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A middle school student-centered conflict management program: Impact on student managers' self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution

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A MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT-CENTERED CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: IMPACT ON STUDENT MANAGERS' SELF-ESTEEM, COMMUNICATION SKILLS, AND APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A Dissertation

Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Approved:

Dr. Radhi Al-Mabuk, Co-Chair

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May 1997

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An Abstract of a Dissertation

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Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution of trained student mediators in a conflict resolution program. This study also assessed the perceived transferability of conflict management information and skills from the school to the home environment. Indicators were the frequency, duration, and intensity of sibling conflicts reported by conflict managers and their parents.

The subjects in this study consisted of 60 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at two different middle schools in the state of Iowa. Thirty whom were trained as conflict managers and assigned to the experimental group, and thirty to the control group.

Data were gathered and analyzed in two parts: (a) a pretest-posttest experimental design which investigated differences in the experimental and control group on the dependent variables of pre-post change scores in self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution, and (b) a pretest-posttest single group design which investigated differences in the experimental group on the dependent variables of pre-post change scores in frequency, duration, intensity of conflict, and amount of positive conflict resolution skills as perceived by the conflict

managers and their parents. This second method utilizes the procedures in a study by Gentry and Benenson (1993).

The results of the first part of the data analysis indicated that students demonstrated a statistically significant increase in constructive approaches to resolving conflict at one school. The results further indicated a tendency to use less destructive approaches to resolving conflict and an increase in communication skills; however, not statistically significant. Self-esteem was an unchanged variable.

The second part of the data analysis indicated statistical significance in the decrease in number of conflicts as perceived by parents, a decrease in the amount of time it took to settle conflicts as perceived by students, a decrease in blameful behavior toward siblings as perceived by students and parents, and a decrease in how much the conflict managers tried to win when engaged in conflict as perceived by students and parents.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Everyone experiences conflict, regardless of age, race, culture, or gender (Benenson, 1988). Although conflict has existed in schools for centuries, it has only been within the last 10 to 15 years that emphasis on teaching conflict resolution has become a priority. According to Roderick (1988), "conflict is as old as life itself, but conflict resolution is a relatively new concept" (p. 87). American educators are recognizing that conflict is a normal part of school-age childrens' development (Koch & Miller, 1987).

Burrell and Vogel (1990) stated that mediation is the basic technique in most conflict resolution programs, and mediation makes conflict resolution a popular concept for the 1990s. Mediation is considered to be a way of resolving disputes in which disputants (students in conflict) are assisted by trained conflict managers (student mediators) to work on a solution of their own. The students who are trained in mediation skills learn to listen to varying perspectives, attend to feelings, and evoke mutual contributions to the problem's eventual solution. This is conducted in an atmosphere where respect for the parties is maintained (Lane & McWhirter, 1992). Koch and Miller (1987) stated many students "would rather have a student mediator

handle their disputes than a teacher, counselor, or principal, because: (a) it is easier to talk to someone their own age, (b) other students have had similar problems, or (c) students don't 'bust' them" (p. 60).

Much of the research on conflict resolution has originated due to increasing violence and the number of suspensions or explusions in large urban school districts. Consequently, most research on conflict resolution has been restricted to large urban districts (Araki, 1990; Brown, 1992; Burrell & Vogel, 1990). Little empirical evidence exists regarding conflict resolution programs in small rural schools.

In this study, the researcher examined self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution of trained student mediators in a conflict resolution program. This study also assessed the perceived transferability of conflict management information and skills from the school to the home environment, as noted by the frequency, duration, and intensity of sibling conflicts reported by conflict managers and their parents.

Justification for the Study

Schools are populated with many students, each with a distinct and ever-evolving set of values and needs. In the process of trying to meet these needs, students bump up against one another and conflict occurs. Kreidler (1984)

defined conflict as "two or more people who interact and perceive incompatible differences between, or threats to, their resources, needs, or values" (p. 10).

According to this definition, conflict situations can easily be linked to the school setting where students constantly interact. Kreidler (1984) stated that people encounter different levels of conflict every day. Sometimes these conflicts end with laughter, but other times with hurt feelings or black eyes.

Individual styles of resolving conflict are assimilated throughout one's life with influence from parents, peers, culture, religion, and from the media. Consider, for example, the confrontational and violent methods of problem solving in television programming where the "hero" is identified as the "winner." Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, stated that fighting is portrayed as too glamorous on television and is rewarded and chosen by the hero as the first solution to the problem (Hackett, Sandza, Gibney, & Gareiss, 1988).

Research confirms that violence on television is increasing and that there is a consistent relationship between television violence and subsequent aggressive behavior (Eron & Huesmann, 1987; Pearl, 1984). Television is a powerful instructor which can teach children both

antisocial and prosocial ways of behaving and solving problems. Children often view the characters on television behaving aggressively when solving interpersonal problems and imitate that aggressiveness later in their own personal situations (Eron & Huesmann, 1987; Green & Thomas, 1986).

In an attempt to counteract violent problem-solving methods, a movement began in the United States in the early 1970s to develop conflict resolution programs in schools. The premise of these programs is that a problem-solving approach to conflict is the preferred mode for dealing with disagreements. There is an assumption that conflict can be positive and has benefits if handled constructively. In general terms, these benefits are: (a) to learn new and better ways to respond to problems, (b) to build better and more lasting relationships, and (c) to learn more about oneself and others. Girard and Koch (1996) added that "conflict offers rich opportunities for learning about our culture, values, needs, and interests as well as the culture, values, needs, and interests of others" (p. 10).

Among the models of conflict resolution programs there is one developed by the San Francisco Community Board Center for Policy and Training that stands out. Currently referred to as the San Francsico Community Board Model (1990), this program trains students to be conflict managers.

The conflict managers help disputants to define and work through the problem and to identify acceptable solutions.

A study conducted by Brown (1992) provided evidence that students exposed to the San Francisco Community Board Program favored more peaceful solutions to conflict situations. Brown's study utilized three schools in the Detroit Public Schools that had conflict resolution programs as the treatment schools and three schools that did not have such a program as the control group. To more accurately measure the effectiveness of a conflict management program, Brown recommended that future research should be conducted with schools just initiating a conflict resolution program, and in a "pre" and "post" test fashion.

School-age children experience conflict with one another at school and at home. At home, school-age brothers and sisters spend more time with each other than they spend with their parents (Brooks, 1987). Research findings indicate that sibling relationships are more conflictual than peer or parent-child relationships (Dunn, 1985). Gentry and Benenson (1993) stated that "75% of children with siblings have at least one violent episode of conflict with their siblings per year" (p. 67). They also pointed out that both parents and teachers complain about spending too much time and energy arbitrating children's interpersonal conflicts.

The researcher in this study selected two middle schools that implemented the San Francisco Community Board Model in the Fall of the 1994-95 school year. A pretest-posttest experimental design was used to measure the impact of a conflict management program relative to the conflict manager's self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution. In addition, the study assessed the perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict management skills in the mediator's personal sibling relationships.

Research Questions

1. What impact did the conflict resolution program have on student conflict managers' self-esteem?

2. What impact did the conflict resolution program have on student conflict managers' communication skills?

3. What impact did the conflict resolution program have on student conflict managers' approaches to conflict resolution?

4. What impact did the conflict resolution program have on student conflict managers' perceived ability to transfer conflict management skills to the home environment when dealing with siblings?

Assumptions

1. Students are capable of acquiring conflict management skills regardless of gender, racial, ethnic, or geographic characteristics.

2. All students encounter conflict and have various techniques of resolving their conflicts, whether they are positive or negative.

Limitations

1. This study is based on the San Francisco Community Board Model, one of several possible choices.

2. The study is limited to two middle schools in Iowa that voluntarily implemented the Community Board Model in the Fall of 1994.

3. This study utilizes an intervention period of 16 weeks, or 4 months, in which conflict managers are trained and mediate conflicts with their peers.

4. The researcher had no control over the number of conflicts that were referred to conflict management in the respective schools.

5. The results of this study are based on the perceptions of the students and parents.

6. This study is limited by the different perceptions students and parents have of the questions and/or response choices.

Definition of Terms

Communication

The use of responsible speaking ("I" statements) and active listening (paraphrasing) skills, along with attention

to feelings, to encourage positive interaction between people (Benenson, 1988).

Conflict

Two or more people who interact and perceive incompatible differences between, or threats to, their resources, needs, or values (Kreidler, 1984).

Conflict Manager

A student who has completed conflict resolution training and helps disputants define the problem, work through the problem, and identify mutually acceptable solutions (Conflict managers training manual for middle school, 1987).

Confrontation

One of three styles in addressing conflict whereby one disputant verbally or physically attacks another disputant (Benenson, 1988).

Constructive Approach to Conflict Resolution

Students who use I statements, listen to others nonjudgementally, utilize collaborative decision-making, acknowledge feelings of others, show a cooperative attitude, and avoid giving put-downs (Benenson, 1988).

Denial

One of three styles in addressing conflict whereby the disputant refuses to acknowledge emotional involvement in the conflict. Often this involves feelings of anger (Benenson, 1988).

Destructive Approach to Conflict Resolution

Students who do not use " statements," listen to others nonjudgementally, utilize collaborative decision-making, acknowledge feelings of others, cooperative attitude, and avoid giving put-downs (Benenson, 1988).

Disputant

The student who is in conflict (Conflict managers training manual for middle school, 1987).

Mediation

When two parties present their points of view and the mediator, working with both sides, actively assists them in designing an agreement that is satisfactory to both (Umbreit, (1991).

Problem-Solving

One of three styles in addressing conflict whereby the disputants talk about a conflict and possible resolutions to the conflict without insulting or blaming each other (Benenson, 1988).

Self-Esteem

The conceptions of one's self relative to what is considered important, not necessarily to one's capabilities and/or knowledge (Hattie, 1992).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This review of related literature provides background information about conflict and conflict resolution programs in schools. This review is organized into seven major sections: (a) understanding conflict; (b) understanding mediation; (c) rationale for initiating conflict resolution programs; (d) rationale for implementing a conflict resolution program at the middle school level; (e) advantages of a conflict resolution program; (f) comparison of conflict resolution programs relative to history, training and implementation, effects, available services and resources; and (g) sibling rivalry.

Understanding Conflict

Conflict, a social process which takes various forms and outcomes, is neither good nor bad. Jandt (1973) noted that "Man has been most creative through conflict . . .," (p. 3) which implies that conflict can be desirable. Davis and Salem (1985) stated that "conflict is natural, conflict is inevitable, and conflict can often be constructive" (p. 21).

The conflict process merely leads to results, and the value of those results as favorable or unfavorable depends upon the measures used, the party making the judgement, and other subjective criteria (Filley, 1975). Rapoport (1967, as

cited by Vermillion, 1989) provided an interpretation of conflict, conceiving it as either a fight, game, or debate, depending on the goal or attitude of those involved. The goal of a fight is to harm the opponent; in a game, to outwit the opponent and to win the contest; in a debate, to convince the opponent (p. 34).

The conception of conflict as a fight, game, or debate has relevance to conflict in schools. A fight is one of the most obvious forms of conflict manifested in verbal or physical harassment, with one student emerging as the winner and the other, the loser. A game, such as football, basketball, or kickball on the playground, provides the opportunity for an expression for conflict. Whatever the form of competition, one individual, group, or team will emerge the winner and the other, the loser. Conflict in a debate or dispute is an essential ingredient. Here the opponents rely heavily on verbal articulation of opposing viewpoints to enact their conflict process, and one party emerges as the winner defeating the other.

Crawford and Bodine (in press) defined conflict as a natural, vital part of life. They further stated that, once conflict is understood, it can become an opportunity to learn and create.

Kreidler (1984) described conflict as two or more people who interact and perceive incompatible differences between,

or threats to, their resources, needs, or values. This causes people to behave in response to the interaction and their perception of it. The conflict will then escalate or de-escalate. This concept is supported by Deutsch (1973a) as represented in Figure 1.

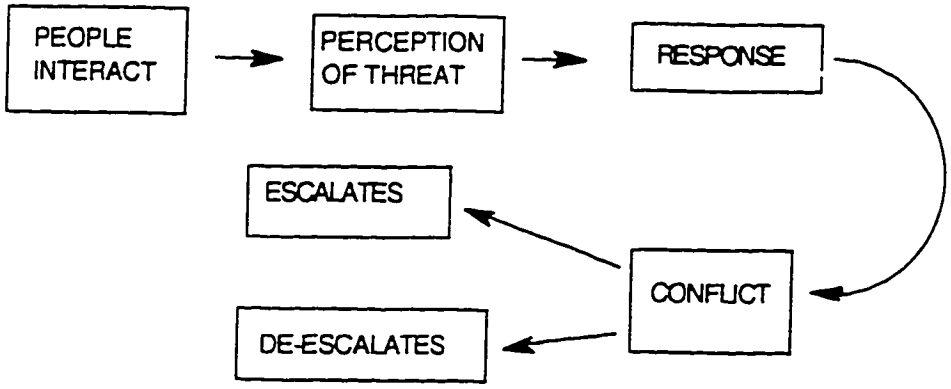

Figure 1. Pathway to Conflict

Note. Modified from The Resolution of Conflict, by M. Deutsch, 1973, New Haven CT: Yale Press.

Deutsch (1973a) stated that the terms conflict and competition are often used interchangeably. Although competition produces conflict, not all instances of conflict reflect competition. Competition implies an opposition in goals. However, conflict may occur even when there is no perceived opposition or incompatibility of goals. The basic premise of Deutsch's research is that conflict can occur in a cooperative or a competitive context, and the processes of

conflict resolution will be strongly influenced by the context within which the conflict occurs.

It is a common assumption that conflict represents failure and that conflict is bad and should be avoided at all times. Jandt (1973) suggested that this attitude is culturally learned. He further listed possible alternatives to conflict: (a) separation of the parties; (b) one party winning all, the other party losing all; and (c) a creative relationship, sometimes labeled as a compromise. Separation of the parties, however, does not resolve conflict; it only postpones conflict resolution. The win-lose concept is perhaps the most commonly accepted attitude in our society. This attitude is prevalent through competition in games from football to monopoly (Vermillion, 1989).

According to Blake and Mouton (1973), it is essential to have an understanding of the roots of conflict and refer to the "Fifth Achievement" as the establishment of a problem-solving society where differences among people are subject to resolutions upon the basis of a committed agreement. These authors stated that the first step toward this Fifth Achievement is to present a conceptual basis for analyzing situations of conflict. The conflict grid in Figure 2 (Blake & Mouton, 1973) is a way of identifying basic assumptions where people act in situations where differences are present, whether disagreement is openly expressed or silently present.

Whenever people face conflict, they have at least two basic considerations in mind. One is people, and the other is results or resolution to the disagreement. In Figure 2, the horizontal axis represents a scale from low to high concern for production of results. The vertical axis represents a low to high scale of concern for people. Considering the interactions of these two scales, there are many possible positions, each describing an intersection between the two dimensions. These are labeled A, B, C, D, and E, all describing possible styles of resolving conflict.

The statements listed by Blake and Mouton (1973) in Figure 2 are represented by one-word descriptors by Thomas and Kilmann (1981, cited by Benenson, 1988), shown in Figure 3. Note, the one word descriptors in Figure 3 correlate with the bold letters in Figure 2. The word descriptors are: (A) accommodation (low concern for results, high concern for people); (B) collaboration (high concern for results, high concern for people); (C) compromise (moderate concern for people and results); (D) avoidance (low concern for results, low concern for people); and (E) competition (high concern for results, low concern for people).

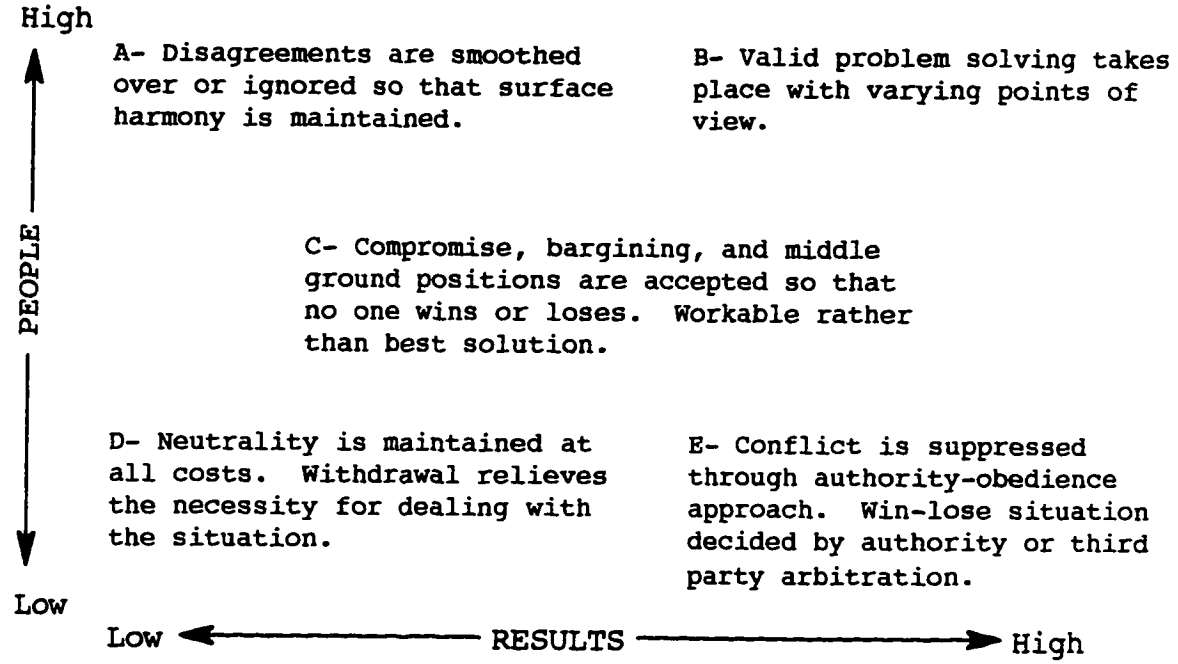

Figure 2. Blake and Mouton conflict resolution styles.

Note. From The Fifth Achievement, (p. 94), by R. Blake and J. Mouton in F. Jandt (Ed.) Conflict Resolution Through Communication, 1973, New York: Harper & Row.

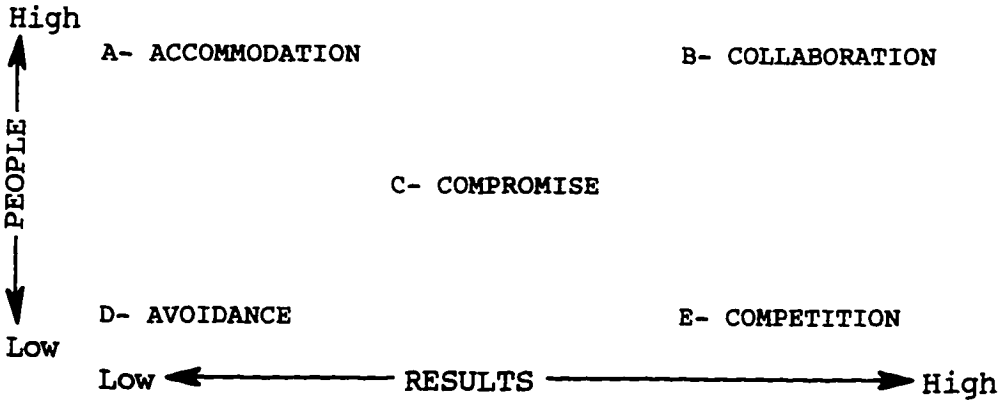

Figure 3. Thomas-Kilmann conflict styles.

