, and to monitor progress in response to the social skills program. If a student’s score was less than or equal to 12, he or she was eligible to participate, as this score represents 80% compliance with expectations (Rhode, Jenson, & Reavis, 1992).

Acceptance among peers and interactions with others can also be affected by the behaviors of a student. Antisocial behavior can also have a marked impact on a child’s acceptance by his or her peers. It is not uncommon for a student who displays antisocial behaviors to be rejected by his or her classmates (Beard et al, 2004). One way researchers have studied this effect is by using a class-wide sociometric rating scale based on a system of peer nomination, as described by Yugar and Shapiro (2001). According to this method, each student in a class is taken aside for a one-to-one interview with the researcher. The researcher asks the student to nominate his or her three best friends in the class. Then, the student is asked to look at each child in the class picture and rate how much he or she likes to play with each other student using a Likert scale where 3 = a smiley face, 2 = a neutral face, and 1 = a frown face. After all
the children have been interviewed, the researchers compare nominations to determine where reciprocal and unreciprocated friendships occur. Yugar and Shapiro (2001) found that this measure was valid when compared with other methods of peer assessment, and peer nominations have helped yield results in a number of different studies on strategies such as positive peer reporting (Moroz & Jones, 2002; Morrison & Jones, 2006).

Class-wide sociometric ratings. Similar to the measure used by Yugar and Shapiro (2001) sociometric nomination ratings were collected before and after the study. Ratings were provided by all students in each classroom that contained one or more participants. Two class-wide sociometric ratings, in the form of Written Expression Probes, were administered by the classroom teacher before the Please Officers program was implemented, the week following the program, and approximately six weeks after the treatment for follow-up data. Each teacher was given a standard administration script in order to ensure the probes were given the same way to each classroom. The Written Expression Probes asked students to anonymously nominate (1) the three students in the classroom with whom they would most like to play and (2) the three students in the classroom with whom they would most like to work. A sociometric rating score was calculated for each participant during pre-treatment, post-treatment, and follow-up phases of the study from the number of times his or her name was nominated by a classmate. During baseline, if a student was nominated by one or fewer students, he or she was eligible to participate in the social skills program, as this score indicates they may have a rejected or neglected sociometric status among their peers (Yugar and Shapiro, 2001).

Experimental Conditions

All members of the targeted cohorts were exposed to three conditions: baseline, Please Officers (treatment), and follow-up (post-treatment). “Promotion Week” at their school and this study’s participants were referred to as “Please Officers.”

Baseline. During the baseline phase of the study, school personnel, and teachers responded to study participants in their typical manner. No changes were implemented. Baseline began at approximately the same time for all four cohorts. Weekly Report Cards were used to establish a stable trend in antisocial behavior. The first set of sociometric nomination ratings were also administered to each participants’ classroom during this phase.

Please Officers. The treatment phase of the study, called the Please Officers program, was be introduced in a staggered manner (i.e., at different weeks throughout the fall semester)
across the four cohorts. The Please Officers represents a social skills program “package” that combines social skills instruction, peer modeling, and peer monitoring. All treatment activities were completed during a 2-week long “Social Skills Week” one of the Please Officers program began with the researchers teaching the participants three different social skills using the Boys Town Social Skills Training Method (Dowd & Tierney, 2005). Skills were selected based on a survey of social skills that elementary school teachers report as vital to success in school (Lane, Pierson, & Givner, 2003). The first skill is how to use free time effectively in order to better deal with boredom and waiting. The second skill is how to use problem solving techniques to resolve peer conflicts. The third skill is how to accept feedback, including both positive and negative consequences from adult authorities. Each skill was taught on a separate day in a 45-minute session.

The first component of the Please Officers program involved social skills instruction using the Boys Town approach. This component began by praising students for their involvement. A specific skill was then targeted through discussing everyday examples and by describing reasons for the having the skill. Students were given multiple opportunities to practice the learned skill and receive appropriate feedback (see Table 1). For example, when teaching the skill “how to use problem solving” students identified specific situations in which problem solving is needed. The appropriate problem solving approach was described and taught to students through skill steps a) define the problem situation b) generate two or more options c) look at each option’s potential disadvantage d) look at each option’s potential advantages and e) decide on the best solution (Dowd & Tierney, 2005). Reasons and the importance of problem solving were then discussed with the group. Students were then asked to practice their newly acquired problem solving techniques and receive immediate feedback and encouragement. A follow-up opportunity to practice this skill was also scheduled.

