

**Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching Middle School Students Social Skills Using the
Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model**

Elizabeth E. Hunt Esco

B.S., University of Missouri – Columbia, 2003

M.A., University of Missouri – Kansas City, 2005

Ed. Specialist, University of Missouri – Kansas City, 2012

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Verneda Edwards, Ed. D.
Major Advisor

Charlsie Prosser, Ed. D.

Connie Heinen, Ed. D.

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Abstract

The purpose of this research study was to determine teachers' perception of the effect of a character education program the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. This was a quantitative research study using archived data collected electronically through SurveyMonkey, an online survey tool. This study focused on addressing three research questions. The first was to determine if there was a relationship between teachers' perceptions of building support and involvement of the model. Second, was to determine the extent teachers perceived they have the ability to use the model. Lastly, the purpose of the study was to determine if teachers perceived that the model could be used to develop social skills in students.

Current literature on character education includes the eleven guiding principles developed by Character Education Partnership (CEP) as a guide on how to develop, implement, and assess the effectiveness of a character education program. The tenth guiding principle defined by the CEP details how engaging families and communities in the effort to implement character education program will increase the likelihood of impacting students.

The character education programs review for the current study were found to positively affect student behavior. Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO), Peacemakers program, and the Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP) program were character education programs that reported positive character development in students.

Significant findings from the current study include when teachers perceived high support and involvement from other stakeholders, the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model had more of an impact on students' social skill development. Secondly, teachers

perceived they were effective in implementing the model to affect the development of students' social skills. Lastly, teachers do perceive that teaching social skills using the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model develops students' social skills.

School leaders could consider the results of the current study when determining whether to implement a character education program. The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model is founded in replacing negative behaviors with a social skill.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the following four individuals:

The first dedication is to my late dad, Steve. I did not get enough time with you; however during the time we did have you instilled in me a passion for learning. The learning we did together was always fun and left me wanting to know more. You are the reason that I love science, inquiry, and life. Thank you.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Public education was developed on two basic principles: to educate its citizens and to help citizens understand the importance of doing good works (Davidson, Lickona, & Khmelkov, 2007; Lickona, 1993). During the past eleven years public education and the government have shifted from educating the whole child to a focus on academic achievement. This has been done through the requirement of state assessments that hold schools and school districts accountable for each student's learning. Given the pressure to perform well on academic assessments, schools and school districts were re-evaluating the need to teach to the whole child. "Social skills are critical for the ability to interact with, adapt to, and function with the environment. Furthermore, the acquisition of social skills is essential to becoming a contributing member of society" (Chen, 2006, p. 143). This includes, but is not limited to, the need to teach character education programs with social skills to middle school students.

Background

Boys Town in Omaha, Nebraska was started by Father Edward J. Flanagan in 1917 as a home for all boys, regardless of race and religion, to live, go to school, and be cared for by loving adults (Lynch, 2010). Father Flanagan's goal was to educate and care for at-risk children, in the hopes of helping them develop skills to overcome their circumstances and realize their potential. The students at Boys Town took traditional academic courses in English, mathematics, science, social studies and other content areas, but embedded in all of the coursework was the teaching of social skills. The organization has been fulfilling Father Flanagan's goal for nearly a century (Lynch, 2010).

With Father Flanagan's goals in mind, his successors have taken the social skills taught and developed them into a curriculum that focuses on replacing negative behaviors with the social skills a child is lacking. This education model embraces successful teaching strategies, which can be implemented by any school or school district to aid in the growth and development of all children (Lynch, 2010). The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model was created to benefit those students who attended the original Boys Town School. The over-arching goal of the program is for at-risk students to see their own potential and overcome their own circumstances (Lynch, 2010).

The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model has four guiding principles: "Building relations with all students; encouraging a sense of connectedness to school; establishing a safe, positive climate for learning; and empowering every child with the social skills needed to enjoy academic and personal success" (Hensley, Powell, Lamke, & Hartman, 2007, p. 3). The last two principles, establishing a safe, positive climate for learning and empowering every child with social skills needed to enjoy academic and personal success, are the two driving forces behind the model's proactive teaching of social skills. The proactive teaching of social skills empowers teachers trained in the model to ignore negative behavior and focus on the social skill the students are lacking. One strategy from The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model includes teachers modeling positive social skills for students. Negative behavior is replaced with positive behavior. The goal of proactive teaching of social skills is to then reinforce the skill until the student demonstrates its use, rather than using a negative consequence or office discipline referral (ODR).

Much of the success of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model is monitored through the decrease of ODRs in a school or school district. Due to this, many of the buildings or districts that choose to implement the model are schools with high ODR's, which tend to be in areas with high rates of poverty and diversity (Hensley et. al, 2007). The Director of Student Support Services from Hartford Public Schools stated, Teachers who faithfully implement these techniques can make a huge difference in their classrooms. Their students spend less time off task and are much more academically engaged. The Well-Managed Schools model has given our district an effective way to address and prevent student behavior problems and create positive classroom environments. (Hensley et. al, 2007)

Due to the implementation of the model in buildings or districts that have high-risk students, the model has primarily been used to impact the growth of students from poverty and diversity. However, the four principles of the model are concepts that could be beneficial for all students. Father Flanagan's goal of educating students to see their own potential no matter their current circumstances should be a goal for all children, not just those who are at-risk.

School District A is a suburban district in Kansas used for this study. School District A had one of its four high schools implement the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model during the 2006-2007 school year. During the 2005-2006 school year, this high school had over 1300 ODRs. After five years of implementation this school's ODRs fell to 530, a reduction of 41% (J. Herman, personal communication, August 10, 2012). Because of the success seen with the implementation of the Boys Town Well-

Managed Schools Model, School District A implemented it in its nine middle schools during the 2012-2013 school year.

In 2012-2013, the enrollment in School District A was 28,872 students. Of those students, 27.23% were of low socioeconomic status, 6.2% were English Language Learners, and 14.6% received special education services. The ethnicity and racial breakdown for the district was 0.1% Pacific Islander, 0.4% Native American, 3.3% Multi-Racial, 4.6% Asian, 7.0% African-American, 13.3% Hispanic, and 71.4% White (School District A, 2012b).

It has been projected that School District A will continue to grow at a rate of 7 to 15% each year until 2021. Of those enrolled, 6,329 students attend middle school in the district. The middle schools mimics the diversity of the district (School District A, 2012b). Table 1 illustrates the middle schools demographic information broken down by sub-groups for the 2012-2013 school year.

Table 1

*School District A – Middle School Information by Sub-group for the 2012-2013 School**Year*

Middle School	Enrollment	SES Population	ELL Population	Special Education Population
1	820	6.7%	2.1%	5.5%
2	712	10.5%	3.4%	9.0%
3	804	17.7%	2.2%	10.4%
4	729	50.2%	29.4%	14.5%
5	675	23.9%	10.1%	9.0%
6	442	57.2%	46.2%	14.3%
7	683	39.2%	15.8%	12.2%
8	731	10.4%	3.6%	4.9%
9	684	50.0%	24.6%	12.9%

Note: Adapted from “Kansas State Department of Education Report Card 2012-2013”, n.db. Available at http://online.ksde.org/rcard/county.aspx?cnty_no=046

The middle schools in School District A were also reflective of the ethnicity and race identified in the district. Table 2 illustrates the comparison between district’s middle schools for ethnicity and race for the 2012-2013 school year.

Table 2

*School District A – Middle School Information by Ethnicity and Race for the 2012-2013**School Year*

Middle School	Enrollment	African Americans	Hispanic	White	Other
1	820	3.3%	3.6%	83.2%	9.9%
2	712	4.8%	6.7%	79.6%	8.8%
3	804	4.4%	7.7%	80.7%	7.2%
4	729	10.7%	20.0%	60.8%	8.5%
5	675	5.9%	10.1%	78.2%	5.8%
6	442	8.6%	33.0%	52.7%	5.7%
7	683	12.9%	13.5%	65.2%	8.5%
8	731	3.1%	7.0%	80.3%	9.6%
9	684	11.7%	24.4%	56.4%	7.5%

Note: Adapted from “Kansas State Department of Education Report Card 2012-2013”,

n.db. Available at http://online.ksde.org/rcard/county.aspx?cnty_no=046

Statement of the Problem

The vision of School District A is to have “students prepared for their future” (School District A, 2012a, p. 1). Furthermore, the district mission is “to provide a safe, positive environment where all students acquire knowledge and skills to be productive citizens” (School District A, 2012a, p. 1). Public schools across the country aspire to ensure that all students become productive members of society. However, as school districts are asked to change the focus of the work to be more academic, particularly in mathematics and reading, the responsibility of teaching character development falls to

other organizations within the community, including the family. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has been in place since 2001 and continued until the 2013-2014 school year. During the era of NCLB, schools were pushing to ensure that all students would reach the set proficiency goals in mathematics and reading (NCLB, 2002). Schools focused on those two content areas.

While NCLB was being implemented the country was also facing economic challenges. This applied additional pressure to the family unit. From 2000 to 2010 the country saw a 2.5% increase in the poverty rate, which meant that 7,533,335 more people were living in poverty (United States Census Bureau, 2010). During this same time, increases were also seen in divorce rates, unwed mothers giving birth, and self-destructive behaviors such as suicide (Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2011a; Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2011b; U.S. Department of Justice, 2011; U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, 2010). Educators saw the need for the more than just a focus on academics in the public schools.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research was to evaluate if a character education program that teaches social skills, specifically the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, had an effect on middle school students social-emotional learning. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to determine the extent at which teachers perceived that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helps develop students' social skills. Traditionally, this model has been implemented in schools of low SES and at-risk students to decrease office referrals and teach social skills. The current study's purpose was to see to what extent teachers perceive if all middle schools students could benefit from a character

education program like the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. Teacher survey data was used to determine if teachers who used the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model of proactive teaching with social skills in the classroom perceived a decrease in student misbehavior and an increase in students' ability to use social skills.

Significance of the Study

It is the responsibility of public education to ensure that students become productive members of society. School districts, states, and the federal government demonstrate their support for character education by allocating funds towards developing and implementing these programs (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007). Character education programs are highly variable. They are highly variable in their design and implementation across the country (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; CEP, 2010; Lickona, 1996). Current character education studies focus on evaluating student behaviors, specific student outcomes, and specifics of the program. While current studies on the effects of teaching social skills are focused primarily on teaching these skills to students in special education only. There are few studies that focus on teachers' comments and teachers' perception of the character education program, even though teachers are the individuals implementing the program with students. The focus of this study is solely on teachers' perception of one character education program, the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. There will be a review of teachers' perceptions of improving student behavior through incorporating character education strategies through social skills teaching. Current studies on social skill use students in special education as the population. This study looks at the teachers' perception of teaching social skills to all students in middle school. Programs like the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model need to be

evaluated to determine if their strategies are effective at impacting students' social emotional learning.

Delimitations

“Delimitations are self-imposed boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose and scope of the study” (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 134). The following delimitations were placed on this study: (a) data collected included survey results of teachers, and (b) only middle schools were used, so the results may not be generalized to elementary or high school students.

