

OPEN MIND, OPEN HEART: A SECONDARY ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM AN
ENRICHMENT ARTS SUMMER PROGRAM

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OPEN MIND, OPEN HEART: A SECONDARY ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM AN
ENRICHMENT ARTS SUMMER PROGRAM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Program Overview

open mind, open heART was an enrichment arts program conducted at the Residential Treatment Center (RTC) in San Antonio, Texas. The program consisted of a 10-week structured summer camp providing children residing at the center with therapeutic benefits. For three hours a day, five days a week, children engaged in safe and creative activities that served as emotional outlets. The activities integrated multiple art activities including photography, videography, music, structured movement, character building lessons, and learning to make healthy snacks. The program was designed so children would feel a sense of empowerment as they made decisions about which activities to participate in each day. They also had to make choices throughout the program in order to complete the required number of sessions for each activity. Empowerment of choice allowed each child to practice judgment and decision making skills. Activities were designed specifically for the children focused on resiliency factors, protective factors and one or more of the 40-developmental assets such as responsibility, integrity, self-esteem, personal power, and resistance skills along with many others (Scales, 2005). Pre- and post-test data were collected from the children. Interviewing provided the opportunity for children to personally reflect on the activities they participated in and the impact it has had on their lives. The children also had the

opportunity to participate in field trips to three different museums within the San Antonio area, as well as a talent show at the end of the summer program to display their artwork and celebrate their successes.

A concluding statement about the children's competence, character, confidence and connection about the children from pre to post program was summarized by a KCI RTC staff member: "our children really look happier, understand more, and know that we, the staff, are here for them. They are more loving, caring, and respectful." It was asserted that *open mind, open heART* was a successful program that met and succeeded its goals over the summer.

At Risk Youth

Youth are labeled "at-risk" due to negative involvement and circumstances in their lives that may stunt development. Youth must learn to develop forms of self-control in order to adapt to and manage crises, commitment, express idealism, and alleviate alienation. Researchers state that at risk youth seek to avoid stress and enhance pleasure (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006).

Many intervention programs for "at-risk-youth", or "at-potential youth", mock the Project Re-Ed. Re-Ed was established in the 1960's by a man named Nicholas Hobbs and his colleagues (Valore, Cantrell & Cantrell, 2006). The project focused on competence building and was first implemented in a short-term residential treatment center for children. Hobbs believed that group development and involvement were primary sources for expanding competency in youth. A similar therapeutic art program, The National Arts and Youth Demonstration Project (NAYDP) encouraged youth to participate in various

artistic media while having fun by freely engaging in creative and artistic expression (Stinson, 2009). In addition to gaining new art skills, the program proved effective in influencing increased pro-social, participation, and task completion skills (Stinson, 2009).

The 4 C's

A portion of the results section will focus on competence, character, confidence and connection (the 4 C's) and how it was addressed by the participants and facilitators/staff involved in *open mind, open heART*.

Competence

Competence refers to the experience of feeling that one is effective in dealing with the environment (Prellow, Weaver & Swenson, 2006). It is “a pattern of effective adaptation to one’s personal and social environment to provide reasonable success related to major developmental tasks for a given age and gender with specific domains of achievement” (Fetro, Rhodes & Hey, 2010). Social competence “is an individual-level attribute that facilitates adaptive functioning, positive adjustment, and later goal attainment despite early adversity of stressful life event” (Stepp, Pardini, Loeber & Morris, 2011).

Several positive outcomes were linked to social competency, such as educational attainment, employment status, lower levels of substance abuse, depression, and self-reported delinquency (Stepp, Pardini, Loeber & Morris, 2011). Social competence encourages positive interactions between teachers and peers, increasing academic motivation.

Confidence

Self-esteem can serve as a protective factor against taking part in risky health behaviors (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002). It is linked to high academic achievement, involvement in sport and physical activity, and development of effective coping, and peer pressure resisting skills.

Self-esteem is affected by past experiences with adversity, such as poverty, stressful life events, or neighborhood disadvantages (Prelow, Weaver & Swenson, 2006). Unsuccessful experiences dealing with these situations affect the development of self-worth, competence, and self-efficacy. Art has been proven to increase confidence and raise self-esteem, two critical factors in pro-social development (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006). Life skills, a group of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions and deal with everyday life, are effective for empowering young people to make informed decisions about their own well-being (Pharaoh, Frantz & Smith, 2011).

Character

The all too common nationwide school violence, has established the recognition of the need for character education for our youth (Allen et al., 2011). Character education programs increase the youth's ability to think in principled ways, respond to others empathetically, and develop social responsibility. These are all vital skills to help children be successful in challenges they encounter daily. Effective character education programs teach communication, active-listening, relationships, decision making, assertiveness, and social awareness. This helps to teach children the difference between

right and wrong and to guide their thoughts and actions based on the character traits discussed. Skills for conflict resolution pertaining to anger management and the ability to constructively problem solve have been identified as risk protective assets (Shuval et al., 2010).

Connection

Many at-risk youth display developmental problems in attachments to family, school, and community due to their lack of trust caused by past experiences (Phelan, 2008). These attachments were repaired by forming healthy trusting relationships with adults. Adults working with these youth can measure their relationship strength by noting an increase in communication, social reinforcement, and the acceptance of the adult as a role model. Youth then develop personal boundary skills and feel comfortable asking for needed help. Establishing trust allows youth to let down their guard and share their thoughts that are prohibiting them from successful behavior (Phelan, 2008).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to conduct a secondary analysis of data collected by the San Antonio Children's Shelter KCI Residential Treatment Center in order to further evaluate the positive shift in competence, character, confidence, and connection post *open mind, open heART* intervention.

Significance of the Problem

In Texas alone, there were 27, 422 children in foster care in 2009 (Blundell, J. 2010). Of those children, 475 lived in Travis County, and 1,822 in Region 7 (Children in Foster Care, 2011). Incidents of developing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for

abused children ranges from a low of 15.4% in boys who received physically abusive punishment to 90% of sexually abused children (Giardino, 2011). The effects of trauma on a child's life can result in reduced academic performance, increased high-risk behavior and difficulties with relationships (National Child Traumatic, n. d.).

The presence of trusted adults or peers highly reduces the amount of stress weighing on youth who have experienced trauma (Larson, 2005). They are looking to find a supportive listener with whom their story was shared. In 2003, a report by the Commission on Children at Risk cites research that "humans are wired for close attachment to others" When youth were asked what they most needed to succeed in life, the number one response was having a positive connection with the adults working with them (Larson, 2005).

A sense of positive connectedness protects youth from taking part in risky health behaviors by providing youth with pro-social and empowering opportunities (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002). Youth who feel cared about make more conscious and informed health decisions (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002). "Overcoming mistrust, influencing the youth's story of self, creating shared meaning, and establishing basic empathy" will develop from safe and healthy relationships (Phelan, 2008). A similar program to *open mind, open heART*, described earlier, YWAP, was noted in helping youth identify community support networks for increased communication (Stinson, 2009).

Imagination and flexibility prove to be strong tools in creating competency. The ability to learn new art skills in a safe environment offers an avenue for exploring life and expressing ones emotions (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006).

Research Questions

1. Will the children at KCI Residential Treatment Center have fewer restraints while participating in *open mind, open heART*?
2. Will the participants feel a sense of connection towards one another while participating in *open mind, open heART*?
3. Does an enrichment arts program such as *open mind, open heART* increase participants competence, character, and confidence in a positive manner?

Need for Study

Further data analysis is necessary in order to continuously improve *open mind, open heART* for the children living at KCI Residential Treatment Center. Further analysis will allow society to recognize additional youth facilities in which the program was a positive addition. A study on the increased positive involvement the staff members had in this program will help enable other facilities to recognize the importance of staff involvement in increasing connection between children and their adult staff.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is the small sample size available due to convenience sampling.

Key Terms

1. Empowerment- the development of self-efficacy (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006).

2. Enrichment Arts Program- For the purpose of this research paper the Enrichment Arts Program was defined as a program that consisted of a 10-week structured summer program providing children residing at the KCI Residential Treatment Center in San Antonio with therapeutic benefits. The program had several components defined below:

- *Character Building- open mind, open heART* utilized the youth development curricula, Character Counts, to help children build resiliency skills, positive identity and self-esteem through regular participation in lessons and activities. Character building included both protective factors and resiliency factors.
- *Enrichment Arts-* Children experienced self-expression through photography, videography, painting, drawing, and other activities as instructed through the Southwest School of Arts.
- *Field Trips-* Children participated in three visits to art museums in the San Antonio, Texas area to further develop their appreciation of fine art and create a sense of belonging with the community at-large. The museums visits included the following locations: ArtPace, the Witte Museum, and the San Antonio Museum of Art.
- *Healthy Snacks-* Children participated in making healthy snacks led by the Texas State University- San Marcos interns.
- *Music-* Children learned to express themselves creatively through music; led by a licensed Music Therapist.

- *Structured Movement*- Structured Movement activities provided a physical outlet for children during the Mobile Arts Program. The 30 minute break-out sessions consisted of various activities such as martial arts, yoga, dance, and swimming.
- *Talent Show/Celebration Event*- Children participated in a talent show to display their gained talents at the shelter and celebrate their accomplishments with their instructors and other community members who have supported the program.

3. Facilitators- consisted of artists from the Southwest School of Art, a Music Therapist, and two interns from Texas State University-San Marcos.

4. Residential Treatment Center- The Children's Shelter provides 24-hour residential treatment care for children, ages 5-12 years, who have been victimized by abuse, neglect or abandonment; and, as a result, have emotional dilemmas that make it difficult for them to heal and thrive in a family-based setting. The 36-bed KCI Servant's Heart Residential Treatment program for children enables healing through individualized attention and therapeutic programming.

5. Staff- KCI Residential Treatment Center employees who participated in *open mind*, *open heART* activities.

6. Youth/Children- Participants in *open mind*, *open heART* living at KCI Residential Treatment Center ages 5-12 years old. Youth and children are used interchangeably throughout this study.

Research Design/ Analysis

open mind, open heART was a collaborative partnership between The Children's Shelter KCI Residential Treatment Center, Southwest School of Art and Texas State's Department of Health and Human Performance. The primary goal of *open mind, open heART* was for children to participate in and enjoy the enrichment arts program implemented during the summer at KCI RTC. After completing *open mind, open heART* it was intended that the children would have participated in and enjoyed the enrichment arts program implemented during the summer at KCI RTC as well as completed the following:

Competence

Children will have improved art skills.

Children will behave in a cooperative way with others in the group.

Children will actively participate throughout the 10-week summer program.

Children will improve task completion skills.

Children will have improved cooperation skills.

Children will obtain a sense of empowerment as they make decisions about which activities they engage in each day.

Character

Children will improve social skills.

Children will express anger appropriately.

Children will manage conflict appropriately.

Confidence

Children will have increased self-efficacy.

Children will have increased self-identify.

Children will have increased self-esteem.

Connection

Children will communicate effectively with adults.

Children will communicate effectively with peers.

During the planning stages, researchers contemplated how to collect qualitative data from the youth that related to the program and changes that were instilled in the youth based on the program and related to competence, character, confidence and connection. Rather than using written journals, which have been identified as problematic with at-risk youth, the children were allowed to walk around the program facilitator who asked specific questions (the interview guide is included in the Appendix of this report). The interviews were recorded using a USB recording device and then transcribed using DragonSpeak® software. The pool of children's interview questions were developed by evaluators and resemble the Youth Arts Public Program survey. Not all questions were asked to each child.

Pre and post Child Surveys were administered using paper and pencil with the children that were currently enrolled in the program. Question items that were included on both the pre and post child surveys related to the 4 C's. Adult surveys (program facilitators, KCI RTC staff, and volunteers) were administered using Survey Monkey® and related to the 4 C's as well as their opinion of the program and changes seen in the

children throughout the program. The results are presented with simple descriptive and inferential statistics and were derived using SPSS statistical software.

Sample

The child participants in this program consisted of 25 children ranging in age from 5-13 years of age. Of the twenty-five participants, eight were female and seventeen were male. Participant's ethnicities consisted of Caucasian, Hispanic, African American, and Asian/Pacific Islander. Each child in this study participated in the intervention for a minimum of eight out of ten weeks. Data were not collected for children who arrived at the Shelter after the Pre-Survey had been conducted.

All staff members, volunteers, facilitators, and artists (Adult Participants) who were present during *open mind*, *open heART*, were included in this study. Age, gender, and ethnicities vary greatly.

Data Collection

Surveys

Program pre and post surveys for child participants were conducted on picnic tables outside of the Shelter on the patio, to allow for privacy when answering the questions. The pre-surveys were given during week one and the post-surveys were given during week ten; between the hours of 9:30 AM and 11:00 AM. All surveys were conducted one at a time between the child and evaluator. Prior to beginning each survey, the child was reassured their responses would be kept confidential. To ensure test validity, the program evaluator explained the answer choices and what they meant before reading each question aloud to the child. Each of the 31 questions were read aloud one at

a time and responded to by the child. Due to attention spans, several surveys were not conducted from beginning to end in one setting, with the maximum number of sittings being three. Each question was explained to every child with the same consistency if a question about the content arose. At the completion of each survey, responses were safely stored in the evaluator's teaching toolbox, to be taken with the facilitator each day.

The surveys for all adult participants, consisting of 20 questions, were available on-line through survey monkey, an online survey maker. The staff took the surveys at the shelter at various times on the Shelter Supervisor's computer. Volunteers, facilitators, and artist had the flexibility to access the surveys on any computer with Internet, whether it was a personal or public computer. Adult surveys were not conducted off-line nor did non-staff members conduct any online surveys at the shelter. Surveys remained confidential and anonymous by refraining from questions such as name, age, or gender. Staff members were required to fill out the survey at the completion of the first, fifth, and tenth week, while facilitators and artists, who were more involved in the planning of activities, were responsible for completing the surveys at the end of each week during the ten-week program. Volunteers were asked to complete the survey at the end of each week they volunteered during the intervention.

Child Interviews

All child interviews were conducted and recorded by the program evaluator on the picnic tables outside on the Shelter's patio, to again assure privacy as well as to have a calmer and quieter environment. After a child was randomly asked by the evaluator to go talk outside, the evaluator asked for permission to ask and record the child's questions

and answers, assuring them confidentiality and anonymity. Upon agreement from the child, the evaluator turned on the recording device and began by asking a chosen question. Depending on the child's answer, the evaluator proceeded to ask a more in-depth question relating to the prior one, or continued with the next question. This step was repeated until the evaluator felt the child was ready to go back to the activities. At the completion of the interview all participants had the opportunity to listen to their recording, ask questions, and was thanked for their openness and time. Questions were chosen at random, with lower skills needed to answer those questions asked to the younger children.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study's purpose was to conduct a secondary analysis of data collected by the San Antonio Children's Shelter KCI Residential Treatment Center to further evaluate the positive changes in competence, confidence, character, and connection post *open mind*, *open heART* intervention. The study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board - Human Subjects in Research at Texas State University-San Marcos.

