

Research Proposal

The Social Skills Programs in Nebraska School Districts

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate the social skills programs used in Midwestern suburban elementary schools. We also explored what the teachers believe the most effective aspects of the programs in place. The data of this research comes from seven participants in elementary schools. As our data for this research study progressed a couple of themes emerged. These themes include: teaching social skills, practice, and tools used.

Introduction

Assumptions

Throughout the study, researchers assumed that all of the teachers are honest with their responses to the interview questions. It was also assumed that the teachers have been educated in social skills along with the social skills programs their district uses.

Operational Definitions

Assistive technology- An Assistive technology device is any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities (Carrero, 2013).

Technology- any tool that can be used to help promote human learning, including – but not limited to – calculators, tablets (such as an iPad), Smart Boards, video cameras, digital cameras, MP3 players, Portable Digital Assistants (PDAs), and, of course, the computer.

Curriculum-the subjects comprising a course of study in a school or college (Stephen Abbott, 2014).

Social Skills-the personal skills needed for successful social communication and interaction.

Social Stories- a writing format, generally a set of boxes (or rectangles, circles, or other shapes) placed in a logically sequenced order. Each box or frame is a place for the writer to put information, pictures, symbols, or text (R. Essley, L. Rief & A. L. Rocci, 2008).

Tools/assessment- refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students.

Play- is defined as actively and functionally engaging with objects and/ or other people for the purpose of enjoyment (Carrero, 2013).

Green Book- a book that is a communication log between a teacher and a student's guardian. The log will contain positive notes about the students day as well as things the student may need to work on.

Stoplight- a behavioral tool used in the classroom. This tool is used as a visual so the student can monitor their own behavior. When using this tool, the student starts at the color green. If the student shows an undesired behavior after a warning from the teacher, the student changes their color to yellow or red.

Who Will Benefit

The information obtained from this research study will benefit both future and current educators, as well as parents seeking information on various social skills techniques. Current educators may find the information helpful for planning and making modifications to fit the needs of their students. Future educators will gain insight into what programs are currently being used in the state of Nebraska.

Literature Review

Introduction

Research tells us that social skills are important for functioning in a variety of settings (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011). When children do not have adequate social skills, it puts them at risk for isolation from peers and family, emotional and behavioral problems and academic underachievement (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011). To develop social skills of students schools must have a successful social skills program. In order for the program to be successful, teachers should understand the importance of social skills, social skills must be incorporated daily in a variety of ways, and teachers must be aware of the tools available and how to implement and teach with these tools.

The Importance of Social Skills

Establishing relationships with others, learning to live within the bounds of societal expectations, and discovering your place in the group are all major tasks of children in early childhood and reflect aspects of children's social development (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren,

2011). Children are not born knowing how to make friends and influence people, nor do they automatically understand the rules of society. Time and varied experiences are necessary for them to master the skills required for successful social functioning (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011) Through experimentation, they begin to discover what works and what doesn't under which different circumstances and which behaviors are effective or acceptable. This requires practice and support from adults and educators in their lives (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011).

Incorporating Social Skills Daily

It is important for educators to create a sense of community in the classroom and help children gain new knowledge and skills through naturally occurring interactions with others as well as through planned lessons and relevant projects (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011). It is important to teach social skills daily because research demonstrates that social competence influences children's academic performance. Children who have better social skills and more positive social attitudes tend to do better academically than less socially skilled children (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011). As a result of these outcomes, socially competent children often have high self-esteem, viewing themselves as worthwhile, capable people. The same is not true for children whose social skills are poor. Instructional time spent on social development is simply not "icing on the cake," but an essential ingredient for learning of all children. Some ways to implement social skills daily is to enforce positive behavior, having students hold each other accountable and giving students time to think about their actions (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011).