Once participants had shown an understanding of their new social skills, the researchers and children produced a classroom skit, during which all children in the targeted cohort taught the critical social skills to two different classrooms. This component occurred during the second week of the program. The skit included three parts. First, the Please Officers listed and defined the three critical social skills, providing examples and non-examples. Second, the Please Officers role played skits in which one or more children demonstrate the appropriate use of the social
skills. Third, the Please Officers introduced to each classroom “X-citations,” which were small, credit-card size acknowledgments for demonstrating appropriate social skills.

Following the social skills training and classroom skit during the second week of the program, participants were given authority to issue 6 to 7 “X-citations” to younger children during playground or indoor recess. This component of the study incorporated peer monitoring of positive social interactions for participants. The Please Officers were instructed to issue X-citations to children when they observed positive social skills. The participants were also directed to tell each child why they were giving them the “X-citation.” Each Please Officer had the opportunity to complete this activity at two different recesses during the second week of the program. Immediately following the peer-monitoring activity, the cohort of Please Officers met to debrief about what they observed and learned.

**Follow-up.** The final phase consisted of a follow up period, during which a return to baseline conditions occurred. No additional social skills training, classroom skits, or recess monitoring occurred. Teachers continued to complete the Weekly Report Card regarding each participant’s social behavior in the classroom for three to six weeks after the Please Officers intervention. The sociometric nomination rating was given as a post measure the week following the treatment phase and then again as a follow-up measure six weeks post-treatment.

**Treatment Integrity**

The researchers included three treatment integrity measures for this study. The first is a checklist of the steps to complete the Boys Town social skills training (see Appendix B). The second is a review of the procedural steps for the classroom skit (see Appendix C). The third is a checklist of the procedural steps for the recess monitoring activity (see Appendix D).

**Design & Analysis**

A multiple baseline across subjects design (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 1987) was used in this study to demonstrate a causal relationship between participation in social skills training and peer monitoring (Please Officers Program) and social acceptance. In this design, baseline was begun for all participants simultaneously, while treatment was introduced after varying length of baseline periods. After achieving a stable baseline to rule out the effects of testing and measurement, the Please Officers Program began for London elementary school, while the remaining children continued under baseline conditions. After the effects of treatment are established for London elementary school, treatment was introduced to Apple Elementary
School. Finally, the treatment was introduced to Barnes Elementary School and Kemper Elementary School. It was anticipated that the length of baseline would increase by about 1-2 additional weeks per group. However, only two baseline data points were collected for each participant. Each school group received treatment for 2 weeks. Following this time period, the school group returned to baseline conditions. Data continued to be collected to assess whether the treatment effects reverse or are maintained.

The multiple baseline design has several practical advantages in applied settings. First, it provides a 3-dimensional account of performance. Rather than demonstrating the impact on levels of dependent variables only, this design allows stakeholders to view differences in level and variability and trends. Second, the purpose of applied research is to identify the most effective independent variables, rather than every variable that produces differences beyond chance. Thus, treatments are judged in terms of their “practical” value: they must be so powerful that they can be seen “with the naked eye” (Baer, 1977). This is an appealing characteristic of visual inspection because parents and teachers are usually more interested in clinically meaningful differences rather than statistical differences. Contrary to popular belief, the use of inferential statistics (versus visual inspection) is not necessarily an indicator of the scientific value of a research paper. In a review of “hard” science versus “soft” science journals, Smith, Best, Stubbs, Archibald, and Roberson-Nay (2002) found that visual inscriptions such as line graphs or charts, was the most prominent distinguishing characteristic of hard sciences.

Third, multiple baseline design allows for intrasubject comparisons, which is the primary purpose of applied work. In evaluating treatment variables in natural settings, it is important to know how a child’s performance after therapy compares with his or her performance before therapy, not how much the child’s performance deviates from a statistically derived group average (Morgan & Morgan, 2001). Finally, single case designs are valid for establishing internal validity. These designs represent, in fact, one of only two research designs that are universally accepted for establishing treatment efficacy in education and psychology (Horner, Carr, McGee, Odom, & Wolery, 2005).