Assumptions

“Assumptions are postulates, premises, and propositions that are accepted as operational for purposes of the research” (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 135). The study was guided by the following assumptions: (a) all teachers participated in professional development on how to implement the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, (b) all middle school administrators were supportive of the implementation of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, (c) all teachers used the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model of teaching and corrective teaching with the social skills, (d) the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model was being used the same in all of the middle schools in School District A, and (e) all teachers answered the surveys honestly.

Research Questions

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) state that research questions “identify questions that have not been addressed previously or remain unanswered in the literature” (p. 126). This study was focused on addressing the following research questions:

RQ1. To what extent is there a relationship between teachers' perceptions of building support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?

RQ2. To what extent do teachers perceive they have the ability to use the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?

RQ3. Do teachers perceive that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helps develop students' social skills?

Definition of Terms

This section will define key terms that will be used during the study.

At-risk. In a contractor report for the National Center for Education Statistics (2010), at-risk students are defined as those students who are likely to fail at any aspect of school.

Social skills. Social skills or life skills, as defined by the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, are sets of behaviors that enable individuals to interact with one another in ways that are socially acceptable and personally beneficial, mutually beneficial, or beneficial to others (Hensley et al., 2007).

Overview of the Methodology

This was a quantitative research study. Data was collected by surveying middle school teachers on the perceived effectiveness of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. The population included all certified teachers in School District A teaching in one of the nine middle schools during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. The survey used for this study was developed by the school district and completed online using SurveyMonkey. Data from SurveyMonkey was downloaded and imported into

IBM® SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 23 for Windows. Statistical tests used from this study include chi-squared tests and one-sample *t*-tests.

Organization of the Study

The current chapter began with background information on the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. This chapter also included background information on the school district used in the current study, the statement of the problem, and the purpose of the research. The significance of the research, delimitations, and assumptions were also in chapter one. The chapter concluded with the research questions, definition of terms, and research and methodology. A review of the literature on the historical perspective of character education, the developmental theories that support current principles of character education, the social need of character education, and a review of the current programs being implemented is included in chapter two. Contained in chapter three are details on the methodology used to carry out the research and outlines the research design, population and sample, sampling procedure, measurement, data collection procedures, data analysis and hypothesis testing, and the limitations of the study. The results of hypothesis testing are described in chapter four. Presented in chapter five is the interpretation of the findings and offers future recommendations and suggestions for the field study.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

Public schools have the expectation of challenging students academically, as well as developing youth with the skills needed to be good citizens (Field, 1996). Character education programs have long been part of the American schooling system to aid schools and school districts in developing good citizens. These programs were modified with every societal change throughout history. Character education programs had to identify the new and different ways to teach how to be a good citizen in the ever changing world.

This chapter is divided into four sections that present a review of the literature relevant to character education. The first section reviews the historical perspective of character education in America and its public schools. The second section examines developmental theories that support the current principles of character education. Next, the chapter discusses the need for character education in schools. The final section reviews the impact of character education programs implemented in middle schools.

Historical Perspective of Character Education

Character education has been part of public schools since their inception in the United States. In the 1700s, it was the responsibility of the family, and church to educate children on moral and religious content (Mulkey, 1997). During this time, parents supported the church in taking responsibility to educate their own children, servants they employed, and apprentices. This undertaking included the whole community ensuring that all children were morally educated in the teachings of Christianity. All moral education taught in the church and home were to be based on the teachings of

Christianity (Glazer, 1996; McClellan, 1999). However, when the colonies became a nation and schools became publicly supported moral education became a part of the schools' responsibility (Mulkey, 1997). In the late 1770s, some schools began to move away from a moral, religiously oriented education system. There was an increase in the number of immigrants settling in large cities. These immigrants had varied religious backgrounds causing the school to move to a secular structure. This secular structure included values being taught to factory workers like being on time, problem-solving, and regular attendance rather than those values found in Christianity (Mulkey, 1997).

In the 1800s, there was a resurgence in schools which embraced the teachings of Christianity. As cited in Glazer (1996), McClellan (1999), and Yu (2004), William Holmes McGuffey published his Readers in 1836. Teachings from these readers emphasized patriotism, parental respect, and adherence to Christianity. The McGuffey Readers taught moral life lessons through biblical stories along with the values of an increasingly industrial society such as diligence, orderliness, and willingness to comply with regulations. Due to the blend of religion and values, the Readers became widely used by schools (Glazer, 1996; McClellan, 1999; Yu, 2004).

During the nineteenth century schools continued to face the challenge of expanding their curricula to continue to meet the needs of a changing society. Due to the expansion of industrialization and corporate development schools needed to add new academic content. Societal changes required character education to turn its focus to socializing children with the middle class morals (Field, 1996). Educators struggled to have enough time to teach new curriculum, including the application of science, newly developed technology, and leadership development, while still meeting the needs of

character development (McClellan, 1999; Yu, 2004). At the same time, schools were seeing an influx of children both born in America and immigrants.

Middle class morals were taught in schools, but were not defined until 1917 when William Hutchins described them in the Children's Morality Code (Field, 1996; Glazer, 1996; McClellan, 1999; Mulkey, 1997). This code was frequently used by teachers and parents to teach the following values: self-control, good health, kindness, truth, sportsmanship, teamwork, self-reliance, duty reliability, and good workmanship (Field, 1996; Glazer, 1996; McClellan, 1999; Mulkey, 1997). In reaction to the increased requirements of academic curriculum, schools also created good character clubs as part of school course work or after school opportunities to fully meet character education needs (Field, 1996; McClellan, 1999).

In 1918, the National Education Association published the Seven Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education. "These aims, which found broad support in the 1920's from America's educational leadership, were the following: command of fundamental processes, health, worthy home membership, vocational efficiency, civic participation, worthy use of leisure time, and ethical character" (Barnard & Best, 1961, p. 23). These principles supported the Children's Morality Code for secondary education. Specifically, the second, third, fifth and seventh principles speak to character development. The second principle was health, which meant that schools should encourage good health habits, provide health instruction, and physical activities. Secondary schools were also to teach the qualities that make an individual a worthy member of a family through literature, music, social studies, and art. For students to truly be a worthy member of the family and to meet the requirements of the third

principle, they needed to learn to both contribute and benefit from being a member of a family. The fifth cardinal principle stated that secondary schools should guide students to develop an awareness and concern for one's own community. As students gained knowledge of social organization and civic morality, they were also asked to apply problem-solving methods to better society as a whole. The final principle was being an ethical character, which stated that schools should instill in students the notion of personal responsibility and initiative. Students learn responsibility and initiative through service learning and mentoring. These seven principles were designed to be implemented together and not as separated courses (Barnard & Best, 1961; Raubinger, Rowe, Piper, & West, 1969). In 1929, the country was reeling from the stock market crash and the beginning of the Great Depression (McClellan, 1999). The major social changes of the 1920s and 1930s fueled progressive educational theorists to believe there was a need for reform in character education (Yu, 2004). Progressive educational theorists, such as As cited in Yu (2004), Harry C. McKown and John Dewey, used this time to show the need for character education. McKown specifically focused on the changes in the family unit and use of personal leisure time to support the need for character education. He believed that the home had become just a place to sleep that reduced the family bond. People were also choosing to play cards, smoke, and dance rather than attend church (Yu, 2004). Dewey approached character education in the terms of moral knowledge. He believed that students should be taught academic content like history, science, mathematics, reading, and writing, but he argued that skills gained from this learning will remain technical and mechanistic unless it is matched with the consequence of human life. The consequences Dewey focused on were the social changes occurring daily for

students. Depending on the subject or idea, the student was learning consequences of human life that may pertain to truth, politics, the economy, cultural issues, or all of these. McKown and Dewey both believed that to achieve true understanding and knowledge a student must apply academic knowledge with moral knowledge (Hansen, 2007; McClellan, 1999). Both also advocated that students needed to be taught problem-solving and how to become independent thinkers. They proposed that schools should use complex daily problems to accomplish this through character education. McKown (as cited in Barnard & Best, 1961; McClellan 1999; Yu, 2004), published a book titled *Character Education* in 1935, which was a detailed account of the education system during that time. In his book, McKown argued that there were connections between the need for character education and social changes that were occurring.

The work of advocates in the 1920s and 1930s for character development saw increased support into the 1940s and 1950s. The driving force behind the renewed interest was the United States involvement in World War II, the Cold War, and the Korean War. The focus of character education shifted from the reflection of values to also include democratic pride (McClellan, 1999; Ryan, 1986). During the time of World War II, patriotism was high in the United States with all citizens being asked to make sacrifices. Schools developed a connection between students' personal efforts and their civic and national duty. The effects of war changed the focus of character education from only teaching values to creating good human beings (Field, 1996; McClellan, 1999). A debate had begun that character education should "develop social and civic consciousness of its young citizens" (Field, 1996, p.119). To accomplish this, character education began to emphasize civic growth of students in and outside the classroom. Schools began

to encourage students to partake in campaigns to collect scrap metal or sell government bonds and stamps. Some schools also encouraged students to be responsible in the home, for example caring for younger siblings, household work, and running errands for their parents. Students were asked to create first aid kits for air raid shelters, develop blackout procedures for their home, and gather food for potential emergencies (Field, 1996).

Character education was being taught by teachers through community service to achieve the goal of good citizenship or being a good human being (Field, 1996; McClellan, 1999; Zarra, 2000).

As the wars during the 1940s and 1950s changed the focus of character education, the American public began again to require more intellectual and academic skills from the schools. During the 1940s and 1950s, all academic levels mirrored the change Americans thought about government, ethnicity, and civic duty. There was no longer an accepted set of values to direct character education (McClellan, 1999). The Education Policies Commission of the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators published *The Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools* report in 1951 (as cited in McClellan, 1999). This report was an attempt to summarize an accepted body of values that should be taught in public schools (McClellan, 1999).

Moving into the 1960s and 1970s, the Vietnam War caused an increase in political and racial turmoil to increase. The turmoil forced educators to move away from anything that could cause a reaction from students or parents. Educators wanted to stay neutral, not challenging or picking sides in the social and political issues of the time. Because of this, character education eroded away (Lickona, 1993; McClellan,

1999; Ryan, 1986). As a reaction to the advances during the war there was a greater need for high-level technical and scientific skills. This caused schools to remove character education to make room for academic courses that focused on problem-solving, specifically in science (McClellan, 1999). As educational systems gradually shifted away from character education, the groundwork was laid for the fading of character education.

Since the 1980s and into the present, the support for character education programs returning to the public schools has increased (Mulkey, 1999). The Character Education Partnership (CEP) was formed in 1993 (Lickona, 1993). The mission was to develop civic virtues and moral character in American youth (Lickona, 1993). The government also showed support for character education with The Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (U.S. DOE, 1995), which created a partnership with the Character Education Pilot Project. This pilot project provided grants to states to design and implement character education programs. Forty-five states and the District of Columbia were awarded grants to implement character education programs.

