Designing a Social Skills Program in Jewish Day Schools

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complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Abstract

This thesis equivalent was an instructional design and human performance technology project, in which I analyzed the current state of an educational program for students with disabilities and their classmates at a Jewish day schools in Montreal. The program was first developed as a pilot project by Ometz, a social services organization. Ometz requested assistance with the program towards the end of their pilot project year. The program focused on building social skills and coping with anxiety. I designed performance improvement interventions, as well as developed prototypes of the proposed interventions and evaluation instruments.

To determine what improvements could be made to the program, I collected data from several sources: a focus group with three facilitators, the program coordinator and a member of the Ometz leadership team held during the peer supervision meetings; an interview with the 2016-2017 program coordinator; an interview with the facilitator at the primary site; a joint interview with a vice principal and resource centre coordinator, an interview with a member of the Ometz leadership team; electronic feedback forms submitted by each facilitator after every session delivery during the 2016-2017 pilot year; email correspondence with program coordinators; original program requests; meeting minutes; and session handouts. I analyzed the data using an open coding process.

Although the program impacted many different stakeholders, the program facilitators were considered as the target performers for the analysis and for the design of interventions. However, the performance of other stakeholders was also considered. Those stakeholders were teachers, parents, and students.

During the analysis phase, several performance gaps were identified. Firstly, facilitators designed a curriculum based on their previous experience and available resources, instead of basing it on specific program objectives and the needs of the students. Secondly, the facilitators experienced challenges when designing instructional content and finding resources on which to base their content. Additionally, some facilitators experienced issues with classroom management. Finally, facilitators were unable to always schedule sessions at times that did not conflict with other school or classroom events.

I proposed several interventions to close the performance gaps. These interventions included a feedback and system, an online resource bank, parent workshops, and kick-off meetings. Working collaboratively with members of the Ometz team, I established program objectives and a program evaluation plan. I then created a detailed design of the proposed interventions. The program was terminated before the interventions could be implemented because of a change in funding. Although the program has since been terminated, these proposed interventions may help Ometz with future projects.

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Thank you to my mother and my sisters for your support, advice and love.

Thank you to my incredibly kind and wonderful husband for the nearly two thousand dinners made, almost as many lunches packed, countless hours washing dishes, giving baths and reading stories. Your unwavering support allowed me to do this. This is as much your work as it is mine.

Dedication

Ayla and Elliott

For every encouraging smile

For every supportive hug

For every kind look

For everything

Every word of this is for you.

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Introduction

There are many Jewish theologists who believe that one of Judaism's greatest figures, Moses, had a disability. In the second book of the Torah, Shemot, Moses tells God that he is "heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue", which many take to imply that Moses has a disability, most likely a speech impediment. Moses believed that because of this disability that he was unworthy to lead the Jewish people from the bondage of slavery. God replied to Moses' concern with the following words: "Who gave man a mouth, or who makes [one] dumb or deaf or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?" (Shemot, 4:10-11) When asked to be God's messenger, one of Judaism's greatest figures begged God to choose someone else because he did not feel up to the task. It is God who reminds Moses that it was He who created him. Are Jews to understand from this that with or without disabilities, we are all made as God intended?

The treatment of individuals with any kind of disability in the Jewish community has deep theological roots and is a complex issue with social, educational and communal implications. In Montreal, approximately 50% of Jewish students attend faith-based schools, where religion is intertwined with education (Grassroots for Affordable Jewish Education, 2016). How does this intersect of faith and education affect students with learning disabilities and how can we design programs that will benefit students with learning disabilities at Jewish day schools?

Overview

This thesis equivalent describes the instructional design project I worked on between 2017 and 2019 on behalf of Ometz, a community-based organization in Montreal. This organization had established a program for students with learning disabilities in Jewish day schools. I assessed the needs of the program, analyzed the performance gaps, proposed performance improvement interventions and designed evaluation tools. However, the program is no longer running and therefore I was unable to implement the proposed performance improvement interventions, nor could I evaluate the impact of these changes.

Context

Ometz. Ometz is a Jewish organization that offers immigration, employment and social services to the population of Montreal. The organization provides a wide variety of programming and employs social workers, immigration counsellors and mental health professionals who serve the community both within their facilities as well as in schools and other institutions. One of the central goals of Ometz is to "deliver culturally-sensitive human services" (Ometz, 2017).

Vanguard. The Vanguard program consists of three elements: schools (both primary and secondary), a Centre of Expertise, and a foundation. The schools are private institutions that offer adapted programs for students with learning disabilities. Educational programs are offered in both French and English (Vanguard, 2017).

The Centre of Expertise offers specialized tutoring services for students with learning disabilities. The Centre was established to meet the needs of the community, particularly those who cannot attend the Vanguard School. All tutoring takes places at the Vanguard Centre of Expertise (Vanguard, 2017).

As a non-profit, the Vanguard Foundation provides funding for the Vanguard schools. The Foundation solicits donations from individuals as well as organizations. Additionally, the Foundation is responsible for organizing fundraising events (Vanguard, 2017).

Description of the Program

The administrators of the Vanguard program approached Ometz because they felt that the needs of students with learning disabilities at Jewish day schools were not being met by Vanguard's current programs and offerings. The Vanguard administrators had received requests from Jewish day schools for academic and social services for Jewish students with learning disabilities. However, neither the Vanguard School nor the Centre of Expertise were equipped to accommodate this request. This was due to two important factors. Firstly, if a family is from an Orthodox religious background, the parents may not feel comfortable sending their children to the Vanguard School or to the tutoring centre because for Orthodox believers, education requires not only the teaching of academic subjects, but also the teaching of Judaism. Secondly, Vanguard did not have the human resources to create and run a program on their own that could take place within the Jewish day schools. However, the Vanguard Foundation had funding available for the development of the program. Therefore, the Vanguard administrators asked the Ometz director if Ometz facilitators could step in to create a social and academic program that would take place within Jewish day schools. The director of Ometz appointed a program coordinator who then created a pilot project that launched in the 2016-2017 school year.

The program was offered to Jewish day schools in the Montreal area. Ometz sent information to Jewish schools, detailing the possible elements that the program could entail. The program elements generally consisted of training in at least one of the following areas: coping with stress and anxiety, bullying, creating healthy relationship, resolving conflict, empathy,

effective communication, and the regulation of emotions. Nine Jewish day schools took part in the program.

Ometz also offered to host workshops for parents. Some schools decided to host these parent workshops, while other schools opted to have more student sessions instead. The school staff and administration selected the students that would be participating in the program. Overall, 375 students in grades two through six took part in the program in the pilot year. Not all the students involved in the program had learning disabilities. In some cases, the school administration decided to include all students in the cohort or class. Fifty-five school staff members and 135 families were impacted by the program in its pilot year.

The Jewish schools are all private. Three of the schools are part of the Montreal Association of Jewish Day Schools. Five of the schools identify as Orthodox, three identify as being Hasidic schools, and one identifies simply as a Jewish school. French is the primary language of instruction at two of the schools, while the others are English schools. Several of the schools offer instruction to both boys and girls, but only one school has co-educational classrooms. Students at the schools follow two curriculums; kodesh limudei chol and limudei kodesh, which loosely translate to mundane studies and holy studies respectively. In limudei chol, students follow the standard provincial curriculum. In limudei kodesh students learn the Jewish teachings.

The Request from Ometz

I had previously worked with Ometz in my role as a high school teacher and contacted an Ometz facilitator to see if there were any projects on which I could collaborate for my thesis equivalent. This facilitator put me in contact with the Program Coordinator of the Vanguard-

Ometz program, who I will refer to as Lena. When I spoke to Lena the first time, I described the

Educational Technology program and described what I was hoping to accomplish through my

thesis equivalent; I wanted to conduct a performance improvement project. After hearing my

description, Lena was eager to work together. As Lena described, the pilot year of the program

was put together without a significant amount of time to prepare. Lena had accomplished a great

deal in a short amount of time, but she felt there were improvements that could be done to help

support the facilitators in their role. Lena and I discussed my current studies and determined that

my experience in instructional design, human performance, and program evaluation would be a

good fit for this project.

Description of the Problem

The requests. The request from the Ometz coordinator was to analyze the existing state

of the pilot year of the Vanguard-Ometz program, discover opportunities for improvement, and

design interventions that would improve the overall effectiveness of the social service program.

Business need. Ometz is a charitable community organization. It relies on donations

from other organizations, associations, public entities, companies, and foundations for funding

for its programs. To ensure the program continued to receive funding, the program had to be

perceived as valuable to its stakeholders.

Instructional Design Approach

The instructional design model I used was the ADDIE Model, as described in Branch's

Instructional Design: The ADDIE Approach. According to Branch (2009), instructional design

should: be learner-centred, focus on performance, follow an iterative process, be systematic, be

based on evidence, and use a systems approach. The ADDIE approach incorporates all these

characteristics of instructional design. The term ADDIE is an acronym, which stands for the

different phases of the model: analyze, design, development, implement and evaluate. The

ADDIE model describes the process for creating learning products that are performance-based

and learner-centred. As depicted in Figure 1, adapted from "The ADDIE Model" (Branch, 2009),

the process is cyclical and iterative, with evaluation occurring at each phase, prompting revision
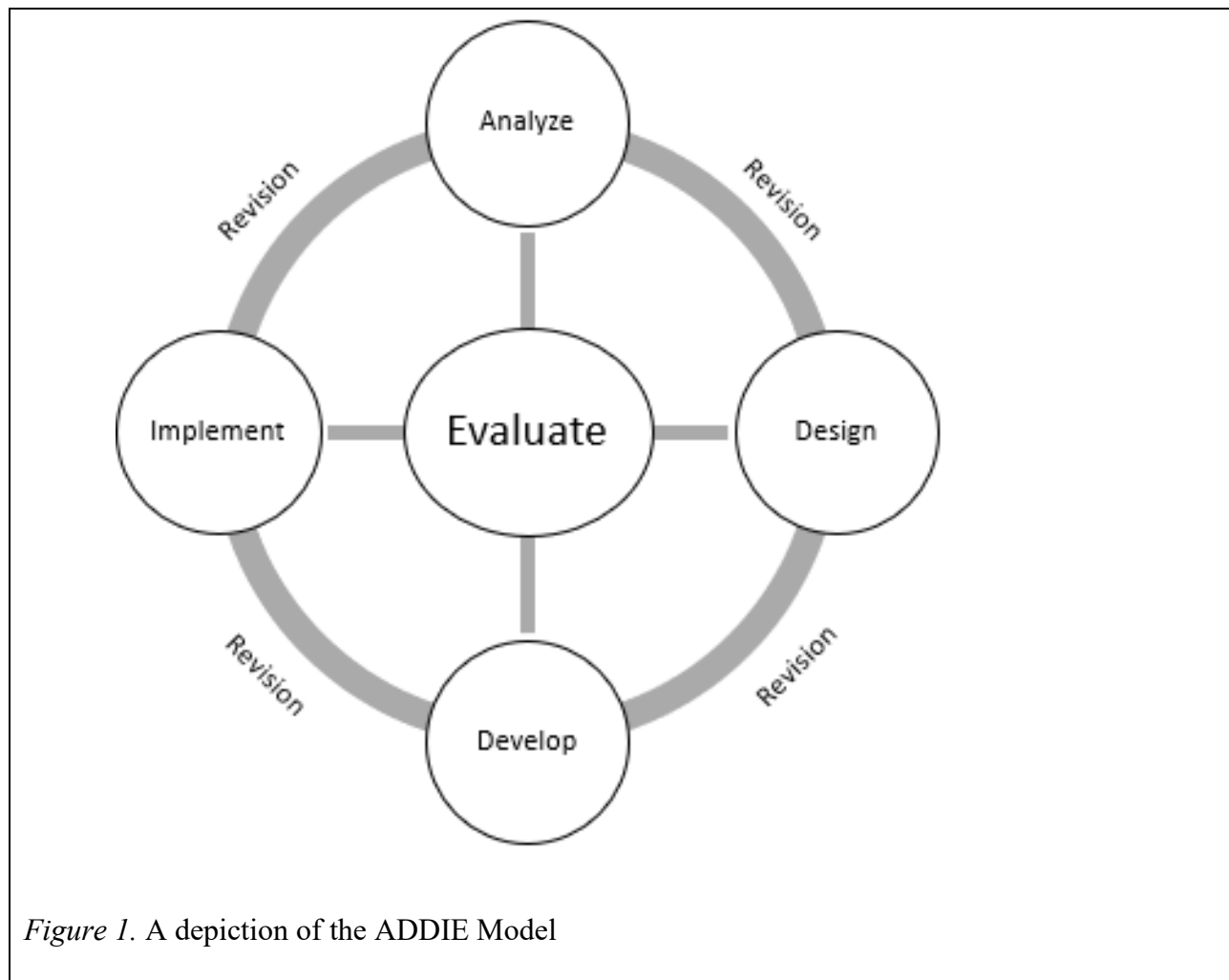
and improvement.

Figure 1. A depiction of the ADDIE Model

Analysis. In each phase of the ADDIE model, the instructional designer carries out

different activities. According to Carliner (2015), in the analysis phase, the intent of the

instructional designer is to clarify the request of the project sponsor and understand the problem.

To that end, the instructional designer collects data, identifies the current state and the ideal state, determines the performance gap, defines the business goal (with the project sponsor), and gathers information about the learners. Additionally, the instructional designer will create performance objectives and determine evaluation measurements and tools.

Design. In the design phase, the instructional designer will select the appropriate performance improvement interventions and design the structure of the interventions. The interventions are carefully planned to meet the objectives established in the analysis phase. Once the interventions are determined, the designer also has to select the best means to communicate the training or interventions (Carliner, 2015).

Development. The instructional designer will then create the instructional materials or program content in the development phase. It is important that the instructional designer work with subject matter experts to ensure the accuracy of the content (Carliner, 2015).

Implementation. According to Carliner (2015), implementation is the actual teaching of the course, or in the case of a performance intervention, the launching of the intervention. Part of implementation is correcting errors in the courseware and providing updates as required.

Evaluation. The last step of the ADDIE process is a critical one. In this step, the instruction designer evaluates the program by assessing whether the course or interventions achieved the objectives (Carliner, 2015). As Brinkerhoff (2006) points out, it is important that evaluation be formalized and done in a manner that enhances validity.

A typical misconception about the ADDIE process is that it is linear, rather than cyclical, with evaluation only coming at the end of the process once a program is complete or instructional materials are already implemented. However, one of the key principles of the

ADDIE process is that it is iterative, with evaluation done at each phase. An evaluation plan should not only measure the success of the instructional materials, but the success of the ADDIE process itself (Branch, 2009).

In different phases of my work, I used other models and theories to determine performance gaps, design objectives, develop solutions, and determine appropriate evaluation measure. However, the ADDIE model guided my approach throughout the entire project. I have included descriptions of all additional models used in the project where appropriate.

Literature Review

The literature review for this thesis equivalent served several practical purposes. First, the literature review offered background information regarding the Jewish faith, Jewish day schools, and existing school-based social skills or anxiety programs. The second practical purpose of this literature review was to provide triangulation of data gathered in the analysis phase of the project; I was able to determine if the data I had obtained was congruent with the findings of other researchers. Finally, the literature review informed the design of the solutions. I examined similar social skills training interventions and tools, as well as programs that provide instruction on coping with anxiety to understand what elements should be included in the design. Consequently, the literature review was cyclical in nature and directed by my research.

Disabilities in a religious setting

The literature review initially focused on exploring how students with disabilities access care in orthodox religious educational settings. Access to care can be a road block for anyone with a disability. In an Orthodox community, it seems it can be especially challenging. In their grounded-theory study of 27 ultra-orthodox parents of children with special needs, Schnitzer, Loots, Escudero and Schechter (2011) conducted interviews to determine how orthodox Jewish parents accessed care for their children. They determined that parents who did access care were able to do so via three pathways. The first pathway, called the "hidden path" involves parents seeking help outside the school setting and without the knowledge of school staff and administration. The second pathway was the school-initiated pathway. This was the most typical pathway to care. The final pathway, the interfering pathway depicted times when parents and school staff were interfering with one another. In this study, Schnitzer et al. (2011) discovered that religion may act as a barrier to accessible care. This confirmed some of the anecdotal

information I had received about the Vanguard-Ometz Program. As described in the overview, the program was created to serve a population that was not able to easily access care due in part to religious requirements.

Additionally, in some communities, a feeling of exclusion can be present for many people with disabilities. In a 2014 paper, Marx explored the integration of people with disabilities in the Jewish community and concluded that Jewish law "poses religious obstacles" to integration (p. 33). Marx explained that if people with disabilities are excluded from the obligations of a Jewish religious life (i.e. they are unable to carry out the duties, or Mitzvah, required of Jews) they may be perceived as less worthy than those who can carry out those obligations. In their report on the Minneapolis Inclusion Program, *From Invisibility to Visibly In*, Christensen and Weil (2007) found that a lack of awareness of disabilities led many Jewish organization to exclude disabled children. Christensen and Weil (2007) explored some of the barriers to inclusion of people with disabilities in a religious setting. Their study looked at the Inclusion Program of the Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis. The program had a structure that included an advisory committee that helped determine strategic objectives of the program. The three main areas of concern for the program were: information and advocacy for those with disabilities and their families, professional development, and institutional change. Christensen and Weil discovered that barriers to inclusion included cost, availability of access (which was tied to cost), institutional attitudes, the perceived additional burden on educators, and finger pointing between parents and teachers. The literature made the importance of inclusion immediately apparent. Therefore, I wonder how the Vanguard-Ometz program could be used to promote inclusion, which prompted me to return to the literature for further insight.

Despite potential religious barriers to support and care, additional research showed that there are means to promote inclusiveness in religious social and educational settings. For example, Laszlo Mizrahi and Buren (2014) explored how inclusive programming could be promoted in Jewish summer camps. They concluded that several elements were required to promote full inclusion. First, it was important to have buy-in from leadership, as well as a shared vision. Second, it is important for those with disabilities to be involved in the decision-making process to influence and shape programs. The researchers also felt it was vital to use "people-first" language; using people's names rather than identifying them by their disability. Another important step for successful inclusion was to implement the changes that are promised and to put time and money towards inclusion. This would help establish trust. Laszlo Mizrahi and Buren (2014) also felt it was important to engage professionals who understand special needs and inclusion so that those professionals can support the program and can provide training for camp staff members who were not specialists. Finally, the researchers also felt it was important to promote the program within the community. The research by Laszlo Mizrahi and Buren provided me with insight into how the Vanguard-Ometz program could be used to promote inclusion, especially when it came to providing support to teacher who are not necessarily specialists in the field of learning disabilities. I wanted to find out if and how teachers were already being incorporated into the program, and what more we could do.

Overall, the research indicates that individuals with disabilities who are in an orthodox religious setting may face additional barriers to support and inclusion. It should be noted that at the primary site of my research inclusion and access to resources were already highly valued and promoted. However, I used the information about the importance of access and inclusion in my program design.

Successful Programs

In my literature review, I examined studies about programs that were similar to the Vanguard-Ometz program, in that they involved the instruction of anxiety coping strategies or with the instruction of social skills. From these studies, I wanted to gain an understanding of the factors that made programs successful and how we could incorporate this information into the design of the Vanguard-Ometz program. I also wanted to explore the content of other programs and compare it to what was being offered in the existing Vanguard-Ometz program. Were there gaps in the content of the existing Vanguard-Ometz program that other programs had successfully addressed? What follows are descriptions of several different programs that could help shape the design of interventions for of the Vanguard-Ometz program.

Student-centred approach. Clarke, Hill and Charman (2016) studied the benefits of a school-based cognitive behavioural program targeting anxiety on children with autism spectrum disorder. Clarke et al. (2016) conducted a mixed method study of 28 students between the ages of 11 and 14 in 6 different schools. The schools and students were sorted into either the experimental or control group. The study used an established program called "Exploring Feelings: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy to Manage Anxiety for children aged 10-12". This program was designed for children with autism who experience anxiety. In this study, the program was delivered by one of the researchers, who was completing a doctorate in child psychology. The program was divided into six, one-hour sessions. The first sessions focused on the students' strengths and asked them to identify physical and emotional characteristics of being happy and relaxed. In the second session, the students were asked to describe how they feel when they are anxious. Session Three focused on relaxation techniques. The fourth session built on the third and asked students to describe a situation where they felt anxious and asked them to rate

their level of anxiety. The students then described how they could apply the relaxation techniques taught in the previous session to these scenarios. In the fifth session, the students wrote a story about a situation that would make them feel anxious and then think about their self-directed negative thoughts. The students then learned about positive thoughts they could use to replace the negativity. In the last session, students wrote about a situation that would create anxiety for them and then created a plan for what they can do to cope. The approach for all sessions was student-centred and focused on individual needs. Pre-program measurements indicate that the students in both the control and intervention groups were comparative with regards to the severity of their autism, severity of anxiety, and their cognitive and coping abilities. The results indicate that students in the experimental group had reduced levels of anxiety compared to the control group. The study also found that children in the experimental group were more likely to use problem-solving strategies instead of avoidance strategies than the control group.