Tools to Implement and Teach With

Social Stories

One tool that educators can use is Social Stories. A Social Story is a short simple story written from the perspective of the student that provides instruction on positive, appropriate social behaviors (Crozier & Sileo, 2005). The simplicity and utility of social stories make them functional in both general and special education settings (Crozier & Sileo, 2005).

There are six steps outlined in the article *Encouraging Positive Behavior with Social Stories* by Crozier & Sileo that are necessary for the effective use of social stories. These steps are: A team identifies the need for behavior intervention, a functional assessment is completed, social stories are included in a behavior plan, the social story is written, the social story is introduced and progress is monitored with data, and success is evaluated with data. Social stories were originally developed to teach children with autism how to play games while increasing their ability to interact socially with others (Barry & Burlew, 2004). Social stories are now applied to several situations to teach children with mild to moderate autism and Asperger syndrome the cues and behaviors they need to know when interacting with others in a socially appropriate manner (Barry & Burlew, 2004). According to a study conducted by the National Association of School Psychologists, when social stories are used in conjunction with other interventions, effects were more pronounced. The use of social stories may be effective because it combines the elements of visual interventions along with directions, choices, or rationale to transitions or manage their own behavior (Barry & Burlew, 2004). Language used in social stories includes the following (Barry & Burlew, 2004):

- Descriptions of environmental, social, and/ or behavioral cues that a student can learn to identify and discriminate from other stimuli;

- Directive statements that tell the student how to respond to the cues described;
- Statements that describe other people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors
- Descriptions of the setting and typical behaviors in that setting that may help the individual recognize the context of the social story.

Social stories are taught using repetition, priming, opportunities to practice, and corrective feedback (Barry & Burlew, 2004). The stories should be presented to the student on a regular basis, and if using priming, it should be reviewed with the child prior to entering a situation in which he or she can practice the skills (Barry & Burlew, 2004).

To ensure their benefit, teachers should use a systematic checklist for writing and use social stories (Crozier & Sileo, 2005). There are six steps necessary for the effective use of social stories according to Crozier & Sileo:

Step 1: Identifying target behavior- The primary teacher or another team member must identify a target behavior. You should do this informally through regular observation of the student or through more formal assessments. The team can prioritize behaviors for intervention in a variety of ways:

- According to the level of risk to the student or others.
- According to how irritating the behavior is.
- According to how isolating the behavior is.
- The behavior most likely to respond quickly to intervention.
- The first behavior in an escalation chain.
- The most difficult or entrenched behavior a student displays

- Step 2: Conducting a functional assessment- Once you have selected the target behavior, you should conduct a functional assessment. The functional assessment provides a picture of what the behavior looks like and allows the team to develop a hypothesis as to what causes or maintains the student's behavior. An informal functional assessment may take only 15 minutes while a detailed, formal assessment could take several hours.

Step 3: Making a plan to include Social Stories- The team should use the data to select appropriate interventions once they have established a baseline and developed a hypothesis of why the behavior occurs. The IEP team should ensure that social stories are part of a balanced plan that includes other social-behavioral interventions. No one strategy will be appropriate for all students.

Step 4: Writing the social story: Write a social story based on the information gathered from the functional assessment. For example, a functional assessment shows that a student's inappropriate physical contact while walking in line to the library occurs because the student is trying to rush ahead to reach the destination quickly. An appropriate social story would describe why the class travels in a line and gives specific directions for the appropriate lineup behavior.

Step 5: Using the Social Story with the student- The teacher can now introduce the social story to the student and include it as part of the student's regular schedule. The first time the Social Story is read to the student, ask a few questions to ensure comprehension. After the initial comprehension check, the student can read the story

independently, read it aloud to an adult, listen to the story being read aloud, or listen to the recording of the story.

Step 6: Collecting More Data- After the student has begun to use the social story, the teacher should continue to collect data on the target behavior in the same way it was collected during the functional assessment. The data should be reviewed as part of the evaluation process to assess how effective the social story has been, whether or not it needs to be modified, and whether or not the student's behavior is considered to be within an acceptable range.