Principles of Character Education

Character education has gone by a variety of names while being implemented in public schools. It has had names like moral education and values education. Regardless of the changes in the names character education continues to embody a variety of concepts like positive school climate, social-emotional learning, civic education, service learning, violence prevention, drug and alcohol prevention, and positive youth development (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; CEP, 2010; Lickona, 1996). Character education is about the balance between academic growth and moral development (CEP, 2010;

Lickona, 1996). Schools and school districts use different names for their character education program, but the goal is the same, “to promote the intellectual, social, emotional, and ethical development of young people and share a commitment to help young people become responsible, caring, and contributing citizens” (CEP, 2010, p. 1). Character education programs are rooted in developing children’s rational and ethical decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills in the areas of ethical and academic issues (CEP, 2010; White & Warfa, 2011).

Character education is about developing the whole student. The goal is the same, but as noted earlier, character education programs have varied curriculums and names. Due to the variation in the types of programs developed CEP, now named character.org, used eleven principles written by Tom Lickona, Ph.D., Eric Schaps, Ph.D., and Catherine Lewis, Ph.D. (2007) as the cornerstone to what constitutes effective character education. The eleven principles are recognized in the field of character education as the most comprehensive guide for defining character education. The principles are to be used by schools and school districts as a guide on how to develop, implement, and assess the effectiveness of a character education program (CEP, 2010, Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 2007). The eleven guiding principles for character education programs are as follows:

1. Promotes core ethical values and supportive performance values as the foundation of good character.
2. Defines “character” comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.
3. Uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to character development.

4. Creates a caring school community.
5. Provides students with opportunities for moral action.
6. Includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them to succeed.
7. Strives to foster students' self-motivation.
8. Engages the school staff as a learning and moral community that shares responsibility for character education and attempts to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students.
9. Fosters shared moral leadership and long-range support of the character education initiative.
10. Engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.
11. Assesses the character of the school staff's functioning as character educators, and the extent to which students manifest good character. (CEP, 2010).

Lickona, Schaps, and Lewis (2007) wrote these eleven principles so character education programs would support the development of the whole student. The eleven principles also support the development theories by Piaget, Kohlberg, Goleman, and Gardner. These researchers argue that character education is a required piece to ensure that a student is fully educated (DeVries, 1999; Fogarty & Steoehr, 1995; Goleman, 1995; Kavathatzopoulos, 1991; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977; Lickona, 1977; McClellan, 1999; Mulkey, 1997; Ryan, 1986). There are three main development theories that support developing programs that aligns with the CEP eleven principles of character

education. The theories are Moral Development, Multiple Intelligences, and Emotional Intelligence.

Jean Piaget was the first to develop the idea of moral development in children. As cited in DeVries (1999) and Kavathatzopoulos (1991), Piaget published *The Moral Judgment of the Child* in 1932. Piaget's research was a process called simiclinical interview, a specific type of questioning designed by Piaget. Piaget's simiclinical interviews included him asking children standard questions. Based on the child's answers he would ask follow up questions that were not standard, meaning Piaget formed the questions after the child had answered. From the questioning process he defined his constructivist theory of moral development. This theory was based on each individual constructing their own moral structures while they are acting upon the social world they live in (DeVries, 1999; Kavathatzopoulos, 1991). Piaget divides his constructivist theory of moral development into two types. The first type of moral development is morality of obedience. This is the type of morality that Piaget found most prevalent in the schools; students are morally obedient when they follow the rules of the others without asking questions (DeVries, 1999). Piaget believed the schools should also develop a second type of morality in students, moral autonomy. Moral autonomy is defined as an individual who "follows self-constructed principles to which he or she feels a personal commitment" (DeVries, 1999, p. 40). Piaget theorized that moral autonomy could be promoted through cooperative learning when students are asked to compare ideas, communicate to reach a collaborative agreement, and coordinate the implementation of the agreement, thus developing their own moral structures through the environment (DeVries, 1999; Lickona, 1977). Piaget believed that students should use real life

situations as the basis of their collaboration. He theorized that using the surrounding environment, including the academic curriculum, would help students link their learning to the community. With each cooperative learning event students would develop their moral autonomy based on interaction with others and the environment (DeVries, 1999; Kavathatzopouls, 1992; Lickona, 1977). Piaget's theory aligns with all eleven guiding principles, but specifically well with the fifth and seventh guiding principles. The fifth principle incorporates real-life situations which allow students to apply the values or skills taught through a character education program and the seventh principle guides schools to teach students to act morally in all real-life situations (CEP, 2010, Lickona, 1996; Lickona et al., 2007). Piaget's theory of moral development supports character education programs designed following the eleven principles.

Lawrence Kohlberg structured his research similarly to Piaget. Kohlberg analyzed responses to hypothetical moral dilemmas. Instead of questioning children, Kohlberg would tell them a story with different endings. Kohlberg created specific situations for discussions that would aid students in moving from one stage of moral development to the next. The child's response would allow Kohlberg to define the child's stage of moral development (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). Kohlberg built on Piaget's two types of morality when he identified six stages of moral development. Kohlberg theorized that schools could promote the growth of students through the six stages of moral development using classroom discussions presented by the teacher (Kavathatzopouls, 1992; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). Kohlberg's stages of development could be taught to educators so they could assess each student for their specific developmental stage (Lickona, 1993; McClellan, 1999; Mulkey, 1997; Ryan,

1986). Both Piaget and Kohlberg focused on the need of schools developing a culture that would allow peer interaction to develop student morality (Kavathatzopoulos, 1992; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977; Lickona, 1993; Lickona, 1977; McClellan, 1999; Mulkey, 1997; Ryan, 1986). Kohlberg's stages of moral development also support the eleven guiding principles of character education. Kohlberg's theory is intentional and individualized for each student. Principle three of Kohlberg's theory, identifies that a character education program has to be designed intentionally for a school or school district. The program has to be proactive and comprehensive, targeting the needs of the students in a specific school or school district (CEP, 2010, Lickona, 1996; Lickona et al., 2007).

Howard Gardner, a psychologist at the Harvard School of Education, developed his theory of multiple intelligences by combining empirical findings of studies across disciplines and conducting his research in experimental psychology. The theory of multiple intelligences allows one to assess the talents and skills of the whole student (Fogarty & Steoehr, 1995). Gardner researched symbol-using capacities in normal and gifted children and adults who had experienced brain damage (Gardner & Moran, 2006). He defined his ideas into the multiple intelligences theory, which identified seven intelligences that are independent of one another. However, Gardner believed students could be taught to use the seven intelligences together. Gardner believes that education needed to broaden the concept of what makes a student talented. Gardner also theorized that if education taught to the full spectrum of talents a student could display, there could be hundreds of ways a student could find success and achievement (Goleman,

1995). Lickona et al. (1995) developed the eleven principles of effective character education so the whole student could benefit.

In the text *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman (1995) writes that a person's true intelligence is more than just their intelligence quotient (IQ). A person's intelligence could be defined by other characteristics such as, "being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustration; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope" (Goleman, 1995, p. 34). Goleman admits that the potential of each person's emotional intelligence is just as variable as IQ. This means that environment could affect both emotional and intellectual intelligence. However, through research, Goleman discovered that a person's emotional intelligence could be more powerful when a child is taught to use crucial emotional competencies. When schools educate children in all areas, including life skills, children develop their full range of abilities. Goleman (1995) states that students with a full range of abilities increase their potential to be successful in wide range of fields. Character education programs that are designed, implemented, and assessed the eleven principles of effective character education could be used in an educational setting to support the development of emotional intelligence in students (CEP, 2010; Lickona, 1996; Lickona et al., 2007).

Need Defined by Sociality Changes and Demographic Changes

Education has two basic driving principles: educating students and developing productive citizens (Davidson, Lickona, & Khmelkov, 2007; Lickona, 1993). Family units are changing. Some offer that the decline in the traditional family, two-parent household, and surge in self-destructive behaviors among teens are indications that

students are not receiving character education in the home or school (Lickona, 1996). Mulkey, Crain, and Harrington (1992) found that students from one-parent households display behavior issues like school lateness/absences, not doing homework, and misbehaving in class more often than students from two-parent homes. Amato (2001) discussed the nature of the marital dissolution as a factor affecting children and that any disruption in the family has an impact on children's development.

The result of divorce is one indicator of the decline of the traditional family structure. The national divorce rate from 2000 to 2011 decreased .4%. Even with this slight decline there continues to be a high number of divorces and/or annulments. In 2011, there were 877,000 divorces and/or annulments (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, [CDC], 2011a). In the state of Kansas the divorce rate is .3% higher than the national average and has increased yearly since 2000 (CDC, 2011b). Amato (2001) reports students from divorced homes "score significantly lower on measures of academic achievement, conduct, psychological adjustment, self-control, and social relations" (p. 355). Another indicator of the family unit being stressed can be seen in the number of children being raised in single parent households. In 2009, 41% of births in the U.S. were to single mother births (U.S. Nation Center for Health Statistics, 2010). This has increased 7.8% in nine years (U.S. Nation Center for Health Statistics, 2010). In the state of Kansas approximately 40.0% of births in 2009 were to single mothers. This number has increased 8.9% in nine years (U.S. Nation Center for Health Statistics, 2010).

Along with the changing family unit students' self-destructive behaviors, such as thinking, planning, and committing suicide has increased (CDC, 2013). The National

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) surveyed over 13,633 students grades 9 through 12 between the years of 2009-2013 in both public and private schools throughout the United States (CDC, 2014). Results from the surveys reported a 2.7% increase in the number of youth who planned an attempted suicide from 2009 to 2013. During the same period, there was a 3.2% increase in the number of youth who seriously considered suicide. Finally, the CDC (2014) also found a 1.7% increase in the number of youths who actually attempted suicide. Today's students are under an increased amount of stress, schools who implement a character education program could aid students in others ways just academically.

Current Implementation and Impact of Character Education

During the last two decades, character education has become more prevalent in American education. National organizations like the CEP and Character Counts were established (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007). U.S. Presidents and state legislatures have increased funding for research and implementation of character education in public schools (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007). The broad definition of character education leads to the programs being diverse in purpose, execution, and outcomes (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007). This section identifies seven character education programs currently implemented in schools across the country.

The All Stars curriculum is a series of lessons designed to target variables theorized to mediate negative behaviors. The targeted variables are “1) personal commitment to avoid participating in high-risk behaviors, 2) ideals incongruent with high-risk behaviors, 3) bonding with prosocial institutions, and 4) conventional beliefs about social norms regarding high-risk behaviors” (Hansen, 1996, p. 1359). The lessons

range from whole-class to small group and include debates, games, and discussions. Homework can be assigned to include parents' active participation (Hansen, 1996; Harrington, Giles, Hoyle, Feeney, & Yungbluth, 2001). The purpose of the program is for students to develop a strong personal commitment to avoid high-risk behaviors. At the end of the program students are awarded a symbolic ring for documenting their personal commitments throughout the program (Hansen, 1996).

