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Evaluation of the Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower Healthy Relationships Programme

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The overall aim of this evaluation was to learn about programme training, delivery and outcomes for students. Specifically, the evaluation explored:

1. Teacher and parent understandings of healthy relationships, their perceptions of student/children's' understandings and their expectations around programme delivery and its potential impact upon these young people
2. Perceptions of teaching staff, parent and young people through in-depth interviews in terms of the impact of the programme on student behaviour (e.g. if and how students used the Healthy Relationships skills to prevent potential sexual violence)

Key findings

Overall, the programme was perceived to have had a positive impact on students and most teachers observed behaviour change in their students. It was acknowledged that change in this student group can be challenging and that long-term, repeated teaching is often required before students absorb and apply learning. Therefore, that the three-month Healthy Relationships programme was seen to have resulted in at least some change for many students is an indication of its efficacy.

Teachers were motivated and well prepared to deliver the programme following their training. They reported that while training had not significantly extended their knowledge, it had given them valuable information and techniques for working with children around these issues, and this had increased their confidence. Following the teacher training, teachers felt able to use and adapt the programme to the specific needs of the students.

The programme was high quality, easy to follow and enjoyable for students, particularly because of its interactive nature. The most useful resources were the teachers guide and CDs, and the least useful were the sticker pages. CDs were particularly effective when used in combination with a 'smart board'. Teachers found the role play activities were also very useful.

Teachers indicated that the programme had good potential for being integrated within other education programmes already running in the school. However, for most teachers,

time to fit all programmes in was an issue and although integration would make a positive difference, this too would take time.

The main barrier mentioned by teachers was that some language could have been more accessible to the target group. Further, the length of some of the stories tended to lose the attention for some of the target group of children. Other helpful suggestions were also offered by teachers who had used the programme.

The programme was designed to be shared with parents. Some information about the programme had been shared by teachers with parents but this had not been systematic. Thus parents were not greatly aware of the details of the programme and nor were they involved in the programme. This is a flaw that needs addressing, since parent involvement is important for embedding learned understandings and behaviours in their children.

In terms of learning outcomes, teachers reported greater awareness and action among students, particularly in terms of setting and respecting boundaries and stopping unwanted behaviour. Positive behaviour changes were noted both in the classroom, during break times and at home. Families reported that their children's understanding and behaviour in terms of healthy relationships had improved after taking part in the programme. Teachers and parents reported that the programme was best suited to high ability students.

Recommendations

That teachers' adaptations to the programme are captured on a regular basis (suggest annually) in order to assist with ongoing review and adjustment.

That teachers' experience of using resources is captured on a regular basis (suggest annually) in order to assist with ongoing review and adjustment.

That, in addition to the existing guide, an advanced teacher training guide is developed that includes examples of adaptations to delivery and resources and suggestions for integration of Healthy Relationships in other school programmes.

That suggestions for improvements to delivery and resources made by teachers in this evaluation are considered.

That issues for teachers in sharing the programme with parents are explored with teachers during training, as well as possible solutions. Where possible Kidpower representatives might consider discussing these issues with school principals or lead teachers in order to find ways that Kidpower representatives can facilitate greater parent involvement.

That Kidpower representatives explore the value of offering free posters to all teachers in the school whether or not they were delivering the programme. This would reinforce the work being done by participating teachers and might also generate interest among non-participating teachers.

That Kidpower management undertakes regular (suggest annual) evaluation using a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. However, if achieving sufficient survey responses is going to be a continuing issue, we recommend that a greater emphasis is placed on qualitative methods such as observations, interviews and focus groups.

1.0 BACKGROUND

Impact Research was contracted in 2010 to evaluate the Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower Healthy Relationships programme. The overall aim of this evaluation was to learn about programme training, delivery and outcomes for students. In particular the evaluation would:

1. Explore teacher and parent understandings of healthy relationships, their perceptions of student/children's' understandings and their expectations around programme delivery and its potential impact upon these young people
2. Explore perceptions of teaching staff, parent and young people through in-depth interviews in terms of the impact of the programme on student behaviour (e.g. if and how students used the Healthy Relationships skills to prevent potential sexual violence) and recommendations for further improvement of the programme.

For further information about the Healthy Relationships programme, please refer to: www.Kidpower.co.nz, where contact details for requesting a previous evaluation report, "Stop!, I don't like it! An evaluation of the 'Healthy Relationships' programme." (Hamilton & Turner, 2009) can also be found.

2.0 METHODS

2.1. Study setting

The study was conducted across five special needs schools: Arohanui Special School (Auckland) Allenvale School (Christchurch), Ruru Specialist School (Dunedin), Kimiora School (Wellington) and Mana College (Kapiti Coast). All schools took part in surveys, but due to cost considerations, only one school was able to be visited by Impact Research NZ researchers. For one school (School A) researchers were able to have face to face communications with teacher and student participants. Communications with other schools were conducted by telephone and email. The director of the Kidpower Healthy Relationships teacher training programme and student programme was instrumental in gaining access to schools, parents, teachers and students.

2.2. Sample

All teachers, teacher aids and allied staff (e.g. occupational therapists) who attended the Kidpower Healthy Relationships programme training, were invited to take part in the evaluation. Parents of students involved with Healthy Relationships programme were also invited to participate. Students from one school took part.

2.3. Materials

An information sheet was prepared for teachers and families that explained the evaluation and the survey tools and their right to confidentiality as well as their right to withdraw from the evaluation. Participants gave their consent by completing the survey questionnaire. A paper-based baseline survey questionnaire was developed to evaluate the following before the programme:

- Staff attitudes, skills and knowledge relating to delivery of the Healthy Relationships programme and personal safety
- Staff perceptions of students' relevant awareness and abilities in relation to the Healthy Relationships programme
- Families' perceptions of their child's relevant awareness and abilities in relation to the Healthy Relationships programme

The baseline survey for teachers contained 14 question items and the family survey contained 13. Both were estimated to take 5-10 minutes to complete. Both teacher and family survey questionnaires contained some closed questions with multiple choice responses. In order to evaluate whether teachers and parents had perceived any changes in students' abilities and behaviour as a result of the programme, a number of questions were asked at baseline and repeated post-programme. For these questions, participants could rate their answer on a 5-point likert scale with, for example, 'Always' or 'Strongly agree' being the most positive responses and 'Never' or 'Strongly disagree' being the least. A small number of open ended questions and opportunities for comment were also included.

Post-programme questionnaires were designed for teachers and families to explore benefits and issues relating to participants delivery of the programme and the impact of the programme on students. The teacher survey contained 17 items and the family survey

contained 11. Again, the questionnaires were estimated to take 5-10 minutes to complete. As for the baseline survey, both teacher and family survey questionnaires contained closed questions with multiple choice responses and 4 and 5 point likert-scales and a small number of open ended questions and opportunities for comment were also included.

Post-programme interview schedules were developed for use with consenting teachers, parents and students. Teacher interview schedules included open-ended questions relating to utility & acceptability of training, barriers to programme delivery and utility of programme resources.

Family interview schedules included questions about knowledge and awareness of the Healthy Relationships programme, perceived impact on their child's behaviour, perceptions of what had worked well, concerns and suggested improvements.

The student interview schedule asked participants to demonstrate appropriate use of signals and statements they had learned and to share drawings and other activities.

2.4. Data collection

Phase One: Baseline survey (May 2010)

In School A the researcher distributed and collected surveys and left parent surveys to be distributed by the school. In remaining schools, teachers completed surveys that were distributed, collected and forwarded to Impact Research by the Director of Kidpower, Cornelia Baumgartner, who facilitated teacher training at all schools prior to the delivery of the programme. Family surveys were mailed to schools.

