

# RAPS Program Summary 2010-2011

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## **Participants and attendance:**

RAPS for the 2010-2011 school year involved mentors and mentees at two sites, Diehl Elementary and Wilson Middle School. Mentees were grades 6-8 and mentors were college students from Mercyhurst, Gannon, Edinboro, and Behrend representing 14 different majors. As with previous years, participant consistency was a noticeable problem with students leaving the program and new students coming into the program. Mentors also left the program during the course of the year.

- 15 mentees completed the pre/post surveys for quantitative data.
- 25 mentees completed the post survey for qualitative data.
- 21 mentors completed the pre/post surveys for quantitative data.
- 23 mentors completed the post survey for qualitative data.

Several mentors and mentees in their qualitative responses noted that inconsistency in attendance and program inclusion for both mentors and mentees was problematic and detrimental to the success of the program.

## **Program Structure:**

The lessons were used from the manual currently formatted for sale. Of the 20 planned sessions, 18 were conducted at one location and 19 at the other.

Mentors were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the following aspects of the program on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being ineffective and 5 being effective in contributing to the success of the program. Average response scores are listed below:

- The facilitator: 4.84
- The training: 4.2
- The planning and processing sessions: 4.36
- The format of the mentoring sessions: 4.44
- Group activities: 4.48
- Teacher: 4.16
- The facility/ physical environment: 4.12

## **Recommendations for Program Structure:**

Overall, mentors appeared to consider all of the above elements effective. Lowest rated were the training, teacher and physical environment. The teacher and facility are provided through CHAMPS and thus beyond Ophelia Project control. A recommendation can be made to CHAMPS for a more productive location within the school. The teacher is merely present to observe and intervene if there are problems with students. Their role is not to contribute directly to the program which may explain a lower rating. Several mentors remarked that the training was not practical or particularly effective. The structure and content of the training should be reviewed and adjusted as necessary to be efficient as well as engaging.

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## **Quantitative Survey Summary (Mentees):**

### *Areas of significant increase:*

- I can tell how others are feeling.
- I can describe how I am feeling.
- I know what I want and I try to get it.
- I try to help people get along.
- When I have a problem with someone, I try to fix it.
- I have someone who supports me.

### *Areas of significant decrease:*

- I have healthy, trusting relationships.
- I choose to hang out with good people.
- I can say “no” when I feel uncomfortable.
- I stop when others say they are uncomfortable.
- I try to be a good student.
- I eat nutritious food more than junk food.
- When someone hurts me, I can fix it without getting angry.
- When I hurt someone, I try to make it right.

## **Qualitative Survey Summary (Mentees):**

All students responding that they use skills learned in RAPS in one way or another at least sometimes. Overall, the things liked best about the program are the friendships and relationships with the peers and mentors and the skills relating to self control. Seventeen of the 25 students reported no negative aspects of the program. Mentees tended to regard their mentors as awesome, cool, trustworthy, and nice.

## **Conclusions (Mentees):**

The program can be considered effective for mentees in the following areas: (a) increasing students’ emotional literacy, (b) goal setting, and (c) positive conflict resolution. Recommended areas of focus for strengthening the program would be anger management skills and being assertive in uncomfortable situations.

An interesting caveat in the surveys was the significant decrease in the first survey item, “I have healthy, trusting relationships” while at the same time the majority of students in the qualitative responses commented on the quality of the relationships within the RAPS group. A possible explanation for this inconsistency is that through RAPS, students learned how to better identify a healthy, trusting relationships and realized that some relationships they had previously identified as healthy were, in fact, not.

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## **Quantitative Summary (Mentors):**

*Areas of significant increase:*

- I know how to prioritize.
- I can enforce boundaries with others.

*Areas of significant decrease:*

- When someone makes me mad, I get even.

## **Qualitative Summary (Mentors):**

Most mentors responded that they use the strategies in RAPS often, many saying on a daily basis. There were also notable comments that the mentors are self-monitoring better and focusing more on being an appropriate role model. Mentors seemed to benefit from the dual-mentoring structure in that they reflected upon the impact they made on their student mentees, but also remarked on the impact from the program facilitator, Jessica Semler. Another major area for commenting was that mentors and mentees need more time together to make a significant connection, whether that is longer sessions or more sessions. Negative comments tended to focus on participant attrition and attendance – reiterating the need for a commitment from the schools to not move students in and out of the program.

## **Conclusions (Mentors):**

The survey items did not show much change from pre to post testing; in fact, 6 of the 28 questions had no change at all. Most items showed an insignificant fluctuation of less than one-fourth of point. The only area to show decrease actually reflects positive change in that it shows mentors less likely to seek revenge after being angered. Areas of growth were demonstrated in prioritizing and also enforcing boundaries. The mentors all responded positively in regards to the program, and would like to see more of a commitment from the schools and mentees to further invest in a worthwhile relationship.