

A Dramatherapy Intervention to Bullying in Elementary Schools:  
Bully? A Role to Be or Not to Be.

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## Abstract

### A Dramatherapy Intervention to Bullying in Elementary Schools: Bully?

#### A Role to Be or Not to Be.

Ashley Rimbey

Over the past few decades, a great deal of research has been conducted on bullying and even though research continues, bullying is still a large problem in many of today's societies. An evaluation of the literature suggests that a whole-school-approach intervention program is most beneficial in the elementary school years (Beale, 2001; Gordon & Green, 2008; Hervey & Kornblum, 2006; Olweus, 1994). This overview of the vast literature and research, contributed to the creation of a program that can be implemented in the school system. It has been suggested throughout the literature, that the use of role-play can be a valuable tool in the struggle against bullying (Beale, 2001; DeRosier, 2004; Hervey & Kornblum, 2006). Therefore, the focus of this study will be on using Dramatherapy as a role based approach, to the ever-present problem of bullying in the school system (Kellermann, 1992; Landy, 2008).

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Bullying has been studied for the past few decades, and it is still present in society. While studying school aged children, Frisen, Jonsson, and Persson (2007) determined that the most common age range for the occurrence of bullying is between the ages of seven and nine. Consequently, the proposed program will be aimed at prevention and intervention in elementary schools. In addition, it is not only the bullies who's perception is being influenced in the bullying process; literature suggests that students who are affected by bullying, show numerous signs of high levels of anxiety, tend to be more insecure, and have a lower self-esteem (Kokkinos & Panayiotou, 2004; Rigby, 2003; West & Salmon, 2000). Due to the serious nature of the bullying phenomenon, this paper will highlight the importance of treatment interventions, not only for the bullies and victims, but also for the fellow classmates, in hopes of deterring the bystander behaviours (Rigby & Slee, 1991). A large amount of literature and previous studies have supported a whole school approach, rather than interventions which separate victims and bullies (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003).

Dramatherapy is a therapeutic intervention that uses theatre and other projective techniques, to help people function better in their lives, and work through issues that are causing them distress (Jones, 2007). This paper reviews the literature on bullying, as well as the benefits of Dramatherapy as a therapeutic approach, and proposes the use of Dramatherapy as a prevention/intervention program to address the bullying phenomenon. The purpose of this paper is to explore and develop the Dramatherapy-Bully-Prevention Intervention Program (DT-B-PIP), which has an emphasis on exploring and examining roles that students play in order to help them address the phenomenon of bullying.

## Bullying at School

### *What is Bullying?*

Bullying has been systematically studied since when Dan Olweus, a Scandinavian researcher, first conducted research surrounding this topic. (Smith, Pepler & Rigby, 2004). Being one of the leading researchers in his field, Olweus' definitions are most commonly used in today's literature. Olweus defined bullying and victimization as a student who is "exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students" (Olweus, 1993, p. 9). In the context of bullying, the term negative action, although a somewhat objective one, implies that one person is intentionally hurting, or trying to hurt another individual physically, emotionally and/or mentally. Olweus goes on to distinguish bullying as a phenomenon that occurs when the following three distinguishing factors take place. Firstly, there is aggressive behaviour with the intent to harm: secondly, the aggressive behaviour is a reoccurring event that persists over time. The third and final factor is that the harmful behaviour usually takes place where there is an imbalance of power (Olweus, 1994). Olweus found that there are two different forms of bullying: direct and indirect. Direct bullying implies that the bully attacks the victim openly whereas the indirect form would be bullying through the use of social isolation or gossip (Olweus, 1994). For the purpose of this paper, the term bullying will embrace Olweus' concept and definitions, as does most of the current literature on bullying (e.g. Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003; Roberts & Coursol, 1996).

### *Prevalence of Bullying*

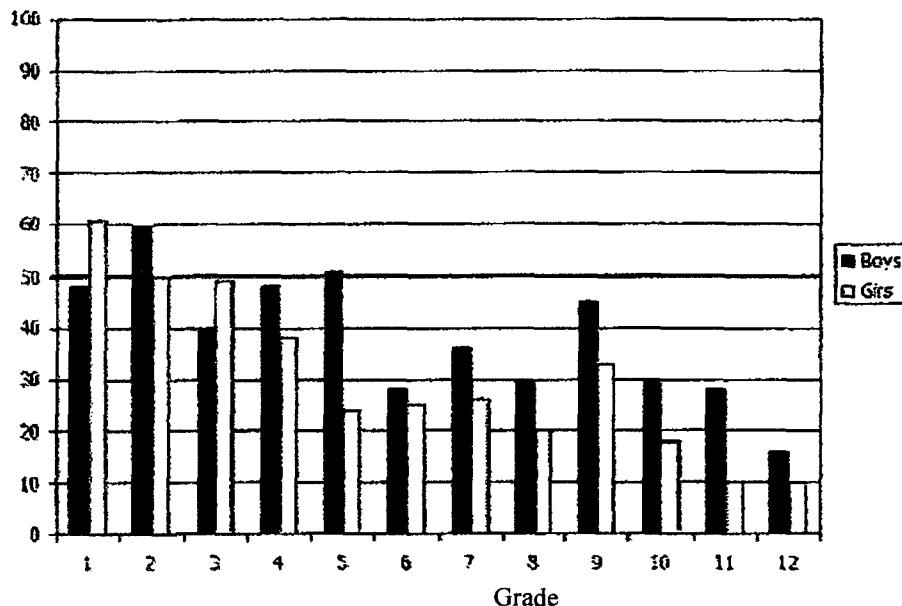
Even though it has been studied more intensively since the 1970's bullying is a phenomenon that has taken place for many years (Olweus, 1994). However, bullying seems to have become a more prevalent issue today, than it was in previous decades. This progression is likely due to the 21<sup>st</sup> century's societal developments in regards to modern technology. Media and technology acting as informants, have displayed the increase of very public and tragic outcomes of events, resulting from bullying (Joong & Ridler, 2005). In Canada bullying has been studied for the past few decades, and the statistics still highlight bullying as being a major problem (Bullying Statistics, PREVNET). A survey conducted in 1993/1994, and a more recent comparable survey in 2004; both showed that while the prevalence of bullying in Canadian elementary schools had not increased, it still had not decreased either (Bullying Statistics, PREVNET). Joong and Ridler conducted a study in Ontario Canada, where over 2000 students and 400 teachers from 24 middle and secondary schools were questioned about school safety and violence at their school. The results showed that students and teachers alike felt that the main cause of school violence stemmed from bullying.

In fact, Pepler et al.(1997) found that bullying is a common phenomenon children will encounter bullying at some point during their school career. In their study, Canadian elementary students were surveyed, and half the students stated that they had been bullied at school (Pepler et al., 1997, as cited in Harach, Catalano, & Hawkins, 1999). Furthermore, Nansel et al. (2001, as cited in Beale & Hall, 2007) found that seventy-four percent of students, aged eight to eleven, in the United States, had claimed that teasing and bullying had taken place in their schools. Another study, conducted in Toronto

Canada, used the results of Olweus's questionnaire, which was handed out to elementary school students, teachers, and parents, at 16 local schools (Charach, Pepler & Ziegler, 1995). The students, who were between the ages of four and fourteen, were briefed the day before as to what bullying was, in order to give them a better understanding of the questions. The results showed that over seventy percent of students had been bullied at least once during the previous school term, and of that, eight percent reported being bullied every week. Thirty-nine percent of the students admitted to bullying at least once during a term, and only two percent revealed that they bullied others on a regular-weekly basis (Charach, Pepler & Ziegler). In addition, the study found that the students, both those who bullied and those who refrained from bullying, felt that the top two reasons as to why bullying occurred were to substantiate the feelings of power, and that of being 'cool'. According to the questionnaire's responses, it was clear that many of the students in grades three to eight disliked the bullying that occurred, and had a desire to help stop it (Charach, Pepler & Ziegler). Although the desire to stop bullying was still present, by the sixth grade, students had taken on the overall feeling that bullying could not be stopped. As a result of these findings, Charach, Pepler and Ziegler wrote that extra effort should be placed on interventions in grades five to six. Despite this suggestion, many other studies found that bullying was, and is, more prevalent in the early elementary years (e.g. Frisen, Jonsson & Persson, 2007; Stevens, Bourdeaudhuij & Van Oost, 2000).