Instrumentation

Child Surveys

The purpose of evaluating child participants' quantitative pre- and post-program data via surveys was to assess improvements in the areas of competence, confidence, character, and connection. Child surveys contained 31 items regarding competence, confidence, character, and connection. Surveys were on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, agree to strongly agree. Items were developed in collaboration with the evaluator and KCI Residential Treatment Center staff members. Child surveys were paper and pencil based.

Child Interviews

In order to collect qualitative data from the youth related to the program and changes which were instilled in the youth based on the program relating to competence, confidence, character and connection interviews were conducted (the interview guide is included in the Appendix of this report). Child interview items were developed by evaluators and taken from the Youth Arts Public Art Program.

Adult Surveys

Adult surveys evaluated the competence, confidence, character, and connection improvements in the children from the viewpoints of staff members, facilitators, artists, and volunteers. The connection level the adults felt they had with the child participants was also evaluated. Surveying the adults also helped to evaluate the logistics of the program as well as well.

The surveys for all adult participants, consisting of 20 items, were made available on-line through Survey Monkey®—an online survey maker. Items were developed by the evaluator and KCI RTC staff members.

Participants

Child Participants

The child participants in this program consisted of 25 children ranging in age from 5-13 years of age who were currently living at the KCI RTC for therapeutic benefits. Of the 25 participants, eight were female and 17 were male. Participant's ethnicities included Caucasian, Hispanic, African American, and Asian/Pacific Islander. Each child participating had been abused or neglected in some manner. Thus, the children

were unable to make successful adjustments and possess successful behaviors in a family-based environment. Each child in this study participated in the program for a minimum of eight out of 10 weeks. Data were not collected for children who arrived at the shelter after the pre-survey had been conducted.

Adult Participants

All staff members, volunteers, facilitators, and artists who were present during *open mind, open heART* were included in this study. Age, gender, and ethnicities varied greatly. Each role is defined below.

Staff Members

Staff member(s) were identified as adults employed at KCI RTC during the 10-week program and present during the program. Staff members were present to offer support to instructors/facilitators of *open mind, open heART* and to encourage children to participate in and enjoy the enrichments art program. Staff members were responsible for all behavior corrections necessary during the program.

Volunteers

Volunteers were identified as any community member that volunteered their time during program hours during the 10-week program. Volunteers assisted in set-up and clean-up of program activities, helped engage children in the program activities, and various other tasks. Adults classified as volunteers may have volunteered for various amounts of time ranging from one time to being present the majority of days during the program.

Facilitators and Artist

Facilitators were identified as the adults who were not employed by the KCI RTC who used appropriate and effective activity management and instructional methods to engage all children participants in their respective activity during *open mind*, *open heART* throughout the 10-week period. Facilitators included a licensed music therapist (who led music activities) and two Texas State University-San Marcos graduate students interns, (who led character building, structured movement, healthy snack making, and field trips). Additionally, artists were considered facilitators and consisted of three instructors who led various painting, drawing, and crafting activities as well as a photographer and videographer. Facilitators encouraged children to make choices about engaging in breakout activities and served as active, enthusiastic role models.

Variables

In this study, the independent variables were age, gender, and participation in *open mind*, *open heART*. Dependent variables included competence, confidence, character, and connection levels.

Program Collaboration

open mind, *open heART* was a collaborative partnership between The Children's Shelter KCI Residential Treatment Center, Southwest School of Art, and Texas State University-San Marcos's Department of Health and Human Performance.

The Children's Shelter provides 24-hour residential treatment care for children, ages 5-12 years of age, who have been victimized by abuse, neglect or abandonment. As a result, these children have emotional dilemmas making it difficult for them to heal and

thrive in a family-based setting. The 36-bed KCI Servant's Heart Residential Treatment program for children enables healing through individualized attention and therapeutic programming. Children reside at the Residential Treatment Center until significant emotional development has been achieved. They are then placed with their biological family or in a foster family setting. The Southwest School of Art is a nationally recognized leader in arts education, offering studio programs for adults, children and teens. Classes and workshops are taught by local, regional and national artists. During *open mind, open heART* artists moved out of their San Antonio based state-of-the-art facilities to work with the children at KCI RTC in their own setting. Texas State University- San Marcos has diverse academic programs and is nationally recognized as a catalyst for promoting, transforming, and enhancing health related quality of life for individuals, groups, organizations and communities. The health education division became a collaborative partner to provide a research and teaching perspective to *open mind, open heART*.

These partners have expertise at a variety of levels working with at-risk youth. Recognizing that each partner uses different methods and language with children; essential pre-program trainings provided the opportunity for all partners to learn: (1) one another's language, (2) to understand the system within which the partners work, (3) to be in agreement about the program goals and (4) define each group's contribution to the collaborative partnership.

Program Activity Description

Enrichment Arts

Children expressed themselves and increased empowerment through therapeutic and interactive arts. They experienced self-expression through photography, videography, painting, drawing, and other activities as instructed through the enrichment arts teacher from the Southwest School of Arts. The arts teacher was responsible for planning activities and teaching the children how to complete the art project.

Structured Movement

Structured Movement activities provided a physical outlet for children during the enrichment arts program. The 30-minute break-out sessions consisted of various activities, such as martial arts, yoga, dance, and swimming. A structured movement teacher was hired from Texas State University–San Marcos, Department of Health and Human Performance to plan and implement the movement activities offered over the 10-week program.

Character Building

open mind, open heART utilized youth development curricula, entitled Character Counts, to help children build resiliency skills, positive identity and self-esteem through regular participation in lessons and activities. This provided an opportunity for children to express themselves in a safe environment, where they felt respected and empowered. Character building included both protective factors and resiliency factors.

Music

Children learned to express themselves creatively through music. Led by a licensed music therapist, each child learned how to use various percussion instruments.

Field Trips

Children participated in three visits to art museums in the San Antonio, Texas area to further develop their appreciation of fine art and create a sense of belonging with the community at-large. The museum visits included the following locations: ArtPace, the Witte Museum, and the San Antonio Museum of Art.

Healthy Snacks

Children participated in making healthy snacks led by the Texas State University-San Marcos graduate interns. Children learned the importance of eating healthy and how to make delicious healthy snacks.

Celebration Event

Children participated in a talent show to display their talents at the completion of the enrichment arts program and to celebrate their accomplishments with their instructors and other community members who have supported the program.

Program Procedure

open mind, open heART was conducted Monday through Friday, 9AM to 12PM, for a 10-week period over the summer at the San Antonio Children's Shelter Residential Treatment Center. Children were required to complete each enrichment activity a designated number of times throughout the summer. Each activity, which was previously noted, was offered to the children on the same day each week. Art was offered on

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Photography, videography, music therapy, swimming, and healthy snacks were offered on Tuesday and Thursday. Structured movement and character building were offered daily in alternating 30-minute increments. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday the children all started their art activity. For art, children were divided into three groups by the staff for the length of the program. At 9:25AM, the evaluator notified each art group of the additional breakout activities available at 9:30AM and gathered those children who were interested in participating. This process repeated with character building and structured movement being offered in alternating 30-minute intervals until 11:30AM. At this time, children had the opportunity to participate in free dance, limbo, or continue working on art. This process was similar on Tuesday and Thursday with children having the ability to choose where to begin their day. Tuesday and Thursday activities included videography, photography, music, character building, and structured movement. Each Tuesday and Thursday, one group was able to leave the site to swim in a personal pool donated by a community member under staff members' supervision. Children participated in healthy snack making during their designated snack time, led by Texas State University-San Marcos graduate interns. Character building focused on two of the six character traits each week, consisting of trust, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. The structured movement schedule allowed for yoga on Monday, learning a line dance on Tuesday and Thursday, Karate on Wednesday and a mixture of the three or games on Friday.

At the completion of each day, the program evaluator visited with each child to record which activities each child participated in. Activities were tracked using stickers

to mark a box under each activity completed. The tracking process also made the children aware of how many times they needed to complete specific activities to meet the program requirements.

As previously mentioned, the children visited three different art museums throughout the summer. Two groups at a time, determined by the Residential Treatment Center staff, went on the field trips during the week. The remaining two groups went the following week. Staff members and Texas State University-San Marcos graduate interns supervised children during the outings. At the completion of each tour, each child had the opportunity to choose an approved souvenir. Children were taken into the gift shop by an intern two at a time and given two minutes to pick their souvenir. Museums were contacted in advance for scheduling and pricing by the program evaluator.

Three weeks prior to the completion of the program, children were made aware of the talent show taking place during the celebration event. Facilitators worked with children on music, art, fashion, dances, letters of appreciation, and the design of program t-shirts. Children spent the last three days of the program rehearsing their performance for the talent show. The celebration event took place on the Saturday following the completion of the program. At the celebration event children were able to perform, received completion certifications, backpacks, art supplies, and t-shirts. Staff members, volunteers, and facilitators attended the celebration event.

Consent Forms

Consent forms were not signed by either the children or adult participants. Prior to conducting child surveys and interviews, the evaluator asked each participant for their

permission to ask questions and record their responses. Implied consent was given at completion of the adult surveys on Survey Monkey[®].

Data Collection Protocol

Child Surveys

Program pre- and post-assessments for the children participants were conducted on picnic tables outside of the shelter, on the patio, to allow for privacy when responding to the items. The patio was selected rather than the child's room to avoid associated risks with being in an enclosed space alone with the child. Each child, after being asked to be interviewed by the evaluator, received permission from their assigned staff member before stepping outside to the patio. Pre-surveys were conducted during week one and post-surveys were conducted during week 10 between the hours of 9:30AM and 11:00AM.

Prior to beginning each survey, each child was ensured the information provided would remain confidential. To ensure test validity, the program evaluator explained the answer choices and what they meant before reading each item aloud. Each of the 31 items were read aloud one at a time and the child responded. Due to children's attention spans, several surveys were not conducted from beginning to end in one session with the maximum number of sessions being three. Each item was explained to every child in the same consistency by the evaluator, if a question about the content arose. At the completion of each survey, it was safely stored in the evaluator's teaching toolbox, to be taken with the evaluator each day. The evaluator and supervisor were the only people with access to the box.

Child Interviews

The purpose for interviewing the child participants randomly throughout the program was to collect qualitative data to analyze the positive shifts in competence, confidence, character, and connection. Interviewing allowed for expansion to survey items and enabled the child to build trust, connect, and open up to the evaluator. All child interviews were conducted and recorded by the program evaluator on the picnic tables outside on the shelter's patio, to again assure privacy as well as a calmer and quieter environment. The picnic tables were chosen for the very reason mentioned in the previous section. After a child was randomly asked by the evaluator to go talk outside, the evaluator asked for permission to ask and record the child questions, assuring them confidentiality and anonymity. Upon agreement from the child, the evaluator turned on the recording device and began by reading a chosen item. Depending on the child's answer, the evaluator proceeded to ask a more in-depth question relating to the prior one, or continues with the next item. This step was repeated until the evaluator felt the child was ready to go back to the activities. Upon completion of the interview all participants had the opportunity to listen to their recording, ask questions, and were thanked for their openness and time. Items were chosen at random, with lower skills needed to respond to those items asked to the younger children. A USB device was used to record the interviews.

Upon completion of the program each child was given a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality and anonymity when reporting program outcomes. Pseudonyms were derived from a list of top 50 names and chosen at random. Each interview was

transcribed using Dragon Speak[®] software. In order to accurately transcribe the interviews, the evaluator listened to the recording, pressed pause, repeated what was said into the Dragon Speak[®]'s microphone, checked for errors, and then played the next section. This process was continued until all interviews were transcribed.

Adult Surveys

Adult surveys were necessary to evaluate the competence, confidence, character, and connection improvements in the children from the staff member, facilitators, artists, and volunteers' viewpoint. The surveys also evaluated the connection level the adults perceived they had with the child participants. Surveying the adults helped to evaluate the program logistics as well.

Twenty-item surveys for all adult participants were available online through Survey Monkey[®]. The staff completed the surveys on the supervisor's computer during weeks one, five, and 10 at various times. Volunteers and facilitators had the flexibility to access the surveys on any computer with Internet; whether it was a personal or public computer, through Survey Monkey[®]. Facilitators were asked to complete the survey at the completion of each week and volunteers were asked to complete the survey for each week they volunteered. Facilitators were required to complete the survey more often because they had a higher level of involvement with the activity planning and program logistics. Adult surveys were neither conducted offline nor were any online surveys conducted at the shelter by non-staff members. The program evaluator distributed the web link for the survey weekly as a reminder. Surveys remained confidential and anonymous by refraining from questions such as name, age, or gender.

Analysis of Data

Quantitative data were analyzed for shifts in competence, confidence, character, and connection using SPSS to identify descriptive statistics. T-tests were also utilized to examine pre- to post-program shifts based on gender. Qualitative data were examined for common trends existing relating to competence, confidence, character, and connection.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Introduction

Results are outlined in a manner that reflect the goals and objectives of *open mind, open heART*. The primary goal of *open mind, open heART* was for children to participate in and enjoy the enrichment arts program implemented during the summer at KCI RTC. The activities planned for the children included: multiple art activities, music, structured movement, character building lessons, and learning to make healthy snacks. These activities gave children a sense of empowerment as they engaged in making decisions about which activities they participated in each day. After completing *open mind, open heART* it was intended that the children would have participated in and enjoyed the enrichment arts program implemented during the summer at KCI RTC as well as completion of the following goals.

Competence

Children will have improved art skills

Children will behave in a cooperative way with others in the group.

Children will actively participate throughout the 10-week summer program.

Children will improve task completion skills.

Children will have improved cooperation skills. Children will obtain a sense of empowerment as they make decisions about which activities they engage in each day.

Character

Children will improve social skills.

Children will express anger appropriately.

Children will manage conflict appropriately.

Confidence

Children will have increased self-efficacy.

Children will have increased self-identify.

Children will have increased self-esteem.

Connection

Children will communicate effectively with adults.

Children will communicate effectively with peers.

Results focus on competence, character, confidence and connection (the 4 C's) and how it was addressed by the participants and facilitators/staff involved in *open mind, open heART*. Rather than using written journals, which have been identified as problematic with at-risk youth, the children were allowed to walk around the program facilitator who asked specific questions (the interview guide is included in the Appendix of this study). The interviews were recorded using a USB recording device and then transcribed using Dragon Speak® software. Themes are identified in each section.