Phase two: Post-programme survey (September 2010)

Over a period of three months, teachers then conducted the programme. Following delivery of the Healthy Relationships programme, a second survey questionnaire was distributed to teachers and families. Teacher surveys were distributed face to face in School A, and family surveys were left with the school. Both teacher and family surveys were posted to the remaining schools. On-line versions of both the teacher and family post-programme surveys were developed using Survey Monkey to offer participants an alternative method of taking part. Invitations to participate in the online survey were sent directly to those teachers for whom the research team held email contact details.

Otherwise, a web-link was sent to the main school contact who was asked to distribute amongst relevant staff. In addition, all schools were asked whether they would be willing to forward web-link to online version of family survey to parents. Those schools that agreed were sent the web-link along with an email invitation via email.

Phase three: Teacher, family and student interviews (October-November 2010)

Teacher survey participants were invited to take part in post-programme interviews. Invitations were sent via email and followed up with telephone calls. Due to the difficulty of accessing teachers for telephone interviews during school hours, teachers were offered the option of taking part in interviews either by telephone or email. Up to eight teachers from School A were invited to take part in face-to-face interviews in the form of a focus group..

The web-link for parents of School A students asked participants to provide contact details if they were interested in taking part in a post-programme focus group. The Associate Principal of School A was also asked to invite up to eight relevant parents to participate in a focus group. However, the family focus group was not pursued on the advice of the Associate Principal.

In addition, School A was asked to invite up to eight students to take part in a focus group.

2.5. Data Analysis

All survey data were entered into an excel spreadsheet where basic descriptive statistical analysis were performed. Survey data were then transferred to an SPSS (Version 19) database in order to compare baseline and post-programme results to explore whether any post-programme changes reached statistical significance (non-parametric Mann Whitney U tests were performed).

All face-to-face interviews/focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed. Detailed notes were taken during telephone interviews. Transcripts along with written texts produced by teachers who took part in the interviews by email and telephone were read and re-read by the researcher. A thematic analyses was performed to identify key themes that emerged from the interviews pertaining to the evaluation's objectives.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1. Response rates

In total, five schools took part in the evaluation. Numbers of teaching and other staff invited to participate in each part of the evaluation survey at each school are presented below in Table 1. The baseline survey response rate was 85.5% and the post-programme survey response rate was 39.5%.

Table 1 Teacher evaluation survey responses

School	Baseline		Post-programme	
	Invited	Completed	Sent	Returned
A	8	7	7	6
B	10	10	10	5
C	19	19	14	4
D	10	9	5	0
E	8	2	2	0
Total	55	47	38	15

Family participants increased between baseline and post-programmes surveys. Seven families of students attending three of the participating schools took part at baseline, while nine took part in the post-programme survey.

Eleven teachers took part in post-programme interviews. Five teachers chose to complete the interview by email, while one was conducted via telephone. Five teachers took part in a face-to-face focus group. Six students took part in a face-to-face focus group.

3.2. Participant characteristics

Those participating in the teacher survey held a variety of teaching and other staff roles. A breakdown of participants' roles is presented below in Table 2 on the following page. Over half of the participants did not identify their role at baseline. Of the others, there were similar numbers of teachers and teachers' aids took part and slightly fewer principals. The vast majority of post-programme survey participants identified themselves as teachers.

Table 2 Teacher survey participants' roles

Role	Baseline % (n=47)	Post- programme % (n=15)
Teacher	14.9	93.3
Teacher Aid	17.0	-
Principal	10.6	-
Other*	2.1	6.7
Unknown	55.3	-

*'Other' includes 'Associate Principal'; 'Occupational Therapist'; 'Speech Language Therapist and counsellor'.

All teaching and allied staff will henceforth be referred to as 'teachers'.

3.3. Teacher motivations and understanding

Teacher survey participants were asked to indicate why they felt it was important to enrol in the Healthy Relationships programme. The proportion of participants who gave each response is outlined below in Table 3. Five participants also gave other reasons, including 'to meet students' needs' and 'to support existing related programmes'.

Table 3 Teachers' motivations for undertaking Healthy Relationships training

Reason for enrolling in programme	% (n=47)
Because it was recommended	31.9
New learning	44.7
To add to existing knowledge	68.1
To pass on to other teachers	19.1

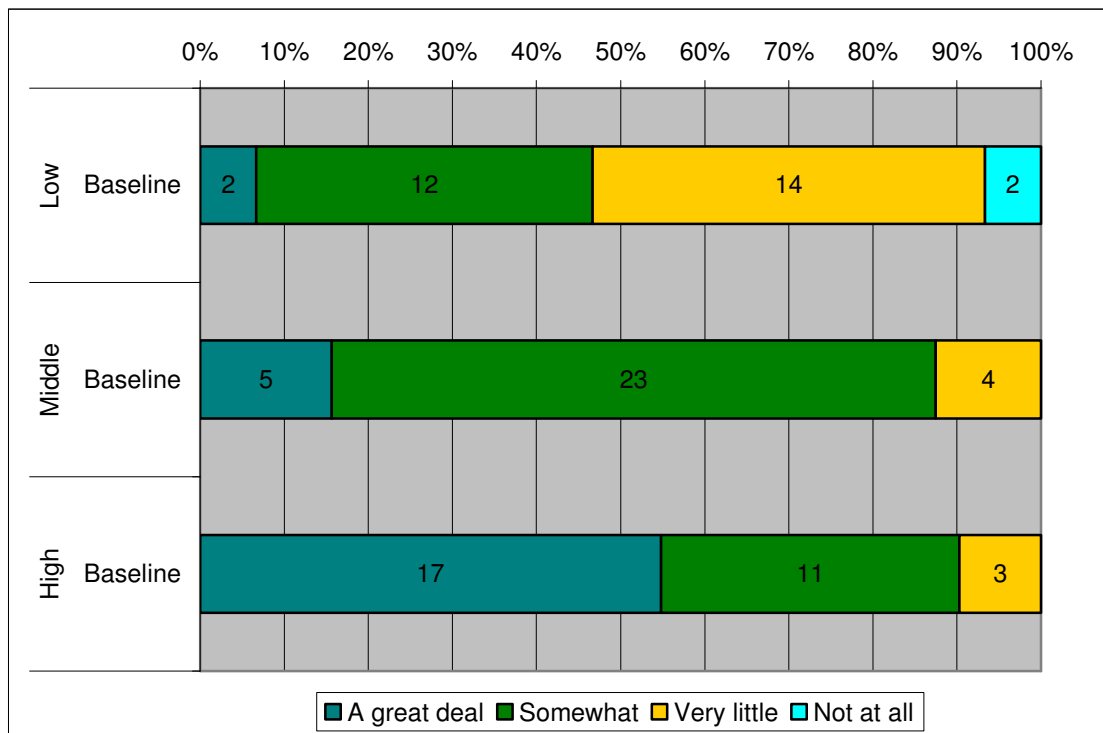
Before the Healthy Relationships programme began, teacher survey participants were asked to describe their current level of understanding of healthy relationships and personal safety issues. Table 4, below, presents the proportion of participants who rated themselves at each level of understanding. You will see that slightly less than two-thirds of participants felt their understanding was of an 'intermediate' level. In addition, 41 out of 47 participants (87.2%) reported having worked with students previously to develop healthy and safe relationships.