Incorporating Play

Social relationships are a fundamental and crucial part of life (Carrero, Lewis, Zolkoski, Lusk, 2014). Play is defined as actively and functionally engaging with objects and/ or other people for the purpose of enjoyment (Carrero, Lewis, Zolkoski, Lusk, 2014). It is important to incorporate play into the classroom to help students with their social skills.

There are four research-based strategies for effectively teaching play to young students according to Wong et al.

- -Video modeling is an instructional strategy in which the learner views a video of the desired behavior being performed.
- Visual supports is when an educator presents visually represented social stories to teach social scripts to be used in a play situation
- Pivotal response Training is based on the principles of applied behavior analysis. A pivotal behavior is a skill or behavior that is central to performing a variety of other behaviors in various areas of functioning.

- Pivotal response training is a method of loosely structured, child- directed instruction that uses the student's interests to teach pivotal behaviors that will affect a wide range of skills (e.g., language, social behaviors, academic skills)
- Task analysis and chaining, task analysis refers to taking a large or complex task and breaking it into smaller, more discrete tasks.

To ensure that behavioral changes are internalized in the child's repertoire of behaviors, it is often necessary for the changes to occur over time and involve multiple individuals and settings (Jung & Sainato, 2013). Engaging appropriately with play materials and peers in classrooms allows young children to acquire critical developmental skills (Jung & Sainato, 2013). There are three types of play according to Jung and Sainato.

- Functional play means to functionally use an object such as pushing a toy car.
- Symbolic play is defined as a child's ability to act on an object as if it is something else. This type of play involves three forms: object substitution (e.g., using a brick as some soap), the attribution of false properties (e.g., pretending a doll is ill), and the attribution of presence to imaginary objects (e.g., driving a truck over an invisible bridge).
- Sociodramatic play is defined as an advanced form of symbolic play involving engagement in role playing and cooperative dramatizations around a particular theme

Curriculum

It is important for educators to clearly distinguish where they will use social skills practice within their curriculum. Curriculum is defined as the content and sequence of

instruction, and instruction or treatment is defined as how content is delivered and/ or goals achieved (Olley, 1999). Choosing appropriate curriculum is based on student's individual needs, as well as the whole classroom needs. Through careful planning and instruction, students' social skills goals will be achieved. Although there is a general consensus about the importance of education, controversy continues in many areas, including methods of instruction, intensity of instruction, and the value of early instruction (Olley, 1999). There is also a general consensus that early education is important (Olley, 1999). The California Department of Education and Development Services did, however, endorse individualized curriculum and treatment to address curricular areas such as social engagement, language, coping, and reduction of problem behavior.

The following are the roles of curriculum as stated by Olley of the University of North Carolina.

- The choice of curriculum is based more on the knowledge of the individual child than on the choice of a curriculum package. The curriculum should be matched to the individual learning needs and behavior characteristics of the student.
- Curriculum content and sequence are decided on the basis of individual student progress.
- Curriculum changes (accommodations and modifications) have been shown to be effective both in increasing skills and decreasing problem behavior.

- All decisions in regards to curriculum should be made based on assessment and consultation of other involved parties.

Technology

Affective and social learning occurs in relationships and with others. Technology can act as a buffer and a bridge between communication partners (Cafiero, 2008). Some of the supportive tools that can support effective social learning are the virtual reality software, Boardmaker, and mobile technology such as iPads and tablets. There are a variety of apps on mobile media that are customizable to help individuals with their social skills. Some apps that have been helpful with AAC to enhance social skills are Active Chat, Grace Picture Exchange, Communication, MyTalk Mobile, and TouchChat HD. It is also important when choosing tools for the classroom that you have students' individual needs as well as the whole classroom.