Pre and post Child Surveys were administered using paper and pencil with the children that were currently enrolled in the program. Question items that were included on both the pre and post child surveys related to the 4 C's. The results are presented with simple descriptive statistics and t-tests.

Competence

Child Surveys

Questions on both the pre and post child surveys relating to competence included:

- Do you have the skills needed to make nice work/art projects?
- Do you participate in classes/sessions?
- Will you work on a job from beginning to end?
- Are you able to work with others in the group?
- Do you help others during a class/session?
- Do you cooperate well with others in the group?

Refer to Appendix 1.2 for full instrumentation. Prior to the program only 88% of the children felt they had the skills necessary to make nice art. Through participating in various art activities, which allowed for knowledge and confidence in working with art tools, the percentage of children at the completion of the program who felt they had necessary skills rose to 100%. The frequency of children participating in the program rose throughout, increasing by three responses. Task completion rates among the children increased by 6%, which is significant considering the small population. A 15% increase from pre to post assessment was noted in the child's perceived ability to work with others

in the group and helping others during the sessions. An increase in frequency of positive responses was seen in the child's level of cooperation within the group.

A paired-samples t-test compared pre-program data related competence levels to post-program data. There was a significant post program difference in the scores for pair one, "I have the skills necessary to make nice art" ($t=-2.939$, $p = 0.008$).

The following table represents the data analysis for the above text:

Table 1 Child Data in Relation to Competence

Competence	Pre-Survey		Post-Survey	
	(n)	(n)	t	p
Do you have the skills needed to make nice art?			2.939	0.008
Yes	22	20		
No	3	0		
Do you participate in sessions?				
Yes	15	20		
No	10	0		
Will you work on a job from beginning to end?				
Yes	21	18		
No	4	2		

Table 1 Continued

Are you able to work with others in

your group?

Yes	20	19
No	5	1

Do you help others during sessions?

Yes	20	19
No	5	1

Do you cooperate well with others

in the group?

Yes	24	20
No	1	1

Findings from Children's Interviews

Sample questions related to competence are located in Appendix 1.1. Due to confidentiality issues, all names have been changed. Three emerging themes were noted from the child interviews relating to competence: 1) improvement of art skills, 2) ability to cooperate within the group, and 3) increased proper group behavior.

Improvement of Art Skills

Several children discussed feeling frustrated or “not good” at completing the art projects. They felt the projects were too difficult at the beginning of the summer. When asked this same question at the end of the program, they all expressed improved skills and perceived themselves as being “great artists”. Noah stated he was not good at art during his first interview but then stated in his last interview that his proudest accomplishment this summer was art. Similarly, Madison believed that at week 10 her proudest accomplishment was art. She reported, “I’m doing good in art.” and that her favorite thing she made was her purse. When asked what type of emotions art makes you feel, Logan responded, “...when I used to do art, I did not like how things turned out, I didn’t like it....I’m happier with it now because I take my time and I used to just rush through it.” Isabella when talking about her earrings made during art commented “I thought it wasn’t about matching it and now I know it is about matching it.”

Group Behavior and Cooperation Abilities

As Sophia discussed her daily routine, she mentioned her favorite program activities were music and making a video. When further probed about her video she described how she and Isabella were creating a song to sing together for the movie.

Coinciding with this, when Isabella was interviewed she also mentioned the project she and Sophia were collaborating on. In regards to group cooperation, one child described the reason he enjoyed making movies was because of the collaboration between two group members, the videographer, and himself to record them playing basketball. He stated, “We worked together and had fun.” Daniel mentioned the thing that made him happy about working on art projects was “getting to go around and help each other, color, and make pictures for people.” When the evaluator asked Daniel what makes a good friend he noted one of the factors being the ability to make agreements. Several children noted learning how to behave within their group. Comments relating to this include: “Was treating people the way people want to be treated”, “And no fighting. No fighting. No kicking”.

Adult Surveys

The adult survey results combined the responses from facilitators, artist, volunteers, and staff. For a breakdown of interesting findings per adult role please see conclusions.

Questions used to assess competence include:

- Were you involved in the *open mind, open heART* program to any extent?
- I have an in-depth knowledge about the KCI RTC local environment and its challenges/barriers.
- Would you note anything in relationship to the children's competence, character, confidence or connection since the start of the program or since you last completed a survey?

For the full instruments used see Appendix 1.3. Descriptive statistics were used through Survey Monkey® to count the percentage of responses. The number of adults who felt that they were involved during week 1 showed 4 adults felt a part from the program. By week 10, all adult respondents felt involved. There was little change noted in the knowledge of KCI’s environment from pre to post program. In response to the qualitative question of noting observed differences to the children’s relationship to competence, an adult commented “I saw Sophia act as a role model to the children. She helped talk Olivia out of an outburst twice and redirected her attention a couple times by making the project with her. The cheer that they did together at our party on Saturday was a direct result of this. Sophia helped Olivia with her costume and I could see that it made Olivia feel good to work with Sophia”. Another adult noted “Children are more willing to share materials, interactions between children seem positive for the most part”.

The table below represents the quantitative data presented in the above paragraph.

Table 2 Adult Data in Relation to Competence

Competency	<u>Pre-Survey</u>	<u>Post-Survey</u>
	(n)	(n)
Were you involved in the <i>open mind, open</i>		
<i>heART</i> program to any extent?		
Yes	16	14
No	4	0

Table 2 Continued

I have an in-depth knowledge about the KCI RTC local environment and its challenges/barriers.

Yes	15	14
No	0	0

Confidence

Child Surveys

Questions on both the pre and post child surveys relating to confidence include:

- If there is a conflict, I try to improve the situation.
- Other people respect the way I handle conflict.
- I enjoy living in my community
- I influence what my community is like
- I help people in my community to get along with each other.

Refer to Appendix 1.2 for full instrumentation. Descriptive statistics and T-tests were used to count the frequency of responses measuring the child's confidence. Children reported having more confidence trying to improve conflicts post program by 9%. The confidence children had in observers viewing the way they handle conflict grew as well, by 8%, by the completion of the program. The number of children who reported liking living in their community dropped by 25%, likely due to gained trust of the evaluator in keeping the responses confidential. There was an increase in the perceived influence over

what their community is like, while a positive decrease was seen in the child's response to helping people in their community get along.

A paired-samples t-test compared pre-program data related confidence levels to post-program data. There was a significant difference post program in the scores for pair 28, "I enjoy living in my community" ($t=2.259$, $p=0.36$).

The following table represents the data analysis in the above text:

Table 3 Child Data in Relation to Confidence

Confidence	Pre-		t	p
	Survey	Post-Survey		
	(n)	(n)		
Were you involved in the <i>open mind, open heART</i> program to any extent?				
Yes	19	17		
No	6	3		
Other people respect the way I handle conflict.				
Yes	13	12		
No	12	8		
I enjoy living in my community.				
Yes	15	7	2.259	0.36
No	10	13		

Table 3 Continued

I influence what my community
is like.

Yes	18	15
No	7	5

I help people in my community
get along with each other.

Yes	20	17
No	3	3

Findings from Child Interviews

Sample questions asked relating to confidence are found in Appendix 1.1. Due to confidentiality issues, all names have been changed. Two emerging themes were noted from the child interviews relating to confidence such as: 1) creative activities help my confidence and 2) enable me to recognize my positive self- attributes.

Creative Activities Help my Confidence

When asked by the evaluator if the child felt more confident now than before the program, 100% of the children indicated being more confident. Children were asked throughout the second part of the program if they had anything to be proud of since the beginning of the program. Every child interviewed stated something they were proud of being related to an activity in *open mind, open heART*. One such response was a story

told by Sophia, “When one of my friends wanted to play with me and Abigail, she wanted to put on a dress and I said that is not fair because my staff doesn't let me put on two clothes because I can't change once or twice I have to stay in the same outfit that she wanted to stick on a dress because she wanted to dance. So my staff looked at me and I said you know what fine, go to your dress. It's okay you can go put it on. I usually get mad and say it's not there but I just let her do it.” Confidence was seen in Olivia when she stated she was proud she was able to go swimming. She knew she had this opportunity because she “behaved and all that stuff. No biting and kicking staff.” Madison commented she was proud of herself for the way she was behaving and the art work she has completed. Joshua expressed, “I am proud of learning how to walk on my hands and dancing the right way instead of the wrong way, which is not good. It's a terrible way. I'm not going to explain it. I think you know what I mean”.

I Have Positive Attributes

Each child interviewed was asked to identify the one thing they did best over the summer. This question was asked in order for the children to identify a positive attribute. Responses include: “Hair bands and clips, write that down.”, “my singing”, “I am responsible because I take care of my family.”, “I drewed [sic] a rectangle and then made a big monster truck out of paper and then out of cardboard.” Mason was very confident in his belt making skills. Another child recognized that he is a very caring person and good at helping others.

Adult Surveys

The adult survey results combined the responses from facilitators, artist, volunteers, and staff. For a breakdown of interesting findings per adult role please see conclusions.

Questions used to assess confidence include:

- I enjoy working in the KCI RTC community.
- I influence what my community is like.
- Would you note anything in relationship to the children's competence, character, confidence or connection since the start of the program or since you last completed a survey?

For the full instruments used see Appendixes 1.3. Descriptive statistics were used through Survey Monkey® to count the percentage of responses. When asked during week 1 if they enjoyed working in the KCI RTC community, a staff member reported not enjoying it, as seen in Table 4, while in week 10 all adults reported enjoying their work community. There was a frequency increase of 2, resulting in all adults feeling they influence what the community is like at the completion of the program. Comments in response to observing a relationship to the children's confidence include: "I have gotten to know my group of kids likes and dislikes, I have noticed that all they really want is someone to show them they are here for them, and because they know this, our kids are more active towards our activities and a lot more confident," and "The children are more confident expressing themselves, both artistically and orally discussing their ideas and what they are trying to express." One artist expressed the following: "I feel like Logan really benefitted from us coming. He is such a creative and determined boy! I think being

in the art classes helped Logan’s confidence and character. I remember in the beginning when I had the boy's group, his hands shook so bad that it was hard for him to make his art. The constant practice and determination seems to help him overcome and manage this. Although all the children are special, Logan is very unique. When I heard that he was moving, I felt very emotional because I was fearful of how the change was going to affect him.”

The table below represents the quantitative data presented in the above paragraph.

Table 4 Adult Data in Relation to Confidence

Confidence	<u>Pre-Survey</u>	<u>Post-Survey</u>
	(n)	(n)
I enjoy working in the KCI RTC community.		
Yes	14	14
No	1	0
I influence what the KCI RTC community is like.		
Yes	12	14
No	3	0

Character

Child Surveys

Questions on both the pre and post child surveys relating to character include:

- I like to use creative ways of exploring my thoughts and feelings.

- I explore my thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photo/video or music.
- I have lots of creative ways to communicate my thoughts and feelings.
- I have difficulty finding creative ways to express myself.
- Do you manage anger the right way?
- Do you express conflict the right way?
- I behave appropriately toward other people.
- I respect personal boundaries when touching other people.
- I understand issues of personal space, touch, and appropriate behavior towards other people.
- I have problems respecting other people's personal space.
- I avoid unnecessary conflicts with others.
- I can't deal with conflict.

Refer to Appendix 1.2 for full instrumentation. Again, descriptive statistics and t-tests were used to analyze the responses. Post-program results indicated 100% of the children liked to use creative ways to explore their thoughts and feelings. This was an increase of 24%. There was also a significant increase of 23% in children exploring their thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photo/video, or music. The positive responses to children believing they have lots of creative ways to communicate their thoughts and feelings jumped by 24% from pre to post program surveys. Coinciding with the previous question's responses, the number of children who felt they had difficulty in finding creative ways to express themselves decreased by 40% at the completion of the program.

There was a 34% increase in the children's perception of handling anger the right way, as well as a 17% increase in the ability to express conflict the right way. The confidence the children had when asked if they behave properly towards other people decreased by 7%. The rate at which children reported respecting boundaries when touching people showed an increase of 12% at the completion of the ten weeks. There was also an increase of 15% in the level of understanding of personal space, touch, and appropriate behavior towards other people. There were no pre to post-survey differences found in problems respecting other people's personal space. Children reported a 4% increase in response to avoiding unnecessary conflicts with others. A substantial increase was seen in the children's perceived ability to deal with conflict, showing an increase of 54%.

A paired-samples t-test compared pre-program data in relation to character to post program data. There was a significant difference post-program scores for pairs seven, ten, twelve, and seventeen. Pair seven, "I have difficulty finding creative ways to express myself" ($t=3.343$, $p=.003$); pair ten; "Do you manage anger the right way?" ($t=-2.668$, $p=.015$); pair twelve, "I behave properly towards other people" ($t=2.932$, $p=.009$); and pair seventeen, "I can't deal with conflict" ($t=3.489$, $p=.002$).

The following table represents the data analysis in the above text:

Table 5 Child Data in Relation to Character

Character	Pre-		t	p
	Survey	Post-Survey		
	(n)	(n)		
I like to use creative ways to explore my thoughts and feelings.				
Yes	19	20		
No	6	0		
I explore my thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photo/video, or music				
Yes	18	19		
No	7	1		
I have lots of creative ways to communicate my thoughts and feelings.				
Yes	19	20		
No	6	0		

Table 5 Continued

I have difficulty finding creative ways to express myself.			3.343	0.003
Yes	15	0		
No	10	20		
Do you manage anger the right way			2.668	0.015
Yes	14	18		
No	11	2		
Do you express conflict the right way?				
Yes	17	17		
No	8	3		
I behave properly towards other people.			2.932	0.009
Yes	23	17		
No	2	3		
I respect boundaries when touching other people.				
Yes	18	17		
No	7	3		

Table 5 Continued

I understand issues of personal space, touch, and appropriate behavior towards other people.

Yes 20 17

No 5 3

I have problems respecting other people's personal space.

Yes 10 8

No 15 12

I avoid unnecessary conflicts with others.

Yes 19 16

No 6 4

I can't deal with conflict.

3.489 0.002

Yes 16 2

No 9 18

Findings from Child Interviews

Sample questions asked related to character are found in Appendix 1.1. Due to confidentiality issues, all names have been changed. Two emerging themes were noted

from the child interviews relating to character such as: 1) improved behavior and 2) creativity provides resources for stress and anger management.