Frisen, Jonsson and Perrson (2007) used a reflective study, asking their participants who were 15 to 20 years old, about their experiences with bullying. They found that over all, the most common age in which bullying took place, was in the age range of seven to nine. Similar results were found by Pellegrini and Long (2002), who

also observed the trend for bullying to decrease through secondary school. A study conducted in Canada, surveyed students from grades one through twelve, and found the same trend; that bullying decreased with age and consequently by grade. This concept is demonstrated in Figure 1 (Craig, Pepler, Jiang & Connolly, in preparation).



*Figure 1.* Percentage of students reported being victimized over the course of 2 months.

As a result of the findings, demonstrated in Figure 1, it is logical to infer that an intervention, aiming to address bullying in the early years of elementary school, would be most beneficial. Stevens, Bourdeaudhuij and Van Oost (2000) studied the effects of different styles of interventions among 1,104 primary and secondary school students. Their findings showed that the group that received an intervention treatment concurrently with counseling support had the greatest reduction in bullying. They also found that the interventions reduced bullying more in primary and early elementary schools, confirming the idea that early intervention is key (Stevens, Bourdeaudhuij & Van Oost).

### *Consequences of bullying*

It is the assumption of this DT-B-PIP, that if bullying is addressed in the primary grades, its harmful consequences can be prevented. Schafer et al. (2004) studied the effects bullying has on students while in school, as well as the lasting effects later in their lives. Schafer et al. found that the harmful consequences can range from feelings of loneliness to the unfortunate reality of suicide, which has been the case for victims of bullying in the past (O'Moore, 2000). Seals and Young (2003) conducted a descriptive study that surveyed 1,126 students enrolled in grades seven and eight. Using three different questionnaires, they assessed the prevalence of bullying, as well as the relationship that gender, grade level, ethnicity, self-esteem, and depression had with it. They found that students, who were victims of bullying, had depression scores that were significantly higher than those of non-victims. Along with depression, victims often have significantly lower self-esteem, and are more anxious and insecure than their peers (Craig, 1998; Kokkinos & Panayiotou, 2004; Olweus, 1994). Berthold and Hoover (2000) documented similar findings, as previously discussed, and noted that victims also suffer from feelings of worry and that of being unsafe. The aforementioned psychological factors that plague victims can be very detrimental. Rigby (2003) found that the longer victims are subjected to bullying; the risk factor for remaining in a poor psychological state rises. The feelings of worry and lack of safety experienced by victims of bullying, lend themselves to Berthold and Hoover's findings that the number of victims who were afraid of going to school, was twice as high as students who were not bullied. Students, fear of going to school, spirals into another problem; Hazler, Hoover, and Oliver (1992) found that ninety percent of victims have suffered a decrease in their academic grades.

Not only is there a concern for victims during their school days, but for their futures as well, as some researchers have found long lasting effects of bullying. Schafer et al. (2004) conducted a long-term correlate study of adults who were victims of bullying in school, and found that many of the psychological effects of it such as low self-esteem, loneliness, and fearful attachment style had followed them into adulthood.

It has been proven that it is not only crucial to provide interventions for the victims, but that it is just as important to provide help for their aggressors. Research has shown that students, who bully in their younger years, are more likely to have altercations with the law throughout their lives (Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Rigby & Cox, 1996). However, prior to acts of delinquency, criminal records, and potential jail sentences, bullies tend to struggle with depression and self-esteem while growing up. Much like victims of bullying, Seals and Young (2003) found that bullies also have higher levels of depression in comparison to their peers, who are not involved in bullying. In terms of self-esteem, it is still debatable as to whether bullies have an abundance of it or rather, a lack thereof (O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001; Rigby & Slee, 1991). Rigby and Slee found that bullies have high self-esteem, although they argue that the trend may have occurred as a result of the bullying itself. Kokkinos and Panayiotou (2004) found mixed results in regards to the levels of self-esteem in bullies. Their study showed that bully-victims (students who are bullied as well as bully others) had significantly lower self-esteem, whereas students who just bullied others had similar self-esteem to those who were not bullied. O'Moore and Kirkham conducted a study with over 13,000 school aged participants, ranging from eight to eighteen years of age, where they were given questionnaires without a time restraint, allowing them the opportunity to give complete

answers. The questionnaires were then analyzed, and the scores of students who had stated that they had bullied others, were found to show a significantly lower global self-esteem score, in comparison to students who had not taken part in bullying. Furthermore, there was a correlation between the level of self-esteem and the frequency of bullying; students, who bullied more, had statistically lower levels of self-esteem (Olweus, 2005; O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001). Regardless of a bullies' level of self-esteem, the fact remains that they may fall into a very possible path of delinquent activity in their lives (Rigby & Cox, 1996). Rigby and Cox conducted a survey of secondary school students, 352 boys and 411 girls, where questionnaires measuring student's activity in bullying, delinquent behaviour, and their level of self-esteem, were handed out. After analyzing the scores, Rigby and Cox found that students who scored higher on the bullying scale, tended to have lower self-esteem. Along with lower self-esteem, bullies were also more likely to take part in delinquent type behaviours than their non-bullying peers. These findings were similar to those found by Baldry and Farrington (2000), who asked 238 students, ages eleven to fourteen, to fill out a self-report questionnaire on bullying and delinquency. The results indicated that the younger students bullied, while the older ones had higher tendencies of participating in delinquent behaviours. This could suggest, as pointed out by Baldry and Farrington, that younger students start off bullying, and then move on to delinquent acts. Following along those lines Viadero (1997) found that students who bully, are four times more likely to become criminals than their peers who do not partake in bullying. With this type of research demonstrating all the negative effects that bullying can have on the victims, as well as those who inflict the bullying, it explains the number of interventions that have been put into motion over the past decade.

## Previous Interventions

The following section will explore some of the various interventions that have been implemented, and explain how they affected the phenomenon of bullying in schools. Hawkins, Pepler and Craig (2001) studied a unique form of intervention, for which the students were neither taught nor prepared. The study took place over three years with sample sizes of 616, 762, and 535 students, who were in grades one to six. The students were videotaped and the researchers reviewed the material and found that students were witness to incidents of bullying eighty eight percent of the time, but only intervened nineteen percent of the time. Within the attempts made by students to stop bullying, fifty seven percent of the interventions proved to be effective (Hawkins, Pepler & Craig). Considering that almost two thirds of the student interventions were effective, it seems that this process is beneficial for students. Perhaps if more students were taking a stand, more than just nineteen percent of students would intervene, and that would slowly decrease the overall amount of bullying that takes place.

Cowie and Olafsson (2000) examined the effects of a peer support service that would help combat the problem of bullying in schools. The study took place at an all boys' school, where all 420 students were offered the position of peer supporter. Nine of the boys were selected to be trained with skills such as listening, being more empathetic, and were given a vocabulary of feelings. The peer supporters were instructed to be on the watch for others being bullied, and were given the authority to intervene and provide support when necessary (Cowie & Olafsson). At the beginning of this intervention, 300 students were given a questionnaire to help researchers understand the boys' role in bullying. Approximately eight months later, the questionnaire was repeated to determine

whether or not the peer support had changed that role. The results showed that bullying had actually increased over the months, which Cowie and Olafsson felt might have been as a result of negative feelings towards the peer supporters. However, the peer supporters, even at the end of the study, relayed that this had been a good experience and that they believed in the method. The researchers also felt that the results may have been due to the small ratio of peer supporters, which may support the whole school approach, in which all students be given the knowledge of these skills.

In the study mentioned above, the peer supporters had the mentality that no bullying was acceptable, and they seemed to adopt that into their everyday lives. The students had what researchers Twemlow, Fonagy, Sacco, Gies, Evans and Ewbank (2001) called a zero tolerance policy for bullying. In this study, two schools, which were chosen based on their demographic similarities, were assigned to either the control or the experimental school. The teachers who taught at the experimental school were given training on the bullying intervention program, which consisted of four components. The first was the overall compliance to a zero tolerance policy for any behavioural disturbances. The second was a plan that would allow for the discipline of wrong doings while modeling acceptable behaviour. The third component adapted the physical education program to include self-regulation skills, and finally the fourth component was a mentoring program (Twemlow et al.). The results conveyed positive findings on behalf of the experimental group who experienced a significant reduction in disciplinary referrals. The control group, on the other hand, showed no significant change in the disciplinary referrals which support the four-component program that was implemented in the experimental school. Moreover, teachers from the experimental school informed

researchers that they witnessed students who had previously been quiet and reserved became more outgoing (Twemlow et al.). Through the simple process of providing students with the tools and skills to combat against bullying, the results suggest that this can aid in deterring defiant behaviour, including bullying.

