EFFECTS OF A SOCIAL SKILL INSTRUCTION PROGRAM ON THE SOCIAL
SKILL ACQUISITION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
WITH MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

by

Alicia Amanda Brophy

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Special Education

Charlotte

2011

Approved by:

_____
Dr. Ya-yu Lo

_____
Dr. Lee Sherry

_____
Dr. Chris O'Brien

_____
Dr. Janet Levy

ABSTRACT

ALICIA AMANDA BROPHY. Effects of a social skill instruction program on the social skill acquisition of african american high school students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors. (Under direction of DR. YA-YU LO)

Disproportionality and the poor post-school outcomes for African American youth with disabilities have been ongoing issues in special education. Limited opportunities to engage in social interactions may exacerbate these poor post-school outcomes for African American students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors. African American students per population consistently receive more office referrals, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions than other students. Effective interventions that can offset social skill deficits or aggressive behaviors of African American students are important.

One way to increase the social competence of African American youth with aggression who frequently display social skill deficits may be social skill instruction with anger management. By increasing students' social competence it may facilitate students' success within the school environment and enhance their post-school outcomes. A difficulty researchers have experienced is in getting social behaviors taught to generalize to more than one place and maintain over time. A way to facilitate the generalization of social skills may be to employ multiple exemplar training (i.e., training across different settings, varied role-play scenarios, training by different people).

Research supports the idea that parent collaboration may help facilitate students' learning of social skills and increase the likelihood of generalization of these skills from the instructional small group to the classroom setting. Furthermore, when parents are informed that social skills are being taught at schools, they are more likely to prompt

their child to practice these skills and reinforce skill demonstration in the home environment.

Culturally relevant social skill instruction is rare in the literature, despite the inherent need for this type of instruction for African American learners. A culturally responsive, social skill instruction program can serve as a way to promote the overall social competence of this population of students. This study examined the effects of a small group, culturally responsive social skill instruction program, incorporating parental involvement, on increasing the prosocial behaviors of three African American high school students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors. In addition, the function of participants' social behavior was examined and incorporated into instruction.

Using a multiple probe across skill sets design, data on participants' social skill acquisition were collected in both the school and home settings. Results indicated that participants were able to increase appropriate usage of targeted social skills during role-play situations with their peers and family members. In addition, anecdotal data suggest that participants were able to use targeted social skills in naturally occurring aggression inducing environments. Results are discussed relative to the importance of culturally responsive social skill instruction for African American high school students with mild intellectual disabilities incorporating parental involvement and a functional perspective. Recommendations for future research and implications for practice are also addressed.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the two people who have been there for me from the beginning and have continued to support me throughout this endeavor, my parents, Michael and Anna Brophy. You have instilled in me the idea that a mind is a terrible thing to waste and I hope I continue to use mine wisely as I start my career in academia. To my sister, Erin and brother-in-law, Josh, thank you for believing in me. I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to Mema and all of my extended family members. I appreciate all of the love and support I received from each of you along the way! Thank you so much! I must also express gratitude to the Heavenly Father above for listening to my concerns, answering my prayers, guiding me on this path, and carrying me when I lost my footing. I could not have done with this without You and I am incredibly blessed! Finally, in memory of my grandfather Honey and Grandma Brophy… thank you for being my guardian angels!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to everyone who has been essential to the successful completion of my dissertation. First, I must thank my AMAZING advisor, Dr. Ya-yu Lo, for her phenomenal support, guidance, and for teaching me to believe that you can do anything if you work hard. You have helped me to grow as a researcher and writer in ways I could never have imagined. I would also like to thank Dr. Richard White and Dr. Chris O'Brien for helping me to grow as an educator and a professional in this field. Dr. White, you started me on this path and I am grateful for all the help you have given me along the way. I must also thank Dr. Lee Sherry and Dr. Janet Levy for serving on my committee and helping to strengthen my writing skills throughout this process. To Dr. April Mustian, thank you for being my "big sis" and encouraging me. It has been a pleasure to follow in your footsteps! To Drs. Kelly Kelley, Christy Hicks, Chris Rivera, Dawn Rowe, and the rest of my doc family… it has been awesome to experience and survive this journey with you! To Susan Arndt, you are an amazing teacher and thank you so much for all of your help! To Crystalyn Schnorr, I am so grateful for your friendship and everything you did to help me! I am also so blessed to have such supportive friends in my life, thank you Michelle Bird, Dawn Bearinger, Cathie Hanten, David Eaton, Jada Sarac, Jennifer Lazhar, Maria Stephens, Shannon Helms, Crystal Clodfelter, Shelly Johns, Rachel Johns, Christen Hathaway, Kelly Dowless, Lisha Weck, Joann Wozny, Shaqwana Freeman, Flo Parkhill, and Karen Knott! And finally, I would like to thank Ozalle Toms (and her boys Mike, David, and Josh). You have been an amazing blessing to me and I am so grateful that God placed us in the same cohort. Your friendship, advice, love, support, and time have been appreciated more than I can possibly express!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Segregation of African American students continues to exist in the school environment, despite almost 60 years since *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). Nowhere in education is this segregation more evident than in special education. Disproportionate representation of African American students in intellectual disabilities persists despite the use of current strategies such as Response to Intervention and Functional Behavioral Assessments. Unfortunately, identification in intellectual disabilities for African American students frequently leads to segregated placements and fewer opportunities for social and educational interactions with their general education peers. The limited opportunities to engage in social interactions may exacerbate poor post-school outcomes for African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors. This dissertation seeks to explore the effectiveness of a small group, culturally responsive, social skill instruction program incorporating parental involvement to increase the prosocial behaviors of African American students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors who receive special education in a segregated placement.

Statement of the Problem

Post-school outcomes for youth with mild intellectual disabilities. A demand for schools to improve the outcomes for youth with disabilities upon leaving high school has resulted from recent legislative policies and research initiatives (Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act of 2004; Johnson, Stodden, Emanuel, Luecking, & Mack, 2002). Specifically, schools were challenged by the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2002) to make sure that students with disabilities have sufficient skills and supports necessary to lead successful adult lives. For many youth with mild intellectual disabilities, deficiency in the ability to engage in acceptable peer interactions could hinder both their academic and social success more so than their nondisabled peers. For example, research indicates that youth with intellectual disabilities have lower grades, experience academic underachievement, have more absences, higher course failure, higher suspension/expulsion rates, and are more likely to be retained when compared to students without disabilities (e.g., Blackorby & Wagner, 1996; Bullis & Cheney, 1999; Greenbaum et al., 1996; Kortering & Blackorby, 1992; Sutherland & Singh, 2004; Wagner, 1995). Additionally, students with intellectual disabilities with behavioral challenges are more likely to drop out of school and are more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, & Garza, 2006). Post-school outcomes for these students with disabilities are poor.

Poor educational outcomes for African American youth with disabilities. Among students with mild intellectual disabilities who are susceptible to poor post-school outcomes, African American students are frequently ill prepared to engage in appropriate social interactions with their peers within the school setting. An increasing number of children entering school do not have appropriate social and academic competencies required for success in school environments, putting them at risk for developing difficulties later on in their schooling (Lane et al., 2003). African American students represent one of these at-risk student populations. For example, urban African American

students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are found to be more likely to demonstrate socioemotional difficulties when compared to their more affluent Caucasian counterparts (Bolger, Patterson, Thompson, & Kupersmidt, 1995; Duncan, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanoz, 1994; Mendez, Fantuzzo, & Cicchetti, 2002; Stormont, 2002). These students also experience poorer educational and developmental outcomes. In fact, African American students with intellectual disabilities by population have a higher likelihood of encountering poor post-school outcomes than their Caucasian peers (National Research Council, 2002; Wagner & Cameto, 2004).

Additionally, African American students are overrepresented in special education, receive more discipline referrals, and are educated in more restrictive placements than peers of other ethnicities (Coutinho, Oswald, & Best, 2002; Gay, 2000; National Research Council, 2002; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Skiba, Polini-Staudinger, Gallini, Simmons, & Feggins-Azziz, 2006). For example, African American students with behavioral disabilities are 1.2 times and African American students with intellectual disabilities are 1.5 times more likely to be served in self-contained placements than their Caucasian counterparts (Skiba, Poloni-Staudinger, Gallini, Simmons, & Feggins-Azziz, 2006). The disproportionate representation of African American youth in special education, disciplinary referrals, and segregated placements may be attributed to less experienced teachers, lack of parent participation, use of unproductive strategies, inappropriate curriculum, underfunded schools, poverty, inappropriate disciplinary practices, students' chronic poor academic performance, and lack of community resources (Gardener & Miranda, 2001). In order to increase successful post-school outcomes for this population, it is necessary to determine factors that may

contribute to their poor post-school outcomes and disproportionality, and consequently examine a possible intervention to counteract these causal factors.

Aggression and social skill deficits for African American youth. Across grade levels and academic settings, African American students consistently receive more office referrals, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions at disproportionately higher rates than other students (Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982). For example, in a recent study by Lo and Cartledge (2007) that examined disciplinary referrals in an urban elementary school, African Americans were the most likely recipients of disciplinary referrals and suspensions, when compared to their counterparts, due primarily to behavior problems characterized as disruptive, aggressive, and non-compliant. In addition, over the course of the 2-year study, repeat offenders who were characteristically African American males committed an increasing number of rule violations despite receipt of intensified punitive consequences such as time-out, suspensions, or expulsions.

Further, Feng and Cartledge (1996) who investigated the social skill knowledge of fifth grade African, European, and Asian students found that African American students experience difficulty in resisting peer-oriented actions (e.g., talking) which could have a negative impact on their completion of academic tasks. When treated in what they perceived to be an unfair manner, their responses were liable to be more assertive or aggressive than their European or Asian counterparts. Teacher ratings for this population were indicative of a need for African American students to learn more constructive ways to cope with conflict and employ more self-control in the school environment when interacting with teachers and peers.

Visible anger and aggressive behavior are often intertwined with poor anger management and social skill deficits. One of the reasons for possible criminal justice system involvement for youth with mild intellectual disabilities, especially those of African American descent, could be attributed to the congruence of physical aggression and assorted indices of social incompetence, including insufficient social skills (Lochman & Dodge, 1998). The poor social skills of youth with disabilities, especially those of an emotional or behavioral nature, can be predictive of adult mental health difficulties, higher juvenile delinquency rates, academic underachievement, negative peer relationships, and underemployment and unemployment (Cartledge & Milburn, 1995; Elksnin & Elksnin, 1998a; Elksnin & Elksnin, 1998b). Effective interventions that can offset social skill deficits or aggressive behaviors of African American students are important.

However, Feng and Cartledge (1996) cautioned that many social skill assessments used for evaluating students' social behaviors often do not adequately reflect the social competence of culturally diverse students as culturally unique behaviors are not the same as social skill deficits or behavior disorders. For example, the intense and animated communication style of African American students could be perceived by teachers as being markedly contentious in their interactions with others. Misunderstandings that may result from dissimilar cultural norms are well documented in the literature (e.g., Cartledge & Loe, 2001; Cartledge et al., 2002; Gable, Hendrickson, Tonelson, & Van Acker, 2002). According to Schoenfeld, Rutherford, Gable, and Rock (2008), a culturally responsive social skill instruction curriculum can alleviate these kinds of misunderstandings by providing knowledge and skills to students and teachers alike. In

addition, by presenting culturally responsive social skill instruction addressing a variety of cultural norms, teachers can create an atmosphere that promotes tolerance and appreciation of unique differences while facilitating student attainment and usage of social skills which may contribute to successful academic and post-school outcomes in the environments where these students reside (Schoenfeld et al., 2008).

Social skill instruction for African American youth with aggression. Educators have expressed the need for more emphasis on social skills development to increase social competence of students with intellectual disabilities or those with behavioral challenges (Gresham, Sugai, & Horner, 2001; Ogilvy, 1994). Social skills have been defined as the particular behaviors that a person employs from his or her repertoire to perform successfully on specific social tasks. These skills must be taught, understood, and correctly implemented (Gresham et al., 2001). Social skills have been demonstrated to be important for students with disabilities as they are essential for social and educational achievement (Lane, Menzies, Barton-Arwood, Doukas, & Munton, 2005). In effect, academic instruction and social behavior are dependent upon one another.

In order to help students acquire social skills, a social skill instruction program may be used. Most social skill instruction programs encompass the following: (a) supporting skill realization, (b) increasing skill execution, (c) removing or decreasing rival problem behaviors, and (d) contributing to the generalization and maintenance of social skills (Cook et al., 2008). The primary purpose of social skill instruction is to increase participants' satisfaction with peer relations and social aptitude through activities that participants and their peers find acceptable while increasing peer acceptance and interaction (Christopher, Nangle, & Hansen, 1993).

To increase social competence of African American youth with aggression who frequently display social skill deficits in the social contexts within which they function with others, social skill instruction and anger management are beneficial and important (Elliott & Gresham, 1993; Hansen et al., 1998; Keller & Bry, 1999). Through social skill instruction, it is possible to facilitate student success within the school environment and enhance students' post-school outcomes (Gresham, 2002). Moreover, social skill instruction could play a key role in preventing or reducing special education placements for at-risk African American students and reinforcing the social skills of students already receiving services provided by special educators (Gardner & Miranda, 2001).

A number of successful treatments for aggression and anger using social skills development exist within the research (Bullis et al., 2001; Christopher et al., 1993; Elliott & Gresham, 1993; Gresham, 1985; Maddern et al., 2004). For example, Elder, Edelstein, and Narick (1979) conducted one of the first studies on modifying aggression in adolescents through social skill instruction. In this multiple baseline across three behavior classes design, four adolescents (three males and one female) were taught the targeted social skills of requesting behavior change, responding to negative communications, and appropriate means of interrupting in a small group setting 4 days a week for 45 min each session. Results indicated that the social skill instruction increased the adolescents' socially appropriate behavior and decreased aggressive responses during role-plays, in addition to generalizing to their day room and lunchroom settings.

Some social skill instruction programs (i.e., *ASSET*, *Skillstreaming*, *and Walker Social Skills Curriculum*) are purposely developed for teaching youth with aggression to express anger appropriately through exhibition of prosocial behavior (Hazel, Schumaker,

Sherman, & Sheldon-Wildgen, 1981; Goldstein, 1973; Walker et al., 1988). One all-encompassing program, *Aggression Replacement Training* (*ART*) developed by Goldstein, Glick, and Gibbs (1998) incorporates *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (Goldstein, 1973; Goldstein, McGinnis, Sprafkin, Gershaw, & Klein, 1997) alongside Anger Control Training (Feindler & Ecton, 1986) and Moral Reasoning Training (Kohlberg, 1984). *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* is a social skill instruction curriculum composed of 50 prosocial behaviors taught systematically to adolescents who were chronically aggressive (Goldstein et al., 1997). The *Skillstreaming* program utilizes the following approach to teaching social skills: (a) expert modeling of behaviors composing skills where deficits lie, (b) role-playing (guided opportunities to exhibit skills), (c) providing performance feedback, and (d) transfer training (providing activities to encourage youth to use skills taught in real-life environments). Through the use of transfer training, adolescents are given opportunities to apply social skills learned to new settings and situations, thus providing a foundation for generalization. The *Skillstreaming* program has been used in a few studies as a component of *Aggression Replacement Training* (*ART*) developed by Goldstein, Glick, and Gibbs (1998). Goldstein and Glick (1994) evaluated the efficacy of *ART* incorporating *Skillstreaming* and found that this program decreased the frequency of acting-out behaviors, promoted social skill acquisition and performance, increased the frequency of prosocial behaviors, and improved anger control.

Promoting generalization effects of social skill instruction. To facilitate social competency within the academic environment, it is essential to provide social skill instruction through explicit interventions geared towards attainment. One of the most

challenging aspects of implementing an effective social skill instruction program lies in the difficulty of getting students to generalize social skills learned to settings other than the therapeutic environment. Researchers have been, for the most part, largely unable to get social behaviors trained to broaden to more than one place for an extensive amount of time (Gresham, 1994). Many studies illustrate that while students with disabilities can exhibit appropriate social skills taught in isolation, they fail to maintain this high level of achievement when asked to comply with requests in alternate settings (Foxx, Faw, & Nisbeth, 1991; Herring & Northup, 1998). For example, in a review of the literature on students with emotional and behavioral disorders, Maag (2006) states that generalization strategies should be an integral component of any social skill training program. Additionally, not only is it imperative that researchers program for generalization prior to implementation of a study, generalization procedures should exist for the entire duration of the intervention (Sheridan, Hungelmann, & Maughan, 1999).

There are many ways in which generalization of social skills to other settings have been programmed and investigated. Stokes and Osnes (1989) acknowledged the following "generalization facilitators" (i.e., procedures to facilitate generalization beyond the therapeutic setting): (a) training across stimuli (e.g., settings, persons), (b) teaching behaviors with higher likelihood of natural maintaining contingencies (i.e., targeting socially valid skills), (c) peer mediated training, (d) reinforcing application of skills to novel and appropriate situations, and (e) fading response contingencies to approximate naturally occurring consequences. The term "Training across stimuli" can be interpreted as multiple exemplar training (Foxx et al., 1991; Herring & Northup, 1998). Multiple exemplar training has been used since the early 1980's to increase the generality of social

skills taught to children and adolescents with disabilities (Berler et al., 1982; Bornstein, Bellack, & Hersen, 1980; Lancioni, 1982). Examples of multiple exemplar training can include training across different settings (i.e., academic, home, community), using varied role-play scenarios, and incorporating interactions with or instruction by a range of people with whom the student has frequent contact (i.e., parents, other family members, peers, various staff in the school environment, neighbors). To increase the likelihood of generalization from the instructional small group to the classroom setting for students with mild intellectual disabilities, parents can play an important role. According to a recent literature review on social skill instruction for students with disabilities, one component of a successful social skill intervention was to involve parents in implementing the intervention by providing them with certain responsibilities to enable their child to practice social skills learned in the home environment (Denning, 2007).

Parental involvement in social skill instruction. Parental participation in children's learning can be a predictor of academic success; and interventions within the school environment have increased positive results when parents are involved (Jimerson et al., 2006; Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). Specifically, home-school collaboration has been linked with better educational outcomes for children (Christenson, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992; Epstein, 1992). Cox (2005) conducted a review of empirical studies of home-school collaboration interventions during which 18 studies were identified and analyzed. The majority of students (aged 4 to 16 years) investigated in the review were at risk for mild disabilities or experienced delays in their academic learning, in addition to experiencing social difficulties. More than half of the studies reporting socioeconomic status (SES) of participants included those from mainly low SES environments, the

majority of which were African Americans (67%). Results indicated that interventions implemented where school personnel and parents had a two-way exchange of information and worked together were most successful.

The aforementioned research supports the idea that parent collaboration may help facilitate learning of social skills. By including parents in the process of teaching social skills, schools may help to improve generalization of social skills (Armstrong & McPherson, 1991; Budd & Itzkowitz, 1990). Parent participation in social skill instruction is vital for three reasons: (a) the natural environment (i.e., home or community settings) presents the most opportunities for student application of social skills taught, (b) parents can provide opportunities for instruction and interactions that do not occur in the academic environment (e.g., with neighbors, church members, youth groups, members of athletic teams), and (c) by nature of being their child's caretaker parents are with their children the longest (Schulze, Rule, & Innocenti, 1989). Furthermore, when parents are informed that social skills are being taught at schools, they are more likely to prompt their child to practice these skills and reinforce skill demonstration in the home environment (Siperstein & Bak, 1988). In addition to increased possibility of generalization effects through use of multiple exemplars addressed earlier, a study investigating the importance of social skill curricula conducted by Baumgart, Filler, and Askvig (1991) demonstrated that parents and educators perceive social skills as an essential area of curricula, facilitating generalization through social validity.

Limitations of Current Research

Although much of the literature discusses the issue of disproportionality with regard to African American students and their placement in special education, little research has been conducted with this population focused on finding ways to increase their social skill interactions and decrease their aggressive behavior in small groups. Culturally relevant social skill instruction is rare in the literature, despite the inherent need for this type of instruction for African American learners (Cartledge & Loe, 2001; Schoenfeld et al., 2008). Additionally, the use of function based assessments of students' social skill strengths and needs to facilitate development of social skill instruction interventions are severely lacking. Specifically, a social skill interventionist should adequately identify the social skills ethnically diverse students currently have, social skills that are lacking within the students' repertoires, and social skills that are crucial to the students' education (Elliott & Gresham, 1991).

Further aggravating the aforementioned issues, research is scant in the area of teaching social skills to African American secondary students when these are the ones most likely to experience dismal post-school outcomes. Presley and Hughes (2000) conducted one of the few studies in the high school setting that expressly focused on the effects of teaching primarily African American students social skills. Four students were chosen for participation in this multiple-baseline across participants design study; 75% of them being African American males. All students were identified as having mild disabilities, the majority encompassing learning or behavioral disabilities. The intervention consisted of the use of the *Triple A* Strategy (ASSESS, AMEND, ACT) to express anger appropriately taught by general education peers through peer-mediated

direct instruction and role playing activities. Results demonstrated that all students were able to show an increase in the number of steps of the anger management strategy they performed accurately in given role-play scenarios with their general education peers. Generalization data were hard to measure due to limited frequency of naturally occurring aggression inducing situations. However, these data indicated some behavioral change within the academic setting, despite minimal use of steps taught (3 or less) in response to naturally occurring anger provoking situations.

Parents need to be involved in the implementation of social skill instruction programs, but this premise is lacking in the literature. Few studies had direct involvement of parents in choosing social skills to be taught (Haager & Vaughn, 1995). Also, the contribution of parents as participants in the interventions or as social skills instructors is frequently missing (Budd, 1985). To increase the educational success of students, parents must be crucial participants, and parents, teachers, and youth must all work together (Pryor, 1995).

Few social skill instruction studies have been published that were conducted with African American students having intellectual disabilities with behavioral challenges where parental involvement was a component of the overall social skill instruction package. To date, there were a total of 17 studies identified where some level of parent involvement was included in a social skill instruction package. Of these identified social skill instruction studies incorporating parental involvement, six were conducted within the elementary setting and had a population of African American students among the participants (i.e., DeRosier & Gilliom, 2007; Fraser, Day, Galinsky, Hodges, &

Smokowski, 2004; Fraser et al., 2005; Middleton & Cartledge, 1995; Pfiffner & McBurnett, 1997; Townsend, 1994).

Specifically, DeRosier and Gilliom (2007) conducted a study on 59 elementary students (93% White and 7% African American) experiencing socio-emotional problems. Fraser et al. (2004) investigated 86 children with conduct problems (approximately 85% African American and 15% White) ranging in age from 6 to 12 years. Townsend (1994) targeted six upper elementary (i.e., 4th, 5th, 6th grade) students at risk for school failure evenly distributed as White, Black or Hispanic. Pfiffner and McBurnett (1997) investigated 27 elementary age students with disabilities (i.e., other health impairment), with only one male student identified as being African American. The study by Fraser et al. (2005) was conducted with 548 third-grade students within the general education with 20% identified as African American. Finally, Middleton and Cartledge (1995) conducted the only study with an entirely African American student population who exhibited aggressive behaviors, ranging in age from 6 to 9 years.

Only two of the 17 studies on a social skill instruction package that incorporated parental involvement were conducted in the secondary setting with some proportion of African American students. The first study was by Harrell, Mercer, and DeRosier (2009) who investigated the effects of social skill instruction with students with a median age of 14.2 who were experiencing social relationship problems. Thirteen and one-half percent of these students were African American. Results indicated that this social skill instruction package had a positive impact on the emotional and social functioning of youth experiencing social relationship difficulties.

The second study, conducted by Laugeson, Frankel, Mogil, and Dillion (2009) examined the effects of a parent-assisted social skill instruction intervention on increasing social skills and friendships of high school students with autism spectrum disorders. Three of the 33 participants were African American students. Supplemental homework activities were monitored by parents who provided support and reiteration of skills as needed. This social skill instruction intervention package was effective in increasing treatment participants' knowledge of social etiquette with regard to making and keeping friends, increasing their frequency of get-togethers with peers, and increasing their quality of friendships.

Although the two previous studies show promise, there are a few limitations that need to be addressed in future studies. First, bias exists in one of the dependent variables, parent outcome. The researchers hypothesized that the parents might have been biased due to their participation in the intervention. To discourage bias in persons selected to provide data on the effects of an intervention, a multimodal method of assessment is necessary. An example of a multimodal method might be to gather data from parents, teachers, and students. Second, maintenance data were not collected following termination of the interventions. Third, more comprehensive demographic data need to be collected, especially on students' diagnosed disabilities. Finally, studies need to be conducted using evaluation methods that rule out non-specific treatment effects (e.g., effects that could be due to attention received during the intervention).

Summary

Two major factors have been identified by researchers as contributing to the poor post-school outcomes of African American students with intellectual disabilities with

behavioral challenges: a lack of social competence and high levels of aggression. Social skill instruction has been suggested as a strategy to increase social competence and decrease aggressive behaviors in students of all ages. Although social skill instruction has a high probability of success, a factor that has consistently cropped up as a deterrent to its long-term effectiveness has been the difficulty in getting students to generalize skills learned in the instructional setting to natural environments outside the therapeutic setting. Parental involvement in social skill instruction has been shown to help facilitate their children's generalization of social skills learned and increase the probability of maintenance over time. However, the literature on parental involvement in social skill instruction for high school students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors within the African American community is extremely scarce.

Culturally relevant social skill instruction is also a rarity in the social skill instruction literature for African American learners though there is a definitive need for culturally-based instruction for this population. Furthermore, studies where the function of social skills have been examined in order to determine existing acquisition or performance deficits necessary for tailoring instruction to students' specific needs are lacking in the literature. There exists a call for researchers to investigate effective ways to implement culturally relevant social skill instruction that is designed from the behavioral function perspective and that incorporates parental involvement for African American high school students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors who are in need of prosocial alternatives to aggression.

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of a social skill instruction program on the exhibition of appropriate social skills as alternatives to aggression for African American high school students with intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors. This social skill instruction program consisted of three important components: (a) cultural relevance for African American high school students, (b) consideration of behavioral functions of the African American participants, and (c) parental involvement.

This study seeks to answer six research questions.

1. To what extent does the social skill instruction program improve participant's execution of social skills as an alternative to aggression in role-play situations involving peers?

2. To what extent does the social skill instruction program improve participant's execution of social skills as an alternative to aggression in role-play situations involving family members?

3. To what extent will the participants respond appropriately to naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents in the classroom environment?

4. To what extent do the obtained social behavior changes maintain across time?

Additionally, this study will answer two secondary research questions.

5. To what extent do the participants improve their social skill acquisition and performance from the pretest to the posttest as measured through teacher ratings, parent ratings, and participants' self rating?

6. What are the opinions of the participants, parents, and teachers regarding the importance of the targeted social skills, acceptability of the intervention package, and effectiveness of the social skill instruction program?

Significance of the Study

This study has the potential to contribute to the knowledge base for five major reasons. First, this study can extend the research on social skill instruction by evaluating each student's ability to apply social skill steps learned to multiple settings (in home and at school) through the incorporation of parental involvement in practicing activities with their children and assessing them during role-play situations. Second, this study will increase the knowledge base of using culturally relevant social skill instruction and parental involvement with a minority population, specifically African American students. Third, this study will add to the truly limited amount of literature that exists in the area of implementing social skill instruction for students with mild intellectual disabilities educated within a high school setting. Fourth, this will be one of only a handful of social skills studies that was conducted with secondary students with mild intellectual disabilities that focuses solely on alternatives to aggression. Finally, this study will extend current social skill instruction literature by designing the instruction from a behavioral function perspective.