My Behavior has Improved

Many of the children interviewed expressed improvement of their behavior throughout the program. William stated learning not to kick, bite, or cuss anymore. He attributed this knowledge to the creative activities and character building lessons he participated in. Another child reported “I have not been fighting as much and I have been doing a lot of stuff during art”, in response to the question *how has your behavior changed since the beginning of the summer until now?* Noah felt “he changed his act by being good and listening”. In the first interview with Madison, she identified the reason for her being at KCI RTC as problems with her behavior, specifically her anger management. She reported being placed at Laurel Ridge five times and it is her third time at KCI RTC. Her goal is to leave the facility by improving her behavior. When asked if her behavior has improved at the end of the summer, she said yes, stating the program has helped her. “I have learned how not to touch other people’s middle parts and nasty parts,” said Madison. She commented that her mentor had just told her she is “on her way out of here”. Jackson responded to how has his behavior changed by stating, “Um, I feel calmer and before character building I was not very respectful... I am now and that makes me feel good.”

Creativity Provides Resources for Stress and Anger Management

It was noted the children interviewed felt art, music, dance, movement, photography, videography, and character development all provide resources for dealing

with anger and stress. Dancing was most commonly reported as a stress reliever, making the children feel happy. Michael stated any kind of movement makes him feel less stressed. When discussing things that make Madison sad, she expressed sadness when her parents argued over who would get the kids. She said when she would hear them she would “Hide, take a break and eat ice cream to help her calm down.” She then suggested that now maybe she would dance rather than eat when she is angry or stressed. Another child, Joshua, said, “When we dance I feel a little relaxed because I get happy because my days aren’t so good.” He also stated his favorite activity being dance “because I get a little exercise and I get emotions out”.

Adult Surveys

The adult survey results combine the responses from facilitators, artist, volunteers, and staff. For a breakdown of interesting findings per adult role please see conclusions.

Questions used to assess character include:

- I’ve observed the children use creative ways of exploring thoughts and feelings.
- I observed the children explore thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photography and music.
- The children have difficulty finding creative ways to express themselves.
- The children have lots of creative ways to communicate their thoughts and feelings.
- Would you note anything in relationship to the children's competence, character, confidence or connection since the start of the program or since you last completed a survey?

For the full instruments used see Appendixes 1.3. Descriptive statistics were used through Survey Monkey® to count the percentage of responses. The number of adults who disagreed with having observed the children using creative way to express their feelings dropped from 1 to zero post-program. Those adults in disagreement of having viewed children use art, music, or photography to express their feelings also decreased from 2 to zero. There were a lower percentage of adults who felt the children had lots of creative ways to express themselves after week 10 of the program. In response to the relationship of the children to character, one adult was quoted in saying, “This year I think that the students are much more willing to try things. There is not the mean kind of teasing going on and I think the addition of the yoga, movement, dance and character development have really improved the program. It is a delight to watch the kids dance with such abandon. I think they feel really safe and comfortable in the environment we have created. The added choices have helped with that.”

The table below represents the quantitative data presented in the above paragraph.

Table 6 Adult Data in Relation to Character

Character	<u>Pre-Survey</u> (n)	<u>Post-Survey</u> (n)
I've observed the children use creative ways of exploring thoughts and feelings.		
Yes	14	14
No	1	0

Table 6 Continued

I observed the children explore thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photography, videography or music.

Yes	13	14
No	2	0

The children have difficulty finding creative ways to express themselves.

Yes	7	5
No	8	9

The children have lots of creative ways to communicate their thoughts and feelings.

Yes	12	10
No	3	4

Connection

Child Surveys

Questions on both the pre and post child surveys relating to connection include:

- Do you talk to adults about things that are important to you?
- Do you talk with other youth in the group about things that are important to you?
- I communicate effectively with my peers.

- I communicate effectively with other people.
- I understand people when they are talking to me.
- I have good conversations with other people.
- I communicate well when in a group.
- If I have problems, there are people in my community to help me solve them.

Refer to Appendix 1.2 for full instrumentation. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. A 10% increase, from pre to post assessments, was noted in responses relating to the children talking to adults about things of importance to them. The frequency in which children expressed talking to peers about important issues decreased by 7 responses. The frequency for communicating well with peers decreased as well, by 5 responses. However, the ability to communicate well with other people increased. The children indicated a 2% decrease in understanding other people when they are talking and a 6% decrease in having good conversations with other people. Another decrease from pre to post survey was found in the children's ability to communicate well in a group. An increase of 3% was cited in the children's confidence of having people in their community to help them solve problems.

A paired-samples t-test compared pre-program data related to level of connection to post program data. There were no significant changes noted.

The following table represents the data analysis in the above text:

Table 7 Child Data in Relation to Connection

Connection	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	p
	(n)	(n)		
Do you talk with adults about things that are important to you?				
Yes	20	18		
No	5	2		
Do you talk with other youth about things that are important to you?				
Yes	17	10		
No	8	10		
Do you communicate well with peers?				
Yes	22	17		
No	3	3		

Table 7 Continued

Do you communicate well with
other people?

Yes	21	17
No	4	3

Do you understand other people
when they talk to you?

Yes	23	18
No	2	2

I have good conversations with
people.

Yes	24	18
No	1	2

I communicate well in a group.

Yes	22	15
No	3	5

Table 7 Continued

If I have problems, there are people
in my community to help me solve
them.

Yes	23	19
No	2	1

Findings from Child Interviews

Sample questions asked relating to connection are found in Appendix 1.1. Due to confidentiality issues, all names have been changed. Two emerging themes were noted from the child interviews relating to connection: 1) connecting with adults and peers makes me happy and 2) I trust you with my story.

Connecting With Adults and Peers Makes me Happy

The children interviewed were each asked about one thing that made them happy on the day of their interview and to recall their happiest day of their lives. The majority of children had responses relating to feeling connected to an adult and/or peer. Sophia was happy the day of her interview because she and Abigail were singing a song together. She also mentioned feeling alone when she was in an argument with the other girls at KCI RTC, including her best friend there. When Mason was asked about a time in his life he felt alone, he responded, “when nobody loved me” and “having no friends.” Olivia expressed feeling glad because “...you hug me and give me something.” Michael feels happy and connected when the “staff plays basketball and stuff” with them. He feels the

staff likes to play with them. Logan expressed liking and feeling connected to the artist he worked with all summer. Another child reported their most trusted person to be one of the staff members working with him. When asked what this program has made you thankful for, Jackson responded, “Like, the art projects, it makes me thankful that you all get to come and I get to do stuff with y'all.” Joshua, Isabella, and Aiden reported talking to the evaluator alone the happiest part of their day so far.

I Trust You With My Story

Several children felt connected and trusted the evaluator with their personal stories in response to some of the questions. Olivia briefly discussed her mom making her sad in response to “what makes you sad today?” She discussed being yelled at and said “she always says I’m going to whoop your butt daughter for you not come over here...she chased me in the rain.” Joshua spent time talking about his last visit home to see his family. He excitedly expressed getting to see his brothers and sister. He went on discussing why his family didn’t wear pirate costumes. When the evaluator asked Jackson if videography made him recall any memories he reported remembering “When me and my little brother we were little, we have this picture on this chair wearing the same clothes and the same hat. We were taking pictures together.” He identified the happiest day of his life as “Umm Christmas because my family never had a Christmas like this before. We got Christmas trees, we got corn to string up around the Christmas tree, and apples to hang up and my cousin dressed up like Santa Claus but I couldn't tell anyone. And then everybody got to sit on his lap. My grandma my grandpa and my mom.”

Adult Surveys

The adult survey results combined the responses from facilitators, artist, volunteers, and staff. For a breakdown of interesting findings per adult roles please see conclusions.

Questions used to assess connection include:

- If I have problems, there are people in the KCI RTC who help me solve them.
- I communicate effectively with other people.
- I understand other people at KCI RTC when they are talking to me.
- I have good conversations with other people at KCI RTC.
- I communicate well when in a group.
- Would you note anything in relationship to the children's competence, character, confidence or connection since the start of the program or since you last completed a survey?

For the full instruments used see Appendixes 1.3. Descriptive statistics were used through Survey Monkey® to count the percentage of responses. The adult perceived connection to people at KCI RTC who can help them with their problems decreased by one person post-program. As seen in Table 8, the communication effectiveness the adults felt had no change from week 1 to week 10. The perceived ability for adults to understand people when they are talking to them and their ability to have good conversations both had changes, but this change may be due to the number of total respondents. The same held true for their ability to communicate well in groups. One artist stated in response to the children's relationship to connection, "Children's

confidence and connection continue to grow. Teaching has been more fun and easier this year.”

The table below represents the quantitative data presented in the above paragraph.

Table 8 Adult Data in Relation to Connection

Connection	<u>Pre-Survey</u> (n)	<u>Post-Survey</u> (n)
If I have problems, there are people in the KCI RTC who help me solve them		
Yes	15	14
No	0	0
I communicate effectively with other people.		
Yes	14	14
No	0	0
I understand other people at KCI RTC when they are talking to me,		
Yes	15	14
No	0	0
I have good conversations with other people at KCI RTC.		
Yes	14	14
No	1	0

Table 8 Continued

I communicate well when in a group.

Yes	15	14
No	0	0

Additional Program Findings

Child Responses

During the child interviews, participants were asked to describe their average day. Many of the children expressed waking up sad. Aiden responded by saying “Umm... when I wake up I think about my mom and dad and parents and how I can’t see them, I don’t get to see them, and I get more happy knowing that every time I think about it I know I’m going home still.” Another child reported feeling sad due to waking up every morning with a stomachache from vomiting during the night. The children were also asked to choose a superpower. There were interesting responses to this question such as the power to “stay with my sister ... to fly... if I had the power to stay with her I would fly there.” Another child stated wanting the power “thankful” so they could “teach people how to be nice and people how to have faith.”

It is interesting that one child noted liking art, or program time, because they did not have to be around all of the children at once. They had the freedom and ability for personal space and one-on-one time with adults in the program. This might have been related to the decrease in peer communication. A goal stated by Benjamin was to “achieve in what I believe in myself...I want to become a lawyer or dancer when I grow

up.” Daniel was able to connect his good behavior with the reason he able to visit his Aunt. Several other children made this connection to being able to go swimming during the program. Logan pointed out he is learning to take responsibility for himself, stating, “I am learning now that now that I can’t blame my roommate for stuff, which I never lied about, but now that I can’t blame my roommate I have to clean up on my own.” When asked to share a secret with the evaluator, Michael said, “I don’t tell no secrets, I feel like I want to but I can’t... I wish people already knew what they were.”

Children were also asked what advice they would give a new child at KCI RTC during their individual interviews. Responses included things relating to behavior and feelings such as: “Just behave, please do not act up or you will just stay longer”, “It ain’t that bad, it ain’t going to be forever”, “keep your head up, if anybody makes you mad it’s ok.” During one interview the child responded to the majority of questions with “no hitting, no kicking, no biting”, which did not match up to the questions asked. It almost seemed as though the child knew what therapists or adults wanted him to say and used those responses to hide his true feelings.

Adult Responses

According to facilitators, artists, staff and volunteers the majority of the planned activities per week were accomplished. One of the artists stated, “The children were interested in the projects and all plans were completed. The trash bag costumes were a big hit. Staff was very cooperative and helpful with the students after some problems on Wednesday. I was very appreciative that concerns I raised were addressed and handled in a positive and professional way.” In regards to noticeable interactions with and among

the youth, responses from the staff included: “they have learned to spend longer on one activity”, “our children know that we are all here for them and that their peers are whom they have right now so they have learned to talk about things rather than blowing up”, and “They spend all day together so being able to go with another group, even just for character lessons makes a difference”. The artists reported on the same question with responses such as “I hear words like please, sorry, thank you, used more and more”, “The children are working well together and they continue to resolve problems that come up on their own without teacher or staff supervision”, and “This week I didn't say anything about working in pairs or groups and some students decided on their own to work together and help each other out.”

Conclusions

In conclusion, all of the children expressed throughout the program how grateful they were that the artists and facilitators were at the Center and part of the program. Many children reported days they were able to do the activities as their happiest day ever.

Competence

As seen from the results, children's art skills improved as well as their group behavior skills. It was suggested that an increase in children's participation resulted in increased art skills, therefore resulting in higher project completion rates. Increased staff involvement may also be connected to increases in child participation and cooperation abilities. As skills of one child increase, they are eager to help the other group members improve their skills.

Confidence

It was noted that participation in creative activities results in higher confidence levels of the children and their ability to identify positive self attributes increases. When the children feel more confident in themselves and in the way they perceive others as viewing their conflict management skills is positive, they will have higher frequencies of trying to improve conflicts and avoid unnecessary conflicts, as seen by the results. The percentage of children liking their environment may be due to testing validity. Children might have lied about their true feelings to the evaluator week one. After gaining trust, the children might have felt more open to state their true feelings. Increases in adult participation and involvement correlate to the level of influence they have at KCI RTC over the environment.

Character

Based on the results, it was concluded the children had improved behavior and creative activities provided an outlet for stress and anger management. There was a connection seen between rates of having lots of creative ways to express feelings, liking to use creative way to express feelings, and actually using creative way to express feelings. Children have to first be taught and like creative ways such as art, music, dance, and photography before they feel empowered to use those skills. The use of creative expression of feelings was apparent to the adults involved. Once there was an increase in confidence in using their creative skills, the ability to manage anger and conflict, expressing it the proper way increased. There was also a link to the children

understanding personal space issues and respecting it. One cannot respect an issue they do not comprehend.

Connection

Feeling connected has the ability to make both children and adults happy. When a child feels connected to somebody they open up and tell their stories because of the built trust. The decrease in peer communications was a result of having time to have one-on-one conversations with adults and the ability of the children to separate themselves from their normal groups, since the level of communication with others increased. There was an increase in understanding people when they are talking but an unusual decrease in child perception of having good conversations and group communication. This may be due to testing error and/or factors outside of the program. The perception of having adults in KCI RTC to help both children and adults solve problems rose, indicating a connectedness throughout.

A concluding statement about the relationship to the children's competence, character, confidence and connection about the children from pre-program to post was quoted by a staff member as: "our children really look happier, understand more, and know that we, the staff, are here for them. They are more loving, caring, and respectful". Grounded in the program data, it was concluded that *open mind, open heART* was a successful program that met and accomplished the program goals and objectives over the summer.

Recommendations

Training for Staff

It is recommended that there be a comprehensive training of the program with all participating staff members, facilitators, and artists prior to the start date. Training would include background knowledge of the four “C’s” (competence, confidence, character, and connection), resiliency and protective factors, program goals and logistics. One artist expressing frustration said, “Prior to working with the children a workshop or meeting was scheduled for staff explaining the idea of choice for the children in regards to art activities, dance, character building, etc. Some staff haven’t gotten this idea and it hampers interactions with and between the children when they are told to get up and leave for another group when they are engrossed in what they are doing.” Training on how to conduct the interviews and proper ways to respond to what the children are saying would be recommended to refrain from negatively affecting the children and increased evaluator confidence. It is suggested to have a third intern to conduct the research and handle logistics of the program or give the responsibility of nutrition and character building to the movement intern as well. The role of each person and chain of command should be identified and discussed as well. Training staff members in the various movement activities is suggested in order to promote staff participation during the summer sessions with the children.