Procedures

First, schools were contacted regarding the general purpose and procedures, and were asked to participate. Next, parental consent was sought from all children who were nominated to participate by their classroom teachers, based primarily on office referrals.
Children for whom parent consent and child assent were received participated in all procedures described below. Children for whom no consent was obtained did not participate in the program. After consent/assent was obtained, baseline data were collected by the researchers on the Weekly Report Card and administration of the class-wide sociometric scale. Treatment was introduced to each cohort in a staggered manner according to the multiple baseline design. All treatment components were delivered during a compressed time frame of about two weeks. Next, the impact of the Please Officer program was evaluated over the course of one month. Repeated measures of WRC were collected weekly throughout baseline, treatment, and follow up. Pre-post measures were collected at the beginning of baseline and again at one-month follow up.

**Research Question**

The research question is, “What are the effects of participating in a positive social skills training program and subsequently demonstrating those skills by participating in a skit and acting as a peer monitor on the playground on increasing critical measures of prosocial behavior?” To address this question, changes in weekly report card (WRC) and class-wide sociometric ratings during baseline were compared to changes in WRC and sociometric ratings during – and following – and then again six weeks after the introduction of the Please Officers program.

**Supplemental Question**

To what extent do the effects of a social skills and peer modeling program impact peer acceptance? This question was addressed by examining differences in sociometric status before and after intervention. This analysis was considered supplemental to the research question because it was addressed solely through examining pre and post social acceptance.

**Generality**

Although it is difficult to establish the generality of any treatment in a single study, these findings were also used to address the question of whether these findings could apply to other children experiencing problems related to psychopathology and social acceptance. The generality of the treatment effect was established by comparing these findings to previous research using the same or a similar treatment. The published guidelines for replications to establish an “evidence-based intervention” require 5 studies and 20 participants, across 3 different
researchers (Horner et al., 2005). This requirement highlights the importance of systematic replication across participants, across studies, and across researchers.

Results

*Weekly Report Card (WRC)*. Throughout the study, teachers completed a social Weekly Report Card on each participant in order to collect data using a repeated measure. The WRC was completed two weeks prior to treatment implementation in order to establish a baseline for each student and three to six week after the intervention was completed to monitor whether or not the impact of the treatment was maintained. Because participants consisted of four different schools from three different grade levels and different teachers, results from the four cohorts of students are reported in reference to the students’ grade level rather than school location. Results are reported and compared by grade level in order to group the participants by their level of social development and maturity.

The impact of the Please Officers program on the teacher-reported Weekly Report Card (WRC) rating of each student’s overall class behavior, class work, and social behavior in the classroom of each fifth grade participant are displayed individually in Figures 1a-h. Of the eight 5th grade students, the frequency of appropriate social behavior increased from a weekly mean of 6.5 (range, 4.0 to 11.0) during baseline to a mean of 8.44 (range, 5.0 to 12.0) during treatment. The Please Officers intervention effects on the participant’s social behavior maintained and slightly increased over four to six weeks of post-treatment data collection with a mean of 9.92 (range, 6.0 to 12.0) for this subset of participants. Visual analysis of the fifth grade participants’ results show that 6 out of 8 participants were reported to have exhibited an increase in positive social behavior from baseline through the end of the intervention phase. When examining the effects of the Please Officers program over time, all fifth grade participants maintained or were displaying an increase in positive social interactions during the post-treatment phase when compared to their scores in the baseline phase.
Figure 1a: 5th grade participant

Figure 1b: 5th grade participant

Figure 1c: 5th grade participant
Figure 1d: 5th grade participant

Figure 1e: 5th grade participant

Figure 1f: 5th grade participant
The impact of the Please Officers program on the teacher-reported Weekly Report Card (WRC) rating of each student’s overall social behavior, class work, and social behavior in the classroom of our fourth grade participant are displayed in Figure 2. Of the one 4th grade student, Maria, the frequency of appropriate social behavior decreased slightly from a weekly mean of 7.0 (range, 7.0 to 7.0) during baseline to a mean of 6.5 (range, 6.0 to 7.0) during treatment. The Please Officers intervention effects showed an increase in Maria’s social behavior over four
weeks of post-treatment data collection with a mean of 8.5 (range, 8.0 to 9.0) for this subset of participants. Visual analysis of Maria, the fourth grade participant’s results display a decline in positive social behavior from baseline to the treatment phase. However, a increase in positive social behavior was seen during the treatment weeks and continued into the post-treatment weeks. When examining the effects of the Please Officers program over time, Maria displayed an increase in positive social interactions during the post-treatment phase when compared to results in the baseline phase.

