ADDRESSING BULLYING IN SCHOOLS: STRATEGIES, STRUCTURES AND SCAFFOLDING

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DEDICATION

To my daughter, Gwendylan.
You give me the courage to reach out for my dreams.
ABSTRACT

Addressing Bullying in Schools: Strategies, Structures and Scaffolding is comparative multiple case study of the empowering effects of professional development on teachers to manage bullying, using two educational drama techniques, forum theatre and process drama, as well as peer teaching.

This thesis is based on the findings from three years of an action research project called Acting Against Bullying, which was conducted by Griffith University in several Queensland high schools and primary schools between 2004 and 2006. The main focus of the dissertation is three key schools; Southside State High School, North Beachside State High School and Westside State High School. It also draws on the findings at several of the other participating schools to ensure that the findings are grounded in significant data and to reinforce their validity.

This data is presented as a collection of themes embedded in each case study, based on the findings and insights that emerged from the drama, peer teaching and in-services that were held for the teachers. The data is conveyed as a narrative account to highlight the multiple voices of the participants and to enhance the natural approach of research from an active researcher perspective.

Throughout the phases of the research study, the key question that remained constant was:

- What conditions promote effective management of bullying in schools?

Developing from this question, were the following sub questions:

- What pedagogical strategies are effective for managing bullying in schools?
- What school structures are required to achieve the effective management of bullying?
- What scaffolding is required for classroom teachers to contribute towards the effective management of bullying in schools?
The key question and the sub questions were considered in the light of the data analysis and the literature review. The *Acting Against Bullying* study concluded that a combination of educational drama and peer teaching through targeted professional development significantly empowered teachers to deal with bullying in secondary school settings. The research indicated that teachers, with the support of their school administration, could significantly lower the incidence of bullying in their schools, through peer teaching drama techniques that focus on managing conflict, within the curriculum and classroom setting over a period of time.

These research findings have considerable significance in the field of education, professional development, the workforce and anywhere where bullying can take place. They indicate that with time, support, dedication and focused participation people can be empowered to significantly reduce bullying in their environment and establish a culture that is anti-bullying.
STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where the due reference is made on the thesis itself.

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Maureen Owen, April 2011
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CHAPTER ONE

THE CONTEXT

Introduction

Bullying is a major problem in most schools throughout the world and widespread research suggests it is on the increase, despite the numerous attempts educators have made at finding a solution. In fact, concerns about bullying have spread from the school microcosm to the workforce and systematic bullying has been blamed for emotional breakdowns and even suicide in both children and adults. This concern for the impact of bullying in schools led to the Acting Against Bullying Project, funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant which was the wider context of the research conducted for this thesis. The Acting Against Bullying research was designed to de-escalate bullying in schools and to alter the prevailing culture that perceives bullying as simply a normal part of growing up. The Acting Against Bullying project was aimed at empowering the students to manage bullying more effectively as part of a whole school approach to the problem. The project also experimented with approaches to professional development for teachers, to empower them to deal with bullying successfully through drama and peer teaching in their own classrooms.

The Acting Against Bullying project employed a unique combination of drama and peer teaching, drawing its inspiration from two projects that came before it and led to its creation. The first of these was the DRACON Project (Drama for Conflict Resolution) which began in Sweden, which researched the use of drama as a means of addressing cultural conflict in a range of international contexts. This international project gave rise to the Cooling Conflicts Project in NSW with DRACON’s methods being supplemented to also include peer teaching. Cooling Conflicts was first applied in schools experiencing racial tension, and then more widely across schools in Sydney.

One of the findings to emerge from the Cooling Conflicts project was that an emphasis on the students alone was insufficient, as the teachers also needed support in
dealing with bullying issues. For this reason, a professional development component was included as part of the design for the *Acting Against Bullying* project and I was employed to coordinate this component, supported through an Australian Postgraduate Award Scholarship.