Limitations/Delimitations

This study seeks to evaluate the effects of a culturally relevant social skill instruction program incorporating parental involvement on the exhibition of appropriate social skills as alternatives to aggression for high school students with mild intellectual or

disabilities and challenging behaviors. This study was conducted with African American

high school students in an occupational course of study program from a large school

district. It was imperative to define the confines or limitations of the current study to

enable readers to interpret the findings from this study correctly. First, this study

employed single-subject methodology. Studies using this design cannot be generalized to

different participants and settings, but rather are designed and reported in a way that

lends itself to replication. However, the internal validity of this study was strengthened

by using quality indicators for this type of research provided by Horner et al. (2005).

Second, this study was only conducted with African American students whose parents are

active members of their child's education, which affects the ability to generalize results to

students whose parents are not active participants in their child's education due to various

reasons.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided for terms used throughout this manuscript

in describing related literature and the methodology of the anticipated study. Familiarity

with these terms is vital to full comprehension of the study's purpose and probable

contributions to the literature base.

African American students: American students who identify themselves as being a

member of an ethnic group whose ancestors are originally from the continent of Africa.

Culturally relevant social skill instruction: social skill instruction that

incorporates and respects a student's native culture by teaching skills most important to

the target population, including culturally specific role models, using culturally relevant

materials, applying the skill within the culturally specific environment, and integrating

students' personal experiences into instruction (Robinson-Ervin, Cartledge, & Keyes, 2011).

Disproportionate placement: representation of a particular group of students that is at a rate different than those in the general population, i.e., overrepresented or underrepresented (Gravois & Rosenfield, 2005).

Generalization: use of a newly learned skill not only with the trainer, but with different persons and in settings outside of the instructional one.

Multiple exemplars: use of a variety of stimuli that are common to the training and natural environments, such as family members or peers (Berler, Gross, & Drabman, 1982).

Naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents: observable situations where a participant might respond in an aggressive manner occurring outside the instructional setting.

Occupational course of study: a diploma bound, modified standard course of study consisting of 15 courses (i.e., English, occupation preparation, social studies, mathematics, science) for a small group of students with disabilities who need a modified curriculum that focuses on independent living and post-school employment (NCDPI, 2010).

Odds ratio: a measure obtained by dividing the risk index of one ethnic or racial group with the risk index of another group, resulting in a comparative index of risk. Ratios in excess of 1.0 are indicative of a higher possibility of placement within a particular category of comparison (Gravois & Rosenfield, 2006).

Parental involvement: includes parental participation in home-based activities relative to their children's education, active parental participation in events occurring within the school setting, and/or parental engagement in communication activities between the school and home settings (Cartledge & Lo, 2006).

Risk index: a measure acquired by dividing the quantity of students of a specific group receiving special education services for a given disability by the total enrollment of that group within the school population (Gravois & Rosenfield, 2006).

Social competence: a term that is an assessment of one's level of accurate performance on social tasks based on the judgment of a social agent (McFall, 1982).

Social skills: the particular behaviors that a person employs from his or her repertoire to perform successfully on specific social tasks that must be taught, understood, and correctly implemented (Gresham et al., 2001).

Social skill instruction: instruction that encompasses the following: (a) supporting skill realization, (b) increasing skill execution, (c) removing or decreasing rival problem behaviors, and (d) contributing to the generalization and maintenance of social skills (Cook et al., 2008).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Poor post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities have been an ongoing issue in special education. State and federal education reforms challenged special education to improve its programs through their promotion of comprehensive strategies aimed at improving post-school outcomes for students with disabilities, especially those from minority backgrounds (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004; Johnson, Stodden, Emanuel, Luecking, & Mack, 2002). The President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2002) recognized that while academic achievement is important for all students, other skills are necessary to facilitate successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. For example, some of the necessary skills are community and peer connection, social skills, and conflict-resolution skills (The President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002). Additionally, parents of children with disabilities reported that effective measures for increasing their participation in school endeavors was lacking and they expressed a desire for open communication with schools in order to increase their involvement in school-related activities (The President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002). Parents' involvement in their children's education can help promote post-school outcomes for their children.

When taken into account the disproportionate representation of minority students, African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities have a higher likelihood of

encountering poor post-school outcomes than their Caucasian peers (National Research Council, 2002; Wagner & Cameto, 2004). A suggested reason for poor post-school outcomes for these students could be the high prevalence of violence and aggression within this population (Lochman & Dodge, 1998), and the correlation between aggression and inadequate social skills (Bastian & Taylor, 1994). A promising intervention aimed at decreasing aggression and increasing prosocial behavior for youth with aggression who exhibit social skill deficits is social skill instruction (Elliott & Gresham, 1993). Additionally, social skill instruction incorporating parental involvement has an increased aptitude of success in environments outside of the learning one (Budd & Itzkowitz, 1990). This review of the literature will address the following three major themes: (a) post-school outcomes for African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities, (b) social skill instruction, and (c) parental involvement.

Post-School Outcomes for African American Youth with Mild Intellectual Disabilities

Disproportionate Representation in Segregated Placements

According to the U. S. Department of Education (2006), only 13.8% of students with intellectual disabilities are likely to spend 80% or more of their school day in the general education classroom. This percentage nearly echoes the number of students with multiple disabilities (13%) who also spend 80% or more of their day with general education peers. For these two student populations, students experience the least amount of participation in the general education environment. The next disability category with limited participation in general education is students who are deaf or blind (18.8%, >80% of time in general education settings) followed by students with autism (29.1%, >80% of

time in general education settings), and finally behavioral disabilities (32.4%, >80% of time in general education settings). In essence, students with intellectual disabilities represent one of the top disability categories that experience limited time spent in the general education classroom.

It has been almost 57 years since the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) when it was determined that separate educational placements for African American students were unconstitutional. However, today, African American students spend more time in segregated classrooms due to their disproportionate representation within the disability categories of intellectual disabilities and emotional disabilities. For example, according to the 28th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (U.S. Department of Education, 2006) nearly 32% of African American students with disabilities spend more than 60% more their day outside of the general education classroom environment compared to their Caucasian (17%) and Hispanic (24.4%) peers. The higher likelihood of their placement in more segregated settings may be influenced by the fact that when odds ratios are examined, African American students are 2.83 times more likely to receive special education and related services for mental retardation (now termed intellectual disabilities) and 2.24 times more likely to receive special education and related services for emotional or behavioral disabilities than children from other racial/ethnic groups (U.S. Department of Education, 2006).

Segregated Placements Contribute to Poor Educational Outcomes

In some sense, a domino effect contributing to poor educational outcomes for African American students begins once they are initially placed in special education

under either the intellectual disability category. Specifically, research showed that students educated in more restrictive settings are more likely to perform below grade level, are less likely to engage in school activities, and are more likely to experience difficulty with social adjustment than their grade level peers (Blackorby et al., 2005).

The Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study (SEELS) is a study commissioned by the Office of Special Education Programs (OESP) of the U. S. Department of Education. Over 11,000 students with disabilities were evaluated over a 6-year period to assess their achievements in key outcome domains during their elementary and middle school years (Blackorby et al., 2005). The key outcomes of the SEELS study identified the following as major domains: (a) school engagement, (b) academic performance, (c) social adjustment, and (d) independence. The *school engagement* domain was examined using both subjective and behavioral dimensions for students' feelings toward school, absenteeism, engaging in classroom activities, and motivation for schooling. The *academic performance* domain was measured through standardized test scores, grades, discrepancies between actual and tested grade levels for math and reading, and grade retention. The *social adjustment* domain was investigated by eliciting information from parents or teachers on performance of social skills, classroom behavior, getting along with teachers/peers at school, existing problem behaviors in the school environment, and social integration. Lastly, the *independence* domain was examined through parent or teacher reports of each student's management of self-care activities, functional cognitive skills, mobility, and self-determination and locus of control.

The SEELS data indicate that in general, students who spend the majority of their time in general education classroom settings tend to have higher scores on achievement

tests, perform closer to grade level than their peers in pull-out settings, experience lower levels of absenteeism, and exhibit higher levels of social adjustment. While the focus of this study was on outcome performance within the four domains across disability categories for elementary and middle school students, some conclusions related to African American youth with disabilities could be drawn taking into account previously addressed information. Since African American students with disabilities are more likely to be served under intellectual disabilities, accordingly they are more likely to receive services in a segregated environment. By receiving services in primarily segregated placements, African American students with intellectual disabilities are at risk for performing lower academically than grade level peers, having more absences, and experiencing more social maladjustment. Additionally, once placed in segregated special education programs, they rarely are moved back into the general education classroom setting as are their Caucasian peers (National Research Council, 2002). Thus, just by nature of being an African American youth with an intellectual disability, outcomes in the secondary or post-school environments look bleak.

Disproportionate Representation in Disciplinary Measures

As discussed earlier, African American youth with intellectual disabilities are at risk for experiencing poor post-school outcomes. In addition to having disproportionate representation in the intellectual and behavioral disability categories and higher likelihood of placement in segregated settings (Skiba, Poloni-Staudinger, Gallini, Simmons, & Feggins-Azziz, 2006), African American students have been found to receive out-of-school suspensions, school expulsions, and office referrals at

disproportionately higher rates than other students (Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002; Wu et al., 1982).

Skiba et al. (2002) conducted a study to investigate the existing disparities between race, gender, and socioeconomic status of 11,001 middle-school students in a large, urban midwestern public school district. The racial composition of the students was African American (56%), Caucasian (42%), Latino (1.2%), Asian-American (0.7%), and Native American (0.1%). An Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used in this study to determine the extent to which disparities existing in discipline by race and gender could be explained by the covariate, free-lunch status for African American and Caucasian students. Statistically significant differences were found for the rate of office referrals for both races, with African American males receiving the most office referrals. Discriminant analyses were used to look at the types of behaviors that were conducive to office referrals by gender and race. Results of the racial analysis revealed differences in the pattern of treatment indicating that Caucasian students were most likely to be referred for reasons such as smoking, vandalism, obscene language, and leaving without permission, whereas African American students were most likely to receive referrals for threat, disrespect, loitering, and excessive noise. The main conclusion derived from this study was that due to the differing patterns of referrals between Caucasian and African American students, it is suggested that African Americans are more likely to be referred due to subjective reasons rather than objective ones.

Mendez and Knoff (2003) also conducted a study to examine racial and gender disparities in the amount of out-of-school suspension and type of infractions. Their study investigated the 12th largest school district in the nation serving 146,000 students, located

within the state of Florida. Of the population of students included in this study, 30% were Caucasian, 12% were Black (e.g., African American, Haitian, or Caribbean), and 9% were Hispanic. Results indicated that Black students were the most likely recipients of suspensions. Black males were twice as likely to receive suspensions than Caucasian males, and Black females were three times as likely to receive suspensions than Caucasian females. At the middle school level in particular, one half of all Black male students and one third of all Black female students had received at least one suspension. Although the overall population of students included only 12% of Black students, they received more than one-third of all suspensions in the areas of threat, battery, fighting, disruptive behavior, inappropriate behavior, sexual harassment, and leaving class or school without permission. When classified into incident categories, it was determined that suspensions for Violence Against Persons increased about 700% from the elementary to middle school levels, although it dropped by two-thirds at the high school level. Even though the reasons for suspension are varied for African American students within this study, results corroborate previous research indicating that African Americans youth receive more suspensions per population than do their Caucasian peers (Skiba et al., 2002; Wu et al., 1982).

It is clear from the research that in school-wide discipline actions there are racial differences between Caucasian and African American student populations regardless of whether or not they have identified disabilities. It is no surprise then that when it comes to the implementation of disciplinary measures under the provisions outlined in IDEA (2004), differences exist here too. Rausch and Skiba (2006) investigated if IDEA (2004) disciplinary removals differed by race within the state of Indiana. The researchers

concluded that African American students with disabilities have higher rates of receiving IDEA (2004) disciplinary action than other students with disabilities. During the 2004-2005 school year, it was determined that almost 3% of African American students with disabilities received IDEA (2004) disciplinary provisions 2.8 times more often than students with other racial backgrounds and disabilities, in addition to receiving suspensions/expulsions over 10 days at a rate 3.4 times higher.

Aggression and Social Skill Deficits May Be Contributing Factors

Although definitive causal factors for elevated suspension rates of African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities are still unclear, research suggests that aggression within this population and lack of appropriate prosocial behavior could play a role (Crick & Dodge 1996; Dodge & Coie, 1987; Hammond & Yung, 1993). Ellickson, Saner, and McGuigan (1997) conducted a study of almost 4,600 youth in high school and found that within the past year 54% had engaged in at least one violent act, 14% reported attacking someone with intent to injure or kill, 13% reported carrying a weapon, and 23% admitted to committing repeated acts of violence with family members or acquaintances. Research on youth violence with urban African American youth in particular indicates that this population is at a far greater risk of being involved in violence than their peers from other racial or ethnic groups. For example, African American males between the ages of 15 and 19 years old are homicide victims at a yearly rate of 50.7 per 100,000 compared to 8.5 for their White male peers, and African American females between the ages of 10 to 19 years old were four times as likely to be victims of homicide than their White female peers (National Center for Health Statistics, 1990). Furthermore, African

American youth from low socioeconomic backgrounds are the group most susceptible to death or injury stemming from violence (Hammond & Yung, 1993).

Throughout the literature, several risk factors have been identified as predictors of violence and aggression in children. Determining factors for aggression include attention deficits (Loeber & Hay, 1997), impulsivity (White, Moffit, Caspi, Bartusch, Needles, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1994), and difficulties in processing social information (Crick & Dodge 1996; Dodge & Coie, 1987). For example, Dodge and Coie (1987) conducted four studies with primarily African American upper elementary age students to examine the social-information-processing mechanisms in chronic aggressive behavior. They demonstrated through these studies, that a child who is unable to interpret social cues appropriately (i.e., interprets a peer's intention as hostile when it is actually benevolent) feels justified in displaying anger and responding aggressively without understanding why others might view their behavior as inappropriate. Thus, in this study African American children with deficits in processing social information (i.e., social skill deficits) would display high rates of aggression during play time with peers and were more likely to be rated by their teachers as highly reactively aggressive within the classroom setting.

Another reason for the visible aggression within youth of African American descent, predominately males, could be attributed to the ways in which they culturally interact with their peers of the same ethnic backgrounds. This cultural interaction with peers may be perceived by teachers in a way that differs from a student's original intent, thus serving as a possible contributor for the high rate of disciplinary referrals for this population of students. For example, while one male student may resolve a conflict in a humorous manner, others may choose to engage in obvious expressions of anger through

exhibition of hypermasculine behaviors (Cassidy & Stevenson, 2005; Spencer, 1999; Swanson, Cunningham, & Spencer, 2003). This behavior may be perceived as noncompliant or acting tough when the youth may not truly be exhibiting insubordinate behaviors or an aggressive attitude (Noguera, 2003). Cartledge and Loe (2001) relayed comparable information about teacher misperceptions of student behaviors due to limited cultural knowledge and how these misperceptions could be interpreted by others as being biased or prejudicial. Misperceptions could then provoke students to escalated levels of aggression or anger. Increased levels of student aggression or anger could in turn promote a sequence of events where teachers increase their punitive efforts trying to control student behavior and students' anger or aggression continues to escalate in an unproductive pattern (Cartledge & Loe, 2001).

Many longitudinal studies have established that children's physical aggression can contribute to poor outcomes later in their adolescent and adult lives such as criminal activity, dropping out of school, substance abuse, and juvenile delinquency (e.g., Broidy et al., 2003; Nagin & Tremblay, 1999). Similar unfortunate outcomes, inclusive of adult mental health deficits, academic underachievement, employment difficulties, and negative peer relationships have been found with students having disabilities, particularly those with emotional or behavioral disorders, who lack appropriate social skills (Cartledge & Milburn, 1995; Elksnin & Elksnin, 1998a; Elksnin & Elksnin, 1998b). The possibility exists that poor outcomes, such as future criminal justice involvement for African American youth with intellectual disabilities, could be ascribed to the relationship between poor social skills and aggression (Lochman & Dodge, 1998). To address the behavioral profiles of African American youth, research shows that social

skill instruction with cultural relevance may provide a means for educators to intervene the social and behavioral needs of these students (Gardner & Miranda, 2001).

Summary

The research on the disproportionate representation of African American youth in the intellectual disability category, segregated settings, and disciplinary measures signifies that these students are at risk of having unsuccessful post-school outcomes. There are a couple of factors that may contribute or amplify the probability of poor post-school outcomes for African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities. Specifically, social skill deficits within this population have the potential to increase aggressive responses and facilitate students' ability to sabotage their future academic and post-school success. In addition, cultural differences may cause African American students to develop social behaviors that are mismatched with their peers and teachers who come from the predominately Caucasian culture. A potential solution to improve the post-school outcomes of African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors is to provide culturally relevant social skill instruction. Culturally relevant social skill instruction can be a positive and practical approach to increase the social competency of African American learners with mild intellectual disabilities and alleviate their predisposition toward aggression. It may also serve to reduce the need for disciplinary action by providing students with the essential skills necessary to engage in positive interactions with peers and school staff.

<div align="center">

Social Skill Instruction

</div>

Social skill instruction is designed to teach desirable social behaviors as alternatives to negative social behaviors to enable students to benefit from appropriate

peer interactions (Moore, Cartledege, & Heckaman, 1995). Social skill instruction has been widely used to help students with disabilities decrease social skill deficits (Gresham, 1992, 1998; Kavale & Forness, 1999; Rutherford, Quinn, & Mathur, 1996). According to Quinn, Kavale, Mathur, Rutherford, and Forness (1999), social skill instruction primarily involves the following: (a) choosing needed social skills, (b) explaining or demonstrating (modeling) the skills, (c) providing guided practice, (d) giving feedback and reinforcement during application of skills, and (e) identifying various social situations wherein the skill might be important.

Effectiveness of Social Skill Instruction and Limitations in Current Literature

While the theoretical approaches to social skill training may differ, the common theme that ties all social skill instruction programs together is the teaching of certain interpersonal skills to facilitate the success of students in their social environments (Cook et al., 2008). Gresham et al. (2001) examined the existing literature within the area of social skill instruction for students with disabilities to determine if social skill instruction has positive effects on the acquisition, performance, and generalization of appropriate social behaviors; reduction of competing problem behaviors; and enrichment of interpersonal relationships with adults and peers. Based on the quantitative and narrative reviews of the social skill instruction literature, Gresham et al. found that social skill instruction could result in both small and large effects on the social competence of participants.

Cook et al. (2008) conducted a review and analysis of the meta-analytic literature of social skill instruction for secondary students with emotional and behavioral disorders. The goal of their analysis was to determine if social skill instruction was an effective

intervention for this population of students. The authors found a moderate effect size ($r =$ .32) for social skill instruction for secondary students with emotional and behavioral disorders across five meta-analyses. The proportion of variance accounted for by social skill instruction for secondary students with emotional and behavioral disorders is equivalent to increasing the success rate of participants from 34% to 66%. Basically, the authors contend that two thirds of students with emotional and behavioral disorders receiving social skill instruction would improve compared to one third of students with emotional or behavioral disorders who did not receive social skill instruction.

Gresham, Cook, Crews, and Kern (2004) conducted a similar analysis of the current literature in social skill instruction for children and youth with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders with results comparable to those obtained by Cook et al. (2008). Gresham et al. (2004) found a moderate effect size ($r = .29$) for participants receiving social skill instruction compared to those not receiving social skill instruction. Results demonstrated that social skill instruction was an effective intervention for children and youth with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders in five of the six meta-analyses reviewed.

Although researchers acknowledged that there could be many reasons for variances in the effects of social skill instruction, Gresham at al. (2001) provided five potential explanations for differences as follows: (a) population characteristics, (b) corresponding treatments to the type of social skill deficit, (c) treatment integrity issues, (d) evaluation issues, and (e) generalization issues. The authors recommended that in order to alleviate low effect sizes, future researchers should try to determine skill deficits through functional assessments to better match instruction to skill deficits. Specifically,

before implementing social skill instruction, an interventionist should conduct a

functional assessment to identify the social skills the participants currently have, social

skills that are lacking within the participants' repertoires, and social skills that are crucial

to the participants' education (Elliott & Gresham, 1991). The possibility exists for the

successful incorporation of functional assessments prior to, during, and following social

skill instruction for secondary learners. Since secondary learners with mild intellectual

disabilities are usually more aware of their environments and in possession of more

advanced conversational skills than their elementary counterparts, it would be feasible for

secondary students to discuss their own social skill strengths and deficits in addition to

providing feedback to themselves and others during and following social skill instruction.

Students could address the functional aspect of using prosocial replacement behaviors for

current inappropriate aggression-related social behaviors. Gresham et al. (2001) further

expressed the need for more treatment or procedural fidelity in addition to accurate

assessment of student skill performance. The authors found little verification in the meta-

analyses that social skill instruction interventions were implemented as intended or

planned. Lastly, Gresham et al. addressed the need for social skills taught to exhibit the

propensity for generalization to settings other than the instructional one, and maintain

over time.

Generalization of Social Skill Instruction

One of the most persistent weaknesses within the social skill instruction literature

has consistently been the inability of students to generalize skills taught in therapeutic

settings to other settings, and to demonstrate maintenance over time (Gresham, 1994,

1998; Gresham et al., 2001). As Gresham (1998) explained, social skills are usually

taught to small groups of four to six children in pull-out settings where the acquisition

and performance of skills learned is done in artificial situations rather than naturally

occurring ones. He recommends that instruction should extend to other settings and with

other persons, such as within natural environments (e.g., school, home, community),

since opportunities for incidental learning are more likely to exist there. Another way to

facilitate generalization of social skills to natural settings for students with disabilities is

through multiple exemplar training (Berler et al., 1982; Bornstein et al., 1980; Lancioni,

1982). By providing and reinforcing opportunities for students to practice social skills

learned in other settings and with people in their natural environments, the use of social

skills learned will continue long after instruction has ceased.

Some social skill instruction studies have sought to purposely include features for

increasing generalization (Blackbourn, 1989; Foxx et al., 1991; Herring & Northup,

1998). For example, Foxx et al. (1991) used a multiple baseline across two groups design

to assess generalization effects of social skills taught to six inpatient adolescent males

with emotional disabilities. The adolescents were taught 12 social skill situations falling

within six skill areas (i.e., criticism, compliments, politeness, social confrontation, social

interaction, questions/answers) prior to participation in a social skill instruction game.

The social skill instruction game consisted of the commercially available board game

Sorry and the *Stacking the Deck* social skills training program (Foxx & McMorrow, 1983

as cited in Foxx et al., 1991). Each adolescent randomly chose cards asking them to

respond to given situations using social skills previously taught over the course of the

game. The instructor provided feedback for correct/incorrect exhibition of the social skill

with peers (i.e., during role-play situations). In order to approximate a progression of

natural social interactions with adults, a generalization simulation was incorporated into the study. Two confederates (i.e., hospital employees unknown to participants) adhered to a script consisting of 24 novel social scenarios inclusive of one similar to the training ones and one different from the training scenarios for each actor/reactor component from the six skill areas. Results indicated that the participants increased their post-simulation means over the pre-simulation mean by 8%. Additionally, three of the six participants demonstrated a strong generalization effect to new situations.

In another study, Herring and Northup (1998) examined the effects of a group-oriented program on promoting generalization of social skill instruction. The participant was an 8 year-old male student with an emotional and behavioral disability who was included in the general education classroom. Four general education students were chosen to be peer tutors. Instruction occurred across assorted school settings and was evaluated through a multiple baseline across settings and behaviors with reversals design. Overall, the student experienced a decrease following termination of all treatment components in complaining/whining (e.g., decreased from 11 to 8 in small group, from 6 to 4 during recess, and from 5 to 1 in the classroom) and an increase in appropriate tone of voice (e.g., increased from 1 to 8 in small group, from 1 to 4 during recess, and from 2 to 3 in the classroom). Results supported that the use of peer mediated strategies and a group contingency can promote the generalization of social skills.

Lastly, using a modified multiple baseline of behavior across four settings design, Blackbourn (1989) examined the effects of social skill instruction delivered over 12 weeks on the generalization of social skills learned into new settings. Participants were four Caucasian elementary school children with learning disabilities with average to

above average intelligence. Training occurred in the students' self-contained classroom and consisted of discussion of the skill, verbal rehearsal, consequences for appropriate usage, and guided practice. Once the students were able to use the skills taught proficiently, the researcher sought to establish the social skills in other settings. Opportunities for practice and reinforcement of the targeted skills were initiated through use of multiple exemplars. Prompts were delivered in new environments by other teachers and parents. Results demonstrated that the trainings of multiple exemplars through systematic attention and prompts were a feasible way of nurturing social skill generalization. Each participant was able to adapt usage of the targeted social skill to both novel environments and situations.

Social Skill Instruction for Reducing Aggression

Many successful treatments exist in the literature for using social skills as a preventative strategy for anger and aggression (e.g., Bullis et al., 2001; Christopher et al., 1993; Elliott & Gresham, 1993; Gresham, 1985; Maddern et al., 2004). Elder, Edelstein, and Narick (1979) conducted one of the first studies on modifying aggression in adolescents through social skill instruction. All four of the participants (three males and one female) had data-based and anecdotal histories of physically and verbally aggressive behaviors. In this multiple baseline across three behavior classes design, the four adolescents were taught the targeted social skills of requesting behavior change, responding to negative communications, and appropriate means of interrupting in a small group setting 4 days per week for 45 min each session. The intervention consisted of the instructor providing instructions, modeling, and feedback on correct role play of each target behavior. Event recording was used during direct observations of the target

behaviors in addition to the use of a 5-point scale to rate each occurrence using specific criteria. Further, a direct observation generalization measure was used consisting of the number of times participants received time-out for inappropriate instances of target behaviors and the amount of token economy fines. Results indicated that the social skill instruction increased the adolescents' socially appropriate behavior and decreased aggressive responses during role-plays, in addition to generalizing to their day room and lunchroom settings.

A few social skill instruction programs (e.g., *ASSET*, *Skillstreaming*, *and Walker Social Skills Curriculum*) were developed exclusively for the sole function of teaching youth with aggression to express anger appropriately through exhibition of prosocial behavior (Hazel, Schumaker, Sherman, & Sheldon-Wildgen, 1981; Goldstein, 1973; Walker et al., 1988). One all-encompassing program, *Aggression Replacement Training* (*ART*) developed by Goldstein, Glick, and Gibbs (1998) incorporates *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (Goldstein, 1973; Goldstein, McGinnis, Sprafkin, Gershaw, & Klein, 1997) social skill instruction curriculum for adolescents who are chronically aggressive, alongside Anger Control Training (Feindler & Ecton, 1986) and Moral Reasoning Training (Kohlberg, 1984). The *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (Goldstein, 1973; Goldstein et al., 1997) social skill curriculum has been found effective with youth who are chronically aggressive (e.g., Coleman, Pfeiffer, & Oakland, 1992; Goldstein & Glick, 1994); however, it is also the only curriculum commercially available for use with secondary students.

Goldstein and Glick (1994) evaluated the effectiveness of *Aggression Replacement Training* (*ART*) with two studies conducted with incarcerated juvenile

offenders. The first study was conducted at a New York State youth facility with 60

youths incarcerated for crimes such as drug abuse, burglary, or unarmed robbery.