Planning and Communication with Facilitators

Based on data, minimum knowledge of the children’s backgrounds and current situations would be helpful for the facilitators and artists to know how to deal with

certain conflicts and situations. It would also be helpful if non-staff members were trained by staff on how to handle conflicts and outbursts. The artists and facilitators mentioned receiving a notice from the staff prior to the children permanently leaving KCI RTC in order to prepare with gifts the day of. It is also recommended that facilitators and artists be notified of days in which more than 25% of the children will be absent for planning purposes.

CHAPTER IV

EMPOWERING AT RISK CHILDREN WITH AN ENRICHMENT ART PROGRAM

Abstract

This study provides an overview of the evaluation for the *open mind, open heART* enrichment arts program conducted at the KCI Residential Treatment Center (RTC) in San Antonio, Texas. The program consisted of a 10-week structured summer program providing children residing at the center with therapeutic benefits. The evaluation focused on four themes: Competence, Confidence, Character, and Connection. The purpose of this study was to provide evaluation results from the children who participated in the *open mind, open heART* enrichment arts program. The evaluation consisted of pre and post surveys as well as interviews with the children. Program results indicate that despite the children's hardships, they were able to improve competence, confidence, character and connection after participating in the summer program. A concluding statement about the children's competence, confidence, character and connection following the program was summarized by a KCI RTC staff member: "our children really look happier, understand more, and know that we, the staff, are here for them. They are more loving, caring, and respectful." It was asserted that *open mind, open heART* was a successful program that met and succeeded its goals over the summer.

Keywords

at-risk children, enrichment arts, competence, confidence, character, connection

Introduction

In order to adapt to and manage crises, develop commitment, express idealism, and alleviate alienation, children must develop self-control. “At-risk” children are labeled due to negative involvement and circumstances in their lives, which may inhibit the development of essential assets. To best serve these children, programs should seek to avoid stress and enhance pleasure in their lives (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006). Children who have been impacted by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) are commonly labeled as at-risk.

Children who have been abused are more likely to develop PTSD. Incidence of developing PTSD among abused children is a concern. Fifteen percent of boys who were physically abused and 90% of sexually abused children experienced PTSD (Giardino, 2011). The effects of trauma on a child’s life can result in reduced academic performance, increased high-risk behaviors and difficulties forming and developing relationships (National Child Traumatic, n. d.).

Many interventions for “at-risk-youth” replicate the efforts of successful programs. One project (Project Re-Ed) focused on competence building and was implemented in a short-term residential treatment center for children (Valore, Cantrell & Cantrell, 2006). Group development and involvement were primary techniques used to expand competency in youth enrolled in the program. A similar therapeutic art program, The National Arts and Youth Demonstration Project (NAYDP), encouraged youth to freely engage in creative and artistic expression through various artistic media while

having fun (Stinson, 2009). In addition to gaining new art skills, the program proved effective in increasing pro-social, participation, and task completion skills (Stinson, 2009).

Competence is the experience of feeling that one is effective in dealing with the environment (Prelow, Weaver & Swenson, 2006). One who exhibits competence is able to effectively adapt to one's personal and social environment in order to achieve major developmental tasks given age, gender and specific domains of achievement (Fetro, Rhodes & Hey, 2010). Social competence "is an individual-level attribute that facilitates adaptive functioning, positive adjustment, and later goal attainment despite early adversity of stressful life events" (Stepp, Pardini, Loeber & Morris, 2011).

Pittman and Cahill defined child development as "an ongoing process in which individuals seek ways to meet their developmental needs and build skills and competencies that will allow them to function effectively and efficiently in their daily lives" (Fetro, Rhodes & Hey, 2010). This definition, based on the work of Erikson, Kohlberg, Maslow, and Piaget, has seven developmental needs: safety and structure, closeness and relationships, belonging and group membership, self-worth and the ability to contribute, independence and control over one's life, competency and mastery and self-awareness. The definition also encompasses five competency domains: cognitive/creative, health/physical, personal/social, career/vocational and citizenship (Fetro, Rhodes & Hey, 2010). Based on this definition, it was concluded that as competence in one domain increases, one or more developmental needs might be met. Programs focusing on the noted factors have been proven to have a positive impact on self-confidence, problem-solving skills, communication skills, cooperation, and self-

management (Fetro, Rhodes & Hey, 2010). Several positive outcomes were linked to social competency as well, such as educational attainment, employment status, lower levels of substance abuse, depression, and self-reported delinquency (Stepp, Pardini, Loeber & Morris, 2011).

Confidence consists of several factors, two of which are self-esteem and self-efficacy. Self-esteem was defined as the evaluations that an individual makes about his or her value and worth. Self-efficacy is the belief that one can deal with the demands made and the emotions aroused by the situation (Prelow, Weaver & Swenson, 2006). Self-esteem can serve as a protective factor against taking part in risky health behavior (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002). It is linked to high academic achievement, involvement in sport and physical activity, and development of effective coping, and peer pressure resisting skills.

Self-esteem is affected by past experiences with adversity, such as poverty, stressful life events, or neighborhood disadvantages (Prelow, Weaver & Swenson, 2006). Unsuccessful experiences dealing with these situations affect the development of self-worth, competence, and self-efficacy. Self-efficacy and self-esteem have been shown to reduce the feeling of hopelessness, therefore reducing violent behavior among children (Shuval et al., 2010). Also, the projection of self-identity to the future is an important variable for the development of feeling hopeful (Stoddard, Henly, Sieving & Bolland, 2011).

Art has been reported to increase confidence and raise self-esteem, two critical factors in pro-social development (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006). Life skills, a group of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed

decisions and deal with everyday life, are effective for empowering young people to make informed decisions about their own well-being (Pharaoh, Frantz & Smith, 2011). Evidence exists to support the benefits of life skills in reducing health risk behavior. High confidence levels allow children to engage in creative problem solving in order to overcome barriers to self-development. It was noted that young people engage in health risk behaviors without reflecting on the consequences due to the fact they do not see themselves being at risk (Pharaoh, Frantz & Smith, 2011). Perceived vulnerability has played a vital role in many prevention programs. The level of confidence was linked to taking part in health risk behaviors. Programs offering safe environments, encouragement and support, empowering activities, and specific guidelines for appropriate behavior contribute to increased self-esteem (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002).

Character includes one's thinking, feeling, and behavior and their actions. It is normally a morally neutral term that describes major qualities (i.e., trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship). The all too common nationwide school violence, has established the recognition of the need for character education for our children (Allen et al., 2011). Although it is recognized, there is little emphasis on implementing character education in the classroom. Character education programs increase children's ability to think in principled ways, respond to others empathetically, and develop social responsibility. These are all vital skills to help children be successful in challenges they encounter daily. Effective character education programs teach communication, active listening, relationships, decision-making, assertiveness, and social awareness. It helps to teach children the difference between right and wrong and to guide their thoughts and actions based on the character traits discussed (Allen et al., 2011).

Connection was defined as the bond felt between two or more people, places, or things. It is the ability to communicate with others effectively. Many at risk children display developmental problems in attachments to family, school, and community due to their lack of trust caused by past experiences (Phelan, 2008). These attachments were repaired by forming healthy trusting relationships. Adults working with at risk children can measure their relationship strength by noting an increase in communication, social reinforcement, and the acceptance of the adult as a role model. Children can then develop personal boundary skills and feel comfortable asking for help. Establishing trust allows children to let down their guard and share their thoughts which prohibit them from successful behaviors (Phelan, 2008).

Evidence suggests positive group bonds can support other treatment efforts and enhance competency (Valore, Cantrell & Cantrell, 2006). At-risk children have a chance to succeed when caring adults invest in them by offering more than threats and punishment, but rather offering them the help they need. According to Nicholas Hobbs, trust between child and adult is the foundation on which all else rests. Hobbs felt feelings should be nurtured, shared, controlled, and explored with trusted others (Valore, Cantrell & Cantrell, 2006).

The presence of trusted adults or peers highly reduces the amount of stress weighing on children who have experienced trauma (Larson, 2005). They are looking to find a supportive listener with whom their story was shared. In 2003, a report by the Commission on Children at Risk cites research noting, “humans are wired for close attachment to others”. When children in a focus group were asked what they most

needed to succeed in life, the number one response was having a positive connection with adults working with them (Larson, 2005).

A sense of positive connection protects children from taking part in risky health behaviors by providing children with pro-social and empowering opportunities (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002). Children who feel cared about make more conscious and informed health decisions (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002). “Overcoming mistrust, influencing the child’s story of self, creating shared meaning, and establishing basic empathy” will develop from safe and healthy relationships (Phelan, 2008).

Methods

Program Collaboration

open mind, open heART was a collaborative partnership between The Children’s Shelter KCI Residential Treatment Center (RTC), the Southwest School of Art and Texas State University-San Marcos. The Children’s Shelter provides 24-hour residential treatment care for children, ages 5-12 years, who have been victimized by abuse, neglect or abandonment. As a result, these children experience emotional dilemmas that make healing and thriving in a family-based setting difficult. The 36-bed KCI Servant’s Heart Residential Treatment Center and its programs enable children’s healing through individualized attention and therapeutic programming. Children reside at the residential treatment facility until significant emotional development has been achieved. Once this development is realized, the child is placed back with the family or a foster family setting. The Southwest School of Art is a nationally recognized leader in arts education, offering studio programs for adults, children and teens. Classes and workshops are

taught by local, regional and national artists. During *open mind, open heART* the artists worked with the children at KCI RTC in their own setting. Texas State University's division of health education was a collaborative partner which provided program planning, implementation and evaluation efforts to the *open mind, open heART* program.

The collaborative partners had various levels of expertise working with at risk youth. Recognizing that each partner would use different methods, language, and ways of working with children; staff and facilitator training for the 10-week program was provided. The training provided the opportunity for all partners to learn one another's language, as well as understand program goals, the relationship between the partners, and individual's contribution to the collaborative partnership.

Program Description

Enrichment Arts

Children creatively expressed themselves and increased empowerment by participating in therapeutic and interactive arts activities. Art allowed students to experience self-expression through photography, videography, painting, drawing, and other activities as instructed through the enrichment arts teacher. The arts teacher was responsible for planning activities and teaching the children how to complete the project.

Structured Movement

Structured movement activities were offered in order to provide a physical outlet for children while they were participating in the enrichment arts program. Thirty-minute break-out sessions consisted of various activities, such as martial arts, yoga, dance, and swimming. Activities not only provided children an energy outlet, but also an opportunity to develop self-efficacy, improve motor-skills and balance, and learn positive

stress-reduction techniques. A structured movement teacher had the responsibility to plan and implement movement activities over the 10-week period.

Character Building

open mind, open heART utilized Character Counts, a youth development curriculum, to teach children resiliency skills, positive identity and self-esteem through consistent participation in lessons and activities. Character building included both protective factors and resiliency factors. This portion of the program provided an opportunity for children to express themselves in a safe environment, where they felt respected and empowered.

Music

Children learned to express themselves creatively through music activities led by a licensed music therapist. Collectively, participants improved their music skills through matched tempo, volume and rhythm. Individually, children used various percussion instruments that lead to therapeutic relief, increased dexterity and improved coordination.

Field Trips

Children participated in three visits to art museums in the San Antonio, Texas area to develop their appreciation of fine art and create a sense of belonging with the community outside the residential treatment center. The museum visits included the following locations: ArtPace, the Witte Museum, and the San Antonio Museum of Art. At the end of the field trip, the children were allowed to select and purchase a souvenir.

Healthy Snacks

Children participated in making healthy snacks. Children learned the importance of eating healthy, as well as how to make fun and delicious healthy snacks.

Celebration Event

Children participated in a celebration event at the completion of the 10-week program to display their talents. Children celebrated their accomplishments with open mind, open heart staff, facilitators and other community members who supported them throughout the duration of the program.

Participants

Child participants in this program included twenty-five children ranging in age from 5-13 years of age. Of the twenty-five participants, eight were female and seventeen were male. Participant's ethnicities consisted of Caucasian, Hispanic, African American, and Asian/Pacific Islander. Each child in this study participated in the intervention for a minimum of eight weeks. Data was not collected from children who arrived at the Shelter after the Pre-Survey was conducted.

Program Procedure

open mind, open heART was implemented Monday through Friday, 9AM to 12PM, for a 10-week period during the summer months. Children were required to complete a designated number of each activity throughout the duration of the summer program. Each activity was offered on the same day each week. Art activities were offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Photography, videography, music therapy, swimming, and healthy snack activities were offered on Tuesday and Thursday. Structured movement and character building were offered daily in alternating 30-minute increments.

At the completion of each day, children recorded which activities they participated in. This not only allowed the evaluator to keep implementation records, but

also made the children aware of how many additional times they needed to attend specific activities to meet the program's participation requirements. Children were reminded about activities on a regular basis. The last 15 minutes of each program day consisted of free dance time for the children throughout the program.

Children visited three different art museums throughout the duration of the program. When appropriate, the children were divided into smaller groups to attend the field trips. Children were supervised by program staff and facilitators while at the museum. At the conclusion of each field trip, children had the opportunity to choose an approved souvenir.

Three weeks prior to the completion of the program, children prepared to participate in the talent show which took place during their celebration event. Facilitators worked with children on music, art, fashion, dances, letters of appreciation, and designing program t-shirts that were presented during the event. The celebration event took place on Saturday following the conclusion of the 10-week program.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study utilizes pre- and post- test data from the *open mind, open heART* pre- and post- survey to understand children's shifts in the areas of competence, confidence, character, and connection, referred to as the 4 C's. The following research questions were asked: Will the participants feel a sense of connection towards one another while participating in *open mind, open heART*? Does an enrichment arts program such as *open mind, open heART* increase participants competence, confidence, character, and connections in a positive manner?

Pre-and Post-Survey

The survey was developed based on program goals related to the 4 C's and using surveys from other similar programs. Children were provided a private space to respond to the questions on the pre- and post-survey. The pre-and post-surveys were administered during week one and the last week of programming, respectively. Questions were read aloud to the children. When necessary, children were able to have questions and answer choices explained. Due to child attention spans, surveys were not always completed in one session (the maximum number of sessions was three). Upon completion, each survey was stored confidentially.