Note. From "Assessing the Effectiveness of a Peer-Based Conflict Management Program in Elementary Schools," Dissertation by Wayne Benenson, 1988.

Filley (1975) identified five conflict resolution styles: (a) the accommodation-type: the "friendly helper" or "yield-lose" style where a person overvalues maintenance of relationships and undervalues achievement of personal goals, (b) the collaboration-type: the "problem-solver" or integrative style, (c) the compromise-type: giving up something in order to satisfy both parties and based on the phrase "half a loaf is better than none" (p. 52), (d) the avoidance-type: the "lose-leave" style, where one keeps encounters with others as impersonal as possible and simply removes oneself mentally or physically, and (e) the competitive-type: the "tough battler" or win-lose style, where the person seeks to meet personal goals at all costs. This type fits the former Green Bay Packer coach Vince Lombardi's quote of "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing" (O'Brien, 1987, p. 380).

The San Francisco Community Board Model (1990) synthesized conflict resolution styles as: (a) denial (avoidance, lose-leave, or low concern for results and people); (b) confrontation (accommodation, win-lose, or high concern for results and low concern for people); and (c) problem-solving (compromise, problem solver or moderate concern for results and people). For the purpose of this research, further reference to conflict resolution styles will utilize the San Francisco Model.

The review of the literature on conflict and conflict styles indicated a strong preference toward the problem-solving approach. This approach dates back to 1924, when Follett wrote Creative Experience (as cited by Roderick, 1988), advising business managers how to deal effectively with interpersonal conflicts in the work place. This also was the approach used at Camp David when the agreement between Egypt and Israel was a win-win solution on the international scene (Roderick, 1988). The basic assumption of the San Francisco Community Board Program was that the problem solving approach to conflict had the best chance for success (1990). However, the problem-solving approach to conflict resolution started slowly in the school setting with the Quakers' introduction of "The Children's Creative Response to Conflict (CCRC)" program in New York City in 1972. Along with other conflict resolution programs, the CCRC will be reviewed in a later section of this chapter.

Further elaboration of the problem-solving approach by Filley (1975) suggested several key beliefs associated with the problem solving approach (win-win method): (a) belief in the availability and desirability of a mutually acceptable solution, (b) belief in cooperation rather than competition, (c) belief that everyone is of equal value, (d) belief that differences of opinion are helpful, and (e) belief that the other party can compete but chooses to cooperate.

Understanding the Mediation Process

One of the highly renowned books in the field of negotiation is Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In (Fisher & Ury, 1981). In this resource, Fisher and Ury stated that negotiation is a fact of life and that more and more occasions require negotiation. They suggested four simple points as the basic elements to negotiation: (a) people: separate the people from the problem; (b) interests: focus on interests, not positions; (c) options: generate a variety of options for mutual gain; and (d) criteria: insist on some objective standard.

Negotiation is similar to mediation but differs in that the parties work out their differences without the assistance of the mediator. Mediation is the utilization of the services of another person to help settle a dispute. The person who assists does not give judgement in the nature of a court or an award in the nature of an arbitrator. Rather, the mediator aids the disputants to arrive at a solution to their problem (Graham & Cline, 1989).

Davis and Salem (1985) defined mediation "as a process in which an impartial third party helps disputants negotiate a settlement to their differences" (p. 32). Umbreit (1991) noted that "mediation is when two parties present their points of view and the mediator, working with both sides, actively assists them in designing an agreement that is

satisfactory to both" (p. 142). Umbreit also emphasized that the mediator does not impose a settlement, and it is preferable that it comes from the disputants. Mediation is also different from arbitration, which involves a third party who makes a decision after hearing arguments and reviewing evidence from both sides.

Davis and Gadlin (1988) suggested that mediation contains a certain logic which includes six areas. First, it acknowledges the importance of setting sufficient time to engage in concentrated problem solving, while also taking into account the need to buffer or soften the interaction between parties. Second, it allows the parties directly involved in a dispute to speak for themselves, to define the issues as they perceive them. Third, it acknowledges the interaction of emotional needs and rational thought and allows people to develop resolutions that speak to both. Fourth, the stages are paced to follow human problem-solving or negotiation patterns. This pattern includes the decision to try for a resolution, the expression of feelings about the matter, discussion of the circumstances, identification of the issues, agreement upon a common agenda, a search for solutions, and the need for resolution. Fifth, it avoids the need to place blame, thereby leaving room for differences of opinion about values and facts. Finally, it leads to

agreements that parties feel more committed to honor because of their high involvement in developing terms.

The theory of mediation, developed by Pastorino (1991), advances the notion that resolution has occurred when the experience reaches a point where genuine communication, understanding, and acceptance of similarities and differences are realized between parties of conflict. Pastorino's (1991) mediation experience model includes five key concepts: (a) the conflict management process assumes all participants are equal, which creates a balance of power; (b) the basic rules include no physical contact, no abusive language, no put-downs, and only one person talks at a time; (c) the rule of confidentiality is imperative to foster both safety and freedom to explore conflict; (d) the disputants must be in agreement to reach an agreement prior to beginning a conflict management session; and (e) the facilitators are peers in order to develop trust and confidence. This development of trust and confidence is attributed to their common age group, speaking the same language, familiarity with a common social milieu, and confidence to relate to one another more effectively.

Pastorino (1991) outlined the following steps in this mediation process:

1. Preliminary agreement to agree.
2. Expressing his/her feelings and perceptions.

3. Curiosity forces both parties to become engaged.

4. Clearing up any inconsistencies.

5. Getting to the truth of the matter or the root of the problem.

6. Arriving on the same wave length of achieving the actual resolution.

7. Arriving at new understandings of self and other.

8. Agreement. (p. 12)

Kreidler (1984) translated mediation literature to working with children and described mediation as a way of helping children solve their differences in the presence of a calm, nonpartisan observer who keeps everything fair. Kreidler suggested the following procedure:

1. Tell the children that each of them will have the opportunity to give his or her side of the story without interruption.

2. As each child talks, have him or her first tell what the problem was and then what happened during the conflict.

3. If the problem still exists, help the participants develop some possible solutions and choose one to implement.

4. If the problem no longer exists, ask the participants if there might have been more effective ways to solve the problem than the one they chose.

Schmidt and Friedman (1990) developed a set of rules for children in their Fighting Fair Curriculum that correlate

with Kreidler's mediation process for children. The rules for fighting fair are:

1. Identify the problem.
2. Focus on the problem.
3. Attack the problem, not the person.
4. Listen with an open mind.
5. Treat a person's feelings with respect.
6. Take responsibility for your actions.

Anger, a common feeling associated with conflict and a reason to utilize mediation was addressed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who offered a way for children to deal with anger without hurting other children (cited by Schmidt & Friedman, 1990). King's steps in attacking the problem, not people, were:

1. Cool off.
2. Use I care language.
3. Find the right time and place.
4. Listen to each other's side of the story. One person talks, the other listens, one at a time without interruptions.
5. Listen to each other's feelings.
6. Think of ways to resolve the conflict by brainstorming together.
7. Select the solution which will work for both.
8. Implement the solution (p. 18).

The mediation process developed by the San Francisco Community Board Model (1990) is a combination of other

models, yet contains key points suggested by different authors. The key components include: (a) belief that conflict is an opportunity and can be positive or negative (Davis, 1986; Deutsch, 1973b; Jandt, 1973; Kreidler, 1984); (b) the problem solving approach is a "win-win" approach (Lippitt, 1983; Smith, 1990); (c) feelings should be acknowledged (Cheatham, 1988; Davis, 1986; Frey, Holley, & L'Abate, 1979; Pastorino, 1991; Schmidt & Friedman, 1990); (d) mediators do not suggest solutions, but assist disputants in arriving at mutually acceptable solutions (Cheatham, 1988; Filley, 1975; Pastorino, 1991); and (e) training involves developing good communication skills (Davis, 1986; Fisher & Ury, 1981; Frey et al., Kreidler, 1984; Pastorino, 1991).

The San Francisco Community Board Model (1990) identified the following mediation process for the middle school level. In helping the disputants, conflict managers will:

1. Introduce themselves, explain confidentiality (what is said is not repeated to others), and give a disclaimer (we don't deal with anything illegal).

2. Explain and get agreement from each disputant on six rules: solve the problem, no name calling, do not interrupt, be as honest as possible, no physical fighting, and speak directly to the conflict managers.

3. Allow the first disputant to describe what happened, restate and ask how he/she feels. Then allow the second person to tell his or her side, restate, and ask how he/she feels.

4. Clarify with questions to help understand the problem.

5. Ask the first disputant what he/she can do to solve this problem and repeat the question for the second person. Get agreement from both disputants for each of the solutions; if not, repeat this step.

6. Ask the first disputant what he/she can do to prevent this problem from happening again. Repeat question for the second person.

7. Inform both disputants to tell their friends the conflict has been solved to prevent rumors.

8. Congratulate the disputants for working hard to resolve their conflict.

9. Fill out a report form.

The high school model differs because the two disputants are allowed to discuss with each other the problem and acknowledge feelings directly to each other.

Rationale for Starting a Conflict Resolution Program

Conflict resolution programs have often been implemented in schools where there is a high level of physical violence. They are justified through alarming statistics of violence.

Brown (1992) noted that in Detroit Public Schools, in 1988, 433 students under age 17 were wounded, and 77 were killed. Koch (1993) added that 15% of American 10th graders carried a knife to school and 44% of 8th grade students in the United States were involved in at least one physical fight. Another indication of growing violence is the expanding number and activity of gangs in schools (Vermillion, 1989). Therefore, many schools have reason to be concerned with the severity and frequency of violence in schools.

Kreidler (1984) states that people encounter conflict every day and these conflicts can range from hurt feelings to black eyes. This previous statement indicates that not all conflicts end in violence and that there is a range of responses to conflict. Therefore, schools will have different reasons for implementing a conflict resolution program.

Mack and Snyder (1973) noted that resolution of conflict reduces tension and permits maintenance of relationships. Deutsch (1973b) supported the premise that the regulation of conflict decreases the likelihood that conflict will take a destructive course, which usually means the conflict has escalated and consequences become more severe.

Roderick (1988) suggested that the main reason to implement conflict resolution programs is to show kids they have choices besides passivity or aggression. "All they knew

before conflict resolution was to fight. Now the students have choices" (p. 90).

There are a number of reasons why conflict resolution is productive, as listed by Deutsch (1973a, p. 363):

1. It aids open and honest communication between individuals.

2. It encourages the recognition of the legitimacy of other's interests and of the necessity to search for a solution that is responsive to the needs of both sides.

3. It leads to a trusting, friendly attitude, which increases sensitivity to similarities and common interests, while minimizing the salience of differences. It stimulates a convergence of beliefs and values.

4. The cooperative process produces many of the characteristics that are conducive to creative thinking.

Crawford and Bodine (in press) list several compelling, valid reasons for every school to implement a program to teach youth conflict resolution:

1. The problem-solving process of conflict resolution can improve school climate.

2. Conflict resolution strategies can reduce violence, vandalism, chronic school absence, and suspension.

3. Conflict resolution training helps students and teachers deepen their understanding of themselves and others, and develops important life skills.

4. Training in negotiation, mediation, and consensus decision-making encourages a high level of citizenship activity.

5. Shifting the responsibility for solving nonviolent conflicts to students frees adults to concentrate more on teaching and less on discipline.

There were several specific reasons for initiating a conflict resolution program in the State of Iowa (Davenport & Koch, 1993). The most significant reasons were:

1. Iowa is relatively small and contains a large number of consolidated rural schools.

2. Iowa is home to the Iowa Peace Institute (IPI), which acts as a catalyst by providing statewide facilitation and leadership.

3. The Iowa Legislature approved House File 774 that states that the Department of Education shall develop and establish a conflict resolution program to assist teachers and administrators in the management of disputes among students.

4. Students, administrators, teachers, and parents have strong positive feelings about how these programs are enhancing their school environments.

These reasons make Iowa an ideal place for research on the effects of conflict resolution programs in smaller, less violent schools.

Rationale for Implementing a Conflict Resolution Program at the Middle School Level

Research has confirmed that any school-age student is capable of learning conflict resolution skills (Vermillion, 1989). Children have needs, interests, and positions, just like adults, and need help learning how to recognize, respond to, and solve the variety of conflicts and problems they encounter. Thus, conflict resolution skills fit within developmentally appropriate curricula for secondary students (Girard & Koch, 1996).

The San Francisco Community Board Conflict Resolution Program has many components that fit the developmental characteristics of young adolescents. The core concept of the San Francisco Community Board Conflict Resolution Program is to provide students with an opportunity to resolve their conflicts using a problem-solving approach. Vernon (1993) stated that, cognitively, 11-15 year-olds are entering the formal operational stage of development in which they become increasingly capable to develop hypotheses and make conclusions about effective ways to solve problems. They also are beginning to think more like a scientist thinks, devising plans to solve problems and systematically testing solutions (Santrock, 1993). Santrock also added that not all adolescents are full-fledged formal operational thinkers. Thus, providing a forum for which problem-solving is modeled

and practiced could assist adolescents in that transition to formal operational thinking.

Through the problem-solving method, an agreement is reached that is mutually acceptable to both disputants. This ability to make sensible decisions is another characteristic of young adolescents. Mann, Harmoni, and Power (1989) suggested that conflicts relating to interpersonal decisions are significant during adolescence. Furthermore, when faced with difficult interpersonal decisions, adolescents often use unsatisfactory coping patterns such as complacency and defensive avoidance. The San Francisco Community Board Model emphasizes resolving conflicts rather than using avoidance and providing adolescents with the opportunities to practice and discuss realistic decision making. According to Mann et al., providing adolescents with the opportunity to engage in role-playing and group problem-solving is one strategy to improve adolescent decision making skills. This model not only provides an opportunity to practice decision making but also provides a sequential structure to assist students in the process.

Another aspect of the San Francisco Community Board Model is that conflicts are mediated by peers, without the presence of an adult. Developmental psychologist David Elkind (1988) also supported this proposition. He stated that adolescent social thinking can be categorized into two

types: imaginary audience and personal fable. The imaginary audience refers to the heightened self-consciousness of adolescents and their desire to be noticed, visible, or on stage. The personal fable reflects adolescents' sense of personal uniqueness which makes them feel that no one can truly understand how they really feel. Both of these types of social thinking can be linked to the model's lack of adult intervention. The students themselves are "on stage," and other adolescents serve as the real audience, thereby minimizing the feelings of self-consciousness. Also, students are more likely to share their feelings with peers rather than adults, thus increasing the chance that feelings will be acknowledged.

The skills that are taught in the conflict management training parallel some key developmental characteristics of adolescents. During the training, the student mediators practice questioning techniques to better understand the disputants' problem. They also practice the skill of restating to clarify feelings and verbalize the essence of the conflict. This ability to understand another person's thoughts and feelings is considered "perspective taking" in Selman's (1980) adolescent development theory. He also stated that adolescents who are competent at perspective taking are better at understanding the needs of their companions so they are more apt to effectively communicate

with them. Santrock (1993) added that adolescent perspective taking can increase self-understanding and improve their peer relations.

Every adolescent wants to be popular. Sometimes adolescents will go to great lengths to be popular or to increase the likelihood that they will be popular. Santrock (1993) suggested that peer popularity in adolescents is related to listening skills, effective communication, being yourself, being happy, and showing enthusiasm and concern for others (p. 232). He further stated that adolescents need to hear what others say instead of trying to dominate peer interactions. Students who go through the conflict resolution training are taught good listening skills and effective communication skills. These skills are practiced during the training and are also reinforced throughout the year in the bi-weekly meetings held by the coordinator of the program.

In summary, young adolescents experience some developmental characteristics that provide the basis for the concepts of the San Francisco Community Board Conflict Resolution Program. Skills taught and reinforced in this program can assist adolescents through a time filled with developmental struggles.

Advantages of a Conflict Resolution Program

As previously mentioned, mediation is a primary technique used in conflict resolution. Educating students in mediation is a preventative technique to avoid negative consequences of conflict. The National Institute for Dispute Resolution identified several advantages related to the practice of mediation (Umbreit, 1991). These advantages include the ability to respect confidentiality of the individuals, the ability to control the process by the parties involved, the ability to generate integrative solutions, and the ability to address underlying problems. Furthermore, the process educates disputants, there is a high rate of compliance, and the implication is that mediated agreements endure.

Another advantage of mediation is shared decision making, which shifts the responsibility for enforcement from the teachers and administrators to the students. Participation in decision making "directly nurtures self-respect, emotional stability, self-confidence, social responsibility, nonaggressive leadership, and meaningful involvement with life" (Briggs, 1970 cited by Maxwell, 1989). Koch and Miller (1987) suggested that children and adolescents accept and support rules they have helped design far greater than rules that are imposed on them from a higher authority.

It is the self-empowering aspect of mediation that fosters these positive characteristics in students. Koch (1988) described the major value of conflict resolution programs as the learning it evokes among students, particularly problem-solving skills, language development, and communication skills in general. In addition, he listed five program outcomes for students: (a) learning to be responsible for their own behavior, (b) learning to be responsible and responsive to their peers in a cooperative, constructive mode, (c) learning to be fair, (d) improving self-concept, and (e) learning resolution skills in a protected environment.

Pastorino (1991) identified the following implications of the mediation process: (a) mediation creates an open as opposed to a closed system experience; (b) mediation promotes non-adversarial as opposed to adversarial processes for problem solving; (c) the mediation process promotes understanding and acceptance as opposed to winning or being right; and (d) mediation fosters independence, self-reliance, and self-competence, as well as genuine and direct assertive communication.

Araki (1990) conducted a study in the Honolulu School District to test several research questions relative to conflict resolution. The primary question was can mediation as a technique be used by students to manage disputes? The

results indicated that students can indeed use mediation successfully with their peers. Of the 127 student-student dispute cases, 91.7% were deemed successful. Araki also found that the students trained to be mediators were significantly empowered and improved academically, especially those with marginal academic grades. Teachers and administrators consistently reported improvements in attitude of both mediators and disputants.

Another key point in favor of school mediation programs comes from Stichter (1986), a law student and former research associate with the Mennonite Conciliation Service. She noted that school mediation programs respond to conflict immediately, rather than at some future date. Stichter also concluded that youngsters are more "present oriented" (p. 41) than adults. Johnson, Johnson, Dudley, and Burnett (1992) added that conflict resolution programs teach students self-responsibility and self-regulation. Self-regulation is "the ability to act in socially approved ways in the absence of external monitors and is a central and significant hallmark of cognitive and social development" (p. 10).