Virtual Reality

Virtual reality allows the opportunity for a person to experience a three-dimensional, computer-generated world in which people can behave and encounter responses with their behavior. Virtual reality has been common with helping students with autism. In these virtual realities, participants can create their own virtual characters with identities. One virtual reality site is called Second Life. Second life is an online, 3D virtual world created by participants who actually interact with it. Within Second, life there are virtual private enclaves, one of which is for individuals with Asperger's syndrome (AS) and the people that support them. The virtual community is called Brigadoon. Members create avatars and environments and interact socially within the virtual community. This provides people with AS to engage socially with others to practice social skills within a virtual environment (Cafiero, 2008).

Mobile Technology

An appealing aspect of the iPad and Tablet is the versatility. Because iPads function through applications, there is an endless possibility of options for integrating iPads in work with children. Recent research, for example, has suggested iPads and their apps can effectively be used to increase play skills, decrease challenging behavior , to increase academic engagement, as a speech-generating AAC , and to provide video models (King, Scott, Thomeczek, & Voreis, 2014). The lower cost, easy to use interface, and customizable applications of the iPad have gained favor with parents and teachers (Boyd, Barnett, & More 2015). Companies have caught on and have begun producing more applications to help students communicate and succeed in and out of the classroom.

Meeting Individual Needs

To implement assistive technology in children's' lives a variety of steps must be taken to ensure the child success. According to the Missouri Assistive Technology Council, a team approach is necessary with members knowledgeable about the child. The team must keep in mind the student's strengths and limitations, the activities, tasks and environments in which they function, and the range and scope of potential AT options to address specific needs. The team should have access to AT to use in structured device trials in the environments in which the child will be using the technology (e.g. home, school, community, etc.) This allows for device trial data to be comparatively analyzed. Going through these steps helps the team determine what is best for the child.

As technology plays an increasingly important role in children's lives in modern society, children who are left out of this process are in danger of being disconnected from peers, cut-off

from various opportunities, disadvantaged, and unskilled in terms of future work (Vellonen, Karna & Virnes, 2013). It is crucial that technologies are continuously modifiable according to the interests, strengths, and needs of children with special needs, To meet the criteria of children's various situations, learning environments should contain multiple technologies (Vellonen, Karna & Virnes, 2013).

There is only so much time in the instructional school day, and teachers must make careful, deliberate choices for which instructional approaches to use and on which target skills to focus. Teachers should be knowledgeable about the advantages and disadvantages of an intervention they choose to adopt. Each intervention has a cost, even if that cost is simply time. (Knight, McKissick, & Saunders, 2013).

Summary

It is clear that social skills are a necessity for daily living and to be a functional member of society. Children's social development can be looked at as the foundation on which other types of learning are built (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011). Establishing relationships with others, learning to live within the bounds of societal expectations, and discovering your place in the group are all major tasks of children in early childhood and reflect aspects of children's social development (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011). With this said, it is extremely important that educators understand the importance of social skills in early development. Educators must incorporate and implement social skills instruction and practice daily. When incorporating social skills instruction and practice educators should be aware of the available technology tools. When following recommendations that researchers have developed, school districts social skills programs will be successful.

Method

Design

The design of this study is based on a qualitative research methodology. The researchers have chosen to use this design because qualitative research will provide information about the techniques and strategies that current districts are using for their social skills programs.

Population

Participants include seven teachers currently working in an elementary school. Participants were from two different midwestern urban school districts in Nebraska. Participants included two second-grade general education teachers, one fifth grade general education teacher, two special education teachers, a first-grade general education teacher, and a fourth-grade general education teacher. The teaching experience of the participants ranges from two to twenty-five years.

Data collection

Data was collected through an online survey. The online survey included thirteen open-ended questions. The researchers first obtained two general questions about the each teacher's district that they are employed in and years as an educator. The online survey questions are comprised of open-ended questions in order to obtain unique responses from each teacher.

Analysis of Data

Data will be analyzed through the online survey responses. These themes are described in the results section of this paper.