Table 4 Teachers' self-assessed understanding of Healthy Relationships and personal safety at baseline

Baseline understanding	% (n=46)
Basic	28.3
Intermediate	60.9
Advanced	10.9

Teachers were asked at baseline the degree to which they expected behaviour to change in students' of low, middle and high ability as a result of a Healthy Relationships programme. Figure 1, below, shows the number of teachers that expected students of each ability to show behaviour change. Immediately before receiving training, 14 out of 30 teachers (46.7%) expected their low ability students' behaviour to change either a great deal or somewhat; 28 out of 33 teachers (87.5%) expected their middle ability students' behaviour to change either a great deal or somewhat; and 28 out of 31 teachers (90.3%) expected their high ability students' behaviour to change a great deal or somewhat. This shows that teacher expectations were greatest for middle and high ability students.

Figure 1 Baseline teacher expectations of student behaviour change



3.4. Family knowledge about healthy relationships

All seven of the baseline family survey participants were parents of students involved with the Healthy Relationships programme. Five felt they had basic knowledge of how to support young people to develop healthy relationships and personal safety, while two felt more knowledgeable. Two reported that their child had been involved with healthy and safe relationships-type programmes before. Two parents expressed interest in receiving further information about the Healthy Relationships programme.

Of the nine participants who took part in the post-programme family survey, eight were parents of the students who had been involved with the Healthy Relationships programme and one was a caregiver. Three of these participants felt they knew “a lot” about the programme, while four knew “not much” and one knew “nothing”. None of the participants had had the chance to observe the programme.

3.5. Training

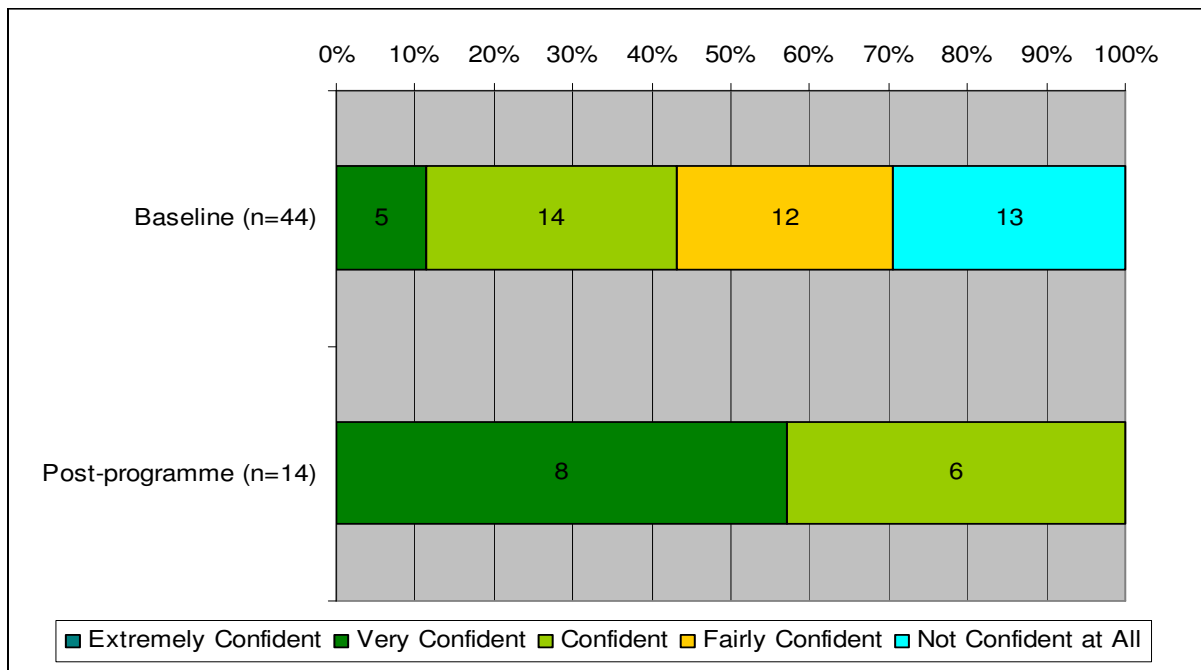
Teachers and allied staff taking part in the post-programme survey were asked how well the training had prepared them to run the Healthy Relationships programme. Nine post-programme teacher survey participants responded to this question. Four out of the nine respondents (44.4%) reported that the training had prepared them ‘sufficiently’, while the remaining five (55.6%) felt they had been ‘very well’ prepared by the training.

Post-programme focus group and interview feedback from teachers indicated that, while the training did not necessarily extend trainees’ existing knowledge, for some it helped to reinforce that knowledge and present a different and interesting way of teaching about healthy relationships to students. A number of participants mentioned that the role-playing in particular was a new technique that provided them with an effective means of engaging their students in the programme. For the focus group participants, the role-playing made the training engaging, fun and confidence boosting, as illustrated here:

“The fact that we were confident enough to stand up and show off our acting skills in front of everyone, you know, you go into your class and do it.” (Participant 2)

Indeed, post-programme teacher survey participants noted a significant improvement in confidence compared with confidence levels reported at baseline ($p < 0.001$). Figure 2, below shows how many (and what proportion of) survey participants rated their confidence at each level at baseline compared with post-programme ratings.

Figure 2 Teachers' confidence to deliver a Healthy Relationship programme: compared at baseline and post-programme

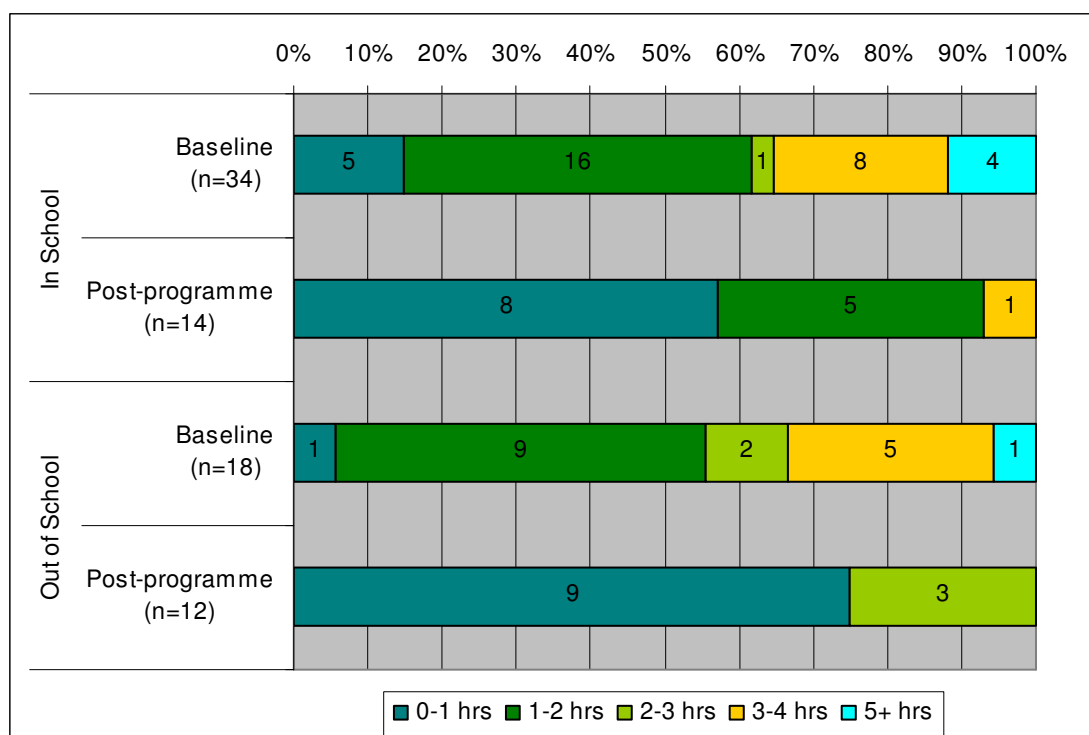


Focus group and interview participants added that they had more confidence to use the programme resources and use their own experiences to adapt the programme delivery to meet the specific needs of their students. Some participants reported that they felt confident to deliver the programme because it was easy to do and that the training had provided them with “a good base to start from” (Participant 5).