Out of this involvement and my close contact with teachers and school administrators across 18 Queensland schools, my focus shifted from the specifics of the *Acting Against Bullying* project, which related to empowering students to deal with bullying, to consider in more depth the structures needed at a teacher and school level to support anti-bullying measures. I wanted to understand, from the schools’ and teachers’ perspectives what would be required to make drama and peer teaching models work. I wanted to hear from the teachers and school administrators about their experiences and ideas. I believed that these insights would contribute valuable new knowledge about addressing bullying in schools. To focus this exploration, one key question and three sub-questions were created and these became the driving force for this thesis:

**Key Research Question:**

- What conditions promote effective management of bullying in schools?

**Sub-questions:**

- What pedagogical strategies are effective for managing bullying in schools?

- What school structures are required to achieve effective management of bullying?

- What scaffolding is required for classroom teachers to contribute towards the effective management of bullying in schools?

- The first sub-question is obviously closely related to the overall focus of the AAB project, but was included to ensure that the key question and the other two sub-questions did not become disconnected from the key pedagogies of the research.
In order to explore these questions, three of the secondary schools participating in the *Acting Against Bullying* Project were selected as focused case studies. In each of these schools I established the role of an active observer–as–participant, a role that allowed me to investigate the research question from the inside. This thesis records the journey I took and the outcome of my findings.

**Purpose of the Research**

Given these questions, the purpose of this research was to isolate the key successful elements in the three case study schools and to determine which of these elements were integral in assisting the participating teachers to decrease bullying in their schools. Although every school in the larger project had key teachers that were passionate and dedicated, there were teachers that were definitely more successful in eliminating bullying in their schools than other teachers. It was these teachers and their schools that eventually became known as ‘my case studies’.

I felt this study was a vitally important one to make in light of the larger project because I observed quite early in the project there were recurring concepts and findings among the more dynamic schools relating to teacher engagement. As stated earlier, in each school that made progress against bullying, there were key ingredients. These key ingredients varied somewhat in the context of each school, but they had the potential to form a possible formula for the successful elimination of bullying in schools. These schools thus developed into my case studies and these concepts became the categories that I used to organise each case study within this thesis.

My objective was to find out what qualities successful participating teachers had and what circumstances in each school empowered the teachers to become effective facilitators of bullying management, after having completed the targeted professional development.
Importance of the Research

Since ‘Sticks and Stones’ was published by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Violence in Schools in 1994, Australian government activities “have increasingly been directed towards encouraging practical ways in which the problem of bullying in schools can be addressed” (Rigby, 2002b, p. 19). Since 1999, each state and territory has implemented its own anti-bullying policy or framework for schools. Furthermore, the Conference of Education System Chief Executive Officers (CESCEO) endorsed a proposal for states and territories to undertake a national scan of approaches to minimise bullying and violence in schools; to develop a framework for sharing workable solutions to these issues; and to investigate the use of technology and hypertext links to maximise accessibility to teachers and schools (Rigby, 2002b, p. 21).

As Cooling Conflicts points out however, “the harsh reality is that there are no quick-fix solutions to the manifestations of conflict and bullying in schools” (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. vii) and as such, the Acting Against Bullying Project was funded to research the implementation of a proactive anti-bullying program within the Queensland context. It was the culmination of eight years of research into bullying management that began with the DRACON project and, in Australia, evolved into Cooling Conflicts. Like its predecessor, the Acting Against Bullying Project investigated the viability of a system designed to prevent conflict from occurring “by assisting students to examine the three stages of conflict—latent, emerging and manifest—and by teaching them how to intervene in conflict situations” (O’Toole & Burton, 2003, p. 3). Both projects originated from the chief investigators’ involvement in the DRACON Project. That project was coordinated in the Peace and Development Research Institute in Gothenburg, in Sweden, and was “interested in investigating whether drama had anything to offer school students in the area of conflict resolution or management” (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. 5).