In their three-year study of three American elementary schools, Albercht, Mathur, Jones and Alazemi (2015) examined another student-focused and tiered program, entitled START^{Plus}, which advocated for teaching skills in practical contexts, using situations that were identified by the students. Results of the research performed by the group indicated that the majority of students increased or had the same level of attendance. Also, there was a decrease in the number of office discipline referrals. Finally, the study showed an increase in academic achievement levels.

In a study of social skills training for students with emotional and behavioural disorders, Patterson, Jolivette and Crosby (2006) also advocated for social skills training programs that reflected the needs of the students. Programs with a student-centred focus seem to allow for

individualization, since students used their own experience as a basis for their learning. This information prompted me to examine the session descriptions provided by Ometz facilitators to understand how they were incorporating the students' experiences into their instruction and what could be done to move towards a more student-centred approach.

Another option to adopt a student-centred approach was offered in Maag's (2005), *Social Skills Training for Youth with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders and Learning Disabilities: Problems, Conclusions, and Suggestions*. Maag (2005) suggested that one of the biggest issues when creating social skills training is determining what social skills to target. Although the research seems to agree that it is important to individualize the learning of social skills, this is rarely done because it is difficult and time consuming. One solution is for the students and other stakeholders to provide a list of the social skills or social situations they feel are important. This gives the students a voice and allows for individualized instruction.

I came across another interesting program while reading Corkum, Corbin and Pike's (2010) quantitative analysis of 16 students with ADHD at three schools. These schools used the *Working Together: Building Children's Social Skills Through Folk Literature* program. The program design as described by Corkum, Corbin and Pike (2014) was intriguing and was worthy of examining in closer detail because the program allowed for significant customization to the needs of the students. Although the study did not contain a rich description of the program, I was able to find additional information about the program in a book review. According to a book review by Johnson (2011), the program is contained in a manual that has activities that were structure but could be adapted to address student needs, the size of the group or time limitations. Each skill also had several activities from which the facilitator could select. I found that this

program's structure supported individualization and customization, characteristics that the Vanguard-Ometz program seemed to require.

As an educator, I have always believed in a student-centred approach to learning and the literature review helped me confirm this belief. The information presented in the studies above provided me with some practical guidance on how this approach could be incorporated into social skills education programs. As the studies show, one way the Vanguard-Ometz program could take a student-centred approach would be to incorporate the students' challenges and experiences into the lessons and activities. Additionally, the students could help shape the curriculum by selecting the social skills to target.

Delivery. While conducting my research, I saw how wildly the delivery of the programs can vary. As mentioned previously, the Vanguard-Ometz program differed in the way it was delivered throughout the various schools. At some schools, the program was delivered to the entire class, at other schools, it was delivered to a select group of students (those with learning disabilities). I wondered if this had an impact on the effectiveness of the program. In the literature, I also noted a variety of approaches when it came to program delivery. In some cases, programs were delivered to individual students. However, Maag (2005) was critical of that approach. Maag (2005) stated that social interactions, by their very nature, are interactions with others. To limit social skills training to an individual setting is to remove the learning from the natural setting in which the skills will be carried out, thereby limiting generalizability of the skill. Some researchers have purposefully included the peer group in the social skills learning. Maag (2005) concluded that this is helpful in reinforcing the learned social skills. In their study, Choi and Heckenlaible-Gotto (1998) examined the delivery of social skills training within a regular classroom environment. The study involved students and teachers from two first grade

classrooms. Each week, students learned one social skill in two 30-minutes sessions. The training took place in regular classrooms and used realistic role play scenarios. The study used a pre and post test design to see if social skills training would impact peer acceptance. The control group's scores remained largely unchanged over time whereas about half the students in the treatment group experienced increases in their scores. This seems to reinforce Maag's (2005) perspective that social skill learning can be positively reinforced through classroom social interactions. As Quinn and Jannasch (1995) pointed out in their article on social skills training for students with antisocial behaviour, current social skills training usually takes place in small groups. Quinn and Jannasch stated that this type of training design can be detrimental because the regular classroom teacher and the other students excluded from the training cannot be leveraged to reinforce positive behaviours.

The research seemed to show that individual, small group and whole-class instruction can have benefits. I started to consider how a blended approach might work. In Albercht, Mathur, Jones and Alazemi's (2015) study, the program design seemed to be quite effective and used both a whole-class and small group approach. Students and teachers participated in selecting the skills that they would work on each month. These skills were modeled for all students, using a whole-class approach. The program also used small group meetings with students who needed more specialized support. Similarly, in their review of 22 studies, involving 572 students, McIntosh, Vaughnn and Zaragoza (1991) reported that successful programs included both individual as well as group instruction.

The studies suggests that a variety of delivery approaches can be effective. A commonality in the studies was that peer interaction can reinforce the learning of social skills.

Therefore, it seemed important that the Vanguard-Ometz program leverage peer interactions, whether it be in small "pull-out" groups or within the existing classroom dynamic.

Teacher involvement. As previously mentioned, Laszlo Mizrahi and Buren's 2014 study made me consider the important role that teachers can play in this kind of program. I decided to examine the impact of teachers more closely to see if it was a success factor in the design of similar programs. Beaumont and Sofronoff (2008) examined the effects of a seven-week program on children with autism. Twenty-six students were randomly assigned to the intervention and 23 were used as a control group. In this program, students acted as detectives, deciphering how characters are feeling and reacting in different situations. The program was delivered by a facilitator to small student groups. The program included handouts for teachers. The handouts provided a description of the group session content and offered recommendations for reinforcing the skills in the classroom setting. The study concluded that those who received the intervention made greater improvements than those in the control group. This handout was a simple way of incorporating teachers into the program.

In their mixed design study of elementary school students, Collins, Woolfson, and Durkin (2014) discussed the benefits and drawbacks of programs delivered by mental health professionals versus programs delivered by teachers. Mental health professionals have a wealth of knowledge and the required expertise but bringing in mental health professionals can be costly and can make the program unsustainable. Using teachers to deliver the program is more cost-effective, but teachers may not have the knowledge required to deliver the program. Participants were from nine elementary schools in Scotland. The study compared five classes that were led through a program by psychologists, four classes that were teacher-led, and nine control classes. The program used a whole-group approach and did not specifically target students identified

with anxiety disorders. Both teachers and the psychologists attended a one-day training workshop. The goal of the program was to teach students coping and problem-solving strategies. The study found that students in the intervention groups (both psychologist- and teacher-led) reported a reduction in their anxiety levels and an increase in problem-solving coping skills. The study also found no significant difference between the psychologist-led group and the teacher-led group.

Another study that evaluated the impact of teacher-delivered programs was Gillham, Reivich, Brunwasser, Freres, Chajon, Kash-MacDonald and Seligman's 2012 research. Gillham et al. (2012) looked at the effects of a resiliency training program on 408 middle school students in the United States. The study used a pre-existing program called "Penn Resiliency Program for Adolescents" or PRP-A. The program was delivered by school staff. The students were divided into three groups: the control group, a second group where only students would receive the program (PRP-A), and a third group where students participated in the program and their parents were involved in a component of the intervention (PRP-AP). The study found that students who received the intervention experienced a reduction in anxiety, which shows that school staff can effectively deliver the program.

Quinn and Hannasch (1995) also identified the potential benefits of including teachers in the delivery of a social skills training program. They identify that in a typical social skills program design, the facilitator and setting are often unfamiliar, which makes it harder for the student to generalize skills learned in that setting. Also, the facilitator is not as familiar with the student and may not have as good a grasp on the students' needs as the classroom teacher.

I reflected on some of the difficulties that the Ometz facilitators had experienced and many of the problems seemed to stem from classroom management issues. I began to consider how we could leverage teachers to effectively deliver the Vanguard-Ometz program. Could they help with classroom management and reinforce learning objectives in their classroom? Could they connect with their students more easily than a facilitator? Could they help create a connection between the facilitator and the parents or the school community? These were all questions I wanted to answer through this project.

Parent involvement. After my initial research, I began to think that parental involvement could be a critical factor in program success. Brendel and Maynard (2013) conducted a meta-analysis comparing the effects of child-focus anxiety interventions and interventions that included both parents and students. The meta-analysis included a sample of eight studies, with a total of 710 children participants and at least one parent for each child. The children were diagnosed with one or multiple anxiety disorders. Four of the studies used the "Coping Cat" program, or an adaptation of it. Two other studies used existing programs, while the remaining studies did not name the program used. However, all the programs used a manual. Mental health professionals delivered the programs in all the studies. The meta-analysis showed a small positive effect of interventions that included parents versus those that only included the children. This meta analysis reinforced my belief that parents should be included into the Vanguard-Ometz program. However, I was still unsure of what approach to use, since various studies incorporated parents in very different ways.

In-depth parental involvement. Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, and Frankel (2014) studied the impact of a social skills training program on 53 students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their parents. The skills learned in this training program were

assessed between one- and five-years following treatment. The researchers used a social skills program called the Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills, or PEERS. PEERS is a published program, which uses a manual. The focuses of this program are friendships, managing rejection, and conflict. The program is comprised of 90-minute sessions, delivered once a week for twelve to fourteen weeks. During this period, parents and students attended separate sessions. Parents were taught how to help their children, while children were given training on social skills. This was followed by weekly work that the students completed with their parents' coaching. The program was effective in improving friendship skills. Also, improvements were maintained at a follow-up one to five years after treatment. Mandelberg et al. (2014) identified that an important component of successful social skills interventions is the involvement of parents. Parents can help reinforce the skills that are taught to the students and provide support for the development of those skills. If parents are involved, they can continue to model and reinforce those skills long after the program has ended.

In their study of thirty-five children with ADHD and 14 children without ADHD, Frankel and Myatt (1997) compared the results of a social skills training program after twelve treatment sessions. Frankel and Myatt (1997) believed that parental involvement could have a positive effect due to the significant role that parents have in their child's play experiences. The treatment addressed previously identified areas where children were having trouble with social skills and involved in-depth training for parents as well as a homework component. In this program, children attended twelve sessions, each with four parts. The sessions included a review of the homework from previous session, a presentation of the skill for that week, and coached play. The last part of the session was reserved for parents and children to determine homework parameters for the week. The parent sessions ran concurrent to the child sessions. The first parent session

was an orientation, but the other sessions mirrored the child sessions and had four parts as well. The parent sessions included a parent handout and the facilitators reviewed the homework. The parents discussed what problems they anticipated and were able to ask questions. The parent handout informed parents of how they could support the social skill learned that session. For all variables, the treatment group result was at least marginally more favourable than the waitlist group. Frankel and Myatt's (1997) research shows that increased involvement from parents can obtain positive results.

Although the findings in both the Frankel and Myatt (1997) study and the Mandelberg et al. (2014) study were compelling, I also realized from the description of the programs that I would not be able to incorporate that level of involvement into the Vanguard-Ometz program. Such involvement would require substantial resources and a significant commitment from the parents, which would not be possible due to the limited scope of my work.

The training session approach. In the Radley et al. (2014) study, parents attended a training session prior acting as a facilitator with their children. At this session, parents were able to learn about the program and the skills that would be taught. The parents were also able to practice their facilitation and coaching. This would help them reinforce the skills at home. In their study Essau, Conradt, Sasagawa and Ollendick (2012) used a school-based anxiety program that invited parents to instructional sessions. The 638 students involved in the study were from the ages of six to twelve and the program used a universal approach, rather than targeting a group of students identified as experiencing anxiety. Participating schools were randomly selected as intervention of control groups. Parents were invited to four parent sessions and about half of the parents attended some of the sessions, but only seven parents reported participating in all four sessions. The parent sessions described strategies that parents could use to reinforce the coping

skills taught in the program and also discussed the importance of practicing the skills as a family. Parents who reported attending one time and those who reported attending all four sessions reported a higher level of satisfaction with the program. The study also showed that children of parents who attended all the sessions had a greater reduction in their scores on an anxiety measurement test.

A study conducted by Wilkes-Gillan, Bundy, Cordier, and Lincoln (2016) found similar results when it came to parental involvement to Mandelberg et al. (2014). Wilkes-Gillan et al. believed that limited effectiveness of social skills training programs might be attributed a lack of parent involvement. In their study of eleven children from ages six to eleven years old and their parents, the study found that the children's social play skills improved significantly from pre to post test. The parents received a one-hour training after which the parents and children completed home modules. The parents and child would read a chapter from the program manual and watched a corresponding video. This was followed by a playdate with another child involved in the study. Parents would use cards to give their child feedback. The feedback cards were divided into three categories: Great Play, Stop-let's think about what happened, and Things to Remember While We Play. The order of the modules was based on the child's needs.

These studies show that brief training sessions can help prepare parents to reinforce skills at home. The coordinator of the Vanguard-Ometz program informed me that some of the schools had elected to host parent sessions, but we did not know if parents found these sessions valuable or if the parent sessions had helped students improve their social skills or anxiety coping abilities.

The homework approach. One of the first programs I reviewed was in Beaumont and Sofronoff's (2008) study. The program included "home missions"; tasks for the children to do at

home to reinforce the skills learned each week. As part of these home missions, parents were engaged to prompt and reward the students, as well as help the student with their work when needed. Beaumont and Sofronoff (2008) found that those in the intervention group made greater improvements than those in the control group. As described in the book review by Johnson (2010), one program with a parent component was *Working Together: Building Children's Social Skills Through Folk Literature*. As mentioned previously, the program had a manual that contained different lessons based on social skills. The manual also has a parent letter for each skill. Additionally, the program had several games that were designed to be used at home so that parents could work with their children to reinforce the skills.

Similarly, in their research, Radley, Jenson, Clark, and O'Neill (2014) examined a Superheroes Social Skills program that had a homework component for parents and students. In the original program design, an animated superheroes presented a social skill each week via a video. The students would be taught the skill in a treatment setting and practice the skill in a role-play activity with other students. Each week, there was also a homework component that would encourage the student to use the skill outside the treatment setting. As part of this homework, the student would watch a video at home and read a comic that reinforced the skill. For this particular study, the researchers adapted the program to include the parents as facilitator at home. Radley et al. (2014) included the parents because the previous research indicated that programs with a parent component are effective in generating improvements in the targeted skills. Training in a variety of setting is more likely to increase the use of the skills, which will lead to learning the skills faster. In the Radley et al. (2014) study, two out of five students participating in the study had substantial improvements in social engagement. One student showed improvements, whereas the remaining two students experienced no change. Also noted

in this study is that the two students who did not respond to the treatment had lower levels of intervention fidelity.

Adams, Womack, Shatzer, and Caldarella (2010) studied a social skills training program that included the use of notes sent home to parents. The study involved teacher, parents and students at an elementary school in the US. In this program, one social skill each month was taught to children in kindergarten through grade six in a series of lessons. The classroom teacher introduced the skill. The teachers were given the rationale and teaching tips for how to reinforce the skill in their classroom. Notes were sent home each month to explain the social skill and to encourage the parents to teach the skill at home. The notes also described an activity that could be done at home that would reinforce the skill. The parents were asked to return the note, signed, at the end of the month. Adams et al. (2010) described that one of the limitations of social skills program is that the skills learned in the training setting are not generalized to other setting. Adams et al. (2010) believed that involving the parents could help to facilitate the generalization of skills because parents spend a lot of time with their children in settings that these social skills would be most helpful. Adams et al. (2010) also stated that schools can gain support for these types of programs by including parents from the beginning. However, as Adams et al. (2010) mentioned, it is important to consider the parents' perceptions of this involvement. You do not want the parents to perceive the program as a critique of their parenting abilities. A survey was sent to parent, teachers and students regarding their attitude towards the note home program. The majority of parents found that the notes home helped them reinforce the skills. However, some parents reported feeling burdened by the additional task. One parent was offended and felt that the program was a criticism of their parenting. Adams et al. (2010) suggested that informing parents of the goal of the program and the importance of their participation early on might

prevent parents from being offended. The majority of students thought that the home notes helped improved their social skills. Some felt that the notes were boring or were annoyed at having an additional homework task. This was particularly true in the older grades. The researchers suggested incorporating the "note home" tasks into other homework.

The homework approach seemed like a viable way to include parents in the Vanguard-Ometz program. It was relatively simple, yet effective. However, the Adam et al. (2010) study showed the importance of preparation and laying the ground work before introducing a homework component.

Needs Assessment

In this chapter, I will describe the comprehensive needs assessment I conducted for the Vanguard-Ometz program. Carliner (2015) described a needs assessment as the process of gathering information about the request, the business need, the desired and current performance, the tasks, the learners, influences on the learners, the context in which the learning is applied, and constraints. I conducted a needs assessment to analyze the current performance. In this phase, I determined the exact request from the project sponsor, collected data, identified the business need, identified the target performers, conducted a task analysis, determined the gaps between the current state and the desired state, and identified potential causes of the gaps.

Data Collection

Process. I began my work on the project in May of 2017. A pilot of the Vanguard-Ometz program ran during the 2016-2017 school year. Although my inclusion in the project came at the end of the school year, I was able to use the feedback forms that were already gathered by the program coordinator as a source of data. The program coordinator, Lena, asked if I could help her create questions for a focus group during the final peer supervision session for the program. At this session, the coordinator, three facilitators and a member of the Ometz leadership team were present.

In August 2017, Lena informed me that she would no longer be leading the program and put me in touch with her replacement, Melinda. Unfortunately, Lena could no longer help me obtain consent from school administration to conduct research with the school staff. Until this permission was granted, I could only obtain conditional ethics approval, which made it difficult to progress with my research. It took several months of communication between me, Melinda,

and school administrators before I could be granted permission to interview administrators or other staff members. With this consent, I was able to obtain full approval for my Certification of Ethical Acceptability. The current re-approval certificate is available in Appendix D.

Whilst we were trying to gain access to a school, Melinda was replaced with a third coordinator, Tina, for the remainder of the school year. Tina helped me organize interviews with one of the vice-principals of the school, as well as the coordinator of the resource centre, in late November of 2017. For this thesis equivalent, I conducted interviews at one site only (the primary site). It would be too difficult and lengthy of a process to obtain permission to conduct interviews at all schools. The school at which I conducted interviews is an all-girls school, which serves students from the pre-school to the high school level. Approximately 600 students attend this institution. The school has both a religious and secular curriculum. The secular curriculum is conducted primarily in French. Other languages of instruction include English and Hebrew. Additionally, the school has a resource centre. Staff of the resource centre help to identify learning difficulties, develop individual education plans, support programs and provide workshops for teachers. The resource centre coordinator was an integral part of the design, development and delivery of the Vanguard-Ometz program at this school.

In February 2018, I conducted an in-depth interview with the Ometz facilitator who worked at the primary site. She facilitated the program at this school in both the 2016-2017 school year and the 2017-2018 school year. As the interview was conducted over the phone, the consent to participate in a research study was sent via email.

In an attempt to gather data from additional sources, I sent questionnaires to the school so that they might distribute it to their teaching staff, but no replies were received. When I went on site to interview the school administrator and resource centre coordinator, I also requested to

interview at least one teacher whose students were involved in the program. Unfortunately, no teachers were available to be interviewed.

Many months passed between my original meeting with the program coordinator, Lena, and the point at which I could interview other stakeholders. As such, I asked Lena if she could meet with me again to discuss her perspective of the program. She consented to a telephone interview during which we discussed the pilot year and the state of the program in the 2017-2018 school year. She was still working at Ometz and continued to be familiar with the program.

Participants. Finding participants from whom to collect data was a challenge. I hoped to gather data from several different sources, including the parents and teachers of students in the program. Unfortunately, I did not have direct access to these groups and neither the school administration nor Ometz could facilitate this access. I believe that this lack of access may be attributed to the fact that I was perceived as an outsider. While I was careful to remain respectful and follow religious traditions while visiting the primary site, I do not feel I was able to gain the complete trust of the school administrators, due to the fact that I was not a member of their community and not known to them directly. Contributing to this was the fact that prior to this point, I was not engaging with them directly, and almost all previous interactions were mediated through the program coordinators.

Facilitators. The three facilitators who participate in the focus group were approximately 25 to 35 years old. One was male and the other two were female. One of the female participants was Francophone and answered primarily in French, while the other two focus group participants were Anglophone.

Additionally, seven of the eight facilitators gave their consent for their session feedback forms to be shared with me. The eighth facilitator asked that I exclude her data, which I did. The facilitators ranged in age from approximately 25-38. Of the seven facilitators who consented to participate, six were female and one was male, as a male instructor was requested to run the program in two all-boys schools. Four of the facilitators were Jewish, with various levels of observance. The facilitators all had experience working with elementary school-aged children and have education or social services backgrounds (master's in creative arts therapy, Master of Social Work, Master of Education).

Primary facilitator. I was able to conduct an in-depth interview with one facilitator, hereafter referred to as Nancy. Nancy was the facilitator at the primary site both during the pilot year and the second year of the program. She has a Master's in Creative Arts Therapy and extensive experience working with children and facilitating groups.