Twenty-four youth received the 10-week *ART* program, 24 were assigned to a no-*ART*

brief instruction control group, and 12 received no treatment. The *ART* curriculum

consisted of the following: (a) *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (i.e., modeling of behaviors,

role-playing, providing performance feedback, and transfer training), (b) Moral

Reasoning Training (exposing participants to moral dilemmas), and (c) Anger Control

Training (i.e., recognizing triggers, identifying cues, using reminders, using reducers, and

employing self-evaluation). Multiple dependent measures were used to determine the

effectiveness of the training, including (a) skill acquisition, (b) percentage of skill transfer

to novel situations similar to those taught, (c) percentage of skill transfer to novel

situations dissimilar to those taught, (d) number of naturally occurring behavior incidents

to which skill is applied, and (e) rate of decrease in impulsivity. Results demonstrated

that youths receiving the *ART* program were able to acquire and transfer 4 of the 10

Skillstreaming skills appropriately (i.e., preparing for a stressful situation, dealing with

group anger, expressing a complaint, and responding to anger). When staff at the facility

completed follow-up rating measures blindly for all youth released, it was discovered that

in four of the six areas evaluated (i.e., overall, peer, home/family, and legal) the youth

received ratings of being at in-community functioning (i.e., to live or work

independently) or significantly superior than youth who did not receive the *ART* program.

A second study on the *ART* program by Goldstein and Glick (1994) replicated and

extended the findings of the first. Three juvenile male delinquents, between the ages of

13 to 21 years old, acquired and transferred 5 out of 10 *Skillstreaming* skills correctly.

Another study that adapted the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (Goldstein, 1973; Goldstein et al., 1997) social skill curriculum for instruction was conducted by Tse, Strulovitch, Tagalakis, Meng, and Fombonne (2007). These authors used a pre-test/post-test group design with 46 middle and high school age students (*M* = 14.6) with high-functioning autism or Asperger syndrome. Each group of 7-8 adolescents was taught during a weekly 1 ½-hour session using a combination of psychoeducational and experiential methods to facilitate acquisition of social skills through primarily role play over a 12-week period. Dependent measures were three parent questionnaires, including (a) the *Social Responsiveness Scale* (*SRS*) that evaluated social competence (i.e., treatment effectiveness), (b) the *Aberrant Behavior Checklist* (*ABC*) that measured problem behaviors for persons with developmental disabilities, and (c) the *Nisonger Child Behavior Rating Form* (*N-CBRF*) that assessed behavioral and emotional difficulties of children and adolescents with developmental disabilities.

Results indicated that no significant differences between age or gender existed on the dependent measures. For adolescents whose parents returned feedback surveys (n < 33), improvement was seen on the *ABC* subscales of "Irritability" (mean difference 22.41 vs. 3.38, *p* = .006) and "Hyperactivity" (mean difference 6.82 vs. 0.43, *p* = .003). In the area of social competence, statistically significant pre- to post-test differences were seen on 6 of the 12 outcome measures (i.e., *SRS* Total, Social Awareness, Social Cognition, Social Motivation, DSM Social Aspects, and *N-CBRF* Positive Social Total). For the area of problem behaviors, statistically significant improvements were seen on 5 of the 12 outcome measures (i.e., *N-CBRF* Problem Behavior Total, Conduct Problems, Insecure/Anxious, Self-Injure/Stereotypic, Self-Isolated/Ritualistic, and Overly

Sensitive). The authors stated that there were a few limitations of this study including the following: (a) small sample size, (b) use of parent only measures, (c) the group program was not standardized, so program differences between groups existed, and (d) interventionists were not trained to work with this specific population although they had prior experience in teaching social skills. An inherent problem that arose after implementation of this study is that due to the non-standardized techniques for delivering social skill instruction across groups, it is impossible to replicate this study. Additionally, the use of multiple exemplars would be necessary for generalization of social skills learned using the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (Goldstein, 1973; Goldstein et al., 1997) program.

Social Skill Instruction Studies with African American Youth as Primary Participants

Even though a variety of social skill instruction programs exist to teach youth with aggression to express anger appropriately through exhibition of prosocial behavior, much of the research has focused on the Caucasian population. Few social skill instruction studies have been conducted with African American youth, especially at a secondary level. Even fewer social skill instruction studies exist that were conducted with African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities. According to Banks, Hogue, Timberlake, and Liddle (1996) only a small number of studies pertaining to social skill instruction have focused on reducing cognitive or social skill deficits related to aggression, with only a scant amount focusing on African American youth.

Presley and Hughes (2000) conducted one of the few studies in the high school setting that expressly focused on the effects of teaching primarily African American

students social skills. Four students with emotional or behavioral disabilities, three African American males and one Caucasian female, were chosen for participation in this multiple baseline across participants design study. The intervention consisted of the use of the *Triple A* Strategy (ASSESS, AMEND, ACT) adapted from the *Walker Social Skills Curriculum* (Walker et al., 1988, as cited in Presley & Hughes, 2000) to express anger appropriately taught by the selected general education peers through peer-mediated direct instruction and role playing activities. The following four dependent variables were measured: (a) number of correctly performed steps of the *Triple A* strategy, (b) participant's volume of voice, (c) participant's nonverbal affect, and (d) occurrence of appropriate and inappropriate responses to naturally occurring anger-inducing situations in the classroom. Results demonstrated that all students were able to show an increase in the number of steps of the anger management strategy they performed accurately in given role-play scenarios with their general education peers. A limitation of this study was that the generalization data were difficult to measure. The authors explained that this was due to the infrequent opportunity for naturally occurring aggression inducing situations. Nevertheless, there was some indication of behavioral change within the academic setting, demonstrating nominal use of steps taught (3 or less) in reaction to naturally occurring anger provoking situations.

Hammond and Yung (1991) examined the impact of a small-group, social skill instruction program on the social skill acquisition of primarily at-risk African American adolescents. Participants in this study were between the ages of 12 and 15 years old with 70% male and 30% female. A total of 57 youth completed the training in small groups of 10-12; however, they only assessed the outcomes for a small sample consisting of 15

participants. Of the 15 participants, 14 were African American and one was Caucasian. A control group of 13 students who did not receive the intervention were chosen for comparison. The social skill intervention utilized in this study was the *Positive Adolescents Choices Training* (*PACT*), a social skill based violence prevention training program adapted from the *ASSET* social skill instruction curriculum (Hazel et al., 1981, as cited by Hammond & Yung, 1991) and targeted for at-risk African American adolescents. Training was conducted in a public school setting during the school day twice weekly for 50 min per session. Youth received *PACT* in six skill areas: resisting peer pressure, negotiating, giving positive feedback, giving negative feedback, accepting negative feedback, and solving problems. Skills were introduced to participants through videotape vignettes. After watching the vignettes, students participated in role play activities together which were videotaped. The purpose of videotaping participants was that it allowed them to see themselves and peers as models who demonstrated appropriate behavior during social conflict.

According to observers, youth who participated in the *PACT* social skill instruction training demonstrated improvement in all target areas, in addition to gains in conversation skills and ability to follow directions. Results also demonstrated that participants made the greatest gains in areas with larger skill deficits and the least gains in areas in which they demonstrated strength prior to the intervention. The three skill areas of greatest gains were giving negative feedback, problem-solving, and resisting peer pressure. The average participant gain was 33.5% across all areas. Following training, school records showed that none of the participants received suspension or expulsions for violence. For the comparison group of 13 students not receiving the

intervention, there were two expulsions, six in-school suspensions, and one out-of-school suspension associated with violence.

While few social skill instruction studies exist with African American students as primary participants, it is even rarer to find studies that incorporate a culturally responsive curriculum. According to Cartledge, Singh, and Gibson (2008), social skill instruction needs to mirror the experiences and lifestyle of a culturally diverse learner in order to be culturally relevant to them (i.e., include culturally specific models, use scenarios that reflect learner's environment, include socially valid skills). In addition, the persons providing social skill instruction need to be knowledgeable about various cultural differences and be able to distinguish between social skill deficits and cultural differences (Cartledge et al., 2008).

Lo, Mustian, Brophy, and White (2011) conducted one of the few studies examining the efficacy of culturally responsive social skill instruction studies on the social competence of African American males with or at risk for mild disabilities. In this multiple probe across participants design study, participants were in the third through fifth grades. Students received peer-mediated culturally relevant social skill instruction adapted from the *Working Together* social skill curriculum (Cartledge & Kleefeld, 1994, as cited in Lo et al., 2011) from their same grade peers. Social skill instruction for each targeted skill was delivered over the course of three lessons using Microsoft PowerPoint© on a laptop computer. Each lesson comprised a folk story (i.e., from different countries in the world) aligned with the targeted social skill, discussion questions related to the folk story, skills steps, practice scenarios, and application of the skill to real-life situations. Results demonstrated that all participants (i.e., tutors and

tutees) improved their response accuracy on specific classroom-based and aggression-resolution social skill knowledge probes for targeted social skills taught by their peers. Moreover, direct observation data indicate that participants exhibited decreased levels of inappropriate classroom behaviors during social skill instruction.

A second study by Banks et al. (1996) investigated the effectiveness of two different social skill instruction curricula focusing on problem solving, anger management, and conflict resolution for 64 low-income, urban African American children and youth. The sample was divided in two groups. One group received a curriculum that was Afrocentric (i.e., incorporated discussion of African American History, cultural experiences, and value system based on seven principles of African American culture identified) and the other group received a curriculum that was culturally responsive but not Afrocentric. The results of this study demonstrated that while both social skill curricula were effective in reducing participants' anger and inducing their exhibition of more controlled behaviors during potentially problematic situations, neither curriculum was inherently better than the other.

An additional study by Leff et al. (2009) examined the efficacy of a culturally responsive social problem solving and social skill intervention for 35 third- through fifth-grade African American girls identified with relational aggression (i.e., gossiping, threatening to withdraw friendships) from six experimental and five control classrooms. The intervention consisted of 20 sessions provided for 30 min biweekly divided into the following five components: (a) types/locations of friendship-making difficulties, (b) physiological arousal and calming strategies, (c) evaluating responses and intentions, (d) applying strategies to gossip and peer entry situations, and (e) reviewing. Groups

contained 6-10 girls who were either relational aggressors or positive role models. Each lesson utilized culturally relevant material such as cartoons and video illustrations with African American girls. Results of this study demonstrate that a culturally relevant social skill intervention has the potential for effectiveness with urban African American girls with high levels of relational aggression. In addition, high rates of program acceptability and low rates of attrition suggest that this type of curriculum was meaningful and engaging to participants.

Summary

Studies examining the use of social skill instruction in decreasing aggression and promoting the prosocial behavior of African American students have been limited, especially in the high school setting for students with mild intellectual disabilities. An effective social skill instruction curriculum aimed at preventing violence within African American youth is *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (Goldstein, 1973; Goldstein et al., 1997). Even though social skill instruction programs have demonstrated success in decreasing aggression related behaviors in African American youth and increasing prosocial ones, Gresham et al. (2001) described several flaws that exist within the literature for successful implementation of social skill instruction.

One of the consistent weaknesses Gresham et al. (2001) provided was the difficulty in getting students to generalize skills taught over a variety of settings and to maintain these skills over time. A recommendation provided by researchers is that a structured and standardized curriculum should be utilized to ensure consistency throughout implementation of the social skill instruction program. Another suggestion offered during the implementation of future studies is to incorporate the use of multiple

exemplars (e.g., across different settings, across different persons, using variations in role-play situations). Culturally relevant social skill instruction should also be used to enable students to relate to the social skills being taught in a culturally relative manner. Lastly, the use of function based assessments of participants' social skill strengths and needs are recommended in order to develop social skill instruction programs that are socially valid and increase the probability for successful implementation.

<div align="center">**Parental Involvement**</div>

According to a recent literature review on social skill instruction for students with disabilities, an element of effective social skill instruction was to involve parents in the implementation of the intervention by providing parents with certain responsibilities to support their child in practicing social skills taught in a therapeutic setting within the home environment (Denning, 2007). While many studies use peers to facilitate student generalization of social skills learned due to the increasingly significant role of peer influence and approval, parental influence still has a notable impact (Quinn et al., 1995; Ruffalo & Elliott, 1997).

Parental Involvement in the Education of African American Youth

Parental participation in their child's education may be prognostic of academic success; and interventions provided within schools have optimistic results with parental involvement (Jimerson et al., 2006; Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). Specifically, home-school collaboration is related to better academic outcomes for children (Christenson et al., 1992; Epstein, 1992). A strong correlation exists between parental participation and student achievement, accountability, attendance, social skills, and behaviors (Bloom, 2001; McKay et al., 2003; Pena, 2000; Thompson, 2003). Furthermore, to increase the

educational success of students, parents must be crucial participants; and parents,

teachers, and youth must all work together (Pryor, 1995). Even though there are mutual

benefits for children and parents, Smith, Krohn, Chu, and Best (2005) demonstrated that

African American parents still remain minimally involved in their children's education

regardless of whether their child receives general or special education services. A way for

schools to help empower parents within their children's education is to develop open and

proactive communication systems between African American families and the school

(DeCastro-Ambrosetti & Cho, 2005).

Due to the lack of parental involvement in the education of their African

American children, it is not surprising that much of the literature surrounding this area

has been with this specific population. Cox (2005) identified and analyzed 18 empirical

studies conducted in the United States involving interventions using home-school

collaboration as a component. The majority of the almost 9,000 students (aged 4 to 16

years) investigated were at risk for mild disabilities or experienced delays in their

academic learning, and experienced social difficulties. More than half of the studies

reporting socioeconomic status (SES) of participants included those from mainly low

SES environments, the majority of which were African Americans (67%).

Key methodological features of the studies were evaluated by Cox (2005) to

determine external validity. The majority of studies showed strong or promising evidence

of measurement quality; however, few discussed validity of measures used and only one-

third noted reliability of results. About 33% and 50% of the studies showed strong and

promising evidence for control group in group designs or quality of baseline in single-

subject designs, respectively. None of the studies were able to verify the need of all

intervention components, thus none received a rating of strong evidence in this area. With regard to procedural fidelity, 22% showed strong evidence and 27% showed promising evidence. The vast majority of the studies (72%) were conducted in the public school environment, and a few of the studies were replications of previous research. Most studies did not meet the criterion for showing statistical evidence of change on outcome measures (i.e., at least 75% of total measure for each key construct). Interventions showing the smallest effect sizes tended to be those involving multiple components or were school-wide interventions. The ones that showed the greatest effect sizes were ones involving daily home and school communication (e.g., daily report cards, school-to-home notes). Results indicated that interventions implemented where school personnel and parents had a two-way exchange of information or worked together were most successful.

Parent Involvement in Social Skill Instruction for African American Youth

Based on the current research, it is highly probable that by involving parents in a social skill instruction program, their children might fare better in the areas of acquisition and generalization of skills taught within the academic setting. Schools may be able to increase students' ability to generalize social skills to other settings by involving parents in the intervention process (Armstrong & McPherson, 1991; Budd & Itzkowitz, 1990) in order to prompt their children to practice these skills and reinforce skill demonstration in the home environment (Siperstein & Bak, 1988). Despite that few studies had direct involvement of parents in choosing social skills to be taught (Haager & Vaughn, 1995), research indicates that parents and educators perceive social skills as vital curricular area (Baumgart, Filler, & Askvig, 1991).

Involvement of parents as participants in social skill interventions in some capacity,

or as instructors is frequently missing (Budd, 1985). Of the 18 studies currently identified as having some level of parental participation as a component of the social skill instruction package, only nine included African American students as participants. Seven of those eight studies investigated students at the elementary level (i.e., Christian, 2005; DeRosier & Gilliom, 2007; Fraser, Day, Galinsky, Hodges, & Smokowski, 2004; Fraser et al., 2005; Middleton & Cartledge, 1995; Pfiffner & McBurnett, 1997; Townsend, 1994). For example, DeRosier and Gilliom (2007) evaluated the effects of the *Parent Guide for Social Skills GRoup INtervention* (*S.S.GRIN-PG*) compared to the effects of the *Social Skills GRoup INtervention* (*S.S. GRIN*) on 59 elementary general education students (93% White and 7% African American) experiencing socio-emotional problems. The parent and child versions of this social skill intervention were manualized, highly structured programs consisting of session scripts and activities focused on decreasing negative social behaviors and increasing prosocial behaviors. Participants were assigned to one of three groups (i.e., parent social skill instruction, parent plus parallel child social skill instruction, or no-intervention control). Although results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between treatment groups on outcome measures, it was shown that by having the parents learn social skills, they were given the skills to teach these to their children as effectively as the interventionists.

Fraser et al. (2004) investigated the effects of a multicomponent social skill and family communication/problem solving program using a treatment or control group design on 86 children with conduct problems (approximately 85% African American and 15% White) ranging in age from 6 to 12 years. Statistically significant results were observed for the treatment group participants as they received higher teacher ratings than

the control group in the areas of engaging in prosocial behavior and social contact with peers. Children receiving the intervention were also rated as having better skills for controlling their tempers, calming down when excited, and expressing their feelings in an appropriate manner. A significant limitation of this study was that the design did not include a child-only intervention group, so researchers were unable to differentiate if parent involvement, social skill instruction, or a combination of the both attributed to student gains on outcome measures.

Townsend (1994) examined the effect of the *Parent and Child Training Strategies* (*PACTS*) on the acquisition and performance of appropriate social skills for six upper elementary (i.e., 4th, 5th, 6th grade) students at risk for school failure evenly distributed as White, Black or Hispanic. Parents implemented each *PACTS* lesson by using the following teaching format: (a) model skill, (b) provide practice opportunities, (c) evaluate student performance, (d) use an error-correction procedure to provide feedback, and (e) provide social reinforcement. Utilizing curriculum based assessments and role-play scenarios, Townsend determined that through parental involvement within the intervention, participating students were able to perform at a level consistent with normally achieving peers.

Christian (2005) conducted a study that explored the effects of parent-teacher collaboration on the behavioral performance of three kindergarten and first grade students. In this multiple baseline across behaviors design, teachers and parents collaborated to implement daily lesson plans using the *HOPE* social skill curriculum (i.e., What Happened, What are some Other things that could be done, Pick one, and Encourage it). Materials consisted of three dolls representing the three problem behaviors

to be addressed (i.e., following directions, listening without interruptions, remain in assigned area/sitting in seat), nine stories relative to behaviors addressed, and cards that outlined social skill steps provided in the stories. Each doll represented a student with a social skill deficit that interfered with its ability to conform to classroom rules and expectations. Social skill lesson instruction was provided by the students' classroom teacher 3 days per week (i.e., Mon, Wed, Fri) in the school environment and by their parents two nights per week (i.e., Tues, Thurs) in the home environment. Results demonstrated the efficacy of parent-teacher collaboration in teaching social skills to African American elementary aged students with challenging behaviors using social stories and decreasing their exhibition of targeted behaviors.

Pfiffner and McBurnett (1997) investigated the impact of brief social skill instruction with activities provided by parents to enhance social skill acquisition and performance of 27 elementary age students with other health impairment. Only one participant was an African American student. Researchers demonstrated that this specific social skill instruction led to gains in the participants' acquisition of social skill knowledge, and to statistically significant improvements, as reported by the parents, in the social interaction and home behaviors of their children. Improvement was maintained over a period of about 3-4 months after termination of the intervention; however, the magnitude of treatment effects did diminish from post-treatment to follow-up.

The treatment/control group design study by Fraser et al. (2005) was conducted to determine the effects of social skill instruction with parental involvement on the social competence and aggressive behavior of 548 third-grade students in the general education classroom with 20% identified as African American. The social skill instruction

intervention in this study, the *MC Program*, consisted of activities to help students build social relationships and work collaboratively with peers in the classroom and other settings. It was designed to increase contact with prosocial peers, increase social competence, and decrease peer rejection. In order to increase generalization to home environment, parents received newsletters that described social skills taught and provided activities to practice skills with their children. Parents were also invited to attend five 1.5-hour information sessions and 28% of the children in the study had parents who participated in a minimum of one family night session. Results supported the research hypotheses suggesting that children in the two intervention conditions would show decreased aggression and increased social competence.

Finally, Middleton and Cartledge (1995) conducted the only study with an entirely African American student population who exhibited aggressive behaviors, ranging in age from 6 to 9 years. They evaluated the effects of social skill instruction on the aggression of five elementary students. The *Taking Part: Introducing Social Skills* (Cartledge & Kleefield, 1991, as cited in Middleton & Cartledge, 1995) consisted of modeling, role-playing, corrective feedback, parental involvement, and differential reinforcement of alternative or incompatible behaviors. The intervention was administered by the researchers in an urban public elementary school for eight 30-min sessions over a period of 10 days. Parents received training in a 1 1/2 hour session inclusive of discussions and demonstrations on social skills training, importance their children's prosocial development, and parental influence on child behavior. Parents received notes following each social skill lesson to enable them to discuss skills with their children, provide opportunities for demonstration, and provide feedback. Social skill instruction provided

at school in combination with parent participation in activities and reinforcement within the home environment reduced the aggressive behaviors of four out of the five participants.

Of the 18 studies incorporating parental involvement in a social skill intervention, only two had participants of African American descent at the middle or high school levels. Harrell, Mercer, and DeRosier (2009) investigated the impact of a social skill instruction intervention package with a parental component on social relationships, behavior, and emotional functioning of youth. Students ranged in age from 13 to 16 years old (median age was 14.2) and were experiencing social relationship problems. The racial composition of participants was 79% Caucasian, 13.5% African American, 1.4% Hispanic, 2.7% Asian, and 1.4% Hawaiian. A pre-test/post-test group design was utilized and participants were randomly assigned to a treatment or wait-list control group. The social skill instruction consisted of didactic instruction combined with physical activities (e.g., hands-on, modeling, role playing). Parents participated in 4 out of the 12 group sessions with their children on topics such as goals and personal and family action plans as well as communication, cooperation, and perspective taking. In addition, parents provided supplementary activities within the home environment. Statistically significant differences were found in global self-concept (B=.58, p< .01), social self-efficacy (B=.20, p< .05) and internalizing behavior (B= –.14, p< .05). Results supported that this social skill instruction package had a positive impact on the emotional and social functioning of youth experiencing social relationship difficulties.

The second study, conducted by Laugeson, Frankel, Mogil, and Dillion (2009), examined the effects of a parent-assisted social skill instruction intervention on

increasing social skills and friendships of high school students with disabilities. The majority of the participants were identified as either having Asperger's Syndrome or Pervasive Developmental Disorder. Fourteen of the participants were Caucasian, six were Hispanic/Latino, three were African American, three were Middle-Eastern, and three were from mixed ethnicities. A pre-test/post-test group design was utilized. Random assignment of participants included 17 in a treatment group and 16 in a delayed treatment control group. Data for both groups were collected prior to the implementation of the intervention and at the end of the intervention (i.e., week 12). The delayed treatment control group did not receive the intervention until week 13 and data collected during the time this group received the intervention were not presented. The social skill instruction intervention occurred once per week for 90 min for a total of 12 sessions. Teens and parents attended concurrent sessions separately, where they received instruction on the main components of making and keeping friends. Supplemental homework activities were monitored by parents who provided support and reiteration of skills as needed. The treatment group had statistically significant gains on the *Test of Adolescent Social Skills Knowledge* (*TASSK*) in knowledge of social skills (q_3=17.76, $p<$ .01) and on parent rated social skills (q_2=7.34, $p<$ .01). The treatment group also showed improvement of 4 of 12 outcome measures (knowledge of rules of social etiquette in making/keeping friends, frequency of hosted get togethers, quality of friendships, and teens' overall level of social skills). This social skill instruction intervention package was effective in increasing treatment participants' knowledge of social etiquette with regard to making and keeping friends, increasing their frequency of get-togethers with peers, and increasing their

quality of friendships. On the contrary, the delayed treatment control group did not make statistically significant gains

Although the two previous studies including secondary level African American students show promise, there are a few limitations that need to be addressed in future studies. First, bias exists in one of the dependent variables, parent outcome. The researchers hypothesized that the parents might have been biased due to their participation in the intervention. A multimodal method of assessment needs to be utilized capturing data from parents, teachers, and students. Second, maintenance data were not collected following termination of the interventions. Third, more comprehensive demographic data need to be collected, especially regarding students' diagnosed disabilities. Finally, studies need to be conducted using evaluation methods that rule out non-specific treatment effects (e.g., effects that could be due to attention received during the intervention).

Summary

Researchers have expressed the need for parental involvement in the schools in order to facilitate academic success of students, especially those from African American backgrounds. Parent collaboration has been associated with better educational outcomes in addition to increasing favorable results of interventions implemented within a school setting (Christenson et al., 1992; Epstein, 1992; Jimerson et al., 2006; Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). Social skill instruction is a need for many students with mild intellectual disabilities; and having parental involvement as a component can help generalize skills learned to settings other than the therapeutic one. Even though much of the literature within special education revolves around the issue of disproportionality with the African

American population, it is surprising that very few social skills studies on aggression have been done with these students at the secondary level. Additionally, only 9 out of 18 studies in the area of parent collaboration included African American students.

Summary of Literature Review

Poor post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities continue to be an ongoing trend despite federal legislation mandating that schools make the necessary changes to improve outcomes for their students, especially those with disabilities (IDEA, 2004; Johnson et al., 2002; NCLB, 2001). When taking the disproportionate representation of African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities into account, it is found that this population has a greater probability of encountering poor post-school outcomes than their Caucasian counterparts (National Research Council, 2002; Wagner & Cameto, 2004). A contributing factor to poor post-school outcomes for African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities could be attributed to higher levels of aggression that exist within this population and a correlation between aggression and poor social skills (Bastian & Taylor, 1994; Lochman & Dodge, 1998). Another contributing factor could be that they are placed in more segregated placements due to cultural bias existing during the placement process (Arnold & Lassmann, 2003). These segregated placements may further inhibit their social growth and development.

A promising intervention that can increase prosocial behavior and decrease the poor social skills of students with intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors is social skill instruction. Social skill instruction has been used frequently to help students with intellectual disabilities remediate their social skill deficits (Gresham, 1992, 1998; Kavale & Forness, 1999; Rutherford et al., 1996). Moreover, research suggests that social

skill instruction may help to reinforce the social skills of African American students who already receive special education services (Gardner & Miranda, 2001).

Gresham et al. (2001) identified consistent weaknesses in the social skill instruction literature including generalization issues and low effects sizes resulting from a mismatch between treatments and social skill deficits. One way to help students generalize social skills to other settings is to incorporate the use of multiple exemplars (e.g., practice skills in multiple settings and with a variety of people). Parents, for example, would be able to help students learn social skills with people and places that differ from the academic environment. This idea is supported by research because a strong correlation exists between parental participation and student achievement, accountability, attendance, and social skills (Bloom, 2001; McKay et al., 2003; Pena, 2000; Thompson, 2003). In order to counter low effect sizes that could be caused by treatments not aligned to social skill deficits, Elliott and Gresham (1991) recommended that prior to formal social skill instruction, interventionists should conduct assessments to identify social skills participants currently possess, social skills that are lacking within participants' repertoires, and social skills integral to the participants' education. Additionally, the social skill instruction intervention should match students' acquisition or performance deficits by attending to the competing behaviors, behavioral functions, and alternative replacement behaviors (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006).

Even though it has been noted that African American youth tend to be more likely to experience aggression and social skill deficits than their Caucasian peers, there is little research with this population on social skill instruction with parental involvement. In this current literature review, 18 studies were found with only nine having been conducted on

students who were African American. Of these nine studies, only two were conducted within the secondary setting. It is even more difficult to find research studies that examine the efficacy of culturally responsive social skill instruction with African American youth. Few studies using a culturally responsive social skill instruction package with African American students were identified (Banks et al., 1996, Leff et al. 2009, Lo et al., 2011). In order to help improve the post-school outcomes of African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors, research is needed in the area of social skill instruction incorporating parental involvement to address students' aggression and overall social skill deficits. Additionally, research is needed that incorporates the use of a culturally responsive social skill instruction curriculum and considers the behavioral function of students' aggressive behaviors.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

This chapter describes the methodology used for the current study. Information is provided on the participants, settings, materials used, experimental design, intervention, dependent variables, interobserver agreement, procedural fidelity, and social validity.