Limitations

Limitations of this study include time allotted, small sample size and the lack of responses from teachers who were sent the survey as well as the quality of responses from the participants. The research was completed in only a few months due to several holidays. This gave researchers limited time for more participants to take the online survey. Due to limited time for participants to give feedback, this resulted in a small sample of educators.

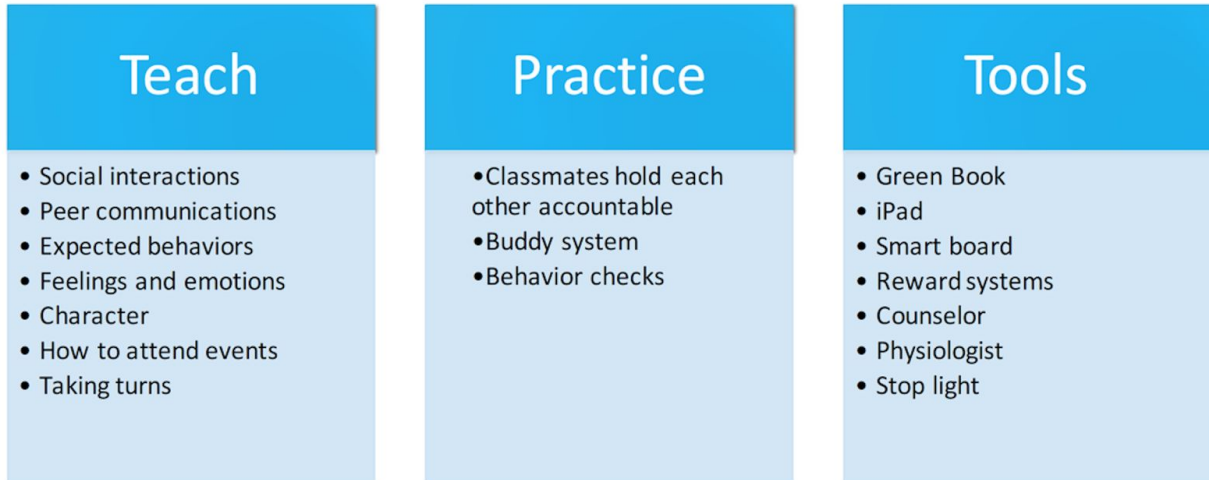
Report

The findings of this study were presented to College of Saint Mary staff, faculty, and students through the use of an iMovie presentation on Scholars' Day, April 27th, 2016.

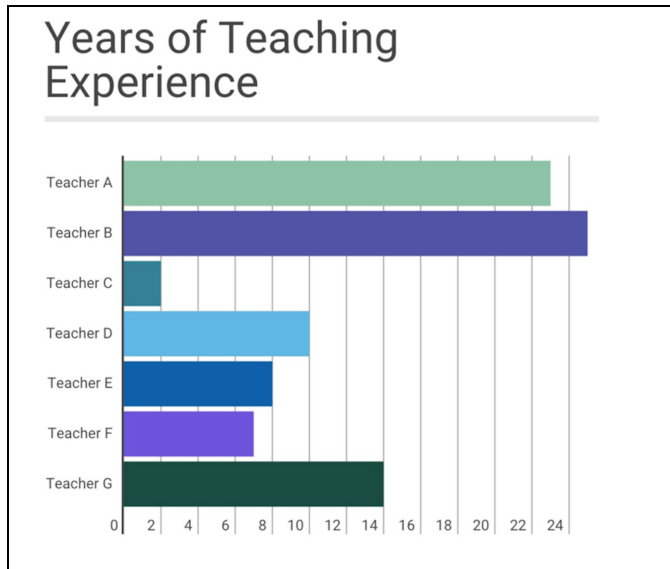
Results

In order to analyze the seven responses received through the online survey, the researchers worked together to read through the interview responses and discuss similarities and themes. After reading through the interview responses several themes appeared that seemed to be common in both districts. Themes that were similar to the districts were how educators teach social skills, practice social skills and tools they use.