Figure 2: 4th grade participant

![Weekly Report Card - Maria](image)

The impact of the Please Officers program on the teacher-reported Weekly Report Card (WRC) rating of each student’s overall social behavior, class work, and social behavior in the classroom of each third grade participant are displayed individually in Figures 3a-c. Regarding the three 3rd grade students, the frequency of appropriate social behavior increased from a weekly mean of 6.5 (range, 3.0 to 10.0) during baseline to a mean of 8.33 (range, 6.0 to 10.0) during treatment. The Please Officers intervention effects maintained and slightly increased over three to four weeks of post-treatment data collection with a mean of 9.22 (range, 7.0 to 11.0) for this subset of participants. Visual analyses of the third grade participant’s results showed that 1 out of 3 participants were reported to have exhibited an increase in positive social behavior from baseline to intervention phase. However, 3 out of 3 third grade participants experienced an
increase in positive social behavior over the two treatment weeks. When examining the effects of the Please Officers program over time all third grade participants maintained or were displaying an increase in positive social interactions during the post-treatment phase when compared to their results in the baseline phase.

Figure 3a: 3rd grade participant

Figure 3b: 3rd grade participant
The WRC rating for all of the Please Officers participants increased from a group weekly mean of 6.54 (range, 4.0 to 11.0) during baseline to a mean of 8.25 (range 5.0 to 12.0) during treatment. The Please Officers intervention effects maintained and increased over three to six weeks of post-treatment data collection with a mean of 9.32 (range, 6.0 to 12.0) for all of the participants. Visual analyses of all the participants’ results show that 7 out of 12 participants were reported to have exhibited an increase in positive social behavior from baseline to the intervention phase. During the treatment phase, 10 out of 12 total participants exhibited an increase in positive social behavior over these two weeks. When examining the effects of the Please Officers program over time all 12 of the participants maintained or were displaying an increase in positive social interactions during the post-treatment phase when compared to the baseline period. However, 10 out of 12 participants began to see a decline or no change between the last two post-treatment assessments. This result could shows a lack of maintaining behavioral changes over a longer period of time. Continuing the intervention (treatment) for a longer period of time may help with the maintenance of appropriate social behavior.

In addition to the overall social behavior score from the WRC, each teacher separately rated the impact of the Please Officers program on participant’s growth on individual social skills. The three skill areas that were assessed by teachers corresponded to the social skills taught through the Please Officers Program. Students were rated on their behavior regarding using free time wisely, avoiding peer conflicts, and accepting feedback from others. The results
for each individual are again reported by grade level during the baseline, treatment, and post-treatment phases of the study. The fifth grade individual social skills growth are displayed in Figures 4a-h. The fourth grade participant’s individual social skill growth is represented in Figures 5 and the third grade participants’ individual social skill growth is exhibited in Figures 6a-c.

Figure 4a: 5th grade participant

![WRC Individual Skill Growth - Andy](image)

Figure 4b: 5th grade participant

![WRC Individual Skill Growth - Bobby](image)
Figure 4c: 5th grade participant

Figure 4d: 5th grade participant

Figure 4e: 5th grade participant
Figure 4f: 5th grade participant

Figure 4g: 5th grade participant

Figure 4h: 5th grade participant
Figure 5: 4th grade participant

Figure 6a: 3rd grade participant

Figure 6b: 3rd grade participant
Class-wide sociometric ratings. Sociometric nomination ratings were collected as a pre/post/follow-up assessment of the impacts of the Please Officers program on each participant’s acceptance among their peers. Two class-wide sociometric ratings were administered by the classroom teacher in the form of Written Expression Probes before the Please Officers program was implemented, the week following the program, and approximately six weeks after the treatment for follow-up data. It was anticipated that throughout the study the Please Officer participants name would be rated more frequently. However, visual analysis of this measure shows that across grade levels and all participants, 10 out of 12 participants sociometric ratings decreased from baseline to post-treatment. From post-treatment to follow-up, 5 participants’ number of sociometric ratings decreased whereas 5 participants number of sociometric ratings increased and 2 participants remained the same. Visual results for the sociometric ratings are again reported by grade level.
Figure 7a: 5th grade participant