Interviews with Children

Participants were interviewed at random, throughout the 10-week period. Qualitative data were collected in order to analyze the children's shifts in competence, confidence, character, and connection throughout the enrichment arts program. All interviews were conducted and recorded by the program evaluator in a private, calm and quiet environment. To begin an interview, children were asked to go outside and talk. The evaluator obtained verbal consent to ask questions and record participants remarks, assuring them of confidentiality. Upon agreement from the participant, the evaluator turned on the recording device and began the interview process. Depending on the child's answer, the evaluator asked a more in-depth question relating to the first one or continued with the next question. This was repeated until the evaluator felt the child exhausted his or her responses and was ready to go back to the program's activities. At the completion of the interview all participants had the opportunity to listen to the

recording, ask questions, and were thanked for their openness and time. Interview questions were adapted from the Youth Arts Public Art Program.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Simple descriptive statistics examined the children's pre- and post-program responses in competence, confidence, character, and connection displayed in the participants. T-tests analyzed the pre- and post-test differences noted. Qualitative data collected from the interviews were transcribed using Dragon Speak® software and examined for common emerging themes. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, participants were given pseudonyms taken from a list of the top 50 names.

Results

Competence

Goals of *open mind, open heART* related to competence included the following: children will behave in a cooperative way with others in the group, children will actively participate throughout the 10-week summer program, children will have improved art skills, children will improve task completion skills, and children will have improved cooperation skills. Three emerging themes were noted from the child interviews relating to competence, such as 1) improvement of art skills, 2) ability to cooperate within the group, and 3) increased proper group behavior.

Prior to the program, a majority (88%) of the children felt they had the skills necessary to make nice art. After participating in various art activities and completion of the program, the percentage of children at the completion of the program who felt they had necessary art skills rose to 100%. Task completion rates among the children

increased (6%). An increase of 15% was noted from pre- to post test for the children's perceived ability to work with and help others in the group during the art activities. An increase in frequency of positive responses was seen in the child's level of cooperation within the group. A paired-samples t-test compared pre-test data to post-test data for competence levels. There was a significant difference in the scores for children having the skills necessary to make nice art ($t=-2.939$, $p = 0.008$).

Art Skills

During interviews, children discussed feeling frustrated or "not good" at completing art projects. They felt projects were too difficult at the beginning of the summer. When asked this same question at the end of the program, they all expressed improved skills and perceived themselves as being "great artists." Noah stated he was not good at art during his first interview but then stated in the second interview that his proudest accomplishment this summer was art. Similarly, Madison believed at week 10 her proudest accomplishment was art. She reported, "I'm doing good in art" and the favorite thing she made was a purse. When asked about emotions he felt from making art, Logan responded, "...when I used to do art, I did not like how things turned out, I didn't like it....I'm happier with it now because I take my time and I used to just rush through it." Isabella talked about creating earrings and stated, "I thought it wasn't about matching it and now I know it is about matching it."

Group Behavior and Cooperation Abilities

As Sophia discussed her daily routine, she mentioned her favorite program activities were music and making a video. When asked more about her video, she described how she and Isabella were creating a song to sing together for the movie.

Coinciding with this, when Isabella was interviewed, she also mentioned the project she and Sophia were collaborating on. In regards to group cooperation, one child described the reason he enjoyed making movies because of the collaboration between two group members, the videographer, and his ability to record them playing basketball. He stated, “We worked together and had fun.” Daniel mentioned the thing which makes him happy about art projects is “getting to go around and help each other, color, and make pictures for people.” When Daniel was asked about what makes a good friend, he noted the ability to make agreements. Several children noted learning how to behave within their group. Comments relating to this included: “Was treating people the way people want to be treated.”, and “... no fighting. No fighting. No kicking.”

Confidence

Goals of *open mind, open heART* related to confidence included children’s increased self-efficacy, increased self-identify and increased self-esteem. Children reported having more confidence (9%) in the ability to improve conflicts by the end of the program. The confidence children had in observers viewing the way they handle conflict grew as well, by 8%, at the completion of the program. The number of children who reported they liked living in their community dropped by 25%, possibly due to gained trust of the evaluator in keeping the responses confidential. There was an increase from pre- to post-test in the perceived influence over what their community was like and a decrease in the children’s responses about helping people in their community get along. A paired-samples t-test compared pre-program data to confidence levels to post program data. There was a significant difference post program in the variable; “I enjoy living in my community” ($t=2.259$, $p=0.36$).

Two emerging themes were noted from the child interviews related to confidence: 1) creative activities help my confidence and 2) enable me to recognize my positive self-attributes.

Creative Activities Help my Confidence

When asked by the evaluator if the child felt more confident now than before the program, 100% of the children indicated being more confident. Children were asked throughout the second part of the program if they had anything to be proud of since the beginning of the program. Every child interviewed stated something they were proud of related to an activity in *open mind, open heART*. One such response was a story told by Sophia,

“When one of my friends wanted to play with me and Abigail, she wanted to put on a dress and I said that is not fair because my staff doesn't let me put on two clothes because I can't change once or twice I have to stay in the same outfit that she wanted to stick on a dress because she wanted to dance. So my staff looked at me and I said you know what fine, go to your dress. It's okay you can go put it on. I usually get mad and say it's not there but I just let her do it.”

Improved confidence was observed in Olivia when she expressed excitement about being allowed to participate in swim activities. She knew she had this opportunity because she “behaved and all that stuff. No biting and kicking staff.” Madison commented she was proud of herself for the way she was behaving and the artwork she had completed. Joshua expressed, “I am proud of learning how to walk on my hands and

dancing the right way instead of the wrong way, which is not good. It's a terrible way. I'm not going to explain it. I think you know what I mean".

I Have Positive Attributes

Each child interviewed was asked to identify the one thing they did best over the summer. This question was asked in order for the children to identify a positive attribute. Responses included: "Hair bands and clips, write that down.", "my singing", "I am responsible because I take care of my family.", "I drewed [sic] a rectangle and then made a big monster truck out of paper and then out of cardboard." Mason was very confident in his belt making skills. Another child recognized that he was a very caring person and good at helping others.

Character

Goals of *open mind, open heART* that related to character included improved social skills, appropriate anger expression, and appropriate conflict management. Post program results indicated 100% of the children liked to use creative ways to explore their thoughts and feelings. This was an increase of 24%. There was also an increase of 23% in children exploring their thoughts and feelings creatively, through art, photo/video, or music. Children believed they had a lot of creative ways to communicate thoughts and feelings, these variables increased 24% from pre to post program surveys. The number of children who felt they had difficulty in finding creative ways to express themselves decreased by 40% at the completion of the program. There was a 34% increase in the children's perception of handling anger the right way, as well as a 17% increase in the ability to express conflict the right way. Confidence children had in their ability to behave properly towards other people decreased by 7%. The rate at which children

reported respecting boundaries when touching people increased 12% at the completion of the ten weeks. The level of understanding the children have of personal space, touch, and appropriate behavior towards other people also positively increased by 15%. There were no pre to post-survey differences found in problems respecting other people's personal space. Children reported a 4% increase in response to avoiding unnecessary conflicts with others. A significant increase was seen in the children's perceived ability to deal with conflict, showing an increase of 54%.

A paired-samples t-test was used to compare pre-program and post program character data. There was a significant difference post program in the scores for pairs seven, ten, twelve, and seventeen. Pair seven, "I have difficulty finding creative ways to express myself" ($t=3.343$, $p=.003$); pair ten, "Do you manage anger the right way?" ($t=-2.668$, $p=.015$); pair twelve, "I behave properly towards other people" ($t=2.932$, $p=.009$); and pair seventeen, "I can't deal with conflict" ($t=3.489$, $p=.002$).

Two emerging themes were noted from the child interviews related to character including 1) improved behavior and 2) creativity provides resources for stress and anger management.

My Behavior has Improved

Many of the children interviewed expressed improvement of their behavior throughout the program. William stated he learned not to kick, bite, or cuss anymore. He attributed this knowledge to his participation in the creative activities and character building lessons. In response to the question, *how has your behavior changed since the beginning of the summer until now*, one child reported "I have not been fighting as much and I have been doing a lot of stuff during art". Noah felt "he changed his act by being

good and listening”. In the first interview with Madison, she identified the reason for her being at KCI RTC as problems with her behavior, specifically her anger management. She reported being placed at Laurel Ridge five times and it was her third time at KCI RTC. Her goal was to leave the facility by improving her behavior. When asked if her behavior improved at the end of the summer, she said yes, stating the program has helped her. “I have learned how not to touch other people’s middle parts and nasty parts,” said Madison. She commented her mentor had just told her she is “on her way out of here.” Jackson expressed, “Um, I feel calmer and before character building I was not very respectful...I am now and that makes me feel good.”

Creativity Provides Resources for Stress and Anger Management

It was noted that the children interviewed felt art, music, dance, movement, photography, videography, and character development all provide resources for dealing with anger and stress. Dancing was most commonly reported as a stress reliever, making the children feel happy. Michael stated any kind of movement makes him feel less stressed. When discussing emotions, Madison expressed sadness when her parents argued over who would get the kids. She said when she would hear them she would “Hide, take a break and eat ice cream to help her calm down.” She then suggested she might dance rather than eat when she is angry or stressed. Another child, Joshua, said, “When we dance I feel a little relaxed because I get happy because my days aren’t so good.” He also stated his favorite activity being dance “because I get a little exercise and I get emotions out”.

Connection

Goals of *open mind, open heART* related to connection included children communicating effectively with adults and peers. A 10% increase, from pre to post assessment, was noted in responses relating to children talking to adults about things of importance to them. The frequency children expressed talking to peers about important issues decreased by 7 responses and the frequency for communicating well with peers decreased as well by 5 responses. The ability to communicate well with other people however, increased. Children's understanding of other people when they were talking decreased 2% and having good conversations with other people decreased 6%. Another decrease from pre to post survey was found in the children's ability to communicate well in a group. An increase of 3% was found in the children's confidence of having people in their community to help them solve problems. A paired-samples t-test compared pre-program data related to connection to post program data. There were no significant changes noted.

Two emerging themes were noted from the child interviews relating to connection such as 1) connecting with adults and peers make me happy and 2) I trust you with my story.

Connecting with Adults and Peers Makes Me Happy

The children were asked to identify one thing that made them happy on the day of their interview and to recall the happiest day of their lives. The majority of children had responses relating to feeling connected to an adult and/or peer. Sophia was happy the day of her interview because she and Abigail were singing a song together. She also mentioned feeling alone when she was in an argument with the other girls, including her

best friend at KCI RTC. When Mason was asked about feeling alone he responded, “when nobody loved me” and “having no friends.” Olivia expressed feeling glad because “...you hug me and give me something.” Michael felt happy and connected when the “staff plays basketball and stuff” with them. He felt the staff likes to play with them. Logan expressed liking and feeling connected to the artist he worked with all summer. Another child reported their most trusted person to be one of the staff members working with him. When asked what this program made him thankful for, Jackson responded, “Like, the art projects, it makes me thankful that you all get to come and I get to do stuff with y'all.” Joshua, Isabella, and Aiden reported talking to the evaluator alone to be the happiest part of their day so far.

It was interesting that one child noted liking art and the program time because they did not have to be around the other children all at once. They had the freedom and ability to be in their personal space and had one-on-one time with adults in the program. This may have been related to the decrease in peer communication.

I Trust you with My Story

Several children felt connected and trusted the evaluator with their personal stories in response to some of the interview questions. Olivia briefly discussed her mom’s actions making her sad in response to “what makes you sad today?” She discussed being yelled at and said “she always says I’m going to whoop your butt daughter for you not come over here...she chased me in the rain.” Joshua spent time talking about his last visit home to see his family. He excitedly talked about getting to see his brothers and sister. He went on to discuss why his family did not wear pirate costumes. When the evaluator asked Jackson if videography made him recall any memories, he reported remembering

“When me and my little brother we were little, we have this picture on this chair wearing the same clothes and the same hat. We were taking pictures together.” He identified the happiest day of his life as “Umm Christmas because my family never had a Christmas like this before. We got Christmas trees, we got corn to string up around the Christmas tree, and apples to hang up and my cousin dressed up like Santa Claus but I couldn't tell anyone. And then everybody got to sit on his lap. My grandma my grandpa and my mom.”

Additional Program Findings

During their interviews, children they were asked to describe their average day. Many of the children expressed waking up sad. Aiden responded by saying “Umm... when I wake up I think about my mom and dad and parents and how I can't see them, I don't get to see them, and I get more happy knowing that every time I think about it I know I'm going home still.” Another child reported feeling sad due to waking up every morning with a stomachache from vomiting during the night. The children were also asked to choose a superpower. There were many interesting responses to this question such as the power to “stay with my sister...to fly...if I had the power to stay with her I would fly there.” Another child stated wanting the power “thankful” so they could “teach people how to be nice and people how to have faith.”

A goal stated by Benjamin was to “achieve in what I believe in myself...I want to become a lawyer or dancer when I grow up.” Children were able to connect good behavior with what they perceived to be rewards. Daniel connected his good behavior with the reason he able to visit his Aunt. Several other children made this connection with being able to swim during the program. Logan pointed out learning to take responsibility

for himself, stating, “I am learning now that now that I can’t blame my roommate for stuff, which I never lied about, but now that I can’t blame my roommate I have to clean up on my own.” When asked to share a secret with the evaluator, Michael said, “I don’t tell no secrets, I feel like I want to but I can’t... I wish people already knew what they were.”

Children were also asked what advice they would give a new child at KCI RTC during their interviews. Responses included things relating to behavior and feelings such as: “Just behave, please do not act up or you will just stay longer”, “It ain’t that bad, it ain’t going to be forever”, “keep your head up, if anybody makes you mad it’s ok.” During one interview, the child responded to the majority of the questions with the response, “no hitting, no kicking, no biting”, which did not align with the questions asked. It seemed as though the child knew what therapists or adults wanted him to say and used those responses to hide his true feelings.

Conclusions

In conclusion, all of the children continually expressed how grateful they were the artists and facilitators were at the Center and part of the program. Many children reported days they were able to do the activities as their happiest day ever. Grounded in the program data, it was concluded *open mind, open heART* was a successful program, which met and accomplished the program goals and objectives over the summer.

As seen in the results, children’s art skills improved as well as their group behavior skills. It was suggested that an increase in children’s participation resulted in increased art skills, therefore resulting in higher project completion rates. As skills of one child increases, they are eager to help the other group members improve their skills.