Davis and Porter (1985) listed 10 reasons for implementing a school-based mediation program:

1. Conflict is a natural human state often accompanying changes in our institutions or personal growth. It is better approached with skills than avoidance.
2. More appropriate and effective systems are needed to deal with conflict in the school setting than

expulsion, suspension, court intervention, and detention.

3. The use of mediation to resolve school-based disputes can result in improved communication between and among students, teachers, administrators, and parents and can, in general, improve school climate as well as provide a forum for addressing common concerns.

4. The use of mediation as a conflict resolution method can result in a reduction of violence, vandalism, chronic school absence, and suspension.

5. Mediation training helps both young people and teachers to deepen their understanding about themselves and others and provides them with lifetime dispute resolution skills.

6. Mediation training increases student's interest in conflict resolution, justice, and the American legal system while encouraging a higher level of citizenship activity.

7. Shifting the responsibility for solving appropriate school conflicts from adults to young adults and children frees both teachers and administrators to concentrate more on teaching than on discipline.

8. Recognizing that young people are competent to participate in the resolution of their own disputes encourages student growth and gives students skills such as listening, critical thinking, and problem-solving that are basic to all learning.

9. Mediation training, with its emphasis upon listening to others' points of view and peaceful resolution of differences, assists in preparing students to live in a multi-cultural world.

10. Mediation provides a system for problem solving that is uniquely suited to the personal nature of young people's problems and is frequently used by students for problems they would not take to parents, teachers, counselors, or administrators. (p. 27)

The Ohio School Conflict Management Demonstration Project, conducted in 17 schools between 1990 and 1993, improved student attitudes toward conflict, increased

understanding of non-violent problem-solving methods, and enhanced communication skills. Also, during the 1992-1993 school year, Clark County Social Service School Mediation Program in Nevada reported that peer mediators demonstrated a significant increase in conflict management skills, self-esteem, and assertiveness (Crawford & Bodine, in press).

In summarizing the benefits of a conflict peer mediation program in schools, the following are quotes from students who have been trained to be mediators (Koch & Miller, 1987, p. 62; Smith, 1990, p. 114):

> "It helped me at home with my stepfather; after mediation training I didn't fight with him so much." (Rochelle)
>
> "Mediation helps me solve my own fights. It also gives me a good feeling inside after I mediate an argument." (Michelle)
>
> "I'm kind of little and don't do well in sports. But people respect me for being a mediator." (Tony)
>
> "Being a mediator makes me feel good because I know I have helped someone. It also makes me feel important." (Samika)
>
> "Learning mediation has helped me deal with anger in a positive way." (Julie)
>
> "Personally, I would rather talk to another student, they can understand you." (L.)
>
> "It taught me to give a person a chance, to try harder to relax to what my point of view is and to listen to what they have to say about their side of the story. When they see me trying harder to work with them, they began to start working with me at the same level." (W.)

Support for the inclusion of conflict resolution skills is listed in the Healthy People 2000 Report. This report is

the national strategy for improving the health of the nation and objective 7.16 stated: "Increase to at least 50% the proportion of elementary and secondary schools that teach nonviolent conflict resolution skills, preferably as part of quality school health education" (p. 298).

Comparison of Conflict Resolution Programs

Cheatham (1988) published a comprehensive directory of over 200 school mediation and conflict resolution programs in the United States, Canada, and England. This directory of programs is just a sampling of such programs in existence. Cheatham noted that the majority of programs are derived from four models: (a) the San Francisco Community Board Model; (b) the Children's Creative Response to Conflict (CCRC) program in Nyack, New York; (c) the School Mediators Alternative Resolution Team (SMART) in New York City; and (d) Einstein-Gordon's model in Chicago. These four models will subsequently be described, with the descriptions organized into four sections: history, training and implementation, effects on school, and available services and resources.

San Francisco Community Board Model

History. The Community Board Program established Conflict Resolution Resources for Schools and Youth (formerly called the School Initiatives Program) in 1982 at the urging of volunteers who wanted to reduce the level of tension and hostility in schools. Conflict manager programs (CMP) and

conflict resolution curricula were initiated in several San Francisco schools. By the end of 1988, conflict manager programs were operating in 13 elementary, 10 middle, 3 high schools and 3 K-8 Catholic schools in the San Francisco area. As of January, 1993, an additional 6 elementary schools have added the program. Contracts to train and implement the program in several more elementary and middle schools will be established.

Training and implementation. Training teachers, resource and administrative staff, is the first step. Often a teacher who participates in the training becomes coordinator of the conflict management program. The coordinator is responsible for final selection of conflict managers, student training, scheduling of conflict managers, maintaining records, updating the faculty, and conducting regular meetings with the conflict managers.

Student training takes approximately 15 hours and usually takes place during school hours. Normally 10 to 25 students are trained each year. The training focuses on building communication skills and role-playing the conflict resolution process.

Conflict managers help disputants define and work through the problem and identify mutually acceptable solutions. Conflict managers are taught to stay neutral and not give advice. Conflict managers always work in pairs.

Effects on school. Conflict management programs help create an environment more conducive to learning because students are better equipped to handle conflict constructively. Trained students report using skills at home and with friends. Coordinators report that suspensions decrease and students' self-esteem increases.

Available services and resources. Community Board staff have developed a number of materials including a complete school curriculum. They also distribute videotapes about their program and offer on-site training and assistance to schools by contract.

Children's Creative Response to Conflict (CCRC)

History. CCRC started in 1972 and was sponsored by the Quaker Project on Community Conflict, a project of the Peace and Social Action Program of the Religious Society of Friends.

During the 1986-87 school year, CCRC initiated school programs. By the end of the year, CCRC trained students and teachers in three New York City schools, two elementary and one intermediate school. The CCRC coordinator is paid by grants from the New York State Youth Board of Education and Educators for Social Responsibility.

Training and implementation. Student mediators are chosen by consent of teachers and students. They receive 10 to 30 hours of training during school time and over a

weekend. In some cases, mediators are trained to work in classrooms only; in other cases, students mediate referred disputes.

Effects on school. Self-esteem of mediators has increased dramatically in the CCRC's school program. Overall school climate has improved as well.

Available services and resources. A handbook on creative approaches to problem solving is available. CCRC offers training anywhere in the world.

School Mediation Alternative Resolution Team (SMART)

History. SMART began in 1983 at the W. C. Bryant High School in Queens, New York City. The Victim Services Agency initiated the program. Since 1983, the program has expanded to five additional high schools and one junior high. These schools welcomed SMART because administrators could see that mediation was a good way to address truancy, attendance, and "school climate" problems as well as crime and violence. Five of the programs are funded by the NYC Board of Education; two are funded by the NYC Youth Bureau. Funding pays for the school coordinators' salaries and for other administrative costs.

Training and implementation. Student mediators volunteer for training with parental permission. The school coordinator recruits a variety of students that represent the different subgroups in the school. The main method

for recruiting students is classroom seminars on conflict resolution.

Mediators receive 15 to 20 hours of training during and after school hours. Teachers, parents, deans, guidance counselors, and security staffs are also trained. Students mediate student-student disputes, and student-staff teams mediate student-teacher and student-parent disputes. Mediators work in pairs or individually with an adult mediator.

Effects on school. Suspensions for student fighting dropped dramatically at each of the high schools. SMART programs have given students and staff an opportunity to open lines of communication, to explore new ways of approaching problems, and to develop a sense of accomplishment both on a personal level and as agents of change. Improvements in self-esteem and positive behavioral changes are indicators of success.

Available services and resources. Victim Services Agency staff are available for consultation. They also distribute a free program summary about project SMART.

Chicago Public School Resolution Program

History. In 1984, the John Marshall Law School collaborated with the Chicago Public School System to develop the Chicago Public School Conflict Resolution Program. As

the director, Dr. Vivian Einstein-Gordon developed the program and authored a six-week curriculum for ninth graders. The curriculum includes introductions to negotiation, mediation, and arbitration.

Training and implementation. All Chicago ninth graders (approximately 10,000) take a mandatory course in conflict resolution. Each school implements the program in its own way to meet its particular needs. Some schools use the program as part of the drop-out prevention initiative; some use it as part of the student government training; others use it in the guidance and counseling department.

Effects on school. Teachers involved in the program have given it unanimous support. One teacher commented that the skills are necessary for the resolution of everyday problems.

The program has been featured in Chicago Tribune stories and on Chicago radio stations and has received grant awards from the American Bar Association. It is being replicated in six other cities throughout the United States.

Available services and resources Dr. Einstein-Gordon's curriculum on conflict resolution is available.

Julie Lam (1988), Coordinator of Research for the University of Massachusetts Mediation Project, prepared a review of conflict resolution entitled: "The Impact of Conflict Resolution Programs on Schools: A Review and

Synthesis of the Evidence." This review covers seven programs in Poughkeepsie, New York; New Mexico; Colorado Springs, Colorado; New York City; Chatham County, North Carolina; Greenfield, Massachusetts; and Burnaby, British Columbia. The purpose of the project was to summarize existing research on school-based mediation or conflict resolution programs in such a way as to make it accessible to school administrators who are interested in starting similar programs in their schools.

In a summary of Lam's review (Brown, 1992), all seven of the studies revealed some positive effects on student mediators, the general student body, and teachers. The studies generally made claims of success, broadly defined, and some made even stronger claims of "definite impact."

In an article describing the status of conflict resolution programs in the State of Iowa, Davenport and Koch (1993) stated that 10% of all Iowa teachers have been trained in school-based conflict resolution skills. Additionally, approximately 6,000 K-12 students have been intensively trained in one of the major conflict resolution models. Conflict resolution programs have experienced rapid growth over the past 4 years in the state of Iowa, and students, administrators, teachers, and parents have strong positive feelings about how these programs are enhancing their school environment (Davenport & Koch, 1993).

Sibling Rivalry

Eighty percent of children in the United States grow up with siblings (Dunn, 1985). Dunn noted that the time children spend together is far greater than the time children spend with their mothers or fathers. She also stated that conflict is inevitable with siblings and that what happens in the early childhood years is of real significance to adult siblings. Greer (1992) supported this notion by asserting that sibling rivalry is not confined to childhood but originates there.

It is no secret that family life includes a measure of conflict and that sibling conflict is frequent and intense (Greer, 1992). Ames (1982) added that sibling conflict is "like the person who climbed the mountain; siblings fight because they are there" (p. 16). Aggression toward one another is "common among young chimps and wolf cubs, and is common among young children" (Leder, 1991, p. 4). Sibling rivalry is simply a fact of life. You can "deny it, suppress it, understand it, change it or improve it, but you can't get rid of it" (Hapworth, Hapworth, & Heilman, 1993, p. 5).

The term "sibling rivalry" carries with it negative connotations, and to most people it signifies trouble. In the healthiest sense, sibling rivalry can be positive, because it is an opportunity to interact and practice social behavior (Hapworth et al.). This relates to Jandt's (1973)

assertion that conflict can lead to creative opportunities and is neither good nor bad.

Another concept in conflict resolution is that peers mediate the conflicts without the intervention of an adult. Ames (1982) indicated that the more parents can manage to stay out of sibling conflicts, the more ingenious and self-reliant children will become in settling their own squabbles (p. 24). Leder (1991) added that the more parents intervene in sibling fights, the less chance siblings learn how to resolve conflicts for themselves. She summarized this idea with the following quote: "Okay, we know that most siblings quarrel. It's normal and actually quite healthy, if only parents would stay out and let their kids resolve their own conflicts" (p. 59).

A study by Raffaelli (1992) on sibling conflict in early adolescence classified conflict resolution strategies into four categories: (a) no overt resolution, which was reported as the most common strategy, (b) outside intervention, which also did not require the siblings to work out their differences, (c) capitulation, where one sibling gave in to the other, sometimes forcibly and producing a winner and a loser, and (d) compromise, which was reported as the most infrequent method. The results of this study closely resembled the styles of conflict described in the conflict resolution literature. It also implied that there is a need

to educate and advocate the problem-solving or compromising strategy so that more siblings can utilize this strategy.

Summary

The first section of this chapter described conflict and the different styles of resolving conflict. The diagrams by Blake and Mouton (1973) and Thomas and Kilmann (cited by Benenson, 1988) presented a conceptual basis for analyzing conflict. The mediation process as described by various authors was identified and compared to the San Francisco Community Board Model. Fisher and Ury's (1981) book Getting to Yes appeared to have laid the foundation for many different mediation programs.

The next section of this chapter developed a rationale for implementing conflict resolution programs in schools. The best summary of reasons for implementing a school-based mediation program was described by Davis and Porter (1985) in their 10 reasons for instituting a school-based mediation program.

The chapter then summarized four model programs that form the basis for most other conflict mediation programs. The description of these programs are included in Cheatham's (1988) directory of over 200 mediation and conflict resolution programs in United States, Canada, and England. The final section of the chapter demonstrated that conflict is not limited to school but exists at home. Sibling rivalry

is common, and conflict resolution skills can be applied with siblings.

In conclusion, "to teach peace through nonviolence is to give the young a chance to develop a philosophy of force--the force of justice, the force of love, the force of sharing wealth, and the force of ideas" (McCarthy, 1992, p. 8). Teaching alternatives to violence does indeed arm children with ideas and skills.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of a conflict management program on the conflict managers' self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution. In addition, the perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict management skills in the managers' personal sibling relationships was examined.

This chapter describes the methodology and procedure used in this study. It includes a discussion of the subjects, procedure, and experimental design.

Subjects

The Iowa Peace Institute is the supporting organization behind the conflict resolution movement in Iowa. The Iowa Peace Institute exists because violence is an unacceptable way of dealing with conflict. The Peace Institute's mission is to reduce the costs of conflict and to help people solve their problems (Resolution Report, 1996). The Iowa Peace Institute endorses the San Francisco Community Board model, which is the model most commonly used by schools in this state. Therefore, only schools that will be implementing this specific model were considered for this study.

Two middle schools in northeast Iowa which implemented the San Francisco Community Board Conflict Resolution Program in the Fall of 1994 were selected. Dysart Middle School and

Western Dubuque Middle School are both located in a rural setting and are similar in size.

The subjects who served as conflict managers in this study were middle school students ranging in age from 12 to 15. Early adolescents were chosen because developmental theories that focus on adolescents confirm that the middle school level is an appropriate level for implementing conflict resolution programs. Vernon (1993) stated that cognitively 11-15 year-olds are entering the formal operational stage of development. She noted that because of this adolescents are potentially able to develop hypotheses and form conclusions about effective ways to solve problems. This is one reason why the San Francisco Community Board conflict resolution model was selected by the Iowa Peace Institute. It is designed to enable students in conflict (the disputants) a means for determining their own resolution by providing a problem-solving method.

According to Vernon (1993), adolescents are in the process of developing a greater sense of individuality, identity, and emotional independence. The San Francisco Community Board model allows for this. It provides a conflict resolution process which is conducted by peer mediators (conflict managers) and without the presence of adults.

The skills that are taught in the conflict management training also reflect some key developmental characteristics of adolescents. One such characteristic is the ability to understand another person's thoughts and feelings. This is considered "perspective taking" in Selman's (1980) adolescent development theory. Another developmental characteristic in adolescents is acquiring decision-making skills. Mann et al. (1989) suggested that adolescents need more opportunities to practice realistic decision-making. The San Francisco Community Board Model not only provides this opportunity but also includes a sequential structure to assist students in the process.

The subjects in this study consisted of 60 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at Dysart Middle School and 60 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at Western Dubuque Middle School. The initial pool of subjects were generated through a process of self-nomination, peer nomination, and teacher nominations. The entire student body had an orientation to the conflict management program and had the opportunity to express interest in being a conflict manager, and to nominate two peers to be conflict managers. The counselor and teachers reviewed the list to confirm that the student body was appropriately represented in regards to gender, grade level, race, and peer groups (i.e., athletes and nonathletes). The compiled list contained 60 students, 30 of

whom were assigned to the experimental group and 30 to the control group using a stratified sampling procedure. Stratified sampling is a way of selecting a sample that assures that certain subgroups in the population will be represented in the sample (Borg & Gall, 1983). Students were grouped in four categories that included: gender, race, grade level, and peer groups. Utilizing a table of random numbers, students were randomly assigned to the treatment and control groups. The experimental and control groups at both schools each contained 10 students per grade level (sixth, seventh, and eighth), 15 males and 15 females, 15 students considered to be in the athletic crowd and 15 students considered to be nonathletes, and only one visable minority student was placed in the experimental group at Dysart Middle School. In addition, 5 extra students were designated as alternates in case those selected to the experimental group failed to have siblings living at home.

Procedure

The procedures for this study will be described in four stages: (a) the pilot study that utilized the same instruments and procedures outlined in this study, (b) the pretest stage that describes the initial data collection procedures and the instruments, (c) the intervention or treatment, and (d) the posttest stage that describes the data

collection procedure after the intervention (treatment) was implemented.

Pilot Test

A pilot study was performed in 1991-92 at Northern University Middle School, Cedar Falls, Iowa, to determine the time necessary to complete the two instruments, to check the wording of the questions, and to receive any feedback regarding the two instruments.

Northern University Middle School is a Laboratory School that is part of the Department of Teaching, University of Northern Iowa. It is a state-supported school with approximately 600 students ranging from nursery/kindergarten to grade 12. The San Francisco Community Board Model was implemented at the middle school during the 1991-92 school year. A total of 20 conflict managers, 10 seventh and 10 eighth graders, were trained in early November by experienced trainers identified through the Iowa Peace Institute.

All 20 conflict managers participated in the pilot study. They were administered a pretest in October and a posttest in March. The instruments used were the Conflict Management Questionnaire (Benenson, 1988) and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1981) for school age children. Names were included on the questionnaires to allow for pre-posttest match.

As a result of the pilot study, the researcher learned that it took approximately 20 to 30 minutes for the students to complete both instruments. Also, slight adjustments were made to the Conflict Management Questionnaire due to feedback from the students. Specifically, there were 10 questions that dealt with how the students felt about themselves. The students viewed those questions and the questions on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory as redundant. Because the Coopersmith instrument is more detailed and provides a better assessment of self-esteem, the questions concerning self-esteem on the Conflict Management Questionnaire were eliminated for the purpose of this study. Each section of the Conflict Management Questionaire was scored independently, therefore, eliminating one section of the instrument would not effect how the other sections of the instrument were scored.

Pretest Stage

Initial contact with Dysart Middle School and Western Dubuque Middle School was made by the researcher through a phone call to the school counselor and the building principal. A brief explanation of the study was given and permission to conduct the research was obtained. A contact person at each school was identified so that all future communication would be made through this person.

The entire student body at each school were given an orientation assembly by the researcher to introduce basic concepts of the conflict management program. The assembly lasted approximately 30 minutes with the content focusing on: (a) the three styles of resolving conflict: denial, confrontation, and problem-solving, (b) what conflict management is and why it will be implemented in the school, (c) demonstration of the conflict management process using previously trained student managers from Northern University Middle School, and (d) specific school procedures, such as how to refer a conflict and who to refer the conflict to, where the conflict management session would be held, and policy for getting out of class. All students were also told that by volunteering to be a conflict manager, they would also be participating in a research study.

At the conclusion of the orientation assembly, all students received an index card and were instructed to put their name on the top line, yes or no on the second line to the question "Would you be willing to be a conflict manager?" and the third line they were to nominate two peers they thought would be good conflict managers. The cards were collected and given to the counselor at each building.