Figure 7b: 5th grade participant

Figure 7c: 5th grade participant
Figure 7d: 5th grade participant

Figure 7e: 5th grade participant

Figure 7f: 5th grade participant
Figure 7g: 5th grade participant

Figure 7h: 5th grade participant

Figure 8: 4th grade participant
Figure 9a: 3rd grade participant

Figure 9b: 3rd grade participant

Figure 9c: 3rd grade participant
Discussion

The findings from this study indicate the Please Officers social skills program may be an effective method of improving student’s social behavior and acceptance in the classroom. This two-week program was designed to teach student social skills as well as have them demonstrate their understanding and monitoring other peers for these skills. This study showed increases in positive social behavior across all grade level participants. Outcomes from this study suggest that briefly teaching social skills to students and having them role play and monitor what they have learned can be beneficial for improving behavior. Through the second and third components (treatment week 2) of the Please Officers program, students were asked to demonstrate their understanding of the skill to several classrooms in their school as well as monitor playground behavior for appropriate social skills.

Results from the repeated measure, Weekly Report Card (WRC), displayed the positive impact of the Please Officers program on each participant’s weekly behavior over a period of approximately 8 to 10 weeks from baseline to post-treatment. Visual analysis of the data shows significant trends in positive social behavior in all participants throughout the study.

In contrast, results from the pre/pre/follow-up measure, sociometric nomination ratings, displayed a decline in social acceptance among peers over time in most participants. Many factors could account for such outcomes from this measure. First, the sociometric measure itself, in the form of Written Expression (WE) probes, may not have sufficiently been sensitive to determine the acceptance of the participants among peers. Second, the participant’s classrooms were given the same two probes at three different times. Two of these points were only two weeks apart (baseline and post-treatment). Students may have felt they should list different students each time. Students could have also been less motivated to complete the same task. Third, a Please Officer participant could have been absent from the classroom during the administration of the probes. The participant’s lack of presence could have made them less likely to be nominated by their classmates.

The findings from these two measures suggest that brief weekly, repeated measures are more sensitive to monitoring changes in students’ social behavior overtime than a pre/post measure. Perhaps a different sociometric rating process would be more sensitive in measuring a student’s acceptance among their peer group. Teachers reported improvements in social
interactions; however, the study’s sociometric ratings, displayed a decline in social acceptance among peers over time in most participants. This measurement process should be explored in future work with the Please Officers program in order to find a more sensitive means of recording the reported growth in social interactions.

Observational evidence. All of the Please Officers participants agreed to participate in group sessions and appeared to enjoy the program. The program seemed to be better suited for the fourth and fifth grade participants rather than the third graders, as the third grade participants often struggled to keep their attention on activities and questions during each session. These younger participants also seemed more timid and needed assistance when demonstrating their learned social skills to younger students in the schools. The same was true when the students were asked to monitor appropriate social skills on the playground.

All of the Please Officers candidly reported enjoying monitoring and passing out “caught you being good tickets” on the playground to younger students. The participants seemed to take pride in their task and by being meticulous to whom they distributed their tickets to. Each of the Please Officers was asked to tell each student they were giving a ticket to exactly what they were doing and why they were getting the ticket. Some interesting observations were made during this component of the program. One taller participant made sure he bent over to the child’s level to speak to children. All of the Please Officers worked hard to study the students playing in order to find a variety of good behavior. Participants were also seen helping younger students and explaining why it is important to have good behavior. On each of the four school’s playgrounds once the students playing caught onto what the Please Officers were doing, they quickly flocked to them to ask for a ticket or worked to display good behavior. The effect shows evidence to the positive impact this component of the program had on a larger scale of students and may point to additional measures of program effectiveness in future studies.