Participant Selection Criteria and Participants

Participants in this study were three 10th-grade African American students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors enrolled in the "occupational course of study," a diploma bound program for students with disabilities who need a modified curriculum focusing on independent living and post-school employment. Participants were selected based on the following criteria: (a) history of exhibiting social skill deficits and/or high levels of aggressive behaviors according to teacher's nominations and informal observations, (b) scoring "Below Average" level or lower on at least one of the *Social Skills* subscales (signifying they exhibited less social skills than the average for those within their norm group) or "Above Average" level or higher on at least one of the *Problem Behaviors* subscales on the *Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) Rating Scales* – Teacher, Parent, and Student Forms (Gresham & Elliott, 2008), (c) deficits in social skill performance as identified through teacher, parent, and student completion of the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* (Goldstein & McGinnis, 1997) especially in the areas of alternatives to aggression, (d) high level of student attendance (i.e., absent no more than once per bi-week period), (e) parents' commitment to

implement social skill instruction activities at home, and (f) parents' signed informed

consent and students' assent.

The *SSIS Rating Scales* Teacher Form, Parent Form, and Student Form (Gresham

& Elliott, 2008) was conducted to determine each student's social skill strengths and

performance deficits. The *SSIS* uses a multirater approach assessed individually to help

identify students suspected of having considerable social skill deficits and assists in the

development of interventions for those students. The *SSIS Rating Scales* assesses three

domains: (a) social skills, (b) problem behaviors, and (c) academic competence. There

are a total of 46 items measured in seven subdomains on the *Social Skills* subscale: (a)

communication, (b) cooperation, (c) assertion, (d) responsibility, (e) empathy, (f)

engagement, and (g) self-control. The domain of *Problem Behavior* consists of 30 items

in five subdomains: (a) externalizing, (b) bullying, (c) hyperactivity/inattention, (d)

internalizing, and (e) autism spectrum. The domain of *Academic Competence*, which is

only included on the Teacher Form, assesses a student's academic or learning behaviors

in the classroom environment. For each item on the *SSIS Rating Scales* in the domains of

Social Skills and *Problem Behaviors*, a rater indicates how often a specific, observable

behavior occurs using a 4-point scale (i.e., Never, Seldom, Often, Almost Always).

Additionally, within the domain of *Social Skills*, the rater designates the perceived

importance of each social skill (i.e., Not Important, Important, Critical). In the domain of

Academic Competence, the teacher compares the student's academic or learning

behaviors for each item with peers within the same classroom environment using a scale

of 1 to 5 (i.e., 1=Lowest 10%, 2=Next Lowest 20%, 3=Middle 40%, 4=Next Highest

20%, 5=Highest 10%). For the purpose of this study, participant results in the academic

competence domain were not reported.

According to Gresham and Elliott (2008), results from the *SSIS Rating Scales*

were compared to normative scores developed via a nationwide standardization sample of

4,700 children aged 3 through 18 years who represent the population of the United States

across race, gender, geographic location, and socioeconomic status. On the *SSIS Rating*

Scales Teacher Form, Parent Form, and Student Form for students aged 13 to 18 years,

the median scale internal consistency reliability coefficients are .96, .96, and .95,

respectively. Median test-retest reliability coefficients of the scales for the Teacher and

Parent Forms for students aged 3 to 18 are .83 and .86 respectively. The Student Form is

only used for students aged 8 to 18 and its median test-retest reliability coefficient of the

scales is .79. These measures were used to establish teacher, parent, and self-perceptions

of participants' social behaviors by indicating the degree to which certain social skills or

problem behaviors were observed. As indicated previously, only students who received

"Below Average" levels or lower on at least one of the *Social Skills* subscales or "Above

Average" level or higher on at least one of the *Problem Behaviors* subscales met criteria

appropriate for inclusion in this study.

The *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* (Goldstein & McGinnis, 1997)

provides a multimodal means of measurement to assess social skill deficits of adolescents

who exhibit aggressive behavior. The *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* has three

versions: Teacher, Parent, and Student checklists. Each is composed of 50 items

measuring how often a student, aged 13 to 18 years, performs each social skill within six

domains: (a) Beginning Social Skills, (b) Advanced Social Skills, (c) Skills for Dealing

with Feelings, (d) Skill Alternatives to Aggression, (e) Skills for Dealing with Stress, and (f) Planning Skills. For each item, the rater indicates the frequency each social skill is performed on a 5-point scale (i.e., Almost Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Often, Almost Always).

Five students were initially recommended by the special education coordinator for participation in this study; however, only three students (two female students and one male student) met the criteria for participation. One student was excluded because her school attendance was poor. A second student was excluded due to the inability of school staff to obtain parental permission for her participation.

Jaquita. Jaquita (pseudonyms are used to identify students) was a 16-year-old, 10th-grade African American female student referred for her inability to interact in a socially appropriate manner with her peers and for numerous office referrals (i.e., spitting in peers' faces, cussing at staff and peers, insubordination). Her parents were not married; however, they have cohabitated since her birth. Jaquita was identified with a mild intellectual disability in addition to documented behavioral issues. On the *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fourth Edition* (*WISC-IV*) conducted by a school psychologist in 2006, Jaquita's *Full Scale Intelligence Quotient* (*IQ*) was 70, her *Verbal Comprehension Index* was 74, and her *Processing Speed Index* was 70. On the *Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement* (*WJ-III*), Jaquita had subscale standard scores of 74 in *Broad Math*, 71 in *Written Language*, 92 in *Basic Reading*, and 84 in *Reading Comprehension*. On the *WJ-III*, a standard score from 90 to 110 is within the average range, 80 to 89 is within the low average range, 70 to 79 is within the low range, and 69 and below is considered to be within the very low range.

Results of the *SSIS* Student Form completed by Jaquita indicated that she fell in the "Below Average" range on all seven subdomains on the *Social Skill* subscale. Results from the *SSIS* completed by her teacher indicated that Jaquita fell in the "Below Average" range on the *Communication*, *Cooperation*, *Responsibility*, *Empathy*, *Engagement*, and *Self-Control* Social Skill subdomains. Results from the *SSIS* completed by her mother indicated that Jaquita fell in the "Below Average" range on the *Communication*, *Assertion*, *Responsibility*, *Engagement*, and *Self-Control* Social Skill subdomains. Her overall standard scores of 40, 69, and 70 on the *SSIS* completed by Jaquita, her mother, and her teacher, respectively, indicated an average rank of 2 percentile. This means that 98% of students in her age norm exhibit higher social skills than Jaquita. On the Problem Behavior subscale of the *SSIS*, Jaquita fell within the "Above Average" range across all raters on the *Externalizing*, *Hyperactivity/Inattention*, and *Autism Spectrum* subdomains. Her overall average standard score of 137 on the *Problem Behaviors* subscale indicated an average rank of 97 percentile when compared to a norm sample of her same-age peers, meaning that she scored as high as or higher (i.e., more problem behaviors) than 97% of the individuals in the norm sample.

On the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist*, Jaquita rated her herself as "Seldom" or "Rarely" using the skills of standing up for your rights, responding to teasing, and keeping out of fights within the area of alternatives to aggression. Her mother rated her as "Almost Never" using the social skills of asking permission, negotiating, using self-control, and responding to teasing, within the area of alternatives to aggression. Results of the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* completed by Jaquita's teacher indicated that Jaquita "Seldom" or "Almost Never" used the social skills

of sharing something, negotiating, using self-control, standing up for your rights, responding to teasing, and keeping out of fights.

Monique. Monique was a 16-year-old, 10th-grade African American female student referred for her poor peer relationships, difficulty maintaining friendships, and for numerous office referrals (i.e., making rude remarks to her teacher, stealing). Her grandmother was her legal guardian and Monique rarely saw her mother. Monique was identified with a mild intellectual disability and a behavioral disability at an early age. In elementary school, she received services in a self-contained special education classroom on a half-day schedule for 2 years. On the *Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales* conducted by a school psychologist in 2006, Monique's *Composite Intelligence Index* was 56, her *Verbal Intelligence Index* was 63, and her *Nonverbal Intelligence Index* was 63. On the *WJ-III*, all of Monique's subscale standard scores fell within the very low range. She had subscale standard scores of 65 in *Math Calculation*, 64 in *Math Reasoning*, 59 in *Written Expression*, 65 in *Basic Reading*, and 61 in *Reading Comprehension*.

Results from the *SSIS* completed by Monique indicated that she fell in the "Below Average" range on the *Cooperation*, *Responsibility*, and *Empathy* Social Skill subdomains. Results from the *SSIS* completed by her grandmother indicated that Monique fell in the "Below Average" range on the *Communication*, *Assertion*, *Responsibility*, *Empathy*, and *Self-Control* Social Skill subdomains. Results from the *SSIS* completed by her teacher indicated that Monique fell in the "Below Average" range on the *Communication*, *Cooperation*, *Responsibility*, *Empathy*, *Engagement*, and *Self-Control* Social Skill subdomains. Her overall standard scores of 85, 73, and 82 on the

SSIS completed by the student, her grandmother, and her teacher, respectively, indicated an average rank of 11 percentile. This means that 89% of students in her age norm exhibit higher social skills than Monique. On the *Problem Behavior* subscale, results of Monique's self-ratings indicated that she fell within the "Average" range. Results of her grandmother's ratings indicated that Monique fell within the "Above Average" range on the *Externalizing* and *Autism Spectrum* Problem Behavior subdomains. Results from the *SSIS* completed by her teacher indicated that Monique fell within the "Below Average" range on the *Externalizing*, *Hyperactivity/Inattention*, and *Internalizing* Problem Behavior subdomains. Her overall average standard score of 111 on the *Problem Behaviors* Scale indicated an average rank of 73 percentile when compared to a norm sample of her same-age peers.

Monique's self-ratings on the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* indicated that within the scope of alternatives to aggression, she rated herself as "Seldom" or "Rarely" using the social skills of asking for permission, using self-control, and responding to teasing. Monique's grandmother rated her as "Almost Never" using the social skills of standing up for your rights, responding to teasing, and avoiding trouble with others, within this same area. Results of the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* completed by Monique's teacher indicated that Monique "Seldom" or "Almost Never" used the social skills of negotiating, using self-control, standing up for your rights, responding to teasing, avoiding trouble with others, and keeping out of fights.

Delante. Delante was a 17-year-old, 10th-grade African American male student referred for his difficulty in engaging in socially appropriate peer and staff interactions. He lived with his married parents and 10-year-old sister. Delante was identified with a

disability coding of other health impairment for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in addition to a mild intellectual disability. The results of the *WISC-IV* conducted by a school psychologist in 2006 indicated that Delante's *Full Scale IQ* was 60, his *Verbal Comprehension Index* was 65, his *Processing Speed Index* was 56, his *Working Memory Index* was 77, and his *Perceptual Reasoning Index* was 77. On the *WJ-III Tests of Achievement*, Delante had subscale standard scores of 92 (average) in *Basic Reading*, 71 (low) in *Reading Comprehension*, 79 (low) in *Math Calculation*, 73 (low) in *Math Reasoning*, and 78 (low) in *Written Expression*.

Results from the *SSIS* completed by Delante indicated that he fell in the "Average" to "Above Average" range on all of the *Social Skill* subdomains, which contrasted greatly with those indicated by his mother and teacher. Results from the *SSIS* completed by his teacher indicated that Delante fell in the "Below Average" range on the *Communication*, *Cooperation*, *Assertion*, *Responsibility*, *Empathy*, and *Engagement* Social Skill subdomains which corresponded to results from the *SSIS* completed by his mother. Additionally, results from the *SSIS* completed by his mother also indicated that he was "Below Average" on the *Self-Control* subdomain. His overall standard scores of 124, 55, and 72 on the *SSIS* completed by Delante, his mother, and his teacher, respectively, indicated an average rank of 33 percentile. On the *Problem Behavior* subscale, Delante rated himself as being "Below Average" to "Average" which were contradictory to the mostly "Average" to "Above Average" ratings indicated by his mother and teacher. The only *Problem Behavior* subdomain that was consistent across all raters was Delante's behavior falling in the "Average" range on the *Bullying* subdomain.

His overall average standard score of 105 on the *Problem Behaviors* Scale indicated an average rank of 57 percentile when compared to individuals in the norm sample.

On the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* completed by Delante, there were 10 social skills that he rated himself as using "Seldom" or "Rarely." The only one that fell within the area of alternatives to aggression was sharing something. His mother rated him as "Almost Never" using the social skills of helping others, negotiating, and standing up for your rights, within the area of alternatives to aggression. Delante's teacher rated him as "Seldom" or "Almost Never" using the social skills of sharing something, helping others, negotiating, standing up for your rights, responding to teasing, avoiding trouble with others, and keeping out of fights.

Settings

The current study was implemented in a high school located in one of the 20 largest school districts in the southeastern state. The school selected had an enrollment of 1,190 students with 48.8% Caucasian, 38.4% African American, 15.5% Hispanic, 2.5% Asian, and 1.2% multi-racial. This school had 21.3% of students receiving special education (i.e., students who were academically gifted and students who had disabilities). Approximately 58.2% of all students at the school received free or reduced lunch. The intervention and data collection took place in a small room located on a hallway across from the "occupational course of study" teacher's classroom. The room was located in a suite where the school counselors also had their offices. It was a small conference room about 15' by 20' containing one large conference table with six chairs and a dry erase board. Additionally, each participant's home setting served as a place where part of the intervention (i.e., supplemental activities conducted by parents) and data collection

occurred. From information obtained from the two parents and the grandmother who worked with the participants at home, the instruction occurred in the kitchen at the table away from the television or other distractions.

Materials

Materials used for the social skill instruction were adapted from the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (Goldstein & McGinnis, 1997) Program. Specific social skills, chosen from this program, were based on students' need and were modified accordingly. Supplemental materials were sent to the home setting in a blue, 1-inch 3-ring binder with a clear insert on the front. Each participant's name and their classroom number were written on a sheet of paper and placed in this insert to prevent loss of the binder. In addition, a pencil pouch clipped inside the binder was used to transport the digital audio recorder. Further explanation and specific information about the targeted skills and intervention are provided within the Dependent Variables and the General Procedures sections. The researcher used a personal laptop computer to deliver instruction via a computer-based format. Digital audio recorders were used by both interventionists (i.e., the researcher in the school settings and participating parent at home) to record student responses when engaged in role-play situations. The digital audio recorders, Olympus VN-8100PC models, were chosen for their ease of use in recording student responses, good sound quality, and downloading capabilities. Each recorder came with a USB cord that enabled the recorder to be plugged directly into a computer to facilitate download into a digital file. Further, each instructional session was recorded for a graduate assistant to assess procedural fidelity at a later time. Following instruction,

weekly discussion sessions were also recorded to gather anecdotal information related to participant's usage of social skills taught outside of the instructional setting.

Interventionists and Data Collectors

The primary interventionist and data collector for the study was a full-time doctoral student in special education with 10 years of experience teaching students with mild to moderate disabilities in public school systems. The primary interventionist received a Bachelor of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology and Audiology and a Master of Education degree with a focus on Autism and Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities. She held certification in two states in the areas of cross-categorical and generic special education across grades K-12.

The primary interventionist received prior training in the area of social skill development while working as a special educator in a self-contained middle school program for students with severe emotional and behavioral needs. After receiving training in the area of social skill instruction, she developed social skill instruction programs within both middle and high school settings and taught these programs for a total of 5 years. She also had experiences delivering social skill instruction on classroom-related and aggression-resolution skills with urban elementary school students for the past 2 years as a part of two research studies.

Jaquita's mother, Delante's mother, and Monique's grandmother served as interventionists at home and as secondary data collectors. Both of the mothers had high school degrees and worked full time. Monique's grandmother did not complete high school and worked part-time. They took data on supplementary social skill activities in the home environment throughout the baseline, intervention, and maintenance conditions.

Dependent Variables

Increasing prosocial behaviors that served as alternatives to aggression was the focus of the social skill instruction in this study. There were three dependent variables.

The first dependent variable was the percentage of social skill performance as an alternative to aggression with peers on each of the three targeted social skills. This was measured as the percentage of steps performed correctly by participants during role-play situations with their peers across three specific social skills selected based on students' needs. A total of 147 role-play scenarios to be enacted with peers across the targeted social skills were generated to be used throughout the baseline, intervention, and maintenance conditions. The role-play situations were conducted in the small-group setting involving two to three participants, depending on each specific role-play situation and the number of characters needed. Each student was read a role-play scenario and then asked to act out the role-play (i.e., using appropriate steps for one of the three targeted social skills) with their peer(s). The three targeted social skills were responding to teasing, using self-control, and standing up for your rights. Responding to teasing was operationally defined as when one person makes fun of another person by calling him or her a name, laughing or pointing at the person, making a joke about the person, or calling attention to someone for the sole purpose of picking on the person. Using self-control was defined as keeping self calm when feeling angry, frustrated, or upset. Standing up for your rights was defined as defending self when being denied something for which the person is entitled or when being criticized for something the person did not do.

Role-play situations for the targeted social skills were chosen in a random order in addition to having students rotate their participation in role-play situations to try to avoid

practice effects across students. For each targeted social skill, the researcher used a checklist of expected steps that the students should follow to record the degree to which students were able to recall the skill steps, enact the skill with correct steps, and use appropriate tone of voice and volume of the voice during role-playing. See Appendix A for a sample of the "Social Skill Checklist for Role-Play" for each of the three targeted social skills.

The second dependent variable was the percentage of social skill performance as an alternative to aggression with family members. This was measured as the percentage of steps performed correctly by participants during role-play situations with their family members across the three targeted social skills. Thirty-six role-play scenarios (different from those used in the school setting) were generated to be used throughout the baseline, intervention, and maintenance conditions. The role-play scenarios scripts were given to each student in a binder along with a digital audio recorder to take home on a weekly basis (totaling 4 weeks). Jaquita's mother, Delante's mother, and Monique's grandmother were given a script in each binder for which they were asked to read each role-play scenario to their child and then ask their child to respond to three questions (i.e., What steps do you need to follow in order to respond to the situation appropriately?, Can you show me what you would do in this situation?, Can you tell me why it is appropriate to follow appropriate steps when dealing with this situation?) following each role-play scenario and answer them in order. Parents recorded the student's responses using a digital audio recorder provided by the researcher. The primary interventionist listened to the audio recordings at a later time and used the "Social Skill Checklist for Role-Play" to document participants' demonstrations of the taught skills.

The third dependent variable was an indirect measure of participants' appropriate responses to naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents in the natural settings through participants' self-reports. The data collected were qualitative data. After the social skill instruction commenced, students were asked daily to discuss opportunities that they encountered in the school and home/community environments to use the targeted social skills being taught. Each discussion session was audiotaped and later transcribed to gather anecdotal information about each student's use of the social skills learned outside of the instructional environment. This indirect measure of participants' transfer of skills into their natural environments was selected because in-class baseline observations during a 90-min core curriculum content instructional session over a period of 1.5 weeks resulted in no naturally occurring aggression inducing incidences. Additionally, students attended two occupational curriculum classes in a self-contained environment and two core curriculum classes in the general education environment daily. All three students attended different core classes and with only four class periods per day (due to block scheduling), there was not enough time during each day open for consistent observations across all three participants. As a result, direct observation of student behaviors in the classrooms was not a viable option.

Interobserver Agreements and Procedural Fidelity

Interobserver agreement. Interobserver agreement (IOA) for the appropriate social skill exhibition during role-play scenarios were collected for 25.2% of the sessions across all conditions using the same "Social Skill Checklist for Role-Play" form for recording across all targeted social skills in the school and home environments. Two trained observers, who were doctoral students in special education, listened to a total of

56 digitally audio-recorded sessions and scored participants' responses using the "Social

Skill Checklist for Role-Play" (Appendix A). The researcher trained the observers by

explaining the process for collecting participant data during the role-play scenarios for

each of three targeted social skills. Both of the outside observers practiced scoring a role-

play for each different social skill. Since interobserver agreement for the practice role-

play scenarios was 100%, no more practice sessions were necessary. After each observer

listened to an audio-recorded session, an item-by-item analysis was used to calculate

percentage of agreement by dividing number of agreed items by total number of

applicable items on the checklist and multiplying by 100.

Procedural fidelity. Treatment fidelity data were collected using a 15-item social

skill implementation checklist (see Appendix B) to measure the degree to which the

interventions were implemented as planned in the school and home settings. A trained

outside observer, who was a 1st year doctoral student in special education, listened to

33.3% of the audio-recorded instructional sessions (total of five) across the three social

skills taught. The observer then circled either a "YES" or "NO" for each item on the

checklist to determine the fidelity to which the interventionist implemented the social

skill instruction. The percentage of procedural fidelity was calculated by dividing the

number of correctly performed steps by the number of total steps (14) and multiplied by

100. Besides the interobserver reliability data collected on the two dependent variables,

interobserver agreement was also calculated for 40% of the instructional sessions (total of

two) that procedural fidelity data were collected.

Social Validity

Social validity data were collected at the conclusion of the study to measure teacher, parent, and student satisfaction regarding the acceptability, practicality, and effectiveness of the interventions. The teacher and parent survey included statements to which teachers/parents responded using a 4-point Likert scale to indicate their level or agreement or disagreement regarding their perceptions of the social behavioral improvement of participants, practical application and appropriateness of the intervention, and importance of social skills taught. The teacher survey (see Appendix C) included a total of 13 items. The teachers responded to 12 items using a 4-point Likert scale, and one open-ended question. The parent survey (see Appendix D) consisted of a total of 13 items, including 12 items using a 4-point Likert scale and one open-ended item. The student survey (see Appendix E) consisted of statements to which students indicated their opinions regarding their enjoyment of the social skill instruction program, degree to which they learned the social skills taught, and the value each student placed on the importance of the targeted social skills. Students responded to a total of 16 items, including 12 statements using a 4-pont Likert scale and four items requiring open-ended responses.

Additionally, the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklists* for Teacher, Parent, and Student checklists, and the *SSIS Rating Scales* Teacher and Parent, and Student Forms were given as both pretests and posttests to compare the effects of the social skill instruction on the participants' social skill learning. Office referral data were also collected prior to, during, and following the intervention to determine if there were any changes in the number of office referrals participants received for inappropriate behavior.

Experimental Design

The experimental design used in this study was a multiple probe across three

social skills design (Horner & Baer, 1978) to evaluate the participants' acquisition of

skills. Participants received five baseline sessions showing that stability was established

prior to implementing the intervention. This design enabled the researcher to introduce

the intervention to the participants after a stable baseline was attained, and determine if

changes in the dependent variables for participants occurred when and only when the

intervention was in place. The social skill with the lowest level of participant

performance and most stable baseline data patterns on the first and second dependent

variables (i.e., percentage of social skill exhibition in school and at home) was taught

first, followed by the next social skill with lower level of participant performance and

more stable baseline data. The same rule applied for the third social skill. The first social

skill taught was responding to teasing, the second was using self-control, and the third

was standing up for your rights.

General Procedures

Baseline. Prior to beginning the baseline condition, it was understood through

consultation with the teacher that no structured social skill instruction was taught to any

of the participants. However, upon implementation of the study, it was discovered that

one of the participants (Jaquita) was involved in a social skills group that met on

Wednesday afternoons during school for a total of 3 months. The researcher consulted

with the school counselor who was leading the social skills groups to discover what

social skills curriculum was being employed. The researcher also attended one of the

sessions the counselor was teaching. It was discovered that the social skills being

discussed within this group setting primarily involved learning about interviewing and employment related skills, with other topics discussed on an as needed basis. None of the skills included in this social skill instruction program was related to alternatives to aggression. The counselor stated that she was not using a specific social skill instructional program.

During baseline, students were asked to engage in role-play situations with peers and family members pertaining to each of the three targeted social skills. These were comparable scenarios to those used to collect data during the intervention.

Social skill instruction. The social skill instruction program was adapted from the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* social skills curriculum (Goldstein & McGinnis, 1997) and focused on social skills in the area of alternatives to aggression. Three social skills to be taught were chosen based on participants's needs (as determined via assessment materials described previously) from the following: (a) asking permission, (b) sharing something, (c) helping others, (d) negotiating, (e) using self-control, (f) standing up for your rights, (g) responding to teasing, (h) avoiding trouble with others, and (i) keeping out of fights. The three social skills taught were responding to teasing, using self-control, and standing up for your rights. Each lesson took five sessions to fully complete and were taught daily for each day of the week for a period of 30 min per session. All lessons were created using Microsoft PowerPoint® and consisted of the following core training procedures: (a) modeling the skill, (b) role-playing, (c) providing feedback following performance, and (d) generalization training. Visual (i.e., Clipart) and video (YouTube) prompts were embedded within each PowerPoint® slide to support the delivery of instruction. The researcher used a laptop computer daily to teach each social skill lesson to the group of

three students using the following sequence: (a) identify and define the skill to be taught, (b) provide the rationale for skill, (c) describe general characteristics of situations in which skill will be used, (d) identify social rules, (e) teach skill steps, (f) model the skill, (g) provide practice situations through role play, (h) provide performance feedback, (i) review skill steps, and (j) practice/reiterate skills steps in the home environment through parent participation (i.e., using role play activities, sample situations in which the student will be asked to respond appropriately, recollection of skill steps taught). Due to the disability status of all participants (i.e., mild intellectual disabilities) and their specific learning needs, the sequence for teaching each social skill was repetitive and comparable every day. The only differences that existed for each part of the social skills lessons revolved around content. Participants would watch either a YouTube clip, read a poem, discuss a photo, or a read a news story. For example, for the social skill of standing up for your rights, the following are the content delivered over the 5-day sequence in order: (a) day 1 – discussion about what rights are and what rights students believe they have, assessment of student knowledge in this area, (b) day 2 – looked at a photo of Martin Luther King, Jr., discussed his "I Have a Dream Speech," and watched a YouTube clip about the "Freedom Riders" that aired on the Public Broadcasting Station (PBS), (c) day 3 – watched a YouTube clip about a news report of two women in Malawi and discussed their rights, (d) day 4 – watched a news clip from YouTube that reported on the Bushman's rights in Botswana, read a newspaper article on the same topic and had a discussion on rights and how they may differ among countries (especially from the United States), and (e) day 5 – watched two YouTube video clips (one was an animated

story and one had narration by Morgan Freeman) released by Amnesty International about standing up for rights.

 During social skill instruction, the researcher (i.e., primary interventionist) encouraged discussions to enable participants to assess their own strengths and needs regarding social skills being taught, and to incorporate culturally relevant material to help facilitate students' "buy in." The students were given opportunities to tell the group and the researcher how the learning of targeted social skill was particularly relevant to them. Additionally, the social skill instruction incoporated participants' African American cultural backgrounds into role-play activities. Many of the scenarios used during the modeling and role-play components were based on material covered or discussed during each part of the three social skills lessons. For example, if a student brought up something that had occurred in the school, home, or community setting, such as a conversation some girls had about an outfit Beyoncé was wearing or about a Nelly song in their apparel class, this information might be incorporated in a modeling or role-play scenario later in the session to establish relevance to students. The students' behavior function (i.e., reason for performing or not performing a targeted social skill) was also addressed at this time. Specifically, the researcher engaged participants in conversations about why they chose to perform behaviors that did or did not show appropriate use of the social skills being taught. The discussions on behavior function helped the interventionist examine situations that occured within the participants' environments that could have contributed to how participants exhibited targeted social skills, and in turn, helped students find appropriate replacement behavior to achieve the same outcome. For example, one participant (Jaquita) said that she got in trouble for spitting on another

student prior to participation in the study. The researcher asked Jaquita why she spat on the student. She said because the boy had teased her by calling her a name. The researcher then asked Jaquita what she expected to happen when she spat on the student. Jaquita stated that she wanted the boy to stop calling her names. The experimenter then asked what consequences she received for spitting on the boy. Jaquita relayed that she got suspended from school. The researcher asked Jaquita if she liked being suspended from school to which Jaquita replied, "No." The researcher then asked Jaquita if there were other things she could have done that also would have gotten the boy to stop calling her names. Jaquita said she could have followed the steps for responding to teasing and explained some alternative behaviors that she could have engaged in (e.g., walked away, ignored, explained her feelings). Jaquita also relayed that had she done one of the alternate behaviors she could have avoided getting suspended form school.