DeRosier (2004) had a similar approach to bullying interventions as mentioned above. She created a program called Social Skills Group Intervention (S. S. GRIN), which taught general social skills. The skills were based on interventions that had previously been seen to raise peer relationships as well as increase pro-social behaviour (DeRosier). To achieve these skills the administrators of the program used role-plays, and other exercises where the students were encouraged to physically participate. Students from 11 schools in grades three to five were administered questionnaires asking about their peers (i.e. children whom they like the best/least, etc.). They were also given surveys, which measured their self-perception and social interactions. From these surveys, students scoring low and found to be less liked by their peers were put in an eligible pool (DeRosier). In each of the 11 schools 18 eligible students formed the groups, which met for an hour once a week for eight weeks. Control groups were established to compare findings. At the end of the treatment it was found that the treatment students were more liked by their peers, had raised self-esteem and self worth. Treatment students also reported having lower social anxiety while those of the control group seemed to have lower social anxiety than at the beginning of the intervention (DeRosier). As the results showed no significant differences between the effectiveness of the S. S. GRIN between boys and girls, it would seem that the treatment was beneficial to both sexes.

One year later DeRosier and Marcus (2005) conducted a follow-up study, in which they surveyed the treatment and control groups once more. They found that after one year the effects of the treatment group were still in place, and new differences had also arisen. They found the group had higher social acceptance and self-esteem as well as lower scores on depression and anxiety (DeRosier & Marcus). Furthermore students in the treatment group, who had shown signs of aggression a year ago, had lower aggressive behaviours. Overall it would seem that the DeRosier (2004) intervention program for rejected and bullied students proved effective, not only at the time of treatment but also proved to have positive long term value.

In a study conducted in Bangladesh, Ahmed and Braithwaite (2006) set out to better understand the relationship between forgiveness, reconciliation and shame as they relate to bullying. Over 1800 students, grades seven to ten were given a survey, which gave the researchers an overall view of their experiences at school. Along with the previous survey, three others were administered which measured perceived forgiveness, reconciliation and shame management. After extensive analysis of the results, they found that “forgiveness and reconciliation decrease bullying with shame management playing a mediational role, and shame management that is maladaptive reduces forgiveness and reconciliation and increases bullying” (Ahmed & Braithwaite, p. 365). These results are important in terms of beginning a program or intervention in the school system. From the previous findings, when first implementing an intervention it seems important that the bullies are not belittled or shamed, as it only increases the domineering act.

Many studies have agreed that bullies bully not only because of self-esteem issues (O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001), or misplaced feelings of guilt (Ahmed & Braithwaite,

2006), but also because they have a lack of empathy towards the victim, and do not see their actions as wrong (Kokkinos & Panayiotou, 2004; Olweus, 1994). A program that aims to address that very issue, lacking empathy, was implemented in 2000 called Roots of Empathy (Gordon & Green, 2008). In this intervention a local infant and its parent visit the classroom every three weeks for nine weeks in total. Specially trained Roots of Empathy instructors are on site to help the students view the baby's development and needs at the time. As they observe the baby, they are encouraged to ask questions and try to understand how the baby is feeling. Through this curriculum "the children learn to reflect their own feelings and take the perspective of their classmates" (Gordon & Green, p. 35). It was found that through the awareness of others feelings, empathy arose. From the new found empathy for another, initially being the baby, it was noticed to take on a broader text and more responsibility for their classmates' feelings arose. They felt that this program was battling the bullying phenomenon by "bully-proofing from the inside out" (Gordon & Green, p. 35).

Hervey and Kornblum (2006) used a mixed methods approach to assess the effectiveness of Kornblum's school based intervention, Disarming the Playground. While this program did not start out as a research project, it has information that can be helpful in assessing future programs. The sample consisted of three grade two classrooms, and as stated previously this was not initially a research project as no control group was obtained. The teachers in this program were crucial and participated by learning skills to prevent bullying in class. They were asked to form challenges that the class would overcome together, and finally skills for the students were practiced a few times a day to ensure mastery. The students took part in weekly 45-minute groups, which focused on

bullying prevention using movement-based initiatives such as active discussion, kinesthetic cueing, and trial and error. Hervey and Kornblum found that seventy-six percent of students within this program decreased their problematic behavior. In this approach they found that with the alternatives to bullying type behavior the students had other ways of dealing with their emotions.

A similar study was done by Beale (2001), in which students came together with the help of teachers and counselors to create a play called Bullybusters. This play was a form of psycho-educational learning in which not all problems were resolved on stage, but later students would meet to come up with new solutions together. Using a drama piece created distance, seemed to devise a safer way for the students to explore these ideas (Beale, 2000). With fictional characters and predicaments it allowed the students to remove themselves from the situation and witness the scenario. As the solutions were worked on together by the students, it gave them a sense of belonging and ownership. After the performance of Bullybusters there was a twenty percent reduction in the amount of bullying (Beale, 2001).

One of the last studies that will be discussed within the limitations of this paper is perhaps one of the most well known bully prevention programs to date (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Charach, Pepler & Ziegler, 1995; Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003; Entenman, Murnen & Hendricks, 2005; Roberts & Coursol, 1996). Olweus began systematically studying bullying in the 1970's, yet the article presented here is a reflective one, which evaluates the effectiveness of the research in the 1980's. Olweus' (1994) prevention program was implemented in 112, grade four to seven, classrooms. The program is based from research on modifying problem behaviours by

first creating a school with positive and warm experiences between peers as well as with adults. However, the adults must also create boundaries and authority to create a space in which the children feel safe. Through analysis of the questionnaires given before and after the implementation of the program, it was found that levels of bullying had decreased. The results suggested that the students' reports of bullying or being bullied by others had decreased by over fifty percent after the completion of the program (Olweus). The program not only decreased the amount of bullying which was taking place, but also decreased the number of new victims.

Bickley-Green (2007) found that manipulating behavior through rewards and punishment did not seem to deter the act of bullying. Whereas literature suggests students who were given the tools, taught a better understanding of pro-social behavior, and also witnessed their teachers acting as role models, were more likely to comprehend the harmful results of bullying (Cowie & Olafsson, 2000; DeRosier, 2004; Twemlow et al., 2001). This highlights the importance of supporting pro-social behaviours and modeling by adult figures. Behaviour based programs can take many forms, such as the aforementioned rewards/punishment model, roles plays; as well as dance/movement therapy interventions.

### Dramatherapy

There are many forms of therapies that can be found with a simple search on the Internet (<http://psychology.about.com/od/psychotherapy/a/treattypes.htm>). As Dramatherapy is a relatively new concept in the field of psychotherapies and is thus still finding its footing within the psychological models (Valente, 1991), it takes a bit more than the searching of 'types of therapies' on the Internet. Conversely, it is also a

framework that has been around for hundreds, even thousands of years with stories and myths being passed down from generation to generation, many with healing properties (May, 1991; Snow, 1996). In Dramatherapy, it is the job of the therapist to create a safe space in which the clients can explore and discuss their own feelings in order to begin the healing process. According to Landy (2006) Dramatherapy is a therapy which:

Concerns a relationship between a therapist and a client or clients who attempt to make sense of their life experience as they engage partly or fully in a creative process, in this case through the media of drama and theatre. These media include, but are not limited to, storytelling and storymaking, role-playing and role-reversal, improvisation, mask and puppet play, sandplay, play therapy, rehearsal and theatrical performance. (p. 135)

### *Dramatherapy and Role*

Through Dramatherapy's role-playing, a person is given the opportunity to experience roles outside of their regular ones and as a result, expand their role repertoire (Landy, 1993). The enactment of roles helps the clients to identify and project onto the role, thus allowing the facilitator of the group to comment and create a discussion about their process. Landy (2003) suggests that through his role method, participants can increase the number of roles they explore which can allow for significant changes in the person's thought process as well as behavior and role flexibility. In conjunction with Ahmed and Braithwaite (2006) and Kokkinos and Panayiotou (2004) research suggests that many students who bully lack empathy. Through an exploration of placing oneself in another person's situation, it will allow understanding and empathy to emerge for all the students.