Across all of these national and international projects then, the focus had been on the students – what they had learned and what understandings about bullying they had developed. However, it seemed to me that the people most critical to the success of
these drama focused programs were the teachers, for without their interest, involvement, skill and enthusiasm, little or nothing could ever be achieved. In addition, school management structures were also important and once again I felt that these had been somewhat neglected in the earlier research work. My decision to focus on the three “s” factors of strategies, scaffolding and structures seemed to offer the field some useful possibilities.

**Background**

*The Acting Against Bullying* Program was a combined initiative of Education Queensland and Griffith University. Education Queensland was interested in the way *The Cooling Conflicts* Program had approached conflict management and asked the researchers to apply the techniques they used (in N.S.W.) to the bullying problem that was evident in Queensland schools. Action research cycles were used to develop strategies to deal specifically with bullying whilst also continuing to refine the drama and peer teaching system that had been successful in both the *Cooling Conflicts* and *DRACON* programs. It operated with a three year plan, with the first year involving a number of pilot schools that represented a range of demographic and educational settings. The second year entailed working with urban schools and the third year took the program to regional and rural areas, applying the outcomes of the previous action research cycles at each stage.

A total of eighteen schools in Brisbane and regional Queensland were involved at different stages over the three years of the action research. Schools became part of the research project by enlisting key teachers who would undertake an in-service on the methods of the program. The two chief investigators and I provided the basic skills and premises of conflict management and forum drama during the in-service, while all on-going assistance and support was thereafter given by me.

The key teachers had the role of facilitating their own classes to peer teach the drama methods to a class two grades younger than theirs. This class would then be called the relay class. The relay class would then go on to peer teach another relay class and so on until the project reached grade one students. The basic premise that the teachers and students were taught and that informed this project and the *Cooling Conflicts*
project preceding it, is that conflict has three identifiable and escalating stages (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. 16):

- **Latent** – When there are potentially conflicting attitudes and behaviours that have yet to show themselves.
- **Emerging** – When these attitudes and behaviours begin to become evident and affect a situation.
- **Manifest** – When the behaviours and attitudes have led to open conflict or bullying that has escalated to a point where it impacts seriously on the lives of the participants.

Integrated into the teaching and learning of these conflict management concepts were Forum Theatre elements and process drama strategies. These were used by the students to peer teach the conflict management concepts and assist students in understanding conflict and bullying:

The *Acting Against Bullying* Project added the concept that there are three people involved in bullying that all play a part: the Bully, the Bullied (this is preferable to the term ‘victim’) and the Bystander. Anyone can operate as any of these participants at any time because they are common and often involved in human relationships. In *The Acting Against Bullying* Program there is no stigmatisation of any form of behaviour and the bully and bullied are free to choose to play another role should they be ready to. Also, the bystander is encouraged to understand that he/she can play a significant part in intensifying or de-escalating the bullying.

My role within the *Acting Against Bullying* project was to work with the Chief Investigators to implement the three action research cycles and research their impact on the students involved. As part of this implementation I was specifically responsible for the in-servicing of teachers whose classes were involved in the project. My own research evolved from the in-service program as I became increasingly interested in discovering to what extent it was possible to empower the teachers to become active agents of change in relation to bullying within their schools, as well as being able to undertake the program with their classes successfully and confidently. In order to achieve this objective, I chose to do a multiple case study of three schools from within
the project, with Southside, North Beachside and Westside Schools being selected. I chose these schools because although each was successful in its own right, when applying the program, each school was also very different from the other demographically, geographically and culturally.

The Three Case Studies

The three case study schools selected for exploration within this multiple case study research project were all very different, with each one having its own unique characteristics and demographics. Nevertheless, although different, each school succeeded in lowering the level of bullying incidents in their school during their three year action research participation and indicated an increase in anti-bullying empowerment. Teachers at each school demonstrated in the data that they felt more confident at dealing with bullying incidents among their students and students indicated they had a better understanding of bullying and ways of dealing with it during school time. For this reason, the three case studies were chosen. Below is the background to each school.