3.6. Time commitment

Teacher survey participants were asked at baseline how much time they expected to devote to the programme each week, both during and out of school. Post-programme, participants were asked to estimate how much time they had actually been able to spend on the programme each week. Figure 3, below, shows how participants' expectations compared with their experiences in reality. Significantly less time was spent both during ($p = 0.001$) and outside ($p = 0.007$) of school hours in actuality compared with participants' estimations at baseline.

Figure 3 Teachers perceptions of time required to deliver Healthy Relationship programme: compared at baseline and post-programme



A few of the interview participants noted that it could be hard to fit the programme into their already busy schedules. However, the quotation below shows one respondent acknowledging that if the programme became integrated into their existing curriculum, it should not be excessively time intensive:

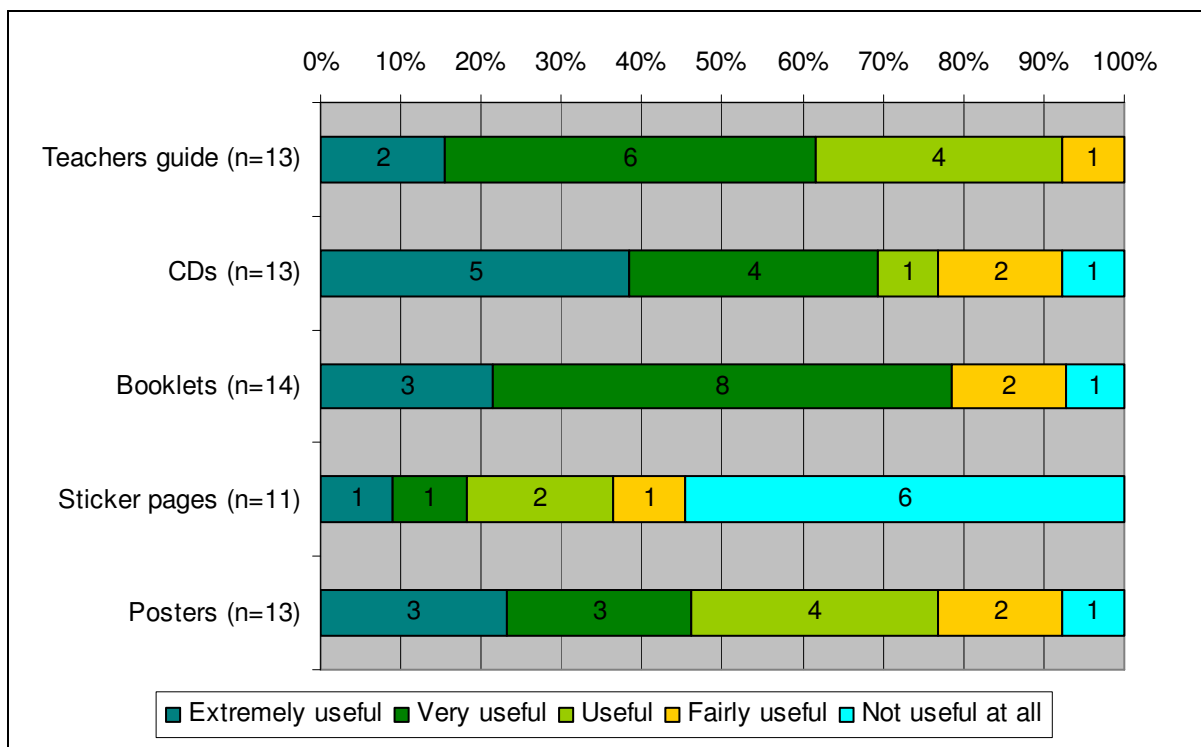
“Because we were piloting it, it became something on top of what we were doing, but if it was something that was being implemented across our programme it could fit into our Health and PE and Sexuality Education that we would be running in our classes, so then it would just become part of what we do.” (Participant 2)

Some interview participants reported that they did not teach the programme in hour long sessions as recommended because they would not have been able to hold the students’ attention for that long. Instead, these participants had delivered half-hour sessions.

3.7. Programme resources

Post-programme teacher survey participants were asked to indicate how useful they found each of the teaching resources provided by the programme. Figure 4, below, shows how respondents rated the utility of each resource in terms of the proportion and number of participants giving each rating. The teacher's guide was found to have some level of usefulness by all participants, while the CDs were rated as most useful and sticker pages as least useful.

Figure 4 Teachers' perceptions of the utility of Healthy Relationships programme resources



Some interview participants reported finding the CDs particularly effective when used along with a 'smart board'. These participants found that, when used in this way, the CDs provided a very successful means of capturing students' attention through being interactive and, as a result, motivating. In contrast, using the CDs with a desktop computer was seen to be less effective, as the potential for interaction was too limited and students were unable to see the screen well enough. One participant, who had tried using the CD with a desktop computer, noted that the students' attention span was dramatically reduced. Another felt that crowding up to ten students around one computer screen would not allow for sufficient personal space.

One interview participant reported that the CD formatting limited its accessibility, especially for parents whose first language was not English. This participant felt that the command buttons were not clearly laid out and that the instructions were difficult to follow. Teachers from three of the schools reported that CDs intended for use by students' families were faulty, with one adding that this was "a huge setback" (Participant 1) in terms of engaging parents in the programme.

Feedback was also received from interview participants about the programme booklets. Overall, participants felt that the booklets had some good content but that with some adjustments, their utility could be improved. Firstly, it was reported that students with visual impairments found the booklets difficult to read. This was particularly the case for the tick box panels indicating the Healthy Relationships interactions at the end of each story. It was suggested that these should be more prominent, perhaps taking up one whole page. Some interview participants felt that their students had not understood the tick box exercise well. Indeed, one participant described a student who discovered that there was a formula for getting the correct answer and so it was suggested that the answers be more randomised.

Some of the interview participants, all from the same school, had created 'visuals' to represent the four Healthy Relationships interactions. These were laminated signs, around the size of an A4 sheet of paper, with symbols or pictures representing each of the interactions. These teachers felt that this made it easier for their students to understand and take part in the exercise, as described in the following quote:

"the use of the visuals that we made was much better because we could hold them up and say 'was that OK with both?' and they could say 'yes' or 'no'" (Participant 1)

A number of interview participants agreed that the booklets were most suitable for high ability students with good literacy skills. Participants suggested that the booklets could be made more accessible to a wider range of students with the addition of symbols or pictures that were already familiar to the students (e.g. such as those used in the 'visuals' described earlier) representing each of the four key interactions. It was noted that the booklets provided a good opportunity for communicating with parents around the programme. However, participants had been reluctant to allow students to take the booklets home before the programme had ended, lacking confidence that they would be

returned. There was also some feeling that, although the booklets may have provided an opportunity for families to work together with the school, many parents were unlikely to do so:

“I think that was the idea, wasn’t it? Collaboration between home and school. But it really, I don’t know, parents don’t have the time or they don’t care, I don’t know” (Participant 4)

Some participants stated that they had not used the posters, preferring the ‘visuals’ that they had created themselves. The posters were felt to be “too busy” (Focus Group Participant 3), leaving students unsure of what to focus on and particularly unsuitable for visually impaired students.