### *Psychodrama and Role*

Like Dramatherapy, Psychodrama uses dramatic means and techniques to identify and work through issues that may be causing distress in ones life. Blatner (2000) defines psychodrama as “a method for exploring psychological and social problems by having participants *enact* the relevant events in their lives instead of simply talking about them” (p. 1). There are five main components to Psychodrama that make up the *body* of the process (Blatner). First there is a protagonist who is the participant who has the desire to work out an issue bothering him/her in his/her life, or sometimes he/she simply need to see things in a different light to gain a new perspective on an old situation. Next, there is a director who acts as the facilitator of the group, as the Dramatherapist would in the program. The third components of a Psychodrama are the auxiliary roles; these are people from the audience who help initiate insight for the protagonist. The audience forms the fourth component and is a very important part of the process, as they are there to witness and support, and in the end share similar experiences they may have had. The final component is the acting area where the *performance* takes place. This is known as the stage, as it is also referred to in the theatre world. This is important for the process as well, as it separates the space for audience members and where the enactments take place (Blatner). Creating the separate space helps the line between make believe and reality more understandable for everyone involved.

Within the Psychodrama frame many different techniques are used. The protagonist takes on a role, often of themselves on the stage, and often interchanging with other characters (auxiliary roles). This process of changing places with auxiliary roles is known as role reversal. Role reversal is one of most common techniques used, and has

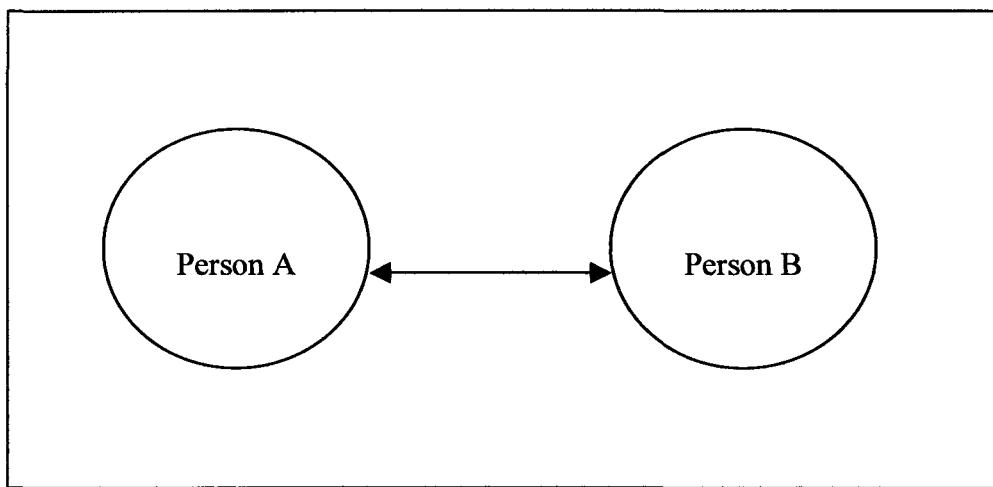
also been a useful method to use in Dramatherapy. This is often used when a client needs to gain distance from the core conflict of the material, to foster a conducive environment to work through the difficult material (Blatner, 1973; Leveton, 2001), but can also be used to show someone the effects of their words (Kellermann, 1992). For example, if the protagonist is yelling out 'I think you are disgusting', they may not be able to place themselves on the other side and understand the heaviness of their words. With allowing them to role-reverse with the auxiliary, the auxiliary would repeat 'I think you are disgusting' allowing them to have new insight on how their words may effect others.

Another technique called Mirroring can be used in psychodrama, as well as adapted for Dramatherapy. In this technique the auxiliary performs as if they are the protagonist's reflection in a mirror (Kellermann, 1992). There are many times during a psychodrama when this technique can be used, such as when protagonists are resisting on some level. Often the auxiliary will be encouraged to over emphasize and exaggerate the protagonists actions in order to evoke a reaction in them (Kellermann). This is similar to role-reversal only the protagonist leaves the stage and witnesses the auxiliaries perform. It is hoped that through the reactions invoked in the protagonist, he/she would be inspired to go back on stage with an enlightened sense of his/her presence in the world or to demonstrate how he/she feels he/she is being perceived. This technique can also be used when the protagonist is having difficulty seeing or recognizing patterns in himself/herself. For example, if a protagonist is constantly avoiding eye contact and fidgeting while people are speaking with him/her, it can be a way for him/her to see the way others perceive this trait. It is also a method for him/her to observe inner conflicts

that he/she may be facing. Kellermann states, “the psychological distance allows a more realistic appraisal of oneself” (2007, p. 85).

### *Role Theory and the Use of Role*

Role theory is quite an old theory that has been accepted and used in many health care settings (Daniel, 2007). Jacob Moreno, who also created Psychodrama<sup>1</sup>, developed this role theory. He believed that we all play roles and relate to others from the roles that serve us in that particular situation. Within an interaction between two people there are three entities. The roles the two people play as well as the space that is created between them. His concepts of these entities in his role theory are displayed in Figure 2.



*Figure 2. The entities of Moreno’s Role Theory.*

In figure 2 person A and B are represented by circles, and the third entity, that of their relationship, by the line joining the circles (Daniel). This third entity (relations between people) is one that often needs the most work in therapy as a result of incompatible roles that people take on. Moreno theorized that role had three components: thinking, feeling and acting (Daniel). Issues arise when one of these components are not on track. For

<sup>1</sup> Psychodrama is the use of drama in a psychotherapy type setting; with the purpose to help one with difficulties they may be having/gain insight (Kellermann, 1992).

example if a man thinks and feels that he has feelings for another person, but does not act in that manner, that relationship may not have a healthy prospect. The same can be said if a man thinks he is acting in a way that shows he is interested, when in reality there are no real feelings involved. There are many ways in which roles can be distorted and through therapy and evaluating the roles we play one can begin to negotiate what roles they find beneficial (Daniel).

There has been considerable research that supports the use of role-playing in some sense during the treatment and prevention of bullying (Beale, 2001; Entenman, Murnen & Hendricks, 2005; Hervey & Kornblum, 2006; DeRosier, 2004). It gives the students a chance to be someone else for the moment and take on a new role and new responses they may not have taken on their own. While using role another factor comes into effect, which is that of modeling behavior. It would seem that within this context, modeling behavior has two benefits. Firstly, when other students are enacting appropriate responses in situations, witnessing students have the potential to have moments of catharsis as well (Rizzolatti & Craighero, 2004, as cited in Landy, 2008). The moment of catharsis or understanding for another, can be linked to mirror neurons, which simply put is an emotional reaction to what someone else is going through (Landy, 2008). The phenomenon in this context is often referred to as having feelings of empathy towards another. Secondly, when students are observing adults and authority figures who are acting in an appropriate manner, it gives them the opportunity to ‘try-on’ the behaviours (Twemlow et al., 2001).

Another benefit of using role is that of role reversal (Landy, 2008). Fontana and Valente (1993) conducted an in depth study on Smith and Apter’s reversal theory. After

looking through a great body of literature, Fontana and Valente found beneficial links by using reversal theory in conjunction with Dramatherapy. Reversal theory, in essence, acknowledges how and why humans switch from role to role in their lives, whether it is seemingly beneficial to them or not. Fontana and Valente found that once reversal theory identified an unhealthy role, Dramatherapy could be a therapeutic technique to help a client find a more productive one. From this, they drew the conclusion that integrating the theory and therapy would result in two major psychotherapeutic gains. Firstly, it would seem to give clients the capacity to understand their own rigidity within their actions. Secondly, it would allow them to act and explore new roles in ways that they might not feel comfortable doing in their daily lives. Giving the students who bully the opportunity to role reverse with others allows them the opportunity to experience how they may be making their classmates feel. As Johnson and Lewis (1999) found, the bullies did not consider their actions to be wrong, therefore this would be a great intervention to help them see the damage that they are causing.

Using Psychodramatic techniques within the role-playing of Dramatherapy will encourage a growth for empathy (Kellermann, 1992) and understanding for others. Gordon & Green (2008) found that the Roots of Empathy program, mentioned earlier, gave students the opportunity to think and be responsible for the needs and desires of another person (in this case the infant), rather than their own. Through the use of role-reversal the same concept will apply, that of being able to switch into another's position and perspective which allows the students to understand their peers on a whole new level.

