



Abstract

This paper describes a six session small-group intervention with a targeted group of African-American 11th grade girls who attend high school in an affluent suburban district. The sessions were designed to enhance students' confidence in building positive relationships with teachers by using coping and negotiation skills. The group session topics are described, and outcomes are assessed. Challenges unique to the group setting and in implementation are addressed. Group work has been recognized as a particularly relevant intervention for African-American youth. The small group format allows the facilitator to more easily connect with the participants and tailor topics to the specific needs of the group. (Havlik, et al. 2019). These students were identified using Panorama Data (Education, 2022) which measures literacy and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills..

Rationale

Discrepancies were noted among African American students on graduation rates, attendance, and English Performance Scores when compared to white students

Introduction-School-Wide Goals

GOAL 1: Create a community of inclusivity that engages all students in meaningful learning especially by working to overcome racial barriers that perpetuate educational inequity.

GOAL 2: Create a sustainable culture that nurtures an environment to personalize and individualize the learning experience for all.

GOAL 3: Identify the characteristics of a healthy mental wellness culture at CHS and develop tools and strategies to create wellness opportunities for all members of the school community.

Panorama Data

	GPA Abs Tardies	Social & Emotional Learning			Well-Being		
		SE	SM	SA	CF	PF	SR
Student A Resident	3.99 3 0	3.4	4.0	4.8	3.2	3.5	3.7
Student B Resident	3.26 2 0	3.5	4.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	5.0
Student C Voluntary Transfer	3.54 8 0	2.6	3.5	3.4	3.7	5.0	5.0
Student D Resident	3.04 6 0	2.4	3.5	3.3	2.4	3.0	3.0
Student E Employee	3.46 5 0	3.0	3.5	3.8	2.4	3.4	3.0
Student F Statutory Tuition	2.17 1 6	2.8	3.4	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.3

Project Goals

By November 14, 2022, six students will decrease their negative interactions with teachers by 50 percent from 1-2 negative interactions per week to 0-1 negative interactions per week.

By November 14, 2022, six students will increase their knowledge and application of advocacy (problem-solving) skills from one strategy to the knowledge and application of three strategies.

General Session Content (Methods)

Session One: Introduction, rapport building and goal setting

Session Two: Processing the Day and Relationships

Session Three: Locus of Control in Relationships and Assertive Communication

Session Four: Handling Conflict and Negotiation

Session Five: "If-Then" Anticipating Consequences, Role Playing

Session Six: Positive Affirmations and Future Goal Setting

Results

	Pre/Post Test					
	Connected to School Extremely-Not At All 5 4 3 2 1	Connected to Adults Extremely-Not At All 5 4 3 2 1	Connected to grade-level peers Extremely-Not At All 5 4 3 2 1	Stayed focused while working independently Most Often-Never 5 4 3 2 1	# Negative Interactions w/peers 0,1-2, 3-4, >4	# Negative Interactions w/ teachers 0,1-2, 3-4, >4
	pre /post	pre/post	pre/post	pre/post	pre/post	pre/post
Student A Resident	4 / 3	3 / 2	4 / 4	3 / 4	0 / 0	1-2 / 0
Student B Resident	4 / 4	3 / 4	4 / 4	4 / 4	0 / 0	0 / 0
Student C Voluntary TR	4 / 3	3 / 4	3 / 3	4 / 3	1-2 / 1-2	1-2 / 0
Student D Resident	2 / 1	2 / 2	2 / 1	4 / 3	0 / 0	0 / 0
Student E Employee	4 / 3	3 / 3	4 / 4	4 / 3	1-2 / 1-2	1-2 / 0
Student F Tuition	3 / 3	4 / 3	3 / 4	4 / 2	1-2 / 0	0 / 0

Pre/Post Continued

	Came to class prepared Every Time - Never 5 4 3 2 1	# Steps identified for addressing an issue w/teacher pre/post	What is your locus of control?	
			pre/post	
Student A Resident	5 / 5	1 / 2		my emotions, procrastination, and my communication
Student B Resident	5 / 4	1 / 1		Grades, Attitude, and Attendance
Student C Voluntary TR	4 / 4	1 / 2		actions, behaviors, words
Student D Resident	4 / 3	1 / 3		actions
Student E Employee	4 / 3	1 / 2		your actions, behavior, and words
Student F Tuition	5 / 3	1 / 3		grade, attendance, my mood

Conclusions

- African-American students are especially responsive to group intervention. The small group model is relaxed enough for students to feel comfortable and want to come, yet structured enough that everyone learns from the experience.
- School counselors can help establish a healthy foundation for building alliances, empowerment, change, and therapeutic intervention (Conner & Yeh, 2018). I believe the students walked away feeling more confident in their ability to communicate with teachers and understood what they could control.