Overarching themes of research results:



Years of Teaching Experience on research participants



The teachers who answered the survey questions have been educators for a variety of years. The longest was twenty-five years for two teachers and the shortest was two years for one teacher. The other teachers fell between two years and twenty-five years.

Five out of seven teachers interviewed mentioned that they have a social skills program in their school. Based on the results, the researchers found that there were a variety of different programs and each answer given was different. There was no common denominator

based on the answers. The answers varied from not having a set social skills program in place to having different methods in place to teach social skills at their school.

“Our green assignment notebooks, the high fives and second step.” (Teacher A)

“Second Step, Assignment Notebook, District Created Social Skills with steps.” (Teacher B)

“We do not have a school-wide social skills program.”(Teacher C)

“One made by our school counselor and a staff committee.” (Teacher D)

“We call our program "Pawsitive Pride." One of the main components is the use of a color ladder.” (Teacher E)

“We do not have one set program but we have used Super Flex and Zones of Regulation.” (Teacher F)

“Various programs, based on student's level and need” (Teacher G)

There were not commonalities between the programs being used, but the researchers noticed that the similarities between the districts were wanting to teach different social skills daily, having their students practice these social skills and the tools they use to enforce and help students meet expectations.

Teach

The various teachers mentioned important social skills that they enforce in their school. These include; social interactions, peer communication, expected behaviors, emotions, feelings, character, how to attend events, and taking turns. The researchers noticed that the theme

within these practices was how teachers implement them in the daily classroom environment.

The social skills taught shape and enforce a positive classroom.

“Second Step is used by the counselors...” (Teacher A)

“The part I have seen teaches students to handle emotions and resolve conflict.”
(Teacher B)

“Each month we stress a skill, it is discussed on our daily news program heard by all grades. The counselor teaches lessons monthly in each classroom touching on the skill of the month.” (Teacher C)

“The program is designed to foster positive behaviors in students....” (Teacher D)

“We do not have a set program so if you need resources we have gone to the school psychologist and she has been a good resource to use.” (Teacher E)

“There are various social skills programs that are used with specific students, depending on their needs and delays present. Each one is at their level, focusing on the deficit areas of social skills. For example, how to interact with peers, closing/ initiating conversations with others, turn- taking skills, how to end an activity, etc.” (Teacher F)

Educators also expressed that their social skills program has problems. Teachers mentioned that the challenges they face with teaching social skills program are, that it is very vague, confusing and that there is not one set program to follow.

“If a teacher is not using the program correctly, students in their classrooms don't take responsibility for following the plan” (Teacher A)

“Many of our children have trauma in their pasts and other challenges that have changed their brain. Our programs are high quality. There is deeper assistance our children need.” (Teacher B)

“It is very vague. The school needs to establish a more defined social skills program.”
(Teacher C)

“...The only other problem I've seen is if/when a staff member does not actively support the program.” (Teacher D)

“Not one set program and not every teacher in the building knows about them unless they ask around. Their needs to be reinforcement and support so that all teachers utilize the program.” (Teacher E)

“Maybe have a training for teachers so they know the programs that are available and how they might be used with the students.”(Teacher F)

Practice

The teachers mentioned different ways in which they help their students achieve social skill practice. Some teachers use a reward system and some teachers use positive reinforcement as well as behavior modifications. The practice of social skills varies at each school because of the different student dynamics.