The subjects were then selected using the stratified sampling procedure described earlier in the subjects section with the assistance of the researcher. The parent(s) or

guardian(s) of the students selected for the treatment and control groups were sent a letter by the researcher to obtain informed consent to participate in the study (see Appendix A). The informed consent form was designed to provide parents with basic information concerning the study and to obtain permission for their child to participate in the study. The parents/guardians were asked to return the informed consent form within 2 weeks. A follow-up phone call was made by the researcher if consent forms were not received by the date requested.

The contact person was instructed by the researcher on how and when to administer the questionnaires to both the treatment and control groups. The pretesting was completed before the conflict managers' training began. The students needed approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete both instruments. Names were included to allow for posttest match, but the students were assured that only the researcher would utilize their names and that individual responses would not be reported.

The pretest instruments included the Conflict Management Questionnaire (Appendix B) and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Appendix C) which were administered to the treatment and control groups. The other part of pretesting included collecting data concerning the perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict resolution skills. This was

accomplished by utilizing the procedures in a study done by Gentry and Benenson (1993). They interviewed each student in the treatment group, as well as one parent or guardian in a pre-posttest design. The researcher in this study contacted the parents of the conflict managers by telephone to set up an interview schedule, and it was the choice of the families which parent elected to come in for the interview.

Gentry and Benenson (1993) developed the questions that provided the structure for the interviews (see Appendix D). The interviews lasted approximately 15 minutes and the interviewer wrote down the responses, as well as tape recorded the interview for later interpretation. This procedure is described in more detail in the instrumentation section of this chapter. The procedures by Gentry and Benenson were utilized in this study with the following modifications: (a) it was conducted at the middle school level instead of the elementary level, and (b) it extended the time for the conflict managers to practice resolving conflicts from 10 weeks to 16 weeks or 4 months.

The first instrument utilized was The Conflict Management Questionnaire, adapted from Benenson (1988) and contained questions dealing with approaches to conflict resolution (see Appendix B). The instrument specifically measures attitude towards conflict as either constructive or destructive. There are 22 questions rated on a 5-point

Likert Scale from Never (1) to Always (5). Examples of some items are: "I will hit someone if they do something to really make me mad," "I try to talk out a problem instead of fighting," "If I'm mad at someone, I just ignore them." Six of the 22 questions refer to the students' communication skills. Examples of some items are: "I'm good at asking questions when I want to find something out," "I like to look people in the eyes when I talk to them."

The questionnaire is scored by taking the sum of Questions 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 16 to obtain a score in dealing with conflict in a constructive manner, then finding the sum of Questions 1, 3, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 14 to obtain a score in dealing with conflict in a destructive manner. In a comparison of the two scores, and the higher score indicates a tendency to deal with conflict either in a constructive or destructive way.

Questions 17-22 concern the students' communication skills and are scored similarly to the ways of dealing with conflict. A high score means the student tends to practice good communication skills. There was no attempt to address cultural differences in regards to communication skills.

Regarding validity of the Conflict Management Questionnaire, Benenson (1988) developed the instrument and field tested it for validity. He had several teachers identify students who exhibited either constructive or

destructive approaches to conflict resolution using an established criteria. The students took the questionnaire and their scores were compared to their predetermined approach to conflict resolution. Benenson reported statistical significance ($p < .01$) which supported the validity of the instrument.

The second instrument was the school form of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (see Appendix C). The questionnaire is a forced-choice instrument that contained 58 statements that are marked "like me" or "unlike me" by the respondent. Examples of some items are: "I'm popular with kids my own age," "I'm pretty happy," "I often get discouraged at school."

The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI) was designed to measure evaluative attitudes toward the self in social, academic, family, and personal areas of expectation. It was developed in 1959, and the manual has been updated many times, reflecting wide interest in the use of this test. The current manual was published in 1984 (Hattie, 1992).

To determine the score, the raw scores are converted to percentiles, with high scores corresponding to high self-esteem. The upper quartile in a group can be considered indicative of high self-esteem, the lower quartile generally indicates low self-esteem, and the interquartile range generally indicates medium self-esteem (Al-Mabuk, 1990).

Hattie (1992) stated that the "reliability estimates for the total test are of a magnitude that is defensible for a published test" (p. 157). Coopersmith (1993) stated in his manual that Kuder-Richardson reliability estimates were done and revealed coefficients between .81 and .86 (p. 12). Al-Mabuk (1990) quoted Kokenes in her research regarding the construct validity of the CSEI in which she "confirmed the construct validity of the subscales proposed by Coopersmith as measuring sources of self-esteem" (p. 79).

The University of Northern Iowa requires all questionnaires used in any study be submitted to the Human Subjects Review Committee. The two instruments were submitted for review, and approval was granted for use in this research.

The final method of data collection was a series of interview questions (Appendix D) which were developed by Gentry and Benenson (1993) and were used in their study in the investigation of school-to-home transfer of conflict management skills among school-age children. Their study focused on sibling conflict and was limited to 27 students enrolled in grades 4, 5, and 6 in an elementary school in central Illinois.

Most of the questions on this instrument required Likert-type responses, although some multiple choice and open-ended questions were included. Questions 1-6 on the

Student Questionnaire were multiple choice items that pertain to number of sibling conflicts and length of time it takes to settle sibling conflicts. Questions 7-18 were on a 5-point Likert Scale from Hardly at all (1) to Very much (5). Examples of some items were: "When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how hot/steamed up do you usually get?" "When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how often do you try to win?" The last question asked was, "Are the ways you handle conflict with school mates different from the ways you handle conflict with your brothers and sisters?" If yes, "How are they different?"

The questions for the structured interview with the parent or guardian were slightly different. The first four questions asked about number and birth order of siblings, relationship to child, and estimated family income. The next two questions asked about number of conflicts their children are involved in and how long it takes for those conflicts to be resolved. Questions 7-13 are on a 5-point Likert Scale, similar to the student questions. The last two questions referred to the degree of parental intervention in their childrens' conflicts.

Gentry and Benenson (1993) used these questions as the structure for the pretest interviews. This study utilized their procedure at the middle school level.

Intervention

The intervention for this study was implemented in two phases: (a) training for the conflict managers, and (b) mediating peer conflicts.

All materials and activities used in the intervention phases were taken from the San Francisco Community Board Program. The training was done by the researcher with the assistance of another trained individual.

Phase 1: Conflict manager training. After the conflict managers were selected, as outlined in the sampling method, a training session was arranged. The researcher and the research assistant facilitated the training sessions. The counselor at each school attended and assisted when possible. All of the selected students participated in the one-day training program that included information about communication, conflict-resolution strategies, and opportunities to practice mediation. Some instruction was provided through large group lecture, discussion, and demonstration. Many learning activities and practice exercises called for the students to work in pairs or small groups. The middle school training was divided into four sessions. The content of each session is explained as follows:

Session I--The session opened with a welcome from the school counselor and introduction of the researcher and

assistant. A brief overview of the training was presented along with a few announcements.

The purpose of the first activity was to serve as an icebreaker. The activity chosen was called "Killer," where one student was choosen to wink (which eliminated that student) while engaged in conversation. The activity continued until the group identified the "killer."

The next activity stressed the importance of listening. The researcher and his assistant briefly demonstrated poor listening skills in a conversation by looking away, looking bored, interrupting, changing the subject, and looking at one's watch. The students were asked to identify the poor listening skills and to discuss good listening skills. This was followed by showing a transparency identifying active listening techniques. These techniques included: tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, and posture. The skills of encouraging, restating, and summarizing were also discussed.

This was followed by an activity called "Robbery Report" to further demonstrate good listening skills. Three students, one at a time, volunteered to listen to a very descriptive story. They listened carefully and told what they remembered about this story to the next person. After the third repetition, the story was quite different from the

original version, thus reinforcing that it was not easy to be a good listener.

The trainer then discussed different points of view and perceptions. The classic picture of the old lady/young lady was used to demonstrate different perceptions. The story, "The Maligned Wolf," or "Little Red Riding Hood" from the wolf's perspective, was read to further emphasize perceptual differences.

The last topic of the first session was the introduction of "I messages" to the students. In a large group, the trainer presented a transparency which highlighted the formula for "I messages": "I feel . . . " "when you . . . " "because . . . " The students were then asked to create "I messages" from some situations presented by the trainer. A ten-minute break was given to the students before the beginning of the next session.

Session II--This session began in large group with the introduction of a definition of conflict. Students were asked to define conflict and were told by the trainer that conflict will be viewed as neither good nor bad, but as an opportunity.

The next activity was a skit demonstrating the three different styles of resolving conflict (denial, confrontation, and problem-solving). The trainer acted out and explained the three different styles. A rationale why

the problem-solving method is a more constructive way of dealing with conflict was established.

The role of the conflict manager was then explained--what a conflict manager is and is not. The following descriptors were used as a guide (San Francisco Community Board Model Training Manual, 1986, p. 24):

Is	Is Not
A good listener	A disciplinarian
A fair person (does not take sides)	A person who focuses attention on him/herself
A good teamworker	A judge
A helper	A person who gives orders or advice
A person you can trust	A person who tells others

The next activity was the viewing of a video produced by the San Francisco Community Board on what the conflict manager program is and how it operates in the school setting. Discussion of the video included the difference between the elementary, middle, and high school conflict management programs. The trainer then presented the conflict management process on a transparency, which is described in detail in Chapter II, page 24. The steps were discussed in sequential order with a demonstration of the process.

The group was divided into smaller groups of five. Each group decided which two students would be the conflict managers, which two would be in conflict (the disputants), and who would be the observer. A pre-determined conflict

topic was presented so each group would role play the same conflict. After they completed all the steps and resolved the conflict, they reversed roles and role played again. All groups returned to large group, and the trainer discussed the role plays. Discussion was focused on what went well and what could be improved. A 30 minute lunch break was given before the next session.

Session III--This session began with a review of the conflict management process. Then, a second role play conflict was presented to the large group. The students returned to their groups of five to practice the conflict management process. After they completed all the steps and resolved the conflict, they again reversed roles and went through the role play again. All groups returned to the large group, and the trainer discussed the role plays. Discussion focused on what went well and what could be improved.

The conflict manager report form (see Appendix E) was introduced and explained. This report identified the managers, disputants, nature of conflict, and resolution. The large group brainstormed types of conflicts they saw in their school, and the trainer wrote them down. The students then broke into their small groups, selected a conflict, and practiced their third role play. After they completed all the steps and resolved the conflict, they reversed roles and

went through the role play again. Time was given for the conflict managers to fill out the conflict management report form. All groups returned to large group, and the trainer discussed the role plays. Discussion focused on what went well and what could be improved. A 10 minute break was given before the next session.

Session IV--The students immediately broke into small groups for their fourth role play. They practiced the conflict management process. The trainer selected one group to do a "fishbowl" demonstration of the conflict management process. This group demonstrated the conflict management process in front of the large group. The large group discussed what went well and gave positive feedback to the group.

The trainer gave a final review and distributed evaluation forms for the students to fill out to give feedback on the training. A final question and answering period was then followed by a verbal celebration of the hard work the students exhibited during the day.

Phase 2: Mediating peer conflicts. The second phase consisted of a 4-month period during which the conflict managers mediated conflicts in the school setting. The conflict managers worked in pairs and were assigned to a referred conflict by the school counselor. The counselor at Dysart Middle School indicated that every conflict manager

mediated at least two conflicts. The counselor at Western Dubuque indicated that every conflict manager mediated at least one conflict, with several that mediated two conflicts. The difference in number of conflicts between the two schools could be attributed to either fewer conflicts among the students at Western Dubuque, or the counselor at Dysart Middle School more actively utilized the conflict management program. In addition, all conflict managers met every other week with the counselor to discuss students' concerns and review the skills learned in training.

Posttest Stage

At the close of Phase 2, a second round of data collection was conducted. The procedures and instruments used 4 months earlier were repeated. The questions concerning demographic data in the interviews were not repeated on the posttest. New questions aimed at soliciting information about perceived benefits and problems of the program were incorporated.

Experimental Design and Data Analysis

Design

The design of this study was in two parts: a) the pretest-posttest control group design was utilized for the Conflict Management Questionnaire and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (see Table 1), and b) the single-group pretest-posttest design was utilized for the structured

interviews (see Table 2). The second design is a replication of that used by Gentry and Benenson (1993) in their study of the perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict resolution skills.

The pretests (Conflict Management Questionnaire and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory) were administered to the treatment group and control group before Phase 1 of the intervention, by the school counselor. The posttests (same instruments) were administered 4 months after Phase 1 was completed. This time frame allowed opportunities for the conflict managers to practice the conflict resolution skills they learned in phase 1.

In the second part of the design, each student in the experimental group and their parent(s) or guardian(s) were interviewed in a single-group pretest-posttest design. The families decided which parent would be interviewed for the pretest, and the same parent was interviewed for the posttest. In this investigation, the researcher used the questions and adapted the procedures by Gentry and Benenson (1993). The procedures utilized the Gentry and Benenson study with the following modifications: (a) the research was conducted with middle school students instead of elementary students, and (b) a 4 month time period before posttesting, instead of 10 weeks, was utilized.

Table 1

Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design

R STRATIFIED RANDOM ASSIGNMENT	O DEPENDENT VARIABLES PRETEST	X INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	O DEPENDENT VARIABLES POSTTEST
Experimental group	1. self-esteem 2. communication skills 3. constructive approach 4. destructive approach	Phase 1 Phase 2	1. self-esteem 2. communication skills 3. constructive approach 4. destructive approach
Control group	1. self-esteem 2. communication skills 3. constructive approach 4. destructive approach		1. self-esteem 2. communication skills 3. constructive approach 4. destructive approach

Note. Adapted from Reading Statistics and Research, (p. 249), by Huck, Cormier, and Bounds, 1974.

This study was conducted in two different schools. The procedures for sample selection, pre-posttest administration, and implementation of the intervention were the same in both schools. Thus, one of the schools (Western Dubuque Middle School) was used as a replication of the other school (Dysart Middle School). The rationale for replicating this study is based on the premise that if a second study yields similar

results, it inspires confidence that the results represent differences or relationships in the population being studied (Borg & Gall, 1989).

Table 2

Single-Group Pretest-Posttest Design

R STRATIFIED RANDOM ASSIGNMENT	O DEPENDENT VARIABLES PRETEST	X INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	O DEPENDENT VARIABLES POSTTEST
Experimental group or Trained Conflict Managers	1. frequency of conflicts 2. duration of conflicts 3. intensity of conflicts 4. positive CR skills	Phase 1 Phase 2	1. frequency of conflicts 2. duration of conflicts 3. intensity of conflicts 4. positive CR skills
Parents of Conflict Managers	1. frequency of conflicts 2. duration of conflicts 3. intensity of conflicts 4. positive CR skills 5. parental intervention		1. frequency of conflicts 2. duration of conflicts 3. intensity of conflicts 4. positive CR skills 5. parental intervention

Note. Adapted from Reading Statistics and Research, (p. 249), by Huck, Cormier, and Bounds, 1974.

Analysis of Data

Data analysis was divided into two parts: (a) testing differences in the experimental and control group on the dependent variables of pre-post change scores in self-esteem, communication skills, and constructive and destructive approaches to conflict resolution; and (b) testing differences in pre-posttest in the experimental group on the dependent variables of pre-post change scores in frequency, duration, intensity of conflict, and amount of positive conflict resolution skills.

The first part of data analysis utilized an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to evaluate significance ($p < .05$) between pre and post scores of the experimental and control groups. This one-way analysis of variance was used because the subgroups differ on one factor, namely, the intervention. The ANOVA was used to determine whether mean scores on the pretest and posttest differ significantly from each other, and whether the various dependent variables interact significantly with each other.

The second part of the data analysis utilized the procedures by Gentry and Benenson (1993) in their study of perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict management skills among school-age children. The interviews were used to collect quantitative data that will be reported using a frequency distribution procedure to gain basic descriptive

information about the participants and their responses. A *t* test for correlated samples was used to determine the nature and significance of any differences between the pretest and posttest results.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The findings of the study are presented in three parts in this chapter. Section one presents the statistical analysis of data related to the effect of the conflict management program on conflict managers' self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution. The second section presents collected data as it relates to the perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict management skills among the conflict managers. The third and final section is a descriptive anaylsis of the perceptions of conflict managers and their parents. These perceptions are in reference to the effects of the conflict management program on the transferability of conflict management skills to the home environment.

Statistical Analysis

First, a test of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) was run to determine the reliability of the Conflict Management Questionnaire. This test was run on the pretests for the experimental and control groups at Dysart Middle School. The alpha was found to be .89.

The pretest and posttest means and standard deviations for each dependent variable are reported in Tables 3 and 4. A comparison of the mean scores reflect consistency from the pretest and posttest findings. Pre-posttest differences were

measured on the dependent variables of: (a) self-esteem, (b) communication skills, and (c) approaches to conflict resolution, either constructive or destructive.

Table 3

Pretest means, posttest means, and standard deviations for the experimental group (N = 30) and the control group (N = 24) at Dysart Middle School.

		SE	COMM	CONST	DEST
Experimental Group					
Pre-test	M	76.9	24.0	29.9	20.6
	SD	13.9	5.2	5.2	4.6
Post-test	M	76.9	23.6	31.1	19.7
	SD	18.3	3.9	5.4	4.3
Control Group					
Pre-test	M	71.2	22.6	29.1	19.7
	SD	16.7	4.9	6.1	4.1
Post-test	M	73.9	21.0	27.1	21.3
	SD	18.7	5.4	5.3	4.6

Note. SE = Self-Esteem scale; COMM = Communication scale; CONST = Constructive scale; DEST = Destructive scale.

Table 4

Pretest means, posttest means, and standard deviations for the experimental group (N = 29) and the control group (N = 30) at Western Dubuque Middle School.

		SE	COMM	CONST	DEST
Experimental Group					
Pre-test	M	82.9	22.9	29.4	20.7
	SD	14.0	2.9	3.8	4.4
Post-test	M	80.8	22.9	30.1	20.1
	SD	14.0	3.0	4.2	4.7
Control Group					
Pre-test	M	74.0	22.2	30.0	20.6
	SD	17.0	4.4	4.9	4.2
Post-test	M	70.1	22.3	28.5	21.6
	SD	18.6	4.3	4.6	4.1

Note. SE = Self-Esteem scale; COMM = Communication scale; CONST = Constructive scale; DEST = Destructive scale.

Treatment Effect on Conflict Managers' Self-Esteem, Communication Skills, and Approaches to Conflict Resolution

Research Question 1 (What impact did the conflict resolution program have on the conflict managers' self-esteem?) was tested by using an analysis of variance (ANOVA). The pre-posttest change scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory were analyzed for the experimental and control group at both schools. The results for Dysart Middle School were $F = .603$, $p > .05$. The results for Western Dubuque

Middle School were $F = .102$, $p > .05$. The findings were not statistically significant at either school and indicate the conflict managers' self-esteem was not impacted by the intervention (see Table 5).