Coordinator (Lena). Lena has a master's degree in creative arts therapies with a specialization in drama therapy. She is also a certified counsellor and had previous experience working with children and their families.

Vice Principal and Resource Centre Coordinator. I was not able to obtain a significant amount of demographic information about either the Vice Principal or Resource Centre Coordinator. Both worked at the site during the pilot year and during the second year of the program. Both have worked at the school for many years.

Ometz leadership team member. The member of the leadership team who participated in an interview was female. She has a background in education, social services and counselling. She has a master's degree in Social Work.

Table 1

Data Collection Instruments and Participants

Data Collection Instrument	Participants
Focus Group	3 facilitators Coordinator
Feedback forms	7 facilitators
Interview	Coordinator (Lena)
Interview	Vice Principal at primary site Resource Centre Coordinator at Primary Site
Interview	Facilitator at primary site
Interview	Member of the Ometz leadership

Data Collection Instruments

Focus group. I provide questions for Lena for the peer supervision session. Lena was

hoping to conduct a focus group that would help pinpoint opportunities to improve the program

for the next year. Therefore, I developed questions using a human performance technology

model, Gilbert's (1978) Behavior Engineering Model. The model is a tool to analyze the cause of

performance gaps, both at the individual and environmental level in three areas: information,

instrumentation and motivation. Although some might argue the model is outdated, the Behavior

Engineering Model is a foundational model in the field of performance improvement. As argued

by Chevalier (2003), many of the current analysis models in the field of human performance are,

in fact, updates of the Behavior Engineering Model. Some of these updated models consider

additional factors than those identified by Gilbert, such as process or input. However, after

evaluating several alternatives, I selected the original Behavior Engineering Model because it

can be easily understood by all stakeholders, and the model accounts for both the individual as

well as the system or environment in which the individual performs their work. The model

divides the factors that affect performance into six different areas: data, instruments and

incentives, knowledge, capacity and motives. The first three are environmental factors, and the last three are individual factors, as shown in Figure 2 (adapted from "The Behaviour Engineering Model" by Gilbert, 1978). The model allows the user to analyze the potential causes of performance gaps.

	Information	Instrumentation	Motivation
Environment	Data 1. Performance feedback 2. Description of expectation 3. Clear guidelines	Resources 1. Adequate tools, time and materials	Incentives 1. Financial 2. Non-monetary 3. Development opportunity 4. Consequences for poor performance
Individual	Knowledge 1. Adequate training	Capacity 1. Scheduling 2. Aids 3. Adaptation 4. Selection	Motives 1. Assessment of personal motivation 2. Recruitment to match people to the work

Figure 2. The Behavior Engineering Model.

The structure of the questions for the focus group was adapted from the *Rapid Performance Analysis Toolkit* created by Tim Gillum and Kery Mortenson. Table 2 shows the questions asked to the group during the Ometz facilitator meeting. Each question is tied to one of the factors identified in Gilbert's analysis model. In addition to the prepared questions, the meeting involved a lot of open discussion. I was invited by the coordinator to attend the session, and the three facilitators and coordinator gave their signed consent for their feedback to be included in the research.

Table 2

Focus Group Questions for Facilitators

Factor	Questions
Data	Where do you go or who do you speak to when you have questions or concerns about your work? How were the expectations regarding the role of facilitator described to you? What kind of feedback do you receive regarding your work as a facilitator?
Instruments	What professional resources do you have to support you? What resources do you need that you do not have? Do you feel you can realistically complete all the program objectives in the time allotted?
Incentives	How are facilitators recognized for exceptional work?
Knowledge	Other than your education, what type of training did you receive prior to facilitating this program?
Capacity	In your opinion, what qualities are critical for a facilitator to have? In your opinion, what knowledge is critical for a facilitator to have?
Motives	When you were first asked to participate, how would you describe your level of motivation? How would you describe your level of motivation now?

Additionally, to obtain the opinion of the participants on the ideal state of the program, the facilitators completed an index card that asked the question, "what would the perfect program look like to you?" Their responses can be seen in Figure 3. These responses provided the basis for the current state narrative found in the next section of this paper.
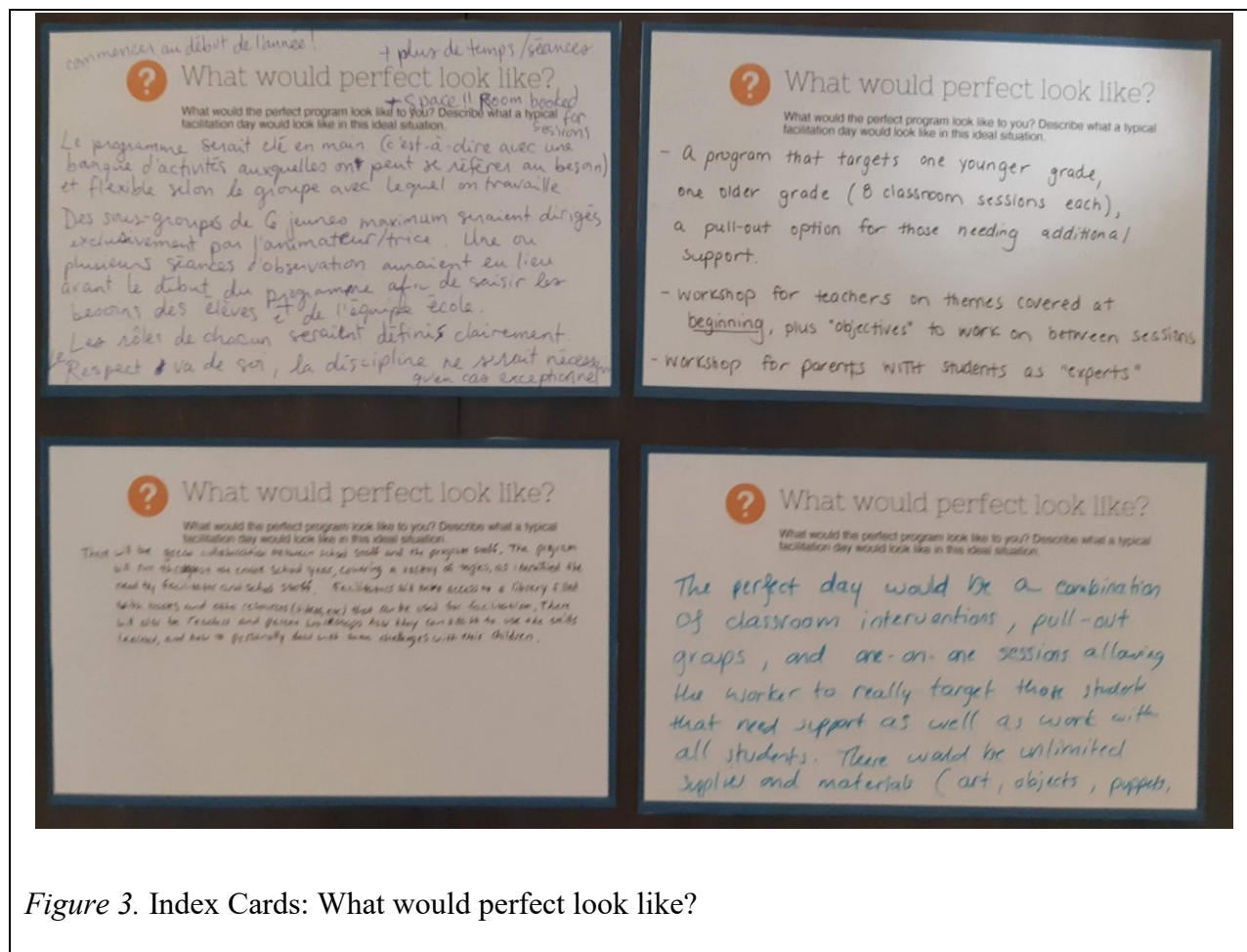
Figure 3. Index Cards: What would perfect look like?

Facilitator feedback forms. The feedback forms were created and distributed by Lena, the Program Coordinator during the pilot year, through an online survey tool. The facilitators were asked to complete the form after each session of the program. The form contained basic questions about the session such as school, grade, theme, and format. The facilitators were also asked to describe the session and identify highlights, challenges, and recommendations. One hundred and nine feedback forms were included in the data collection and analysis. This data provided the basis for the current state narrative included in the next section. Additionally, the information from the feedback forms was instrumental when identifying the performance gaps and understanding the causes of these gaps. This information is summarized in Table 4 and Table 5.

Interview with Lena, the Program Coordinator. The interviewed followed a script with main questions, follow-up questions, and prompts. Once again, the questions were based on the Behavior Engineering Model (Gilbert, 1978). However, on several occasions, our conversations diverted from the script in order to obtain additional insights and information. In this telephone interview, I asked Lena to describe the ideal state of the program. Additionally, I asked her if there were any feedback systems in place during the pilot year. Following that, I asked her how she gave and received feedback from the different program stakeholders. We also discussed the qualities and knowledge she felt were critical for the facilitators to have and whether she believed the facilitators had the qualities and knowledge she identified. I also asked Lena if the various parties involved (students, teachers and facilitators) seemed motivated to participate in the program. I also inquired as to whether she noted a difference in the involvement of the parents in schools where a parent workshop or information session was held. Since I had already started to identify opportunities for improvement from the information in the feedback forms, the interview with Lena helped to confirm these gaps and provided additional insight. Data from this interview can be found in my performance gap analysis and cause analysis.

Interview with the vice-principal and resource centre coordinator at the primary site. The two participants in this interview consented to participate in the research study but declined for the session to be recorded. For this interview, I developed questions that focused on seven areas: program objectives, parent sessions, student and teacher preparation, motivation, program impact, program benefits and improvements. The interview script is available in Appendix A. Both participants had prepared for the interview by reflecting on the pilot program, reviewing the notes they had taken throughout the year, and writing a summary, which they

shared with me verbally and referred to when responding to questions. This data is included in the performance gap analysis and cause analysis. Additionally, this interview helped inform the design of some of the interventions, since it helped identify what interventions might be most effective within a Jewish day school.

Interview with the facilitator at primary site. Because the facilitator was not present at the final supervision meeting that I attended, I used essentially the same questions, although the follow-up questions differed according to the facilitator's responses. Additionally, the facilitator had prepared notes beforehand, which she shared with me verbally at the end of the interview. The facilitator consented for the conversation to be recorded. I was able to confirm much of the information included in the feedback forms and from my interview with Lena. This information was also incorporated into my performance gap analysis and cause analysis. The facilitator also had suggestions for improvement, which were helpful when designing the solutions.

Interview with a member of the Ometz leadership. A member of the leadership team contacted me to inform me that the program was no longer running. It was at this time that I asked her if she would answer some follow-up questions in a telephone interview. She agreed to participate. The goal of this interview was to gain her feedback on the performance improvement interventions I was proposing and to determine if the revised program content could be repurposed for other Ometz programs. The questions focused on whether the proposed solutions seemed to address the gaps in the program and what could be transferable to other programs. First, I asked her to describe her role in the program. I shared with her my cause analysis and proposed interventions. I asked her to reflect on the information, and to suggest changes or improvements. Additionally, I asked if she felt the solutions were realistic. Finally, I asked if any

of the proposed interventions could be used in other Ometz programs, since at this time, we knew the program was no longer running.

Target Performers

The facilitators were the target performers considered for this project, due to the fact that I had much more direct access to this group and could design interventions to meet their needs.

Additional Performers

Students. The central goal of the Vanguard-Ometz is to improve the performance of students with regards to social skills and/or coping with anxiety. Therefore, it is important in this thesis equivalent to consider their performance as well. Despite their important role, I could not examine their performance in depth, as I could not easily obtain ethical approval to work with them. This meant that it was challenging to understand the performance gaps that existed for this group of performers and difficult to have any direct impact on their performance. All of the information I received regarding the students was obtained indirectly through the program coordinator, facilitators, and the school administrators. As previously stated, 375 students in grades two through six took part in the pilot year of the program. The target student population for the program were students with learning disabilities, but students without learning disabilities often took part. The students may come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. It is likely that all the students are Jewish.

Classrooms teachers. The program coordinator stressed the importance of teacher involvement in the program. The Ometz facilitators were only in the classroom for a very limited period and so had limited influence on the students' behaviours. It is important for learning that skills be reinforced and practiced on a continued basis. Therefore, the performance of the

teachers is also an important consideration. Although I did not have direct contact with the teachers, other people I interviewed were able to provide me with information about these performers. The teachers vary significantly in terms of demographics and so the interventions created for this program must consider the needs of this diverse group.

Parents. As seen in the literature review, parents are an important piece of the puzzle when creating a successful program for students. Similar to teachers, parents help to reinforce the skills outside of the constraints of the program sessions. I did not have direct contact with parents, but the school administrator described them as being very invested in their children's education. Again, this group may vary significantly in terms of age and other demographic markers.

Program Stakeholders

Other stakeholders identified by the program coordinator include: additional family members (siblings, grandparents, etc.), school administration, in-school resource teachers, other school staff, Vanguard, and Ometz. Although I requested information on these groups, I was unable to obtain any data.

Current and Ideal Performance

Narrative. To understand the performance gap, you must first understand the current and ideal performance. What follows are narratives that describe both the current state and the ideal state. The current state narrative is an amalgamation of various stories from the facilitators.

Current state narrative. Myla was contacted by the Vanguard-Ometz program coordinator last week and asked to take part in the program. Although she had a very good chat with the coordinator, she did not receive any additional training. Fortunately, Myla has a lot of

previous experience working with children as an arts therapist. During the phone call, Myla asked the coordinator about the content of the program. The school had described a bit about what they wanted to see in the program, but there was no set curriculum. Although the coordinator was helpful, it was a bit of a scramble to put ideas together to make a curriculum. Nonetheless, Myla is happy and excited to have the opportunity to facilitate the program at a local Jewish day school.

She arrives at the school the first day with what she thinks is a very fun ice breaker activity and a great introductory lesson. When she arrives, the receptionist has not heard about the program and is not sure where Myla should go. Finally, the school's resource coordinator is called to the office, as she knows the details about the program. Myla is brought to the classroom where she will be facilitating. The classroom teacher, who is grading at her desk, is surprised to hear that Myla will be working with her class and seems a bit irritated at the disruption. The teacher heard about the program at her last staff meeting, but very few details were shared with the teachers and she didn't realize the program would be starting today. The resource coordinator quickly explains the program to the classroom teacher and leaves, returning to students who need her support in the resource centre.

As the bell rings, Myla quickly starts rearranging the desks into a circle for the ice breaker activity. The classroom teacher interrupts Myla and states that the desks cannot be rearranged because she prefers the desks in rows.

The students enter the classroom and are surprised to see Myla there. The classroom teacher leaves without introducing Myla. Myla introduces herself and talks a little bit about what they will be doing during the program. There is a lot of chatter among the students, who did not know Myla would be coming or what she is doing. As Myla starts the ice breaker activity, she is

interrupted several times by the students who ask her what she is doing there, and about their test scheduled for the next day. Myla must re-explain several times before she can conduct the activity and introductory lesson. She introduces a take-home activity for the students to complete with the help of their parents. Some of the students start to complain about "extra homework" and one student says that her parents will not like the activity. Myla is only half way through the lesson when the bell rings and the students leave. Myla leaves as well, feeling very frustrated and upset with how the first session went.

Ideal state narrative. Myla was contacted by the Vanguard-Ometz program coordinator two months ago and was asked to take part in the program. Myla received training last month, which was a great opportunity to meet the other facilitators and share expertise. At the training, they also learned about the program curriculum and how to use the multiple resources available to them.

The program coordinator put Myla in touch with the resource coordinator at the school where she would be facilitating. When Myla contacted the resource coordinator the month before the program start date, she and the resource coordinator were able to collaborate and shape the curriculum to match the needs and objectives at the school. Myla was also able to plan a teacher workshop before the program start date. She met the classroom teachers with whom she would be working and explained the program to them. Myla was able to provide the teachers with resources that they could use in the classroom to reinforce the concepts taught in the program. The teachers seemed excited to participate.

In collaboration with the school, Myla also organized a note to be sent home to the parents and students. In the note, she described the program and the expectations for parents and students. She also provided a date for a parent workshop and an agenda.

She arrives at the school the first day with a very fun ice-breaker activity and a great introductory lesson that she was able to select from the available resources. When she arrives, she is greeted at reception by the school's resource coordinator. The coordinator brings Myla to the classroom where she will be facilitating. The classroom teacher, who Myla has previously met, is expecting her. The classroom is already arranged in a circle, as Myla and the classroom teacher discussed in an earlier telephone conversation. The resource coordinator leaves the teacher and Myla to prepare for the first session.

The bell rings and students start to enter the classroom. They are excited to meet the facilitator and start the program they have heard so much about. The classroom teacher introduces Myla and reminds the students about the program. Myla and the teacher co-facilitate the ice breaker. As Myla begins teaching the lesson, the classroom teacher stays in the room to assist with discipline issues if necessary. Myla wraps up the lesson and distributes an activity that the students can do at home with their family that reinforce the lesson. The teacher describes how they will use the skills taught in the lesson in the classroom, as well as what to expect at the next session. The bell rings, and the students file out of the classroom, excited to tell their parents about the session.

Ideal State Task Analysis

The primary role of the facilitator is to deliver a program that meets the identified needs of students with learning disabilities at Jewish day schools. A job task analysis allows us to break down this primary role into the main task required to fulfill this role, as well as the supporting tasks and entry tasks. Describing the ideal state in such a way makes it easier to identify gaps between the current and ideal performance. A complete job task analysis is available in

Appendix B. Table 3 describes the ideal state and the current state of the main tasks and supporting tasks.

Table 3
Ideal and Current State Task Analysis

Main Task (Ideal State): Design a Curriculum	
Supporting Tasks (Ideal State)	Current State
Analyze the learners' needs.	Not all facilitators were familiar with the specific learner needs prior to the start of the program and could not design a curriculum to address those needs.
Manage stakeholder expectations.	Facilitators did not always communicate with stakeholders such as parents or teachers.
Develop learning objectives that align to the program objectives.	It is unclear whether program objectives and learning objectives for each session are aligned.
Determine the method of instruction for each learning objectives.	Facilitators used instructional methods that were familiar to them.
Design assessment tools.	Facilitators created different formative assessments. Few summative assessments were done.
Communicate the curriculum to stakeholders.	Some facilitators sent home information about the sessions to parents. At some schools, teachers and students were not aware of the program's purpose and objectives.

Main Task (Ideal State): Design the instructional content.	
Supporting Tasks (Ideal State)	Current State
Develop lesson plans.	Lesson plan development was a difficult process for some facilitators, who used their own resources or existing programs to create lesson plans.

Main Task (Ideal State): Facilitate educational sessions for students.	
Supporting Tasks (Ideal State)	Current State
Provide an overview of the purpose of the lesson.	The objectives of the program were not always clear and the links between the lesson and the curriculum may be unclear.
Action the lesson plan.	The facilitators could not control the set-up of the classroom.
Reinforce skills by providing opportunities for practice.	Not all facilitators were able to provide opportunities for practice outside the session (at home or in the classroom).
Monitor student behaviour.	Some facilitators experienced classroom management issues.
Complete the session feedback questionnaire.	Facilitators completed the feedback questionnaire for each session.

Main Task (Ideal State): Schedule the program delivery at the assigned school(s).	
Supporting Tasks (Ideal State)	Current State
Schedule student sessions.	The facilitators had established schedules but found that some dates conflicted with events on classroom or school calendars.
Schedule additional meeting and workshops, as required.	

Assumptions

Several assumptions were made during this project. The first assumption was that the school at which I was able to conduct interviews was representative of the other schools involved in the Vanguard-Ometz program and thusly could be used to design interventions that could impact the entire program. We can, within reason, presume this to be true because the other facilitators echoed similar challenges, concerns, and opportunities for improvement in the focus group and in their feedback from each session. Additionally, the program coordinator involved in the selection of the school indicated that she felt this school was representative.

I have also assumed that the participants were honest with their responses. This is a critical assumption, since the interviews were an important method of data collection in this thesis equivalent. I triangulated the findings from our interviews with the facilitator feedback forms obtained by Ometz and found that the facilitator I interviewed shared similar concerns with the other facilitators, as expressed in their feedback forms.

Furthermore, my role as an educator for a decade framed my perspective for this thesis equivalent. I have designed and implemented social skills programs in the past. Additionally, in my role as a teacher, I have worked with Ometz. Due to my existing biases as an educator, it was critical to adhere to rigorous analysis procedures. Therefore, when analysing the data or when preparing for interviews I used memoing and journaling to reflect on potential biases. This helped me set aside some of my existing beliefs about the development of social skills.