All lessons occurred in a small group, pull-out format during a non-core content class so that participants did not miss academic instruction. Parents were initially contacted by the researcher to schedule a short training session in person at the school or over the phone regarding the social skill instruction program and their anticipated role. Parents received scripted activities in a workbook, created by the researcher, to review and practice social skills three times per week with their son or daughter to facilitate maintenance and generalization of skills taught in the school environment. Parents were instructed to digitally audio-record all sessions with their son or daughter. The parents were contacted weekly by the researcher through a letter sent home with their child in addition to a follow-up phone call to ensure receipt. Within each weekly letter, the researcher explained the social skill being taught and described skills steps in detail. The

parents were asked to review the skills steps with their child, discuss appropriate usage (i.e., situations where this skill will be used), and practice role-play situations using the scripted format. Parents were asked to give feedback to their children during instruction except during the role-play situations. They could give feedback once their child completed a role-play situation however. Instruction in the home environment typically took about 15-min. See Appendix F for an example of the supplemental activities provided to parents for the social skill of using self-control.

Maintenance. During the maintenance condition, the social skill instruction program for the specific social skill (e.g., responding to teasing) was terminated. Participants' engagement in role-play scenarios with peers and family members was continued twice per week to determine the participants' ability to sustain the learned social skill for a total of 2 weeks with the exception of the last social skill taught (i.e., standing up for your rights). The maintenance data for the last social skill taught were collected for only one week in the school environment and not collected in the home environment due to the end of the school year.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

In this chapter, reports of the study results include: (a) results for the interobserver agreement and procedural fidelity measures, (b) each participant's social skill performance in the school and home settings across the experimental conditions, (c) anecdotal information pertaining to each participant's use of social skills learned outside of the instructional setting, and (d) social validity outcomes presented as pre/post data (i.e., pre/post office referral data, pre/posttest results from the Teacher, Parent, and Student forms of both the *SSIS Rating Scales* and the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist*, and teacher, parent, and student satisfaction questionnaires).

Interobserver Agreement and Procedural Fidelity

Interobserver Agreement

Interobserver agreement for students' appropriate social skill exhibition during role-play scenarios was conducted for 25.2% of the sessions across three targeted skills and settings (i.e., school and home) for all students. Two trained observers, who were doctoral students in special education, listened to a total of 56 digitally audio-recorded sessions and scored participants' responses using the "Social Skill Checklist for Role-Play." An item-by-item analysis was used to calculate percentage of agreement by dividing number of agreed items by total number of applicable items on the checklist and multiplying by 100. Interobserver agreement for appropriate social skill exhibition during role-play scenarios was 100%.

Procedural Fidelity

Treatment fidelity data were collected using a social skill implementation checklist to measure the degree to which the interventions were implemented as planned in the school setting. A trained outside observer, who was a 1st year doctoral student in special education, listened to 33.3% of the audio-recorded instructional sessions (i.e., total of five sessions) across the three social skills taught. The observer circled either a "YES" or "NO" (or "NA" for the last item only) for each item on the checklist to determine the fidelity to which the interventionist implemented the social skill instruction as purported. The percentage of procedural fidelity was calculated by dividing the number of correctly performed steps by the number of total steps (15) and multiplied by 100. The interventionist implemented the social skill instruction with 100% procedural fidelity.

Interobserver agreement for the procedural fidelity was also collected for 40% of the fidelity measure sessions. A trained second outside observer, a 2nd year doctoral student in special education, listened to two of the same sessions as the first outside observer. An item-by-item analysis was used to calculate percentage of agreement by dividing number of agreed items by total number of applicable items on the checklist and multiplying by 100. Interobserver agreement for procedural fidelity was 100%.

<center>**Jaquita**</center>

All components of the social skill instruction program were fully implemented with Jaquita across all three skills at the school and the home setting (see Figure 1). The primary interventionist maintained weekly contact with Jaquita's mother throughout the

intervention, contacting her via notes sent home with the supplemental activities in addition to telephone calls to discuss the curriculum.

Responding to Teasing

School environment. During baseline, Jaquita's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in the role-play situations within the school environment (refer to the solid data points) ranged from 20% to 30% and averaged 22%. During intervention, Jaquita's performance on the role-play scenario probes immediately increased in level and trend. Her performance ranged from 70% to 90% and averaged 84%. After the fifth day of intervention, Jaquita entered the maintenance condition where her ability to respond to teasing appropriately in the role-play situations ranged from 80% to 90% with an average performance of 86%.

Home environment. During baseline, Jaquita's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in the home situation on role-play scenarios ranged from 10% to 20% and averaged 18%. Following the fifth day of baseline, Jaquita entered the social skill instruction intervention. While in the intervention condition, Jaquita participated in supplemental activities with her mother after school for 3 days. During the intervention condition, Jaquita's performance on role-play scenarios with her mother ranged from 60% to 70% with an average performance of 66.7%. Following the conclusion of the intervention, Jaquita entered the maintenance condition where her ability to respond to teasing appropriately in role-play situations with her mother ranged from 50% to 80% with an average of 65%.

Using Self-Control

School environment. Baseline data were collected for the skill of using self-control during eight small group sessions. Jaquita's performance on this skill during role-play scenarios with her peers ranged from 14.3% to 21.4% with an average of 17%. During intervention, Jaquita's self-control skill increased to an average of 87.2% (ranging from 78.6 to 100%). During the maintenance condition, Jaquita's performance on role-play scenarios for using self-control remained at a much higher level than that during the baseline condition and was consistently 92.9% throughout, a higher average than that during intervention.

Home environment. The baseline data collection for Jaquita's ability to use self-control in role-play scenarios with her mom occurred over a period of 2 weeks. Her performance on the role-play scenarios during baseline ranged from 14.3% to 21.4% and averaged 16.3%. During the intervention condition, Jaquita's ability to execute the social skill of using self-control in role-play situations with her mother ranged from 42.9% to 50% and averaged 47.6%. During the maintenance condition, Jaquita's performance on role-play scenarios continued to increase and ranged from 71.4% to 78.6% with an average performance of 75%.

Standing Up for Your Rights

School environment. Baseline data on Jaquita's ability to use the social skill of standing up for your rights were collected over a total of 11 sessions. Jaquita's performance for this skill during role-play situations with her peers ranged from 14.3% to 35.7% and averaged 21.4%. During the intervention condition, Jaquita's performance on standing up for own rights during role-play situations with her peers immediately

improved over the baseline condition, ranging from 64.3% to 92.9% with an average performance of 82.8%. During the maintenance condition, Jaquita's ability to use the social skill of standing up for your rights with her peers in role-play scenarios remained at a high level ranging from 85.7% to 92.9% and averaging 89.3%.

Home environment. Baseline data collection for Jaquita's use of standing up for her rights in role-play scenarios with her mother occurred over a total of nine sessions. Her performance of this social skill throughout baseline ranged from 14.3% to 21.4% and averaged 18.2%. Intervention data collection at home occurred during three after school sessions with her mother. During the intervention, Jaquita exhibited the social skill of standing up for your rights in role-play situations with a performance range of 64.3% to 78.6% that averaged 71.4%. Maintenance data for Jaquita were not collected in the home environment due to the conclusion of the school year.
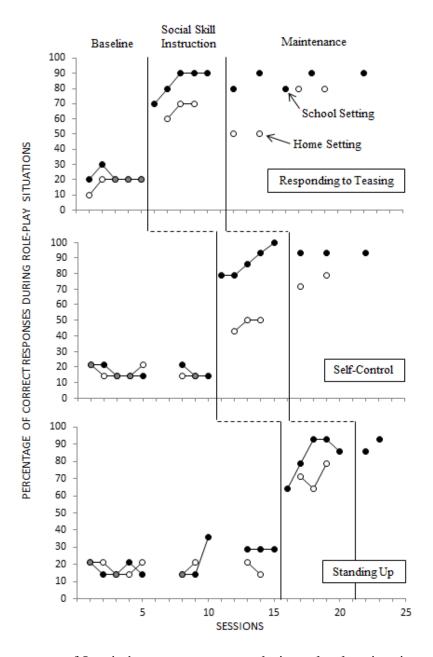
Figure 1. Percentage of Jaquita's correct responses during role-play situations.

Anecdotal Information

During the implementation of the intervention, Jaquita was asked to discuss any

instances of using the social skills learned outside of the small group setting. Jaquita

relayed five instances where she utilized the social skill of using self-control. In one

situation, she said a student was making noises in the hallway and would not stop. She

said, "I got mad and wanted to hit him. I said, 'Could you please stop?'" In another instance, Jaquita said her nephew was screaming and crying at home. "What I did was I went to my room and closed the door, turned the radio up, and tuned him out." On the same day, she also conveyed that she had asked her brother to watch TV to which he responded, "No." Jaquita then "just went in the room and turned the radio up to tune him out and cleaned the house until Mom got home." The next day she explained how her nephew was again crying and distracting her in the morning as she was getting ready for school. Jaquita stated, "He kept on crying so I just ignored him and went and kept on getting ready for school." In her final explanation of her using self-control outside the group setting, Jaquita explained a situation where she and her cousins were asked by a woman at her sister's pool to leave. "I got angry so instead of yelling at her I just said to my cousin, 'Get your shoes on and stuff like that.'"

In the small group sessions, Jaquita was observed becoming agitated with another student on two occasions. In one situation she asked the other student to "please stop beating on the table," in the other she said, "please stop talking." Finally, Jaquita discussed one instance of standing up for her rights which the primary investigator also witnessed. The school's on-duty police officer asked Jaquita about her involvement in money being stolen in the classroom, to which Jaquita responded when describing later, "They thought that I stole it and if I had stole the money, I would go ahead and tell them the truth and I would've said, 'Yeah I stole it… but I didn't steal it.'"

Monique

All of the components of the social skill instruction program were fully implemented with Monique across all skills at the school setting; however, in the home

setting the last week of supplemental instruction was not implemented (see Figure 2). The primary interventionist maintained weekly contact with Monique's grandmother throughout the intervention, contacting her via notes sent home with the supplemental activities in addition to telephone calls to discuss the curriculum. The primary interventionist also contacted her grandmother to remind her to finish completing the last week of supplemental instruction with Monique, and offered her support if needed.

Responding to Teasing

School environment. During baseline, Monique's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in role-play situations within the school environment ranged from 20% to 30% and averaged 24%. Monique received the social skill instruction intervention for a total of five sessions and her performance on the role-play scenario probes increased gradually in level and trend, ranging from 50% to 80% with an average of 68%. During the maintenance condition, Monique's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in the role-play situations ranged from 70% to 90% with an average performance of 80%.

Home environment. Baseline data were collected over a period of 5 days during which Monique's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in the home situation during role-play scenarios was consistently 20%. Following the fifth day of baseline, Monique entered the social skill instruction intervention and participated in supplemental activities with her grandmother after school for 3 days. During the intervention condition, Monique's performance on role-play scenarios for responding to teasing with her grandmother ranged from 30% to 40% with an average performance of 36.7%. During the maintenance condition, Monique's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in role-play situations with her grandmother was consistently 30%.

Using Self-Control

School environment. Baseline data were collected during eight small group sessions. Monique's performance on the skill of using self-control appropriately during role-play scenarios with her peers ranged from 14.3% to 21.4% with an average of 17.8%. During intervention, Monique's ability to use this skill ranged from 71.4 to 78.6% and averaged 77.2%. During the maintenance condition, Monique's performance on role-play scenarios for using self-control stayed at a much higher level than that during the baseline condition and averaged 78.6% which was slightly higher than the average achieved during intervention.

Home environment. The baseline data collection for Monique's ability to use self-control in role-play scenarios with her grandmother occurred over 2 weeks. Her performance on role-play scenarios during baseline ranged from 7.1% to 14.3% and averaged 13.3%. During the intervention condition, Monique's ability to execute using self-control in role-play situations with her grandmother ranged from 21.4% to 85.7% and averaged 61.9%. After the intervention was terminated, Monique should have entered the maintenance phase in the home environment as well as the school environment. However, her grandmother discontinued the supplemental instruction at home.

Standing Up for Your Rights

School environment. Baseline data on Monique's ability to use the social skill of standing up for your rights were collected over a total of 11 sessions. Monique's ability to perform this social skill appropriately during role-play situations with her peers ranged from 14.3% to 21.4% and averaged 16.9%. During the intervention condition, Monique's performance of standing up for your rights during role-play situations with her peers

promptly improved over the baseline condition where it ranged from 64.3% to 78.6% with an average performance of 70%. During the maintenance condition, Monique's ability to use the social skill of standing up for your rights with her peers in role-play scenarios while at a lower level than achieved during the intervention was higher than the baseline level and ranged from 57.1% to 71.4% and averaged 64.3%.

Home environment. Baseline data collection for Monique's use of standing up for her rights in role-play scenarios with her grandmother occurred over a total of nine sessions. Her performance of this social skill throughout baseline was consistently 14.3%. Monique's grandmother should have implemented the supplemental instruction for this social skill with Monique in the home environment during the intervention condition; however, this training did not occur.
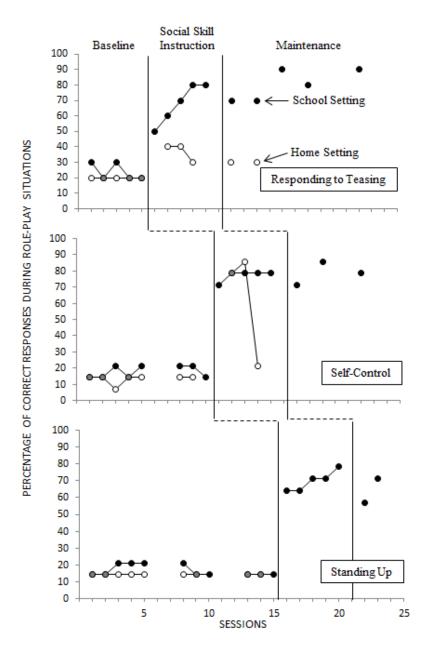
Figure 2. Percentage of Monique's correct responses during role-play situations.

Anecdotal Information

Monique was observed in one small group session getting agitated at the male

student in the group. She demonstrated the strategies of taking a deep breath and ignoring

him. On one occasion she explained an altercation with her grandmother because

Monique had homework to do but wanted to spend time with her friend instead. She said,

"I was being nice and my voice was all low and everything like this." She continued, "cause now every time when me and her fuss sometimes I just go somewhere else so I won't keep fussing."

In another instance of her using self-control outside the instructional setting Monique described a situation that occurred in her neighborhood where she got mad at a person who had shot her friend in the knee during an altercation over money. "He got shot in the knee cap. I was mad, sad. I was hot, shaky and ready to go fight that dude so he would stop messing with him about paying him and stuff cause he got the wrong person. I just leave it alone, get out of their business."

In the school setting, Monique discussed two instances of using self-control with the group. In one situation she explained that this girl kept "butting up in my conversation." She stated, "I was getting ready to slap her and so I just turned around and just walked off." In the second situation she explained that a girl during lunch had yelled at her not to get her "dirty hands on my book before I kick your ass." Monique explained, "so I just left and went to the library."

Delante

All of the components of the social skill instruction program were fully implemented with Delante across all skills at the school setting. However, in the home setting supplemental instruction was implemented sporadically (see Figure 3). The primary interventionist maintained weekly contact with Delante's mother throughout the intervention, contacting her via notes sent home with the supplemental activities in addition to telephone calls (during the first 2 weeks) to discuss the curriculum. Delante's mother changed her phone number in the middle of the intervention without sending the

updated phone number to school, so contact via telephone was temporarily unavailable. The primary interventionist sent reminders home to request that Delante's mother complete all facets of the supplemental instruction with her son, and offered additional support if needed, but the instruction within the home environment remained sporadic.

Responding to Teasing

School environment. During baseline, Delante's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in the role-play situations with peers ranged from 20% to 30% and averaged 26%. During intervention, Delante's performance on the role-play scenario probes gradually increased to range from 40% to 90% with an average of 64%. During the maintenance condition, Delante's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in role-play situations ranged from 80% to 100% with an average performance of 92.9%.

Home environment. Baseline data were to be collected over a period of 5 days at the home setting. However, Delante's mother only completed one role-play scenario on responding to teasing with her son during baseline which was at 20%. During the intervention condition, Delante participated in only one supplemental activity with his mother and Delante's performance on role-play scenarios was 80%. During the maintenance condition, Delante's ability to respond to teasing appropriately in role-play situations with his mother was consistently 80%.

Using Self-Control

School environment. Baseline data were collected during eight small group sessions for Delante. Delante's performance on the skill of using self-control appropriately during role-play scenarios with his peers ranged from 14.3% to 28.6% with an average of 17.9%. During intervention, Delante's ability to use self-control ranged

from 64.3 to 92.9% and averaged 80%. Following the termination of the intervention, Delante's performance on role-play scenarios for using self-control remained at a high level, ranging from 85.7% to 100% with an average of 92.9%.

Home environment. The baseline data collection for Delante's ability to use self-control in role-play scenarios with his mom occurred over 2 weeks; however only one datum was collected at 14.3%. During the intervention condition, Delante's ability to use self-control appropriate in role-play situations with his mother ranged from 42.9% to 78.6% and averaged 60.8%. During the maintenance condition, his mother discontinued participating in role-play situations with him and therefore no data were available.

Standing Up for Your Rights

School environment. Baseline data on Delante's ability to use the social skill of standing up for your rights were collected over a total of 11 sessions. Delante's ability to perform this social skill appropriately during role-play situations with his peers ranged from 14.3% to 21.4% and averaged 15.6%. During the intervention condition, Delante's performance of standing up for own rights during role-play situations with his peers instantly increased in level and trend to range from 64.3% to 100% with an average performance of 89.2%. After termination of the intervention, Delante's ability to use this social skill with his peers in role-play scenarios remained at a high level ranging from 80% to 90% and averaged 82.2%.

Home environment. Baseline data collection for Delante's use of standing up for his rights in role-play scenarios with his mother occurred over a total of three sessions. His performance of this social skill throughout baseline ranged from 14.3% to 21.4% and

averaged 19%. Unfortunately, Delante's mother did not implement any of the

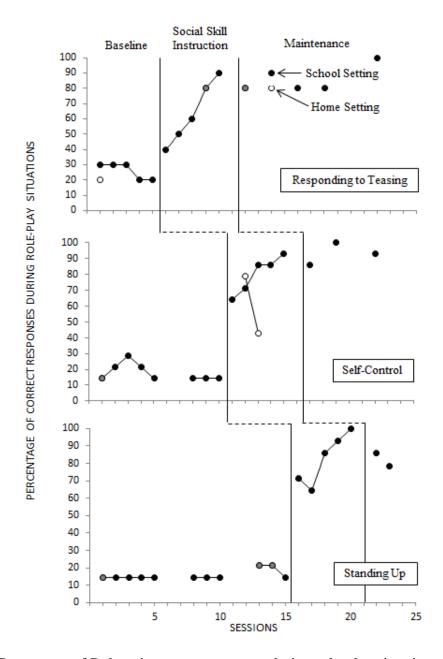supplemental instruction activities with Delante for this social skill.

Figure 3. Percentage of Delante's correct responses during role-play situations.

Anecdotal Information

Throughout the intervention and maintenance conditions, when asked to discuss instances of using social skills taught, Delante continuously stated that he did not experience any situations where he had to use them. Specifically with the social skill of responding to teasing, he said, "I'm good. I'm hard to tease."

Social Validity

Jaquita

Office referral data. Prior to Jaquita's participation in this study, she was referred to the office for six separate incidents over a period of 5 months for the infraction of insubordination ($n = 4$), inappropriate language/disrespect ($n = 1$), and aggressive behavior ($n = 1$). The incident of aggressive behavior occurred immediately prior to her participation in this study (i.e., 3 days prior to baseline collection). Jaquita received 3 days of suspension for spitting in the faces of two peers in the hallway. When the primary interventionist asked Jaquita why she spit in the faces of two students, she said she did it because they called her a name. Over the course of the study (i.e., 5 weeks) and following its completion the day before the last day of school, Jaquita received no additional office referrals.

SSIS Rating Scales. The *SSIS Rating Scales* Teacher Form, Parent Form, and Student Form were all completed for Jaquita to obtain pretest and posttest data. Results of the forms Jaquita completed indicated that from pretest to posttest, her performance went from "Below Average" to "Above Average" on the *Assertion* Social Skill subdomain and to "Average" on the *Communication*, *Cooperation*, *Empathy*, and *Self-Control* subdomains. She went from "Above Average" to "Average" on the *Bullying* and

Internalizing on the Problem Behavior subdomains. On the *SSIS* Parent Form, Jaquita's performance on the *Communication*, *Assertion*, *Engagement*, and *Self-Control* Social Skill subdomains went from "Below Average" to "Average." There were no changes within the Problem Behavior subscale on the Parent Form. Results of the Teacher Form indicated that Jaquita's performance went from "Below Average" to "Average" on the Social Skill subdomains of *Communication*, *Cooperation*, *Responsibility*, *Empathy*, and *Engagement*. Jaquita's performance went from "Above Average" to "Average" on the *Autism Spectrum* Problem Behavior subdomain according to her teacher's ratings. See Tables 1 and 2 for Jaquita's performance on the *SSIS* from all raters.

   Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist. All of the Teacher, Parent, and Student versions of the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* were completed for Jaquita prior to and at the conclusion of the study. On the Student checklist, of the social skills that fell within the area of alternatives to aggression, responding to teasing was the only one that Jaquita rated herself as having improved. She went from "Seldom" to "Sometimes" using this social skill. Results of the Parent checklist completed by her mother indicated that Jaquita made improvement from "Almost Never" to "Often" using the social skills of responding to teasing and using self-control. On the Teacher checklist, the results indicated that the teacher believed Jaquita had improved on all three social skills taught. Jaquita's performance of the social skills of using self-control and responding to teasing went from "Almost Never" to "Sometimes" good at using the skills. On the social skill of standing up for your rights, the teacher rated Jaquita as "Seldom" good at using the skill on the pretest to "Sometimes" good at using the skill on the posttest.

Satisfaction questionnaires. Jaquita, her mother, and her teacher all completed satisfaction questionnaires following the study. Results of the satisfaction questionnaires completed by Jaquita and her mother indicated that both believed the social skill of standing up for your rights was "Important" for the student to be able to do in the school environment. Jaquita and her mother indicated that the social skills of using self-control and responding to teasing were "Very Important" for Jaquita to be able to do in the school environment. In the home environment, Jaquita rated the social skills of standing up for your rights and using self-control as "Important," while her mother rated the same two social skills as being "Very Important" for Jaquita to do at home. On the contrary, Jaquita rated the social skill of responding to teasing as "Very Important" for her to be able to do in the home environment while her mother rated this one as "Important." The teacher rated all three social skills as "Very Important" for Jaquita to be able to do in both the home and school environments.

With regard to improvement on the social skills taught, Jaquita and her mother indicated that Jaquita made "Moderate Improvement" in her ability to demonstrate the social skills of standing up for your rights and using self-control. According to Jaquita and her mother, Jaquita made "A Lot of Improvement" in her ability to demonstrate the responding to teasing social skill. Jaquita's teacher believed that Jaquita made "A Lot of Improvement" in her ability to demonstrate the social skill of standing up for your rights and "Moderate Improvement" in her ability to demonstrate the social skills using self-control and responding to teasing. Jaquita made the following comments about the program, "I loved doing this, I hope to do it again in the future cause it is fun." Jaquita's mother thanked the primary interventionist for teaching her child social skills and wrote

the following comment about the program, "I think this was a great program and I think it will be effective for other children dealing with the same problems." See Tables 3, 4, and 5 for Jaquita's scores and comments on the satisfaction questionnaires from all raters.

Monique

Office referral data. Prior to Monique's participation in this study, she was referred to the office for two separate incidents over a period of 5 months for the infractions of disrespect of faculty/staff and stealing at Wal-Mart while on a school field trip. Monique received 2 days of suspension for the incident of stealing. When the primary interventionist asked Monique why she stole during the field trip, Monique stated that she did not take anything. Over the course of the study and following its completion, Monique received no office referrals.

SSIS Rating Scales. Results of the pretest and posttest forms for the *SSIS Rating Scales* that Monique completed indicated that her performance did not change on any of the Social Skill subdomains. On the *SSIS* Parent Form completed by Monique's grandmother, Monique's performance on the *Self-Control* Social Skill subdomain went from "Below Average" to "Average." Interestingly, for the Problem Behavior subdomains, the subdomains of *Bullying*, *Hyperactivity/Inattention*, and *Internalizing* all went from "Average" to "Above Average." Results of the Teacher Form indicated that Monique's performance went from "Below Average" to "Average" on the Social Skill subdomain of *Engagement*. There were no changes within the Problem Behavior subscale on the Teacher Form. See Tables 1 and 2 for Monique's performance on the *SSIS* from all raters.

Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist. All of the Teacher, Parent, and Student versions of the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* were completed for Monique prior to and at the end of the study. On the Student checklist, of the social skills that fell within the area of alternatives to aggression, there were no social skills taught that Monique rated herself as having improved. Results of the Parent checklist completed by her grandmother indicated that Monique made improvement from "Almost Never" to "Sometimes" using the social skill of responding to teasing, and from "Almost Never" to "Often" for the social skill of using self-control. According to the Teacher checklist, results indicated that the teacher believed Monique had improved on two of the social skills taught. Specifically, Monique's performance of the social skill of using self-control went from "Almost Never" to "Sometimes" good at using the skill. On the social skill of responding to teasing, Monique's teacher rated her as "Seldom" good at using the skill on the pretest to "Sometimes" good at using the skill on the posttest. Monique's performance of the social skill of responding to teasing remained consistent at "Sometimes" good at using the skill.

Satisfaction questionnaires. Monique, her grandmother, and her teacher all completed satisfaction questionnaires at the conclusion of the study. Monique indicated that she perceived the social skill of using self-control as "Very Important," standing up for your rights as "Important," and responding to teasing as "Slightly Important" for her to do in the school environment. Her grandmother indicated that she believed the social skills of standing up for your rights and using self-control were "Slightly Important," and responding to teasing was "Important" for Monique in both the school and home/community environments. Monique's self-ratings indicated that she believed the

social skill of standing up for you rights was "Very Important," using self-control was "Important," and responding to teasing was "Slightly Important" for her to be able to do in the home/community environments. The teacher rated all three social skills as "Very Important" for Monique to be able to do in both the home and school environments.

With regard to improvement on the targeted social skills, Monique indicated that she made "A Lot of Improvement" on standing up for her rights, "No Improvement" in using self-control, and "Moderate Improvement" in responding to teasing. Her grandmother indicated that Monique made "Slight Improvement" in her ability to demonstrate the social skills of standing up for your rights and using self-control and "Moderate Improvement" in her ability to respond to teasing. Monique's teacher believed that Monique made "A Lot of Improvement" in her ability to demonstrate the social skill of standing up for your rights and "Moderate Improvement" in her ability to demonstrate the social skills of using self-control and responding to teasing. Monique made the following comments about the program, "I liked it a bit, lol!!!" Monique's grandmother did not provide any additional comments. See Tables 3, 4, and 5 for Monique's scores and comments on the satisfaction questionnaires from all raters.

Delante

Office referral data. Prior to Delante's participation in this study, he did not receive any office referral. Over the course of the study and following its completion the day before the last day of school, Delante still did not received an office referral.