Southside: Background to the School

Southside is an established school servicing families generally at the higher end of the socio-economic scale and is well respected in terms of its performing arts. It had been recommended that Southside be used to trial the program and we made various trips to the school before the project was eventually launched with the Minister for Education in attendance in 2002.

Southside SHS is located twenty minutes to the south of Brisbane city and situated on ten hectares of land which was once a farm. It opened in 1983 and has a strong academic record as a school that consistently performs at or above state-wide benchmarks for numbers of students with scores of OP 5 or better. Unlike any of the other local schools, it offers Agriculture as one of its subjects and the students taking this subject have the opportunity to be part of a sheep and cattle show team.

Southside began by experimenting with the Acting Against Bullying project, but by the final cycle had implemented the project as part of the school’s ‘Behaviour
Management Policy’ within its ‘National Safe Schools Framework’ and ‘Best Practice Grants Program’ (see Appendix R for diagram of Whole School Approach). As a result of its involvement in the Acting Against Bullying project, Southside SHS collaborated with their local primary school, Southside South State School and eventually issued its own anti-bullying project.

Firstly, the Acting Against Bullying project was the catalyst for a unit that the Performing Arts department wrote called, ‘The Power Punch Unit’, which used drama and dance to explore bullying. Secondly, the staff attended workshops, planning days to create curriculum for the year 8’s anti bullying program, staff briefings and professional development updates. Thirdly, the parents were targeted via teacher pamphlets outlining the school’s approach to creating safe and supportive environments. Finally, the community was invited to be involved in the form of a Community arts project.

**Westside: Background to the School**

Westside is a school located in the Ipswich District to service the retail, industrial and residential communities and those of surrounding rural areas including the Amberley Air Base. The community represents a range of socio-economic levels. At the time of the study, approximately 72.6% of the population lived in couple family households (Australian Bureau of Statistics census, 1996) and almost 12% were part of single parent households. Also during this census, the median household income range was $700 per week. Whilst this was seen by the school as comparable with the Queensland average, there were fewer high income earners in this district than the rest of South East Queensland, Brisbane and Queensland. Unemployment at the time was 9.2%, which was considered average for the total local government area, but unemployment was high for the younger age groups with 20.9% for 15–19 year olds and 14.4% for 10–24 year olds.

The highest occupation categories for the area were tradespersons, related workers and clerical and service workers. House prices had declined in the last years, with the district remaining the lowest of all reported in South East Queensland and shires and cities. The district also had a considerably higher proportion of indigenous persons than Brisbane and South East Queensland at 2.8%.
The school’s teachers and administration stated that there was substantial socio-economic disadvantage and youth unemployment was high. The school had a population of 1,200 students at the time of the research and there were 80 staff members including administration, Community Education Officers for Aboriginal and Pacific Island students and guidance officers, many of whom lived locally.

The school principal saw the areas of perceived strength as the competence of the teaching staff and their prevailing sense of community. The factors that were seen as impacting on learning were the significant number of ‘at risk’ and alienated students, drug taking, low retention rates, poor perception of physical surroundings by school community members and a high burnout rate of teachers due to the demanding nature of regular classroom contact.

As part of their Behaviour Management Policy, the school claimed to employ and regularly update quality curriculum and professional development programs to meet the needs for teachers and students within their school. Westside had been a participant school in the ‘Health Promoting Schools’ Study for over three years and felt that the Acting Against Bullying project would fit into this framework. Westside staff also boasted proudly that they were above the state mean in team spirit, organisation, staff enthusiasm, staff/community relations, workplace quality and support.

**North Beachside: Background to the School**

North Beachside is a rural seaside school with a large number of students coming from a transiting population. Although the Acting Against Bullying project had intended not to deal with the rural areas until the following year, the guidance counselor at this school was very proactive and keen on our project and insisted we allow them participation.