Finally, as a non-practicing Jew, I had existing assumptions and beliefs regarding the Jewish faith. The literature review helped to correct some of these assumptions. Additionally, journaling helped me to reflect on this potential area for bias.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data collected during the first phase began with the coding process. I performed line-by- line open coding of paper copies of the transcripts of the interviews. I scanned the paper copies of the transcripts and saved them to my personal files. I was open to emerging codes and used in vivo coding whenever practical. After performing a line-by-line analysis, I established a list of all the codes established during the open coding process. I reviewed this list and determined if codes were repeated. If codes were repeated, I determined what code to use, selecting an in-vivo code whenever possible. I examined what codes could be assembled together and collapsed into categories. To group the codes, I used predetermined categories derived from Gilbert's (1978) Behavior Engineering Model. These six categories included: data, instruments, incentives, knowledge, capacity, and motives. The final step was to group the categories into themes. Gilbert already divides the six categories of his model into two themes, the aspects controlled by the individual and the environmental conditions. When I obtained new data, I performed the same steps, adding to my code book when necessary (Appendix C).

When I had obtained all the data, I re-examined it and re-coded with the established codes. After which, I reviewed the data to determine if the categories and themes fit with this second round of coding. This was especially vital, considering that I used categories and themes derived from an existing model. This step ensured that I was not attempting to fit data into the wrong categories or themes. I used memoing on the few occasions where the data did not fit neatly into the established categories.

To ensure trustworthiness of the data analysis, I triangulated the findings with the information I obtained during the literature review. I summarized the information contained in each study identified in my literature review. Once I had identified the performance gaps and

causes, I reviewed the literature to see if my findings aligned with the findings in the studies. Finally, I used memoing and reflexive thinking to enhance the trustworthiness of my finding.

To improve the performance of the program, I reviewed the data to determine what gaps existed in the current program and what interventions were needed to design an effective social service program within a Jewish day school.

Performance Gaps

I reviewed each of the main tasks, supporting tasks, and entry tasks in the ideal state of the facilitator role and examined the data to determine what the current state of performance was. Although the facilitators were all experienced professionals, they did describe several challenges that could significantly impact their performance. The gaps are summarized in Table 4 and explained below.

Table 4

Main Tasks and Performance Gaps

Main Task	Performance Gap
Design a curriculum.	Facilitators designed a curriculum based on their previous experience and the resources available to them, instead of basing it on the specific program goals and needs of the students.
Design instructional content.	The facilitators stated that designing content and finding resources was a significant challenge.
Facilitate educational sessions for students.	The facilitators could not always conduct the sessions in the way they had designed and experienced issues with classroom management.
Schedule the program delivery at the assigned school(s).	Some session dates conflicted with events on classroom or school calendars

Design a curriculum. There is little doubt that the goal of everyone involved in the Vanguard-Ometz program was to help students with learning disabilities and their peers. However, some facilitators entered the classroom on the first day of the program with little or no knowledge of the specific needs of the students with whom they would be working. Certainly, all the facilitators were highly experienced and able to support the students. However, it is challenging to design a program curriculum to meet the needs of the learners if you are unsure of what challenges the students may be experiencing, and what the group dynamics are.

Additionally, I reviewed all the request for services from the schools. All the schools involved in the program had different requests. Therefore, each facilitator had to design a program that was adapted to the needs of the school. The ability of the facilitators to adapt to changing requirements is certainly a strength. However, if the facilitators had a clear idea of the program requirements and scope, there would be less of a need to adapt to changing situations. Additionally, there was no defined process or specific support provided to schools when identifying the needs of the students. Therefore, the program requests may not always be based on an accurate assessment of the students' learning needs, which meant that the facilitators might

design a curriculum, only to find after a short time working with the student that the curriculum did not meet their needs. In many cases, the facilitators did not have the opportunity to communicate with vital stakeholders such as parents and teachers when designing the curriculum, which can result in a loss of valuable insight from the people closest to the students. Finally, the school administrators did not always clearly define their requirements or objectives, which could lead to a curriculum that was not designed to meet the students' needs or the expectations of the school administration.

Design instructional content. Many facilitators expressed that designing instructional content was a challenge. The facilitators pulled from personal resources and from their experience to create instructional content. As such, there was likely a duplication of efforts, as facilitators could not easily share resources and lessons. Also, without specifically identified objectives, it is difficult for facilitators to determine if the instructional content met the needs of students.

Facilitate educational sessions for students. In their feedback forms, many facilitators expressed a requirement to deviate from their lesson plan to better meet the needs of the students. While this adaptability was vital to the program's success, it also shows that the objectives of the program were not always clear, which led to lessons that did not align with the needs of the students. Ideally, the program objectives would derive from identified needs for the students, and the learning objectives would support the program objectives.

Many of the facilitators had experience with drama or art therapy and wanted to incorporate activities or lessons that leveraged that experience. However, the classroom setup was often out of their control or not easily changed, so some activities could not be facilitated.

Also, some facilitators experienced issues with student behaviour and classroom management issues. In some cases, the facilitator was able to rely on the classroom teacher to address these issues, but in other cases, the classroom teacher was not present.

Additionally, while a few facilitators gave the students tasks to work on or specific skills to work on at home, this was not an inherent part of the program.

Schedule the program delivery at the assigned school(s). Some of the facilitators described scenarios where they arrived in a classroom only to find that the students were scheduled to attend another event or were somewhere else in the building. Although a schedule was established, some session dates conflicted with events on classroom or school calendars. Therefore, make-up sessions had to be scheduled and valuable time was lost determining what where the students should be and what they should be doing.

Cause Analysis

I used the Behavior Engineering Model to determine the causes of the performance gaps (Gilbert, 1978). The cause analysis is described below and are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

Cause Analysis

Information	Resources	Incentives
– Facilitators roles not always clearly defined – No formal feedback system – Stakeholders roles were not clearly described – Objectives and scope were not clear – Facilitators did not have the opportunity to communicate with vital stakeholders such as parents and teachers when designing the curriculum	– No well-organized library of resources – Lack of time – Limited budget – Space and layout not conducive to instruction – Group size could be problematic – No tools for teachers and parents to reinforce learning	– No formal recognition for facilitators

Knowledge	Capacity	Motives
– Facilitators were very knowledgeable – Not all facilitators attended the training – Training did not take advantage of diverse skill set (knowledge sharing) – Some facilitators experienced difficult with classroom management – Stakeholders were not always aware of the objectives of the program or knowledgeable about learning disabilities	– Facilitators possessed the necessary skills to perform (no issues with capacity)	– Highly motivated at first – Facilitators experienced decrease in motivation

Information. Many participants discussed a lack of clarity regarding expectations. One facilitator commented that in an ideal program, « les roles de chancun seraient définis clairement» (translation: everyone's roles would be clearly defined). Without clear role descriptions, it is difficult to know how you are expected to perform.

Contributing to the lack of clarity was a lack of feedback. Although the Ometz coordinator received feedback from the facilitators and from some of the school administrators, there was no formal feedback system for the facilitators to obtain feedback from students or from the school administrators. This lack of feedback was further exacerbated by the sometimes very limited communication between the facilitators and important stakeholders such as teachers, parents and school administrators.

Additionally, while there were many stakeholders involved in the program collaboration between stakeholders was a significant challenge when managing the program. Facilitators spoke about the importance of collaboration between school staff and program staff and described the need for trust among team members. The school administration at the primary site also describe a need for collaboration, especially when designing the program. The administrators said that input

from the school is necessary as they "know the kids". In the feedback forms, many facilitators provided insight that it took time to get to know the students and to identify their needs. They were not familiar with the students prior to the start of the program. Furthermore, many facilitators reported that the program objectives were vaguely described or unrealistic. The vice-principal at the primary site suggested that it would be beneficial to collaborate on the program design, scope, and objectives. The vice-principal and resource center coordinator also expressed their desire for the program to be student-driven, with examples that were relevant to the students.

Resources. A primary concern for all facilitators and for the coordinator was a lack of resources. These resources include classroom activities, professional development activities, and access to established programs. A request was made during the focus group for the development of a resource catalog. This was echoed in subsequent interviews. While the facilitators often shared resources and borrowed resources from Ometz as well as other sources, the facilitators wanted a catalog that would help them find relevant resources quickly. One facilitator expressed the desire for these resources to be "clef en main", or ready to use. Several facilitators spoke about the importance of providing additional tools and resources for the classroom teachers, in addition to an organized resource bank for their own use as facilitators. These tools and resources would allow teachers to reinforce what the students learned in their sessions with the Ometz facilitators. Similarly, facilitators also suggested take-home activities for students and parents. The administrators at the primary site suggested that handouts and activities be sent home to encourage parent modelling.

Both facilitators, coordinator and school administrators expressed a desire for the program to run for a longer period or time, or for the program to be ongoing throughout the year.

Many facilitators reported feeling that the timeline was too tight, and they were expected to deliver significant content in a short period of time. The facilitator at the primary site expressed that she felt the school administrators was "spreading themselves too thin" by attempting to cover too many objectives in a short period of time. The tight timelines are also likely due to budgetary constraints; there was a limited to what could be offered at each school based on the funding available.

Space seems to be a concern in many of the schools. The classroom set-up was not always conducive to a collaborative atmosphere that was required for the program. Facilitators had to set-up the classroom for their use, which took time out of each session. Some facilitators used pull-out groups (smaller groups pulled from the general class) and had difficulty finding space to conduct these sessions.

Often the demographics of the sessions were determined by the school administration. Some schools selected a "whole-class" approach, as used by the primary site, while other schools decided to have a "pull-out" group, made up of the special needs students (those already involved with Vanguard). At the primary site, the whole-class approach was used. The facilitator stated that this approach was taken because "there are indirect benefits for the Vanguard students when the whole class is involved in the program". However, the facilitator also wondered if the Vanguard students had been "lost in the mix". During the focus group, several facilitators discussed the benefit of having both whole-classroom, as well as pull-out group interventions.

Incentives. There was no formal recognition for their work, although the facilitators reported feeling appreciated and supported by the program coordinator.

Knowledge. A significant contributor to the success of the program from the beginning was the skills and knowledge possessed by the facilitators. According to the coordinator and as reported by the facilitators themselves, they all had a significant amount of experience, particularly in creative arts therapy. The facilitator at the primary site had approximately five years of experience working with children. The coordinator stated that the facilitators were specifically selected for their background and experience. She also identified that it was critical for facilitators to have an awareness of the development stages of children. The only area where some facilitators may have lacked expertise was in classroom management. A few of the facilitators mentioned experiencing challenging behaviour in the classroom or that a classroom or resource teacher had to intervene to manage behaviour.

Although facilitators had a significant amount of experience, there was a training session held at Ometz for the facilitators to introduce them to the program. However, not all facilitators were able to attend. Additionally, the coordinator expressed regret that she was not able to provide a knowledge-sharing component at this training session.

Although the facilitators possessed key knowledge and skill, some gaps in performance may be caused by a lack of knowledge for other stakeholder groups. For example, when teachers, students or parents were unaware of the program, it negatively impacted the performance of the facilitators and stunted communication between the different parties. Many of the participants identified the involvement of the teachers, parents, and school administration as a key factor for success. The coordinator and facilitators suggested that a workshop for teachers and for parents is important to get them "in the loop and on board". If teachers and parents had increased awareness and knowledge of the content of the program, they could reinforce skills taught by the facilitators.

Capacity. Overall, the coordinator stated that she was "blown away" by skill and talent of facilitators. The coordinator seemed to believe that the facilitators were fully capable of performing the required job tasks. However, I did not have the opportunity to observe the facilitators' performance first hand. I have assumed that the coordinator was a reliable assessor of the facilitators' skills and therefore I have assumed that there were no issues related to capacity.

Motives. The facilitator at the primary site described starting out as highly motivated but that her level of motivation declined throughout the year. She also described her motivation as being impacted by challenges she experienced in communicating with the school.

When considering how performance can be improved, it is helpful to align each performance gap to particular items in the cause analysis. This alignment is depicted in Table 6. When it comes to designing a curriculum, the facilitators were forced to design based on previous experience rather than program goals and specific student needs because the objectives and program scope were not always clear. Additionally, facilitators were not able to communicate with vital stakeholders when designing the program. Based on my data collection, the facilitators designed engaging instructional content, but felt it was challenging to do so because of a lack of available resources. They did not have a ready-made program that they could use, nor tools they could provide to parents and teachers. Facilitating the sessions also posed challenges. The facilitators could not always conduct the sessions in the way they wanted to because the space and layout of the classroom or space provided were not always conducive to instruction. Additionally, some facilitators experienced difficulty with classroom management. The students often seemed taken off-guard when the sessions started, as they were not always aware of the program. Lastly, some sessions scheduled conflicted with other events in the school

or classroom calendar. This is likely due to a lack of communication between some facilitators

and the school staff and administrators.

Table 6		
Contributing Causes of Performance Gaps		
Main Task	Performance Gap	Contributing Causes
Design a curriculum.	Facilitators designed a curriculum based on their previous experience and the resources available to them, instead of basing it on the specific program goals and needs of the students.	Objectives were not clear The program scope was not always clear Facilitators did not have the opportunity to communicate with vital stakeholders such as parents and teachers when designing the curriculum
Design instructional content.	The facilitators stated that designing content and finding resources was a significant challenge.	No well-organized library of resources No tools for teachers and parents to reinforce learning
Facilitate educational sessions for students.	The facilitators could not always conduct the sessions in the way they had designed and experienced issues with classroom management.	Objectives were not clear Space and layout not conducive to instruction Some facilitators experienced difficulty with classroom management Stakeholders were not always aware of the objectives of the program or knowledgeable about learning disabilities
Schedule the program delivery at the assigned school(s).	Some session dates conflicted with events on classroom or school calendars	There was a lack of communication between some facilitators and the school staff and administrators

Program Evaluation

When I began my collaboration with Ometz, there were no set program objectives, which consequently meant that there was no means to evaluate the program's success. However, the 2016-2017 program coordinator was eager to establish these program objectives and saw significant value in measuring the success of the program. Together, the coordinator and I collaborated to identify the needs at different levels and to establish objectives so that we could evaluate the program's success.

The program evaluation that follows in this chapter is derived from both the data and the studies included in the literature review. The needs were determined during the analysis, as I identified the current state and the ideal state. The ideal state, which was derived from the data, formed the basis for the creation of specific and measurable objectives for the facilitators. The performance and learning objectives for the students were developed using guidance from similar programs described in the studies included in the literature review. Performance and learning objectives for the parents and teachers were shaped by the literature review as well as the data analysis.

To determine the needs, establish objectives and determine the required measurements, I used the model proposed by Phillips and Phillips (2012) in *10 Steps to Successful Business Alignment*. Figure 4 depicts the model and is adapted from "Program Alignment V-Model" (Phillips and Phillips, 2012).   In this model, Phillips and Phillips proposed aligning impact, performance, learning, preference and input objectives with evaluation measures. Phillips and Phillips proposed five levels of evaluation: reaction, learning and/or confidence, application, impact and return on investment. The V-Model is used to align needs with objectives and a tool to develop an evaluation plan. The user is asked to start with the payoff need and work their way

down to the preference need. Then, the user will develop objectives for each level and determine the appropriate measurement for these objectives. I selected this model because it involves the solicitation of input from the stakeholders to establish the objectives as well as the evaluation plan.
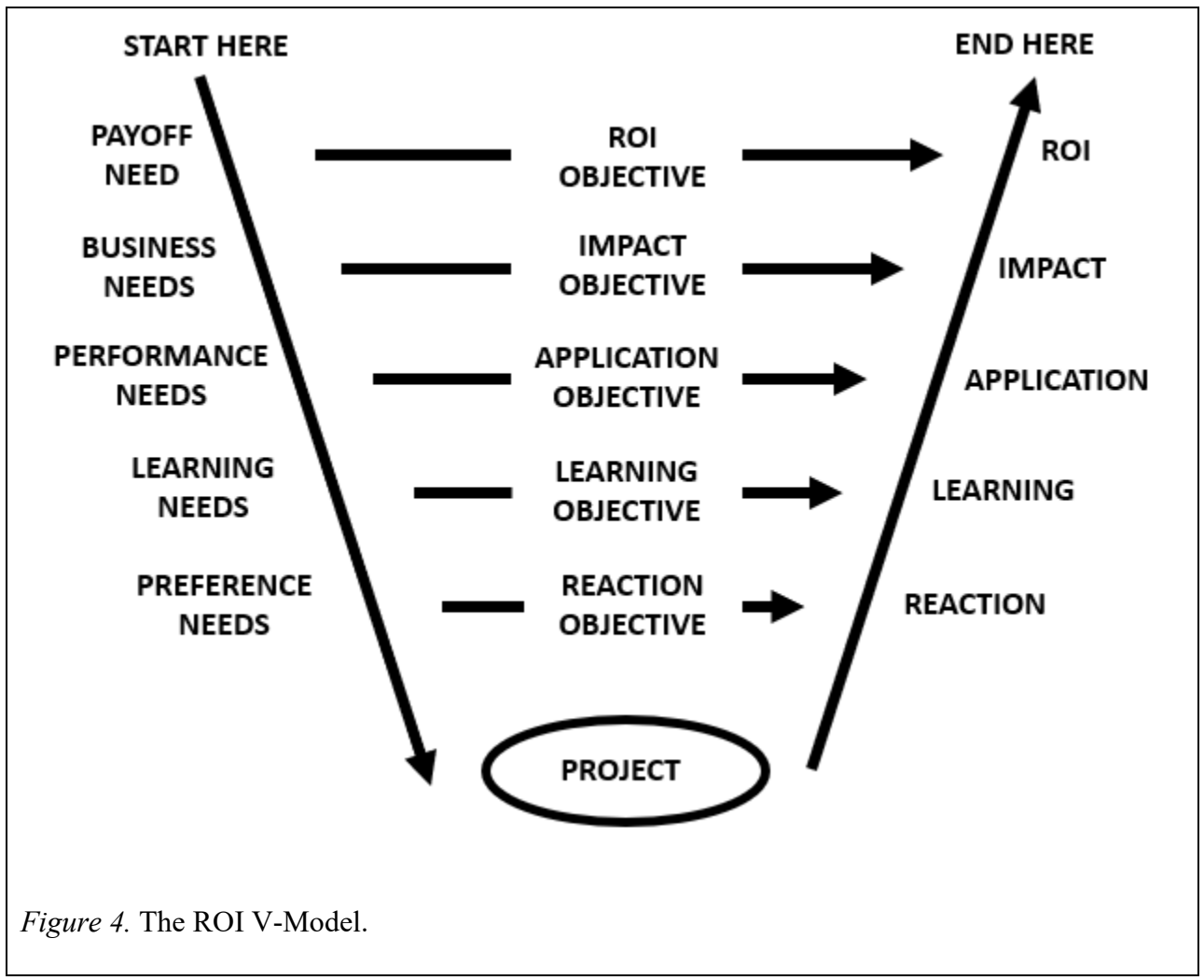
Figure 4. The ROI V-Model.

The program coordinator and I decided that a return on investment objective was outside the scope of this project, but I determined needs at preference, learning, performance and business level. Because the program may be different, depending on the theme selected by the school administration, for this thesis equivalent, I elected to focus on one theme, coping with stress and anxiety. I selected this theme because I have familiarity with the topic of stress and

anxiety and have completed the "Coping Cat" program with my child, which addressed anxiety and provided coping skills. I also selected this theme because research suggests that children with learning disabilities are predisposed to anxiety, which can be magnified in a school setting (Newcomer and Barenbaum, 1995; D'souza and Sudhamayi, 2016; Thaler, Kazemi and Wood, 2010). Therefore, this theme is an important topic to address to better serve the target population of this program; students with learning disabilities.

Needs

According to the Business Alignment Model proposed by Phillips and Phillips (2012), before you can identify objectives at each level, you have to identify the need at each level, starting with the highest level that will be evaluated.

Business need. As previously stated, Ometz is a charitable community organization that relies on funding from various public and private sources. Through my discussions with the coordinator, Lena, I understood that the business impact is just as critical for a charitable organization as it would be for any business, perhaps even more vital because budgets are often highly constrained due to limited funding. In that kind of atmosphere, it is vital to ensure that programs are perceived as worthy of funding. I also learned in my interview with Lena that maintaining funding for the program was dependent on its success. For this program, the Vanguard Foundation was a significant source of funding. To ensure the program continued to receive funding, the program had to be perceived as valuable to school administrators and the Vanguard Foundation.

Performance needs. To ensure that the Vanguard-Ometz program is perceived as valuable, facilitators need to deliver a program that meets the identified needs of students with learning disabilities at Jewish day schools.

Although the facilitators are the target performers for this project, many of the studies included in the literature review indicated that the support of parents and teachers is important to a program's success and that parents and teachers can reinforce what the students learn in the program. Additionally, if the program does not address the needs of students, then the program will not be perceived as valuable, thereby not addressing the business need. Consequently, the performance of the parents, teachers and students should also be support and measured, which meant that I had to identify performance needs for these groups as well. For the students, they need to be able to cope with anxiety and stressful situation. Teacher and parents need to reinforce coping strategies in the classroom and at home, respectively.