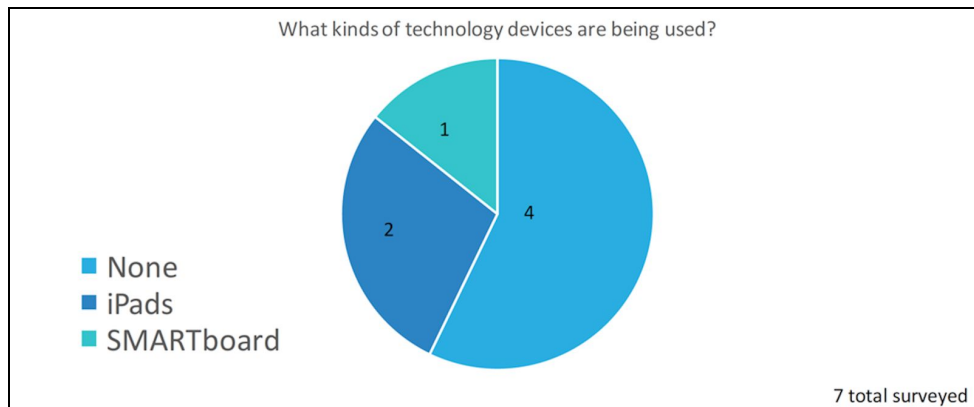
“We are using things like "Stop, Name Your Feeling, Calm Down," as common language. The stoplight used in the "greenbook" is also used as a communication tool.” (Teacher A)

“Working with a buddy class is great - when the kids see each other in the hallways they like to talk about the activity and the skill they recently did together... The learned vocabulary is used by all grade levels. The kids take home projects made with their buddies and share the skill with families.” (Teacher D)

“It is consistently used throughout the building, so that is beneficial to both staff and students. It is also designed to focus on and encourage positive reinforcement, with the goal of decreasing behavioral issues and being proactive with discipline.” (Teacher E)

Tools

The researcher found that half of the surveyed population does not use any form of technology tools. The tools used within the school varied. Some of the tools mentioned included, rewards to help students meet social skill goals, short videos, smartboards, iPads, and the school psychologist.



“Any teacher can give a ticket (positive reinforcement) to any student in the school. Student names are then randomly drawn for prizes.”(Teacher C)

“When with our buddies we have watched short videos or listened to a book read on our smartboards.” (Teacher D)

“The program is designed to foster positive behaviors in students. They earn red tickets for exceptional behavioral decisions. Moving up the ladder indicates positive behavior choices, moving down recognizes a need for improving a behavior. Daily colors are collected. Prizes can be won. We also have Principals Pride, where a name is drawn from red ticket earners to have a special time with the principal. If a student moves down the ladder, they may have consequences like a seating change, buddy room time, and Think Sheet completion. We have also used iPads.” (Teacher E)

“...if you need resources we have gone to the school psychologist and she has been a good resource to use. We have also used iPads,” (Teacher F)

Discussion

Research tells us that social skills are important for functioning in a variety of settings (Campbell, Hansen, and Nangle, 2010). The results of this study show the difference among each school. The researchers decided that the results of this study do not define what social skills are being taught in the school districts, due to the limited amount of teachers interviews. The analysis of data obtained through the participant interviews indicates that each school practices social skills differently. A big issue that some of the educators expressed were their social skills program has some problems. Teachers mentioned that one challenge they face with their social skills program is that it is very vague, confusing and that there is not one set program to follow. There were commonalities among the schools based on the information provided. The schools teach social skills, practice what they teach and use different tools based upon needs.

Limitations

As expected, the research did encounter some limitations while collecting data. The biggest limitation was the lack of information the teachers gave as well as the time constraint for data to be collected. Time played a big role with being able to collect data. The researchers wish that more online surveys would have been answered and sent back. The researchers also would have liked more thought out responses to really understand the social skills program in place in each school. If more time was given the researcher would have been able to give the educators more time to respond and this would have changed the data collected. The researchers thought that with an open-ended question that there would be more detailed responses.

Looking at future research the researchers would like to do more things to gather information on this subject. Some areas that the researchers would like to change are the number of teachers asked, making sure to get in depth responses, and allowing more time for the educators to give feedback.