Two out of nine parents who took part in the post-programme family survey reported that their child had brought home resources related to the programme. Neither had used these resources with their child.

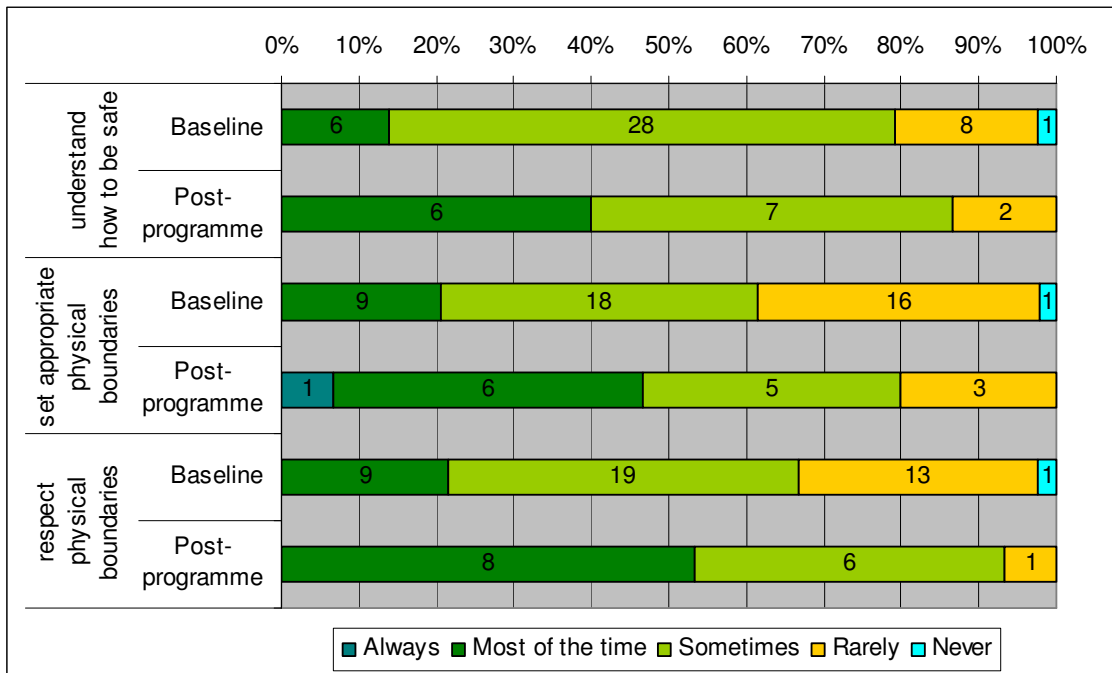
3.8. Student understanding and learning

At baseline and post-programme, teacher survey participants ranked ‘understanding how to be safe’ as the most important healthy relationships issue to be addressed with their students. Second most important at both time points was ‘awareness of how to set boundaries’. Third most important at baseline was ‘awareness of how to respect boundaries’, changing to ‘knowing how to seek help’ post-programme.

Teacher survey participants were asked to rate how often they felt their students demonstrated understanding and awareness of three key healthy relationships programme messages. These participants were also asked to rate how strongly they agreed with statements describing their students’ understanding and learning around knowing how and when to seek help.

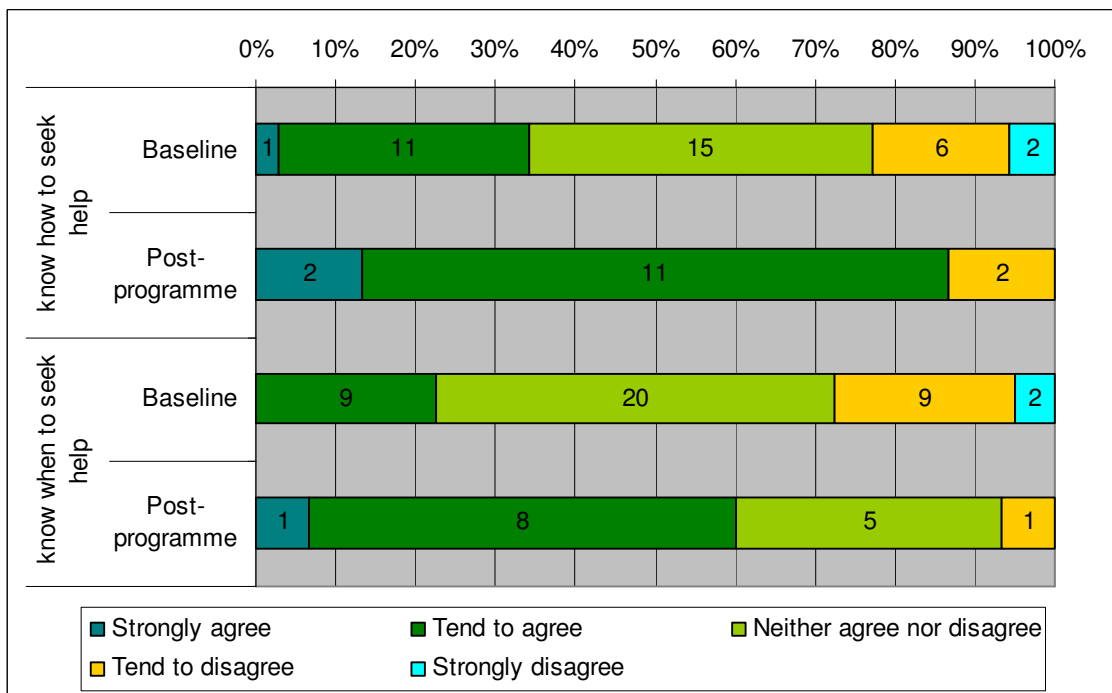
Figures 4 and 5 below show how teachers rated each of their students’ understanding and learning, at each time point. For example, in the first line of Figure 5, we can see that six out of 43 teachers (14.0%) felt that their students ‘always’ understood how to be safe at baseline, while 28 (65.1%) felt that this was true ‘most of the time’.

Figure 5 Teachers' perceptions of students' Healthy Relationship understanding and learning at baseline post-programme



In the last line of Figure 6, we can see that, post-programme, one out of fifteen teachers (6.7%) strongly agreed that their students knew when to seek help, while eight (53.3%) tended to agree that this was true.

Figure 6 Teachers' perceptions of students' Healthy Relationship understanding and learning at baseline post-programme



While teacher survey participants appeared to respond more positively post-programme than at baseline, the differences between baseline and post-programme results did not reach statistical significance. There are a number of reasons that may explain this. Firstly, the lower numbers of respondents post-programme may have resulted in statistical tests being unable to detect a significant degree of change. Secondly, the time lapse between pre- and post surveys may have been insufficient to detect significant change. Thirdly, pre- and post survey responses were not matched so it was not possible to track changes in individual responses. However, the qualitative data collected through interviews and focus groups tends to support that positive change did occur

Teacher interview participants were asked to describe the ways in which they had observed students displaying the key healthy relationships interactions. A couple of respondents simply stated that they had observed students using the interactions, while others specified which interactions they had observed, including: setting and respecting physical boundaries, using 'STOP', and knowing what was urgent and what was not. Other participants noted that they had seen students using appropriate language and signs they had learned about during the programme. One teacher noted that students appeared to be more confident in expressing themselves to others, while another felt that students were more aware of the consequences of their actions. In the following excerpt, one participant describes the positive changes they had observed in their students' classroom behaviour:

“Just the ability to identify the need for space, so you don't need to be right in somebody's space to get your point across, that you can step back a bit...the idea that it's okay to say no and stop in a way that doesn't offend, that you can stick up for yourself and you don't have to use your fists, you can just voice it and everything. That's okay.”