Learning needs. The needs analysis showed that facilitators sometimes struggled to meet the needs of the students. Therefore, at the learning level, facilitators need to learn how to develop a curriculum that meets the needs of students with learning disabilities as well as their peers, and that aligns with the program objectives. Additionally, students with learning disabilities need stress management skills, anxiety management skills, problem-solving skills, and mindfulness skills. These needs were identified by reviewing several programs designed to help children cope with anxiety. As shown in the studies by Quinn and Hannasch (1995) and Mandelberg et al. (2014), parents and educators need to be able to help a child who has anxiety and need to know how to reinforce proper coping techniques.

Preference needs. Students, teachers, parents and school administrators must perceive the program as valuable, useful, practical, appropriate and timely. Students should feel motivated to take part in the program. Vanguard facilitators must feel motivated to continue in the program.

Objectives

Following the identification of the needs, I created objectives that would align with the needs at each level.

Impact. Generally, an impact level objective describes how the performance improvement campaign contributed to an organization's ability to generate revenue or contain expenses. In this case, rather than looking at revenue since Ometz is a non-profit organization, I looked at sustaining continued funding for the program. As such, I created two objectives, the first being: after the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school year, Vanguard will commit to providing funding for the same dollar value or higher for the 2018-2019 school year. The second objective is as follows: the eight schools that were part of the program during the initial school years will recommit to a contract with Ometz for the same dollar value or higher for another school year.

Application. The application level measures if there was a change in job performance as a result of the training or intervention. The application, or performance, objectives for facilitators were derived from the ideal state task analysis, which was based on data collected from the facilitators, the program coordinator, and the school administrators. Accordingly, the objectives for the facilitators were as follows.

After receiving training, facilitators will:

- design a program curriculum that meets the needs of the students,
- design instructional content that aligns with the program's learning objectives,

- design a kick-off meeting for the program to facilitate communication and collaboration with school staff and administration,

- design a parent workshop to facilitate communication with parents and other family members or guardians,

- facilitate educational sessions for students that promote inclusion and support the needs of the students,

- facilitate a kick-off meeting to promote understanding of the program and gain support for the program,

- facilitate a parent workshop to promote understanding of the program and gain support for the program, and

- schedule the program delivery at the assigned school(s) in a manner that maximizes efficiency and reduces upheaval for students who have difficult with change.

After identifying needs for additional performers, I had to create objectives that would align with these needs. For the students, three months after the program they will experience a significant decrease in their anxiety, as measured by an established anxiety measurement instrument. Additionally, after three months, students will report using their coping strategies in at least 50% of situations that induce anxiety. Also, after three months, at least 70% of teachers and at least 70% of parents report that they have continued to reinforce positive coping strategies in the classroom and at home, respectively.

Learning. The learning level measure if the participants were able to acquire the intended skills, knowledge and attitude (Kirkpatrick, 2016). To determine the learning objectives, I looked at the performance gap between the current and ideal state and assessed what

the performers would need to learn to bridge those gaps. As previously stated, these performance gaps were identified using data derived from interviews and documentation. As in years past, if the program were to continue the facilitators would take part in a training session prior to the start of the program. At the end of their training sessions, facilitators can:

- choose an appropriate lesson plan, given search criteria;

- navigate to areas of a curriculum site, given a "Treasure Hunt" list;

- select an appropriate classroom management technique, given a scenario;

- state the program objectives at their assigned school;

- describe the importance of a kick-off meeting and parent workshops;

- design an activity that promote inclusion; and

- identify appropriate periods in the calendar to schedule sessions at their assigned school.

Each student session will also have learning objectives. These objectives will vary according to the program that the administration of each school selects. However, I have provided sample objectives for students who students who are learning about anxiety and coping skills. During the program, students can:

- describe what anxiety feels like and looks like;

- describe at least three coping techniques for anxiety;

- select an appropriate coping technique, given a scenario;

- identify situations that may trigger anxiety; and

- prepare a plan for coping with anxiety-triggering situations.

Although the goal of the parent workshop may also vary according to the program at each school, in general, the parent workshops should provide parents with an understanding of what

the program is about and how they can reinforce what their child is learning during the sessions. For example, in the case of the coping with anxiety program, the learning objectives for the parent workshop could be the following:

- at the end of the parent workshop, parents can identify at least four different behaviours that may indicate anxiety in children; and
- at the end of the parent workshop, parents can describe at least three techniques to reinforce coping strategies at home.

Similar to the parent workshops, the kick-off meetings will also have different learning objectives, depending on the selected program. In the case of the anxiety program, the learning objectives would be:

- at the end of the kick-off meeting, teachers can identify at least four different behaviours that may indicate anxiety in students; and
- at the end of the kick-off meeting, teachers can describe at least three techniques they can use to reinforce coping strategies in the classroom.

Reaction. The reaction level typically measures the degree to which participants or users were satisfied with the training product, program or course. However, numerous studies and meta analyses have concluded that satisfaction has little to no correlation to learning. Therefore, the reaction level objectives should not focus on whether or not the participants liked the training but should instead focus on key indicators of training effectiveness. According to Thalheimer (2016) there are four pillars of successful training: understanding, remembering, motivation and post-training support. In the reaction measurements, we must strive to measure the participants' understanding of the concepts taught, ability to remember the concepts, their motivation to apply

and the degree to which they will require support after the training. Additionally, rather than asking Likert-style questions, Thalheimer (2016) advocates for questions that have statement answers. As Thalheimer cites in his book, research indicates that the responses in Likert-style questions such as "Satisfied" or "Strongly Satisfied" can be interpreted differently by the various respondents, whereas a well-worded statement response is far less ambiguous. To create reaction objectives for this type of questionnaire requires an objective for each question. However, in general for this type of statement-based reaction questionnaire, I categorized the response statements as either the superior response, a satisfactory response, an unsatisfactory response, or an unacceptable response. Overall, on the reaction questionnaires, participants should select the superior or satisfactory response on all questions.

Measurements

I developed or identified measurement tools for each level of the evaluation model in order to determine if the program met the objectives set at each level. A complete package of the evaluation measurement tools I created are found in Appendix E.

Impact. To determine if the program achieves the desired impact objectives, we must look at the program budget and the school contracts for the evaluated year and compare these to the budget and contracts from the two previous years. This allows us to see if the Vanguard Foundation continued to provide the same amount of funding and whether the same number of schools continued to partake in the program.

Application. At the application level, we would largely rely on self-reporting for the target performers, the facilitators. Data for the application level would be gathered through interviews or through questionnaires, depending on the availability of facilitators. A sample of the application questionnaire for facilitators is found in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Application Questionnaire for Facilitators.

Also, at the application level, we would determine if students experienced a reduction in their anxiety as a result of the program. To measure their anxiety levels, we would use a pre-established assessment tool. This assessment would be used prior to the program to establish a baseline level for each student and three months after the program to see if the program

influenced anxiety levels. We would also look at the students' abilities to apply coping strategies in classroom and at home. To measure this, we will gather data through a questionnaire.

To measure application for teachers and parents, we would look at their ability to reinforce positive coping strategies in the classroom and at home. We would use a follow-up card that asks them to reflect on their action plan and answer a few simple questions. An example of this type of follow-up can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Parent Action Plan Follow-up.

Learning. For the facilitators, we will assess their learning through activities during their workshop. The main assessments for facilitators would be a treasure hunt activity (Figure 7) that

would ask the participants to find particular resource in a resource bank. This would assess their

learning of this new tool. The facilitators will also be asked questions based on classroom

management scenarios. Additionally, the facilitators will present an ice breaker activity to the

coordinator and to their peers, who will provide feedback on their facilitation skills.

Figure 7. Facilitator Treasure Hunt Activity.

The facilitators incorporated various formative assessments for the students throughout the program. I would propose that the cap stone activity be to create an action plan for coping with stress and anxiety, as seen in Figure 8. This action plan would incorporate various aspects of their learning.

Figure 8. Student Action Plan.

Parents and teachers will also be asked to create action plans based on what they learn in the parent workshop and program kick off, respectively. In these action plans, they will be asked to identify behaviours that may indicate anxiety and they will be asked to identify techniques

they can use in the classroom or at home to reinforce the students' coping abilities. The Parent

Action Plan can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Parent Action Plan.

Reaction. Students will be asked for their reaction to the program in a questionnaire

delivered at the end of the program, as seen in Figure 10. Teachers and administrators will be

asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of the kick-off meeting. Facilitators will be given a

questionnaire at the end of their training and parents will be give a questionnaire at the end of the

workshop.

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Student Reaction Survey

1. What did you think of the program?

A. I did not like the program
B. The program was okay.
C. I liked the program.
D. I loved the program.

2. How do you feel about the facilitator from Ometz? Check the box of all the sentences that you agree with.

☐ The facilitator is not easy to understand

☐ The facilitator cannot control the class.

☐ The facilitator is not organized.

☐ The facilitator is okay.

☐ The facilitator is organized.

☐ The facilitator is very good.

☐ The facilitator makes me want to come to class.

☐ The facilitator controlled the class.

3. Pick the answer that best describes what you learned about anxiety.

A. I did not learn anything new.
B. I learned a little bit.
C. I learned a lot of new things.
D. I learned many new things and shared what I learned with other people

4. Do you think that the skills and information you were taught are helpful?

A. The program has not helped me.
B. The program helped me a little.
C. The program helped me a lot.
D. The program changed my life.

5. How well do you understand what you were taught?

A. I am really confused about a lot of what I was taught.
B. I understand a little bit of what I was taught.
C. I understand almost everything I was taught.
D. I understand everything perfectly.

6. Do you have anything else you want to share?

Figure 10. Student Reaction Survey.

Program Design

Designing a performance improvement campaign involves careful planning. Each intervention should address performance gaps and all interventions should work together to improve overall performance. In this chapter, I will describe the proposed performance improvement interventions, provide the rationale for each, and state the format, as well as the information, communication style and user expectations for each. The interventions are summarized in Table 7. Examples of all the interventions are provided in Appendix D.

Table 7

Design Template

No.	Title	Description	Instructional/ Non-Instructional	Target Population	Performance Gap Addressed	Form	Communication Medium
1	Feedback and Recognition System	Provides facilitators the opportunity to improve individual performance and program delivery	Non-instructional	Facilitators	Facilitators designed a curriculum based on their previous experience and the resources available to them, instead of basing it on the specific program goals and needs of the students.	Questionnaires for parents, teachers and students Recognition emails	Communication packet Questionnaire preamble
2	Resource Bank (curriculum maps, lesson plans, parent and teacher toolkits)	Allows facilitators to access lessons and other resources on a website, which will help them design a program curriculum that suits the needs of the students and the objectives of the school.	Non-instructional	Facilitators	The facilitators stated that designing content and finding resources was a significant challenge.	Website	Introduction page on website
3	Training Session	The training session for facilitators will allow them to share skills, knowledge and resource for designing and facilitating programs for students with learning disabilities	Instructional	Facilitators	Facilitators designed a curriculum based on their previous experience and the resources available to them, instead of basing it on the specific program goals and needs of the students. The facilitators stated that designing content and finding resources was a significant challenge. The facilitators could not always conduct the sessions in the way they had designed and experienced issues with classroom management.	Classroom instruction and activities	Telephone and email reminders from coordinator
4	Parent Workshops	The workshops will inform the parents about the program and describe their involvement	Instructional	Parents	Facilitators designed a curriculum based on their previous experience and the resources available to them, instead of basing it on the specific program goals and needs of the students.	Two after school meetings of approximately 45 minutes to an hour in duration	Email or note home prior to workshop
5	Kick-off Meetings	School administration, teachers and the facilitator will establish goals and define roles at a kick-off meeting.	Combination	Facilitators Teachers Administrators	Facilitators designed a curriculum based on their previous experience and the resources available to them, instead of basing it on the specific program goals and needs of the students.	Face-to-face meeting	Email sent prior to the meeting

Intervention 1: Feedback Forms

Description. Feedback from key stakeholders will provide facilitators with information that allows them to improve individual performance and program delivery.

Separate feedback forms will be given to parents, teachers and students. Along with the forms, the participants will receive a preamble that briefly explains why the individual is being asked to complete the form and how the information will be used. There will also be an explanation of the expectations of anonymity. All forms for students must be designed for an age appropriate level. Administering the feedback forms for students will be handled by the school.

For parents, the feedback form will focus on the delivery of the parent workshop. The form will also ask parents about their level of confidence to participate in the program, and it will ask about their confidence in applying what they learned in the session.

For teachers and administrators, they will be asked to complete a feedback form at the end of the kick-off meeting. This form will ask them about their level of motivation to participate in the program and their satisfaction with the kick-off meeting.

Students will be asked to complete the feedback form at two times during the program; at the end of the program and three months after the program's completion. Students will be asked about their motivation to participate in the program, their satisfaction with the program delivery and if they have applied what they learned in the program.

Rationale. Feedback forms will provide the facilitators with relevant data about their performance and allow for the continuous improvement of the program. This will help ensure that they are able to design a curriculum based on the specific program goals and needs of the students. Also, many facilitators expressed a desire to include parents and teachers in the

program, and a feedback system is a way to include the voices of these two stakeholder groups. The vice-principal also expressed the importance of developing a student-centred program. Feedback from the students would be an important step in developing this type of program.

Format. The student feedback forms would use an age-appropriate design. For example, younger students could be read the questions aloud and could rate their agreement on a Likert-style scale using "smiley-face" images rather than numbers or words. The parent and teacher forms would include open-ended, closed, and multiple-choice style questions. Paper forms will be used for ease of distribution.

Information. For all stakeholders, there will be questions about their reaction to the different elements of the program, questions about the content of the program, and questions dealing with the intent to apply skills or the application of the skills learned in the program.

Communication style. It is important that Ometz clearly communicate the purpose of the feedback forms to all stakeholders. This can be done through an information packet included with the form and during the sessions, parent workshops, and kick-off meetings. A sample of the parent information packet can be seen in Figure 11. Ometz should also seek permission from parents before distributing a form to students. The communication style should use simple and clear language, active voice and positive language, concise sentences, and unambiguous phrasing.

Figure 11. Parent Information Package.

Users' expectations. The respondents of the feedback forms can expect to have a means to share their opinions and voice concerns. The facilitators and Ometz can expect to use the responses from the forms to improve their performance and the program.

Intervention 2: Resource Bank

Description. The resource bank will allow facilitators to access lessons and other resources on a website, which will help them design a program curriculum that suits the needs of the students and the objectives of the school.

The website can be hosted on a learning management system or via a web host. The website should require users to log in. Once logged in, users will be brought to their dashboard. From their dashboard, they can navigate throughout the site. Visible to users at all times will be various tools and widgets. There will be a Help tool, a search tool and a private message tool. Widgets will include a calendar and an announcement section. Figure 12 represents a prototype of the dashboard.
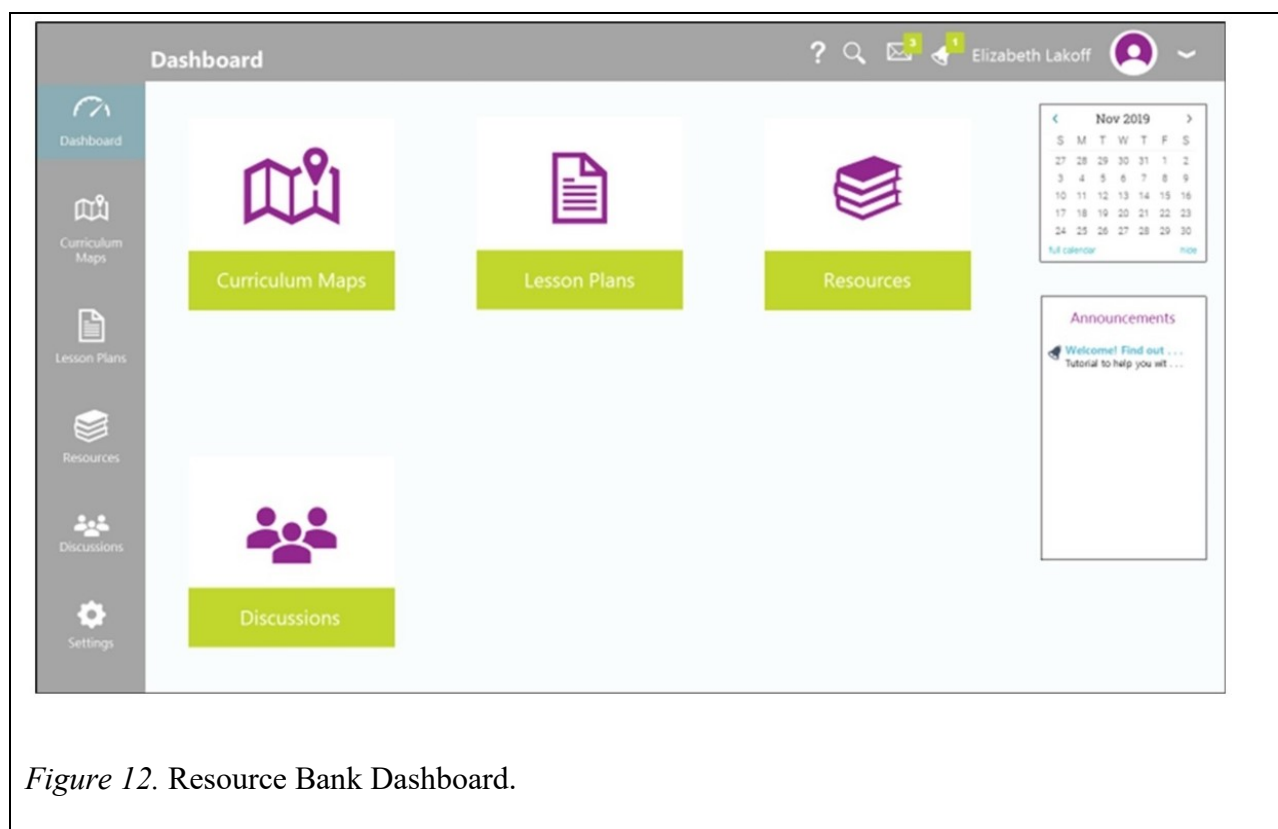

Figure 12. Resource Bank Dashboard.

The site will include four main pages; Curriculum Maps, Lesson Plans, Resources, and Discussions.

On the Curriculum Maps page, users will be able to explore three different curriculum paths: Coping with Stress and Anxiety, Social Skills Training, and Conflict Resolutions.

Selecting the map will open a visual depiction of the suggested curriculum for that theme. The

visual will include the suggested lesson titles for each elementary grade level (first through sixth

grade). The lesson titles contained in the graphic will be hyperlinks, which, when selected, will

redirect the user to that specific lesson. When viewing the lesson, the user can return to the

Curriculum Map at any time by selecting its title at the bottom of the lesson. The curriculum

map, as seen in Figure 13, will also show a suggested progression for the lessons. The users can

download the map as a portable document format by selecting an icon.
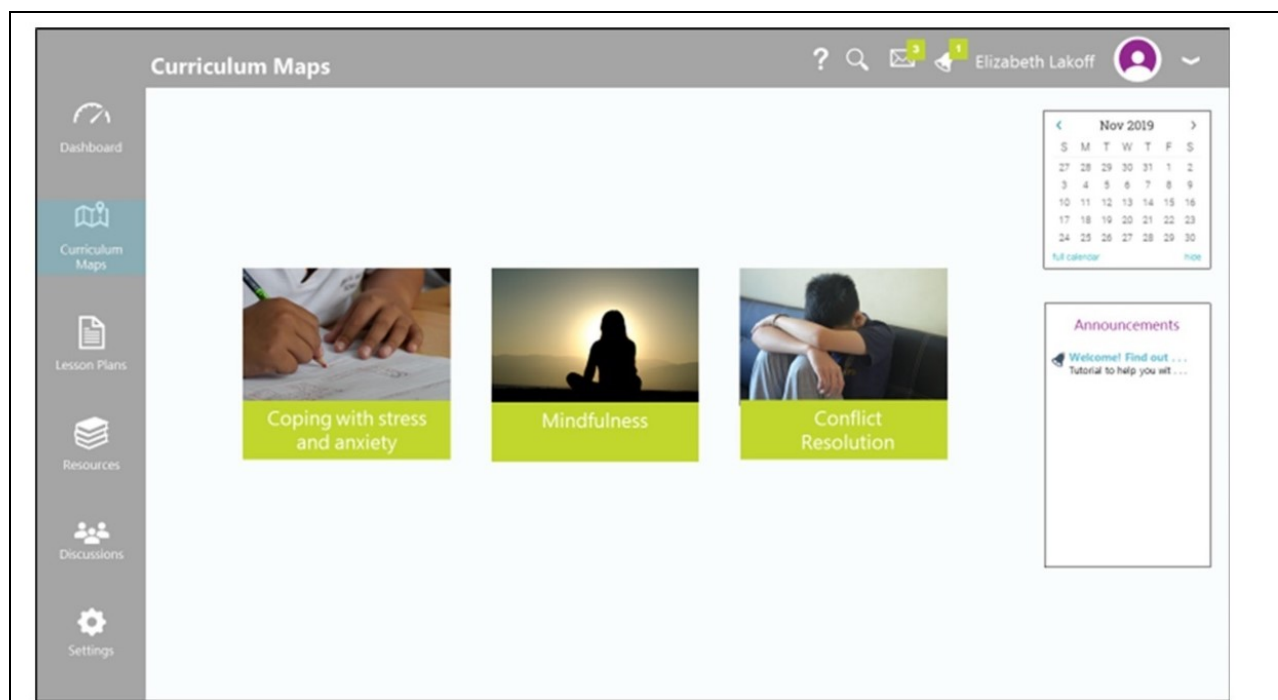
Figure 13. Curriculum Map Page.