North Beachside SHS had a very mobile population of students due to its proximity to the beach and its rural district and during its involvement in the project had an average of 1330 students enrolled. The school administration felt that the percentage of parents and students satisfied with their school’s safe, supportive learning
environment was below state mean data. This reflected an overall problem in the
district. North Beachside was a suburb of the Wide Bay–Burnett Region. According
to that region’s Youth Mentoring Program’s representative, the Wide Bay–Burnett
Region had the highest rate of youth (15–24 years) unemployment in Queensland.
Mentoring was identified as a key strategy to deal with this problem as many students
were at risk of leaving school and these students were often disruptive and had
behavioural problems. The program identified that those mentored were 46% less
likely than their peers to use illegal drugs, 52% less likely than their peers to skip a
day at school and more trusting of their parents or guardians.

As part of the North Beachside SHS ‘Policy on Managing Behaviour in a Supportive
School Environment’, a buddy teacher system was set up as an emergent safety valve
for students who interfered with classroom teaching. Also, a Great Alternative
Program (GAP) was implemented to provide non-academic students in achieving a
Year 10 Certificate in a relaxed and supportive school environment.

The Acting Against Bullying project’s peer teaching component complemented the
school’s and district’s alternate and mentoring approaches to dealing with its youth
behavioural problems and provided a possible solution to its “high early school
leaving rate” (Education Queensland, 2004, p. 8).
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction: The Fields of Research

In order to explore the research question, a multiple case study methodology was applied across three Acting Against Bullying Project schools. The overarching project Acting Against Bullying made use of a combination of peer teaching and educational drama to empower teachers and students to deal with bullying in schools, while my emphasis was on the professional learning of the teachers involved. The literature review therefore investigates the fields of bullying, peer teaching, educational drama and the professional development of teachers in schools.

The first field of the literature review explores the extensive literature on bullying, its causes and the various methods applied to deal with it in school contexts. This literature identifies the types of bullying, the roles within bullying situations and the major issues adolescents identify with when faced with bullying incidents in school settings. Past approaches to dealing with bullying are examined in terms of their successes and limitations. Literature relating to the three phases of bullying taught within the Acting Against Bullying Project (latent, emerging and manifest) is also examined here.

The second field of literature focuses on peer teaching and the underrated, yet empowering effect this approach can have on students in school settings. The difference between peer and cross-age teaching as opposed to peer mediation is emphasised. Next, literature relating to the application of drama strategies as an empowering medium in school contexts is reviewed. A definition of the types of educational drama utilised for empowerment, as well as the origins of these approaches is offered, especially those relating to drama as a form of conflict management. The benefits and constraints of using process drama and in particular and forum theatre approaches for examining bullying are also examined. The fourth
Field of literature looks at the professional development of teachers and the effectiveness of current approaches is discussed.

**Field One: Bullying in Schools**

Norwegian researcher, Dan Olweus was one of the first educators to comprehensively investigate and write about bullying in schools. During his research in the 1970’s he stated, “A student (or pupil) is being bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative action on the part of one or more students” (Olweus, 1993, p. 9). Olweus’ first book, published in 1978, ‘Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys’, is considered a landmark as the first systematic study of the phenomenon of bullying (Bidwell, 2003). His original research discovered that 15% of children in Norwegian schools were involved in bullying “now and then” (Bidwell, 2003, p. 3).

More recently, Ken Rigby, an Australian researcher, updated his many studies into bullying in primary and secondary schools and summarised bullying as “repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or groups of persons” (Rigby, 2007, p. 15). He adds that there are two major types of bullying: malign bullying and non-malign bullying. Rigby states that malign bullying “consciously seeks to do harm to someone; it is deliberate exploitation of a power differential” (p. 15). He defines non-malign bullying as “mindless bullying” or “educational bullying” (p. 17) and suggests this is often motivated not by evil, but by a vague desire to have a bit of fun. He argues that all the misuses of power labelled as bullying are human events where, depending on context, all of us could be implicated as one of three parties;

1. the bully  
2. the bystander  
3. the victim (who we label in the program as the bullied)