It was noted that participation in creative activities resulted in higher confidence levels of the children and their ability to identify positive self-attributes. When the children feel more confident in themselves and the way they perceive others as viewing conflict management skills is positive, they will have higher frequencies of trying to improve conflicts and avoid unnecessary conflicts, as seen by the results. The percentage of children liking their environment may be due to testing validity. Children might have misrepresented true feelings to the evaluator during week one. After gaining trust, the children may have felt more open to express their true feelings. Increases in adult participation and involvement correlate to the level of influence they have at KCI RTC over the environment.

Based on the results, it was concluded the children had improved behavior and that creative activities provided an outlet for stress and anger management. There was a connection seen between rates of having lots of creative ways to express feelings, liking to use creative way to express feelings, and actually using creative way to express feelings. Children have to first be taught and like creative ways such as art, music, dance, and photography before they feel empowered to use those skills. Once there was an increase in confidence in using their creative skills, the ability to manage anger and conflict, expressing it the proper way increased. There was also a link to the children understanding personal space issues and respecting it. One cannot respect an issue they do not comprehend.

Feeling connected has a strong power to make both children and adults happy. In this program, the children felt connected to adults, opened up and shared their stories because of the built trust. The decrease in peer communications could have been a result

of having one-on-one conversations with adults and the ability of the children to separate themselves from their normal groups. There was an increase in understanding people when they were talking, yet we observed a decrease in child perception, participating in good conversations and group communication. The perception of having adults in KCI RTC to help both children and adults solve problems indicated a connectedness.

Recommendations

It is recommended that *open mind, open heART* continues implementing the summer program in order to enhance the lives of the children at KCI RTC. Continuing the program throughout the school year would reinforce the new skills throughout the year. Having additional programs over short school breaks is advised as well. Further analyses of the effect the program had on staff involvement with the children would be useful for future programs.

Table 9 Child Survey Results

Competence	Pre-Survey (n)	Post-Survey (n)	t	p
Do you have the skills needed to make nice art?			2.939	0.008
Yes	22	20		
No	3	0		
Do you participate in sessions?				
Yes	15	20		
No	10	0		
Will you work on a job from beginning to end?				
Yes	21	18		
No	4	2		
Are you able to work with others in your group?				
Yes	20	19		
No	5	1		
Do you help others during sessions?				
Yes	20	19		
No	5	1		

Table 9 Continued

Do you cooperate well with others in the group?				
Yes	24	20		
No	1	1		
<hr/>				
Confidence	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	p
	(n)	(n)		
Were you involved in the <i>open mind</i> , <i>open heART</i> program to any extent?				
Yes	19	17		
No	6	3		
<hr/>				
Other people respect the way I handle conflict.				
Yes	13	12		
No	12	8		
<hr/>				
I enjoy living in my community.				
Yes	15	7	2.259	0.36
No	10	13		
<hr/>				
I influence what my community is like.				
Yes	18	15		
No	7	5		
<hr/>				
I help people in my community get along with each other.				
Yes	20	17		
No	3	3		
<hr/>				
Character	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	p
	(n)	(n)		
I like to use creative ways to explore my thoughts and feelings.				
Yes	19	20		
No	6	0		
<hr/>				
I explore my thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photo/video, or music				
Yes	18	19		
No	7	1		
<hr/>				
I have lots of creative ways to communicate my thoughts and feelings.				
Yes	19	20		
No	6	0		
<hr/>				
I have difficulty finding creative ways to express myself.				
Yes	15	0	3.343	0.003
No	10	20		

Table 9 Continued					
			2.668	0.015	
Do you manage anger the right way					
Yes	14	18			
No	11	2			
Do you express conflict the right way?					
Yes	17	17			
No	8	3			
I behave properly towards other people.			2.932	0.009	
Yes	23	17			
No	2	3			
I respect boundaries when touching other people.					
Yes	18	17			
No	7	3			
I understand issues of personal space, touch, and appropriate behavior towards other people.					
Yes	20	17			
No	5	3			
I have problems respecting other people's personal space.					
Yes	10	8			
No	15	12			
I avoid unnecessary conflicts with others.					
Yes	19	16			
No	6	4			
I can't deal with conflict.			3.489	0.002	
Yes	16	2			
No	9	18			
Connection					
		Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	p
		(n)	(n)		
Do you talk with adults about things that are important to you?					
Yes		20	18		
No		5	2		
Do you talk with other youth about things that are important to you?					
Yes		17	10		
No		8	10		
Do you communicate well with peers?					
Yes		22	17		
No		3	3		
Do you communicate well with other people?					
Yes		21	17		
No		4	3		

Table 9 Continued

Do you understand other people when they talk to you?		
Yes	23	18
No	2	2
I have good conversations with people.		
Yes	24	18
No	1	2
I communicate well in a group.		
Yes	22	15
No	3	5
If I have problems, there are people in my community to help me solve them.		
Yes	23	19
No	2	1

CHAPTER V

EFFECTS OF INCREASED STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN A RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTER THROUGH AN ENRICHMENT ARTS PROGRAM

Abstract

open mind, open heART was an enrichment arts program conducted at the KCI Residential Treatment Center in San Antonio, Texas. The program consisted of a 10-week structured summer program providing children residing at the center with therapeutic benefits. For three hours a day, five days a week, the children engaged in safe and creative emotional outlets that integrated multiple art activities including photography, videography, music, structured movement, character building lessons, and learning to make healthy snacks. The program was designed so children would feel a sense of empowerment as they decided which activities to engage in each day in order to complete the required number of sessions for each activity. Empowerment of choice allowed children to practice judgment and decision making skills. Activities designed specifically for children focused on resiliency factors, protective factors and one or more of the 40-developmental assets such as responsibility, integrity, self-esteem, personal power, and resistance skills along with many others. Children also had the opportunity to participate in field trips to three different museums within the San Antonio area, as well as a talent show at the end of the summer program to display their artwork and celebrate

their successes. Pre- and post-test data was collected from the 29 staff, facilitators, artists, and volunteers who participated in the program. This data was analyzed through survey monkey using descriptive statistics, focusing on shifts seen in the children's competence, confidence, character, and both peer and adult connection. According to the results, the program proved successful in increasing all four components.

Keywords

Competence, Confidence, Character, Connection, Arts

Introduction

Competence is feeling as though one is effective in dealing and successfully adapting to the environment in which they are surrounded (Prelow, Weaver, & Swenson, 2006). It is a pattern of effectively adapting to both personal and social environment to successfully complete appropriate age and gender developmental tasks (Fetro, Rhodes, & Hey, 2010). When further broken down, social competence "is an individual-level attribute that facilitates adaptive functioning, positive adjustment, and later goal attainment despite early adversity of stressful life events" (Stepp, Pardini, Loeber & Morris, 2011).

According to Fetro (2010), in order for children to develop properly, there are five competency domains that must be met: cognitive/creative, health/physical, personal/social, career/vocational and citizenship. It was concluded that as competence in one domain increases, one or more developmental needs might be met (Fetro, Rhodes & Hey, 2010). Many positive outcomes have been suggested when associated with competency such as educational attainment, employment status, lower levels of substance

abuse, depression, and self-reported delinquency (Stepp, Pardini, Loeber & Morris, 2011).

Confidence is noted as having several factors, of which two will be focused on; self-esteem and self-efficacy. Self-esteem is the perception a person has of his or her own value or worth. Self-efficacy is the perception one has regarding their ability to deal with the demands made and emotions triggered by the situation (Prelow, Weaver, & Swenson, 2006). Self-esteem has been documented as a protective factor against participation in risky health behaviors and linked to high academic achievement, involvement in sport and physical activity, and development of effective coping, and peer pressure resisting skills. Programs offering safe environments, encouragement and support, empowering activities, and specific guidelines for appropriate behavior contribute to increased self-esteem (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002).

In this study, character is defined as one's thinking, feeling, and behavior and their actions. Character traits encompass trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship as well as the ability to effectively make decisions. Although the current trend of school violence has established an obvious need for character education for children, little emphasis is being placed on implementation in the classroom (Allen et al., 2011). Character education programs equip children with the ability to think in principled ways, respond to others empathetically, and develop social responsibility (Allen, et al., 2011).

Researchers have described connection as being the bond felt between two or more people, places, or things. Having a feeling of connection allows for effective communication. Many children who are labeled at-risk exhibit developmental problems

in forming connections to family, school, and their community due to their lack of trust gained from past events (Phelan, 2008).

At-risk children have the ability to repair connection issues by building healthy trusting relationships. Adults who work with at-risk children have the ability to build trusting relationships and become a role-model figure to the child. Children can then develop personal boundary skills and feel comfortable in asking for necessary help. Establishing a trusting relationship allows children to share personal thoughts and begin to heal from their trauma, while beginning to form successful behaviors (Phelan, 2008). It has been noted that positive group bonds support other treatment efforts as well as increase competency (Valore, Cantrell & Cantrell, 2006). Evidence suggests the presence of trusted adults or peers greatly minimizes the amount of stress weighing on children who have experienced trauma (Larson, 2005). Larson (2005) states children are looking to find a trusted listener in whom they feel comfortable sharing their story. In a focus group with children, participants were asked what they needed most to succeed in life. The number one response the children gave was having a positive connection with the adults who work with them. Positive connections have been shown to protect children from risky health behaviors through pro-social and empowering opportunities (King, Vidourek, Davis & McClellan, 2002).

Program Overview

The *open mind, open heART* program was a collaborative partnership between The Children's Shelter KCI Residential Treatment Center (RTC) in San Antonio, the Southwest School of Art and Texas State University-San Marcos.

Enrichment Arts

Children had the opportunity to express themselves creatively and increase empowerment through therapeutic and interactive arts such as photography, videography, painting, drawing and other activities as instructed by the art teacher.

Structured Movement

Movement activities enabled children to have a physical outlet during the enrichment arts program. Sessions consisted of activities such as martial arts, yoga, dance, and swimming.

Character Building

Lessons were derived using Character Counts curricula, to help children build resiliency skills, positive identity and self-esteem through regular participation in lessons and activities.

Music

Led by a licensed Music Therapist, children learned how to use various instruments leading to therapeutic relief and increased dexterity and coordination.

Field Trips

Children were able to visit ArtPace, the Witte Museum, and the San Antonio Museum of Art, with the purpose of increasing both their art appreciation and community connection within the San Antonio area.

Healthy Snacks

Children learned the importance of eating healthy and were educated on making healthy snacks.

Celebration Event

Upon conclusion of the program, children participated in a talent show to celebrate gained talents with facilitators, staff, and community members who supported them throughout the program.

Methods

Sample

Participants in the program consisted of 25 children ranging in age from 5-13 years who were living at the RTC at the time. The adult staff and facilitators are the focus of this study. Adult participants in this study were all KCI RTC staff members who were involved in *open mind*, *open heART*, program facilitators, artists and volunteers. Age, gender, and ethnicity vary and were not identified in this study. There were a total of 29 adult participants in the study.

Procedure

open mind, *open heART*, took place Monday thru Friday from 9AM to 12 PM for ten weeks during the summer. Each day, children had several options of activities to participate in which were led by staff and facilitators. Art was offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of each week while photography, videography, music therapy, healthy snacks and swimming were offered on Tuesday and Thursday. Structured movement and character building were offered in 30 minute alternating increments daily throughout the summer. Children visited the museums two groups at a time, as determined by the KCI RTC staff. Trips were spaced out in a manner that allowed one trip per month for each child. The Celebration event was held the Saturday following the completion of the program.

Data Collection and Analysis

Surveys were utilized to evaluate the competence, confidence, character, and connection improvements in the children from the view of staff members, facilitators, artists, and volunteers. The surveys also evaluated the level of connection the adults felt they had with the children involved in the program. Surveying the adults helped to evaluate the logistics of the program as well. The surveys for all adult participants consisted of 20 questions and were available on-line through Survey Monkey®, an online survey maker. The staff took the surveys at the shelter at various times on the Children's Shelter supervisor's computer. Staff members were aware their answers were kept confidential and the supervisor could not view their responses. Volunteers, facilitators, and artists had the flexibility to access the surveys on any computer with Internet, whether it was a personal or public computer. These surveys were not conducted off-line nor did non-staff members complete any online surveys at the Shelter. Surveys remained confidential as demographic questions about name, age, or gender were not asked. Staff members were required to fill out the survey at the completion of the first, fifth, and tenth week, while facilitators and artists, who were more involved in the planning of activities, were responsible for completing the surveys at the end of each week during the ten-weeks. Volunteers were asked to complete the survey at the end of each week they volunteered during the intervention.

Descriptive statistics analyzed changes in the adult's perception of the children's shift in competence, confidence, character and sense of connection pre to post program. Common themes were identified in the qualitative data, with no identifying factors present.

Results

Competence

Four adults indicated feeling as though they were involved in the program at the completion of week one. At week ten all adult respondents felt involvement of some sort in the program. In response to the qualitative question of noting observed differences to the children's relationship to competence, an adult commented, "I saw Sophia act as a role model to the children she helped talk Olivia out of an outburst twice and redirected her attention a couple times by making the project with her. The cheer that they did together at our party on Saturday was a direct result of this. Sophia helped Olivia with her costume and I could see that it made Olivia feel good to work with Sophia". Another adult noted, "Children are more willing to share materials, interactions between children seem positive for the most part".

Confidence

When participants were asked if they enjoy working in the KCI RTC community, during week one a staff member reported not enjoying it, at week ten all adults reported enjoying their work community. There was a frequency increase of 2 responses, resulting in all adults feeling they influence what the community is like at the completion of the program. Comments in response to observing a relationship to the children's confidence include: "I have gotten to know my group of kids likes and dislikes, I have noticed that all they really want is someone to show them they are here for them, and because they know this, our kids are more active towards our activities and a lot more confident," and "The children are more confident expressing themselves, both artistically and orally discussing their ideas and what they are trying to express." One artist

expressed the following: “I feel like Logan really benefitted from us coming. He is such a creative and determined boy! I think being in the art classes helped Logan’s confidence and character. I remember in the beginning when I had the boy's group, his hands shook so bad that it was hard for him to make his art. The constant practice and determination seems to help him overcome and manage this. Although all the children are special, Logan is very unique. When I heard that he was moving, I felt very emotional because I was fearful of how the change was going to affect him.”

Character

The number of adults who disagreed with having observed the children using creative ways to express their feelings dropped to zero post program. Those adults in disagreement of having viewed children use art, music, or photography to express their feelings also decreased to zero. There were a lower percentage of adults who felt the children had lots of creative ways to express themselves after week ten of the program. In response to the relationship of the children to character, an adult was quoted in saying, “This year I think that the students are much more willing to try things. There is not the mean kind of teasing going on and I think the addition of the yoga, movement, dance and character development have really improved the program. It is a delight to watch the kids dance with such abandon. I think they feel really safe and comfortable in the environment we have created. The added choices have helped with that.”