The Lesson Plans page will include a database of lessons. The user can search for lessons using keywords, as seen in Figure 14. The search results will appear as a list of lesson titles with brief descriptions. The user can also filter the results by topic, grade level, language, group size or duration.
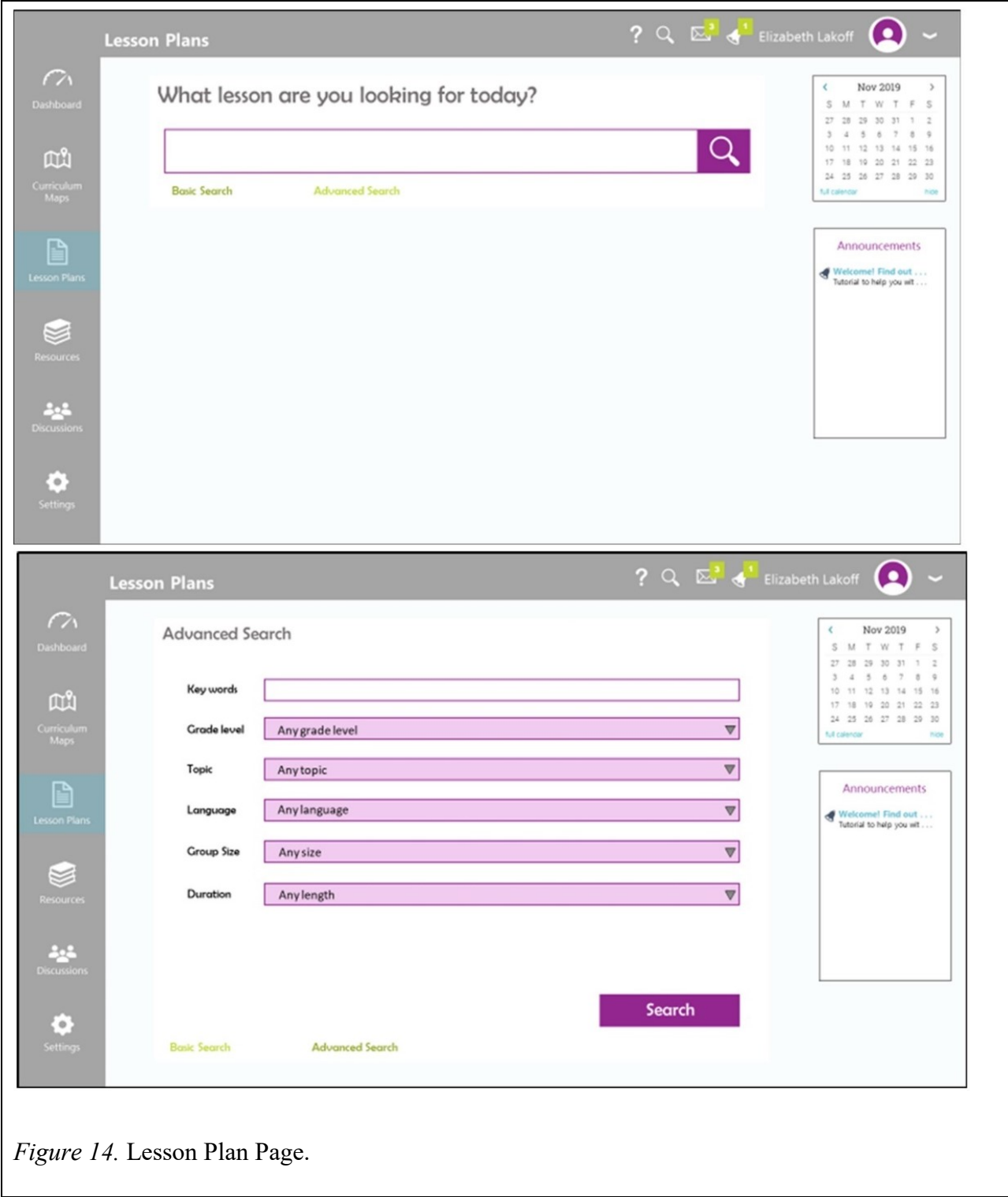
Figure 14. Lesson Plan Page.

Once the user selects a lesson, they will be directed to it. The lessons will appear as HTML text. As shown in Figure 15, the lessons will include the following content: title, topic, duration, group size, objective, materials, description, modifications (including for group sizes), applicable curriculums, Teacher Tool, and Parent Tool. The curriculum will be hyperlinked to the maps, so that users can navigate easily between the two. The lesson plans can be downloaded as a PDF as well.

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

What is Anxiety?

Topic: Anxiety

Lesson length: 50 minutes

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to define anxiety using their own words.

Materials

- Computer and digital projector (if not available, materials can be printed)
- Emotion image gallery
- What Worries Me handout

Description

Warm-up
For your warm-up activity, show students the emotion image gallery. The gallery includes a range of different emotion. In the first round, show the images to the students once, and select a student for each image to name the emotion. Write down the emotion on the board. In the second round, show students the same images, but tell them that they cannot use the same words to describe the emotion. If there is time, do a third round. At the end of the warm-up, point out to the students that there are many ways of describing emotions and that today we will describe "anxiety".

Individual Work
Distribute the "What Worries Me" handout. Tell students that the handout asks them to describe some of the situations that worry them. Give students 10 minutes to complete the handout.

Group Discussion
Start by describing a situation that worries you. Use an example that is common and not overly personal or dramatic. Ask students to share some of the situations that worry them. Allow the discussion to continue for 10 or 15 minutes, facilitating as required. Summarize the discussion by stating that worries come in many different forms and there are many different ways of defining worry, or anxiety.

Instruction
Provide the students with an age-appropriate definition for anxiety.

Wrap-up
Describe the next session.

Modification

This lesson should work with smaller groups, but you may require more prompting for group discussions. If students are hesitant to provide their own examples of what worries them, provide instead generic scenarios and ask students to identify the worry for the individual involved.

Anxiety Curriculum Map   Parent Toolkit   Teacher Toolkit

Figure 15. Sample Lesson Plan.

Each lesson plan will also have accompanying toolkits for parents and teachers. The toolkits, as shown in Figure 16, will provide information about the skills taught within the program, as well as activities that can be done at home and in the classroom. The Toolkits will be a collection of resources for parents and teachers that will help them integrate what students are learning into the classroom and home environments. Each lesson plan will have a Teacher Tool and Parent Tool. Each Tool describes the skill or knowledge addressed in the lesson and provides either discussion topics or a brief activity that can reinforce the skills at home or in the classroom.

Figure 16. Sample Parent Tool.
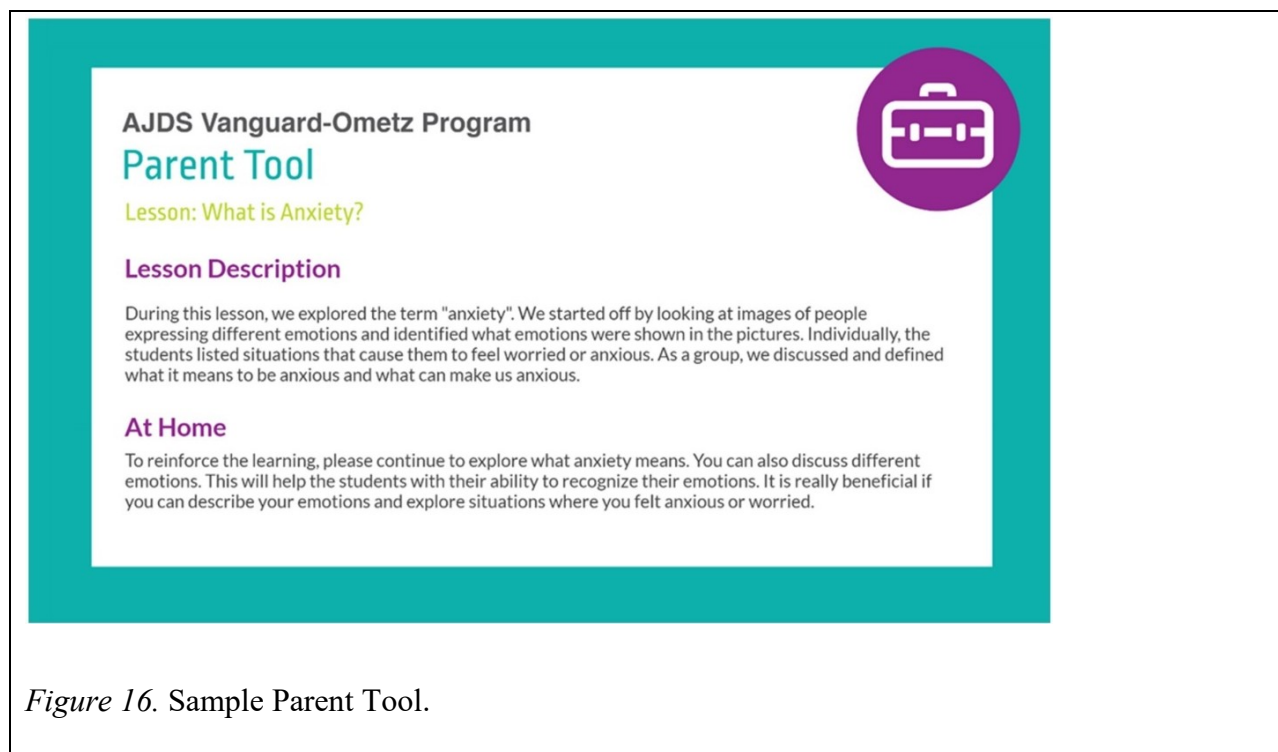
The Resources page will include any additional external resources, not belonging specifically to the Vanguard-Ometz program. These might include links to similar programs or

lesson plan sites. The Resources page, shown in Figure 17, will also contain links to the Ometz

central website as well as Vanguard's site.
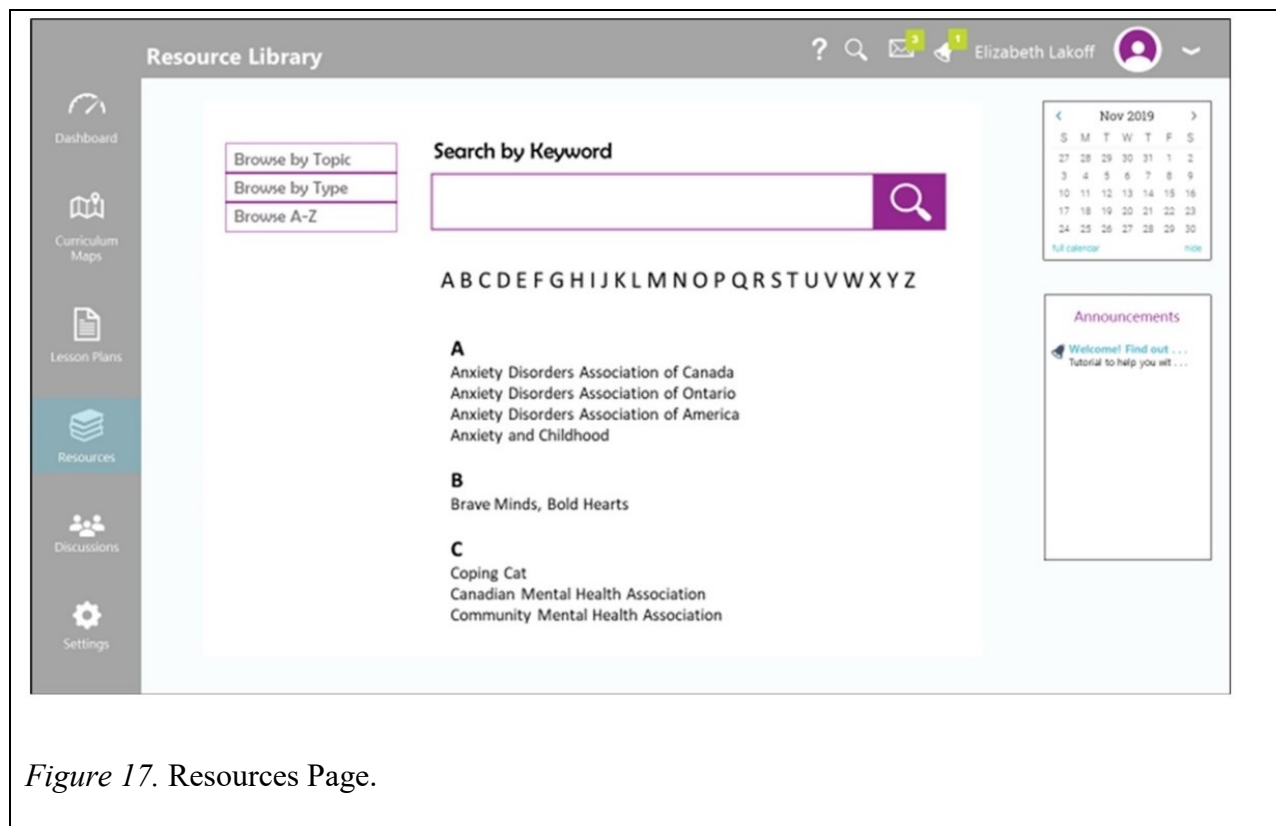
Figure 17. Resources Page.

As seen in Figure 18, the Discussion Board will be a place for the facilitators to share

ideas and voice their concerns. Additionally, the board will be used each week to recognize

outstanding efforts by the Ometz facilitators.
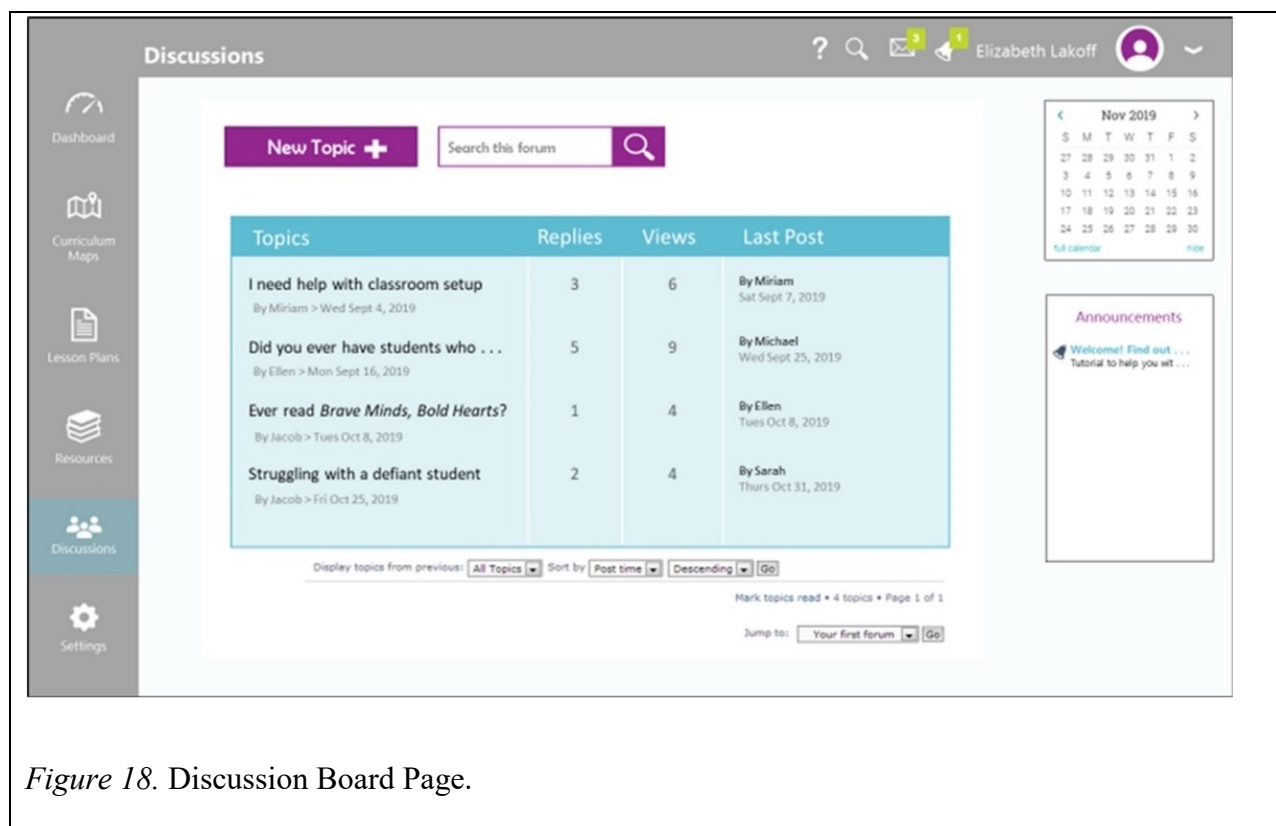
Figure 18. Discussion Board Page.

Rationale. All the facilitators spoke of their desire to have an organized bank of resources. The resources available to them are not centralized, nor are they easy to access. Additionally, there is no singular curriculum that the facilitators can follow. Instead, they relied on their own resources or were left to share resources with others. Consolidating resources in one place will save time and energy. It can also be organized in such a way as to provide guidance regarding the program curriculum, while remaining customizable.

The Resource Bank also meets the needs for individualization and customization. The importance of customization of class size and class dynamics was stressed by the research participants. Furthermore, several of the studies in the literature review described the importance of a program that could be customized to meet individual needs of the students.

Many of the participants interviewed in the data collection period identified a need to involve the parents and teachers. Several facilitators mentioned that this involvement could reinforce the skills they were teaching. This statement is corroborated by the existing literature. Researchers have identified that key element to the success of similar programs was the involvement of parents and teachers who could reinforce skills outside of the program delivery. The parent and teacher tools incorporated into each lesson are a method of involving these stakeholders in the program.

Format. The format for this intervention would be a website. This website would be divided into various pages. Pages would include: introduction to the program, curriculum maps, lesson plan bank, additional resources, and a discussion board.

The lesson plans and curriculum maps must also be available in a downloadable format such as a portable document format.

Information. The Introduction page would clearly describe the program, as well as how to use the site. It would also list the contact information of the program coordinator to whom the facilitators can refer for additional questions.

On the Curriculum Map page, the facilitators would be able to access different curriculum maps, based on different themes. These themes would reflect how the program differed in various schools. For example, there could be different curriculum maps for coping with stress and anxiety, social skills training, and conflict resolution. The curriculum maps would describe objectives addressed within that curriculum, suggest lessons from the lesson plan bank, and suggest a timeline for the curriculum. These maps would provide guidance; however,

facilitators could also build their own curriculum by using the Lesson Plan Bank. On this page, facilitators could search by a variety of filters, such as topic, age group, or curriculum.

The Additional Resources page would provide links to other external resources that the facilitators may wish to consult.

The Discussion section would allow the facilitators to contact one another with questions or concerns. This section would be set up as a discussion board; the site administrator could establish different discussion forums, and users could create postings, as well as reply to others' posts.

Communication style. The language on the site should be clear and colloquial. The site should be pleasant to look at and easy to navigate. The site should conform to website design principles that consider layout, white space, colours, images, navigation, and typeface.

Users' expectations. The users of the website will expect that it is easy to navigate and where they can easily find information. They will want a website format and tools that are familiar to them.

Intervention 3: Training Session

Description. The training session for facilitators will allow them to share skills, knowledge and resource for designing and facilitating programs for students with learning disabilities. Additionally, at the training session, Ometz and the facilitators can clearly define roles and expectations.

Rationale. Although the facilitators were exceptionally knowledgeable, a brief training session would allow them to connect with the facilitators and coordinator so that they could

share strengths and resources. Additionally, training could help the facilitators identify opportunities for improvement in their instructional methods and classroom management skills. Finally, for those with less experience, the training could provide guidance for working in a religious Jewish school.

Format. The format would be a face-to-face half-day session, held at Ometz. The program coordinator would act as the facilitator for the training.

Information. The agenda for the training session is available in Figure 19. Prior to the day of the training, the facilitators would be asked to select a five-minute ice breaker activity. The facilitators would be instructed to come prepared to present this activity at the training. The training would begin with a brief description of the program, followed by a short training on using the website. This would be followed by a description of the norms and expectations when working in a religious setting. Facilitators would then be given the opportunity to present their ice breaker activity. After each facilitator presents, the other facilitators will provide feedback.

Figure 19. Training Session Agenda.

Communication style. The program coordinator would invite each facilitator personally by telephone. This would be followed up by a reminder email, with an agenda, sent the week prior to the training. The training itself would be communicated in an informal, but clear communication style.

Users' expectations. Facilitators can expect that the training will be useful, easy to follow and interestingly presented.