Hawkins, Pepler and Craig (2001) have also explored the three roles in any school bullying situation, including that of the bystander. They believe that bullying is less likely when the students observing the bullying (the bystanders) express their disapproval (pp. 512–517) and this notion is gaining considerable attention in the
literature. For example, whether the bystander intervenes or not is discussed by Oh and Hazler (2009) who suggest that the “bystanders’ potential for breaking the cycles of school bullying is substantial considering the fact that they are usually the majority of participants” (p. 293). Additionally, Trach, Hymel, Waterhouse and Neale (2010) have completed international research on bystanders and found that the interventions by bystanders differed from country to country. They found (p. 116) that:

Canadian students described a variety of strategies for dealing with bullying, with the most common strategies being talking to the bully and supporting the victim (both mentioned by 18% of students), followed by direct intervention, seeking adult involvement and inaction (13% each). In England and Japan, students generated three major bystander responses: take direct action/get involved (endorsed by 66% of the sample), seek help from teachers, parents, or friends (39%), and support the victim (21%).

However research undertaken by Aboud and Miller (2007, p. 807) on peer bystander intervention in bullying episodes has identified “a discrepancy between students’ unfavourable attitudes toward bullying and the limited actions they take to stop it” (p. 804). The most common reasons given for not intervening were that the students did not want to get involved. Less frequent reasons were that the students were afraid or not knowing what to say or do.

In the last few years, cyberbullying via the internet has emerged as another major concern in educational contexts. Raskauskas and Stoltz (2007) define electronic bullying as “a means of bullying in which peers use electronics to taunt, insult, threaten, harass, and/or intimidate a peer.” They add that internet bullies may use text messaging, emails, websites and pictures “to circulate rumours, secrets, insults, and even death threats to harass, manipulate, and harm their victims” (2007, p. 2).

The Impact of Bullying
Overall, the literature demonstrates a basic agreement that bullying is counterproductive for the bully as well as those being bullied. Merrell, Gueldner, Ross and Isava (2008) found that “bullies also tend to be at heightened risk for substance use and later criminal behaviour, and are likely to become increasingly unpopular with peers as they get older” (p. 26). The literature also tends to agree that those who become bullies are often victims of bullying themselves. For example, O’Moore in
Roland and Munthe (1989, p. 22) emphasises that children often become chronic bullies because they feel insecure, humiliated and inadequate and have been abused or not allowed to show their feelings and feel no sense of accomplishment. The author found that “bullying behaviour is difficult to change because the underlying motive is often self-hatred brought on by years of being made to feel small and inadequate” (p. 22). Children may become bullies as a response to change and upheaval in their lives such as divorce, the birth of a baby, the death of a loved one or moving and going to a new school. Other reasons are also suggested. O’Moore (Roland & Munthe, 1989, p. 22) also suggests that bullies may have been pressured as children and denied the chance to “show feelings of tenderness or to be weak in any way, were put under pressure to succeed, but never complimented or felt a sense of accomplishment.”

Some studies accuse the teachers of contributing directly to the bullying dynamic themselves. “They misunderstand the symptoms exhibited by bullied children and treat them as annoying or willful; or they are not fully empathetic to bullied children (and in some cases blame them for their victimisation), thus exposing them to further victimisation” (Sullivan, 2000, p. 87). Moreover, it is asserted that some teachers role model intimidating behaviour to their class thereby not only teaching their own students to bully, but inviting them to ridicule a child as they have done (Sullivan, 2000, p. 88).