(Participant 3)

This participant also felt that the programme had raised their students' awareness of the options available when faced with potential conflict and also that the programme had given teachers a means of guiding students to consider those options. The focus group participants agreed that all students would benefit from going through the programme more than once to build and reinforce skills.

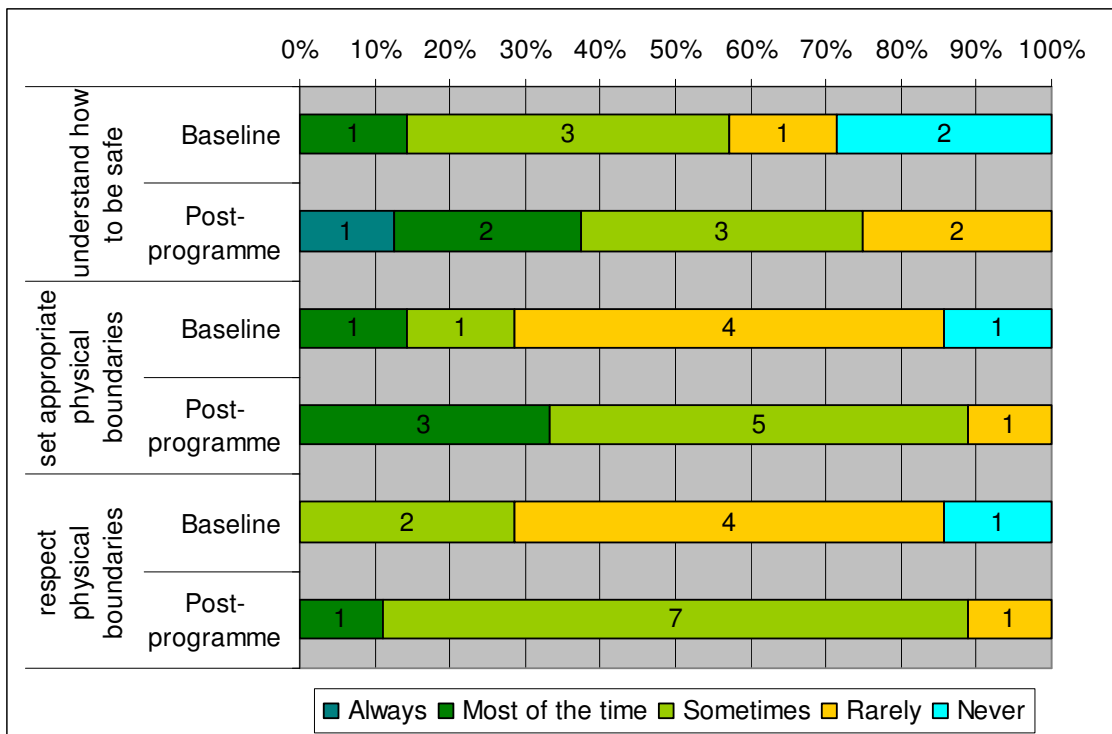
Of the twelve post-programme teacher survey respondents who rated the overall impact of the programme, nine rated it as 'positive' and three as 'extremely positive'. Only two

teacher interview participants felt that they had observed very little behaviour change in their students related to the Healthy Relationships programme. One interview respondent reported that their students had lost interest and, although they had learned the skills, had not applied them.

Family survey participants were also asked to rate how often they felt their children demonstrated understanding and awareness of three key Healthy Relationships programme messages. Families were then asked to rate how strongly they agreed with statements describing their child’s understanding and learning around knowing how and when to seek help.

Figures 7 and 8 show how families rated their each of their child’s understanding at each time point. For example, the first line of Figure 7 shows that one out of seven families (14.3%) who took part in the baseline survey felt that their child understood how to be safe most of the time, while three (42.9%) felt that this was true sometimes. The last line of Figure 7 shows that seven out of nine families (77.8%) who took part in the post-programme survey felt that their child knew how to respect physical boundaries sometimes, while one (14.3%) felt that this was rarely true.

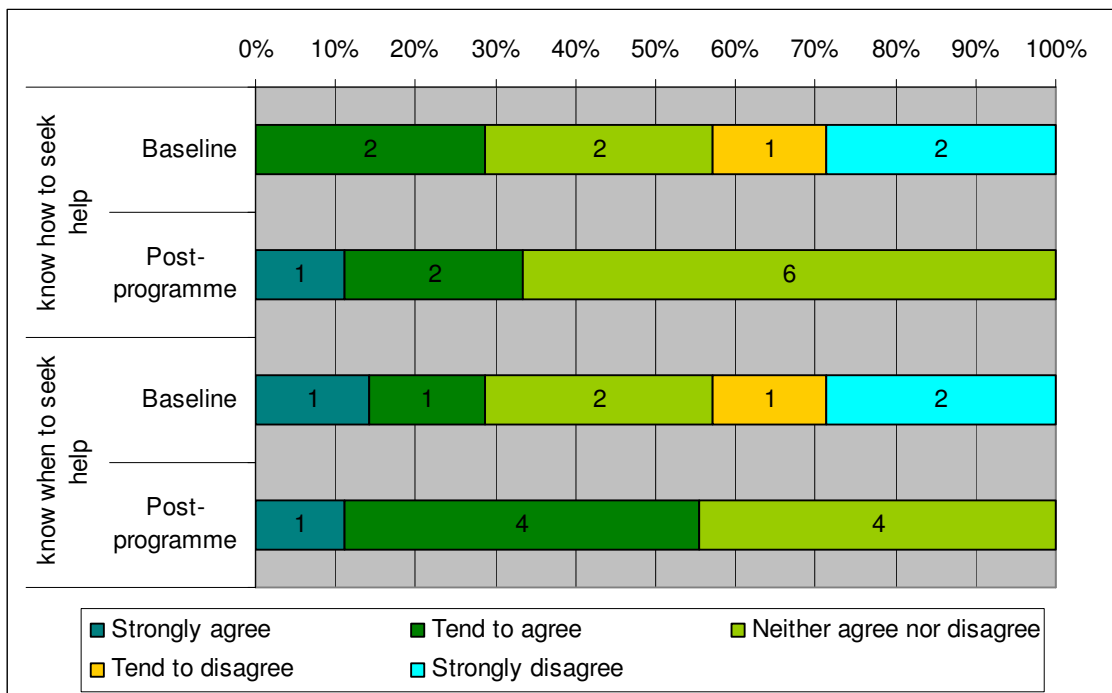
Figure 7 Families’ perceptions of students’ Healthy Relationship understanding and learning at baseline and post-programme



When Figure 7 baseline and post-programme results were compared, families reported observing their children setting and respecting physical boundaries significantly more often ($p=0.050$; 0.019) post-programme. Although it appears that families also felt their children understood how to be safe more often post-programme, this change did not reach statistical significance.

Figure 8 shows how strongly families agreed that their children knew how and when to seek help. The first line shows that, at baseline, four out of seven families (57.1%) agreed to some degree that their child knew how to seek help. The last line shows that post-programme, five out of nine families (55.6%) agreed to some degree that their child knew when to seek help. When Figure 8 baseline and post-programme results were compared, neither of the observed differences reached statistical significance.