Conclusion

This study brings to the researchers attention that out of the educators that were surveyed their social skills program is not as prominent as expected. Due to the lack of participants, this does not provide the overall definition of the district's social skills programs. The study does bring attention to the overarching themes, teach, practice and tools used. Each educator did express that they do teach social skills, they do find different ways to practice and they find different tools to implement within the social skills program. This research is important for educators to become aware of the social skills programs offered within their school and district as well as the tools they can use to strengthen their program.

Establishing relationships with others, learning to live within the bounds of societal expectations, and discovering your place in the group are all major tasks of children in early childhood and reflect aspects of children's social development (Book p 399). With this said, it is extremely important that educators understand the importance of social skills in early development. Educators must incorporate and implement social skills instruction and practice daily.

As future educators, we will take what we have learned from this research and apply it to our teaching. We value teaching students social skills while using various tools to practice. If our school does not have a set program we will look for other resources to use to make sure

our students are learning important social skills. It is important to teach students social skills early on because it helps shape their future. In the future, we will continue educating ourselves on any programs or new tools that arise. Keeping up to date on the latest programs and tools is very important for our future classroom. This research has been eye opening. We thought schools would have had set programs but we found that most school do not. This does not speak for the entire district or all schools in general. We would like to conduct further research on this topic in the future.

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Appendix A
Consent Form

Consent to Participate in Research

Please read and complete the questions below. Thank you for participating in this survey.

Consent to Participate in Research
Spring, 2016

Title of the Study: The Social Skills Programs in Nebraska School Districts

Researcher: Miranda Bengel and Shannon Colling

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Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study which will take place from March 2016 to April 26, 2016.

The purpose of this study is:

1. To fulfill a course requirement for EDU 496, Research Seminar taught by Dr. Merryellen Towey Schulz at College of Saint Mary.
2. To gain insight and experience in the topic of social skill programs being used in school districts

The methods to be used to collect information for this study are explained below.

The design of this study is based on a qualitative research methodology. The researcher has chosen to use this design because qualitative information will provide information about the techniques and strategies that current districts are using for their social skills programs. Data will be collected through an online survey. The online survey includes eleven open-ended questions. The researcher has chosen to use an online survey with eleven open-ended questions to not limit the participants in their answers. In March, the researcher will acquire the participants to complete the online surveys. The researcher will have each participant sign an informed consent form. Data will be analyzed through the submitted responses. The researcher will look for emergent themes in the responses of the educators. The data will be reported through a senior research paper and information on findings will be presented on all

Scholars' Day. The researcher has chosen to report the data through a presentation. This will allow the audience to gain a better understanding of the research that was conducted.

I will use the information from this study to write a report and present the findings at the CSM Scholars' Day, April 27th. This report will be read by the course instructor and other students in the class.

I guarantee that the following conditions will be met:

1. Your real name will not be used at any point of information collection, or in the written report; instead, you and any other person and place names involved in the study will be given pseudonyms that will be used in all verbal and written records and reports.
2. If you grant permission for audio or video recording, no recordings will be used for any purpose other than to complete this study, and will not be played for any reason other than to complete this study. These recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the project.
3. Your participation in this research is voluntary; you have the right to withdraw at any point of the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice, and the information collected and records and reports written will be turned over to you.
4. You will receive a copy of the report that is submitted to the instructor.

Completion of the survey indicates your agreement to participate in this study

Appendix B
Online Survey Questions

What district are you teaching in ?

How long have you been teaching? What grade level are you teaching?

What social skills program does your school use?

Can you walk me through the social skills program that you use in your school?

If there is no social skills program in place what is used?

What kinds of assistive technology devices are used in your school to help students with social skills?

How do you use this program? Example: Modify behavior/teach social skills

What do you believe are the benefits of the social skills program used in your school?

What are some specific problems that you see with the social skills program that is in place?

What actions need to be taken to improve the problems that you mentioned above?

How closely do you follow the program?

How do you revise the program? Why?