## Dramatherapy as an Intervention

Dramatherapy is the use of any dramatic technique to help reach some sort of therapeutic gain. There are many different techniques in Dramatherapy ranging from puppet work and sociodramas, to simple exercises such as mirroring. As in Hervey and Kornblums' (1996) work with dance/movement therapy, Dramatherapy has many of the same positive components. As in dance/movement therapy, Dramatherapy also allows the students to tap into their actual behaviour. Dramatherapy offers the same rehearsal for life approach in which small role plays and scenes can be worked through in the sessions and discussed to help more appropriate solutions be more attainable for them.

Fontana and Valente (1993) studied the role reversal theory, and found that it had two major psychotherapeutic gains. Firstly, it seems to give participants the capacity to understand their own rigidity in their actions and second, it allows them to act in a way that may not be their typical everyday character (Fontana & Valente). By allowing the students who bully the opportunity to role reverse with others, it gives them the experience of feeling how they may be making their classmates feel. As Johnson and Lewis (1999) found that the bullies did not view their actions as wrong, this would be a great intervention to allow them to see the damage they themselves are creating. In Dramatherapy, a safe container is formed during the session in which they can explore and discuss their own feelings and begin to heal. As many students who bully lack empathy, it is hoped that through this exploration of being in another person's shoes, this would allow an understanding and empathy to emerge (Kokkinos & Panayiotou, 2004).

## Program Development

### *Why an in School Program?*

Although bullying can now take on a new dimension in places other than schools because of technological access such as the Internet, Delfabbro, Winefield, Trainor, Dollard, Anderson, Metzer and Hammarstrom (2006) found that it is still most common within school settings. Their findings were also supported by Seals and Young (2003) who found that bullying was twenty percent more likely to occur at school in classrooms, at lunch or at recess versus on the way home from school and over forty percent more than on the way to school. Berthold and Hoover (2000) completed a study, which analyzed the correlation between bullying and victimization of students in Midwestern USA. Within their study they, too, found results that yielded to students identifying school hours as the most prominent time to be victimized from bullying. Atlas and Peplers' (1998) observations of students analyzed the bullying, which took place in the classroom. They found that sixty five percent of incidents occurred while they worked independently on tasks. Bullying incidents occurred twenty three percent of the time while students worked in group settings, and surprisingly twelve percent of the incidents took place while students partook in teacher-led activities (Atlas & Pepler). From the results we can conclude that bullying takes place on school grounds, whether on the playground, near a teacher, or at lunch, more often than anywhere else. Therefore, although bullying has many forms and environments, school bullying is an important issue that needs further intervention.

### *Whole School Approach*

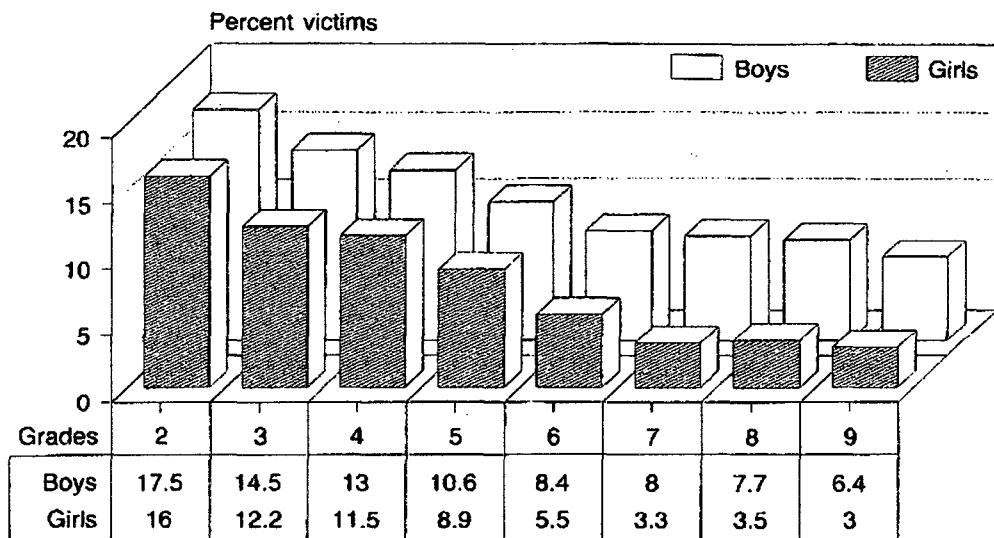
As acknowledged through the literature cited above, it can be safely stated that bullying is a phenomenon that will affect all students in some way or another throughout their schooling years, whether it is them bullying others, being bullied or even involved through watching as a bystander (Rigby & Slee, 1991). An analysis of the research previously conducted illustrates the effectiveness of the whole school approach (Beale, 2001; Gordon & Green, 2008; Hervey & Kornblum, 2006; Olweus, 1994; Twemlow et al., 2001). Berthold and Hoover (2000) found that seventy percent of victims were also bullying others. Although that may not be the case at every school, it does demonstrate the overlap of roles students play. Rather than segregating them into groups of the bullied and the bullies, creating a group that works with everyone, would be more beneficial. In an overview of the literature on bullying in schools and interventions, Dake, Price and Telljohann (2003) found that the most significant results in the reduction of bullying came from programs, which included all students. It was their belief, as is many others, that bullying is a phenomenon that includes all students on some level, and thus must be addressed in such a way (Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003). Atlas and Peplers' (1998) study analyzed the observations filmed at a public school in Toronto, Canada. Results confirmed that peers took part in bullying, in some active or passive way, during eighty five percent of bullying episodes (Atlas & Pepler). They found the results supporting a whole school approach, which would help the students become active bystanders, being those who could intervene in a positive way, using knowledge that came from an early intervention group (Atlas & Pepler).

In a study mentioned earlier, peers were given training to become peer supporters (Cowie & Olafsson, 2000). It was found that even though the results did not yield any significant reduction in bullying behaviours, the students who were educated on how to handle bullying situations found the new skills beneficial. This study, which focused educating a very small amount of students, helps support the whole school approach (Cowie & Olafsson). While some students in the Cowie and Olafsson study rejected the intervention, they felt that it might have been due to hardened feelings towards those who had been given the skills. The majority of students report not agreeing with bullying and having the desire to help make a change and to stop it. Through the implementation of this program, along with a school that honors a zero tolerance for bullying policy, students will be able to have the resources and support to be better able to take a stand against bullying (Charach, Pepler & Ziegler, 1995).

### *Participants*

Research has mixed results on whether bullying occurs more in elementary school grades (Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003) or in secondary schools (Solberg, Olweus & Endresen, 2007). Overall, it seems that there is significantly more research pointing to higher rates of bullying in the elementary years (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Craig, Pepler, Jiang & Connolly, in preparation; Entenman, Murnen & Hendricks, 2005; Frisen, Jonsson & Persson, 2007). Furthermore the literature, as previously mentioned, also demonstrates the potentially harmful effects of bullying. Given that bullying can have lasting effects it would seem logical to intervene and hopefully prevent bullying through the implementation of a program in elementary schools. As illustrated in Figure 3, in this case it is clear that bullying is more prominent

in the earlier grades and seems to decline modestly, as students enter into the higher grades (Olweus, 1993, p. 15).



*Figure 3.* Olweus' findings of the prevalence of bullying in schools.

In addition to the previous reasoning Charach, Pepler and Ziegler (1995) found that students in grades 3 to 8 wanted to stop bullying but felt they did not have the tools to do so. By implementing this program early on, as previously mentioned, it will allow them to have new knowledge, skills and the tools to deter, prevent and stop bullying.

### The Program

The program (Appendix A) will run for eight-weeks starting at the beginning of the school year. It should be introduced at the first assembly and commence the following week. At the assembly the school will announce the policy of zero tolerance for bullying, as was successfully done in Twemlow et al. (2001) intervention. Once the students are made aware of the new policy, an oath to not partake in bullying will be recited at the end of that assembly, as well as at the end of all assemblies throughout the year. The oath and

what it contains should be discussed with the principal, teachers and counselors prior to the assembly.