SSIS Rating Scales. The *SSIS Rating Scales* Teacher Form, Parent Form, and Student Form were all completed for Delante to obtain pretest and posttest data. Results of the pretest and posttest forms Delante completed indicated that from pretest to posttest,

his performance went from "Above Average" to "Average" on the *Communication*, *Responsibility*, and *Engagement* Social Skill subdomains, and from "Above Average" to "Below Average" on the *Empathy* subdomain. His behavioral performance went from "Below Average" to "Average" for *Externalizing* and *Internalizing* on the Problem Behavior subdomains. On the *SSIS* Parent Form, Delante's performance on the *Responsibility* and *Self-Control* Social Skill subdomains went from "Below Average" to "Average." Delante went from "Above Average" to "Average" on the *Internalizing* Problem Behavior subdomain according to his mother's ratings. Results of the Teacher Form indicated that Delante's performance went from "Below Average" to "Average" on the Social Skill subdomains of *Assertion*, *Responsibility*, and *Empathy*. There were no changes within the Problem Behavior subdomains on the Teacher Form. See Tables 1 and 2 for Delante's performance on the *SSIS* from all raters.

 Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist. All of the Teacher, Parent, and Student versions of the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* were completed for Delante prior to and at the conclusion of the study. Of the social skills that fell within the area of alternatives to aggression, there were no social skills taught that Delante rated himself as having improved. Results of the Parent checklist completed by his mother indicated that Delante made improvement from "Almost Never" to "Often" using the social skill of responding to teasing. On the Teacher checklist, the results indicated that the teacher believed Delante had improved on two of the social skills taught. Specifically, the teacher rated Delante's performance as from "Almost Never" good to "Sometimes" good at using the social skill of standing up for you rights. On the social skill of responding to teasing, teacher rated Delante as "Seldom" good at using the skill to "Sometimes" good at using

the skill. Delante's performance of the social skill of using self-control remained consistent at "Sometimes" good at using the skill.

Satisfaction questionnaires. Delante, his mother, and his teacher all completed satisfaction questionnaires at the end of the study. Results of the satisfaction questionnaires completed by Delante and his mother indicated that both believed the social skills of standing up for your rights and using self-control were "Very Important" for the student to be able to do in the home/community environments. Contrary to his mother's belief that responding to teasing was a "Very Important" skill for him to be able to do in the home/community environments, Delante believed it was "Not Important." Whereas Delante perceived all targeted social skills were "Very Important" for him to be able to use in the school environment, his mother perceived the targeted social skills were "Important." Further, the teacher rated all three social skills as "Very Important" for Delante to be able to do in both the home and school environments.

With regard to the improvement on the social skills taught, Delante and his mother indicated that Delante made "Moderate Improvement" in his ability to demonstrate the social skill of using self-control. According to Delante, he made "A Lot of Improvement" in his ability to demonstrate the social skills of standing up for his rights and responding to teasing while his mother believed he made "Moderate Improvement." Delante's teacher believed that Delante made "A Lot of Improvement" in his ability to demonstrate the social skill of standing up for your rights and "Moderate Improvement" in his ability to demonstrate the social skills of using self-control and responding to teasing. Delante made the following comment about the program, "Yes, I liked it." The teacher made the following comments about the social skill instruction

program overall, "Parental involvement is key! The students really enjoyed the instruction. They looked forward to 'their time' and felt special." With regard to the presentation of the instruction, the teacher said, "I liked the power point presentations, my students learn better when they see, do, and hear." See Tables 3, 4, and 5 for Delante's scores and comments on the satisfaction questionnaires from all raters.

Table 1

Participant's Performance on the SSIS Social Skill Subscales across All Raters

Subdomains / Social Skill Subscale		Jaquita		Monique		Delante	
		Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
1. Communication	Self-Rating	Below Average	Average+	Average	Average	Above Average	Average√
	Parent	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average
	Teacher	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average
2. Cooperation	Self-Rating	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Average
	Parent	Average	Average	Average	Average	Below Average	Below Average
	Teacher	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average
3. Assertion	Self-Rating	Below Average	Above Average+	Average	Average	Average	Average
	Parent	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average
	Teacher	Average	Average	Average	Average	Below Average	Average+
4. Responsibility	Self-Rating	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Above Average	Below Average√
	Parent	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average
	Teacher	Below Average	Average+	Average	Average	Average	Average+
5. Empathy	Self-Rating	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Below Average	Above Average	Below Average√
	Parent	Average	Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average Average√
	Teacher	Below Average	Average+	Average	Average	Below Average	Below Average
6. Engagement	Self-Rating	Below Average	Below Average	Average	Average	Above Average	Average+
	Parent	Below Average	Average+	Average	Average	Below Average	Below Average
	Teacher	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Below Average
7. Self-Control	Self-Rating	Below Average	Average+	Average	Average	Average	Average
	Parent	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Average+	Below Average	Average+
	Teacher	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Below Average	Average	Average

Note. + = improvement, √ = regression

Table 2

Participant's Performance on the SSIS Problem Behavior Subscales across All Raters

Subdomains		Jaquita		Monique		Delante	
Problem Behavior Subscale		**Pretest**	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
1. *Externalizing*	Self-Rating	Above Average	Above Average	Average	Average	Below Average	Average√
	Parent	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Average	Average
	Teacher	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Average	Average
2. *Bullying*	Self-Rating	Above Average	Average—	Average	Average	Average	Average
	Parent	Average	Average	Average	Above Average√	Average	Average
	Teacher	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
3. *Hyperactivity / Inattention*	Self-Rating	Above Average	Above Average	Average	Average	Below Average	Below Average
	Parent	Above Average	Above Average	Average	Above Average√	Above Average	Above Average
	Teacher	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
4. *Internalizing*	Self-Rating	Above Average	Average—	Average	Average	Below Average	Average√
	Parent	Above Average	Above Average	Average	Above Average√	Above Average	Average—
	Teacher	Average	Average	Above Average	Above Average	Average	Average
5. *Autism Spectrum*	Parent	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
	Teacher	Above Average	Average—	Average	Average	Above Average	Above Average

Note. + = improvement, √ = regression

Table 3

Student Satisfaction Questionnaire

Question	Jaquita	Monique	Delante	Mean
1. *Importance[1] of targeted skills in school environment*				
1. Standing up for your rights	3	3	4	3.3
2. Using self-control	4	4	4	4
3. Responding to teasing	4	3	4	3.7
2. *Importance of targeted skills in home or community environment*				
1. Standing up for your rights	3	4	4	3.7
2. Using self-control	3	3	4	3.3
3. Responding to teasing	4	2	1	2.3
3. *Improvement[2] in ability to demonstrate the targeted social skills*				
1. Standing up for your rights	3	4	4	3.7
2. Using self-control	3	1	3	2.3
3. Responding to teasing	4	3	4	3.7
4. *How much did you like[3] using the computer program to learn social skills?*	3	4	4	3.7
5. *How much did you like participating in a small group with your peers to learn social skills?*	3	2	4	3
6. *How much did you like working with your parents to practice social skills you learned in school at home?*	4	4	4	4
7. *How much[4] do you think other students would like to learn the social skills using a computer?*	3	3	4	3.3
8. *How much do you think other students would like learning social skills in a small group with their peers?*	4	2	4	3.3
9. *Overall, how effective[5] do you think this social skill instruction program was in the classroom environment?*	3	2	4	3
10. *Overall, how effective do you think this social skill instruction program was in the home or community environment?*	4	1	4	3
11. *To what extent would you recommend[6] this program to other students in your class?*	4	4	3	3.7
12. *How important do you think it is for social skill instruction to include things you enjoy talking about and have in common with your peers?*	3	4	4	3.7
13. *What parts of working together in a small group with your parents on social skills did you like the most?*	Working on role plays.	The one with the numbers	Respond to teasing.	
14. *What parts of working together in a small group with your parents on social skills did you like the most?*	Have to talk out loud and front of family.	The reading part.	Rights.	
15. *If I was to teach this program again to another group of students, is there anything you think I should do differently?*	No, the same.	I don't know.	Same.	

Note. [1] 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = important, 4 = very important; [2] 1 = no improvement, 2 = slight improvement, 3 = moderate improvement, 4 = a lot of improvement; [3] 1 = not at all, 2 = slightly liked, 3 = liked, 4 = definitely liked; [4] 1 = not at all, 2 = possibly, 3 = much, 4 = very much, [5] 1 = not effective, 2 = slightly effective, 3 = effective, 4 = very effective; [6] 1 = not recommend, 2 = possibly recommend, 3 = recommend, 4 = definitely recommend

Table 4

Parent Satisfaction Questionnaire

Question	Jaquita's Mother	Monique's Grandmother	Delante's Mother	Mean
1. *Importance[1] of targeted skills in school environment*				
1. *Standing up for your rights*	3	2	3	2.7
2. *Using self-control*	4	2	3	3
3. *Responding to teasing*	4	3	3	3.3
2. *Importance of targeted skills in home or community environment*				
1. *Standing up for your rights*	4	2	4	3.3
2. *Using self-control*	4	2	4	3.3
3. *Responding to teasing*	3	3	4	3.3
3. *Improvement[2] in ability to demonstrate the targeted social skills*				
1. *Standing up for your rights*	3	2	3	2.7
2. *Using self-control*	3	2	3	2.7
3. *Responding to teasing*	4	3	3	3.3
4. *How appropriate[3] so you think instruction utilizing a computer-based program us for students to learn social skills?*	4	3	3	3.3
5. *How important do you think it is for your child to be able to interact appropriately with peers in small groups?*	4	4	3	3.7
6. *How important is parental involvement in knowing and practicing social skills learned by your child in the home environment?*	4	4	4	4
7. *Overall, how effective[4] do you believe this social skill instruction program was in helping your child become more successful in the classroom environment?*	3	3	2	2.7
8. O*verall, how effective do you believe this social skill instruction program was in helping your child become more successful in the home or community environment?*	4	3	2	3
9. *To what extent would you recommend[5] this program to families who have children with similar social and/or behavioral needs?*	4	4	3	3.7
10. *To what extent did you enjoy working with your child at home on social skills taught at school?*	4	2	3	3
11. *How practical was this program with regard to implementation in the home setting?*	4	2	3	3
12. *How important do you think it is for social skill instruction to incorporate aspects of your child's culture as part of the curriculum?*	4	2	3	3

Note. [1] 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = important, 4 = very important; [2] 1 = no improvement, 2 = slight improvement, 3 = moderate improvement, 4 = a lot of improvement; [3] 1 = not appropriate, 2 = slightly appropriate, 3 = appropriate, 4 = very appropriate; [4] 1 = not effective, 2 = slightly effective, 3 = effective, 4 = very effective; [5] 1 = not recommend, 2 = possibly recommend, 3 = recommend, 4 = definitely recommend; [6] 1 = not at all, 2 = slightly liked, 3 = liked, 4 = definitely liked

Table 5

Teacher Satisfaction Questionnaire

Question	Jaquita	Monique	Delante	Mean
1. *Importance[1] of targeted skills in school environment*				
1. *Standing up for your rights*	4	4	4	4
2. *Using self-control*	4	4	4	4
3. *Responding to teasing*	4	4	4	4
2. *Importance of targeted skills in home or community environment*				
1. *Standing up for your rights*	4	4	4	4
2. *Using self-control*	4	4	4	4
3. *Responding to teasing*	4	4	4	4
3. *Improvement[2] in ability to demonstrate the targeted social skills*				
1. *Standing up for your rights*	4	4	4	4
2. *Using self-control*	3	3	3	3
3. *Responding to teasing*	3	3	3	3
4. *How appropriate[3] do you think instruction utilizing a PowerPoint program is for the target students to learn social skills?*	4			
5. *How important do you think it is for target students to be able to interact appropriately with peers in small group situations?*	4			
6. *Overall, how effective[4] do you believe this social skill instruction program was in helping target students become more successful in the classroom environment?*	3			
7. *To what extent would you recommend[5] this program to students who have similar social and or behavioral needs?*	4			
8. *If your school was given the instructional materials used for this study and training, to what extent do you think this intervention would be practical[6] for a teacher, an instructional assistant, or a general education peer to implement within the school setting?*	3			
9. *How appropriate do you believe parental involvement is for students to learn the social skills taught?*	4			
10. *How important is it for parents to be involved in reiterating skill taught at school within the home environment?*	4			
11. *Do you believe that parental involvement in this social skills instruction program was effective?*	3			

Note. [1] 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = important, 4 = very important; [2] 1 = no improvement, 2 = slight improvement, 3 = moderate improvement, 4 = a lot of improvement; [3] 1 = not appropriate, 2 = slightly appropriate, 3 = appropriate, 4 = very appropriate ; [4] 1 = not effective, 2 = slightly effective, 3 = effective, 4 = very effective; [5] 1 = not recommend, 2 = possibly recommend, 3 = recommend, 4 = definitely recommend; [6] 1 =not practical, 2 = slightly practical, 3 = practical, 4 = very practical

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a social skill instruction program on the exhibition of appropriate social skills as alternatives to aggression for African American high school students with disabilities through a multiple probe across three social skills design. The social skill intervention, an adapted version of the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* social skills curriculum, included the following components: (a) cultural relevance for African American high school students, (b) consideration of behavioral functions of the African American participants, and (c) parental involvement. The participants were three 10th-grade African American students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors. Results indicated a functional relation between the social skill intervention package and the percentage of steps performed correctly by all participants during role-play situations with their peers in the school setting. Results also indicated a functional relation between the social skill intervention package and percentage of steps performed correctly for one participant during role-play situations with a family member in the home setting. Additionally, anecdotal information supported that participants demonstrated appropriate social responses to naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents in the school and home environments. Findings and discussion points are presented in this chapter organized by the six research questions. Limitations of the study, suggestions for future research, and implications for practice are discussed.

Effects of Intervention on Dependent Variables

Research Question 1: To what extent did the social skill instruction program improve

participant's execution of social skills as an alternative to aggression in role-play

situations involving peers in the school setting?

Findings from this study indicated a functional relation between the social skill

intervention package and the percentage of steps performed correctly by all participants

during role-play situations with their peers in the school setting. Specifically,

participants' percentage of correct responses during role-play situations with peers for the

targeted social skills of responding to teasing, using self-control, and standing up for your

rights (shown as the solid data points in Figures 1, 2, and 3) demonstrate that all three

participants performed better during the social skill instruction condition than during the

baseline condition. For the first social skill, responding to teasing, participants'

percentage of correct responses during role-play situations averaged 22% during the

baseline condition and 72% during the social skill instruction condition, showing an

increase of 48%. For the second social skill, using self-control, participants' percentage

of correct responses during role-play situations averaged 17.6% during the baseline

condition and 81.5% during the social skill instruction condition, indicating an increase

of 63.9%. For the third social skill, standing up for your rights, participants' percentage

of correct responses during role-play situations averaged 17.9% during the baseline

condition and 78.6% during the social skill instruction condition, representing an increase

of 60.7%.

This study supports previous research that social skill instruction can be used as

an alternative to aggression for adolescents by increasing their use of prosocial behaviors

during role-play situations. Specifically, two previous studies (i.e., Goldstein & Glick, 1994; Tse et al., 2007) incorporated the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* social skill program that was used in the current study to promote adolescents' prosocial behaviors as alternatives to aggression. This study supports the use of an adapted version of this social skill instruction program as an effective way to improve participants' use of social skills as an alternative to aggression in role-play situations with their peers. One component of the social skill instruction that may help with students' skill improvement is the extensive amounts of role-play opportunities students were given. Role-plays were also created that integrated typical peer experiences in comparable situations and the unique cultural perspectives of this population. Since both the intervention and role-play scenarios incorporated culturally relevant material, the participants may have been able to relate more to the examples given and practiced within the intervention, and this could have helped them later when given comparable role-play scenarios. Another component that contributes to the intervention effects may be that the instruction was developed from a functional perspective and discussions addressed not only why students might be exhibiting certain social behaviors, but also the expected consequences or outcomes of such behavior, and more appropriate ways to achieve the same outcomes.

Previous research on the effectiveness of social skill instruction with African American adolescents with or at risk for disabilities has been limited (Hammond & Yung, 1991; Presley & Hughes, 2000). This study adds to the scant research regarding the effectiveness of social skill instruction for African American youth with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors. Additionally, a consistent weakness cited in the social skill instruction literature has been the limited generalizability of social skills

taught to students in therapeutic settings to other settings (Gresham, 1994, 1998;

Gresham et al., 2001). Gresham et al. (2001) suggested that the use of multiple exemplar

(e.g., across different settings, across different persons, using variations in role-play

situations) training during social skill instruction could increase the probability that

participants would be able to use the social skills taught in small group instructional

settings in real-world situations and environments. Comparable to the study by Foxx et

al. (1991), the intervention for this study incorporated the use of a variety of role-play

scenarios conducted with peers and applicable to the school, home, and community

settings.

Research Question 2: To what extent did the social skill instruction program improve

participant's execution of social skills as an alternative to aggression in role-play

situations involving family members?

Unfortunately, complete data pertaining to this research question were obtained

for only one of the three participants (i.e., Jaquita). Possible reasons and explanations for

the incomplete data collection for the two other participants (i.e., Monique, Delante) will

be discussed in subsequent paragraphs. Findings from this study for Jaquita indicated a

functional relation between the social skill intervention package and Jaquita's percentage

of steps performed correctly during role-play situations with her mother in the home

setting. Specifically, Jaquita's percentage of correct responses during role-play situations

with her mother for the targeted social skills of responding to teasing, using self-control,

and standing up for your rights (shown as the open data points in Figure 1) showed that

she performed better during the social skill instruction condition than during the baseline

condition. For the first social skill taught, responding to teasing, Jaquita's percentage of

correct responses during role-play situations averaged 18% during the baseline condition and 66.7% during the social skill instruction condition, indicating an increase of 48.7%. For the second social skill, using self-control, Jaquita's percentage of correct responses during role-play situations averaged 16.3% during the baseline condition and 47.6% during the social skill instruction condition, which was an increase of 31.3%. For the third social skill, standing up for your rights, Jaquita's percentage of correct responses during role-play situations averaged 18.2% during the baseline condition and 71.4% during the social skill instruction condition, with an increase of 53.2%.

For the two other participants, Monique and Delante, parent participation with their children on the supplemental activities and role-play situations in the home environment was limited. Therefore, a functional relation between the social skill intervention package and percentage of steps performed correctly by these students did not exist. For example, Delante only completed 10 role-play scenarios over the course of the study in the home environment (out of 36) and in an inconsistent manner. However, for the social skill of responding to teasing, at least one data point was collected in each condition. Delante's percentage of correct responses during role-play situations for the one point collected during the baseline condition was 20% and 80% for the one data point collected during the social skill instruction condition, indicating an increase of 60%. For the two data points collected during the maintenance condition, Delante averaged 80%, again, an increase of 60% over the baseline condition. Limited results attained for Delante reflect possible positive effects of the intervention for the skill of responding to teasing.

With regard to Monique, data collection within the home environment occurred for 3 weeks of the study until her grandmother terminated participation the final week. However, while Monique's data indicate an increase over the baseline condition, results for the first two social skills during the intervention condition was very inconsistent. As heard on the audio recording for two role-play situations for responding to teasing, Monique's grandmother told Monique that if she did not know, she could say "I don't know." After this statement, it seemed that Monique tended to use the "I don't know," statement more frequency. For example, on four of the role-play situations for responding to teasing (i.e., last two collected during the intervention and the two collected during maintenance) and for the final data point of using self-control, Monique responded with "I don't know," immediately rather than think about and consequently act out the social skill steps. The verbal prompting, deviating from the script, from Monique's grandmother, may have led to such findings.

As noted previously, Gresham et al. (2001) recommended that the use of multiple exemplar training during social skill instruction could help students generalize targeted social skills to real-world situations and environments. Another way that this study sought to increase participants' ability to generalize social skills learned to settings other than the therapeutic one was to incorporate parental involvement as a part of the intervention package. A review of research on social skill instruction for students with disabilities (Denning, 2007) found that a component of effective social skill instruction was parental involvement through practice of social skills in the home setting. This study supports the idea that by including parents in the intervention process, it may help increase students' ability to generalize skills to other environments (Armstrong &

McPherson, 1991; Budd & Itzkowitz, 1990; Harrell et al., 2009; Laugeson et al., 2009).

Further, this study adds to the limited literature (i.e., Harrell et al., 2009; Laugeson et al.,

2009) conducted on African American secondary students with socio-emotional

difficulties who received social skill instruction involving parental participation.

Research Question 3: To what extent would the participants respond appropriately to

naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents in the school, home, or

community environments?

Though the data collected on participants' ability to respond appropriately to

naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents in the classrooms were limited, there is

an indication that participants were, to some extent, able to use the targeted social skills

in naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents in the home, community, and school

settings. Two of the students (i.e., Jaquita and Monique) reported school, home, and

community situations requiring their use of the targeted social skills. Based on the

participants' self-reports, it appears that to some degree they were able to use the taught

social skills in non-therapeutic environments (i.e., outside of small group instruction

setting). For example, Jaquita relayed a situation at school when she was questioned by

the on-duty police officer to determine her involvement in the theft of some money in her

occupational course of study classroom from the "sweet shop." She clearly explained

how she used the social skill of standing up for your rights to appropriately handle this

situation. In another example,   Monique described how she was using the social skill of

using self-control at home. She described an altercation with her grandmother over her

homework. She stated, "now every time when me and her fuss sometimes I just go

somewhere else so I won't keep fussing."

Similar to previous research, this study indicates that despite students'

demonstration of increased ability to use targeted social skills during naturally occurring

aggression inducing incidents, it is still a generalization measure that is difficult to

capture (i.e., Presley & Hughes, 2000). The continued difficulty incurred while trying to

gather this specific generalization data may be the results of the infrequent appearance of

naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents in the classroom environment, a finding

commonly reported in literature (Lo et al., 2011).

Research Question 4: To what extent did the obtained social behavior changes maintain

across time?

Maintenance data on the participants' use of targeted social skills during role-play

situations in the school environment were collected following the termination of skill

specific instruction. For the first social skill, responding to teasing, participants'

percentage of correct responses during role-play situations in the school setting during the

maintenance condition showed an increase of 12% over the intervention condition and an

increase of 60% over the baseline condition. For the second social skill, using self-

control, participants' percentage of correct responses during role-play situations in the

school setting during the maintenance condition indicated an increase of 6.6% over the

intervention condition and an increase of 70.5% over the baseline condition. For the third

social skill, standing up for your rights, participants' percentage of correct responses

during role-play situations averaged was the same for both the intervention and

maintenance conditions, indicating an increase of 60.7% over the baseline condition.

Maintenance data of the participants' use of targeted social skills during role-play

situations in the home environments were collected for 1-2 weeks after the instruction

ceased for the first two targeted social skills. Maintenance data were not collected on the final social skill, standing up for your rights, in the home setting due to the ending of the school year. Unfortunately, data were collected for only one participant (i.e., Jaquita) throughout the maintenance condition. For the first social skill, responding to teasing, Jaquita's percentage of correct responses during role-play situations which averaged 65% during the maintenance condition, showing an increase of 47% over the baseline condition. For the second social skill, using self-control, Jaquita's percentage of correct responses during role-play situations averaged 75% during the maintenance condition and indicated an increase of 58.7% over the baseline condition.

Overall, for both the school and home settings, it appears that participants were able to maintain the targeted skills of responding to teasing and using self-control upon termination of the intervention. In addition, maintenance results obtained for the social skill of standing up for your rights showed that all participants were able to continue to use this skill appropriately in role-play situations with their peers in the school setting after instruction for this specific skill ceased.

For the first two social skills (i.e., responding to teasing and using self-control) as measured during role-play situations in both school and home environments, the participants demonstrated similar or higher percentages of correct responses during the maintenance condition than those during the intervention condition. This is not typically found in the social skills literature as participants usually do slightly poorly in the maintenance condition than the intervention condition. One reason for the atypical results achieved by the participants in the current study during the maintenance condition may be due to the fact that they practiced the social skills so frequently during the role-play

situations in both school and home settings that they become better at performing the social skills over time. Another reason may be the short period of time during which the entire study occurred (i.e., 5 weeks), therefore decreasing the time lapse between termination of the intervention and the collection of maintenance data. Lastly, the higher maintenance data may have been because the participants were more heavily invested in this study. In addition, because role-play scenarios contained culturally relevant material, this could have contributed to participant recall of appropriate responses later when given comparable role-play scenarios with high relevance to those practiced during the intervention.

The maintenance results of this study strengthen the literature base in social skill instruction in two ways. First, the study addressed an essential aspect of social skill instruction in that social skills taught should be able to maintain over time (Gresham et al., 2001). Second, it addresses the research limitation of insufficient maintenance data collection (Harrell et al., 2009; Laugeson et al., 2009). This study shows that African American youth with disabilities were able to maintain targeted social skills taught over a short period of time following the termination of the intervention.

Discussion of Social Validity Findings

Research Question 5: To what extent did the participants improve their social skill
　　　acquisition and performance from the pretest to the posttest as measured through
　　　teacher ratings, parent ratings, and participants' self ratings?

This study sought to investigate the extent to which participants improved their social skill acquisition and performance from the pretest to the posttest on the *SSIS Rating Scales* and the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist* through teacher ratings,

parent ratings, and participants' self ratings. This research question was included because previous literature indicated that a multimodal method of assessment was important to ensure unbiased data collection (Laugeson et al., 2009). Therefore, rather than collecting data solely from the parents who may be biased due to their investment in the intervention, this study also included both a teacher and participant perspectives on any social or behavioral changes from pretest to posttest.

All three participants improved in one or more of the *SSIS Social Skill Subscales* across almost all raters. The only exception to this improvement was for Delante. Results of his self rating indicated that he did not improve on any of the *Social Skill* subscales and in fact on one skill, *Empathy*, he received scores from "Above Average" to "Below Average" following termination of the intervention. A reason for the differing results for Delante's self rating and his mother's and teacher's ratings may be that he did not perceive that he had deficits in effectively demonstrating targeted social skills. His lack of recognition of his social difficulties could have hindered his ability to use social skills appropriately in a number of situations prior to receiving the social skill instruction. For example, as discussed earlier within the results section, during the intervention and maintenance conditions, Delante frequently mentioned that he did not have any problems or need for learning the targeted social skills. However, during the informal group discussions, the other participants mentioned that he did experience difficulty at times. In two particular instances where Delante said he never got teased, Jaquita refuted this by sharing that she had just seen Delante being teased in the hallway during lunch time. Overall, Delante's improvement over baseline in his ability to exhibit correct responses during role-play situations with peers are more accurately reflected on the social validity

data obtained from his teacher and his mother, specifically for the social skills of standing up for your rights and using self-control.

The improvement seen across all dependent variables for Jaquita correspond to the social validity data that were collected. For example, Jaquita did not receive any additional office referrals during the intervention or following termination of the intervention. Social validity data, specifically information obtained from the *SSIS* and the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklists*, reflect that Jaquita, her mother, and her teacher were all in agreement regarding Jaquita's improved exhibition all targeted social skills.

The improvement seen across two of the dependent variables (i.e., percentage of correct responses during role-play situations with peers, anecdotal data) for Monique correspond to the social validity data that were collected. Specifically, Monique did not receive any additional office referrals during the intervention or following termination of the intervention. Social validity data obtained through the satisfaction questionnaires correspond to improvement seen on the aforementioned dependent variables. Monique's grandmother and her teacher agreed that Monique had improved in her ability to exhibit all of the targeted social skills.

On the *SSIS Problem Behavior Subscales*, all participants with the exception of Monique improved on at least one subscale. Monique did not appear to make any improvement on the *Problem Behavior* Subscales, and in fact her grandmother rated her as getting worse on the subscales of *bullying*, *hyperactivity/inattention*, and *internalizing*. A reason for this discrepancy may be that when the *SSIS* forms was sent home initially, they were provided in a written format. It was later discovered that Monique's grandmother experienced difficulty with reading decoding and comprehension. It is

possible that her grandmother may not have understood the questions she read and therefore could not provide an accurate assessment of Monique's ability. The posttests were completed in an interview format and in person to alleviate any confusion.