Hansen (1996) evaluated the All Stars program by comparing it to the D.A.R.E program for its effectiveness. The population used were students in the seventh grade attending school in North Carolina. Hansen (1996) measured the four target variables of the program (Hansen, 1996, p. 1359). The design of the study included a control group who had received D.A.R.E education in fifth grade and a booster D.A.R.E. program again in seventh grade. The treatment group received the All Star curriculum from January to May during their seventh grade year. Both groups were given a pre-test, designed by the researcher in seventh grade prior to the refresher or new curriculum. The pre-test was a survey that assessed the students on the four mediating variables. The pre-test showed that there was no significant difference between the two groups. In May, after the All Star curriculum had been presented, a post-test was administered. The post-test data revealed that the All Stars group showed a statistical difference in the variable of commitment. There was a gain for the group in bonding and normative beliefs, while the D.A.R.E group showed erosion for this variable. The All Star students also demonstrated a statistical difference for the variable of ideals. There was no statistical difference for the variables of bonding or normative beliefs.

Harrington, Giles, Hoyle, Feeney, and Yungbluth (2001) repeated a similar study by evaluating the All Stars character education program for its effectiveness on middle school students. The researchers were investigating the curriculum's four target variables

1) help student identify their ideal desired lifestyle and then influence their perceptions that drug use, sex, and violence can interfere with that lifestyle; 2) increase students' beliefs about peer norms in relation to abstinence from drugs, sex, and violence; 3) have students make a personal commitment to avoid drugs, sex, and violent behavior; and 4) have students develop stronger feelings of attachment and acceptance at their school. (Harrington et al, 2001, p. 535)

Harrington et al. (2001) conducted the research on 6th and 7th graders at fourteen diverse middle schools in a Midwestern state. Eight schools received the treatment condition, the All Stars curriculum. Five of the eight schools received the curriculum delivered by specialists while the other three schools received the curriculum from district teachers trained by the specialists. The last six schools were the control group, receiving no All Stars curriculum. Harrington et al. (2001) found varying effects of the program. There were immediate positive effects on mediators of problem behavior for students receiving the treatment from district teachers. The effects were delayed for the students receiving the curriculum from a program specialist. It was found that when district teachers administered the curriculum there was an increased impact on all variables for the students due to the program's emphasis on developing a strong relationship between the students and instructor (Harrington et al, 2001). Teachers reported being able to incorporate the All Stars curriculum into other content areas, a piece that specialists could not do because they were only in the class to deliver the All Stars lessons. Results

showed that for all variables students who were taught by district teachers initially benefited more from the All Stars curriculum. However, results show that none of the effects persisted as measured by the one-year follow-up survey completed by the students (Harrington et al, 2001).

The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model “is a school-based intervention strategy that emphasizes behavior management practices, relationship-building techniques, and social skills instruction” (Hensley et. al., 2007, p. 7-8). The curriculum of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model has four guiding principles: “building relations with all students; encouraging a sense of connectedness to school; establishing a safe, positive climate for learning; and empowering every child with the social skills needed to enjoy academic and personal success” (Hensley et. al., 2007, p. 3). In order to implement the curriculum in a building teachers and administrators must be trained. The training takes two days and is specific to classroom or administrative duties. The first principle in the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model is building relationships with all students. After teachers and administrators have built strong relationships with their students, social skills can be taught to students. The model presents teaching social skills in three ways: planned teaching, blended teaching, and preventive prompting (Hensley et. al., 2007). Planned teaching is a strategy the educator uses when they want to systematically introduce a new social skill. Planned teaching is a strategy that prepares students for the specific situation they will be facing and gives them the skills needed to be successful. The skills are taught, situations are described, a reason is given to emphasize the importance of the skills, and then students practice the skills. The blended teaching strategy combines the teaching of a social skill with academic instruction. This

method requires planning by the teacher as to how and when to present the social skill with the academic curriculum. Blended teaching includes the relevancy in the academic content with the importance of the social skill. The last strategy is preventing prompting or a brief reminder about the use of a social skill during a specific event or situation. Preventing prompting can be used before an activity occurs or during the activity to re-direct the student's behavior with re-teaching of the social skills (Hensley et al., 2007). In 2004, Harper High School in Chicago implemented the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. The school is on the south side of Chicago and, before implementation of the model, was experiencing problems. There was a low graduation rate, a high dropout rate, and incidents of serious misconduct. After one year of implementation Harper High School reported student attendance had increased 15.6%, 26% more freshman were on track to graduate, and incidents of serious misconduct decreased by 80% (Boys Town Press, 2015).

The third character education program reviewed is titled Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO) for middle and high school aged students. Hickey Schultz, Barr, and Selman (2001) report:

Facing History and Ourselves trains educators across the USA to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of forms of intergroup conflict (racism, prejudice, anti-Semitism, etc.) in order to foster perspective-taking, critical thinking and moral decision making to help students develop into humane and responsible citizens. (p 5)

The curriculum of the FHAO program includes discussions about readings, films with study guides, incorporating guest speakers, and literature and/or journal writing. The

typical FHAO unit is ten weeks long. Each lesson begins with self-reflection and exploring questions that require the students to examine group membership and obligation to others. The lessons then start to incorporate history with the lives of the students and their country, past and present. Hickey Schultz et al. (2001) researched the implementation of FHAO in four eighth grade classrooms taught by trained FHAO teachers. These classrooms were compared to four classrooms that did not receive the curriculum. The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of the FHAO curriculum in developing interpersonal understanding, interpersonal skills, and personal meaning. Students' development was measured with pre-tests and post-tests on the Group for the Study of Interpersonal Development (GSID) relationship questionnaire. This questionnaire was developed to assess children and adolescents' social competence. Students' development was also tested with the multigroup ethnic identity measure (MEIM) to assess ethnic identity, ethnic identity achievement, and ethnic behaviors. The study also used the National Learning Through Service Survey to determine civic attitudes and participation, the modern racism scale to determine racism, and defining issues test (DIT) to assess students' moral reasoning. The post-test scores between the FHAO group and the comparison group showed many differences. The FHAO group scored a level of significance on relationship maturity and self-reported fighting when compared to the scores of the group who did not receive the FHAO curriculum. The FHAO students also showed a decrease in racist attitudes when compared to students in the comparison group. The decrease was not significant. Neither the FHAO group and the comparison group displayed a significant increase in moral reason and civic attitudes (Hickey Schultz et al. 2001). Hickey Schultz

et al. (2001) concluded that FHAO program promoted student growth in the areas of relationship maturity and a decrease in racist attitudes in comparison to students not receiving the curriculum.

Life Skills Training (LST) is a program that “targets social and intrapersonal factors by teaching the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to actively resist social influences to smoke, drink, or use illicit drugs; reduce susceptibility to those influences and increase resilience; and decrease motivation to use psychoactive substance” (Botvin & Griffin, 2014, p. 59). LST can be taught by trained peer mentors, classroom teachers, or health professionals. The curriculum is designed to be taught over a three-year period with a decreasing number of lessons presented each year. The LST program is organized around three major components: “(1) a personal competence component that teaches self-management skills; (2) a social competence component that teaches a set of social skills; and (3) a drug resistance component that teaches health-related content, resistance skills, and prohealth attitudes” (Botvin & Griffin, 2014, p. 59). Each component has specific skills that are taught at the beginning of the curriculum through direct instruction and demonstration. For example, the personal competence component includes the skills of problem-solving, decision-making, critical thinking, coping with stress and anxiety, and emotional self-regulating. Students are taught the skills of each component along with how and when to use them. After the skills have been presented, students use role-play exercises to practice. After the role-playing, the teacher provides critiques of the student’s use of the skills. These critiques include highlighting strengths and weaknesses demonstrated by each student. The final step is extended practice or behavioral homework assignments. These could include saying hello to a new person, using the

taught skills, or practicing the skills with parents or peers (Botvin & Wolfgang, 2000). The LST program has been implemented in all 50 states and 35 countries around the world. It has also been extensively tested in a variety of settings (Botvin & Griffin, 2014).

Research was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of LST in preventing smoking. The study included 281 students in the grades 8, 9, and 10 who received a shortened curriculum of only a ten session LST program versus a control group that received no intervention program. Of the students in the group who had not smoked the study showed a 75% reduction in the number of new cigarette smokers. When the same group was surveyed three months later, those students who received the LST curriculum reported a 67% reduction of new smokers. A second study of 239 students in grade 7 in New York City public schools researched the effect of LST curriculum on alcohol frequency, episodes of drunkenness, and heavy drinking. The results reported that 54% fewer students reported drinking in the past month, 73% fewer reported heavy drinking, and 79% fewer reported getting drunk at least once per month (Botvin & Wolfgang, 2000). These studies both looked at the short-term effectiveness of the LST program. Botvin and Wolfgang (2000) also conducted a six-year trial of the program using 6,000 students from 56 public schools in New York State. The students in the intervention group received the curriculum in grade 7 with boosters in grades 8 and 9, while the control groups did not receive the curriculum. Using a survey developed by the researcher, data was collected yearly until the students' senior year. The intervention group showed 44% fewer students reported the use of tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana

one or more times per month as compared to the control group. In addition, 66% fewer LST students reported using all three substances one or more times per week.

The Peacemakers Program is a violence prevention program for grades 4 through 8. The goal of the program is to positively change violence-related attitudes while training students to reduce aggression and violence (Shapiro, Burgoon, Welker, & Clough, 2002). The Peacemakers Program “trains all school staff to infuse anti-violence and prosocial principles, language, and procedures into the everyday school environment” (Shapiro et al., 2002, p. 88). The lessons of this program start with sessions on violence-related attitudes and values while incorporating self-concept issues. The goal of the lessons is to increase the attractiveness of non-violent behavior and motivate students to learn more about how to prevent violent behavior. Teachers present lessons on how to self-regulate emotions, avoid conflicts, and problem-solve. Lessons included classroom activities, discussions, writings, role-plays, and experiential exercises (Shapiro et al., 2002). A study regarding the effectiveness of the Peacemaker Program was conducted in a large, urban Midwestern, public school system. Variables measured included attitudes towards guns and violence through a student self-reported questionnaire (AGVQ), knowledge of psychosocial skills using a multiple-choice test and aggressive behavior on a student self-reported checklist (Shapiro et al., 2002). Teacher reported data was also collected on aggression-related occurrences of the students. Using an Analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA) the researchers compared the pre-test and post-test scores between the control group and the group receiving the Peacemaker curriculum. There were no significant differences between the test results of the control or treatment group when looking at the students’ attitudes towards guns and

violence. However, there was a significant difference in the treatment group when analyzing knowledge of psychosocial skills ($p=.05$). The treatment group also had a significant decrease in aggressive behavior reported on the checklist ($p=.01$). Teacher reported data indicated that there was a significant decrease from the number of students in the treatment group involved in aggressive behavior ($p < .05$). This data does show mixed results for the Peacemaker program. Shapiro et al. (2002) reported, as a result of the study, that the program has a strong effect on the variables of overtly aggressive behavior as reported by both students and teacher data.

Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP), like other programs, focuses on situational and relationship violence. “The goal of RIPP is to increase adolescents’ capacity and motivation to respond to development challenges in ways that facilitated social skill acquisition and acceptance of personal responsibility” (Farrell, Meyer, & White, 2001, p. 452). RIPP is designed around twelve cognitive learning objectives. These objectives are divided into three categories, behavior, intrapersonal, and environmental. These objectives are taught using a social-cognitive problem-solving model. Students are asked to apply this problem-solving model in a conflict situation and then asked to reflect on their personal behavior and use of the model (Farrell et al., 2001). Farrell et al. (2001) conducted an evaluation of RIPP by studying its implementation at three public middle schools in Virginia. Sixth graders were chosen as the sample population. Self-reported data was collected through several surveys. The surveys used were the Problem Behavior Frequency Scales, the seven-item violent Behavior Frequency Scale, the six-item Drug Use Frequency Scale, the twelve-item RIPP Knowledge test, the Problem Situation Inventory, and the Beliefs Supporting Aggression

Scale. When data were analyzed, the results were mixed. There were statistically significant results between the intervention groups when compared to the control group on the RIPP Knowledge test and the Problem Behavior Frequency Scales. Students in the intervention group reported using peer-mediation more than resorting to violent behaviors. In the post-test results, students in the RIPP group had fewer disciplinary violations for violent offenses and in-school suspensions as compared to the control group. However, there was not data to support that social-cognitive variables had been impacted by RIPP curriculum. The benefits of the program showed that students who had higher tendencies towards violent behaviors prior to being taught RIPP were more affected by the program than students who did not demonstrate a tendency towards violent behaviors before the implantation of RIPP (Farrell et al., 2001).

The Roots of Empathy (ROE) program “focuses on decreasing children’s aggression and facilitating the development of their social-emotional understanding and prosocial behaviors” (Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaidman-Zait, & Hertzman, 2012, p. 1).

ROE was developed in 1996 for children kindergarten through grade 8.

The primary goals of ROE are to (1) develop children’s social and emotional understanding, (2) promote children’s prosocial behaviors and decrease their aggressive behaviors and (3) increase children’s knowledge about infant development and effective parenting practices. (Schonert-Reichl et al. 2012, p. 2)

ROE is a nine-month program during which a classroom adopts a family with an infant. This family visits monthly so the students can learn about the infant’s growth and development. Before or after the monthly visit the teacher takes the students through lessons designed to foster empathy, emotional understanding, and problem-solving based

on the infant's visit. Teachers used age specific scripted activities and lessons that could include stories, art projects, and discussions to lead the students to their own emotional understanding. Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaidman-Zait, and Hertzman (2012) researched the implementation of ROE at 28 public elementary schools in grades 4 through 7. The ROE program was implemented in late fall. Teachers presented 26 lessons. Each lesson took thirty to forty-five minutes and included a pre-family introduction, a classroom visit with a baby, and a guided post discussion of the visit and lesson topic. The researchers' data included teacher reports on engagement level and frequency of implementation. Data also included peer rating reports on prosocial and aggressive/antisocial behaviors demonstrated by peers. Direct child assessments data was collected including: demographic information, understanding of an infant crying, empathic concern, and perspective taking. The results showed more student engagement when the infant was present in the classroom versus when the infant was absent. Teachers also reported a high level of engagement during ROE implementation. The ROE groups of students showed significant improvements in their ability to determine cause for an infant crying, showing that these students could understand the emotions of a baby. The ROE students also showed a significant increase ($p < .001$) from pretest to posttest in the peer-nominated prosocial behaviors when compared to the control group. This means that ROE students were more likely to share, cooperate, help other students, and understand another student's point of view. Teachers also reported that the ROE program decreased the aggressive behaviors of the students in the intervention group (Schonert-Reichl et al. 2012).

Summary

Presented in chapter two was a review of the literature relevant to character education. A historical perspective of character education in America public schools was discussed. The developmental theories that support the current eleven principles of character education were outlined. Societal changes were introduced to demonstrate the reason there is a need for character education. The chapter concluded with the currently implemented character education programs with their impact on students.

Chapter three includes information about the methodology used when conducting the current study, a description of the study design, the population and sample used in the study, sampling procedures, and instrumentation. It will conclude with data collection, data analysis and hypothesis testing, and limitations for the current study.

Chapter Three

Methods

The focus of this research was to determine whether the implementation of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model benefited the development of social skills in middle school students. The chapter includes information about the methodology used for conducting this study. The chapter contains a description of the research design, the population and sample, and sampling procedures. Instrumentation, data collection, data analysis and hypothesis testing, and limitations are also discussed in this chapter.

Research Design

Creswell (2014) states that research design, “involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry, and specific methods” (p. 5). A quantitative survey research design was used in the current study. The variables for this research was middle school teachers perceived building support and involvement of the model, the teachers perceived ability to use the model, and the teachers perceived effect of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model to develop middle schools students’ social skills in School District A.

Population and Sample

The population for the current study were certified middle school teachers in School District A ($N = 572$). Certified staff members are individuals who hold a current Kanas state middle school teaching license. From this target population the sample included all certified middle school teachers who responded to the optional survey administered by the online system SurveyMonkey and met the criteria identified in the Sampling Procedures section.

Sampling Procedures

Convenience and nonrandom purposive sampling was used in this quantitative research. Lunenburg and Irby (2008) defined nonrandom purposive sampling as “selecting a sample based on the researcher’s experience of knowledge of the group to be sampled” (p. 175). The first established criterion for participation in the study was school level: only certified middle school teachers were selected to participate. The second established criterion for participation in the study was current employment in School District A during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. Only the certified middle school teachers who completed the survey were included in the sample.

Instrumentation

The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model survey was developed by School District A to collect data on the teachers perceived effectiveness of the model after the first and second years of implementation. The survey items were designed based on the needs of the district and the program being implemented. Data were collected during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.

All survey items addressed teachers’ perceptions of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model and its effect on developing social skills to increase student’s social emotional learning. The survey was limited to one open response item; all other items were multiple-choice answered by a click option to decrease survey fatigue. The survey is located in Appendix A.

The survey included 10 items that related specifically to teachers perceived effectiveness and use of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. Of those 10 items, four were used for this study. The data collected from items seven and eight were

used to address research question one. The data collected from item nine were used for research question two. The data collected from item two were used for research question three.

Measurement. Item 1 requested teachers to identify the specific middle school in School District A where they are employed. Item 2 addressed teachers' perception of their ability to implement the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. For this multiple-choice item, teachers had the option of defining their effectiveness as *I am effective at using social skills to corrective teach*, *I am somewhat effective at using social skills to corrective teach*, *I am not effective at using social skills to corrective teach*, or *I do not use social skills to corrective teach*. Items 3 and 4 investigated the teachers' occurrence of use when implementing the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, and the occurrence they taught specific Boys Town Social Skills, respectively. These items were designed based on the objectives outlined by the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. The items were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The response options were coded as *Every class period*, *Daily*, *Weekly*, *Monthly*, and *Do not use*.

Item 5 addressed the teachers' occurrence of completing specific tasks with their students. These tasks are specific to social skill instruction. The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model identified these tasks to effectively teach social skills to students. Occurrence was measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale. The responses were coded as *Every class period*, *Daily*, *Weekly*, and *Never*.

Item 6 focused on how well the model benefited students of different demographic groups. Teachers were allowed to select as many items as needed when determining whom they perceived benefited most from the Boys Town Well-Managed

Schools Model (*Low SES, High-risk students, Quest students, SPED students, and General Education students*).

How teachers perceived the model was supported and the level of involvement of each middle school building was the focus of items 7 and 8. The items were measured on a 3-point Likert-type scale. The response options for item 7 were *High involvement, Low involvement, and No involvement* and the response options for item 8 were *High support, Low support, and No support*.

Item 9 was used to measure the teachers' perception of whether the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helped develop students' social skills. The teachers could choose from *Yes, Maybe, and No*. Item 10 was used to gauge teachers' perceptions of the model affecting students' behavior. The choices were *Yes, Maybe, and No*. Item 11 was an open-ended item that allowed teachers to include any additional information regarding their perceptions of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. This item was included to allow teachers to voice opinions and perceptions without the structure of a multiple-choice or Likert-type item.

Lastly, demographic information about each teacher was gathered. Teachers were asked how many years they had taught (*1 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, or 11 or more years*), their level of education (*Bachelors, Masters, Educational Specialist, or Doctorate*), and their gender (*Male or Female*), in items 12, 13, and 14, respectively.

Validity and reliability. Carmines and Zeller (1979) state that validity is "the extent to which any measuring instrument measures what it is intended to" (p. 17). The survey was critiqued by nine Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model School District A experts and pilot-tested by 13 other model experts from the district to establish

validity. To be considered an expert of the model in School District A, the individual had to attend training in Omaha, Nebraska at Boys Town. In addition, the nine critiquing experts had attended both the Well-Managed Schools training and the Boys Town Administrative training. Both trainings focused on the same model of corrective teaching being used to teach students social skills. The experts were emailed the link to the survey and asked to review the survey for errors when implementing the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model to middle school students. Based on their comments, spelling and grammar changes were corrected. Response options for item 2 were modified from *Very Good, Okay, Limited, and Not Good Using* to *I Am Effective, Somewhat Effective, Not Effective, and Do Not Use*. The experts also commented that there was not a direct question about how Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model changed student behavior. This led to the addition of item 10, a multiple-choice item that reveal teachers' perceptions of the model as it affects behavior. The experts could not fully answer the item about support and involvement as it was first designed. Support and involvement were in one Likert-type item on the original survey. This pre-designed item type on SurveyMonkey did not allow the experts to completely answer all that the item was addressing. Due to poor item design and SurveyMonkey's item limitations, the item was separated into two items, items 7 and 8. This allowed responses on the levels of support and involvement for all stakeholder groups to be obtained.

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) state "reliability is the degree to which an instrument consistently measures whatever it is measuring" (p. 182). A second pilot test was conducted in which 34 expert teachers in the district were asked to complete the survey to ensure that the instrument was reliable. These teachers had attended the Boys Town

Well-Managed Schools Model training in Omaha, Nebraska at Boys Town. These experts were sent the survey through email and asked to complete the survey, answering the questions for how they personally use the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. A preliminary internal consistency analysis was conducted for items 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9, which yielded a strong Cronbach's alpha, $r = .878$. Reliability was conducted on the data from the current study and is reported in chapter four.

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to conducting research, permission was obtained from Baker University. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) request was submitted to Baker University on June 17, 2015 (see Appendix B). The Baker University IRB committee approved the research study on June 22, 2015 (see Appendix C). Once this approval was complete, permission was obtained from School District A. The Research Application Request-Internal for School District A was completed (see Appendix D). The application was approved by School District A on June 22, 2015 (see Appendix E).

Creation and administration of the survey took place through an online survey system, SurveyMonkey. School District A sent out the link to the survey after the first year of implementation. March 13, 2013 was the first day the survey was made available. A reminder email was sent on March 20, 2013. The closure date for the survey was March 27, 2013. The date the survey would close was included in both emails. School District A sent out the survey after the second year of implementation on October 7, 2014. A reminder email was sent on October 14, 2014. The closure date for the survey was October 21, 2014. The date the survey would close was included in both emails. Both times data was collected participants had three full weeks to complete the survey.