The program itself will run for one hour, twice a week for eight consecutive weeks. A break down of each session and its purpose is described below under *techniques*. The program will be lead by a Dramatherapist but the homeroom teacher will also be required to aid in the process of all sessions. The rationale behind the teacher's presence is to show the students that the program and policy of no bullying is one of a whole school approach, in other words that the teachers themselves support the initiative. It also provides the teachers the opportunity to be more aware of problems the students are facing (through discussions the group may have), as well as tips and knowledge that they can then use to remind the students to use after the program (Entenman, Murnen & Hendricks, 2005). As described earlier the intervention would be based for students in elementary schools, grades one to six. Where possible, the Dramatherapist would run the program in a drama room where the classes could rotate coming in. Other possibilities would be a gymnasium or having the Dramatherapist go from classroom to classroom. It would be more therapeutic to have all interventions in the same room such as an allocated drama room, which could create a separate space from their *student lives*. This would be a space where exploring feelings and working through problems would be managed and contained (Jones, 1996).

Thus the Dramatherapy program will be divided by eight weeks and sub categorized into 7seven sections. The following table is a breakdown of the weeks and what each one will entail.

Table 1.

*Timeline of Program*

WEEK	THEME	WEEK	THEME
1A	Warm up games	1B	Warm up games
2A	Warm up games	2B	Warm up games
3A	New vocabulary	3B	Puppet play
4A	Build structure	4B	Mask making
5A	Mask making/work	5B	Role play
6A	Role play	6B	Role play
7A	Role play	7B	Role play
8A	Role play	8B	Celebration

*Dramatherapist's Role*

One of the beneficial factors of this program is that there will be a Dramatherapist leading the group. As the Dramatherapist joins in the process, acting as a guide for group, he/she is providing a very crucial link in this treatment. It has been noticed that client's in group therapy often take on aspects of their therapist, such as mimicking their behaviour. This often occurs in the beginning of therapy, and can tend to fade out as sessions progress (Yalom, 1995). Whether or not this phenomenon continues throughout the duration of the program does not denounce the benefits of having someone demonstrating positive interactions and modeling supportive behaviours. This is reinforced by Twemlow et. al's (2001) research results, which found adults in schools modeling acceptable and appropriate behaviour led to less behaviour issues overall.

Another important role that the Dramatherapist plays is that of the information giver. One of Yalom's (1995) Therapeutic Factors is imparting information, in which the therapist provides information and resources for members of the group. Although his targeted population generally centered in psychiatric settings, the premise of group therapy is the same. He went on to say that an environment where group members were learning throughout the process was one of great value (Yalom). Yalom felt that a group in which all members were involved with learning and sharing of information was most advantageous. This is the approach the Dramatherapist will take as he/she guides members through the program; they will encourage the group to share and provide support for one another. As the members of the group become more comfortable with each other, they may begin to open up and share more personal stories, possibly requiring more support than their group members can handle. This is why it is important for the therapist to be qualified, as he/she will be expected to handle the emotional needs of all group members.

### *Techniques*

The following is a break down and rational for the use of specific Dramatherapy techniques and activities. The following ones that have been chosen will aid in the prevention and intervention of bullying through educating on vocabulary to use when in potential bullying situations (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Roberts & Coursol, 1996). Using Puppets in the beginning of the program will be playful and fun for the students but more importantly act as an assessment tool for the Dramatherapist (Irwin, 1985). Mask making and Role Play are two techniques in Dramatherapy that have many therapeutic and informative elements (Jones, 1996). Through the use and exploration of these and other

elements, the 8eight-week preventative/intervention program will be used to combat the phenomenon of bullying.

### *Warm up Games*

Although short warm up games will be enjoyed at the beginning of every session, the first two weeks will be devoted to fun drama activities that will allow the Dramatherapist to get to know the students and vice versa. Every session will begin with a ritual check called the Magic Box (personal communication, Bonnie Harnden, September 2007). It begins by the group pulling an imaginary box from the sky and miming the opening of it. Each group member then has the opportunity to pull anything he/she needs from the box; this item can be something tangible (e.g. a car) or something less concrete (e.g. a sunny day, or a warm breeze). At the end of the session the same ritual will be performed as the students are invited to leave something they no longer need or would like to save for next session, in the box (e.g. a bad feeling, or the fun time they had with their friends that day). This will be done at the beginning of every session as it allows the Dramatherapist to gage the energy of the group, and again at the end to help wind down the group and transitionally shift them back into *school* mode. This will also give the Dramatherapist the opportunity to reflect themes and moods of the overall group, allowing them to feel heard and give them the comfort of being contained.

For the first two weeks the students will partake in numerous drama games to help the group build unity and cohesion (Yalom, 1995). Games that will be played include categorical groupings, fast-speed handshake, body connections, four-corner dash, balls between backs, circle falls, partner leans, partner blind walks, rag doll, circle ball throw,

who started the motion, and three changes (Emunah, 1994)<sup>2</sup>. These activities all promote group growth and create a universal bond from which they can begin to work through the following weeks more cohesively. Once again, during this stage of the program the Dramatherapist will be observing and can intervene if/when they feel intervention needs to be made. Brief interventions the Dramatherapist may use could range from shouting “freeze!” to get the students to stand still, perhaps as a result of a potentially dangerous situation, to modeling active listening skills, which students could then incorporate into their lives.

### *New Vocabulary*

Research supports giving children the vocabulary and understanding of a variety of feelings and the names for them to help combat bullying (Atlas & Pepler, 1998). To achieve this goal in a manner which is playful and fun, will be done through the use of games. The first game will be Group Mood (Emunah, 1994, p. 148). This game will be played as Emunah has described in her book, with one beginning change. The group will brainstorm together, all the emotions and feelings that they can think of, writing them on a blackboard or large pieces of paper (the list will be used with most of the games for this session). In Group Mood, one student leaves the room while the others decide as a group what emotion they want to convey. Once they have decided on an emotion, the group begins to act as if they were feeling that way, the student then re-enters the room and tries to guess the emotion of the classmates. This will allow the students to become familiarized with an array of feeling words that can help them describe the way they are feeling in situations beyond the program. Using the list of emotions that the students

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<sup>2</sup> For further explanation of the exercises readers are advised to consult Renee Emunah’s book *Acting for Real: Drama Therapy Process, Technique, and Performance* (1994).

created previously, they will then play another game called Emotional Greetings (p. 150), a game in which students would pair up, standing back to back. An emotion would be called out and the students would then turn around and greet each other as if they were feeling that emotion. This exercise allows the students to get a feel for exploring and expressing feelings dramatically (Emunah, 1994). Moving forward, students will be invited to *perform* by themselves during Guess How I Feel (p. 156). This game allows students to take turns acting out how they are feeling at the moment. The students performing can exaggerate the emotion they are feeling and have fun with the idea of exploring it in a comfortable setting. As the student acts it out, classmates try and guess how they are feeling. Next, a similar game called Emotional Mime (p. 156) will be played. This game is quite similar to Guess How I Feel, except that no words are used and they can pick any emotion (or select one off the board). This helps students who are witnessing pick up on non-verbal cues as to how some one acts when they are feeling certain ways (Emunah). Lastly, the group will work together to be the creators of their own art gallery. Emotional Statue (p. 157) is a game that includes all students walking around until the Dramatherapist shouts out an emotion followed by Freeze! As the group freezes in poses depicting the emotion the Dramatherapist taps the shoulders of each group member, which then allows them to walk around and view the sculptures in the *art exhibit*. The game can be repeated a few times, until everyone has had a chance to view an exhibit or two. This game enhances the groups ability to identify emotions through viewing others physical disposition, as well as increasing the cohesion of the group (Yalom, 1995).

Through the use of the games, students are able to use their emotions to communicate. Moreover it is an opportunity for them to understand that emotions can take on different physical characteristics in each person. For example, when one person is mad they may become verbal and aggressive whereas others may become quiet and reserved. These activities also prepare the students for the role-play and other activities to come; in a sense it is preparation work for the exercises that will follow (Emunah, 1994). As mentioned earlier, these games will begin the ever-important bonding process of the group and grow as the group progresses. The Dramatherapist will play an important role by continually reflecting the groups' feelings, giving the group a sense of being witnessed as well as adding to their growing vocabulary.

### *Puppet Play*

During the second session of week three, the students will be introduced to puppet play. This will probably not be the first time that many of them have played with puppets, yet the structure of the play may be new to them. This work is a form of projective play, which will allow the Dramatherapist to gain insight into the group in a very non-threatening manner. As they project their personal issues onto their chosen puppet (detailed explanation of technique to follow), it then becomes their puppet who is *getting in trouble* or *being the quiet one*, thus creating distance<sup>3</sup> and safety from the material. Irwin (1985) developed an assessment tool using puppets as the primary means of communication. Through the selection of the puppet, to the life the student adds to it, a lot can be assessed as to who they are and how they function in the world (Irwin). Some examples of information that can be gathered from this method are gauging impulsivity,

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<sup>3</sup> In this sense Distancing is used in regards to how emotionally and mentally close a person is to the material (Landy, 1996).

creativity, non-verbal communication skills, coping style, even defenses (Irwin, p. 390).

