Sensitivity Training
A Restorative Program for Students who Act Aggressively

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Sensitivity Training:
• 1.5 hour program.
• Students work through a booklet, and a PowerPoint presentation that guides them to think about their actions, and the reactions that they might have created.
• Through group discussions, reflection, and empathy building activities, students learn new ways of acting and reacting.
• Provides problem solving skills for the future.

The program is for students involved in a bullying incident OR who are acting aggressively and:
• are showing little to no remorse for their actions.
• are showing remorse but exploring the issue deeply will help them to not repeat the action.
• are showing remorse but are choosing to act aggressively anyways.
• have been victimized in the past, but are starting to take on aggressive characteristics.

Flow of the program:

Is the program successful?

• Students who attend Sensitivity Training do not continue to pick on the same target.
• The majority of students have not returned to Sensitivity Training, which means that it is likely that they have not re-aggressed and/or shown little remorse.
• Students who do return to Sensitivity Training rarely do so for the same type of aggression action.
• Students return in a more positive manner. They are more open to learning and are more receptive to the counseling experience provided for them.
• During their second and third visits, these students are much more open to admitting their faults and repairing the damage that they have created.
Shame:

Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging.” Brené Brown, 2007

Shame Displacement:

By not acknowledging the shame that they feel, bullies do these three things once an assault has been made:

- deny wrongdoing
- take no responsibility
- feel no rejection from the community

(Lewis 1971)

Research shows that bullies displace their shame by blaming others and acting in anger. Sometimes, they will even lie to others, and to themselves, about the series of events that took place. (Morrison, 2006)

Adaptive Shame Management Techniques (Ahmed et al. 2001)

1. Acknowledge that they caused harm to others, and that they feel shame for doing it.
2. Take full responsibility for the harm that has been done.
3. Make amends (apology, symbolic gesture of regret, some form of compensation)

Qualities of Sensitivity Training Facilitators:

- Flexible (within the program)
- Positive
- Calm
- Caring
- Affirming
- Can see the best in all students.

Referral Process

- Student chooses aggression to solve a problem
- Administration takes the situation seriously and follows appropriate disciplinary steps.
- Administration, Teacher or Guidance Counselor suggests a student might be a good candidate for the program.
- Parents/Guardians are consulted, and consents to their child going through the program.
- Administrator explains to the student what the training is all about. They set consequences for skipping the training.

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