On the *Skillstreaming the Adolescent Checklist*, results of the ratings completed by both the teacher and the parents of participants indicated that the participants improved on both the social skills of responding to teasing and using self-control. Results from this tool further support the positive effects of the intervention on the participants' exhibition of at least two of the targeted social skills in the eyes of the teacher and parents. However, results of the participants' self ratings indicated that two of the participants (i.e., Delante and Monique) did not believe they improved on any of the social skills taught. For Delante, it could be because he perceived that he did not have any social difficulties in the first place. With regard to Monique, she may have lacked self-confidence in her ability to demonstrate targeted social skills appropriately. Jaquita, however, rated herself as having improved on the social skill of responding to teasing.

Research Question 6: What are the opinions of the participants, parents, and teachers

regarding the importance of the targeted social skills, acceptability of the

intervention package, and effectiveness of the social skill instruction program?

One purpose of this study was to determine the social validity of the culturally relevant social skill instruction based on participants', parents', and the teacher's perceptions regarding its effectiveness and practicality. Analysis of the participants' questionnaires showed that participants believed that the targeted social skills were important in both the school and home/community environments. All participants indicated that they enjoyed learning the social skills at home with their parents and would

recommend this social skill instruction program to other students in their class. Overall, the participants agreed that this social skill instruction program was necessary and enjoyable in both the school and home environments. Participants also agreed that the intervention was effective in the school setting; however, there was some difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of the intervention within the home or community environment. While Jaquita and Delante believed the intervention was very effective within the home or community environment, Monique disagreed indicating that the social skill instruction was not effective at all. A possible reason for this incongruity may be based on Monique's perception of her grandmother and her grandmother's difficulties in reading aloud the scripts. Monique could have viewed the process of working with her grandmother on the targeted social skills as very labor and time intensive. So while Monique enjoyed working on the social skills with her grandmother, she may have doubted the effectiveness due to the numerous error corrections Monique had to make while her grandmother read aloud.

Social validity results from the parents indicated that this study had a positive effect on the participants' ability to demonstrate the targeted social skills. All parents agreed that the social skills taught were important in both the school and the home/community environments. The parents also indicated that it was very important for them to be involved in knowing and practicing social skills taught to their children at school and in their home environments. Overall, the parents of the participants felt that this social skill instruction program was effective, practical, enjoyable, and one that they would recommend to families who have children with similar social and/or behavioral needs. Three reasons for their perception are probable. First, parents recognized that their

children experienced difficulty interacting appropriately in social situations with their peers and were willing to do what they could to help their children develop their skills in this area. Second, while parents did not initially have a lot of contact with the school, they appeared to appreciate that their opinions regarding their child's education were taken into consideration. Moreover, parents appeared to enjoy having additional interaction time with their children and being able to practice and reiterate skills learned at school and at home. The literature indicate that there are many benefits of involving parents in interventions conducted within the school setting such as better academic outcomes and more optimistic results (Christenson et al., 1992; Epstein, 1992; Jimerson et al., 2006; Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). In addition, there is a strong connection between parental participation and student achievement, accountability, attendance, social skills, and behaviors (Bloom, 2001; McKay et al., 2003; Pena, 2000; Thompson, 2003). This study adds to the aforementioned literature, especially with regards to an increased exhibition of appropriate social skills.

An analysis of teacher's satisfaction questionnaire showed that the teacher believed that all of her students benefitted from participation in the social skill instruction. She felt that all three of the targeted social skills were very important in both the school and home/community environments, and that all students showed improvement in their ability to exhibit targeted social skills. The teacher reported that the social skill instruction would be practical for a teacher, instructional assistant, or general education peer to implement at school if given the necessary materials. Overall, the teacher viewed this social skill instruction program as practical, effective, appropriate, and one she would definitely recommend. Two reasons are possible. First, this teacher

readily acknowledged that many of her students encountered difficulties in interacting appropriately with peers and that instruction in this area is clearly lacking within the school environment. Second, this teacher valued the importance of parental involvement and expressed that it was an essential component that should be taken into consideration when teaching students.

Specific Contributions of this Study

This study contributes to the literature in a myriad of ways: (a) it incorporated parental involvement in the social skill instruction intervention to help participants generalize skills learned in the school environment to the home or community environments, (b) culturally relevant material was integrated into social skill instruction, (c) it targeted African American secondary students with mild intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviors, (d) it focused on using social skill instruction as an alternative to aggression, and (e) social skill instruction was designed from a behavioral function perspective. These contributions are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

First, this study extends the research base on the effectiveness of social skill programs that incorporate parental involvement. One of the main challenges encountered in social skill instruction has been the difficulty of students to generalize skills taught in therapeutic settings to other settings (Gresham, 1994, 1998; Gresham et al., 2001). Similar to the studies by Pfiffner and McBurnett (1997) and Fraser et al. (2005), results of the current study demonstrated that participants were able to generalize and exhibit appropriate demonstration of targeted social skills to multiple settings (i.e., school, home, community). The reasons for the generalization effects are attributed to participants'

being exposed to a variety of role-play situations across settings (i.e., home, school) and across people (i.e., family members, peers).

Second, this study adds to the scarce literature examining the efficacy of culturally responsive social skill instruction. Comparable to the study by Lo et al. (2011), results of this study showed that all participants improved in their ability to demonstrate targeted social skills after receiving social skill instruction considering the specific behavioral profiles of African American students. Moreover, this study extended the literature by incorporating culturally relevant material into the development of role-play scenarios used to assess the participants' ability to use social skills taught. For example, role-play scenarios reflected participants' interests such as television shows watched, musical tastes, fashion, and slang incorporated into their vocabulary. In addition, discussions during the intervention were encouraged that focused on topics African American students frequently encountered (e.g., dating, getting along with siblings, involvement in church, participation in community activities, applying for jobs).

Third, this study extended the literature by targeting a population (i.e., African American secondary students with mild intellectual disabilities) that has rarely been included in the social skill instruction literature. Only a handful of studies (Hammond & Yung, 1991; Harrell, et al., 2009; Laugeson, et al., 2009; Presley & Hughes, 2000) have included African American secondary students as participants, and only two of these studies (i.e., Laugeson, et al., 2009; Presley & Hughes, 2000) included participants with disabilities. In addition, this study extends the literature by using social skill instruction as an alternative to aggression with this population of students. This skill is important because by increasing students' prosocial behaviors, it could help contribute to better

post-school outcomes for this population of students. Like the study by Presley and Hughes (2000), participants in the current study showed an increase in the number of steps performed accurately in given role-play scenarios with their peers in their responses to aggression.

This study also extends the literature by designing the social skill instruction from a behavioral function perspective as recommended by Elliott and Gresham (1991) to align treatment to participants' specific social skill deficits. While this study did not specifically include a functional behavioral assessment, the functional perspective was integrated. Pre-assessment data were collected from the participants, parents, and teacher to determine which social skills were lacking in each participant's repertoire in order to determine the targeted social skills. During instruction, students' behavior functions (i.e., reasons for performing or not performing targeted social skills) were addressed. For example, participants were asked to explain why they did specific behaviors or had specific reactions in lieu of exhibiting appropriate social skills in given situations to determine how to most effectively engage and teach social skills as students' alternatives to aggression. Integrating the functional perspective into the development of the social skill curriculum used in this study may have contributed to the effectiveness of the intervention because it enabled participants to become more aware of precipitating factors. Further, in may have helped students find appropriate prosocial behaviors to achieve the same outcomes as prior aggressive behaviors.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

This study has several limitations and implications for future research. First, like a similar study on the exhibition of appropriate social skills as alternatives to aggression (Presley & Hughes, 2000), generalization data were difficult to measure. The current study used an indirect measure of the frequency of participants' appropriate responses to naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents (i.e., anecdotal data collected from participants in the school setting) and percentage of social skill performance as an alternative to aggression with family members as dependent variables. The indirect measure of participants' transfer of skills into their natural environments was selected because direct observations of student behaviors in the classrooms were not a viable option due to a lack of observable naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents in the classroom setting within the limited class periods available for observations. The percentage of social skill performance with family members was selected because it was a comparable measure to what was being used in the school setting. Role plays were enacted with family members in the hope that it may increase students' ability to generalize skills to the home setting. However, the indirect measure used was dependent on student verbal accounts of their use of targeted social skills during naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents. Therefore, it is possible that students may not have accurately portrayed their actions during naturally occurring aggression inducing incidents. Future studies should include multiple means of gathering generalization data that incorporate more direct measures.

Second, the way supplemental social skill activities were provided in the home setting limit the results of this study. One of the participants, Monique, lived with her

grandmother who experienced difficulty in the area of reading decoding. Since materials were sent home in a binder in a written format, difficulty in reading could have contributed to Monique's grandmother's lack of follow-through for the duration of the study. There was also inconsistency with regard to implementation of the supplemental activities at home for Delante over the course of the study. Additionally, parents only provided supplemental activities three times per week while instruction occurred in the school setting for 5 days a week. Future studies should take the education level and/or needs of participants' parents or guardians into consideration and compensate for these by creating supplemental activities that are provided in an alternate format (e.g., audio, DVD, or computer). Future studies should also have parents provide their component of the intervention at home consistent with the intervention occurrence within the school setting (e.g., if instruction occurs at home daily then supplemental activities should be provided at home nightly).

Third, parents were compensated for participation in this study. While it seemed reasonable to compensate a parent or guardian for their participation in a study requiring additional time and effort as an extension of typical school expectations, the question remains as to whether or not parental participation would have occurred without this compensation. Future research studies should investigate parents' willingness to go beyond typical school involvement to prevent/intervene in order to improve their child's social interactions or behaviors without compensation.

Fourth, another major limitation of this intervention was that it was a social skill instruction package and therefore it is impossible to determine which part(s) of the intervention was necessary to produce positive results. This study did not tease out the

parental involvement component from the overall social skill instruction package to determine whether it was the social skill instruction conducted at school alone, the parents-directed supplemental materials, or the combination of the components that increased participants' use of targeted social skills. Future research may address this limitation by comparing a teacher-led social skill instruction, a parent-led social skill instruction, and a combination of teacher-parent social skill instruction program to determine which, if any, of the three was most effective.

Fifth, due to this study being conducted towards the end of the school year, maintenance data were not collected in both the school and home settings for an extended period of time following termination of the intervention. Additionally, complete maintenance data for the final targeted social skill (i.e., standing up for you rights) were not collected in the home setting. Future research should consider starting the study earlier in the school year to allow adequate time for complete data collection.

Sixth, students were selected for participation in this study based on teacher recommendation and consideration of classroom schedules. Due to the short period of time available to conduct the present study, participants were chosen who also had a schedule that enabled the interventionist to take all of the students out of class at the same time for instruction. Future studies should be open to the possibility of using students from multiple classes as participants and at different times of the day.

Seventh, participants were involved in observing and practicing with others during role-play scenarios, even when it was not their turn for assessment. It is possible that there might be some practice effect. However, role-play situations for the targeted social skills were chosen in a random order in addition to having students rotate their

participation in role-play situations to try to minimize the practice effect. Future researchers should consider using general education peers who are not involved in the study to engage in role-play situations with participants.

Eighth, no qualitative data were collected regarding students' use of the targeted skills during the baseline condition. Therefore, comparison of students' data between the baseline and intervention conditions was not possible. Future studies should collect qualitative data throughout the course of the study.

Finally, this study employed single-subject methodology. While the internal validity of this study was strengthened by using quality indicators for this type of research provided by Horner et al. (2005), studies using this design cannot be generalized to different participants and settings. The main issue was that there was a limited parent population because only one parent was actively involved in providing the supplemental activities with their child over the course of the study. This study was also conducted with African American students whose parents were active members of their child's education, which affects the ability to generalize results to students whose parents are not active participants in their child's education due to various reasons. Therefore, systematic replications of this study are needed that include participants from other populations across multiple geographic locations to broaden the generalization effects of this particular social skill instruction program. In addition, both parents and/or additional family members should be recruited for participation in future studies to increase the number of people with whom participants can interact.

Implications for Practice

There are some implications for practice. To maximize the efficacy of this culturally relevant social skill intervention incorporating parental involvement, procedural fidelity data should be gathered at the school and home settings with high fidelity. It is recommended that interventionists meet directly and in person with parents prior to beginning the study and continue to reiterate expectations to parents in order to ensure complete understanding of the material and to ward off or alleviate any confusion.

Another recommendation to consider prior to implementing this social skill instruction program relates to who will be implementing instruction, and the level and type of professional development needed. Professional development should include a full demonstration of a social skill lesson and allow the opportunity for future interventionists to practice delivering instruction. Also, the professional development should allow time for interventionists to ask questions or discuss any of the data collection procedures as an effort to confirm clarity.

This study also has important implications for the field of education in providing a possible means to encourage better post-school outcomes for African American students with disabilities. In particular, this study focused on providing social skill instruction to African American students who exhibit difficulty in social interactions as an alternative to aggression. This study included many facets of instruction recommended by Gresham et al. (2001) to increase participants' ability to generalize skills learned to various settings and situations, and maintain skills learned over time. Specifically, this study included social skill instruction that was (a) provided in a small group with peers, (b) reiterated and practiced in the home environment with parents, (c) culturally relevant,

and (d) designed from a behavioral function perspective. In addition, the current study measured the percentage of steps performed correctly by participants during role-play situations with both their peers in the school setting and their parents or family members in the home setting across a variety of situations that could occur in the school, home, and community to increase the generalizability of social skills learned.

REFERENCES

Armstrong, A., & McPherson, A. (1991). Homework as a critical component in social skills instruction. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, *24*(1), 45-47.

Au, K., & Raphael, T. (2000). Equity and literacy in the next millennium. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *35*, 170-188.

Banks, R., Hogue, A., Timberlake, T., & Liddle, H. (1996). An Afrocentric approach to group social skills training with inner-city African American adolescents. *Journal of Negro Education*, *65*, 414-423.

Bastian, L. D., & Taylor, B. M. (1994). *National crime victimization survey: Young Black male victims* (*Bureau of Justice Statistics, Special Report NCJ-147004).* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice. Retrieved from http://www.ntis.gov/search/product.aspx?ABBR=PB2010107830.

Baumgart, D., Filler, J., & Askvig, B. A. (1991). Perceived importance of social skills: A survey of teachers, parents, and other professionals. *The Journal of Special Education*, *25*, 236-251.

Berler, E., Gross, A., & Drabman, R. (1982). Social skills training with children: Proceed with caution. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, *15*, 41-53.

Blackorby, J., & Wagner, M. (1996). Longitudinal postschool outcomes of youth with disabilities: Findings from the national longitudinal transition study. *Exceptional Children*, *62*(5), 399-413.

Blackorby, J., Wagner, M., Cameto, R., Davies, E., Levine, P., Newman, L., … & Sumi, C. (2005). *Engagement, academics, social adjustment, and independence: The achievements of elementary and middle school students with disabilities.* Washington, D.C.: U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Programs. Retrieved from http://www.seels.net/designdocs/engagement/All_SEELS_outcomes_10-04-05.pdf.

Bloom, L. R. (2001). "I'm poor, I'm single, I'm a mom, and I deserve respect." *Educational Studies*, *32*, 300-316.

Bolger, K., Patterson, C., Thompson, W., & Kupersmidt, J. (1995). Psychosocial adjustment among children experiencing persistent and intermittent family economic hardship. *Child Development*, *66*, 1107-1129.

Bornstein, M., Bellack, A. S., & Hersen, M. (1980). Social skills training for highly aggressive children: Treatment in an in-patient psychiatric setting. *Behavior Modification*, *4*, 173-186.

Broidy, L. M., Nagin, D. S., Tremblay, R. E., Bates, J. E., Brame, B., Dodge, K. A., …Vitaro, F. (2003). Developmental trajectories of childhood disruptive behaviors and adolescent delinquency: A six-site, cross-national study. *Developmental Psychology*, *39*, 222-245.

Brown v. Board of Education. (1954). 347 U.S. 483.

Budd, K. S. (1985). Parents as mediators in the social skills training of children. In L. L'Abate & M. A. Milan (Eds.), *Handbook of social skills training and research* (pp. 245-262). New York: Wiley.

Budd, K. S., & Itzkowitz, J. S. (1990). Parents as social skills trainers and evaluators of children. *Child and Family Behavior Therapy*, *12*, 13-29.

Bullis, M., & Cheney, D. (1999). Vocational and transition interventions for adolescents and young adults with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Focus on Exceptional Children*,*31*(7), 1-24.

Cartledge, G., & Lo, Y.-y. (2006). *Teaching urban learners: Culturally responsive strategies for developing academic and behavioral competence*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Cartledge, G., & Loe, S. A. (2001). Cultural diversity and social skill instruction. *Exceptionality*, *9* (2), 33-36.

Cartledge, G., & Milburn, J. F. (1995). *Teaching social skills to children and youth: Innovative approaches* (3rd ed.) Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Cartledge, G., Singh, A., & Gibson, L. (2008). Practical behavior-management techniques to close the accessibility gap for students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. *Preventing School Failure*, *52*(3), 29-38.

Cartledge, G., Tam, K. Y., Loe, S. A., Miranda, A. H., Lambert, M. C., Kea, C. D., &Simmons-Reed, E. *Culturally and linguistically diverse students with behavioral disorders*. Reston, VA: Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders.

Cassidy, R. F., & Stevenson, H. C. (2005). They wear the mask: Hypervulnerability and hypermasculine aggression among African American males in an urban remedial disciplinary school. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, & Trauma*, *11*, 53-74.

Christenson, S. L., Rounds, T., & Franklin, M. J. (1992). Home-school collaboration: Effects, issues, and opportunities. In S. L. Christensen & J. C. Conoley (Eds.), *Home-school collaboration: Enhancing children's academic and social competence* (pp. 193-214). Washington, D.C.: National Association of School Psychologists.

Christian, C. (2005). The Effects of a collaborative parent-teacher social skills intervention on student behavioral performance. (Doctoral dissertation). The University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Christopher, J. S., Nangle, D. W., & Hansen, D. J. (1993). Social-skills interventions with adolescents. *Behavior Modification*, *17*, 314-338.

Coleman, M., Pfeiffer, S., & Oakland, T. (1992). Aggression replacement training with behaviorally disordered adolescents. *Behavioral Disorders*, *18*, 54-66.

Cook, C. R., Gresham, F. M., Kern, L., Barreras, R. B., Thorton, S., & Crews, S. D. (2008). Social skills training for secondary students with emotional and/or behavioral disorders. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *16*, 131-44.

Coutinho, M. J., Oswald, D. P., & Best, A. M. (2002). The influence of sociodemographics on the disproportionate identification of minority students as having learning disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education*, *23*, 49-59.

Cox, D. D. (2005). Evidence-based interventions using home-school collaboration. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *20*, 473-497.

Crick, N. R., & Dodge, K. A. (1996). Social information-processing mechanisms in reactive and proactive aggression. *Child Development*, *67*, 993-1002.

DeCastro-Ambrosetti, D., & Cho, D. (2005). Do parents value education? Teachers' perceptions of minority parents. *Multicultural Education*, *13*, 44-46.

Denning, C. B. (2007). Social skills interventions for students with Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism: Research findings and implications for teachers. *Beyond Behavior*, *16*, 16-23.

DeRosier, M. E., & Gilliom, M. (2007). Effectiveness of a parent training program for improving children's social behavior. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *16*, 660-670.

Dodge, K. A., & Coie, J. D. (19987). Social information processing factors in reactive and proactive aggression in children's peer groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *53*, 1146-1158.

Duncan, G. J., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Klebnov, P. (1994). Economic deprivation and early childhood development. *Child Development*, *65*, 296-318.

Elder, J. P., Edelstein, B. A., & Narick, M. M. (1979). Adolescent psychiatric patients: Modifying aggressive behavior with social skills training. *Behavior Modification*, *3*, 161-178.

Elksnin, N., & Elksnin, L. K. (1998a). *Teaching occupational social skills*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

Elksnin, N., & Elksnin, L. K. (1998b). Teaching social skills to students with learning and behavior problems. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *33*, 131-140.

Ellickson, P., Saner, J., & McGuigan, K. A. (1997). Profiles of violent youth: Substance use and other concurrent problems. *American Journal of Public Health*, *87*, 985-991.

Elliott, S. N., & Gresham, F. M. (1991). *Social skills intervention guide*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance.

Elliott, S. N., & Gresham, F. M. (1993). Social skills interventions for children. *Behavior Modification*, *17*, 287-313.

Epstein, J. L. (1992). *School and family partnerships* (Report No. 6). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning.

Feindler, E. L., & Ecton, R. B. (1986). *Adolescent anger control: Cognitive-behavioral techniques*. New York: Pergamon Press.

Feng, H., & Cartledge, G. (1996). Social skill assessment of inner city Asian, African and European American students. *School Psychology Review*, *25*, 228-239.

Foxx, R. M., Faw, G. D., & Nisbeth, I. (1991). Social skills training for inpatient emotionally disturbed children: An analysis of generalization. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy*, *12*, 11-37.

Fraser, M. W., Day, S. H., Galinsky, M. J., Hodges, V. G., & Smokowski, P. R. (2004). Conduct problems and peer rejection in childhood: A randomized trial of the making choices and strong families. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *14*, 313-324.

Fraser, M. W., Galinsky, M. J., Smokowski, P. R., Day, S. H., Terzian, M. A., Rose, R. A., & Guo, S. (2005). Social information-processing skills training to promote social competence and prevent aggressive behavior in the third grade. *Journal of Counseling and Clinical Psychology*, *73*, 1045-1055.

Gable, R. A., Arllen, N. L., & Hendrickson, J. M. (1994). Use of students with emotional/behavioral disorders as behavior change agents. *Education & Treatment of Children*, *17*, 267-276.

Gardner, R., III, & Miranda, A. H. (2001). Improving outcomes for urban African American students. *Journal of Negro Education*, *70*, 255-263.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, & practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Goldstein, A. P. (1973). *Psychological skill training*. New York: Pergamon Press.

Goldstein, A. P., & Glick, B. (1994). Aggression replacement training: Curriculum and Evaluation. *Simulation & Gaming*, *25*, 9-26.

Goldstein, A. P., Glick, B., & Gibbs, J. (1998). *Aggression Replacement Training: A comprehensive intervention for aggressive youth*. (Rev. ed). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Goldstein, A. P., McGinnis, E., Sprafkin, R. P., Gershaw, N. J., & Klein, P. (1997). *Skillstreaming the Adolescent*. (Rev. ed). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Gravois, T. A., & Rosenfield, S. A. (2006). Impact of instructional consultation teams on the disproportional referral and placement of minority students in special education. *Remedial and Special Education*, *27*, 42-52.

Greenbaum, P.E., Dedrick, R. F., Friedman, R. M., Kutash, K., Brown, E. C., & Lardieri, S. P. (1996). National Adolescent and Child Treatment Study (NACTS: Outcomes for children with serious emotional and behavioral disturbance. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *4*, 130-146.

Gresham, F. M. (1985). Utility of cognitive-behavioral procedures for social skills training with children: A critical review. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *13*, 411-423.

Gresham, F. M. (1992). Social skills and learning disabilities: Causal, concomitant, or correlational. *School Psychology Review*, *21*, 348-360.

Gresham, F. M. (1994). Generalization of social skills: Risks of choosing form over function. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *9*, 142-144.

Gresham, F. M. (1998). Social skills training: Should we raze, remodel, or rebuild? *Behavioral Disorders*, *24*, 19-25.

Gresham, F. M. (2002). Social skills assessment and instruction for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. In K. L. Lane, F. M. Gresham, & T. E. O'Shaughnessy (Eds.), *Interventions for children with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders* (pp. 242-258). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Gresham, F. M., & Elliott, S. N. (2008). *Social Skill Improvement System – Rating Scales*. Minneapolis, MN: Pearson Assessments.

Gresham, F. M., Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. (2001). Interpreting outcomes of social skills training for students with high-incidence disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, *67*, 331-344.

Gresham, F. M., Van, M. B., & Cook, C. R. (2006) Social skills training for teaching replacement behaviors: Remediating acquisition deficits in at-risk students. *Behavioral Disorders*, *31*, 363-377.

Haager, D., & Vaughn, S. (1995). Parent, teacher, peer, and self-reports of the social competence of students with learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *28*, 205-217.

Hammond, W. R., & Yung, B. (1993). Psychology's role in the public health response to assaultive violence among young African-American men. *American Psychologist*, *48*, 142-154.

Harrell, A. W., Mercer, S. H., & DeRosier, M. E. (2009). Improving the social-behavioral adjustment of adolescents: The effectiveness of a social skills group intervention. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *18*, 378-387.

Hazel, J. S., Schumaker, J. B., Sherman, J. A., & Sheldon-Wildgen, J. (1982). Group training for social skills: A program for court adjudicated youths. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *9*, 35-53.

Herring, M., & Northup, J. (1998). The generalization of social skills for a child with behavior disorders in the school setting. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy, 20*, 51-66.

Horner, R. H., Carr, E. G., Halle, J., McGee, G., Odom, S., & Wolery, M. (2005). The use of single-subject research to identify evidence-based practice in special education. *Exceptional Children*, *71*, 165-179.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, P. L. No. 108-466, 20 U. S. C. section 663.

Jimerson, S. R., Pletcher, S. W., Graydon, K., Schnurr, B. L., Nickerson, A. B., & Kundert, D. K. (2006). Beyond grade retention and social promotion: Promoting the social and academic competence of students. *Psychology in the Schools*, *43*, 85-97.

Johnson, D. R., Stodden, R. A., Emanuel, E. J., Luecking, R., & Mack, M. (2002). Current challenges facing secondary education and transition services: What research tells us. *Exceptional Children*, *68*, 519-531.

Kavale, K., & Forness, S. (1996). Social skill deficits and learning disabilities: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *29*, 226-237.

Kellner, M. H., & Bry, B. H. (1999). The effects of anger management groups in a day school for emotionally disturbed adolescents. *Adolescence*, *34*, 645-651.

Kohlberg, L. (1984). *Essays on moral development: The psychology of moral development*. San Francisco: Harper and Row.

Kortering, L. J., & Blackorby, J. (1992). High school dropout and students identified with behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, *18*, 24-32.

Lancioni, G. (1982). Normal children as tutors to teach social responses to withdrawn mentally retarded schoolmates: Training, maintenance, and generalization. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, *15*, 17-40.

Lane, K. L., Menzies, H. M., Barton-Arwood, S. M., Doukas, G. L., & Munton, S. M. (2005). Designing, implementing, and evaluating social skills interventions for elementary students: Step-by-step procedures based on actual school-based interventions. *Preventing School Failure*, *49*, 18-26.

Lane, K. L., Wehby, J., Menzies, H. M., Doukas, G. L., Munton, S. M., & Gregg, R. M. (2003). Social skills instruction for students at risk for antisocial behavior: The effects of small-group instruction. *Behavioral Disorders*, *28*, 229-248.

Leff, S. S., Gullan, R. L., Paskewich, B. S., Abdul-Kabir, S., Jawad, A. F., Grossman, M., … & Power, T. J. (2009). An initial evaluation of a culturally adapted social problem-solving and relational aggression prevention program for urban African-American relationally aggressive girls. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, *37*, 260-274.

Lo, Y.-y., & Cartledge, G. (2007). Office disciplinary referrals in an urban elementary school. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, *2*(1), 20-38.

Lo, Y.-y, Loe, S. A., & Cartledge, G. (2002). The effects of social skills instruction on the social behaviors of students at risk for emotional or behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, *27*, 371-385.