Anecdotal evidence. Anecdotal evidence suggested that the Please Officers program also had an impact on teacher behavior. Teachers were aware of the social skills that were being taught to their students. This element allowed teachers to be able to use the program as a reminder to the students each day of what appropriate behavior looks like. This aspect of the program, along with the cooperation from teachers, also made the social skills training more generalizable to the classroom setting for the Please Officers. Participants were taught through the program that Please Officers are a special group of students who were selected to be role
models for the school. Teachers were able to use this role as a positive way of correcting their participant in the classroom. Anecdotal conversations with teachers as well as comments on the WRC forms and teacher reaction forms also confirmed some of the positive changes seen in participant’s behavior and social interactions.

Teacher evaluation of program. A teacher reaction form was given to all of the teachers who participated in this study to evaluate the teacher’s impressions on the Please Officers post-intervention and followup program and its impact on student behavior. Teachers were questioned about positive and/or negative outcome seen in their participants, and any changes in peer interactions, feedback, and recommendations. Out of the seven teacher reaction forms that were distributed all were returned. Positive changes in social interactions were explicitly observed by the teachers of 5 out of the 12 participants. No changes in social interactions were reported for 4 students. One teacher noted experiencing changes in the student responding to teacher requests. Some other reported positive impacts of the program were increase self-esteem, confidence, more outgoing, better control of temper, becoming more aware of acceptable behavior, and better at resolving conflict. The teachers of nine of the participants reported that their student enjoyed the program. Regarding negative outcomes, no negative outcomes were reported directly from the Please Officers program. Some feedback and recommendations received were for the program to be extended to a longer period of the school year. Two teachers reported that the student missing class time was inconvenient. The feedback was positive regarding the Please Officers program and the impact it had on students. Further work incorporating some of these teacher’s suggestions into the Please Officers program will further refine the intervention and make it more easily adapted to a variety of school settings.

Limitations

A couple of limitations were present in this study that should noted. The measures used for data collection relied almost solely on each participant’s regular classroom teacher’s participation. Teachers were asked to complete the weekly social report cards as well as administer and collect the sociometric nomination ratings at three different points during the study. First, as mentioned before, some limitations with the sociometric nomination ratings were present which made results from this measure inconclusive. Due to the limitations of this measure and its indecisive outcomes on the Please Officers participants’ level of peer acceptance throughout the study, the primary results for this study rely on the teacher reported Weekly
Report Cards. Although teachers were trained by the researcher on how to complete the forms, these data are essentially subjective information from one individual. However, despite this limitation, because all twelve participants accounted for seven different teacher raters, there remains sufficient evidence to support valid benefits from the Please Officers program on student behavior. A third limitation to this study also surrounded the completion of both the repeated measure and the pre/post/follow-up measure. Teachers sometimes did not complete measures as timely as desired which could have influenced their rating or a peer’s nomination of a participant. Further work surrounding these limitations will aid in the measurement of social behavior changes which will further our ability to monitor the effectiveness of programs such as the Please Officers. The Please Officers program could benefit from additional methods of data collection to further examining the impact of the program on social acceptance.

Despite these limitations, the current findings establish several distinct contributions to a model of individual, small group, and potential school-wide way of supporting positive behavior. While this study was essentially a tier 2 level behavioral intervention its implications can also be seen at the school-wide, tier 1 level. As noted by Lane, Rogers, Parks, Weisenbach, Mau, Merwin, and Bergman, (2007) schools are moving to a three-tiered model of providing behavioral and academic services to students. The findings from this study provide confident evidence that the Please Officers program can be included in this model.

Conclusion

This study is unique in that it combines three common antisocial behavior intervention strategies into one intervention. Through the Please Officers program students identified as “at risk” for behavior disorders are given intensive training in social skills, peer modeling, and peer monitoring. The findings from this study support the positive impact teaching, demonstrating, and monitoring social skills can have on individual student and school-wide behavior. This study, displaying significant positive results for all twelve participants, also suggests that a program, such as the Please Officers, may be incorporated well into a systematic tiered model of service delivery. This program could serve as a Tier 2, small group behavior intervention working to prevented further behavior problems in at risk students while modeling for an entire study body appropriate behavior and social interactions. As a Tier 2 intervention, the Please
Officers program would function as a part of Positive Behavior Support (PBS) and an element of the legislative mandated Response to Intervention (RtI) initiative in schools. Teachers report that they would recommend this program for the use by other teachers and students but for a more extended period of time. This study is distinct from other research using peer modeling and peer monitoring because the participants themselves engage in these activities. It is a hope that results from this study will provide further insight into positive, preventative ways schools can support behavioral growth in schools and make schools a safer environment for all students in the generations to come.
References