Figure 8 Families' perceptions of students' Healthy Relationship understanding and learning at baseline and post-programme



Interview data indicated that there had been minimal communication between teachers and families around the programme. However, one parent reported having seen their child using or practising skills learned from the programme and one teacher noted that the few parents they had discussed the programme with had reported observing positive changes in their children. Another teacher had received the following report from a parent:

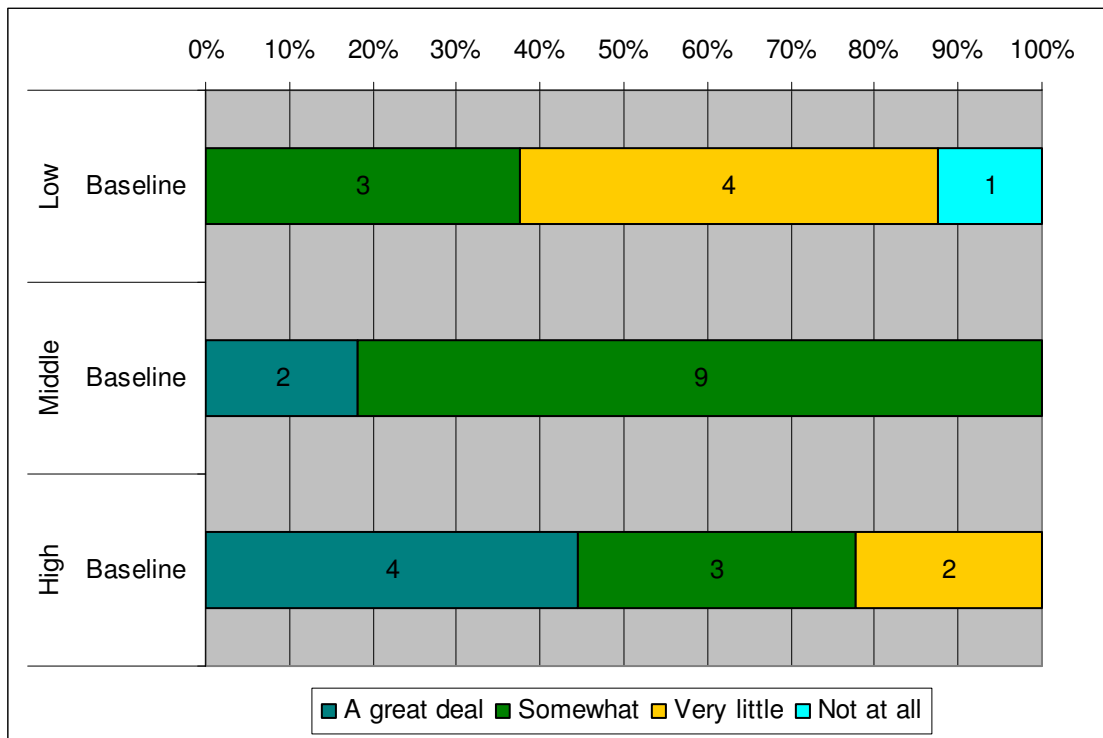
“One of my students, one of the mothers wrote, oh ‘he’s been...using STOP’ – had been doing it at home when his little brothers were bugging him, so he’s actually transferred what he’d learnt at school to being used at home.” (Participant 1)

The student focus group was conducted with six high ability students who attended School A. During the focus group, students demonstrated one of the role plays they had learned during the programme, with the assistance of their teacher and a teacher’s aid. Students were able to respond correctly to their teacher’s questions around which of the four Healthy Relationships interactions applied to the role play they had demonstrated. Some students seemed particularly aware of how to communicate, both verbally and physically, whether they felt particular interactions were acceptable or not to them. It was not clear from the students’ responses how many had practiced the Healthy Relationships interactions at home. However the students’ teacher confirmed that there had been instances where students had used the skills they had learned outside of specific Healthy Relationships lessons, for example in the playground.

3.9. Behaviour change

Post-programme, participants were asked to estimate the degree to which they felt students of each ability group had actually changed. Figure 9, on the next page, shows the number of teachers who felt their students of each ability had shown behaviour change. Post-programme, three out of eight teachers (37.5%) reported that low ability students’ behaviour had indeed changed somewhat, while a further four (50%) felt their students’ behaviour had changed very little. All eleven teachers (100%) responding to the question reported that middle ability students’ behaviour had changed either somewhat or a great deal. Seven out of nine teachers (77.8%) felt that high ability students’ behaviour had changed either somewhat or a great deal.

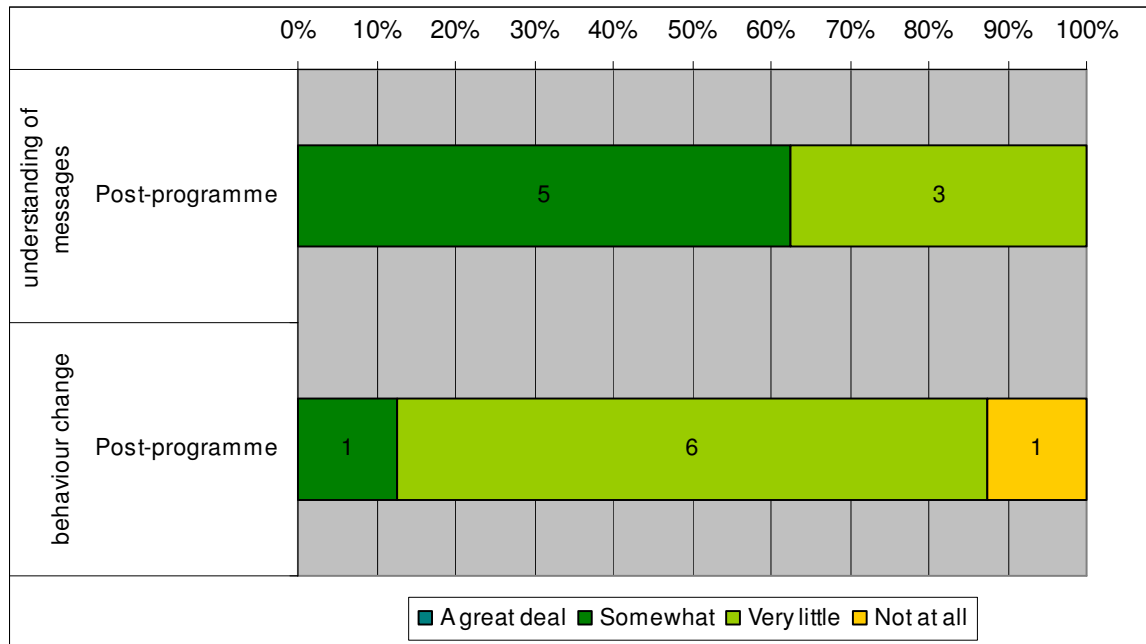
Figure 9 Teachers perceptions of students' behaviour change post-programme



Some interview participants noted that they felt it was particularly challenging to bring about change with their student groups. There were also indications from the interview data that participants felt high ability students had been more able than lower ability students to follow the programme's lessons and understand its intentions.

Family survey participants were similarly asked at baseline the degree to which they expected their child to understand the healthy relationships programme messages and how much they expected their child's behaviour to change. The post-programme survey then asked how much understanding and behaviour change families had actually observed in their child. Figure 10, on the next page, shows that five out of eight parents (62.5%) felt that their children understood the programme's messages 'somewhat' and one out of eight parents (12.5%) felt that their child's behaviour had changed 'somewhat', while six (75%) felt their children's behaviour had changed 'very little'.

Figure 10 Families' perceptions of students' behaviour change post-programme



There were indications that a number of family survey participants felt they had not received sufficient feedback from their child's school around the progress their child had made with the programme, or indeed information about the programme itself. A few others did appear to have some understanding of the programme, expressing that they felt their children needed ongoing support with issues relating to healthy relationships and staying safe.