Research Question 2 (What impact did the conflict resolution program have on the student managers' communication skills?) was tested by using an analysis of variance (ANOVA). The pre-posttest change scores on the Conflict Management Questionnaire were analyzed for the experimental and control group at both schools. The results for Dysart Middle School were $F = .081$, $p > .05$. The results for Western Dubuque Middle School were $F = .710$, $p > .05$. The findings were not statistically significant at either school and indicate the conflict managers' communication skills was not impacted by the intervention (see Table 5).

Research Question 3 (What impact did the conflict resolution program have on the student managers' approaches to conflict resolution?) was tested by using an analysis of variance (ANOVA). The pre-posttest change scores on the Conflict Management Questionnaire were analyzed for the experimental and control group at both schools. The students' approaches to conflict resolution were divided into two categories: (a) constructive approaches to conflict resolution and (b) destructive approaches to conflict resolution. The results at Dysart Middle School for the

constructive approaches were $F = .004$, $p < .05$. The results at Western Dubuque Middle School for the constuctive approaches were $F = .069$, $p > .05$. The findings were statistically significant at Dysart Middle School and indicate that the conflict managers (experimental group) selected a more constructive method of solving conflicts as compared to the control group. The conflict managers at Western Dubuque Middle School showed a tendency toward selecting a more constructive method of solving conflicts; however, the results were not statistically significant (see Table 5).

The results at Dysart Middle School for the destructive approaches were $F = .055$, $p > .05$. The results at Western Dubuque Middle School were $F = .126$, $p > .05$. The findings were not statistically significant at Dysart Middle School or at Western Dubuque Middle School. The conflict managers at both schools showed no change in using a destructive approach to solving their conflicts (see Table 5).

Table 5

Results of Analysis of Variance for Dysart Middle School and Western Dubuque Middle School.

			F			
	N	DF	SE	COMM	CONST	DEST
Dysart	60	58	.603	.081	.004*	.055
Western Dubuque	59	57	.102	.710	.069	.126

Note. SE = Self-Esteem scale; COMM = Communication scale; CONST = Constructive scale; DEST = Destructive scale.

*Significance at .05.

Perceived School-to-Home Transfer of Conflict Management Skills of the Conflict Managers

Research Question 4 (What impact did the conflict resolution program have on the conflict managers' ability to transfer conflict management skills to the home environment when dealing with siblings?) was tested by utilizing a frequency distribution and a *t* test. The frequency distribution procedures were used to gain basic descriptive information about the participants and their responses. The *t* test procedures were used to determine the nature and significance of any differences between the pretest and posttest results. The results were combined to include the thirty conflict managers and their parents at Dysart Middle

School and Western Dubuque Middle School. One conflict manager at Western Dubuque moved away after the training and was excluded from the data. The combination of both schools yielded a total number of 59 conflict managers, and their respective parents, who were interviewed.

The data for each interview question report the differences between pretest and posttest. The data were limited to the research question regarding perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict resolution skills with siblings. Eight interview questions were used to determine the perceived transferability of conflict resolution skills from school-to-home. Questions 1 and 2 used a Likert Scale of (a) 0-3, (b) 4-6, (c) 7-9, (d) 10-12, (e) 13-15, and (f) 16 and over. Questions 3 through 8 used a Likert Scale of (a) hardly at all, (b) somewhat, (c) moderate, (d) quite a bit, and (e) very much.

Student Data

Question 1 was "How many conflicts do you have with your brothers and sisters each week?" The results are reported in Figure 4.

On the pretest, 36% of the students indicated they had 0-3 conflicts per week, 31% had 4-6 conflicts per week, 20% had 7-9 conflicts per week, 12% had 10-12 conflicts per week, 2% had 13-15 conflicts per week, and 0% had over 16 conflicts per week. On the posttest, 32% of the students indicated

they had 0-3 conflicts per week, 53% had 4-6 conflicts per week, 10% had 7-9 conflicts per week, 2% had 10-12 conflicts per week, 2% had 13-15 conflicts per week, and 2% had over 16 conflicts per week.

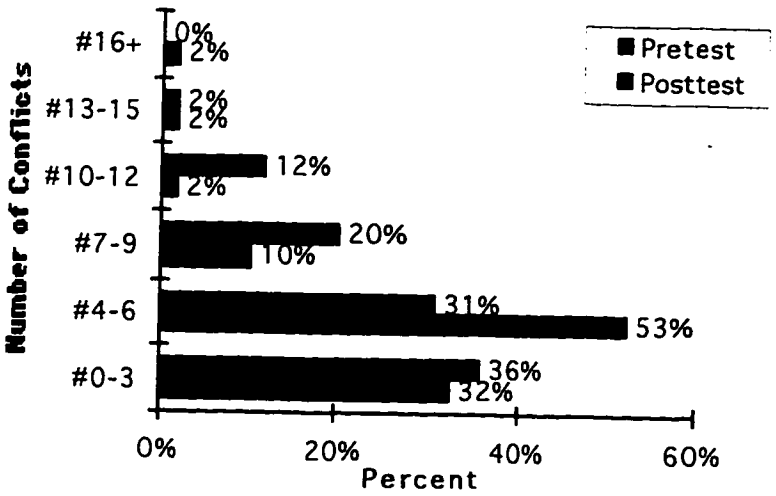

Figure 4. Frequency data represented in percentages for the perceived number of conflicts per week with siblings (N = 59).

In summary, on the pretest 51, or 86.4%, of the students indicated they had less than 10 conflicts per week. On the posttest, 56, or 92.9%, of the students indicated they had less than 10 conflicts per week.

The results of t = .160, df = 58, p > .05 showed the students perceived a reduction in number of conflicts with

siblings at home. These results were not statistically significant.

Question 2 was "When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how long does it usually take to settle it?" The results are reported in Figure 5.

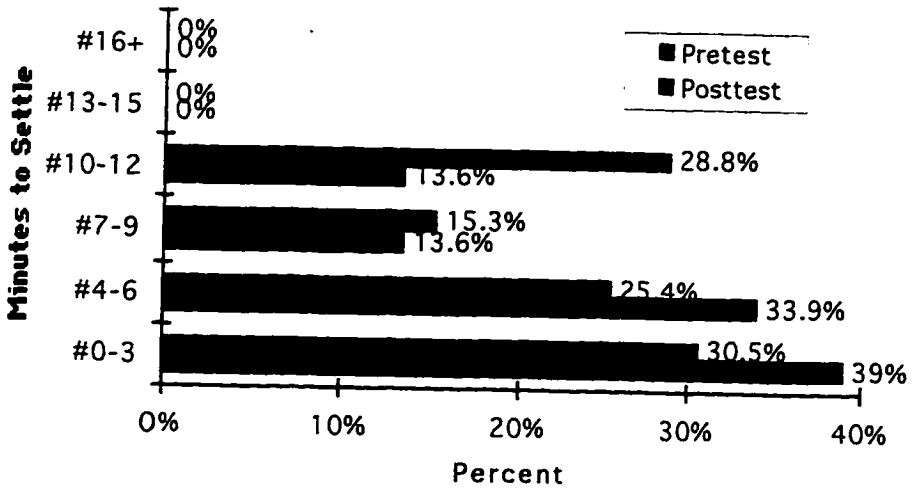

Figure 5. Frequency data represented in percentages for the perceived number of minutes to settle conflicts (N = 59).

On the pretest, 30.5% of the students indicated it took 0-3 minutes to settle conflicts, 25.4% indicated it took 4-6 minutes to settle conflicts, 15.3% indicated it took 7-9 minutes to settle conflicts, 28.8% indicated it took 10-12 minutes to settle conflicts, 0% indicated it took 13-15 minutes to settle conflicts, and 0% indicated it took over 16

minutes to settle conflicts. On the posttest, 39% of the students indicated it took 0-3 minutes to settle conflicts, 33.9% indicated it took 4-6 minutes to settle conflicts, 13.6% indicated it took 7-9 minutes to settle conflicts, 13.6% indicated it took 10-12 minutes to settle conflicts, 0% indicated it took 13-15 minutes to settle conflicts, and 0% indicated it took over 16 minutes to settle conflicts. In summary, on the pretest 33, or 55.9%, of the students settled their conflicts in 10 minutes or less. On the posttest, 43, or 72.9%, of the students indicated they settled their conflicts in 10 minutes or less.

The results of $t = .003$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$ showed the students perceived that the amount of time it took to resolve conflicts decreased. These results were statistically significant.

Question 3 was "When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how 'hot/steamed up' do you usually get?" The results are reported in Figure 6.

The pretest indicated that 13.6% reported hardly at all, 33.9% reported somewhat, 27.1% reported moderate, 6.8% reported quite a bit, and 18.6% reported very much. The posttest indicated that 11.9% reported hardly at all, 42.4% reported somewhat, 16.9% reported moderate, 23.7% reported quite a bit, and 5.1% reported very much. In summary, on the pretest 28, or 47.5%, of the students responded hardly at all

or somewhat. On the posttest 32, or 54.3%, of the students responded hardly at all or somewhat.

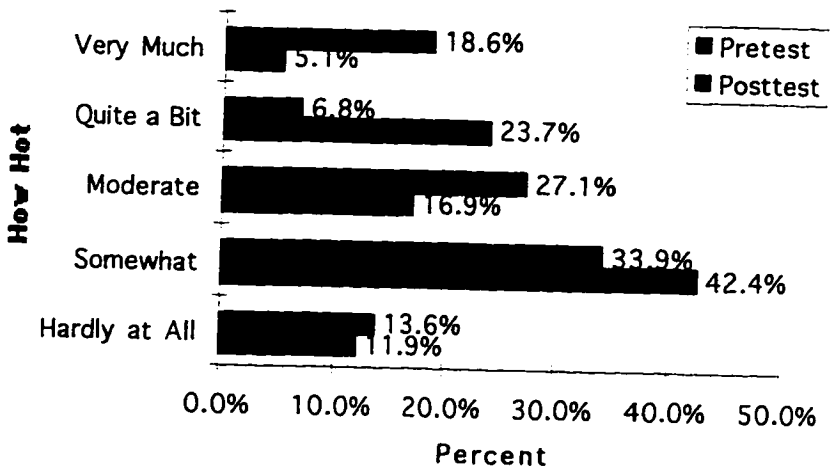

Figure 6. Frequency data in percentages for how hot/steamed up the students perceived they usually get when engaged in conflict (N = 59).

The results of t = .309, df = 58, p > .05 showed that the students percieved little change in how hot/steamed up they got when in conflict. These results were not statistically significant.

Question 4 was "When you have a conflict with your brother or sister, how much do you talk to the person?" The results are reported in Figure 7.

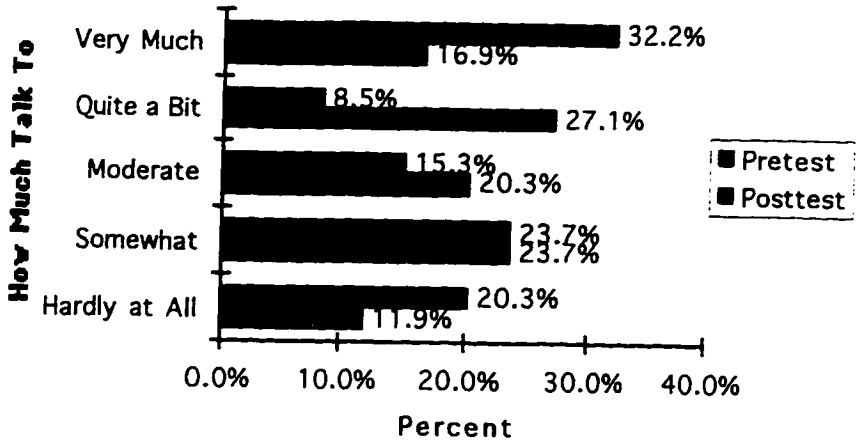

Figure 7. Frequency data represented in percentages for how much students perceived they talked to the other person while engaged in conflict (N = 59).

The pretest indicated that 20.3% reported hardly at all, 23.7% reported somewhat, 15.3% reported moderate, 8.5% reported quite a bit, and 32.2% reported very much. The posttest indicated that 11.9% reported hardly at all, 23.7% reported somewhat, 20.3% reported moderate, 27.1% reported quite a bit, and 16.9% reported very much. In summary, on the pretest 26, or 44%, of the students responded hardly at all or somewhat. On the posttest 21, or 35.6%, of the students responded hardly at all or somewhat.

The results of t = .789, df = 58, p > .05 showed the students percieved little change in how much they talked when engaged in conflict. These results were not statistically significant.

Question 5 was "When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how much do you pay attention or listen to the other person?" The results are reported in Figure 8.

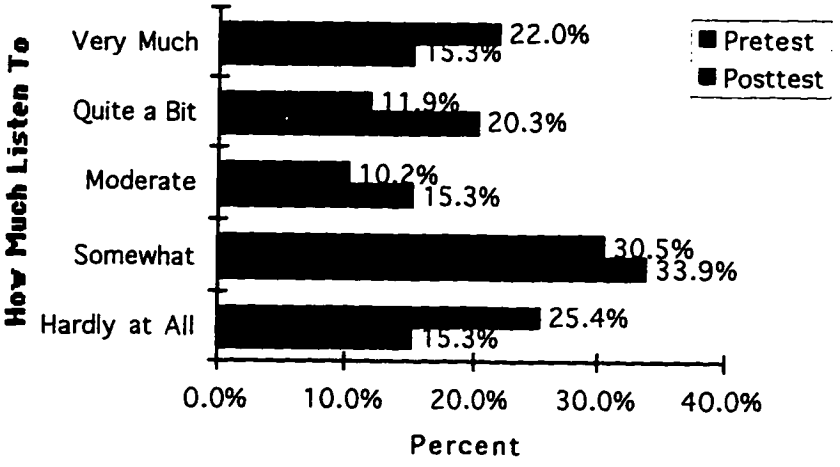

Figure 8. Frequency data represented in percentages for how much the students perceived they listened to the other person while engaged in conflict (N = 59).

The pretest indicated that 25.4% reported hardly at all, 30.5% reported somewhat, 10.2% reported moderate, 11.9% reported quite a bit, and 22% reported very much. The posttest indicated that 15.3% reported hardly at all, 33.9%

reported somewhat, 15.3% reported moderate, 20.3% reported quite a bit, and 15.3% reported very much. In summary, on the pretest 33, or 55.9%, of the students responded hardly at all or somewhat. On the posttest, 29, or 49.2%, responded hardly at all or somewhat.

The results of $t = .458$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$ showed the students perceived little change in how much they listened to the other person when engaged in conflict. These results were not statistically significant.

Question 6 was "When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how often do you blame the other person?" The results are reported in Figure 9.

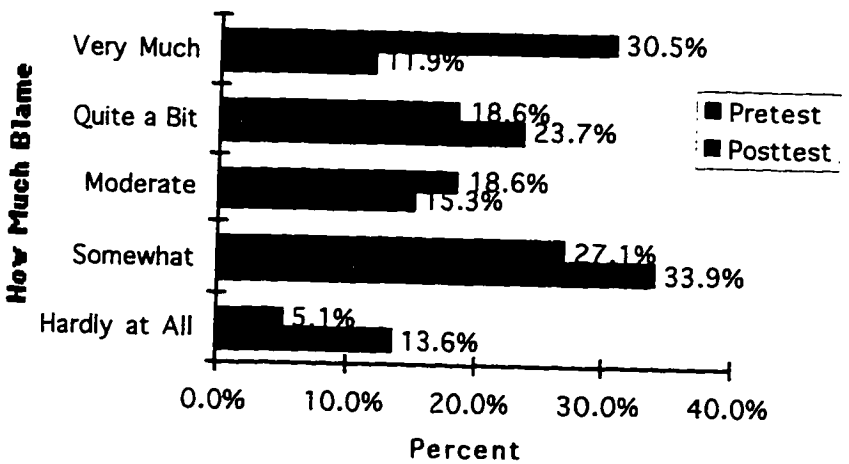

Figure 9. Frequency data represented in percentages for how much students perceived they blamed the other person while engaged in conflict ($N = 59$).

The pretest indicated that 5.1% reported hardly at all, 27.1% reported somewhat, 18.6% reported moderate, 18.6% reported quite a bit, and 30.5% reported very much. The posttest indicated that 13.6% reported hardly at all, 33.9% reported somewhat, 15.3% reported moderate, 23.7% reported quite a bit, and 11.9% reported very much. In summary, on the pretest 29, or 49.1%, of the students responded quite a bit or very much. On the posttest 21, or 35.6%, of the students responded quite a bit or very much.

The results of $t = .008$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$ showed the students perceived a decrease in how often they blamed the other person when in conflict. These results were statistically significant.

Question 7 was "When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how often do you try to 'win'?" The results are reported in Figure 10.

The pretest indicated that 11.9% reported hardly at all, 16.9% reported somewhat, 10.2% reported moderate, 22% reported quite a bit, and 39% reported very much. The posttest indicated that 13.6% reported hardly at all, 18.6% reported somewhat, 23.7% reported moderate, 22% reported quite a bit, and 20.3% reported very much. In summary, on the pretest 36, or 61%, of the students responded quite a bit or very much. On the posttest 25, or 42.3%, of the students responded quite a bit or very much.

The results of t = .013, df = 58, p < .05 showed the students perceived a decrease in how often they tried to win when in conflict. These results were statistically significant.

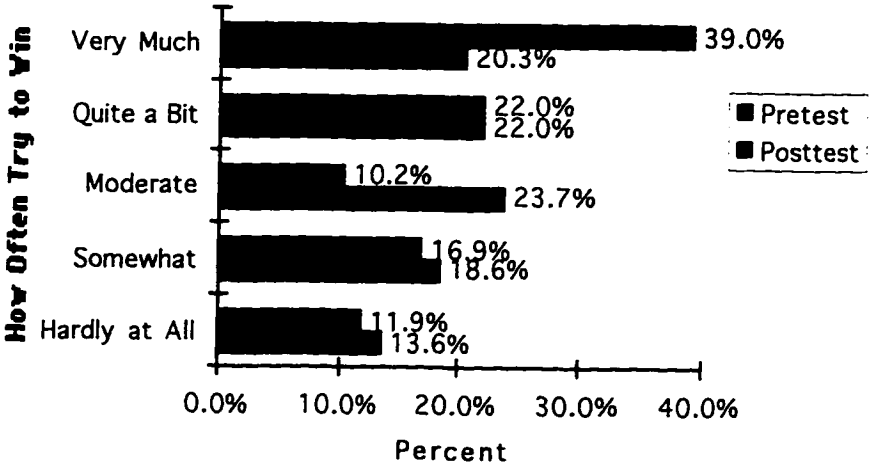

Figure 10. Frequency data represented in percentages for how often the students perceived they tried to win while engaged in conflict (N = 59).

Question 8 was "When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how often can you be kind or affirm the person during or soon after the conflict"? The results are reported in Figure 11.

The pretest indicated that 5.1% reported hardly at all, 8.5% reported somewhat, 8.5% reported moderate, 13.6% reported quite a bit, and 64.4% reported very much. The

posttest indicated that 3.4% reported hardly at all, 1.7% reported somewhat, 11.9% reported moderate, 13.6% reported quite a bit, and 67.8% reported very much. In summary, on the pretest 46, or 78%, of the students responded quite a bit or very much. On the posttest 48, or 81.4%, of the students responded quite a bit or very much.