APPENDIX A
WEEKLY REPORT CARD

Student Name __________________________________________ Date_________________

Please circle the number that best describes the child’s classroom behavior, work, and social interactions during the past week: Also, please provide any additional comments. Thank You!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Using Free Time Wisely</th>
<th>Interacting and Working with peers</th>
<th>Accepting Feedback from teachers and peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Always</strong> used free time appropriately, No warnings No disruptions</td>
<td><strong>5 Exhibited excellent</strong> social skills with peers. No correction or guidance given.</td>
<td><strong>5 Accepted feedback well from peers and staff all of the time.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Almost always</strong> used free time appropriately, One warning, One disruption</td>
<td><strong>4 Exhibited good</strong> social skills with peers. Minimal correction or guidance needed.</td>
<td><strong>4 Accepted feedback well from peers and staff most of the time.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Frequently</strong> used free time appropriately, a few warnings, a few disruptions</td>
<td><strong>3 Exhibited adequate or average</strong> social skills with peers. Some correction or guidance needed.</td>
<td><strong>3 Accepted feedback well from peers and staff some of the time.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Sometimes</strong> used free time appropriately, Some Warnings, Some disruptions</td>
<td><strong>2 Rarely exhibited social skills with peers. Correction or guidance needed.</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 Accepted feedback well from peers and staff rarely.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Rarely</strong> used free time appropriately, Frequent Warnings, Frequent disruptions</td>
<td><strong>1 Exhibited NO social skills with peers. Continuous correction or guidance needed.</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 Accepted feedback well from peers and staff none of the time.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Comments

Additional Comments

Additional Comments

Williams, Gebhardt, & Jones (2008).
Appendix B

Checklist for Social Skills Training – Boys Town Program

Please Officer (student) Name: _________________________
Teacher Name: _________________________
Please Chief (social skill trainer) Name: _________________________
Social Skill: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Step</th>
<th>Please Chief completion check</th>
<th>Teacher completion check</th>
<th>Please Officer completion check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Give initial praise.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identify the skill and give examples.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Describe the appropriate behavior (give the skill steps).</td>
<td>Step 1 ____________</td>
<td>Step 2 ____________</td>
<td>Step 3 ____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Give a rationale (reason)/Request acknowledgement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Schedule a follow-up practice.</td>
<td>Date and Time ____________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Offer praise and encouragement throughout.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C
Checklist for Classroom Skit Development

Please Officer(student) Name: _________________________
Teacher Name:_______________________
Please Chief (social skill trainer) Name:_______________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skit Development Steps</th>
<th>Please Chief completion check</th>
<th>Teacher completion check</th>
<th>Please Officer completion check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Prior to skit development, Please Officers have completed Boys Town social skills training.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identify social skills to be included in skit and review with Please Officers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Introduce Please Officer to skit scripts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assign roles in script.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Practice skit.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D
Checklist for Recess Monitoring Steps

Please Officer(student) Name: _____________________
Teacher Name:_______________________
Please Chief (social skill trainer) Name:_____________________
Social Skill: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recess Monitoring Steps</th>
<th>Please Chief completion check</th>
<th>Teacher completion check</th>
<th>Please Officer completion check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Inform school staff and teachers of specified recess times where monitoring will take place.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Allow teachers to introduce Please Officers and Excitations to their class and offer group contingency reward plan for collection of Excitations if teachers choose to provide rewards.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Provide Please Officers with identifying badges and Excitations to issue for “catching” other students exhibiting positive social skills on the playground.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Review examples of what positive social skills look like.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1  
Social Skills Training – Boys Town Program

1. Give initial praise.
2. Identify the skill and give examples.
3. Describe the appropriate behavior (give the skill steps).
4. Give a rationale (reason)/Request acknowledgement
5. Practice.
   - Give feedback.
   - Give a positive consequence.
6. Schedule a follow-up practice.
7. Offer praise and encouragement throughout.
APPENDIX E

August 1, 2008

Dear Parent:

Your school is working on a project with Miami University graduate students to improve peer relationships in our school. The purpose of this letter is to ask for your consent for your child to participate in the program. Please read the attached consent form, which tells about the program and your child’s rights as a participant in a research study. After reading it carefully, please sign the form and return it to your child’s teacher. You may also contact us if you have questions.