3.10. Programme efficacy

The evaluation sought to explore teachers' views around aspects of the programme that had worked well. Overall, post-programme teacher survey participants gave an average rating of 7.36 (on a scale of one to ten) for the quality of the Healthy Relationships programme.

In particular, there was agreement amongst some interview participants that the programme content integrated well with other programmes being delivered in their schools, including: 'social skills'; 'behaviour programmes'; 'girls puberty class'; and 'health and physical education'. One teacher appreciated that the programme required little adaptation and another felt that the potential for students to continue their learning at home was positive.

The programme was described as easy to follow because of the 'four key' interactions and enjoyable for students, particularly because of its interactive nature. Interview participants from one school felt that the characters' names, accents and personalities also helped to keep students engaged. One participant thought that the inclusion of a character who used a wheelchair had helped their students to identify with a wheelchair using staff member.

Two of the interview participants noted that they felt the signs and communication devices for non-communicative students were particularly helpful. Focus group respondents agreed that the role-playing was one of the aspects of the programme that had worked the best. Focus group participants also reported enjoying working together with each other, as well as with allied staff, such as an occupational therapist and speech and language therapist, to share ideas, discuss what was working well and how to improve the programme for their students

3.11. Barriers and suggested improvements

Barriers

Teacher interview participants were asked if there were any ways in which they had been prevented from being able to fully deliver the Healthy Relationships programme. The area with greatest agreement across all participants was around the language used in the programme materials. It seemed that this issue had been addressed to some extent by an updated version of the CD, however, statements such as 'it is allowed' were still felt to be difficult for many students to grasp, with 'it is okay' suggested as a more accessible alternative. Participants emphasised that negative phrasing such as 'it's not a secret' were especially difficult for students to understand.

One interview participant felt that the whole programme was not age appropriate for their students, who were aged 16-21 years old. This respondent had expected to gain more knowledge around dealing with boy-girl relationships. In contrast, a couple of focus group participants felt cautious about teaching the stories relating to hand-holding and kissing, even though they were particularly relevant to their students, aged up to 15. One of these participants stated that **"you'd have to do a lot of groundwork first before you even approach that"** (Participant 3).

Another interview respondent felt that not enough information and detail was provided on the DVDs to allow teachers/teachers aids to conduct role plays. This same participant felt that many of the scenarios as well as characters' names did not feel locally enough based to New Zealand. As a result, for this participant, the programme content felt a little inauthentic for that respondent.

The focus group participants reported that they had found some of the stories were too long to be able to hold their students' attention. One example given was the story about the bully, which was said to be told in two or three different parts. The following excerpt explains what happened with long stories:

“It lost the gist of...the impact of what you wanted to teach by the time you get to the end” (Participant 4)

Suggested improvements

Teacher focus group and interview participants made a few suggestions around how the programme could be improved. These are summarised below:

- More activities/board games would make the programme more fun
- More information about how to deal with obsessive behaviours
- More consultation with New Zealand based special education experts
- Shorten all stories to a maximum of three slides
- Provide 'visuals' with symbols or pictures representing the four key interactions
- Use consistent symbols or pictures across all programme resources
- Randomise the order of the correct answers in the booklets
- Simplify the language

4.0 Summary and conclusions

Overall, the evaluation found that the programme was perceived to have had a positive impact on students and had resulted in most teachers observing behaviour change in their students. It was acknowledged that change in this student group can be challenging and that long-term, repeated teaching is often required before students absorb and apply

learning. Therefore, that the three-month Healthy Relationships programme was seen to have resulted in at least some change for many students is an indication of its efficacy.

The survey found that teachers were motivated to attend the Healthy Relationships training programme and felt well prepared to deliver the programme following their training. Since most teachers reported that they already felt they had some knowledge and relevant previous experience of healthy relationships issues, the most common motivation for attending the training was to add to this existing knowledge. They reported that while training had not significantly extended their knowledge, it had given them valuable information and new techniques (such as role playing) that assisted their work with children around these issues, and this had increased their confidence.

Teachers reported that they now felt able to use and adapt the programme to the specific needs of the students - indeed, innovative adaptations had been made by some. The most useful resources were the teachers guide and CDs, and the least useful were the sticker pages. The CDs were particularly effective when used in combination with a 'smart board'.

The programme was easy to follow and enjoyable for students, particularly because of its interactive nature. There were some reports that the characters' names, accents and personalities helped to keep students engaged and the signs and also that communication devices for non-communicative students were particularly helpful. Role-playing was one of the aspects of the programme that worked best. Teachers rated the programme as being fairly high quality and indicated that it had good potential for being integrated within other education programmes already running in the school. The main barrier mentioned by teachers was that some language could have been more accessible to the target group. Further, the length of some of the stories tended to lose the attention for some of the target group of children. Other suggested improvements were also offered by teachers who had used the programme.

The programme had been designed to be shared with parents. It was found that this had not occurred in the way recommended by the programme designers. It was clear that some information about the programme had been shared with some parents but that this had not been systematic, and resources had generally been held by the school rather than being sent home to parents (some teachers were concerned that resources might be lost). Thus parents were not greatly aware of the details of the programme and nor were they involved. Parents themselves felt they had not received sufficient feedback about the progress their child had made in the programme, or about the programme itself. This,

some felt was especially important as their children would need ongoing support to embed their understandings.

The evaluation survey results should be considered with the following in mind. Post-programme teacher survey responses were lower in number than baseline responses. This was likely due to the fact that baseline surveys were distributed to all training attendees in person at the end of the training and collected on completion, whereas the vast majority of post-programme surveys were distributed by both post and email in response to numbers of surveys requested by lead teachers. Reduced numbers of responses post-programme may have resulted in inconclusive statistical results when comparing baseline and post-programme data.

However, generally teachers reported greater awareness and action among students who had engaged in the programme, in terms of setting and respecting boundaries and stopping unwanted behaviour. Positive behavioural change was noted by teachers as having taken place not only in the classroom, but also during break times. This indicates that these students had understood the Healthy Relationships messages and were applying them in appropriate situations outside of lessons. Teachers felt that their students would in fact benefit from going through the programme more than once to build and reinforce skills. Families reported that their children's understanding and behaviour in terms of healthy relationships had improved after taking part in the programme. As mentioned earlier there was minimal communication given to parents about the programme – had this occurred, parents might well have been able to recognise further positive changes in their children's behaviour. In terms of ability level, changes in students tended to be perceived mostly among middle and high level ability students. Teachers reported that the programme was best suited to high ability students.

5.0 Recommendations

That teachers' adaptations to the programme are captured on a regular basis (suggest annually) in order to assist with ongoing review and adjustment.

That teachers' experience of using resources is captured on a regular basis (suggest annually) in order to assist with ongoing review and adjustment.

That, in addition to the existing guide, an advanced teacher training guide is developed that includes examples of adaptations to delivery and resources and suggestions for integration of Healthy Relationships in other school programmes.

That suggestions for improvements to delivery and resources made by teachers in this evaluation are considered.

That issues for teachers in sharing the programme with parents are explored with teachers during training, as well as possible solutions. Where possible Kidpower representatives might consider discussing these issues with school principals or lead teachers in order to find ways that Kidpower representatives can facilitate greater parent involvement.

That Kidpower representatives explore the value of offering free posters to all teachers in the school whether or not they were delivering the programme. This would reinforce the work being done by participating teachers and might also generate interest among non-participating teachers.

That Kidpower management undertakes regular (suggest annual) evaluation using a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. However, if achieving sufficient survey responses is going to be a continuing issue, we recommend that a greater emphasis is placed on qualitative methods such as observations, interviews and focus groups.