Data from SurveyMonkey were downloaded and imported into IBM®SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 23 for Windows for data analyses.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The current study used hypothesis testing to examine teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

RQ1. To what extent is there a relationship between teachers' perceptions of building support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?

H1. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of administration's support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

H2. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of teaching staff's support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

H3. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of support staff's support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

H4. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of parents' support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

H5. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of students' support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

Chi-square tests of independence were used to address RQ1. The observed frequencies were compared to those expected by chance for each hypothesis. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ2. To what extent do teachers perceive they have the ability to use the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?

H6. Teachers perceive they have the ability to use the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

A one-sample *t*-test was used to test H6. The sample mean was tested against a null value of 0. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3. Do teachers perceive that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helps develop students' social skills?

H7. Teachers perceive that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helps develop students' social skills.

A chi-square test of equal percentages was used to test H7. The observed frequencies were compared to those expected by chance. The level of significance was set at .05.

Limitations

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) stated "limitations of a study are not under the control of the researcher" (p. 133). The current study had the following limitations: (a) the middle school teachers implementing the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model's strategies have varied training methods and amounts of training with the model, (b) the majority of middle school teachers received training from teachers currently teaching in one of the four high schools in School District A, (c) the level of implementation was determined by each teacher, and (d) teachers' skill levels when implementing the program could vary.

Summary

Chapter three included a restated purpose for the study. Methodological information including research design, population, sample, sampling procedures,

instrumentation, validity, reliability, data collection, data analysis, hypothesis testing, and study limitations were described in chapter three. Chapter four includes the results of the hypothesis testing.

Chapter Four

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent teachers perceive the effect of a character education program, specifically the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, on middle school students' development of social skills. Included in this chapter is a presentation of the results of the data analysis. The sample is described through descriptive statistics. Hypothesis tests were conducted for all hypotheses of the research questions. Chi-square tests were utilized to identify the relationships between support and involvement of administrations, teaching staff, support staff, parents, and students. The tests were utilized to determine if teachers perceived that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model developed social skill for middle school students. One-sample *t*-tests were utilized to determine teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness. An alpha level of .05 was used as a significance criterion for all statistical tests conducted.

Descriptive Statistics

The sample for this study was 302 certified middle school teachers. The IBM®SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 23 for Windows was used for data analyses for all the research questions. The demographics of the sample identified by gender of the teacher (male or female), years of experience teaching (1 to 5, 6 to 10, or 11 or more years), and highest level of education of the teacher (bachelors, masters, educational specialist, or doctorate) are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Sample Demographics

Characteristics		<i>n</i>	Percent of Sample
Gender	Male	77	25.5
	Female	218	72.2
Number of Year Taught	1 to 5	36	11.9
	6 to 10	71	23.5
	11 or more	187	61.9
Highest Level of Education	Bachelors	45	14.9
	Masters	240	79.5
	Educational Specialist	6	2.0
	Doctorate	2	1.7

Reliability Analysis

An internal consistency analysis was conducted on the sample data for items 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($r = .962$) indicated strong internal consistency of the survey items.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing was conducted to address three research questions. Presented in this section are the results of seven hypothesis tests.

RQ1. To what extent is there a relationship between teachers' perceptions of building support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?

H1. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of administration's support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 257.398$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$. See Table 4 for the observed and expected frequencies. There is a relationship between the two variables, involvement and support. High involvement and high support had higher observed values than expected, whereas low involvement and low support had lower observed values than the expected. This supports H1.

Table 4

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 1

Level of Support		Level of Involvement	
		High Involvement	Low Involvement
High Support	Observed	161.00	39.00
	Expected	113.20	77.30
Low Support	Observed	5.00	72.00
	Expected	46.40	31.70

H2. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of teaching staff's support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 322.064$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$. See Table 5 for the observed and expected frequencies. There is a relationship between the two variables, involvement and support. For teaching staff, high involvement and high support had higher observed values than expected, whereas low

involvement and low support had lower observed values than the expected. This supports H2.

Table 5

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 2

Level of Support		Level of Involvement	
		High Involvement	Low Involvement
High Support	Observed	112.0	32.0
	Expected	58.4	80.7
Low Support	Observed	6.0	126.0
	Expected	53.9	74.5

H3. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of support staff's support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 308.665$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$. See Table 6 for the observed and expected frequencies. There is a relationship between the two variables, involvement and support. For support staff, high involvement and high support had higher observed values than expected, whereas low involvement and low support had lower observed values than the expected. This supports H3.

Table 6

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 3

Level of Support		Level of Involvement	
		High Involvement	Low Involvement
High Support	Observed	73.0	29.0
	Expected	27.4	56.6
Low Support	Observed	3.0	117.0
	Expected	34.6	71.6

H4. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of parents' support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 283.983$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$. See Table 7 for the observed and expected frequencies. There is a relationship between the two variables, involvement and support. For parent support, high involvement and high support had higher observed values than expected, whereas low involvement and high support had lower observed values than the expected. This supports H4.

Table 7

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 4

Level of Support		Level of Involvement	
		High Involvement	Low Involvement
High Support	Observed	37.0	29.0
	Expected	9.8	35.0
Low Support	Observed	3.0	106.0
	Expected	17.6	62.8

H5. There is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of students' support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 331.920$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$. See Table 8 for the observed and expected frequencies. There is a relationship between the two variables, involvement and support. For student support, high involvement and high support had higher observed values than expected, whereas low involvement and low support had lower observed values than the expected. This supports H5.

Table 8

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 5

Level of Support		Level of Involvement	
		High Involvement	Low Involvement
High Support	Observed	58.0	15.0
	Expected	16.5	45.0
Low Support	Observed	4.0	147.0
	Expected	35.9	98.0

RQ2. To what extent do teachers perceive they have the ability to use the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?

H6. Teachers perceive they have the ability to use the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

The results of the one-sample *t*-test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 47.250$, $df = 300$, $p < .001$. The sample mean ($M = 2.01$, $SD = .739$) was higher than the null value (0). Teachers perceived more often that their abilities are somewhat effective or effective rather than not effective or they did not use the model. This supports H6.

RQ3. Do teachers perceive that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helps develop students' social skills?

H7. Teachers perceive that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helps develop students' social skills.

The results of the chi-square test of equal percentages indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 115.547$, $df = 2$, p

$< .001$. The observed frequencies were different from the expected frequencies (see Table 9). More teachers than what was expected perceived that the model developed students' social skills. This supports H7.

Table 9

Observed and Expected Frequencies for Hypothesis 7

Category	Observed	Expected
No	14	98.7
Maybe	123	98.7
Yes	159	98.7

Summary

Chapter four began with a summarization of the descriptive statistics of the sample. This included gender of the teachers, the number of years the teachers had taught, and the highest degree earned by the teachers in the sample. Following this information, hypothesis testing results were discussed for each of the three research questions in the study.

Results related to the research question revealed that teachers perceived that there was a relationship between the level of the support and level of involvement. This relationship stayed consistent for all groups: administration, teaching staff, support staff, parents, and students. If teachers perceived a high or low level of support there was also a high or low level of involvement of the group in question. Results showed that teachers perceived that they have the ability to implement the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. Results revealed that teachers perceived that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model showed it could be used to teach students social skills.

Presented in chapter five are the interpretations of the findings and the recommendations for future research. Chapter five also includes a discussion of the study summary. The summary of the study includes the overview of the problem, the purpose statement and research questions, the review of methodology, and the major findings. Following the study summary are the findings related to the literature. Chapter five concludes with implications for actions, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

Chapter Five

Interpretation and Recommendations

Chapter five presents a summary of the study, which includes the overview of the problem, the purpose statement and research questions, the review of methodology, and the major findings. A discussion of the findings related to the literature is also included. The chapter concludes with implications for actions, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

Study Summary

The current study was conducted to examine if teachers perceived that students developed social skills when the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model was implemented. In addition, the study was conducted to examine the extent to which teachers trained in the model were able to implement it and the extent of support and involvement stakeholders had in the character education program.

Overview of the problem. Public schools have the expectation of challenging students academically, as well as developing youth with the skills to be good citizens (Field, 1996). Public schools across the country have been asked to change their focus from educating the whole student to focus on academic growth, particularly in mathematics and reading (NCLB, 2002). This moves the responsibility of teaching character development to the family and other organizations within the community. Legislation is pushing to ensure that all students would reach the set proficiency goals in mathematics and reading (NCLB, 2002), while the country was also facing economic challenges. The U.S. poverty rate increased 2.5% from 2000 to 2010 (United States Census Bureau, 2010). This means that 7,533,335 more U.S. citizens are currently living

in poverty (United States Census Bureau, 2010). At the same time, there has been an increase in divorce rates, single mother births, and self-destructive behaviors such as suicide (CDC, 2011; U.S. Department of Justice, 2011; U.S. Nation Center for Health Statistics, 2010).

Purpose statement and research questions. The purpose of the study was to determine if teachers perceive that a character education program could benefit students' social skills development. Specifically, the current study was conducted to investigate how teachers perceived the character education program, Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, and its ability to develop students' social skills. This study was focused on addressing the following research questions:

RQ1. To what extent is there a relationship between teachers' perceptions of building support and involvement of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?

RQ2. To what extent do teachers perceive they have the ability to use the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?

RQ3. Do teachers perceive that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helps develop students' social skills?

Review of the methodology. The population included all certified teachers in School District A teaching in the nine middle schools during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. Convenience and nonrandom purposive sampling was used in this quantitative research. Data were collected by surveying middle school teachers on the perceived effectiveness of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. Teachers were asked to give their perceptions of the level of support and involvement of school

stakeholders, their ability to implement the model, and overall ability of the model to develop students' social skills. The survey used for this study was developed by the school district and completed online using SurveyMonkey. Chi-square tests, which were utilized to identify the relationships between support and involvement of administration, teaching staff, support staff, parents, and students, were also used to determine if teachers perceived that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model developed social skills for middle school students. One-sample *t*-tests were utilized to determine teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness.

Major findings. There were three statistically significant findings identified in the current study. The first statistically significant finding was that teachers perceived that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model could be used to develop social skills in students. This finding shows that a model built on replacing negative behaviors by teaching social skills does improve behaviors as perceived by teachers.

The second major finding of the study was the level of support and involvement teachers perceived by other stakeholders of the building. Teachers did perceive that there was a link between level of support and level of involvement they received from administration, teaching staff, support staff, parents, and students. Teachers perceived a high level of support when there was a high level of involvement shown by the other stakeholder groups. Inversely, teachers perceived a low level of support when there was a low level of involvement shown by the other stakeholder groups.

The last major finding of this study was that teachers perceived there was a link between their ability to implement the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model and the impact of the model on students. Eighty-four percent of teachers ranked their ability to

use the model as somewhat effective or better. Ninety-five percent of the teachers perceived that the model could be used to teach social skills. Teachers perceived their ability to implement the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model could impact students' development of social skills.

Findings Related to the Literature

Provided in this section is a discussion of the results of the current study as they relate to the existing literature identified in chapter two. Similarities and differences were identified when the results of the current study were compared to the existing literature.