Another even more disturbing factor about bullying is its close relation with teenage suicide. A study by Rigby and Slee in 1999, investigating the relationship between bullying and suicide in a South Australian secondary school confirmed that “involvement in bully–victim problems at school, especially for students with relatively little social support, was significantly related to [a] degree of suicidal ideation” (Rigby & Slee, 1999, p. 119). Indeed, Olweus (1993) as far back as 1977 discovered that “it is not surprising that the victims’ devaluation of themselves sometimes becomes so overwhelming that they see suicide as the only possible solution” (p. 48). Olweus also relates school bullying problems to society’s general attitude toward violence and oppression, claiming that “to refrain from actively counteracting bully/victim problems in school implies a tacit acceptance” (Olweus, 1993, p. 49).
**Bullying and Gender**

A review of the current literature found that while physical aggression was often observed among boys, the more covert forms of social aggression were observed among girls. Remillard and Lamb (2005, p. 221) found that “a number of researchers have identified relational aggression as more prevalent among girls than among boys” and that “occurrences of social aggression increase with age among girls” (p. 221). They cite Brown’s (2003) concept of ‘girlfighting’ as “set up by a culture that teaches girls to be jealous rather than supportive, to compete with one another for boys’ attention, and to mistrust other girls (p. 222).” They also reinforce Brown’s questioning of a society that encourages girls to be catty and competitive with each other and suggest that this is “both developmentally normative and very hurtful (p. 222).”

Similarly, Burton (2010, p. 259) found that girls employed a form of covert bullying in schools. He suggests that “in school contexts, relational aggression is associated with the formation of social cliques and subtle verbal and psychological tactics used to injure other girls’ feelings of social acceptance.” He cites Bauman and Del Rio (2006) when adding that “these are subtle forms of attack, difficult for teachers and other adults to recognize and manage (p. 259).”

Crothers, Field and Kolbert (2005, p. 249) also found in their studies that research conducted in the last decade “suggests that girls are just as likely as boys to be aggressive in their friendships, but that they use their social intelligence rather than physical aggression when in conflict. They suggest this may result from women and girls having “a lack of perceived freedom to relate authentically [which] often results in the masking of emotions and engaging in covert attacks against peers in the form of relational aggression (p. 350).”

James and Owens (2005, p. 72) cite Bjorkvist et al. 1994 and Lagerspetz et al. 1988 in their research “that girls’ preference to use indirect … rather than physical aggression is because they are often physically inferior to boys” and that “cultural gender-role expectations encourage boys to be domineering and directly aggressive whereas similar behavior from girls is socially discouraged (p. 72).”
Leenaars, Dane and Marini (2008, p. 405) add that “indirect aggression appears to be especially salient for females.” However, they add that in some instance girls view indirect aggression as more hurtful than do boys (p. 405) and suggest that while both males and females practise indirect aggression, that there may be “important gender differences in the way indirect aggression is practised and experienced (p. 405).” They conclude to suggest that there is some evidence that “attractive females were at greater risk for indirect victimizations than less attractive peers (p. 413).” They advise “universal prevention programs, engaging all students within the classrooms (p. 413)” as possible solutions for promoting respect and less tolerance toward indirect aggression among adolescents.

In the *Acting Against Bullying* program, it was evident that girls tended to bully each other about relationships and competition for boys while the boys’ issues were more varied. However, while the literature on gender differences in bullying provided vital information for the *Acting Against Bullying* research, the gender issue was not a major factor influencing the outcome of the case studies explored in this thesis.

**Approaches to Bullying Management**

There are many approaches to bullying management in schools. Kochenderfer-Ladd and Pelletier (2008, p. 431) gathered data on primary school teachers and found that “teachers were not likely to intervene [in bullying] if they viewed bullying as normative behaviour, but were more likely to intervene if they held either assertion or avoidant beliefs.” Novick and Isaacs (2010) have undertaken research on teacher preparedness towards dealing with bullying. Their search “supports the notion that teachers who see themselves as effective are more likely to take action that will be effective…this suggests that teachers who view themselves as efficacious and prepared to address bullying issues will be more likely to intervene successfully” (p. 285). Kochenderfer-Ladd and Pelletier’s research (2008) found that although victims of bullying tend to view teacher intervention as an effective means of countering bullying, teachers are not always as effective as they think they are.
Many students report that teachers are typically unaware of the amount of bullying that occurs among their students (Bauman & Del Rio, 2005; Smith & Shu, 2000). Moreover, although teachers perceive they are effective at identifying incidences of bullying, researchers find that teachers tend to overestimate their abilities in detecting bullying as well as their effectiveness in intervening (Limber, 2002; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). In fact, although teachers may intervene, if their efforts are inconsistent or ineffective, their assistance may be problematic for victims.