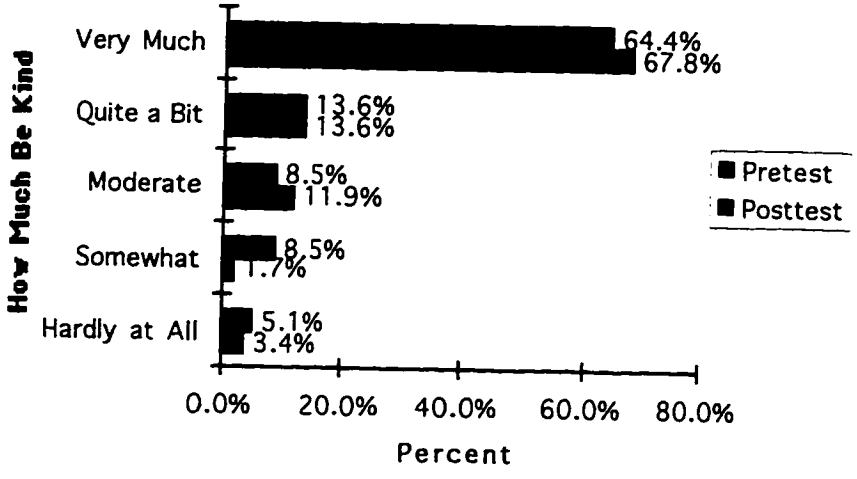

Figure 11. Frequency data represented in percentages for how often the students perceived they can be kind to the person during or soon after the conflict (N = 59).

The results of t = .103, df = 58, p > .05 showed the students perceived little change in how often they affirmed their sibling during or soon after conflict. These results were not statistically significant.

Parent Data

Parents of the conflict managers were asked the same eight questions concerning conflicts their children experienced. The Likert Scale that was used for student responses was also used for the parent responses. One parent of each conflict manager was interviewed at Dysart Middle School and Western Dubuque Middle School for a total of 59. Of the 59 parents, 57 were mothers and 2 were fathers.

Question 1 was concerned with the number of conflicts per week. The results are reported in Figure 12.

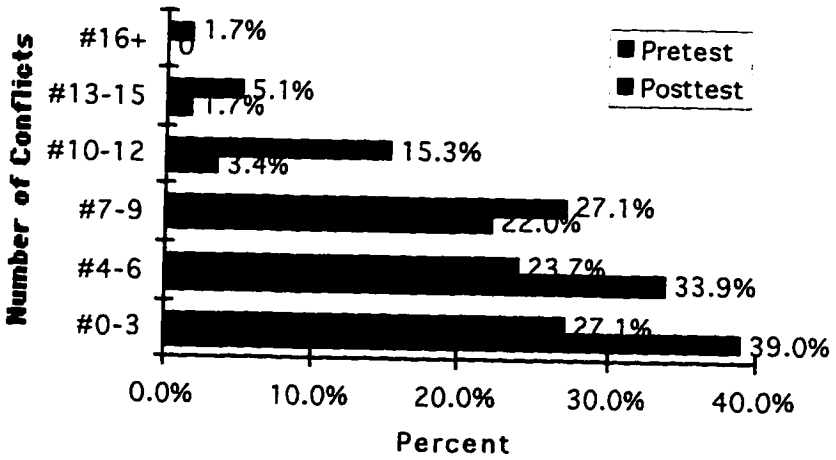

Figure 12. Frequency data represented in percentages for the number of conflicts per with siblings as perceived by parents (N = 59).

The pretest indicated that 27.1% of the parents perceived their child was engaged in 0-3 conflicts, 23.7% perceived their child was engaged in 4-6 conflicts per week, 27.1% perceived their child was engaged in 7-9 conflicts per week, 15.3% perceived their child was engaged in 10-12 conflicts per week, 5.1% perceived their child was engaged in 13-15 conflicts per week, and 1.7% perceived their child was engaged in over 16 conflicts per week. The posttest indicated that 39% of the parents perceived their child was engaged in 0-3 conflicts, 33.9% perceived their child was engaged in 4-6 conflicts per week, 22% perceived their child was engaged in 7-9 conflicts per week, 3.4% perceived their child was engaged in 10-12 conflicts per week, 1.7% perceived their child was engaged in 13-15 conflicts per week, and 0% perceived their child was engaged in over 16 conflicts per week. In summary, 46, or 77.9%, of the parents indicated their child experienced fewer than 10 conflicts per week with other siblings. On the posttest, 56, or 94.9%, of the parents indicated their child experienced fewer than 10 conflicts per week with other siblings.

The results of $t = .001$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$ showed the parents perceived a decrease in the number of conflicts with their children at home. These results were statistically significant.

Question 2 was concerned with the amount of time conflicts typically lasted for their children. The results are reported in Figure 13.

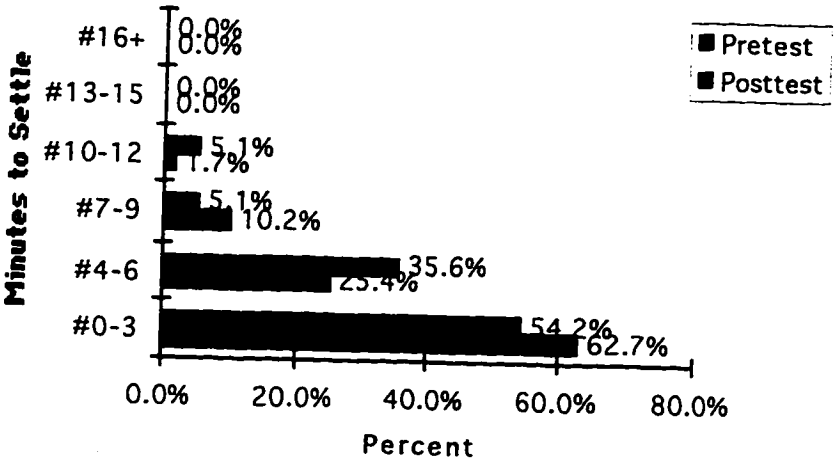

Figure 13. Frequency data represented in percentages for the number of minutes their children took to settle conflicts as perceived by parents (N = 59).

The pretest indicated that 54.2% of the parents perceived it took 0-3 minutes for their children to settle conflicts, 35.6% perceived it took 4-6 minutes for their children to settle conflicts, 5.1% perceived it took 7-9 minutes for their childen to settle conflicts, 5.1% perceived it took 10-12 minutes for their children to settle conflicts, 0% perceived it took 13-15 minutes for their children to settle conflicts, and 0% perceived it took over 16 minutes

for their children to settle conflicts. The posttest indicated that 62.7% of the parents perceived it took 0-3 minutes for their children to settle conflicts, 25.4% perceived it took 4-6 minutes for their children to settle conflicts, 10.2% perceived it took 7-9 minutes for their childen to settle conflicts, 1.7% perceived it took 10-12 minutes for their children to settle conflicts, 0% perceived it took 13-15 minutes for their children to settle conflicts, and 0% perceived it took over 16 minutes for their children to settle conflicts. In summary, 53, or 89.8%, of the parents perceived that the typical conflict lasted 10 minutes or less. On the posttest, 52, or 88.1%, of the parents perceived that the typical conflict lasted 10 minutes or less.

The results of $t = .410$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$ showed the parents perceived little difference in the amount of time it took for their children to resolve conflicts. These results were not statistically significant.

Question 3 was concerned with how "hot or steamed up" their child became when engaged in conflict with other siblings. The results are reported in Figure 14.

Pretest data indicated that 23.7% of the parents reported hardly at all, 25.4% reported somewhat, 22% reported moderate, 15.3% reported quite a bit, and 13.6% reported very much. Posttest data indicated that 6.8% of the parents

reported hardly at all, 32.2% reported somewhat, 20.3% reported moderate, 28.8% reported quite a bit, and 11.9% reported very much. In summary, 17, or 28.9%, of the parents responded quite a bit or very much. On the posttest, 11, or 18.7%, of the parents responded quite a bit or very much.

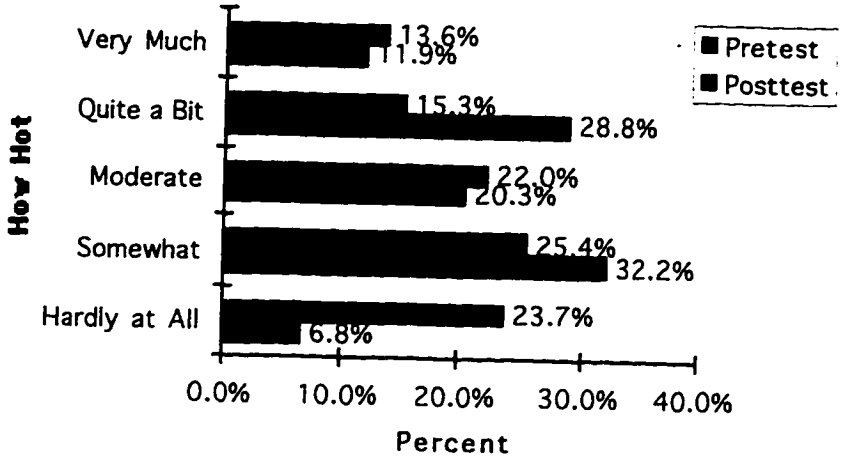

Figure 14. Frequency data represented in percentages for how hot/steamed up their child would get when engaged in conflict as perceived by parents (N = 59).

The results of $t = .306$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$ showed the parents perceived little difference in how hot/steamed up their children got when in conflict. These results were not statistically significant.

Question 4 was how often their child talked to the other person when engaged in conflict with a sibling. The results are reported in Figure 15.

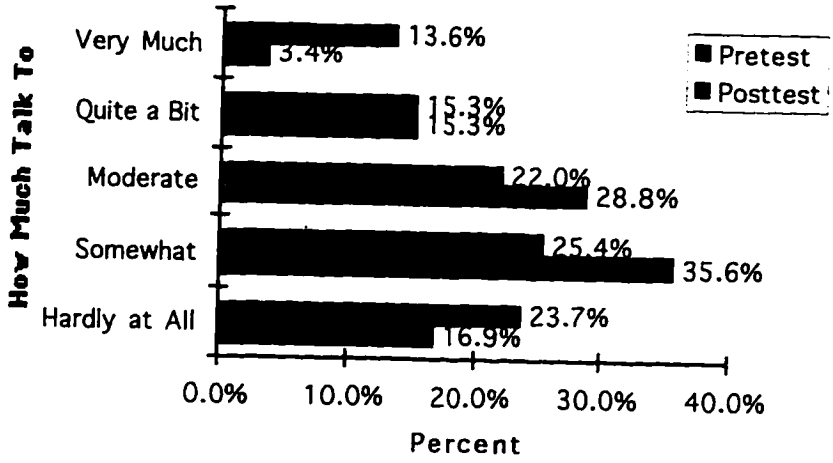

Figure 15. Frequency data represented in percentages for how much their child talked to the other person while engaged in conflict with a sibling as perceived by parents (N = 59).

Pretest data indicated that 23.7% of the parents reported hardly at all, 25.4% reported somewhat, 22% reported moderate, 15.3% reported quite a bit, and 13.6% reported very much. Posttest data indicated that 16.9% of the parents reported hardly at all, 35.6% reported somewhat, 28.8% reported moderate, 15.3% reported quite a bit, and 3.4% reported very much. In summary, pretest data indicated that 14, or 23.8%, of the parents perceived their child hardly ever or somewhat talked to the other person during conflict.

Posttest data indicated that 13, or 22%, of the parents perceived their child hardly ever or somewhat talked to the other person during conflict.

The results of $t = 1.00$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$ showed the parents perceived little change in how often their child talked when engaged in conflict. These results were not statistically significant.

Question 5 was the amount their child listened to the other person when engaged in conflict with a sibling. The results are reported in Figure 16.

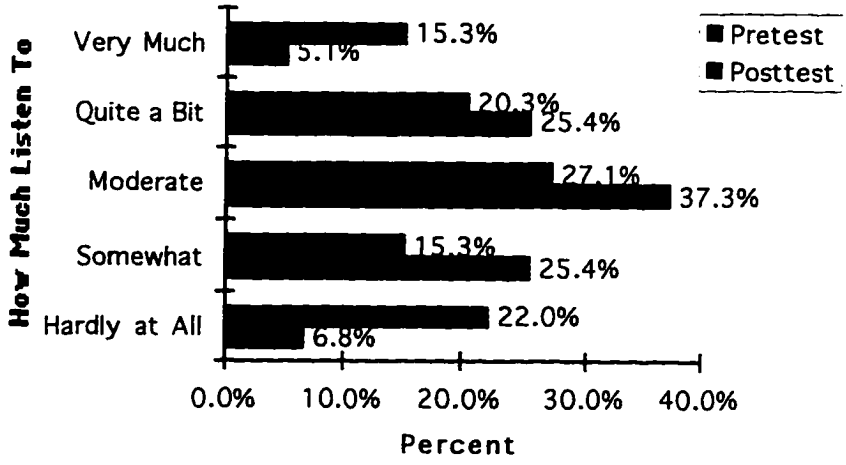

Figure 16. Frequency data represented in percentages for how much their child listened to the other person when engaged in conflict with a sibling as perceived by parents ($N = 59$).

Pretest data indicated that 22% of the parents reported hardly at all, 15.3% reported somewhat, 27.1% reported moderate, 20.3% reported quite a bit, and 15.3% reported very much. Posttest data indicated that 6.8% of the parents reported hardly at all, 25.4% reported somewhat, 37.3% reported moderate, 25.4% reported quite a bit, and 5.1% reported very much. In summary, pretest data indicated that 22, or 37.3%, of the parents perceived their child hardly ever or somewhat listened to the person during conflict. Posttest data indicated that 19, or 32.2%, of the parents perceived their child hardly ever or somewhat listened to the person during conflict.

The results of $t = .672$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$ showed the parents perceived little difference in how much their child listened to their sibling during conflict. These results were not statistically significant.

Question 6 was how often their child blamed the other person when engaged in conflict with a sibling. The results are reported in Figure 17.

Pretest data indicated that 6.8% of the parents reported hardly at all, 15.3% reported somewhat, 23.7% reported moderate, 23.7% reported quite a bit, and 30.5% reported very much. Posttest data indicated that 6.8% of the parents reported hardly at all, 32.2% reported somewhat, 20.3% reported moderate, 28.8% reported quite a bit, and 11.9%

reported very much. In summary, pretest data indicated that 32, or 54.2%, of the parents perceived their child blamed the other person quite a bit or very much while engaged in conflict. Posttest data indicated that 24, or 40.7%, of the parents perceived their child blamed the other person quite a bit or very much while engaged in conflict.

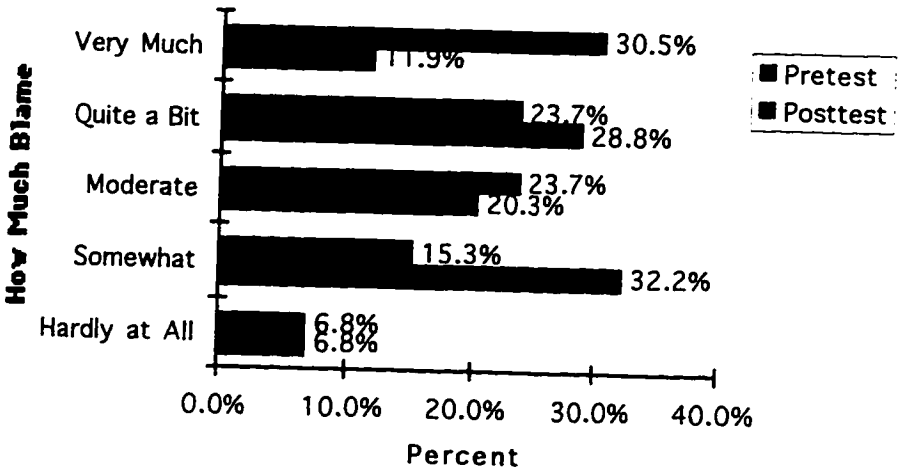

Figure 17. Frequency data represented in percentages for how much their child blamed the other person when engaged in conflict with a sibling as perceived by parents (N = 59).

The results of t = .004, df = 58, p < .05 showed the parents perceived a decrease in how much their child blamed the other person during conflict. These results were statistically significant.

Question 7 was how often the parents perceived their child tried to win when engaged in conflict with a sibling. The results are reported in Figure 18.

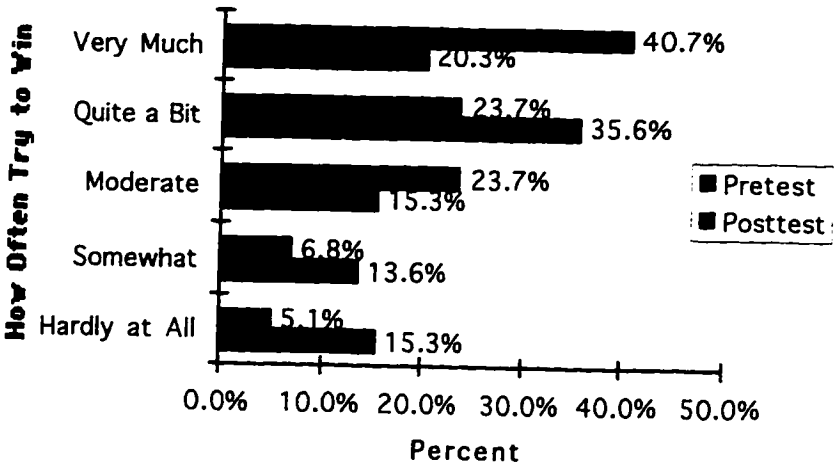

Figure 18. Frequency data represented in percentages for how often their child tried to win when engaged in conflict with a sibling as perceived by parents (N = 59).

Pretest data indicated that 5.1% of the parents reported hardly at all, 6.8% reported somewhat, 23.7% reported moderate, 23.7% reported quite a bit, and 40.7% reported very much. Posttest data indicated that 15.3% of the parents reported hardly at all, 13.6% reported somewhat, 15.3% reported moderate, 35.6% reported quite a bit, and 20.3% reported very much. In summary, pretest data indicated that 38, or 64.4%, of the parents perceived their child tried to

win quite a bit or very much while engaged in conflict. Posttest data indicated that 33, or 55.9%, of the parents perceived their child tried to win quite a bit or very much.

The results of $t = .004$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$ showed the parents perceived a decrease in how often their child tried to win when engaged in conflict. These results were statistically significant.

Question 8 was how often their child affirmed or was kind to the other person during or soon after a conflict with a sibling. The results are reported in Figure 19.