This assessment technique is very useful for this program, as it allows for a whole-school- approach and takes into consideration Ahmed and Braithwaite's (2006) standpoint on blaming students. Ahmed and Braithwaite, as mentioned earlier, found that pointing fingers at those who bullied did not rectify the problem. The intention of using this assessment is to find out who identifies with being more passive, helpless, aggressive, dominant, etc. in the group. Therefore the good Dramatherapist is able to gauge group dynamics without having the students nominate themselves into roles or point their fingers at one another, which could create a disconnected group. The following is a brief description of Irwin's assessment procedure.

For this activity, there needs to be an assortment of about 35-45 puppets. In this selection of puppets there should be a variety of styles; large and small, scary and cuddly, as well as animals and people<sup>4</sup>. The activity is broken into four main sections; Warm-up, The Puppet Show, Interview with the Puppets and finally Interview with the Child (Irwin, 1985). Due to the short amount of time (one hour), the group will look through the puppets together. This interaction between the students will allow the Dramatherapist another opportunity to assess where the students fall into the group. For example, do they become aggressive for the puppet they want, do they passively sit by and wait for whichever one is left at the end, or are they able to negotiate and each take a turn to use it which is possible for this activity (Irwin). Once the students have picked their puppet they then sit in a row (as if in an audience) to watch each other's shows.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on the types of puppets to use, more examples are documented on page 391 of Irwin's article, Puppets in Therapy (1985).

Next, taking turns, each student will stand in front of the group and introduce their puppet. Once they have done this, they are invited to go behind any sort of make shift stage to perform a short story with their puppet (Irwin, 1985). As there is a time constraint, a time limit of about two minutes can be applied. Once they have performed their story, the Dramatherapist can then interview the puppet, which is section three. Questions asked can be about the story or the puppet but must be kept in the fantasy world of the puppet and not about the student. This will give the Dramatherapist an idea of how well they are able to suspend reality and maintain in another role. In the original Puppets in Therapy assessment, the child would then be interviewed as themselves finishing off the four sections (Irwin). Again, with the restriction of time, after they have been interviewed as their puppet, they will be asked to become part of the audience and another student will then be asked to introduce their puppet. Once all the students have had a turn, the Dramatherapist can then interview the class as a whole. The students should be encouraged to speak about their stories and experiences. This assessment, although initially constructed for one on one therapy, can still be very beneficial to gain insight into the dynamics of the class, how they respond to imaginary play, and deal with issues that may have arisen while choosing a puppet. (If not all students were able to perform on week 3B, there is the option of continuing for the first 15 to 20 minutes into week 4A).

#### *Build Structure*

This activity is one in which all students can partake in at the same time. This activity allows the Dramatherapist to again assess the student's ability to work together, support one another as well as communicate through problems. The Dramatherapist can

watch for students who are helping each other, sharing the materials, taking turns, and how they act and react in times of conflict and tension. For example, if there were only one sheet left to finish the fort; who places it on? How do they decide who gets to add it? And how do they respond if they are upset? Considering their responses the Dramatherapist can decide what interventions are necessary. Some examples may be taking time to reflect feelings of frustration, or asking the students to take a moment and talk out a plan with which they all feel comfortable. For this task an ample number of sheets, blankets, clothespins, pillows, tarps and anything else found in the room (e.g. chairs, tables) that could aid in the building of a *fort* like structure are needed. After the check in that occurs at the beginning of every session, each student is asked to pick one piece from the large pile of supplies. At this point they are informed for what the piece they have chosen will be used. They are instructed to work together and create a *fort* using ALL the pieces that they have selected. DeRosier (2004) found that creating positive peer relations, increased acceptable social behavior. The program provides a safe space for students to explore peer relationships, with help and guidance from the Dramatherapist when needed.

While the students put together their structure, the Dramatherapist observes and can make assessments similar to those from the puppet play. They will be able to assess how well they are able to communicate and handle the many inevitable frustrations and conflicts that will arise while participation to create 1 structure with roughly 25-30 *architects*. Through the process of creating 1 structure and being able to work together, the group will likely be at a point where group cohesiveness is at a high (Yalom, 1995). This unity will be beneficial as the group moves into less distant material. Once the

structure is complete the group can then explore the new found *fort* and (if the teacher/school permits) a snack of popcorn or the like can be shared while in the structure.

### *Mask Making*

Mask making will take approximately one session and a half, depending on what type of masks the Dramatherapist chooses to make with the students. For the purpose of this paper it will be explained as though they are making masks with gauze and water, which will take a session and a half. Other options are paper plate or construction paper masks. Masks are a more under distanced form of working than using something like puppets, as they are worn directly on the face (Landy, 1986). They are close to the body and have been used to help free clients in the sense that they somehow give permission for the students to loosen up and express themselves in new and perhaps unfamiliar ways.

For this activity students are split into pairs or groups of about two or three. Taking turns, they cover each other's faces with petroleum jelly. It is important to apply an ample amount of the jelly to prevent the gauze from sticking to the student's face. Gauze, which should be pre-cut into  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch strips, is moistened with warm water and then layered over the students face. Each student should have his or her first layer applied and dried before placing another layer on. As the pieces are placed on, caution should be made to leave ample room around eyes, nose and mouth. This process is one that is quite intimate, as it requires close contact and trust in one another (Emunah, 1994). This process may take the whole session to finish. Once completed, the masks are to be stored in a safe place where they can dry completely.

During the next session the group will decorate their masks. The theme of the mask is *bully free*, and students are invited to define this in any way they see fit and decorate their masks accordingly. The bully free theme is one that is to come from the students themselves and what they identify as being bully free. Beale's (2001) research supported student's writing a play, so that they felt ownership to the material, as is the same with the masks. Numerous art supplies need to be made available to do this. They can use an array of supplies such as paint, markers, cotton balls, pipe cleaners and anything else that is available to decorate the mask (Emunah, 1994). Once their masks are complete they are to sit in a line (audience style), and each take a turn wearing their masks and explaining what *bully free* means to them and how it is represented through their mask.

### *Role Play*

In life people are constantly taking on different roles. Women can take on role of sister, pilot, surgeon, mother, lover, helper and many others, and the same can be said about men (Landy, Luck, Conner & McMullan, 2003). Sometimes in life people end up becoming stuck in one or two rigid roles, or are too shy to explore any others beyond their comfort zone. Role theory sees people and the way in which they act and function within a particular role. Role theorists believe "role is a set of archetypal qualities representing one aspect of a person, an aspect that relates to others and when taken together, provides a meaningful and coherent view of self" (Landy, Luck, Conner & McMullan, pp. 152). Landy<sup>5</sup> believed that clients could be reached on an emotionally, psychological, and behavioural level by increasing the number of roles that they could

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<sup>5</sup> A pioneer in the Dramatherapy field.

call upon effectively throughout their lives. Once the client had the ability to take on that role, it then becomes about practicing the new role(s) and being able to fluidly shift and transition from one into another (Landy, Luck, Conner & McMullan). Working from the same point of view, it is important for the students to work through a process of discovering what roles they take on in their lives and which ones are helpful or hurtful as well as new ones they would like to explore. The Dramatherapist will take a lead in providing a new role model, demonstrating an adult who does not stand for bullying in any form, but who also supports the group in their struggles from their previous maladaptive roles.

To begin this process, an adapted version of Landy's (1993) taxonomy of roles will be distributed to all the students (Appendix B). They will be asked to circle the roles they feel apply to themselves, put an "X" over the ones that do not, a question mark by ones they are not sure about and a star beside ones they wish they could be. Once everyone has chosen all of the roles they identify with, they are to partner up and share with another student the roles they have chosen. This will give them the opportunity to express their roles to another, as well as verbalize why they feel they chose certain roles, which gives them a chance to reflect. From that point small groups can be made according to roles they feel they take on. This will allow for the group to get to know one another's roles and find commonalities between one another and create a sense of universality<sup>6</sup> in the group.