CEP (2001) developed 11 guiding principles for character education programs. The 11 principles are recognized in the field of character education as the most comprehensive guide for defining character education. The principles are to be used by schools and school districts as a guide on how to develop, implement, and assess the effectiveness of a character education program (CEP, 2010; Lickona et. al, 2007). The principles define what a character education program needs to embody for the program to impact students. The results of the current study tie into the tenth guiding principle defined by the CEP (2010) as “engage families and community members as partners in the character-building effort” (p. 5). CEP (2010) and the principles’ developers state that engaging families and communities in the effort to implement a character education will increase the likelihood of the program to have a greater impact on students (CEP, 2010, Lickona, 1996; Lickona et al., 2007). The All Stars curriculum, Facing History and Ourselves, and the Peacemakers Program all include ways for the community to engage in the implementation of the specific character education program (Hansen, 1996; Harrington et al., 2001; Hickey Schultz et al., 2001; Shapiro et al., 2002). Other

programs like LST, RIPP, and ROE are different as they require the trained teacher to be the sole implementer of the character education curriculum (Botvin & Wolfgang, 2000; Farrell et al., 2001; Schonert-Reichl et al., 2012). As in the earlier studies, the results of the current study supported that high levels of support from stakeholders did impact the success of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. Teachers perceived a greater impact of the model when support and involvement of all stakeholders were at a high level.

The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model in the current study was implemented by certified teachers trained in the character education program. Similarly, Harrington et al. (2001) researched the All Stars curriculum and compared the effects of the implementation of the curriculum delivered by the certified teacher to that of an All Stars program specialist. The study conducted by Harrington et al. (2001) supported that there was a greater impact on the students when the certified teacher delivered the curriculum because the lessons of the All Stars curriculum could be implemented into more daily lessons (Harrington et al., 2001). The results of the current study on the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools, indicated that when certified teachers perceived they had a high ability level to implement the program it had an increased impact on the students.

Character education programs have been found to positively affect student behavior. FHAO, Peacemakers program, and the RIPP program were character education programs that reported positive character development in students (Farrell et al., 2001; Hickey Schultz et al., 2001; Shapiro et al., 2002). One goal of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model was to develop social skills; in the current study teachers perceived that the model could be used to develop social skills in middle school students.

Conclusions

Provided in this section are conclusions drawn from the current study on the Boys Town Well-Managed School Model and teachers perceived impact of the model. Included are implications for action and recommendations for further research. Concluding remarks complete this section.

Implications for action. Based on the findings of the current study, when implementing a character education program school districts should first choose a program that is supported by administration, teachers, support staff, parents, and students and second be prepared to provide ongoing teacher training. Teachers perceived a high level of support when there was a high level of involvement shown by other stakeholder groups. This demonstrates the need for support from all stakeholders to be engaged in district/school wide programs to ensure long-term benefit to students. For the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model to continue to impact students, district administration, teaching staff, support staff, parents, and students need to have a high level of support and involvement in implementation. To increase support and involvement, support staff and parents may need to be trained on how to implement the model in their roles. If the leadership can engage each stakeholder to implement the model in their role, the model could have an increased impact on the development of social skills in students.

The results of the current study showed that teachers linked their ability to use the model to the impact it had on students' development of social skills. If teacher training focused on how to teach specific social skills by identified behaviors students were displaying at each building, teachers may have a greater impact on student social skill

development. The results of the current study indicate that the teachers in this district benefited from the original trainings, because teachers perceived that they were effective in implementing the model. Teachers may benefit from more training if it is specific to the needs of students at each building. This would require each building to analyze the student behaviors recorded on office referrals to identify the specific social skills students at that building need. With more training, teachers could gain the ability to use the model in more effective ways with students.

Recommendations for future research. The current study was conducted to evaluate teachers perceived level of support and involvement by other stakeholders, their perceived ability to implement the model, and if they perceived the model could be used to develop social skills in students. Recommendations for future research are as follows.

The first recommendation is to replicate this study to include the identification of certain behaviors to be extinguished. Monitoring specific student behavior could show if behaviors actually changed. The behaviors could be identified by the building or classroom as an area of need. In addition, specific lessons could be used to target specific behaviors. This would allow the researcher to make clear implications that social skills can be taught to replace negative behaviors.

The second recommendation is to replicate the current study to examine grade level differences to determine when students best learn social skills. Investigating the impact at specific age groups could further define when student best learn social skills.

The third recommendation is to expand the current study to investigate all grade levels in a district over a period of five years. This could show the longitudinal impact

the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model has at each grade level as well as a system.

The fourth recommendation is to replicate this study to examine the impact of the model on different student populations, such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, or gender. Investigating the impact of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model on different populations could lead to determining specific social skills required by specific student populations. It could also express the need for more social skills development from specific populations versus others.

Concluding remarks. The current study was conducted to examine teachers' perceptions of the level of support and involvement by other stakeholders, their perceived ability to implement the model, and if they perceived the model could be used to develop social skills in students. Teachers perceived a high support and involvement from other stakeholders; the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model had more of an impact on students' social skill development. Significant results displayed that teachers perceived that they were effective in implementing the character education program to affect the development of social skills in students. Lastly, teachers do perceive that teaching social skills through the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model can be used to develop social skills in students. The implications for action based on the results of the current study is that middle school students could be impacted by a district or building choosing to teach more than just academics.

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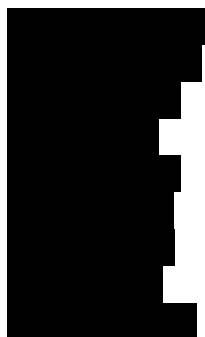
Appendices

Appendix A

Boys Town Survey

Boys Town Survey

1. At which school do you teach?



2. How would you rate your ability to use the Boys Town Model of the Well Managed Schools?

I am effective at using social skills to corrective teach.

I am somewhat effective at using social skills to corrective teach.

I am not effective at using social skills to corrective teach.

I do not use social skills to corrective teach.

3. To what extent do you use the Boys Town Model of the Well Managed Schools with your students?

Every class period

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Do not use

4. Please indicate how often you have used the following social skills within the corrective teaching model.

Every class period Daily Weekly Monthly Do Not Use

Following Instructions

Accepting Criticism or a Consequence

accepting "No" for an Answer

Greeting Others

Getting a Teacher's Attention

Disagreeing Appropriately

Making an Apology

Accepting Compliments

Having a Conversation

Asking for Help

Asking for Permission

Staying on Task Sharing with Others Working with Others Listening
Using an Appropriate Voice Tone

5. Please indicate how often the following occurred during the past week of school.

Every class period Daily Weekly Never

I taught social skills to students.

I modeled the behaviors and social skills I expect to see for my students.

I provided planned instruction of one or more social skills.

I provided proactive instruction of one or more social skills.

I provided blended instruction of one or more social skills.

I used classroom lessons to direct the planned instruction of social skills in the classroom.

I used student behavior trends to direct the planned instruction of social skills in the classroom.

I used office referrals trends to direct the planned instruction of social skills in the classroom.

I praised students for their social behavior.

I praised students for their academic performance.

I praised student more often than I corrected them for their social skill behavior.

I corrected students behavior based on the deficient social skill, rather than than the student's behavior.

I empowered my students to make better choices by acknowledging their good choices.

6. Please indicate the type of student(s) who benefits from the Boys Town Model of the Well Managed Schools. (Please check all that apply.)

Low SES
 High-risk students
 Quest students
 SPED students
 General education students

7. Please rate your buildings support for the Boys Town Model of the Well Managed School.

High Support Low Support No Support

Administration
 Teaching Staff
 Support Staff
 Parents
 Students

8. Please rate your buildings involvement for the Boys Town Model of the Well Managed School.

High Involvement Low Involvement No Involvement

Administration
 Teaching Staff
 Support Staff
 Parents
 Students

9. Do you believe that the Boys Town Model of the Well Managed Schools helps develop students' social skills?

Yes
 Maybe
 No

10. Do you believe that you have seen an improvement in students' behavior since the implementation of the Boys Town Model of the Well Managed Schools?

Yes
Maybe
No

11. Please include any additional information about the Boys Town Model of the Well Managed Schools.

12. How many years have you been teaching?

1 to 5 years
6 to 10 years
11 or more years

13. Please indicate your highest level of education.

Bachelors
Masters
Educational Specialist
Doctorate

14. Please indicate your gender.

Male
Female

Appendix B

Baker University IRB Proposal for Research Permission Form

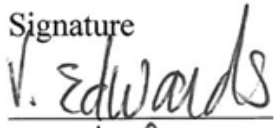



Date: June, 11 2015
IRB PROTOCOL NUMBER _____
(IRB USE ONLY)

IRB REQUEST Proposal for Research Submitted to the Baker University Institutional Review Board

I. Research Investigator(s) (Students must list faculty sponsor first)

Department(s) School of Education Graduate Department

Name	Signature	
Name	Signature	
1. Dr. <u>Verneda</u> Edwards		Major Advisor
2. Dr. Katie Hole		Research Analyst
3. Dr. Charlise Prosser	_____	University Committee Member
4. Dr. Connie Heinen	_____	External Committee Member

Principal Investigator: Elizabeth Hunt Esco
Phone: 913.206.8256
Email: ehuntesco@gmail.com
Mailing address: 14111 W. 147th St. Olathe KS 66062

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Verneda Edwards
Phone: 913.244.7242
Email: Verneda.Edwards@bakeru.edu

Expected Category of Review: ___Exempt ___Expedited ___Full

II: Protocol: (Type the title of your study)

The Effects of Teaching Middle Schools Students Social Skills with the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model

Summary

In a sentence or two, please describe the background and purpose of the research.

The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, a character education program, trains teachers to replace negative behaviors with the appropriate social skills a student is lacking.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate if a character education program, specifically The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model, had an effect on middle school students.

Briefly describe each condition or manipulation to be included within the study.

Middle school teachers will be asked their perceptions regarding behavior changes after students are taught The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model.

What measures or observations will be taken in the study? If any questionnaire or other instruments are used, provide a brief description and attach a copy.

Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical or legal risk? If so, please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.

The measurement for this study will be data from a survey. The survey was developed by the researcher specifically for the current study. Surveys will be completed by participating middle school teachers. A copy of the survey is attached.

There is no psychological, social, physical, or legal risk to the participants.

Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.

No stress will be applied to the subjects, participation was voluntary.

Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.

Subjects will not be deceived or misled in anyway during this study.

Will there be a request for information which subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? If so, please include a description.

Subjects will be asked on the survey the number of years they have taught, their highest level of education, and their gender; which are items that can be construed as personal or sensitive. All of these questions are voluntary.

Will the subjects be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.

No, the subjects will not be presented with materials that might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading.

Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?

The survey will take each subject about 10 to 15 minutes.

Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of any written solicitation as well as an outline of any oral solicitation.

The subjects of this study will be all middle school teachers in School District A. The teachers were trained in the model during district professional development. A request to complete the survey will be generated through email. Participation was voluntary.

What steps will be taken to insure that each subject's participation is voluntary? What if any inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?