Connection

The adult perceived connection to people at KCI RTC who can help them with their problems decreased by one person post program. The perceived ability for adults to understand people when they are talking to them and their ability to have good

conversations both had changes, but may be due to the number of total respondents. The same was held true for their ability to communicate well in groups. One artist stated in response to the children's relationship to connection, "Children's confidence and connection continue to grow. Teaching has been more fun and easier this year."

According to facilitators, artists, staff and volunteers, the majority of the planned activities per week were accomplished. In regards to noticeable interactions with and among the youth, responses from the staff were given such as: "they have learned to spend longer on one activity", and "our children know that we are all here for them and that their peers are whom they have right now so they have learned to talk about things rather than blowing up", and "They spend all day together so being able to go with another group, even just for character lessons makes a difference". The artists' responses included; "I hear words like please, sorry, thank you, used more and more.", and "The children are working well together and they continue to resolve problems that come up on their own without teacher or staff supervision", and "This week I didn't say anything about working in pairs or groups and some students decided on their own to work together and help each other out."

Conclusions

In conclusion, all of the children expressed throughout the program how grateful they were that the artists and facilitators were at the Center and part of the program. Many children reported days they were able to do the activities as their happiest day ever. It was implied that increased staff involvement may also be connected to increases in child participation and cooperation abilities. As skills of one child increases, they are eager to help the other group members improve their skills.

It was noted that participation in creative activities result in higher confidence levels of the children and their ability to identify positive self attributes increases. When the children feel more confident in themselves and in the way they perceive others as viewing their conflict management skills as positive, they will have higher frequencies of trying to improve conflicts and avoid unnecessary conflicts. After gaining trust with the adults, the children may have felt more open to state their true feelings. Increases in adult participation and involvement correlate to the level of influence they have at KCI RTC over the environment.

Based on the results, it was concluded that the children had improved behavior and that creative activities provided an outlet for stress and anger management. Children have to first be taught and like creative ways such as art, music, dance, and photography before they feel empowered to use those skills. The use of creative expression of feelings was apparent to the adults involved. Once there was an increase in confidence in using their creative skills, the ability to manage anger and conflict, expressing it the proper way increased.

Feeling connected has the ability to make both children and adults happy. When a child feels connected to someone they open up and tell their stories because of the built trust. The perception of having adults in KCI RTC to help both children and adults solve problems rose, indicating a connectedness throughout the Shelter's community.

A concluding statement about the relationship to the children's competence, confidence, character, and connection about the children from pre-program to post was quoted by a staff member as: "our children really look happier, understand more, and know that we, the staff, are here for them. They are more loving, caring, and respectful."

Grounded in the program data, it was concluded that *open mind, open heART* was a successful program which met and accomplished the program goals and objectives over the summer.

Table 10 Adult Pre to Post Survey Results

Competency	<u>Pre-Survey</u> (n)	<u>Post-Survey</u> (n)
Were you involved in the <i>open mind, open heART</i> program to any extent?		
Yes	16	14
No	4	0
I have an in-depth knowledge about the KCI RTC local environment and its challenges/barriers.		
Yes	15	14
No	0	0
Confidence	<u>Pre-Survey</u> (n)	<u>Post-Survey</u> (n)
I enjoy working in the KCI RTC community.		
Yes	14	14
No	1	0
I influence what the KCI RTC community is like.		
Yes	12	14
No	3	0
Character	<u>Pre-Survey</u> (n)	<u>Post-Survey</u> (n)
I've observed the children use creative ways of exploring thoughts and feelings.		
Yes	14	14
No	1	0

Table 10 Continued

I observed the children explore thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photography, videography or music.		
Yes	13	14
No	2	0
The children have difficulty finding creative ways to express themselves.		
Yes	7	5
No	8	9
The children have lots of creative ways to communicate their thoughts and feelings.		
Yes	12	10
No	3	4
Connection	<u>Pre-Survey</u> (n)	<u>Post-Survey</u> (n)
If I have problems, there are people in the KCI RTC who help me solve them		
Yes	15	14
No	0	0
I communicate effectively with other people.		
Yes	14	14
No	0	0
I understand other people at KCI RTC when they are talking to me,		
Yes	15	14
No	0	0
I have good conversations with other people at KCI RTC.		
Yes	14	14
No	1	0
I communicate well when in a group.		
Yes	15	14
No	0	0

APPENDIX I INSTRUMENTATION

I.I Child Interview Questions

1. What emotions have your art projects made you feel?
2. How has videography made you feel?
3. What memories has videography made you think of?
4. Has structured movement helped you feel less stressed?
5. Has character building improved your desire to have good behavior?
6. How have the projects this summer helped you to remember the last time you cried?
7. What is one thing that happened today that made you feel happy/sad/angry/scared?
8. Did you do something today during camp that you were proud of? What?
9. What is one thing that *open mind, open heART* made you feel grateful for today?
10. Describe your typical day, from wake to sleep.
11. What is your proudest accomplishment during *open mind, open heART* so far?
12. Which superpower would you choose to have if you had the option and why?
Relate it to the character building activities.
13. In what ways do you sometimes wish to be a better friend, but don't? Why do you find yourself unable to do these things? Do you think these things will be improved by *open mind, open heART*?

14. What does *open mind, open heART* make you thankful for?
15. What is your earliest or happiest memory?
16. What characteristics or personality traits are most important to you in a friend?
17. What are things that you wish people knew about you without your having to tell them?
18. What is a secret about you?
19. Look at yourself in the mirror and describe what you see. Has this changed from the beginning of camp to the end?
20. What is one of your most personal hopes and dreams? How has *open mind, open heART* helped to shape this?
21. What's the most difficult part about being you?
22. What's your favorite part of being you?
23. What is the best thing and the worst thing that happened to you this week?
24. Who do you trust the most and why? How has *open mind, open heART* taught you the importance of trust?
25. What about your life can you take pride in?
26. Tell about the happiest day of your life.
27. Describe when someone has done something very nice for you.
28. What kind of art is your favorite? Why?
29. Tell about something you do well?
30. What do you think courage means?
31. What do you think makes a good friend?
32. What is your idea of perfect happiness?

33. What is your greatest fear?
34. What is something that makes you feel sad?
35. What is something that really bugs you?
36. What is something that really makes you angry?
37. What do you like most about yourself?
38. What advice would you give a new child at RTC?
39. What is one thing nobody knows about you because nobody ever cared to ask?
40. Describe a time you felt alone.
41. Overall, how satisfied do you feel with your *open mind, open heART* experience?
42. Now that *open mind, open heART* is ending and you can think back about it, what did you like best?
43. Is there anything you don't/didn't like about *open mind, open heART*?
44. What could we do differently that would make *open mind, open heART* better for other kids like you in the future?
45. Sometimes people talk about being proud of things they do. How proud are you of your artwork in the *open mind, open heART* show? Why?
46. Do you have more confidence now in your ability to make art?
47. Would you say that you have more confidence in yourself in general?
48. What new art skills did you learn in *open mind, open heART* that you didn't know before?
49. Were there any art skills you did in *open mind, open heART* that you already knew but could practice and get better at during the project?

50. Were there any art skills you wish you could have gotten a chance to learn about in *open mind*, *open heART*, other than the skills you did get to use?
51. If you had to one reward for yourself for being in *open mind*, *open heART*, which one would you choose as the most important to you, and why?
52. If you had a chance to be in *open mind*, *open heART* again in the future, would you want to do it?

I.II Child Pre and Post Survey

Program Start Date: _____ **Today's Date:** _____

open mind, open heART Pre-Program Participant Skills Assessment

Participant Name or ID →	
<i>Do you have the skills needed to make nice work/art projects?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- -Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Do you participate in classes/sessions?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Will you work on a job from beginning to end?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I like to use creative ways of exploring my thoughts and feelings.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I explore my thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photo/video or music.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I have lots of creative ways to communicate my thoughts and feelings.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I have difficulty finding creative ways to express myself.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree

	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Are you able to work with others in the group?</i>	Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Do you help others during a class/session?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Do you manage anger the right way?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Do you express conflict the right way?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I behave appropriately towards other people.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I respect personal boundaries when touching other people.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I understand issues of personal space, touch, and appropriate behavior towards other people.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I have problems respecting other people's personal space.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I avoid unnecessary conflicts with others.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree

	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>I can't deal with conflict.</i>	Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>If there is a conflict, I try to improve the situation.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Other people respect the way I handle conflict.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Do you talk with adults about things that are important to you?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Do you talk with other youth in the group about things that are important to you?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>Do you cooperate well with others in the group?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I communicate effectively with my peers.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I communicate effectively with other people.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I understand other people when they are talking to me.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree

	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>I have good conversations with other people.</i>	Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I communicate well when in a group.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I enjoy living in my community.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I influence what my community is like.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>If I have problems, there are people in my community who help me to solve them.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree
<i>I help people in my community to get along with each other.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly ----- Strongly Disagree Agree

I.III Staff, Facilitator, Artist, & Volunteer Survey

1. What week of the program did you just complete?
2. Which of the following best describes your role in the open mind, open heART program?
3. Were you involved in the open mind, open heART program to any extent?
4. I have an in-depth knowledge about the KCI RTC local environment and its challenges/barriers.
5. I enjoy working in the KCI RTC community.
6. I influence what the KCI RTC community is like.
7. If I have problems, there are people in the KCI RTC who help me to solve them.
8. I've observed the children use creative ways of exploring thoughts and feelings.
9. I observed the children explore thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photography, videography or music.
10. The children have difficulty finding creative ways to express themselves.
11. The children have lots of creative ways to communicate their thoughts and feelings.
12. I communicate effectively with other people.
13. I understand other people at KCI RTC when they are talking to me.
14. I have good conversations with other people at KCI RTC.
15. I communicate well when in a group.
16. What was planned for during the most recent sessions?
17. What actually happened during the most recent sessions?
18. What are your thoughts on interactions with and between the youth?
19. What information do you need now or wish you had received prior to working with the youth?
20. Would you note anything in relationship to the children's competence, character, confidence or connection since the start of the program or since you last completed a survey

APPENDIX II DATA

II.I T-Test Results

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Skills needed to make nice art - Skills needed to make nice art	-.500	.761	.170	-.856	-.144	-2.939	19	.008
Pair 2	Do you participate in sessions - Do you participate in sessions	.000	.649	.145	-.304	.304	.000	19	1.000

Pair 3	Will you work on a job from beginning to end - Will you work on a job from beginning to end	-.100	.852	.191	-.499	.299	-.525	19	.606
Pair 4	I like to use creative feelings to explore my though and feelings - I like to use creative feelings to explore my thoughts and feelings	-.350	1.040	.233	-.837	.137	-1.505	19	.149
Pair 5	I explore my thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photo/video, or music - I explore my thoughts and feelings creatively, such as through art, photo/video, or music	-.350	.813	.182	-.730	.030	-1.926	19	.069
Pair 6	I have lots of creative ways to communicate my thoughts and feelings - I have lots of creative ways to communicate my thoughts and feelings	-.200	.834	.186	-.590	.190	-1.073	19	.297

Pair 7	I have difficulty finding creative ways to express myself - I have difficulty finding creative ways to express myself	1.000	1.338	.299	.374	1.626	3.343	19	.003
Pair 8	Are you able to work with others in your group - Are you able to work with others in your group	.150	1.089	.244	-.360	.660	.616	19	.545
Pair 9	Do you help others during sessions - Do you help others during sessions	-.100	1.071	.240	-.601	.401	-.418	19	.681
Pair 10	Do you manage anger the right way - Do you manage anger the right way	-.650	1.089	.244	-1.160	-.140	-2.668	19	.015
Pair 11	Do you express conflict the right way - Do you manage anger the right way	-.200	1.196	.268	-.760	.360	-.748	19	.464
Pair 12	I behave properly towards other people - I behave properly towards other people	.450	.686	.153	.129	.771	2.932	19	.009

Pair 13	I respect boundaries when touching other people - I respect boundaries when touching other people	-.200	1.399	.313	-.855	.455	-.639	19	.530
Pair 14	I understand issues of personal space, touch, and appropriate behavior towards other people - I understand issues of personal space, touch, and appropriate behavior towards other people	-.300	.865	.193	-.705	.105	-1.552	19	.137
Pair 15	I have problems respecting other people's personal space - I have problems respecting other people's personal space	-.100	.968	.216	-.553	.353	-.462	19	.649
Pair 16	I avoid unnecessary conflicts with others - I avoid unnecessary conflicts with others	-.100	1.334	.298	-.724	.524	-.335	19	.741
Pair 17	I can't deal with conflict - I can't deal with conflict	.850	1.089	.244	.340	1.360	3.489	19	.002

Pair 18	If there is conflict I try to improve the situation - If there is conflict I try to improve the situation	-.400	.940	.210	-.840	.040	-1.902	19	.072
Pair 19	Other people respect the way I handle conflict - Other people respect the way I handle conflict	-.250	1.118	.250	-.773	.273	-1.000	19	.330
Pair 20	Do you talk with adults about things that are important to you - Do you talk with adults about things that are important to you	-.150	1.309	.293	-.763	.463	-.513	19	.614
Pair 21	Do you talk with other youth in the group about things that are important to you - Do you talk with other youth in the group about things that are important to you	.100	1.373	.307	-.542	.742	.326	19	.748
Pair 22	Do you cooperate well with others in the group - Do you cooperate well with others in the group	.000	.649	.145	-.304	.304	.000	19	1.000

Pair 23	Do you communicate well with peers - Do you communicate well with peers	.100	.968	.216	-.353	.553	.462	19	.649
Pair 24	Do you communicate well with other people - Do you communicate well with other people	.050	.945	.211	-.392	.492	.237	19	.815
Pair 25	Do you understand other people when they talk to you - Do you understand other people when they talk to you	.100	.912	.204	-.327	.527	.490	19	.629
Pair 26	I have good conversations with other people - I have good conversations with other people	.250	.716	.160	-.085	.585	1.561	19	.135
Pair 27	I communicate well in a group - I communicate well in a group	.400	1.095	.245	-.113	.913	1.633	19	.119
Pair 28	I enjoy living in my community - I enjoy living in my community	.600	1.188	.266	.044	1.156	2.259	19	.036

Pair 29	I influence what my community is like - I influence what my community is like	-.450	1.146	.256	-.986	.086	-1.756	19	.095
Pair 30	If I have problems, there are people in my community to help me solve them - If I have problems, there are people in my community to help me solve them	.050	.999	.223	-.417	.517	.224	19	.825
Pair 31	I help people in my community get along with each other - I help people in my community get along with each other	-.050	.686	.153	-.371	.271	-.326	19	.748

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VITA

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