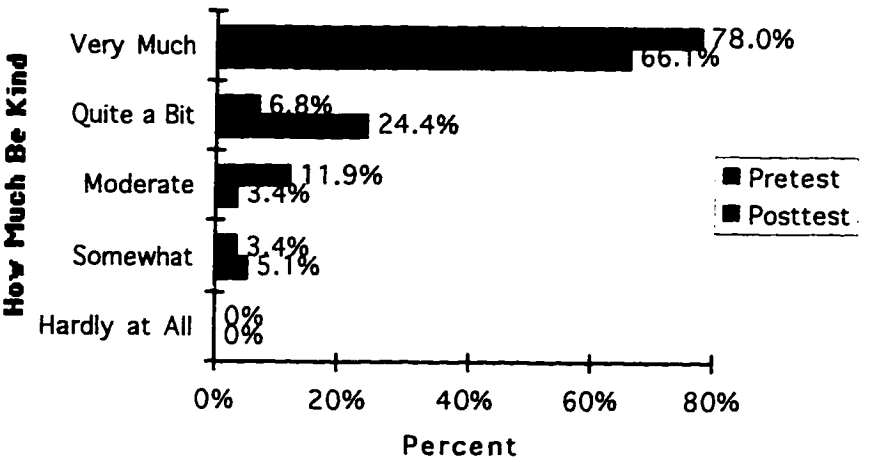

Figure 19. Frequency data represented in percentages for how often their child affirmed or was kind to the other person during or soon after a conflict with a sibling as perceived by parents ($N = 59$).

Pretest data indicated that 0% of the parents reported hardly at all, 3.4% reported somewhat, 11.9% reported moderate, 6.8% reported quite a bit, and 78% reported very much. Posttest data indicated that 0% of the parents reported hardly at all, 5.1% reported somewhat, 3.4% reported moderate, 24.4% reported quite a bit, and 66.1% reported very much. In summary, the pretest indicated that 50, or 84.8%, of the parents perceived their child was kind quite a bit or very much. The posttest indicated that 54, or 91.5%,of the parents perceived their child was kind quite a bit or very much.

The results of $t = .568$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$ showed the parents perceived little difference in how often their child affirmed the other person during or soon after conflict. These results were not statistically significant.

Descriptive Analysis

How the Conflict Managers and their Parents Perceived the Effects of the Conflict Management Program

The open-ended questions on the posttest added additional insight into the students' and parents' perceptions of the impact of the Conflict Management Program. The researcher did all the interviews in a private room located in each school. The conflict managers and one of the conflict managers' parents were interviewed separately. The interviews took approximately 15 minutes, and all responses

were tape recorded by the researcher. The interview climate was a relaxed, non-threatening situation for the students and parents. This section will summarize the comments of the students and parents to each of the open-ended questions. The students' comments will be discussed first, followed by the parents' comments.

Student comments. The first student question was, "What did you like least about being involved in the Conflict Manager Program?" The majority, 71%, of the students responded to this question by simply saying "nothing." This clearly indicates that the students perceived the program as positive and that they had very little negative to say concerning their participation in the program. Negative comments made more than once included: (a) "pulled out of class," which means these students did not like to be removed from class in order to be a conflict manager; (b) "some conflicts difficult to resolve," which means the conflict managers experienced some frustration with disputants resolving their problems; and (c) "not enough opportunties to be a conflict manager," which means some managers were disappointed that they did not get to manage more conflicts.

Additional comments made by only one student were: (a) "not able to give suggestions for resolving the conflict," which follows the guidelines for managers in allowing the disputants come up with their own resolutions; (b) "staying

neutral," which also follows the guidelines for managers in not taking sides with either disputant; (c) "some disputants lie;" (d) "catching up on homework missed"; and (e) "introducing yourself even when the disputants know who you are," which is the first step of the conflict management process.

The second question was, "What problems, if any, have you faced because you were involved in the Conflict Manager Program?" The students responded almost unanimously to this question with 95% saying "none." Other single responses included: (a) "hard to maintain confidentiality," which means the managers were unable to tell anyone what was said during the conflict management process, (b) "some disputants did not take it seriously," and (c) "some conflict managers do not get along with each other," which reflects the fact that the coordinator selects the managers, they do not pick their own partner.

The third student question was, "What did you like best about being involved in the Conflict Manager Program?" Again, the students responded positively with 86% saying "helping others solve their problems." Three students responded by saying "meeting people," which could reflect the cross-section of conflict managers intially selected. Other single responses included: (a) "it was an honor," (b) "people trust me," (c) "getting out of class," (d) "taught me

how to solve my own problems better," and (e) "get along better with my brother."

The final student open-ended question was, "How do you think being involved in the Conflict Manager Program has helped you?" The two most frequent student responses were: "helped me solve my problems," as reported by 20% of the students, and "helped at home with my brothers and/or sisters," which was reported by 17% of the students. Other comments that were made more than once included: (a) "solve problems faster," (b) "see both sides of the conflict," (c) "better listener," (d) "not in as many arguments," (e) "talk more about problems instead of ignoring," (f) "learned new ways to solve problems," and (g) "share feelings more." Comments made by only one student include: (a) "take more responsibility for my actions," (b) "more friends," (c) "know what to say," (d) "not react to conflict in an angry way," (e) "different perspective with own problems," (f) "new friends," and (g) "try to not blame others so much."

Parents' comments. In order to gain further insight, two questions were asked of the parents; one positively and one negatively phrased. The first parent open-ended question was, "In what ways do think your child benefited from the addition of the Conflict Management Program?" The parents had many different responses. The three most frequent were: (a) "very positive or very beneficial," which was stated by

19% of the parents; (b) "less conflicts at home," which was stated by 15% of the parents; and (c) "more willing to listen to both sides of the story," which was stated by 10% of the parents. Comments made by more than one parent included: (a) "more verbal," (b) "knows a process to solve problems," (c) "enjoys it," (d) "self-esteem improved," and (e) "talks through problems better." Other comments made each by one parent include: (a) "calmer," (b) "more controlled," (c) "handles conflict more maturely," (d) "more confidence," (e) "communicates better at home," (f) "more friendships at school," (g) "no change," (h) "listens better," (i) "learned about confidentiality," (j) "helped at home," (k) "no 'you' statements," (l) "expresses herself better," (m) "uses the lingo," and (n) "understands the concept."

The second open-ended question for the parent was, "In what ways do you think your child's exposure to the Conflict Management Program has been problematic for him/her?" There was a unanimous response to this question with one single word, "none."

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This final chapter is organized into four parts. The first section provides a summary of the design, research questions, instruments, procedures, and data analysis used in this study. The second section provides interpretations of the results for each of the four research questions. The third section offers field observations that describe the researcher's impressions about the study. The fourth section provides recommendations for practice and future research.

In this study, a pretest-posttest experimental design was used to measure the impact of a conflict management program on conflict managers' self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution as compared to nonconflict managers who comprised the control group. In addition, the study assessed the perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict management skills in the mediator's relationships with siblings. There were four research questions: (a) What impact did the conflict resolution program have on conflict managers' self-esteem? (b) What impact did the conflict resolution program have on the conflict managers' communication skills? (c) What impact did the conflict resolution program have on the conflict managers' approaches to conflict resolution? and (d) What impact did the conflict resolution program have on the

conflict managers' ability to transfer conflict management skills to the home environment when dealing with siblings?

The subjects in this study consisted of 60 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at Dysart Middle School and 60 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at Western Dubuque Middle School. The initial pool of subjects were generated through a process of self-nomination, peer nomination, and teacher nominations. The entire student body in both schools had an orientation to the conflict management program and had the opportunity to express interest in being a conflict manager, and to nominate two peers to be conflict managers. The counselor and teachers reviewed the list to confirm that the student body was appropriately represented in terms of gender, grade level, race, and peer groups (i.e., athletes and nonathletes). The compiled list contained 60 students, 30 of whom were assigned to the experimental group and 30 to the control group using a stratified sampling procedure. Stratified sampling is a way of selecting a sample that assures that certain subgroups in the population will be represented in the sample (Borg & Gall, 1983). Students were grouped in four categories that included: gender, race, grade level, and peer groups. Utilizing a table of random numbers, students were randomly assigned to the treatment and control groups.

The pretest instruments included the Conflict Management Questionnaire (Appendix B) and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Appendix C), which were administered to the treatment and control groups. The other part of pretesting included collecting data concerning the perceived school-to-home transfer of conflict resolution skills. This was accomplished by utilizing the procedures developed by Gentry and Benenson (1993). Each student in the experimental group, as well as one parent or guardian, was interviewed by the researcher in a pre-posttest design.

The intervention for this study was implemented in two phases: (a) training for the conflict managers, and (b) practice in resolving conflicts by mediating peer conflicts. Only the experimental group received the two phases of the intervention process.

The posttest consisted of the same pretest instruments and were administered at the conclusion of Phase 1 and 2. The time frame provided opportunity for conflict managers to practice the conflict resolution skills they received in Phase 1.

Data analysis was divided into two parts: (a) testing differences in the experimental and control group on the dependent variables of pre-post change scores in self-esteem, communication skills, and constructive and destructive approaches to conflict resolution; and (b) testing pre-

posttest differences in frequency, duration, intensity of conflict, and amount of positive conflict resolution skills among the conflict managers.

For the first part of data analysis, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to evaluate significance ($p < .05$) between pre-posttest change scores of the experimental and control groups. The second part of the data analysis used a frequency distribution procedure to gain basic descriptive information. A t test for correlated samples was used to determine the nature and significance of any differences between the pretest and posttest results.

In the following section, a discussion of the results reported in Chapter IV is given.

What Impact Did the Conflict Resolution Program Have on the Conflict Managers' Self-Esteem?

The results of this research question at Dysart Middle School were $F = .603$, $p > .05$. The results at Western Dubuque Middle School were $F = .102$, $p > .05$. The findings indicated no statistical significance in conflict managers increasing their self-esteem over the intervention period at either school. It is important to note that the students had a mean score of 76.9 on the pretest at Dysart Middle School and a mean score of 82.9 at Western Dubuque Middle School on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. According to the interpretation manual, scores that range from 70-80

correspond to high self-esteem (1993, p. 8). The students at both schools scored in the high self-esteem range on the pretest, which made improvement in self-esteem more difficult to attain. The posttest mean scores were 76.9 and 80.8 respectively, which indicate the students maintained a high level of self-esteem over the 4-month intervention period. Therefore, it would be difficult for the students in the experimental and control groups at either school to demonstrate significant improvement in self-esteem when they initially possessed a relatively high level of self-esteem.

What Impact Did the Conflict Resolution Program Have on the Conflict Managers' Communication Skills?

The results for this research question at Dysart Middle School were $F = .081$, $p > .05$. The results at Western Dubuque Middle School were $F = .710$, $p > .05$. These findings indicate no statistical significance in communication skills at either school.

Communication skills, by nature, are skills that require practice in order to improve. The conflict managers at both schools were provided opportunities to practice their communication skills throughout the 4 month intervention period. As reported by the counselor at Dysart Middle School, each conflict manager mediated at least two conflicts. The counselor at Western Dubuque reported that each conflict manager mediated at least one conflict, with

some mediating two conflicts. There was no way for the researcher to predict or control how many conflicts would be referred and mediated by the conflict managers at either school. The difference in the number of conflicts mediated at Dysart Middle School when compared to Western Dubuque Middle School could be attributed to more referred conflicts at Dysart Middle School. This might be explained by the fact there were more conflicts at Dysart Middle School, or the counselor and faculty at Dysart Middle School more actively referred conflicts to be mediated. As it turned out, it would have been difficult for the conflict managers at either school to demonstrate significant improvement in communication skills based on the limited number of opportunities provided to practice those skills.

What Impact Did the Conflict Resolution Program Have on the Conflict Managers' Approaches to Conflict Resolution?

The results for this research question were divided into constructive approaches and destructive approaches to conflict resolution. At Dysart Middle School the results for the constructive approaches to conflict resolution were $F = .004$, $p < .05$, and were statistically significant. These findings indicated the conflict managers at Dysart Middle School used a more constructive approach in resolving conflict after the intervention. Since the conflict

management program advocates a more constructive approach to resolving conflicts, this basic philosophy is supported at Dysart Middle School.

In Phase 1 of the intervention, the conflict management training, the students learned about three different styles of conflict resolution. The San Francisco Community Board Model (1990) defined the three conflict resolution styles as: (a) denial (avoidance, lose-leave, or low concern for results and people); (b) confrontation (accommodation, win-lose, or high concern for results and low concern for people); and (c) problem-solving (compromise, problem solver or moderate concern for results and people). Benenson (1988) defined these three different styles as: (a) denial: the disputant refuses to acknowledge the emotional involvement in the conflict, (b) confrontation: one disputant verbally or physically attacks another disputant, and (c) problem-solving: the disputants talk about a conflict and possible resolutions to the conflict without insulting or blaming each other.

Denial and confrontation were considered destructive styles of conflict resolution. The problem-solving method, which utilizes a negotiation style procedure, was the preferred method. The problem-solving method is the style practiced by the conflict managers during the training and throughout the 4-month intervention. Therefore, practicing

the problem-solving style of resolving conflicts might influence their preference of using this constructive approach to resolving conflicts.

The results at Dysart Middle School for using a more destructive approach to conflict resolution were $F = .055$, $p > .05$, and were not statistically significant. These findings indicate a tendency for conflict managers to use less destructive approaches to resolve conflicts; however, the results were not statistically significant.

At Western Dubuque Middle School, the results for using a more constructive approach to resolving conflicts were $F = .069$, $p > .05$, and were not statistically significant. The findings indicated the conflict managers at Western Dubuque Middle School showed a tendency toward using a more constructive approach to resolving conflicts even though not statistically significant. The results at Western Dubuque Middle School for using a more destructive approach to resolving conflict were $F = .126$, $p > .05$. These findings indicate little decrease in the conflict managers' preference to using destructive approaches to resolve conflicts, and were not statistically significant.

In summary, the conflict managers showed a statistically significant increase in constructive approaches to resolving conflict at Dysart Middle School. At both schools, all other dependent variables may have showed movement or a tendency

toward change, but there was no statistical significance found in this study.

The findings of this research are similar to the findings reported by Brown (1992). In this study, conflict managers at Dysart Middle School were found to choose a more constructive method of resolving conflict after the intervention. Brown found significant differences between two groups of pupils in relation to their actions and attitudes in conflict situations, with those having conflict resolution training favoring more peaceful solutions to resolving conflicts.

The Impact the Conflict Resolution Program Had on the Conflict Managers' Perceived Ability to Transfer Conflict Management Skills to the Home Environment

Eight questions were used to analyze the perceived frequency, duration, and intensity of conflicts at home. The questions were asked of each conflict manager at Dysart Middle School and at Western Dubuque Middle School. Additionally, one parent of each conflict manager was interviewed in a pretest-posttest format. The families decided which parent would be interviewed for the pretest, and the same parent was interviewed for the posttest.

The interviewer used the questions developed by Gentry and Benenson (1993). The procedures of Gentry and Benenson's

study were utilized with the following modifications: (a) the research was conducted with middle school students instead of elementary students, and (b) there was a 4-month time period before posttesting, instead of 10 weeks used by Gentry and Benenson.

The interviews were used to collect quantitative data. They were reported using a frequency distribution procedure to gain information about the participants and their responses. A *t* test for correlated samples was used to determine the nature and significance of any differences between the pretest and posttest results.

Question one addressed the perceived frequency of conflicts between the conflict manager and his or her siblings in the home environment. The results of $t = .160$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$ did not reveal a statistical significance. The findings showed a tendency for fewer conflicts at home after the intervention period. The parent data for this same question revealed statistical significance in the perceived number of conflicts at home. The results were $t = .001$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$. Parents of the conflict managers perceived the number of conflicts at home to decrease between the conflict manager and his/her siblings.

Statistical significance was found in Question two concerning the duration of conflicts or "How long it takes to settle conflict with siblings." The results for the students

were t = .003, df = 58, p < .05. This student data indicate conflict managers perceive it took less time to settle conflicts with their siblings after their respective involvement in the conflict management program. It could be speculated that, once the students were taught a process to settle conflicts, it provided a model to follow. This might lead the students to believe they resolved their conflicts in a more timely fashion.

The results of the parent data were t = .410, df = 58, p > .05. This parent data indicate the duration of resolving conflicts stayed relatively the same from the pretest to posttest. Unlike the students' perceptions, the parents did not perceive the amount of time to settle conflicts less after the intervention.

Question three addressed the perception of the intensity of conflicts at home. The results of the student data were t = .309, df = 58, p > .05, which were not statistically significant. The results of the parent data were t = .306, df = 58, p > .05, which were not statistically significant. These findings revealed there was no significant difference in how "hot or steamed up" the student got when engaged in conflict with a sibling. It was the researcher's impression that students and parents both believed the intensity of conflicts at home were greater than the intensity of conflicts at school. On both the pretest and posttest, when

the researcher asked about conflicts at home, the conflict managers expressed that conflicts with siblings got intense. This is the nature of sibling rivalry (Greer, 1992). The program does not require students to avoid expressing anger or becoming intense, it just teaches an appropriate way to deal with that anger.

Questions four and five examined the perceived degree of communication between the conflict manager and his/her sibling during conflict. Question four addressed the perceived amount of talk that took place during conflict, whereas question five addressed the perceived degree of listening that took place during conflict. The results of the student data for Question four were $t = .789$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$, which were not statistically significant. The results of the parent data for Question four were $t = 1.00$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$, which were not statistically significant. These findings indicated little or no difference from pretest to posttest on the perceived amount of talk that took place between the conflict manager and siblings during conflict.

The results of the student data for Question five were $t = .458$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$, which were not statistically significant. The results of the parent data for Question five were $t = .672$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$, which was not statistically significant. These findings also indicated little difference from pretest to posttest. As previously

discussed, communication skills need practice to initiate change. A follow-up study might ascertain whether the conflict managers have begun to internalize the communication skills they learned in school and transfer those skills to the home environment.

Question six investigated the perceived frequency of conflict managers' blameful behavior toward their siblings when engaged in conflict. The results of the student data were $t = .008$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$, and were statistically significant. The results of the parent data were $t = .004$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$, which were also statistically significant. These results demonstrated a definite decrease in how often the conflict manager blamed the sibling during conflict. Several aspects of the conflict management program could have contributed to this decrease in blameful behavior: (a) conflict managers were taught the concept of "I messages" which allows one to express conflict in a non-blaming way, (b) the conflict management process requires students to look at both sides of the conflict, and (c) both disputants must take ownership of the problem and the solution. The data suggest that conflict managers followed these three aspects of the program, and thus could explain why both students and parents perceived a decrease in how often blame was placed on the sibling.

Question seven assessed how often the conflict manager "tried to win" when engaged in conflict with a sibling. The results of the student data were $t = .013$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$, which were statistically significant. The results of the parent data were $t = .004$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$, which were also statistically significant. The findings indicate conflict managers tried "to win" less when engaged in conflict with their siblings, as perceived by both the students and parents. This decrease in trying-to-win behavior demonstrates a more neutral approach to resolving conflict and can perhaps be explained by the "win-win" concept that the conflict managers learned in the training session. This "win-win" concept is the problem solving method of resolving conflict, as compared to the methods of denial and confrontation. All three of these styles of resolving conflict were clearly explained and demonstrated in the training.

Question eight assessed how often the conflict managers perceived they affirmed their sibling during or soon after conflict. The results of the student data were $t = .103$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$, which were also not statistically significant.