The request to complete the survey will be done through email. Data from the survey will be collected using SurveyMonkey. Participation is voluntary.

No inducements will be offered.

How will you insure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? If so, include the form. If not, explain why not.

No prior consent will be obtained. Subjects' consent will be determined by participation to take the survey.

Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? If so, please explain the necessity.

None of the data will be made part of a permanent record.

Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer? If so, explain.

Since all data is archived, no subject participation is necessary.

What steps will be taken to insure the confidentiality of the data? Where will it be stored? How long will it be stored? What will be done with it after the study is completed?

Data generated for this study will not be used for any other purposes. No names or other identification will be available to identify the subjects in the study. The data will be stored on a password-protected flash drive; with will be kept in a locked drawer. The data will be stored for three years. Afterwards, the data will be destroyed.

If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subjects or society?

There are no risks to participating in this study.

Will any data from files or archival data be used? If so, please describe.

All data for this study will be archival. Surveys were distributed to middle school teachers after the first year of implementation of The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model in May 2013. Surveys were again sent out after the second year implementation in October 2014. The data was collected by the district and then used by the researcher for this study.

Appendix C

Baker University IRB Approval to Conduct Research Letter



Baker University Institutional Review Board

June 22, 2015

Dear Elizabeth Hunt Esco and Dr. Edwards,

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your research project application and approved this project under Exempt Status Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

Please be aware of the following:

- 1. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.**
- 2. Notify the IRB about any new investigators not named in original application.**
- 3. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents of the research activity.**
- 4. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.**
- 5. If the results of the research are used to prepare papers for publication or oral presentation at professional conferences, manuscripts or abstracts are requested for IRB as part of the project record.**

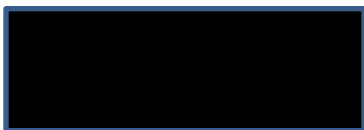
Please inform this Committee or myself when this project is terminated or completed. As noted above, you must also provide IRB with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If you have any questions, please contact me at CTodden@BakerU.edu or 785.594.8440.






Sincerely,

**Chris Todden EdD
Chair, Baker University IRB**

**Baker University IRB Committee Verneda Edwards EdD Sara Crump PhD
Erin Morris PhD Scott Crenshaw**

Appendix D

District Research Application Request-Internal**Research Application Request-** 

1. **Applicant(s) Name: Elizabeth Hunt Esco**
2. **Position: Assistant Principal**
3. **School/Location** 
4. **Telephone:** 
5. **Email address:** 
6. **Project Title: The Effects Teaching Middle School Students Social Skills with the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model**
7. **The proposed research is for: Completion of a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership through Baker University**
8. **Anticipated Dates:**
Beginning Date: August 2012
Ending Date: October 2014 Date
Final Report Available: December 2015
9. **Participant Description:**
Number of schools and names involved in the study: 9 Middle Schools - 

- Number of teachers involved in the study: All certified teachers at the 9 Middle Schools**
- Number of students involved in the study: No students will be surveyed for this research.**
10. **Has the project been submitted to a Human Experimentation Committee? Respond Yes or No. No**

11. If no, please explain why your project has not been submitted to a committee on human experimentation. The research coincided with the training and implementation of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model at the middle school level.

12. Either paste a copy of the letter from the Human Experimentation Committee regarding your study (Word format) below, email a scanned copy to



13. Brief review of the literature:

Public schools have the expectation of academically challenging students along with developing youth with skills to be good citizens (Field, 1996). Character education programs could be a part of the American schooling system to aid schools and school districts in developing good citizens.

This review of literature is divided into four sections that present literature relevant to character education. The first section reviews the historical perspective of character education in America and its public schools. The history of character education is varied, starting as moral education of Christianity, then moving towards values education of the middle class, and currently character education programs cover everything from drug presentation to character development through infant development. The second section looks at the theories that support the current principles of character education. The eleven guiding principles for character education programs are as follows:

- 1. Promotes core ethical values and supportive performance values as the foundation of good character.**
- 2. Defines “character” comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.**
- 3. Uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to character development**
- 4. Creates a caring school community.**
- 5. Provides students with opportunities for moral action.**
- 6. Includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them to succeed.**
- 7. Strives to foster students’ self-motivation.**
- 8. Engages the school staff as a learning and moral community that shares responsibility for character education and attempts to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students.**
- 9. Fosters shared moral leadership and long-range support of the character education initiative.**
- 10. Engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.**

11. Assesses the character of the school staff's functioning as character educators, and the extent to which students manifest good character. (CEP, 2010, Lickona, 1996; Lickona et al., 2007).

Piaget, Kohlberg, Goleman, and Gardner make an argument that character education is a required piece to ensure that a student is fully educated (DeVries, 1999; Fogarty & Steoehr, 1995; Goleman, 1995; Kavathatzopoulos, 1991; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977; Lickona, 1977; McClellan, 1999; Mulkey, 1997; Ryan, 1986). There are three main educational theories that support developing a character education program that aligns with the eleven principles. They are Moral Development, Multiple Intelligences, and Emotional Intelligence. The chapter will then will discuss the need for character education in schools. Family units are changing. Some offer that the decline in the traditional family and surge in self-destructive behaviors among teens are indications that students are not receiving character education in the home or in many of the current school structures (Lickona, 1996). Mulkey, Crain, and Harrington (1992) found that students from one-parent households display behavior issues like school lateness/absences, not doing homework, misbehaving in class more often than students from two-parent homes. Data also shows that more students are being raised in families of divorce or by a single parent; these can be stressful family environments (Mulkey, Crain, & Harrington, 1992). Amato (2001) discussed the nature of the marital dissolution as factor affecting children and that any disruption in the family has an impact on children's development. The final section describes the impact on students of currently implemented character education programs in middle schools. The programs reviewed are All Stars (Harrington, Giles, Hoyle, Feeney, & Yungbluth, 2001), the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model (Hensley, Powell, Lamke, & Hartman, 2007), Facing History and Ourselves (Hickey Schultz, Barr, and Selman, 2001), Life Skills Training (Botvin & Griffin, 2014), Peacemakers (Shapiro, Burgoon, Welker, & Clough, 2002), Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (Farrell, Meyer, & White, 2001), and Roots of Empathy (Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaidman-Zait, & Hertzman, 2012).

14. Major research questions:

- 1. To what extent do teachers' perceptions differ between level of support and level of involvement?**
- 2. To what extent do the teacher perceived they have the ability to use the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model?**
- 3. To what extent do teacher perceive that the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model helps develop students' social skills?**

15. Methodology:

This was a quantitative research study. Data was collected by surveying middle school teachers on the perceived effectiveness of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model. The population included all certified teachers in School District A teaching in one of the nine middle schools during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.

The survey used for this study was developed by the researcher and completed online using SurveyMonkey. Data from SurveyMonkey was downloaded and imported into IBM©SPSS© Statistics Faculty Pack 23 for Windows. Statistical tests used from this study include one-sample t tests tested against null values.

16. Method Summary:

The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model survey was developed for the [REDACTED] to collect data during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, which were the first and second years of implementation of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model in the district's nine middle schools. The survey was developed by the researcher on the request of the School District A. The purpose of the survey was to monitor the effectiveness of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model after the first and second years of implementation.

All items address the teachers' perceptions of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model and its effect on the dependent variable, developing social skills to increase student's social emotional learning. The survey was limited to one open response item; all other items were multiple-choice answered by a click option to decrease survey fatigue.

17. Research Design/Data Analysis:

A quantitative survey research design was used in this current study. The dependent variables for this research was middle school teachers perceived support and involvement of the model, the teachers perceived ability to use to the model, and the teachers perceived effect of the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model to develop middle schools students' social skills in the School District A. Independent variables included in this research are teachers perceived levels of support and involvement of the following groups: administration, teaching staff, support staff, parents, and students.

18. Perceived Benefits of the Project:

The Boys Education Model "is a school-based intervention strategy that emphasizes behavior management practices, relationship-building techniques, and social skills instruction" (Hensley, Powell, Lamke, & Hartman, 2007, p. 7-8). The curriculum of the Boys Town-Managed Schools Model has four guiding principles: "building relations with all students; encouraging a sense of connectedness to school; establishing a safe, positive climate for learning; and empowering every child with the social skills needed to enjoy academic and personal success" (Hensley et. al., 2007, p. 3). In order to implement the curriculum in a building teachers and administrators must be trained. The training takes two days and is specific to classroom or administrative duties. The first principle in the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model is building relationships with all students. After teachers and administrators have built strong relationships with their students, social skills can be taught to students. The model presents teaching social skills in three ways: planned teaching, blended teaching, and preventive prompting (Hensley et. al., 2007). Planned teaching is a strategy the educator uses when they want to

systematically introduce a new social skill. Planned teaching is a strategy that prepares students for the specific situation they will be facing and gives them the skills needed to be successful. The skills are taught, situations are described, a reason is given to emphasize the importance of the skills, and then students practice the skills. The blended teaching strategy combines the teaching of a social skill with academic instruction. This method takes planning by the teacher as to how and when to present the social skill with the academic curriculum. Blended teaching includes the relevancy in the academic content for the importance of the social skills. The last strategy is preventing prompting or a brief reminder about the use of a social skill during a specific event or situation. Preventing prompting can be used before an activity occurs or during the activity to re-direct the student's behavior with re-teaching of the social skills (Hensley et al., 2007).

19. Project Dissemination Plan:

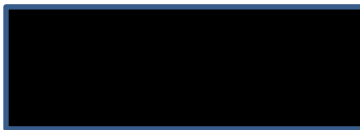
The data used for the research was archival, so results were shared at the completion of the survey and then will also be sent when analysis for the research questions is complete. The survey data sent in 2013 and again in 2015 was separated by building and by question. The data was emailed directly to the building principals for their use.

20. Briefly describe how this research project supports [REDACTED] curriculum, a district goal, and/or individual school's improvement plan. The [REDACTED] mission statement is "to provide a safe, positive environment where all students acquire knowledge and skill to be productive citizens." The Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model will help to create a safe, positive environment while teaching students skills that will help them to become productive citizens. The model trains teachers to replace students' negative behaviors with a social skill they are lacking rather than giving a consequence or blinding disciplining the students. This model will help teachers turn a discipline referral into a learning opportunity. Also the Boys Town Well-Managed Schools Model is built around researched social skills will benefit students in school and in life.

21. Please provide a letter from your faculty advisor/committee indicating that the research project has been reviewed and the researcher has met all requirements necessary to conduct the proposed research. You can paste an electronic copy of the letter (Word format) into this section, email a scanned copy to [REDACTED]

22. Any other comments regarding your application?

Appendix E

District Research Letter of Approval

June 22, 2015

Dear Ms. Esco,

Thank you submitting your research proposal for approval. We are happy to approve your research project with [REDACTED] as written.

When providing final results, you will need to refer to [REDACTED] and the middle schools as a district and schools in the Midwest. Please do not use the district name or school names, no reference to [REDACTED] when providing results. Please forward a copy of the results to our office for our records.

Best of luck with your project. Sincerely



Director of Assessment and School Improvement