Lo, Y.,-y., Mustian, A. L., Brophy, A., & White, R. B. (2011). Peer-mediated social skill instruction for African American males with or at risk for mild disabilities. *Exceptionality*, *19*, 191-209.

Laugeson, E. A., Frankel, F., Mogil, C., & Dillon, A. (2009). Parent-assisted social skills training to improve friendships in teens with autism spectrum disorders. *Journal of Autism & Developmental Disorders*, *39*, 596-606.

Lochman, J. E., & Dodge, K. A. (1998). Distorted perceptions in dyadic interactions of aggressive and nonaggressive boys: Effects of prior expectations, context, and boys' age. *Development and Psychopathology*, *10*, 495-512.

Loeber, R., & Hay, D. (1997). Key issues in the development of aggression and violence from childhood to early adulthood. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *48*, 371-410.

Maag, J. W. (2006). Social skills training for students with emotional and behavioral disorders: A review of reviews. *Behavioral Disorders*, *32*, 5-17.

Maddern, L., Franey, J., McLaughlin, V., & Cox, S. (2004). An evaluation of the impact of an interagency intervention programme to promote social skills in primary school children. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *20*, 135-155.

McFall, R. (1982). A review and reformulation of the concept of social skills, *Behavioral Assessment*, *4*, 1-33.

McKay, M. M., Atkins, M. S., Hawkins, T., Brown, C., & Lynn, C. J. (2003). Inner-city African American parental involvement in children's schooling: Racial socialization and social support from parent community. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *32*, 107-114.

Mendez, J. L., Fantuzzo, J., & Cicchetti, J. (2002). Profiles of social competence among low-income African American preschool children. *Child Development*, *73*, 1085-1100.

Mendez, L. M., & Knoff, H. M. (2003). Who gets suspended from school and why: A demographic analysis of schools and disciplinary infractions in a large school district. *Education & Treatment of Children*, *26*, 30-51.

Middleton, M. B., & Cartledge, G. (1995). The effects of social skills instruction and the parental involvement on the aggressive behaviors of African American Males. *Behavior Modification*, *19*, 192-210.

Moore, R. J., Cartledge, G., & Heckaman, K. (1995). The effects of social skill instruction and self-monitoring on game-related behaviors of adolescents with emotional or behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, *20*, 253-266.

Nagin, D., & Tremblay, R. E. (1999). Trajectories of boys' physical aggression, opposition, and hyperactivity on the path to physically violent and nonviolent juvenile delinquency. *Child Development*, *70*, 1181-1196.

Noguera, P. A. (2003). The trouble with Black boys: The role and influence of environmental and cultural factors on the academic performance of African American males. *Urban Education*, *38*, 431-459.

National Center for Health Statistics. (1990). *Prevention profile, health, United States, 1989*. Hyattsville, MD: Division of Health and Human Services, Publication Number (PHS) 90-1232.

National Research Council, Committee on Minority Representation in Special Education. (2002). M. S. Donovan & C. T. Cross (Eds.), *Minority students in special and gifted education*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (2010). *Future-ready occupational course of study*. Retrieved from http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/ec/development/intellectual/ocs-intro.pdf.

Olgilvy, C. M. (1994). Social skills training with children and adolescents: A review of the evidence on effectiveness. *Educational Psychology*, *14*, 73-83.

Pena, D. C. (2000). Parental involvement: Influencing factors and implications. *Journal of Educational Research*, *9*, 42-54.

Pfiffner, L. J., & McBurnett, K. (1997). Social skills training with parent generalization: Treatment effects for children with attention deficit disorder. *Journal of Counseling and Clinical Psychology*, *65*, 749-757.

Prater, M. A., Serna, L., & Nakamura, K. K. (1999). Impact of peer teaching on the acquisition of social skills by adolescents with learning disabilities. *Education & Treatment of Children*, *22*, 19-35.

President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education. (2002). *A new era: Revitalizing special education for children and their families*. Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Education.

Presley, J. A., & Hughes, C. (2000). Peers as teachers of anger management to high school students with behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, *25*, 114-130.

Pryor, D. (1995). Youth, parent, and teacher views of parent involvement in schools. *Education*, *115*, 410-420.

Quinn, M. M., Jannasch-Pennell, A., & Rutherford, R. B. (1995). Using peers as social skills training agents for students with antisocial behavior: A cooperative learning approach. *Preventing School Failure*, *39*, 26-31.

Quinn, M. M., Kavale, K. A., Mathur, S. R., Rutherford, R. B., & Forness, S. R. (1999). A meta-analysis of social skill interventions for students with emotional or behavioral disorders. *Journal of Emotional & Behavioral Disorders*, *7*, 54-64.

Rausch, M. K., & Skiba, R. J. (2006). *Examining patterns of disciplinary disproportionality by disability status and racial group*. Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation & Education Policy. Retrieved from http://www.ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/PB_V4N10_Fall_2006_Diversity.pdf

Robinson-Ervin, P., Cartledge, G., & Keyes, S. (2011). Culturally responsive social skills instruction for adolescent black males. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, *6*, 1-16.

Ruffalo, S. L., & Elliott, S. N. (1997). Teachers' and parents' ratings of children's social skills: A closer look at cross-informant agreement through an item analysis protocol. *Social Psychology Review*, *26*, 498-502.

Rutherford, R. B., Quinn, M. M., & Mathur, S. R. (1996). *Effective strategies for teaching appropriate behaviors to children with emotional and behavioral disorders*. Reston, VA: Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders.

Schoenfeld, N. A., Rutherford, R. B., Gable, R. A., & Rock, M. L. (2008). ENGAGE: A blueprint for incorporating social skills training into daily academic instruction. *Preventing School Failure*, *52*, 17-28.

Schulze, K. A., Rule, S., & Innocenti, M. S. (1989). Coincidental teaching: Parents promoting social skills at home. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, *21*(4), 24-27.

Sheridan, S. M., Hungelman, A., & Maughan (1999). A contextualized framework for social skills assessment, intervention, and generalization. *School Psychology Review*, *28*, 84-103.

Siperstein, G. N., & Bak, J. J. (1988). Improving social skills in schools: The role of parents. *The Exceptional Parent*, *18*, 18-22.

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *Urban Review*, *34*, 317-342.

Skiba, R. J., Poloni-Staudinger, L., Gallini, S., Simmons, A. B., & Feggins-Azziz, R. (2006). Disparate access: The disproportionality of African American students with disabilities across educational environments. *Exceptional Children*, *72*, 411-424.

Smith, C. A., Krohn, M. D., Chu, R., & Best, O. (2005). African American fathers: Myths and realities about their involvement with their firstborn children. *Journal of Family Issues*, *26*, 975-1001.

Spencer, M. B. (1999). Social and cultural influences on school adjustment: The application of an identity-focused cultural ecological perspective. *Educational Psychologist*, *34*, 43-57.

Stokes, T. F., & Osnes, P. G. (1989). An operant pursuit of generalization. *Behavior Therapy*, *20*, 337-355.

Stormont, M. (2002). Externalizing behavior problems in young children: Contributing factors and early intervention. *Psychology in the Schools*, *39*, 127-137.

Sutherland, K. S., & Singh, N. N. (2004). Learned helplessness and students with emotional or behavioral disorders: Deprivation in the classroom. *Behavioral Disorders*, *29*, 169-181.

Swanson, D. P., Cunningham, M., & Spencer, M. B. (2003). Black males' structural conditions, achievement patterns, normative needs and "opportunities." *Urban Education*, *38*, 608-633.

Thompson, G. L. (2003). No parent left behind: Strengthening ties between educators and African American parents/guardians. *Urban Review*, *35*, 7-23.

Townsend, B. L. (1994). Involving families of at-risk and normally achieving children in social skill instruction. *Preventing School Failure*, *39*, 31-36.

Tse, J., Strulovitch, J., Tagalakis, V., Meng, L., & Fombonne, E. (2007). Social skills training for adolescents with Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism. *Journal of Autism & Developmental Disorders*, *37*, 1960-1968.

Turnbull, A. P., & Turnbull, H. R. (2001). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality: A special partnership* (4th ed.). Columbus: Merrill.

U.S. Department of Education. (2006). *Twenty-eighth annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2006*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/2006/parts-b-c/28th-vol-1.pdf

Wagner, M. M. (1995). Outcomes for youth with serious emotional disturbance in secondary school and early adulthood. *The Future of Children*, *5*, 90-111.

Wagner, M., & Cameto, R. (2004). *NLTS2 data brief: The characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of youth with emotional disturbances. A report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2*. Retrieved from http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1687

Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., Levine, P., & Garza, N. (2006). *An overview of findings from wave 2 of the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2).* Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. Retrieved from www.nlts2.org/reports/2006_08/nlts_report_2006_08_complete.pdf

Walker, H. M., Todis, B., Holmes, D., & Horton, G. (1988). *The Walker social skills curriculum*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

White, J., Moffitt, T. E., Caspi, A., Bartusch, D. J., Needles, D. J., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (1994). Measuring impulsivity and examining its relating to delinquency. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *103*, 192-205.

APPENDIX A: SOCIAL SKILL CHECKLIST FOR ROLE-PLAY

Social Skill: <u>Responding to Teasing</u>

Circle a "Yes" or "No" for each of the following questions:	YES	NO
1. Student will not speak aloud for at least 3 seconds to think about the current situation.	Y	N
2. Student will state the skill steps needed to respond to the given situation. SKILL STEPS: (1) <u>Decide if you are being teased.</u>	Y	N
(2) <u>Think about ways to deal with the teasing.</u>	Y	N
(3) <u>Choose the best way and do it.</u>	Y	N
3. Student verbally states that they believe someone is teasing them.	Y	N
4. Student thinks about possible options to deal with the teasing.	Y	N
5. Student chooses the best option and does it.	Y	N
6. Student uses an appropriate tone of voice when role playing.	Y	N
7. Student uses an appropriate volume of voice when role playing.	Y	N
8. Student explains why it is important to perform the targeted social skill.	Y	N

Scoring: #s of YES = _____   Total #s of responses = __10__   Percent = _____

APPENDIX A: SOCIAL SKILL CHECKLIST FOR ROLE-PLAY

Social Skill: <u>Using Self-Control</u>

Circle a "Yes" or "No" for each of the following questions:	YES	NO
1. Student will not speak aloud for at least 3 seconds to think about the current situation.	Y	N
2. Student will state the skill steps needed to respond to the given situation. SKILL STEPS: (1) <u>Look for body cues that you're about to lose control.</u>	Y	N
(2) <u>Decide what happened to make you feel this way.</u>	Y	N
(3) <u>Think about ways in which you might control yourself.</u>	Y	N
(4) <u>Choose the best thing to do.</u>	Y	N
(5) <u>Do the best thing.</u>	Y	N
3. Student verbally states cues that let them know they are about to lose control.	Y	N
4. Student verbally states what happened to make them upset.	Y	N
5. Student thinks about ways in which they can maintain control.	Y	N
6. Student chooses the best thing to do.	Y	N
7. Student does the best thing.	Y	N
8. Student uses an appropriate tone of voice when role playing.	Y	N
9. Student uses an appropriate volume of voice when role playing.	Y	N
10. Student explains why it is important to perform the targeted social skill.	Y	N

Scoring: #s of YES = _____   Total #s of responses = ___14___   Percent = _____

APPENDIX A: SOCIAL SKILL CHECKLIST FOR ROLE-PLAY

Social Skill: <u>Standing Up for Your Rights</u>

Circle a "Yes" or "No" for each of the following questions:	YES	NO
1. Student will not speak aloud for at least 3 seconds to think about the current situation.	Y	N
2. Student will state the skill steps needed to respond to the given situation. SKILL STEPS: (1) <u>Pay attention to body cues that help you know you are dissatisfied.</u>	Y	N
(2) <u>Decide what happened to make you feel dissatisfied.</u>	Y	N
(3) <u>Think about ways you can stand up for yourself.</u>	Y	N
(4) <u>Choose the best way to stand up for yourself.</u>	Y	N
(5) <u>Stand up for yourself in a direct and reasonable way.</u>	Y	N
3. Student verbally states cues that let them know they are dissatisfied.	Y	N
4. Student verbally states what happened to make them feel dissatisfied.	Y	N
5. Student thinks about ways they can stand up for their rights.	Y	N
6. Student chooses the best thing way to stand up for their rights.	Y	N
7. Student stands up for their rights in a direct and reasonable way.	Y	N
8. Student uses an appropriate tone of voice when role playing.	Y	N
9. Student uses an appropriate volume of voice when role playing.	Y	N
10. Student explains why it is important to perform the targeted social skill.	Y	N

Scoring: #s of YES = _____   Total #s of responses = __14__   Percent = _____

APPENDIX B: SOCIAL SKILL INSTRUCTION PROCEDURAL FIDELITY

CHECKLIST

Instructor: _____ Checklist Completed By: _____

Date: _____ Lesson Length: _____ Lesson _____ Part_____

CRITERIA FOR COMPLETION	YES	NO	
1. Identifies and defines skill to be taught	Y	N	
2. Provides rationale for the students to use the skill	Y	N	
3. Describes general characteristics of the skill being taught	Y	N	
4. Identifies social rules (instances where use of the skill is appropriate)	Y	N	
5. Displays skill steps	Y	N	
6. Discusses skill steps	Y	N	
7. Models the skill	Y	N	
8. Provides practice situation/s	Y	N	
9. Provides corrective feedback to students for inappropriate behavior or incorrect demonstration of skills	Y	N	
10. Provides praise to trainees for appropriate demonstration of skills (including engagement, correct responses, and appropriate behavior)	Y	N	
11. Reviews skill steps with students	Y	N	
12. Provides clarification and answers student questions throughout lesson	Y	N	
13. Uses PowerPoint to guide the lesson and follows the script provided to ensure that the entire lesson is taught to students	Y	N	
14. Operates the laptop and mouse to activate/transition PowerPoint slides correctly during the lesson (e.g., click on slide to transition to next page)	Y	N	
15. Assigns students a homework activity to complete at home	Y	N	NA

Number of Y circle or N/A Marked = _____ / 14 x 100 = _____%

Comments/Notes:

APPENDIX C: TEACHER SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher's Name: _____ Date: _____

Target Students' Names: A_____ B _____ C_____

Directions: Your students participated in a study during which they were taught social skills within a group setting to use during aggression inducing situations. The goal of this study was to increase student use of alternative strategies during situations in which they would normally use aggression. To determine if this study was appropriate and effective, I would like to know your opinion on the following items. I greatly appreciate and value your input!

Question	Not Important	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
1. The students received social skill instruction on the following social skills. How important do you think it is for students to be able to do the following social skills in the school environment?	A B C	A B C	A B C	A B C
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
b. Using Self-Control	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
c. Responding to teasing	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
2. How important do you think it is for students to be able to do the following social skills in the home or community environment?	A B C	A B C	A B C	A B C
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
b. Using Self-Control	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
c. Responding to teasing	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
	No Improv.	Slight Improv.	Moderate Improv.	A Lot of Improv.
3. How much improvement did you observe for target students regarding their ability to exhibit the following social skills?	A B C	A B C	A B C	A B C
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
b. Using Self-Control	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
c. Responding to teasing	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4
	Not Important	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
4. The social skill curriculum used a PowerPoint program to guide students in learning the social skills listed above. How appropriate do you think instruction utilizing a PowerPoint program is for the target students to learn social skills?	1	2	3	4
	Not Important	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
5. Students learned social skills in a small group during which they participated in activities to reinforce skills learned. How important do you think it is for the target students to be able to interact appropriately with peers in small group situations?	1	2	3	4

Question	Not Effective	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective
6. Overall, how effective do you believe this social skill instruction program was in helping your target students to be more successful in the classroom environment?	1	2	3	4

	Not Recom.	Possibly Recom.	Recom.	Definitely Recom.
7. To what extent would you recommend this program to students who have similar social and/or behavioral needs?	1	2	3	4

	Not Practical	Slightly Practical	Practical	Very Practical
8. If your school was given the instructional materials used for this study and training, to what extent do you think this intervention would be practical for a teacher, an instructional assistant, or a general education peer to implement within the school setting?	1	2	3	4

	Not Approp.	Slightly Approp.	Approp.	Very Approp.
9. How appropriate do you believe parental involvement is for students to learn the social skills taught?	1	2	3	4

	Not Important	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
10. How important is it for parents to be involved in reiterating skills taught at school within the home environment?	1	2	3	4

	Not Effective	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective
11. Do you believe that parental involvement in this social skills instruction program was effective?	1	2	3	4

	Not Important	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
12. How important do you think it is for social skill instruction to incorporate aspects of students' cultures as part of the curriculum?	1	2	3	4

13. Please provide any written comments regarding the usefulness, effectiveness, and/or importance of this social skill instruction program for your target students to improve their social skills.

Thank you so much for your response!

APPENDIX D: PARENT SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Parent's Name: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

Directions: Your child participated in a study during which he/she was taught social skills within a group setting to help him/her interact appropriately with others in both the home and school environments. The goal of this study was to increase your child's use of appropriate social skill strategies in situations where he/she might become frustrated or angry. You were involved in helping your child learn social skills by providing additional instruction at home in addition to digitally recording your child's social skills exhibition during role-play situations. I would like to know your opinion on the following items. I greatly appreciate and value your input!

Question	Not Import.	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
1. Your child received instruction on the following social skills. How important do you think it is for your child to be able to do the following social skills in the school environment?				
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1	2	3	4
b. Using Self-Control	1	2	3	4
c. Responding to teasing	1	2	3	4
2. How important do you think it is for your child to be able to do the following social skills in the home or community environment?				
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1	2	3	4
b. Using Self-Control	1	2	3	4
c. Responding to teasing	1	2	3	4
	No Improv.	Slight Improv.	Moderate Improv.	A Lot of Improv.
3. How much improvement did you observe for your child regarding their ability to exhibit the following social skills?				
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1	2	3	4
b. Using Self-Control	1	2	3	4
c. Responding to teasing	1	2	3	4
	Not Import.	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
4. The social skill curriculum used a PowerPoint program to guide your child in learning the social skills listed above. How appropriate do you think instruction utilizing a computer-based program is for the students to learn social skills?	1	2	3	4

Question	Not Import.	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
5. Your child learned social skills in a small group where he/she participated in activities to reinforce skills learned. How important do you think it is for your child to be able to interact appropriately with peers in small groups?	1	2	3	4

	Not Import.	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
6. How important is parental involvement in knowing and practicing social skills learned by your child at school in the home environment?	1	2	3	4

	Not Effective	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective
7. Overall, how effective do you believe this social skill instruction program was in helping your child become more successful in the classroom environment?	1	2	3	4
8. Overall, how effective do you believe this social skill instruction program was in helping your child become more successful in the home or community environment?	1	2	3	4

	Not Recom.	Possibly Recom.	Recom.	Definitely Recom.
9. To what extent would you recommend this program to families who have children with similar social and/or behavioral needs?	1	2	3	4

	Not At All	Slightly Liked	Liked	Definitely Liked
10. To what extent did you enjoy working with your child at home on social skills taught at school?	1	2	3	4

	Not At All	Slightly Practical	Practical	Very Practical
11. How practical was this program with regard to implementation in the home setting?	1	2	3	4

	Not Import.	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
12. How important do you think it is for social skill instruction to incorporate aspects of your child's culture as part of the curriculum?	1	2	3	4

13. Please provide any written comments regarding the usefulness, effectiveness, and/or importance of this social skill instruction program for your child in improving their social skills.

Thank you so much for your response!

APPENDIX E: STUDENT SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: You participated in a study during which you were taught social skills within a group setting to help you interact appropriately with others in both the home and school environments. The goal of this study was to increase your use of appropriate social skill strategies in situations where you might become frustrated or angry. I would like to know your opinion on the following items. I greatly appreciate and value your input!

Question	Not Import.	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
1. You received instruction on the following social skills. How important do you think it is for you to be able to do the following social skills in the school environment?				
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1	2	3	4
b. Using Self-Control	1	2	3	4
c. Responding to teasing	1	2	3	4
2. How important do you think it is for you to be able to do the following social skills in the home or community environment?				
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1	2	3	4
b. Using Self-Control	1	2	3	4
c. Responding to teasing	1	2	3	4
	No Improv.	**Slight Improv.**	**Moderate Improv.**	**A Lot of Improv.**
3. How much improvement do you think you made in your ability to demonstrate the following social skills?				
a. Standing Up for Your Rights	1	2	3	4
b. Using Self-Control	1	2	3	4
c. Responding to teasing	1	2	3	4
	Not At All	**Slightly Liked**	**Liked**	**Definitely Liked**
4. How much did you like using the computer program to learn social skills?	1	2	3	4
5. How much did you like participating in a small group with your peers to learn social skills?	1	2	3	4
6. How much did you like working with your parents to practice social skills you learned in school at home?	1	2	3	4
	Not At All	**Possibly**	**Much**	**Very Much**
7. How much do you think other students would like learn to social skills using a computer?	1	2	3	4

Question	Not At All	Possibly	Much	Very Much
8. How much do you think other students would like learning social skills in a small group with their peers?	1	2	3	4

	Not Effective	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective
9. Overall, how effective do you think this social skill instruction program was in helping you become more successful in the classroom environment?	1	2	3	4
10. Overall, how effective do you think this social skill instruction program was in helping you become more successful in the home or community environment?	1	2	3	4

	Not Recom.	Possibly Recom.	Recom.	Definitely Recom.
11. To what extent would you recommend this program to other students in your class?	1	2	3	4

	Not Import.	Slightly Import.	Import.	Very Import.
12. How important do you think it is for social skill instruction to include things you enjoy talking about and have in common with your peers?	1	2	3	4

13. What parts of working together in a small group and with your parents on social skills did you like the most?

14. What parts of working together in a small group and with your parents on social skills did you like the least?

15. If I was to teach this program again to another group of students, is there anything you think I should do differently?

16. Do you have any additional comments about the group, computer program, working with your parents, or what you learned by participating in this social skills program?

Thank you so much for your response!

APPENDIX F: SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES FOR USING SELF-CONTROL

May 24, 2011

Dear Parents,

In the binder are 3 nights worth of activities to do with your child. Please have your child bring the completed binder to me by next Monday, May 30th. Please complete one activity per night and then read the attached scenarios and questions to your child. Please audiotape doing the activity with your child and acting out the role-play scenarios with them each night. Your child has been working on the social skill of "Using Self-Control" this week. If you have any questions, please call me. Thank you!

~Alicia Brophy

Night 1

Directions: Review the following skill steps for "Using Self-Control" with your child. Please remember to record this activity and the role-play scenarios that you will do on the following page.

1. Look for body cues that you're about to lose control.

2. Decide what happened to make you feel this way.

3. Think about ways in which you might control yourself.

4. Choose the best thing to do.

5. Do the best thing.

Ask your child if there are any times that they can think of where they have had to keep their self-control (controlling their temper when they are frustrated, angry, sad) at home, in their neighborhood, or out in the community (for example: church, grocery store, the mall, movie theater, etc.)

You child can write some of them down here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Please review the skill steps for Using Self-Control again.

1. Look for body cues that you're about to lose control.

2. Decide what happened to make you feel this way.

3. Think about ways in which you might control yourself.

4. Choose the best thing to do.

5. Do the best thing.

Directions: The following are two social skills scenarios to be read to your child. Please remember to use the digital recorder provided to record each session.

Please read the following scenario to your child:

"You got a new Nintendo Wii for your Christmas present. Your close friend decided to play it without your permission while you were setting the table for dinner. When you return to play it, the Wii won't work… it is broken. When you ask them about it, they said they never touched it. How do you maintain your self-control?"

Ask your child the following questions in order:

1. What steps do you need to follow to respond to the situation appropriately?

2. Can you show me what you would do in this situation? Pretend that I am your friend, what would you do?

3. Can you tell me why it is important to follow appropriate steps when dealing with this situation?

****

Please read the following scenario to your child:

"You are riding your bike down the street. A kid down the street calls you a name for no reason and says that your bike looks like "you got it out of the garbage dump." How do you respond to his teasing?"

Ask your child the following questions in order:

1. What steps do you need to follow to respond to the situation appropriately?

2. Can you show me what you would do in this situation? Pretend that I the neighborhood kid, what would you do?

3. Can you tell me why it is important to follow appropriate steps when dealing with this situation?

Night 2

Directions: Review the following skill steps for "Using Self-Control" with your child. Please remember to record this activity and the role-play scenarios that you will do on the following page.

1. Look for body cues that you're about to lose control.

2. Decide what happened to make you feel this way.

3. Think about ways in which you might control yourself.

4. Choose the best thing to do.

5. Do the best thing.

Ask your child what are some of the ways that they can maintain their self-control when they are angry or upset.

You child can write some of them down here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Please review the skill steps for Using Self-Control again.

1. Look for body cues that you're about to lose control.

2. Decide what happened to make you feel this way.

3. Think about ways in which you might control yourself.

4. Choose the best thing to do.

5. Do the best thing.

Directions: The following are three social skills scenarios to be read to your child. Please remember to use the digital recorder provided to record each session.

Please read the following scenario to your child:

"You finish your homework afterschool and leave it on the table while you go get a snack. When you come back to put your homework in your book bag, it is crumpled in a ball and your brother/sister is giggling. How do you maintain your self-control?"

Ask your child the following questions in order:

1. What steps do you need to follow to respond to the situation appropriately?

2. Can you show me what you would do in this situation? Pretend that I am your brother/sister, what would you do?

3. Can you tell me why it is important to follow appropriate steps when dealing with this situation?

****

Please read the following scenario to your child:

"You are playing basketball with some friends outside. After you make a basket, the ball bounces and accidently bumps another boy on the court. He says, "Way to the ball quick slow poke!" How do you respond to his teasing?"

Ask your child the following questions in order:

1. What steps do you need to follow to respond to the situation appropriately?

2. Can you show me what you would do in this situation? Pretend that I am the boy, what would you do?

3. Can you tell me why it is important to follow appropriate steps when dealing with this situation?

****

Please read the following scenario to your child:

"Your bus is running late. When you get home, you get in trouble for not coming straight home and get grounded for a week. You know you did what you were supposed to do. How do you stand up for you rights?"

Ask your child the following questions in order:

1. What steps do you need to follow to respond to the situation appropriately?

2. Can you show me what you would do in this situation? Pretend that I am your parent, what would you do?

3. Can you tell me why it is important to follow appropriate steps when dealing with this situation?

Night 3

Directions: Review the following skill steps for "Using Self-Control" with your child. Please remember to record this activity and the role-play scenarios that you will do on the following page.

1. Look for body cues that you're about to lose control.

2. Decide what happened to make you feel this way.

3. Think about ways in which you might control yourself.

4. Choose the best thing to do.

5. Do the best thing.

Ask your child if they are able to recite the skill steps without looking.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Directions: The following are two social skills scenarios to be read to your child. Please remember to use the digital recorder provided to record each session.

Please read the following scenario to your child:

"You check the mail after school. You realize there is a package in there that doesn't belong to you. You see that it is addressed to a neighbor down the street. You decide to walk over to her house and deliver the package. As you are walking to her house, a neighbor sees you with the package. He then accuses you of stealing the package. How do you stand up for you rights?"

Ask your child the following questions in order:

1. What steps do you need to follow to respond to the situation appropriately?

2. Can you show me what you would do in this situation? Pretend that I am your neighbor, what would you do?

3. Can you tell me why it is important to follow appropriate steps when dealing with this situation?

****

Please read the following scenario to your child:

"You get on the bus in the morning. As you are walking to a seat, a kid sticks out his foot and tries to trip you. How do you maintain your self-control?"

Ask your child the following questions in order:

1. What steps do you need to follow to respond to the situation appropriately?

2. Can you show me what you would do in this situation? Pretend that I am that kid, what would you do?

3. Can you tell me why it is important to follow appropriate steps when dealing with this situation?