The taxonomy of roles sheet to be handed out will be an adaptation of Landy's (1993) for the following reasons. Firstly, it will be a shortened version due to the time

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<sup>6</sup> One of Yalom's therapeutic factors (1995). It is the idea that a client finds similarities between themselves and others in the group.

constraints of the group. Next, the ones that are removed from the list will be ones that have a higher likelihood of not being understood by all of the age groups. The rationale for removing some of the roles lies in not only time constraints, but also the internal validity of the wording. If the students do not understand the roles, and the Dramatherapist or teacher in the room explains it to them, there becomes the adult's projection of what the role means to them (Landy). As a result of the two limitations, the decision was made to remove some of the domains, although the full taxonomy of roles can be found in Landy's book *Persona and performance: the meaning of role in drama, therapy, and everyday life* (1993).

The next part of the process is to allow the students to further role-play out these impersonations. Through playing out these roles they can start to understand the space between them another person while they are engaged in certain roles (Daniel, 2007). The group will be divided into smaller groups. From there they will be asked to pick out one role they each play in their own lives and work together to combine their roles into a brief skit. The skits will be short and viewed by the other groups, after which a discussion on what they were about, how they felt and how the two roles interacted will take place. Giving this time to debrief is a very important part of the process. As stated earlier the three components of a role are broken down into thinking, feeling and acting (Daniel). The more opportunities for the students to discuss and think about the benefits and limitations of the roles they play, the greater the space for understanding the effects that role has on another. They will then be asked to redo their skits, but this time playing some one else's role. This ties in the important element of role-reversal (Daniel).

After a few sessions of working in pairs, the groups can be expanded into groups of three or four. In creating bigger groups it allows the students to play out situations likely to occur at recesses when there are more people to work on one game or initiative. As the groups are able to handle making up simple story lines on their own, it allows a bonding experience, as well as the building of self-confidence (Jones, 1996). As the groups practice taking on roles for the purpose of performing them, it allows for practice on a broader scale. They are given the opportunity to see how they made others feel and start to have a better understanding of the roles in their real lives and can then analyze them on the basis of whether or not they are helpful ones. Throughout the role-play process the Dramatherapist begins to act as a guide for the students. In the beginning the Dramatherapist offers suggestions and reflections for the group, yet as they become more cohesive the therapist's role changes. Their role morphs from reflector to guide and witness, as the students begin to internalize the reflections and suggestions, so as to allow them to use them on their own.

### *Celebration*

During the last session, three items should be addressed: reflection, evaluation and acknowledgment of closure (Jones, 1996). Reflection and evaluation can take place in the form of small enactments in which the students group together and perform something that they felt was important to them during the past eight weeks. It is also important for the group and the Dramatherapist to acknowledge what has taken place, the new skills they have acquired and vocalize any concerns about ending the group. Although the group will have been prepared for the ending of the sessions in advance, this last session is a turning point at which they then take the new knowledge and skills

and transfer them into the real life situations with which they will be faced with (Emunah, 1994).

To finalize the ending of the program and symbolize the schools new attitude towards bullying, a party in which everyone (the whole school) can partake in takes place. This can take place in a large room, somewhere like a gymnasium. If the group is too large, it would be advisable to consider each grade having its own party. Again this final party symbolizes their hard work and commitment to continue to refrain from bullying, and to take a stand against it when they see it taking place. In having a memorable party it recognizes their new insight, and students will be less likely to shift back into their old unsuccessful roles (Daniel, 2007).

## Discussion

Students who were questioned as to why they believed others engaged in bullying activities produced answers such as low self-esteem and the need to feel more accepted by their peers (Frisen, Jonsson & Persson, 2007). However, Johnson and Lewis (1999) determined in their research that students bully because they are not able to see the harm that they are causing others, and they are still viewed as popular. Therefore, they do not view their behavior as wrong. Whether or not there is an agreed upon conclusion as to why students bully each other, it is still clearly an ongoing problem in the school systems to date and must be addressed. As previously stated students affected by bullying display increased levels of anxiety, tend to be more insecure, and have a lower self-esteem (Kokkinos & Panayiotou, 2004; Rigby, 2003; West & Salmon, 2000). As a result of the magnitude of bullying in schools as well as the harmful side affects, it is crucial that society attempt to get a handle on the problem.

In today's society, bullying is no longer limited to face-to-face interactions. As the world becomes more modern, so does bullying; for it no longer takes place solely as physical or verbal abuse. Due to technology a new and modern form of bullying referred to as cyberbullying has emerged (Beale & Hall, 2007; Seals & Young, 2003). Cyberbullying allows children and adolescents to use technology, in the forms of e-mails, websites, cellular phones and text messages, to intimidate and abuse others. The fact that the bullies are not directly dealing with the victims provides them with a figurative shield to help protect themselves, their images and their reputations. If someone were to recognize the screen name that they used to cyberbully, they would have the opportunity to deflect the blame by stating that others used their screen name without their knowledge (Beale & Hall).

As for now, bullying and victimization seems to be taking place most commonly in early elementary schools (Frisen, Jonsson, & Persson, 2007). Research has suggested that the most beneficial programs thus far have aimed at addressing the school as a whole (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003). Through doing this it allows the students to combine forces towards a positive, more accepting elementary school experience. To help shape, unite and practice more appropriate behaviors Dramatherapy has been the chosen modal. Although there is no official literature supporting Dramatherapy as an intervention, throughout this paper a clear rationale has been made as to the benefits this program offers to aid in the prevention and elimination of bullying.

Dramatherapy is a rapidly emerging therapeutic intervention, whose advantages include the use of theatre and other projective techniques, which have been demonstrated through this paper. The analysis of the literature as well as the breakdown of the

Dramatherapy-Bully-Prevention Intervention Program (DT-B-PIP); demonstrates how students will take a zero-tolerance-policy against bullying and create a new mind frame where school is a safe place to be and learn. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to explore and develop the Dramatherapy-Bully-Prevention Intervention Program (DT-B-PIP), whose emphasis is on exploring and examining roles that students play in order to help them address the phenomenon of bullying. The hope is that this program be implemented into elementary schools, and become a gateway to safer, happier schools for all students.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A.

#### *Detailed Plan of Activities and Materials Required*

WEEK	THEME	Activities	Materials
1A	Warm up games	Magic Box (used every session) Categorical groupings Fast-speed handshake Body connections Four-corner dash Balls between backs Circle falls Partner leans Partner blind walks Rag doll Circle ball throw Who started the motion? Three changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 5-10 balls of various sizes (basket balls, spa balls, etc.)</li> <li>* fabric to use as blindfolds</li> <li>* light ball (i.e. beach ball)</li> </ul>
1B			
2A			
2B			
3A	New vocabulary	Group mood Emotional greetings Guess how I feel Emotional mime Emotional statue	* black board, markers (other alternatives are large pieces of paper to post on wall or white board)
3B	Puppet play	Puppet warm-up Puppet show Interview with puppet Interview with Student	* 35-45 puppets of various size, characters and roles
4A	Build structure	Build a fort	* blankets, large sheets of fabric * clothespins * tables, chairs, etc.
4B	Mask making	Create a mask	* Vaseline, gauze, warm water * paper plates, markers, glue, sparkles, etc.
5A	Mask work	What does bully free mean to me?	* Masks created in 4B
5B	Role play	Taxonomy of roles	* Landy's taxonomy list
6A		Explore roles Simple skits	
6B			
7A			
7B			
8A			
8B	Celebration	Party! Revisit fun games/skits	* food & beverages * board games

## Appendix B.

*Taxonomy of Roles* (Adapted from Landy, 1993, p. 256-260)

Taxonomy of Roles	
Domain	Somatic
Classification	Role Type
Age	Child Adolescent Adult
Appearance	Beauty Beast
Health	Sick Healthy
Domain	Cognitive
Classification	Role type
	Smart Dumb Average
Domain	Affective
Classification	Role type
Moral	Villain Victim Helper Coward Survivor
Feeling states	Rebel Lover
Domain	Social
Classification	Role type
Family	Mother Father Son Rebel son Obedient son Daughter Rebel daughter Obedient daughter Sister Brother
Classification	Role type
Authority and power	Warrior Soldier Police Clownish cop

Domain	Spiritual
Classification	Role type
Natural beings	Hero Superman
Supernatural beings	God/Goddess Witty God/Goddess Fairy Demon Magician
Domain	Aesthetic
Classification	Role type
	Artist Performer Dreamer