The results of the parent data were $t = .568$, $df = 58$, $p > .05$), which were not statistically significant. These findings indicated there was not much difference from pretest

to posttest. The impressions of the researcher throughout the interview process were that the relationships between the conflict managers and their siblings were basically very positive. Even though they might have experienced intense conflict, there seemed to be a sense of genuine love and support between the conflict managers and their brothers and/or sisters. The data did not indicate a change, but did indicate that conflict managers almost always affirmed the sibling during or soon after conflict.

In summary, the fourth research question used a series of eight questions to assess the perceived impact of the intervention and how the conflict resolution skills transferred to the home environment. The student and parent data revealed a few statistically significant factors that support the notion that the skills learned from participation in the conflict management program did tend to transfer to the home environment. The data in this research further supported the research findings of Gentry and Benenson (1993), in that some of the skills learned as a conflict manager transferred to the home environment. In their research with elementary children, statistical significance was found in: (a) a decline in the frequency of conflicts as perceived by both parents and children, (b) a decline in the intensity of sibling conflicts as perceived by the children,

and (c) an increase in the amount their child listened when engaged in conflict with a sibling.

The responses students and parents gave to the open-ended questions collected during the interview process further lend support to some of the positive effects of implementing a conflict management program.

Discussion of the Open-Ended Questions

This study resulted in a few statistically significant factors that indicate positive results from the implementation of a conflict management program. To gain more insight into the feelings of the students and parents regarding the effects of the program, they were asked to respond to some open-ended questions. Questions were phrased to address possible positive and negative aspects of the conflict management program. The comments made by the conflict managers and their parents in this study clearly reflected a positive attitude toward the program. In response to the question "How do you think being involved in the Conflict Manager Program has helped you?" most of the students felt they learned to solve problems better. This was supported in this research with the statistical significance of the students' perceived change in their approach to resolving conflicts. The change resulted in using a more problem-solving method of conflict resolution. Some other comments made by the students that reflected the

more constructive approach to resolving conflict included: "better listener," "see both sides," "talk more about the problem instead of ignoring," and "share feelings more." Each of these comments reflect specific skills taught and reinforced throughout the intervention period.

In regards to the perceived transfer of conflict management skills to the home environment, students' comments included: "get along better with my brother" and "helped at home with my brothers and/or sisters." These positive comments were supported by this research with the statistical significance in three areas: (a) the amount of time it took to resolve conflicts with siblings decreased, (b) how often the conflict manager blamed the sibling when engaged in conflict decreased, and (c) how often the conflict manager tried to "win" when engaged in conflict with a sibling decreased. The students' comments were very general, but they did reflect what the quantitative data revealed. It is important to note that the students' perceptions of the quality of their sibling relationships improved.

Other positive comments that the students made, such as "people trust me," "more friends," and "take responsibility for my actions" were not related to any of the research questions in this study. However, these comments indicate from the students' perspective some additional positive outcomes of the program.

The open-ended questions asking for negative responses to the program were mostly answered "none" by the students. This would suggest they viewed the program positively. Responses not answered by "none" were related to components of the conflict management program. The nature of the program placed certain demands on the conflict managers, and these demands were reflected in some of their comments. The comment "not able to give suggestions for resolving conflicts" reflected a guideline conflict managers had to adhere to throughout the process. Conflict managers were instructed not to express their own resolutions but to allow the disputants to develop and take ownership of the resolution. The comment, "hard to maintain confidentiality," reflected another parameter for conflict managers. The conflict managers were expected to maintain confidentiality during the management process. This commitment to maintain confidentiality can be challenged periodically by peers. The comment, "staying neutral," was also a challenge for conflict managers, particularly in a small school. In the small rural schools used in this study, most of the students knew one another. When a conflict manager mediated a conflict between two disputants, he or she knew it was even more important not to take sides or favor one of the disputants. Other comments such as "missing class" and "catching up on homework" would

be expectations for the managers anytime they had to miss class time due to their participation in the program.

The parents' perceptions of the conflict management program were also positive. Their responses to "In what ways do you think your child benefited from the addition of the Conflict Management Program?" reflected a favorable attitude toward the program. The comment "less conflicts at home" was related to an aspect of fourth research question. The results of this research demonstrated a decrease in number of conflicts between siblings as reported by parents. This decrease was statistically significant. The comment "more willing to listen to both sides of the story" indicated the students were following the problem-solving approach to resolving conflicts. The problem-solving approach requires the conflict managers to listen to both sides of the story before reaching a resolution.

This style of resolving conflicts also advocates a "win-win" attitude, which was supported by the statistical significance of the parents' perception that their child tried to "win" less after the intervention period. It was further supported by the statistical significance that parents' perceived their child to blame their sibling less after the intervention period.

The comment "knows a process to solve problems" indicated the students did use the process at home, and it

was observable to the parents. The comment "taking responsibility for own actions" would be a preceived positive outcome as adolescents are going through rapid changes from a developmental perspective.

Other comments made by the parents, such as "self-esteem improved," "more confidence," "listens better," and "more friendships at school" provided additional support that the Conflict Management Program was viewed positively by the parents.

In response to any negative effects of the program for their children, the parents unanimously responded "none." The unanimous response strongly indicates the parents did not view the program negatively.

Field Observations

The researcher had some additional impressions concerning this study. First, it was obvious to the researcher that the students and parents interviewed at both schools believed in and supported the concepts the program advocates. This conclusion is based on the data and the high level of excitement observed by the researcher by those students who were conflict managers and their parents. That excitement serves as another index of the positive effect of the Conflict Management Program. In addition, the administrators at both schools made reference to their support for the program.

Another impression of the researcher is that student violence was not a major concern in either school. This conclusion was based on comments made by faculty and students about the few number of physical fights that occurred in both schools. However, the implementation of the conflict management program still provided an alternative for students to deal with conflict, even those that may be considered non-violent. This research demonstrated this type of program can be a positive alternative to students resolving conflicts, even in two Iowa rural middle schools where violence is not of major concern.

Recommendations

This study is related to the research of Brown (1993) and Gentry and Benenson (1993). In Brown's study, the implementation of a conflict resolution program had positive results in several Detroit Public Schools. Gentry and Benenson found that elementary students and their parents perceived the conflict management program as a very positive addition at a school in Illinois. This study confirms positive impact of a conflict management program in two middle schools in Iowa. The common thread is that positive results have been found in several different settings using the same program. Further studies could continue to research the effect of a conflict management program in different settings and grade levels.

Future research studies could also be done with an additional data collection point of one year after implementation of the program. Even though this study expanded the time frame between pre and posttesting from previous studies, additional time might allow for the skills taught and practiced to be further internalized. Furthermore, this additional data collection could enable one to measure the stability of the conflict management program and the level of retention of the knowledge and skills learned through participation in the conflict management program.

Other research questions that could be added to future research in this area could be to analyze data by race, national origin, gender, or age to see if differences exist. It is possible that differences exist in the perceptions of what is acceptable in resolving conflicts. The problem-solving method is the preferred style of resolving conflicts in the San Francisco Community Board Model. There is no adjustment made for individuals who prefer an alternate style of conflict resolution. For example, if a student is a conflict manager and culturally believes in confrontation as an appropriate style of conflict resolution, that might impact his/her perceptions of the program. Differences may also exist in the perceptions of parents in regard to

acceptable levels of the frequency and intensity of conflicts.

Another direction for further studies would be to conduct a more in-depth study but with fewer numbers. The researcher would gather more in-depth data and report actual frequencies, duration, and intensity of conflicts in the home environment. This would enable the researcher to report accurate numbers and not just students' and parents' perceptions. It may even be appropriate to do a case study of a family using a qualitative design which would report more detailed findings about the style of resolving conflict in the home in a pre and post intervention format. It could also be done with specific intentions of comparing differences in gender and/or ethnicity.

Finally, further research could center around the development of a more comprehensive questionnaire to evaluate the impact of conflict management programs in schools. At the time of this study, the questionnaire developed by Benenson appeared to be the best available instrument. His questionnaire reported statistical significance in validity among a single class norm group. The researcher ran a reliability test and reported an alpha level of .89. However, as the number of conflict management programs continues to increase, larger norm groups would provide for increased confidence in the validity and reliability of this

instrument or a more comprehensive instrument. Assessment is an essential component to the long term success of conflict management programs.

Another aspect of this recommendation section is how the results of this research can be applied to practice. The conclusion can be drawn that schools can benefit from the implementation of a conflict management program. It is the researcher's recommendation that all schools should implement a program that helps students learn peaceful resolutions to conflict. The National Report for Healthy People 2000 states that 50% of the schools will implement conflict resolution programs by the year 2000. The Healthy Iowans 2000 Report states that 75% of the schools will implement conflict resolution programs by the year 2000. The researcher believes all schools could benefit from the implementation of a conflict resolution program by the year 2000.

The program also helps students realize that there are differences in the way others resolve conflict. Students will continue to resolve conflict in different ways, but the San Francisco model provides a framework to problem-solve the resolution of conflicts. Teachers need to actively refer conflicts to the program rather then ignore conflicts or settle them for the students. The efforts to move conflict resolution into higher education would enable new teachers to be familiar and understand the importance of conflict

management programs in schools. The book by Girard and Koch (1996) is an example of the direction teacher education is moving in the area of conflict resolution.

Furthermore, the results of this research show there are benefits received by the conflict managers. It may not be feasible to utilize all students as conflict managers; however, it may be feasible to train all students in the conflict management process. Learning and practicing communication skills and conflict resolution skills can help prepare our youth for life in the adult world.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Tom Keller, and I am a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa. I am also the counselor at Northern University High School in Cedar Falls, I am conducting a dissertation study on the effect of a conflict management program on students trained to be conflict managers. The purpose of the study is to learn if self-esteem, communication skills, and approaches to conflict resolution are impacted by the program. Additionally, to learn if these conflict resolution skills are transferable from school to the home environment when dealing with siblings.

The study would involve your son/daughter completing two short questionnaires and participating in a face-to-face interview. This interview will take approximately 20 minutes and will focus on the way your child handles conflict situations at home with their brothers and/or sisters. No questions should cause any student anxiety or discomfort. You will also be asked to participate in an interview about the frequency, intensity, and amount of parental intervention in conflicts between your children. The interviews will be tape-recorded, but once the interviews have been transcribed, the tape will be erased. Any of the data collected will be kept in strict confidence. At no time will you be personally identified. This is a pre-test/post-test design, so the questionnaires and interviews will be done before the program is implemented and four months after implementation.

I hope you will agree to participate in this study. If you have any questions please contact me at home (319) 277-5727 or at work (319) 273-2220. Please return the bottom portion of this letter to the school counselor within one week. Your cooperation in this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Thomas Keller

Thomas Keller

- -

I hereby agree to allow my child to participate in this study. I acknowledge that I received a copy of this consent statement.

_____ _____

Signature of parent/guardian Date

APPENDIX B

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Student,

In order to help us study the usefulness of mediation training, we would like you to answer few questions about yourself, and how you feel about conflict in your life. All of your answers are private and confidential. The results of this survey will be reported only as totals and averages for many students combined; no report will show the answers that any one student gave. For the questions below, there are no right or wrong answers. Your help is greatly appreciated.

NAME _____

First, we'd like you to answer a few questions about yourself.

1. I am:
   1. Female
   2. Male

2. How old were you after your last birthday?
   ____ years old.

3. Which of these groups best describes you?
   1. Anglo-American
   2. African-American
   3. Asian-American
   4. Native-American
   5. Other

4. Last semester were your grades:
   1. Mostly A's
   2. Mostly B's
   4. Mostly C's
   5. Mostly D's

The next questions ask how you feel about disagreements or conflicts. Circle the number that best describes how you feel about each statement.

1= Never
2= Seldom
3= Sometimes
4= Often
5= Always

	Never				Always
1. I prefer to avoid topics of possible conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I look for creative solutions to conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I will hit someone if they do something to really make me mad.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Something good can come from conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I encourage working together to solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5

	Never				Always
6. I try to talk out a problem instead of fighting.	1	2	3	4	5
7. If I'm mad at someone I just ignore them.	1	2	3	4	5
8. One way I respond to conflict is to blame the other person.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am willing to give in a little if the other person will meet me half way.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I raise my voice when trying to get others to listen to me.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I must win when I am in a disagreement with another person.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I usually share my feelings when I am in conflict with someone.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I respond to conflict with a friend by pretending there is no conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I would prefer not to talk to someone rather than argue.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I try to make compromises in order reach a solution to conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
16. In conflict, I try to understand the other person's point of view.	1	2	3	4	5

The next questions ask about how you communicate with others.

17. It's easy for me to explain things to people.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I'm good at asking questions when I want to find something out.	1	2	3	4	5
19. When people talk, it is easy for me to pay attention to what they are saying.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I can figure out how other people are feeling when I talk with them.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I like to look people in the eyes when I talk to them.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My friends think I am a good listener.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

COOPERSMITH SCHOOL INVENTORY

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Deborah Gentry
Home Economics Department
Illinois State University
Normal, IL 61761

CONFLICT MANAGER PROGRAM

Student Questionnaire
(Round 1)

1. How old are you?

2. How many brothers do you have and what are their ages?

   How many sisters do you have and what are their ages?

3. How many conflicts do you have with schoolmates each week?

   ___ 0-3
   ___ 4-6
   ___ 7-9
   ___ 10-12
   ___ 13-15
   ___ 16 or more

   Conflicts = fights, arguments, yelling matches, "picking-ons"

   Do you think this number is more than what most kids your age have?
   ___ Yes
   ___ No

4. How many conflicts do you have with your brothers and sisters each week?

   ___ 0-3
   ___ 4-6
   ___ 7-9
   ___ 10-12
   ___ 13-15
   ___ 16 or more

   Do you think this number is more than what most kids your age have?
   ___ Yes
   ___ No

5. When you have a conflict with a schoolmate, how long does it usually take to settle it?

   ___ 0-5 minutes
   ___ 6-10 minutes
   ___ 11-15 minutes
   ___ 16+ minutes
   ___ Off-and-on -- not really settled

6. When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how long does it usually take to settle it?

   ___ 0-5 minutes
   ___ 6-10 minutes
   ___ 11-15 minutes
   ___ 16+ minutes
   ___ Off-and-on --not really settled

7. When you have a conflict with a schoolmate, how "hot/steamed up" do you usually get?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Hot/steamed-up = mad, angry, upset

8. When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how "hot/steamed up" do you usually get?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

9. When you have a conflict with a schoolmate, how much do you talk to the person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Talk to = Tell how you feel.
Tell what you think.
Tell information about what you saw, heard, ...
Tell what you want.

10. When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how much do you talk to the person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

11. When you have a conflict with a schoolmate, how much do you pay attention to the other person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Pay attention to = Ask about, listen to, + acknowledge other person's feelings, thoughts, wants, experience of situation...

12. When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how much do you pay attention to the other person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

13. When you have a conflict with a schoolmate, how often do you blame the other person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

14. When you have conflict with a brother or sister, how often do you blame the other person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

15. When you have a conflict with a schoolmate, how often do you try to "win" ?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

16. When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how often do you try to "win"?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

17. When you have a conflict with a schoolmate, how often can you be kind to the person during or soon after the conflict?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Kind = Being affirming and friendly.
Apologizing.
Being affectionate in some way.
Giving a compliment.

18. When you have a conflict with a brother or sister, how often can you be kind to the person during or soon after the conflict?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Kind = Being affirming and friendly.
Apologizing.
Being affectionate in some way.

19. Are the ways you handle conflict with schoolmates different from the ways you handle conflict with your brothers and sisters? If yes, how are they different?

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CONFLICT MANAGER PROGRAM
Parent Questionnaire
(Round 1)

Directions: Please answer the following questions. Either write the answer out in the space provided or check the appropriate answer for rating-type questions.

1. The sex of your child is: Male _____ Female _____

2. As the person(s) completing this questionnaire, what is your relationship to the child involved.
___ mother
___ father
___ mother and father deciding on answers together
___ other (explain)

3. Describe the composition of child's family: (i.e., mother, father, and sister). Also give the age of each sibling referenced.

4. Within which of the following ranges would your family's yearly income fall?

___ $15,000 and under
___ $16-25,000
___ $26-35,000
___ $36-45,000
___ $46-55,000
___ More that $55,000

5. How many conflicts does your child typically have with siblings each week?

___ 0-3
___ 4-6
___ 7-9
___ 10-12
___ 13-15
___ 16 or more

Conflicts = fights, arguments, yelling matches, "picking-ons", etc.

Do you think this number is more than what most kids his/her age have?
___ Yes
___ No

6. When your child engages in a conflict with a sibling, how long does it usually take to settle it?

___ 0-5 minutes
___ 6-10 minutes
___ 11-15 minutes
___ 16+ minutes
___ Off-and-on -- not really settled

7. When your child engages in a conflict with a sibling, how "hot/steamed-up" does s/he usually get?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Hot/steamed-up = shows visible signs of being emotionally and physically angry

8. When your child engages in a conflict with a sibling, how much does s/he talk to the person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Talk to = Tells feelings.
Tells thoughts.
Gives information about what s/he has seen, heard, or sensed that prompted her/his anger.
Tells wants.

9. When your child engages in a conflict with a sibling, how much does s/he pay attention to the other person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Pay attention to = Asks about, listens to, & acknowledges other person's feelings, thoughts, wants, experience of situation...

10. When your child engages in a conflict with a sibling, how often does s/he blame the other person?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

11. When your child engages in a conflict with a sibling, how often does s/he try to "win" ?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

12. When your child engages in a conflict with a sibling, how often does s/he affirm the person during or soon after the conflict?

___ Hardly at all
___ Somewhat
___ Moderately
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much

Affirming = Being kind and friendly.
Apologizing.
Being affectionate in some way.
Giving a compliment.

13. To what degree do you intervene in your child's conflicts with his/her siblings?

___ Hardly at all. My child resolves his/her conflicts w/o my help.
___ Somewhat.
___ Moderately. I intervene in his/her conflicts about as often as he/she resolves his/her own conflicts alone.
___ Quite a bit
___ Very much. I almost always intervene.

14. If and when you do intervene, to what degree do you intervene at your own initiation (vs. your child having requested you intervene)?

___ When I do intervene, it is almost always at my own initiation.
___ When I do intervene, it is usually at my own initiation.
___ I initiate my own intervention about as often as I am requested by my child to intervene.
___ When I do intervene, it is usually at my child's request.
___ When I do intervene, it is almost always at my child's request.

15. What actions, strategies, or techniques, if any, do you typically use when you find yourself drawn into your child's conflicts with his/her siblings? Identify with an " * " those actions, strategies, or techniques that work best.

APPENDIX E

REPORT FORM

CONFLICT MANAGER REPORT FORM

Conflict Managers 1_____ Date_____

2_____

Disputants 1_____ Grade ____

2_____ Grade ____

What kind of conflict?
___ Argument
___ Fight
___ Rumor
___ Other _____

Referred by: ___ Student ___ Teacher ___ Counselor ___ Principal ___ Other

What was the conflict about?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Was the conflict resolved? ___ Yes ___ No

Resolution:
Disputant #1 agrees to:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Disputant #2 agrees to:

_____
_____
_____
_____