Intervention 4: Parent Workshops

Description. The Parent Workshops will be available to all parents whose children are impacted by the program. The workshops will inform the parents about the program and describe their involvement.

Rationale. At some of the schools involved in the program, parent workshops were conducted, and these facilitators described the workshops as beneficial. Additionally, several studies included in the literature review reiterated the benefits of parental inclusion in similar programs, as parents can reinforce the skills learned in the sessions. One area of agreement for all participants in my data collection seemed to be the importance of parent or family involvement. Several facilitators as well as the coordinator discussed the importance of a workshop for the parents. The coordinator stated that "schools that did opt for the parent presentation were [. . .] more successful than we could have anticipated". Facilitators who held parent sessions also advocated for continued communication throughout the program so that parents could reinforce learning at home and to provide opportunities for students to share what they had learned with their parents. For this intervention, I propose making a workshop for parents a mandatory component of the program.

Format. The suggested format is two after school meetings of approximately 45 minutes to an hour in duration. An invitation to the workshop would be sent two weeks prior via email or note home. The invitation should include an agenda, as seen in Figure 20. Templates for the invitation and agenda can be stored in the Lesson Plan Bank on the website.

Figure 20. Parent Workshop Invitation and Agenda.

Information. At a parent workshop, the facilitator and a school administrator will describe the program and its goals. The workshop will also provide parents with information about their role and what they can do to help their child learn the social skills being taught in the sessions.

Communication style. The invitation should be warm and welcoming in its tone. The language should be colloquial and clear.

Users' expectations. Parents can expect to learn about the program. Students can expect to share their learning.

Intervention 5: Kick-off Meeting

Description. School administration, teachers and the facilitator will establish goals and define roles at a kick-off meeting.

Rationale. Some facilitators expressed a desire to have more time with stakeholders from the school at the beginning of the program to ensure their goals were aligned and that all expectations were clear. Several participants expressed that this would help motivate the teachers to be active participants in the program. One facilitator described the ideal program as one that would "create a community of openness". Other facilitators confirmed this sentiment by stating the importance of collaboration between school staff and program staff and describing the need for trust among team members. The school administration at the primary site also describe a need for collaboration, especially when designing the program. The administrators said that input from the school is necessary as they "know the kids". This would help ensure that facilitators can create a program that addresses the students' needs and meets the expectations of the school staff and administration. It was also aid in the establishment of a clear calendar.

Format. The format would be a face-to-face meeting, held at the school. It is suggested that the meeting be held at a time that would be most convenient for the teacher and other staff members to attend. A meeting invitation and agenda, as seen in Figure 21, should be sent two weeks prior, with a follow up a few days before the meeting. The meeting invitation can be sent via internal webmail.

Figure 21. Kick-off Meeting Agenda.
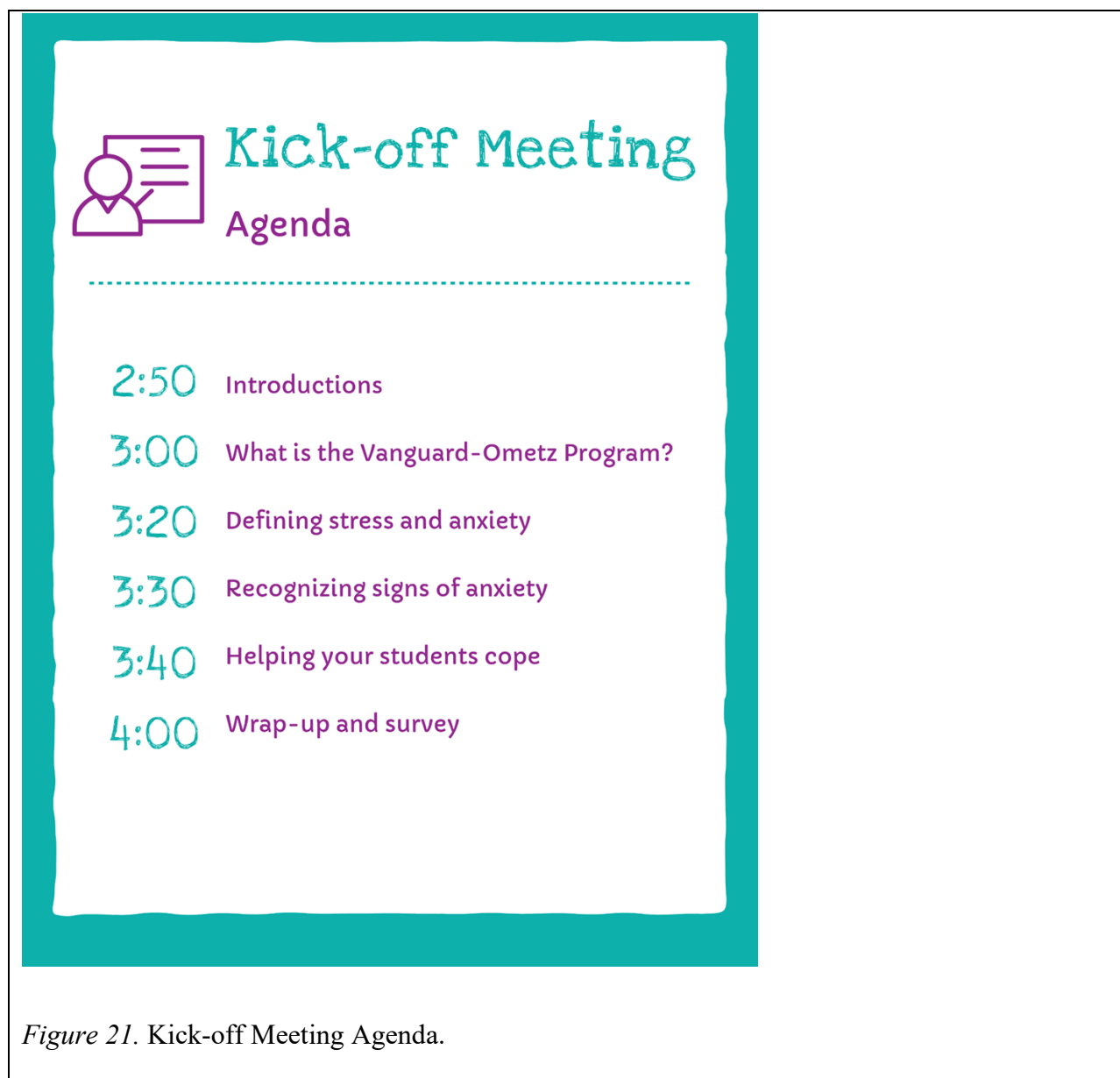
Information. The facilitator or Ometz coordinator (if available) could facilitate the meeting and provide a description of the program. The school staff and Ometz representative would then collaborate to define the goals for the program at their school and to create descriptions for the various roles with regards to the program. Additionally, the group would

establish a program calendar, similar to the one in Figure 22, that would be agreed to by all parties.

Vanguard-Ometz Program Calendar — 2019 to 2020

Important dates

Pre-program
- August 9: Facilitator Training Workshop
- August 30: Kick-off Meeting
- September 4: Information Packet delivered to parents (consent form included)
- October 1: Anxiety Testing

Program Delivery
- October 14 to December 13: student program delivery
- October 21 and 28: Parent Workshop
- December 12: Final Peer Supervision Meeting

Post-program
- March 16: Anxiety testing
- March 30: Parent, Teacher, Student Questionnaires

Figure 22. Sample Program Calendar.

Communication style. The meeting invitation should be welcoming and intriguing. The meeting facilitator should use a clear, friendly and enthusiastic communication style.

Users' expectations. All participants in the meeting can expect a clear understanding of the program, as well as their role within it.

Conclusion

The goal of this project was to carry out a performance improvement campaign for a program that offered social skills education to students with learning disabilities in Jewish day schools in Montreal. Through my preliminary analysis and literature review, I was able to determine the best approach to improve this program.

During my review of the literature I learned more about the context of providing social skills training in a religious setting. Additionally, I learned about some of the key elements that seem to make similar programs a success at reducing anxiety or increasing social skills for students. One of these elements was a student-centred approach. A second key element was teacher and parent involvement. The literature showed that teacher and parent involvement can be leveraged to help students practice their skills in the classroom and at home, rather than just in the program sessions.

During the needs assessment, I was able to gather data from the facilitators, the coordinator and school administrators at the primary site. This allowed me to determine the current state of the performance, the ideal state, and the performance gaps. As part of the needs assessment, I also conducted a cause analysis to understand what was triggering the performance gaps.

The needs assessment showed several performance gaps. Firstly, it was challenging to design a program that met the specific needs of students because the program objectives, scope and roles were unclear. The facilitators did not have the opportunity to communicate with vital stakeholders such as parents and teachers when designing the curriculum, which contributed to the lack of clarity. Also, facilitators experienced difficult in designing the curriculum because

they could not easily share resources and lessons. When it came to scheduling, some sessions conflicted with events in the school or class calendar, and facilitators were unaware. Facilitating sessions could be a challenge because the classroom setup was often out of the control of facilitators or not easily changed, and facilitators experienced classroom management issues.

When the needs assessment was complete, I created a program evaluation plan. I used the Phillips and Phillips (2012) model to align the needs to objectives at four levels of evaluation: reaction, learning, application, and impact. Once I determined the needs and objectives, I created evaluation measurements tools.

Using the data I collected during my preliminary assessment as well as the information contained in the literature, I developed several performance improvement interventions. These interventions were: feedback forms, a program resource bank, kick-off meeting, and parent workshops. Each of these proposed interventions was designed to address the needs of stakeholders as determined during the needs assessment and are supported by the research.

Limitations and Challenges

A significant limitation of this project is the lack of data from important project stakeholders; the students, teachers and parents. Without insight from their perspective, it is difficult to ensure that the proposed design truly address the needs of the students or parents. I knew that working with students was outside the scope of this thesis. However, I had hoped to interview teachers and observe a parent session, but I was unable gather data from either source. However, having access to the vice-principal and resource centre coordinator provided insight into the program from the school's perspective. Additionally, these two participants attended most of the sessions held at the primary site, so their insight helped to compensate for the

absence of an interview with a teacher. The extensive literature review helped me triangulate the information I had gathered from other sources regarding the parents, teachers and students. Future research should gain access to all stakeholders to obtain a more complete picture of what the program should look like.

Another significant limitation and a source of great personal and academic disappointment was that I was unable to implement the suggested interventions or evaluate their impact to the program because the program ended earlier than I had anticipated. As such, we cannot know if these changes will address the gaps discovered during the analysis. However, I have shared the suggestions with Ometz, as well as the evaluation plan. Should they choose to implement these ideas in the future, they will have the means to evaluate their impact.

Another challenge were the changes to the program that were outside my control. The change in the coordination position at Ometz made communication difficult. The changes also caused delays. I was unable to gain access to the administrators at the primary site until the third coordinator took over the program, which took place well after the second year of the program was underway.

Additionally, one of the inherent qualities of qualitative research is that it is open to interpretation. As such, it was difficult to determine the correct analysis path to obtain the most trustworthy findings. This was especially true because the research was done in relative isolation. To mitigate this limitation, I used journaling and asked colleagues for feedback on my work..

Significance

Although the Vangaurd-Ometz program is no longer running, this research may have a significant impact on future programs run by Ometz. Members of the leadership team at Ometz

have expressed interest in the human performance models and I have shared these models with them, as well as the interview questions I prepared. Additionally, the first Vanguard-Ometz program coordinator expressed an intent to use the evaluation model in future projects as well.

Due to the structure of this research, it would be inappropriate to suggest a potential population to which to generalize. However, I do suggest that members of the Ometz leadership team review my analysis and the suggested performance improvement interventions when creating similar programs. If Ometz decides to create a similar program design in the future, I recommend that they monitor the success of the program by determining program objectives and creating an evaluation plan. This will help them continuously improve the program and provide evidence of the program's value when establishing funding.

I started this thesis equivalent with the goal of helping Ometz improve their program so that they could continue to demonstrate the program's worth and continue to receive funding. It is discouraging to know that the performance interventions I created will not be implemented and I will never know if they would indeed have a positive impact on the program. However, I am hopeful that I have helped Ometz and shared ideas and tools that can be used in the future.

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Appendix A

1. Introduction

    1.1. What is your role in the school?

    1.2. Approximately how many student sessions did you observe?

    1.3. Were you present at a session with parents?

2. Program Objectives

    2.1. How can we determine if the program is a success?

    2.2. What were the initial goals of the program?

        2.2.1.   What issues or problems were you trying to resolve?

    2.3. Do you think the program met these initial goals?

    2.4. What obstacles did you observe that impacted the program's success?

3. Parent Session

    3.1. Why did you choose to have a parent session?

    3.2. What was the impact of the parent session?

4. Staff and Teacher Preparation

    4.1. How were staff members and teachers prepared for participation in the program?

    4.2. How did this preparation impact the staff and teachers?

        4.2.1.   Do you think it had a positive impact on them?

        4.2.2.   Was there a reluctance among the staff or teachers to participate?

5. Motivation

    5.1. From what you observed, how motivated were students to participate in the program?

        5.1.1.   How did this level of motivation change throughout the year?

    5.2. How motivated were the teachers and staff?

        5.2.1.   How did this level of motivation change throughout the year?

    5.3. How would you describe your own level of motivation?

        5.3.1.   How did this level of motivation change throughout the year?

6. Program Impact

    6.1. What impact do you think the program had on students who participated?

        6.1.1.   Changes in behaviour?

        6.1.2.   Better able to self-regulate?

        6.1.3.   Cope with anxiety?

        6.1.4.   Better communicate with classmates?

      6.1.5.   Improvement in overall classroom atmosphere?

   6.2. What about an impact on the school population as a whole?

   6.3. What impact did the program have on you?

7. Program Benefits

   7.1. What would the perfect program look like to you?

   7.2. What specific elements of the program did you find most beneficial?

   7.3. What elements could be improved?

8. Wrap-up

   8.1. Do you have any additional comments?

   8.2. Thank you very much for your participation. I wish to take this opportunity to remind you that your personal information will remain confidential. You can contact me at any time should you have follow-up questions or comments.

Appendix B

Table 8
Facilitator Task Analysis

Main Task	Supporting Tasks	Entry Tasks
Design a curriculum.	Analyze the learners' needs.	Identify the audience
		Communication with the program coordinator and school administrators
		Identify the audience demographics
		Describe the request from the school(s)
		State the delivery method selected by the school(s) – whole class vs. group delivery
	Manage stakeholder expectations.	Describe the scope of the program for the school.
		Communicate the scope of the program to the stakeholders.
		Identify the expectations of the various stakeholders.
		Determine if stakeholders' expectations are within the scope of the program.
		Report discrepancies to the program coordinator.
	Develop learning objectives.	State the three parts of a learning objective.
	Determine the method of instruction for each learning objectives.	List instructional methods.
	Design assessment tools.	Describe the difference between formative and summative evaluation.
		Describe different assessment methods.
	Communicate the curriculum to stakeholders.	Identify the stakeholder groups.
		Determine the appropriate communication method for each stakeholder group.
		Summarize the curriculum.
Design the instructional content.	Develop lesson plans.	State the time available for each lesson.
		Determine the lesson objective(s).
		Describe the audience for the lesson.
		Determine the materials required.
		State the steps and activities required to achieve the lesson objectives.
		Determine the summative assessment tool(s).
		Produce student handouts, if required.
Schedule the program delivery at the assigned school(s).	Schedule student sessions.	Collaborate with school administration, teachers, and the program coordinator.
		State the number of hours allotted for the program (in scope).
		Describe the objectives.
		Identify conflicting events.
		Communicate the schedule to all stakeholders.
		Document all unexpected changes.
		Report unexpected changes to the program coordinator.

	Schedule additional meeting and workshops, as required.	Collaborate with school administration, teachers, and the program coordinator.
		Describe the program scope.
		Describe the objectives.
		Identify conflicting events.
		Communicate the schedule to all stakeholders.
		Document all unexpected changes.
		Report unexpected changes to the program coordinator.

Appendix C

Table 9		
Code Book		
<u>Themes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Codes</u>
Internal Factors	Resource requirements.	Longer program
		Resource catalogue
		tight timeline
		Space was an issue
		Cle en main
		School was spreading themselves too thin (quantity over quality)
	Integration of special needs students.	Limit the class size
		Pull-out group versus whole-class approach
		There are "indirect benefits for Vanguard students when the whole class is involved"
		Vanguard students "lost in the mix"
		combination of classroom and smaller groups
	The importance of clarity.	« Les roles de chancun seraient définis clairement »
		Expectations not clearly described
		Lack of feedback
		Vague or unrealistic program objectives (empathy in 2 sessions)
		Need to collaboratively established objectives (school, coordinator, facilitator)
	Skills, knowledge and qualities of facilitators.	Background and experience
		Critical for facilitators to have an awareness of the development stages of children
		Classroom management
		Listening skills
		Coping strategies, mindfulness
		Communication skills
		Coordinator was "blown away" by skill and talent of facilitators
	The need for flexibility.	Possibility for individualization
		Choose your own approach
		Tailored approach to the school
		"we adapted to the school but we also adapted to our own personal comfort level with facilitation"
		Felt school was micromanaging
		Facilitators need to "adjust and align the program to the group"
		Need to be flexible and able to change (deviate from the plan)
		More student-driven
		Examples from students
External Factors	The importance of teacher and school involvement.	Workshop for teachers
		Get teachers "in the loop and on board"
		Teacher support for classroom management
		Provide teachers with tools to "internalized the skills and continued the learning with the students"
		"Excitement from school staff was accidental" (curious about program)
		Help teachers prepare
		Collaborate with teachers
	The importance of parent/family involvement.	Workshop for parents
		Continued communication throughout the program
		Students shared with parents
		Take-home activities for students and parents
		"Schools that did opt for the parent presentation were [. . .] more successful than we could have anticipated"
		Encourage parent modelling
	Sharing the program with the rest of the school.	Outlet for students to present their work
		Raise awareness
		Give students the opportunity to share learning
		Summary of program in school newsletter

Table 9
Code Book

Themes	Categories	Codes
		Display in the school
	Collaboration between different stakeholders.	"Create a community of openness"
		Collaboration between school staff and program staff
		Collaborative approach is needed
		Trust among team members
		Coordinator was available and supportive
		Create "an alliance" with the students
		Welcomed at the school
		Should work together to create the program
		Input from the school – they "know the kids"
		Difficulty of having multiple stakeholders (Vangaurd, Ometz, school, facilitators)

Appendix D

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CERTIFICATION OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY
FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Name of Applicant: **Elizabeth Lakoff**

Department: **Education**

Agency: **N/A**

Title of Project: **Designing a School-based Social Service Program for orthodox Jewish Students**

Certification Number: **30008105**

Valid From: **November 22, 2018**   To: **November 21, 2019**

The members of the University Human Research Ethics Committee have examined the application for a grant to support the above-named project, and consider the experimental procedures, as outlined by the applicant, to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

_____

Dr. Shannon Hebblethwaite, Vice Chair, University Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix E

Vanguard-Ometz Program Prototype Materials

Prepared by Elizabeth Lakoff

Calendar

Sample Program Calendar

Vanguard-Ometz Program Calendar | 2019 to 2020

Aug 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Sep 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Oct 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Nov 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Dec 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Jan 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Feb 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Mar 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Apr 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Jun 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Jul 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Important dates

Pre-program

August 9: Facilitator Training Workshop
August 30: Kick-off Meeting
September 4: Information Packet delivered to parents (consent form included)
October 1: Anxiety Testing

Program Delivery

October 14 to December 13: student program delivery
October 21 and 28: Parent Workshop
December 12: Final Peer Supervision Meeting

Post-program

March 16: Anxiety testing
March 30: Parent, Teacher, Student Questionnaires

Resource Bank

Curriculum View

Lesson Search

Advance Lesson Search

Resource Library

Discussion Board

Educational Materials

Sample Lesson Plan

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

What is Anxiety?

Topic: Anxiety

Lesson length: 50 minutes

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to define anxiety using their own words.

Materials

- Computer and digital projector (if not available, materials can be printed)
- Emotion image gallery
- What Worries Me handout

Description

Warm-up
For your warm-up activity, show students the emotion image gallery. The gallery includes a range of different emotion. In the first round, show the images to the students once, and select a student for each image to name the emotion. Write down the emotion on the board. In the second round, show students the same images, but tell them that they cannot use the same words to describe the emotion. If there is time, do a third round. At the end of the warm-up, point out to the students that there are many ways of describing emotions and that today we will describe "anxiety".

Individual Work
Distribute the "What Worries Me" handout. Tell students that the handout asks them to describe some of the situations that worry them. Give students 10 minutes to complete the handout.

Group Discussion
Start by describing a situation that worries you. Use an example that is common and not overly personal or dramatic. Ask students to share some of the situations that worry them. Allow the discussion to continue for 10 or 15 minutes, facilitating as required. Summarize the discussion by stating that worries come in many different forms and there are many different ways of defining worry, or anxiety.