Thank you for supporting our efforts to make a positive impact on all children in our school.

Sincerely,

__________________________
T. Steuart Watson, PhD
School Psychology Program
Miami University
PARENT CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

**Purpose:** Your child is invited to participate in a research project that will try to help improve relationships between all children in the school. The project will teach your child how to be a “Please Officer” during the school’s Social Skills Awareness Week, which will be held during the fall.

**Procedure:** Your child will be a Please Officer for one week. As a Please Officer, he or she will do three things. All of the following may require your child to miss some class time. However, we will work with your child’s teacher to make sure your child is not missing any instruction. The Please Officer’s program involves three steps: First, your child will learn new ways to practice important social skills such as (1) how to use free time appropriately and deal with boredom, (2) how to resolve peer conflict using problem solving skills, and (3) how to accept both positive and negative feedback from teachers. Then (Step 2), your children and the other Please Officers will teach other students in their schools what they have learned by giving a presentation about their new skills. The third step involves what we call “peer monitoring.” During recess, your child will give out “caught you being good” tickets to students when they observe others using positive social skills. The tickets will be collected by their teachers, and when enough tickets are earned, the class will receive a reward (i.e. stickers, candy, erasers, a prize from the prize box).

To see if the program is helpful, the teacher will provide observations about your child’s interactions with his or her classmates. Your child’s teacher will also administer an anonymous “social story” to the entire class to determine if new friendships have been made before and after the study. All data from this program will be private and confidential. All data collected with identifying information will be kept in a locked office on Miami University campus. Your child’s teacher and the researchers will be the only individuals collecting data. We believe the program will be fun, and may highlight your child as a positive example for others. Your child may benefit from this project by learning new skills, making new friends, and liking school more. If your child does not participate, he or she will receive individual help with social skills through other strategies offered by the school.

**Parent’s Rights:** Your agreement to allow your child to participate in this project is voluntary. You have the right to refuse participation, or withdraw your child from this study at any time. You may withdraw by contacting the child’s teacher or either contact person listed below. The project director and the primary investigator are also available to answer any questions and to make certain that you understood the program. You may also contact the Office for the Advancement of Research and Scholarship via phone (513-529-3734) or email (humansubjects@muohio.edu) for questions about the subject’s rights.

**Project Director**
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I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT, THE PROCEDURES INVOLVED, AND MY RIGHTS. I AGREE TO ALLOW MY CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROJECT.

Parent’s Signature _____________________________ Date _____________________________
CHILD ASSENT SCRIPT

School Psychologist-in-Training:

My name is _________________ and I would like you to be a Please Officer. The Please Officers are group of kids in your school who will teach other children how to solve problems without arguing, fighting, or hurting feelings. Please Officers will also teach other children new ways to make friends, show respect, and get along with others. I am going to tell you ways that I have helped other children, and after that, you can tell me if you want to be part of it or not.

If you decide to work with me, we will meet as a group and go over some ways kids can avoid arguing or hurting each others’ feelings. Once you understand these new ideas really well, you and the other Please Officers will teach other kids what you have learn by doing a presentation in class. If you don’t like talking in front of others, you can still help in other ways. After that, during one or two recesses you will be given the chance to pass out coupons to other kids you see using these new skills. This will last about one week, and after that I will talk to you and your teachers to see if the program was helpful.

Do you understand what this program is like?

Do you have any questions?

It is okay if you decide not to be part of this program. If you say no, your teacher will find other ways to help you be successful. You can simply tell me yes or no.

______________________________________________________________________________

Print Your Name ________________

☐ YES I give my verbal permission to participate in the study. I understand that I will go or be involved in a group with other children and that I will learn how to talk and play better with others. I also understand that don’t have to continue in the group and I can ask to leave at anytime without being punished, check here (point to the box).

☐ NO If you do not want to participate in this program, check here (point to the box).

Thank you for letting me talk to you today.

45