Instruction
Provide the students with an age-appropriate definition for anxiety.

Wrap-up
Describe the next session.

Modification

This lesson should work with smaller groups, but you may require more prompting for group discussions. If students are hesitant to provide their own examples of what worries them, provide instead generic scenarios and ask students to identify the worry for the individual involved.

Anxiety Curriculum Map

Parent Toolkit

Teacher Toolkit

1

Sample Lesson Plan

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program
My Coping Plan
Topic: Anxiety

Lesson length: 50 minutes

> By the end of the lesson, students will prepare a plan for coping with anxiety-triggering situations.

Materials

- My Coping Plan handout
- Coping Strategies handout

Description

Warm-up
The Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety lesson plan is a prerequisite for this lesson. To begin this lesson, review the coping strategies using the Coping Strategies handout.

Instruction
Explain what an action plan is and how it can help be helpful.
Discuss SMART goals and provide examples.
Share examples of an Action Plan that contain SMART goals.

Individual Work
Distribute My Coping Plan handout. Give students 30 minutes to work on their Action Plan, helping as required.

Wrap-up
Have students share their action plan.

Homework
Ask students to share their action plans with their parents or other family members.

Modification

This lesson will work with any group size.
If students experiencing difficulty establishing SMART goals, pair them with a peer and have the peer ask the following:
- Tell me EXACTLY what you want to do.
- How will you know you've done it?
- Can you really do this?
- How will this help you deal with anxiety?
- When do you want to get this done?

Anxiety Curriculum Map   Parent Toolkit   Teacher Toolkit

1

Sample Lesson Plan

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

My Plan in Action

Topic: Anxiety

Lesson length: 50 minutes

By the end of the lesson, students will select an appropriate coping technique, given a scenario.

Materials

- My Coping Plan handout
- Coping Strategies handout
- Anxiety scenarios

Description

Warm-up
The Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety lesson plan is a prerequisite for this lesson but the My Coping Plan lesson is optional. Review the Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety together as a class. If students have completed their coping plans, ask them to take them out and review them individually.

Instruction
Inform students that they will be role playing today. Instruct them to get into groups of three.

Group Work
Give each group a scenario. Give them 15 minutes to prepare a brief skit. The skit should show how the individuals in the scenario could cope with the situation in a healthy way. Have each group present their scripts.

Wrap-up
Discuss the scenarios. Were the scenarios realistic? Would people react this way? Has anyone experiences a similar scenario?

Homework
Ask students to write a short paragraph on how they felt during the activity.

Modification

It is great to have extra help for this lesson. Ask the classroom teacher if they would like to participate. With a smaller group size, the scenario activity will be short. Have students write their reaction paragraph in class rather than at home. With larger groups, role playing will be difficult. Instead, read out the scenarios and have students discuss how they would react.
Students with an anxiety disorder may feel uncomfortable if they are required to role play and act as if they are in an anxiety inducing situation. Instead, of having students role play, read out the scenarios and discuss as a group how the individuals in the scenarios could cope with the stressful situation.
If students have not completed their coping plan, they can role play the scenario using the generic coping strategies contained in the handout.

Anxiety Curriculum Map   Parent Toolkit   Teacher Toolkit

1

Sample Parent Tools

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Parent Tool

Lesson: What is Anxiety?

Lesson Description

During this lesson, we explored the term "anxiety". We started off by looking at images of people expressing different emotions and identified what emotions were shown in the pictures. Individually, the students listed situations that cause them to feel worried or anxious. As a group, we discussed and defined what it means to be anxious and what can make us anxious.

At Home

To reinforce the learning, please continue to explore what anxiety means. You can also discuss different emotions. This will help the students with their ability to recognize their emotions. It is really beneficial if you can describe your emotions and explore situations where you felt anxious or worried.

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Parent Tool

Lesson: My Coping Plan

Lesson Description

During this lesson, the students created an action plan for dealing with their anxiety. The action plans were personal to each student, but the students were encouraged to use some of the coping strategies that we discussed in class.

At Home

Ask your child about their action plan. Ask them to explain what makes their goal in their action plan a SMART goal. Challenge your child to put their action plan into practice.

Sample Parent Tools

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Parent Tool

Lesson: My Plan in Action

Lesson Description

During this lesson, the students were given a scenario of an anxiety-inducing situation. The students were asked to show how the individuals in the situation could cope with the stressful situation in a healthy way. We then discussed the scenarios as a group. Students were asked if they felt the scenarios were realistic and if they had ever experienced a similar situation.

At Home

Students were asked to write a brief response paragraph for homework. Ask your child about their experience. Discuss situations were you felt stressed and how you coped. Ask your child about past situations where they felt anxious. How did they cope at the time? Would they cope differently now?

Sample Teacher Tools

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program
Teacher Tool
Lesson: What is Anxiety?

Lesson Description

During this lesson, we explored the term "anxiety". We started off by looking at images of people expressing different emotions and identified what emotions were shown in the pictures. Individually, the students listed situations that cause them to feel worried or anxious. As a group, we discussed and defined what it means to be anxious and what can make us anxious.

In Class

To reinforce the learning, please continue to identify different emotions. As a Monday morning activity, ask the students what they did during the weekend. For each activity, ask the students to describe how they felt about the activity.

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program
Teacher Tool
Lesson: My Coping Plan

Lesson Description

During this lesson, the students created an action plan for dealing with their anxiety. The action plans were personal to each student, but the students were encouraged to use some of the coping strategies that we discussed in class.

In Class

If you are comfortable doing so, discuss with your students the strategies you use to cope with anxiety or stressful situations. Ask students if they have put their coping plan into practice.

Sample Teacher Tools

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Teacher Tool

Lesson: My Plan in Action

Lesson Description

During this lesson, the students were given a scenario of an anxiety-inducing situation. The students were asked to show how the individuals in the situation could cope with the stressful situation in a healthy way. We then discussed the scenarios as a group. Students were asked if they felt the scenarios were realistic and if they had ever experienced a similar situation.

In Class

The students were asked to write a brief response to the activity. Ask the students to share their response.

Information for Parents

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Parent Info Packet

About the Program

Your child's school is participating in the Vanguard-Ometz program. This program was designed to offer additional support and learning to students, delivered by a facilitator from Ometz. The theme of the learning at your child's school is "Coping with Stress and Anxiety". The duration of the program is 8 weeks. During this time, a facilitator from Ometz will work with your child's class once a week. Below is a sample of the curriculum your child may see during this time.

Coping with Stress and Anxiety								
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Grade One	Big Feelings	Exploring our Big Feelings	Big Feelings, Big Thoughts	A Picture of My Worry Monster	Tips to Beat the Worry Monster	Tips to Beat the Worry Monster	My Plan to Beat the Worry Monster	My Plan in Action
Grade Two	Big Feelings	Exploring our Big Feelings	Big Feelings, Big Thoughts	A Picture of My Worry Monster	Tips to Beat the Worry Monster	Tips to Beat the Worry Monster	My Plan to Beat the Worry Monster	My Plan in Action
Grade Three	Why Worry?	What Worries Me	What does Anxiety Feel Like?	What does Anxiety Look Like?	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	My Calm Down Plan	My Plan in Action
Grade Four	Why Worry?	What Worries Me	What does Anxiety Feel Like?	What does Anxiety Look Like?	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	My Calm Down Plan	My Plan in Action
Grade Five	What is Anxiety?	Exploring our Anxiety	What does Anxiety Feel Like?	What does Anxiety Look Like?	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	My Plan to Cope with Anxiety and Stress	My Plan in Action
Grade Six	What is Anxiety?	Exploring our Anxiety	What does Anxiety Feel Like?	What does Anxiety Look Like?	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	My Plan to Cope with Anxiety and Stress	My Plan in Action

Meet the Facilitator

Laura Abrahams has worked with children for 4 years as an art therapist and facilitator. She has a Bachelor of Education from McGill University and a Master's degree in Art Therapy from Concordia University. Laura delivered the Vanguard-Ometz program on two other occasions at different schools.

1

Data Collection

Ometz, the community organization who provide the program, collects data as part of an effort to continuously improve the program. This data will be used to evaluate the successes of the program and the opportunities for improvement.

Purpose of the Data Collection

The purpose of this data collection is to evaluate the social service program that Ometz provided to Jewish day schools in the Montreal area. The central objective of this data collection is to improve the programming by determining what was successful and what was lacking. This data will be used to develop recommendations that will be implemented in the next cycle of the program. As part of this study, your child may be asked to complete two brief questionnaires and two anxiety measurement tests.

Participation and Confidentiality

Participation in this data collection is voluntary. You may refuse to have your child participate in all or a portion of the data collection. All data collected will remain confidential and accessible only to Ometz. Your name and the name of your child will not be used.
If you require any further information regarding this project or your participation in the project you may contact Ometz.

Publication

The results of this data collection will be used internally by Ometz to improve their programming. The data may also be shared with the public.

Consent

Ometz may ask your child to complete a brief questionnaire at the beginning of the program. Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

____ (initial) I agree to allow my child to answer the questionnaire.
____ (initial) I do not agree to allow my child to answer the questionnaire.

Ometz may ask your child to complete a brief questionnaire at the end of the program. Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

____ (initial) I agree to allow my child to answer the questionnaire.
____ (initial) I do not agree to allow my child to answer the questionnaire.

Ometz may ask your child to complete an assessment that determines their level of anxiety. This assessment will be administered two times. Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

____ (initial) I agree to allow my child's anxiety level to be assessed.
____ (initial) I do not agree to allow my child's anxiety level to be assessed.

_____   _____

Name (print) and Signature   Date

You're invited!

Parent Workshop

Come and learn about stress and anxiety in children
and how you can help your child cope.
This free learning opportunity is presented by the
Ometz-Vanguard Program.

When: Oct 21 or 28 at 7:00 pm

Where: the gym

Parents may attend either session.

Coffee, tea, and dessert will be served.

Parent Workshop

Agenda

....

7:00 Introductions

7:10 What is the Vanguard-Ometz Program?

7:30 Defining stress and anxiety

7:40 Recognizing signs of anxiety

8:00 Helping your child cope

8:45 Wrap-up and survey

Information for Teachers

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Teacher Info Packet

About the Program

Your school is participating in the Vanguard-Ometz program. This program was designed to offer additional support and learning to students, delivered by a facilitator from Ometz. The theme of the learning at your school is "Coping with Stress and Anxiety". The duration of the program is 8 weeks. During this time, a facilitator from Ometz will work with classes in grades Four and Six once a week. Below is a sample of the curriculum the students may see during this time.

Coping with Stress and Anxiety

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Grade One	Big Feelings	Exploring our Big Feelings	Big Feelings, Big Thoughts	A Picture of My Worry Monster	Tips to Beat the Worry Monster	Tips to Beat the Worry Monster	My Plan to Beat the Worry Monster	My Plan in Action
Grade Two	Big Feelings	Exploring our Big Feelings	Big Feelings, Big Thoughts	A Picture of My Worry Monster	Tips to Beat the Worry Monster	Tips to Beat the Worry Monster	My Plan to Beat the Worry Monster	My Plan in Action
Grade Three	Why Worry?	What Worries Me	What does Anxiety Feel Like?	What does Anxiety Look Like?	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	My Calm Down Plan	My Plan in Action
Grade Four	Why Worry?	What Worries Me	What does Anxiety Feel Like?	What does Anxiety Look Like?	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	My Calm Down Plan	My Plan in Action
Grade Five	What is Anxiety?	Exploring our Anxiety	What does Anxiety Feel Like?	What does Anxiety Look Like?	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	My Plan to Cope with Anxiety and Stress	My Plan in Action
Grade Six	What is Anxiety?	Exploring our Anxiety	What does Anxiety Feel Like?	What does Anxiety Look Like?	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	My Plan to Cope with Anxiety and Stress	My Plan in Action

Meet the Facilitator

Laura Abrahams has worked with children for 4 years as an art therapist and facilitator. She has a Bachelor of Education from McGill University and a Master's degree in Art Therapy from Concordia University. Laura delivered the Vanguard-Ometz program on two other occasions at different schools.

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Data Collection

Ometz, the community organization who provide the program, collects data as part of an effort to continuously improve the program. This data will be used to evaluate the successes of the program and the opportunities for improvement.

Purpose of the Data Collection

The purpose of this data collection is to evaluate the social service program that Ometz provided to Jewish day schools in the Montreal area. The central objective of this data collection is to improve the programming by determining what was successful and what was lacking. This data will be used to develop recommendations that will be implemented in the next cycle of the program. As part of this study, you may be asked to complete a brief survey.

Participation and Confidentiality

Participation in this data collection is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in all or a portion of the data collection. All data collected will remain confidential and accessible only to Ometz. Your name will not be used.
If you require any further information regarding this project or your participation in the project you may contact Ometz.

Publication

The results of this data collection will be used internally by Ometz to improve their programming. The data may also be shared with the public.

Consent

Ometz may ask you to complete a brief survey. By completing the survey and submitting it to the facilitator, you are agreeing to participate in the data collection for this program.

Kick-off Meeting

Agenda

2:50 — Introductions

3:00 — What is the Vanguard-Ometz Program?

3:20 — Defining stress and anxiety

3:30 — Recognizing signs of anxiety

3:40 — Helping your students cope

4:00 — Wrap-up and survey

Reaction Measurement Tools

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Student Reaction Survey

1. What did you think of the program?

A. I did not like the program
B. The program was okay.
C. I liked the program.
D. I loved the program.

2. How do you feel about the facilitator from Ometz? Check the box of all the sentences that you agree with.

☐ The facilitator is not easy to understand

☐ The facilitator cannot control the class.

☐ The facilitator is not organized.

☐ The facilitator is okay.

☐ The facilitator is organized.

☐ The facilitator is very good.

☐ The facilitator makes me want to come to class.

☐ The facilitator controlled the class.

3. Pick the answer that best describes what you learned about anxiety.

A. I did not learn anything new.
B. I learned a little bit.
C. I learned a lot of new things.
D. I learned many new things and shared what I learned with other people

1

4. Do you think that the skills and information you were taught are helpful?

A. The program has not helped me.
B. The program helped me a little.
C. The program helped me a lot.
D. The program changed my life.

5. How well do you understand what you were taught?

A. I am really confused about a lot of what I was taught.
B. I understand a little bit of what I was taught.
C. I understand almost everything I was taught.
D. I understand everything perfectly.

6. Do you have anything else you want to share?

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Teacher Reaction Survey

1. What is your role in the school?

_____

2. At the meeting, the facilitator showed you techniques that you can use to reinforce coping skills with your students. How confident do you feel that you can competently put these techniques into practice?

A. I have no confidence that I can successfully use these techniques.
B. I am not very confident that I can successfully use these techniques.
C. I am somewhat confident that I can successfully use these techniques.
D. I am confident that I can successfully use these techniques.
E. I am extremely confident that I can successfully use these techniques.

3. Which of the following were true about the meeting facilitator? Check all that apply.

☐ The facilitator is not easy to understand.

☐ The facilitator was not organized.

☐ The facilitator exhibited a lack of knowledge.

☐ The facilitator exhibited a lack of real-world experience.

☐ The facilitator generally performed competently.

☐ The facilitator provided practical advice and information.

☐ The facilitator demonstrated a high degree of trustworthiness.

1

4. How engaging was the kick-off meeting?

A. I felt completely disengaged.
B. I was often disengaged.
C. I was sometimes engaged.
D. I was mostly engaged.
E. I was almost always engaged.

5. On a scale of 1 to 5, how motivated are you to participate in the program?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all motivated	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Highly motivated

6. Do you have anything else you want to share?

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Parent Reaction Survey

1. How well do you feel you understood the concepts taught in the workshop?

A. I am still very confused.
B. I have a basic understanding of the concepts.
C. I have a solid understanding of the concepts.
D. I have a comprehensive understanding of the concepts.

2. How valuable was the information discussed in the workshop?

A. The information will not help me.
B. The information will help me a little.
C. The information will help me a moderate amount.
D. The information will help me significantly.

3. Which of the following were true about the meeting facilitator? Check all that apply.

☐ The facilitator is not easy to understand.

☐ The facilitator was not organized.

☐ The facilitator exhibited a lack of knowledge.

☐ The facilitator exhibited a lack of real-world experience.

☐ The facilitator generally performed competently.

☐ The facilitator provided practical advice and information.

☐ The facilitator demonstrated a high degree of trustworthiness.

1

4. How engaging was the kick-off meeting?

A. I felt completely disengaged.
B. I was often disengaged.
C. I was sometimes engaged.
D. I was mostly engaged.
E. I was almost always engaged.

5. The workshop facilitator showed you techniques that you can use at home to reinforce anxiety coping skills with your child. How confident do you feel that you can competently put these techniques into practice?

A. I have no confidence that I can successfully use these techniques.
B. I am not very confident that I can successfully use these techniques.
C. I am somewhat confident that I can successfully use these techniques.
D. I am confident I can successfully use these techniques.
E. I am extremely confident I can successfully use these techniques.

6. Do you have anything else you want to share?

Learning Measurement Tools

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Resource Bank Treasure Hunt

Complete all the steps listed below. The first person to finish wins so let us know when you're done!

1 **Find the following lessons. Download each one and save it to your desktop.**

Breathing exercises for a grade three class.
Making friends for a grade two class.
Creating a coping plan for a grade six class.
Defining bullying for a grade four class.

2 **Find the Curriculum Plan for Conflict Resolution and take a screenshot. Save the screenshot to your computer.**

3 **Find the Curriculum Plan for Conflict Resolution and take a screenshot. Save the screenshot to your computer.**

4 **List three different resources found in the Resource Library.**

5 **Create a post on the Discussion Board and list your three biggest Take-aways from today's training.**

1

Parent Action Plan

Name: _____   Date: _____

How can you recognize anxiety?

Identify at least four different behaviours that may indicate anxiety in children.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

How can you help your child cope?

-Describes at least three techniques to reinforce coping strategies at home.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Teacher Action Plan

Name: _____   Date: _____

How can you recognize anxiety?

Identify at least four different behaviours that may indicate anxiety in children.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

How can you help your student cope?

Describes at least three techniques to reinforce coping strategies in the classroom

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

My Coping Plan

Name: _____   Date: _____

What is your SMART goal?

Action Steps: How are you going to get there?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Application and Impact Measurement Tools

AJDS Vanguard-Ometz Program

Student Follow-up Survey

1. Now that it has been a few months, do you think that the skills and information you were taught in the program were helpful?

- A. The program has not helped me.
- B. The program helped me a little.
- C. The program helped me a lot.
- D. The program changed my life.

2. Do you think the program changed how you felt about school school?

- A. The program made me dislike school
- B. The program did not change how I felt about school.
- C. The program made me a little bit more comfortable at school.
- D. The program made me feel much better about school.

3. Since the program finished, how often have you done the following?

	Less than before the program	As much as before the program	A little more than before the program	Much more than before the program
Volunteered to answer a question	◯	◯	◯	◯
Played with my classmates	◯	◯	◯	◯
Asked my teacher for help	◯	◯	◯	◯
Asked a classmate for help	◯	◯	◯	◯
Participated in an extra-curricular activity	◯	◯	◯	◯
Had a fun time in class	◯	◯	◯	◯
Paid attention the whole class	◯	◯	◯	◯

1

4. You were taught a few different ways that you could deal with anxiety, which are called "coping techniques". Have you used the coping techniques at times where you felt anxious?

    A. I have not used the coping techniques.

    B. I have almost never used the coping techniques.

    C. I have used the coping techniques about half the time.

    D. I have used coping techniques almost every time.

5. Do you have anything else you want to share?

Parent Action Plan Follow-up

Putting your Plan into Action

Were you able to use the techniques provided to you in the program to reinforce coping strategies at home? Select only one answer.

No, and I doubt that I will ever use the strategies.

No, but I will probably use the coping strategies.

Yes, I have already used the coping strategies.

◯

◯

◯

What has prevented you from using the strategies?

If you don't plan on using the strategies, or if you have't used them yet, what has prevented you from doing so?

Teacher Action Plan Follow-up

Putting your Plan into Action

Were you able to use the techniques provided to you in the program to reinforce coping strategies in the classroom? Select only one answer.

No, and I doubt that I will ever use the strategies.

No, but I will probably use the coping strategies.

Yes, I have already used the coping strategies.

What has prevented you from using the strategies?

If you don't plan on using the strategies, or if you haven't used them yet, what has prevented you from doing so?

Facilitator Follow-up

The Resource Bank

Did you use the Resource Bank Tool during the design and delivery of the program?

No, and I never
intended to use it.

No, but I intended
to use it.

Yes, I used it.

◯   ◯   ◯

What has prevented you from using the Resource Bank?

If you had planned on using the tool but didn't what has prevented you from
doing so? If you had never intended on using it, can you tell us why?

How motivated are you?

If we asked you to be a facilitator again next year, how motivated would you be
to take part in the program again?

I would not be
motivated to
return.

The program
would need to
change if I were
to return.

I would be
motivated to
return.

I am already
excited about the
possibility of
returning.

◯   ◯   ◯   ◯