Meanwhile, Crothers and Kolbert (2008, p. 132) suggest, “It may be easier [for teachers] to prevent childhood bullying problems rather than react to them, because responding to incidents of peer victimization can be difficult for such reasons as not directly observing the behaviour or not being aware of the extent of the problem due to students not reporting bullying to adults.” Schon (1983) offers a solution for teachers by suggesting using reflective practice to deal with bullying, but warns teachers that the freedom to reflect and innovate may disrupt the institutional order of school systems. He suggests “the teacher’s isolation in her [sic] classroom works against reflection–in–action … she needs to communicate her private puzzles and insights, to test them against the views of her peers” (p. 333). This would mean that for teachers to reflect on what caused the bullying and/or how to deal with it, school systems would need to provide professional freedom for teachers to explore reflective practice within the institutional confines that exist and with principal approval and support, otherwise, “the freedom to reflect, invent and differentiate would disrupt the institutional order of space and time” (p. 333).

Henkin (2005, p. 35) suggests that teachers should use literacy lessons to assist their students to reflect by exploring narratives to deal with bullying in schools. There are also suggestions that whole school anti-bullying policies need to be implemented including the participation not only of teachers, but also of the administration and parents. The Gulbenkian report, *Children and Violence*, “called for a whole population approach rather than targeting high-risk children or developing punitive approaches” against those who bully (Varnava, 2002, p. 60.) Meanwhile, Beare (1989) and Stoll and Fink (1996) consider “the necessity for changes in culture as a key to school improvement” (cited in Glover, Cartwright, & Gleeson, 1998, p. 153).
In order to change the culture of a school, an anti-bullying program would have to involve everyone and permeate the curriculum (Varnava, 2002, p. 63).

Within the Australian context, Plunkett (2002) explored how conflict in adolescent settings can escalate and de-escalate and details the anti-bullying systems that have been attempted so far, analysing what happens when the systems fails. She states that most systems apply what has been labeled as a ‘top-down’ approach that allows “conflict to remain untreated until having reached the most volatile manifest phase. Combined with this is what Coyle and French suggest as the belief that “it is better to let sleeping dogs lie’ than risk drawing attention to the situation” (cited in Plunkett, 2002, p. 25). Apart from the fact that these approaches are mostly unsuccessful, there is also an increasing awareness that any conflict management, including bullying, “is a complex process that requires complex solutions. This is because school communities are microcosms of the larger societies in which they function” (Plunkett, 2002, p. 26).

Plunkett’s work was based on the DRACON Program. The DRACON [Drama and Conflict] Program, funded by the NSW Department of Education and Training and Griffith University, was an integrated approach to empowering secondary students to manage their conflict and become leaders of conflict management through drama and peer teaching. Its manual defines conflict as having three stages; the latent stage that presents the underlying conditions, the emerging stage when the conflict starts brewing and the manifest stage when the conflict is visible to outsiders (O’Toole & Burton, 2000, p. 5). To explore these three stages using dramatic strategies, the DRACON project team invited the students involved to create three short improvised scenes to demonstrate the latent, emerging and manifest stages of a bullying situation. As these improvisations are presented, audience members are invited to join the improvisations with the intent of changing the outcome to a more positive one (see below for more detail).

More recently, the National Coalition Against Bullying (NCAB) has been holding regular conferences specifically aimed at dealing with bullying. Established by the Alannah and Madeline Foundation, the NCAB conducts national conferences working
with, and seeking the support of, all education sectors and government departments. In their work in this area, members of the NCAB have identified a need in schools for practical advice on the delivery of anti-bullying programs and have come together to write *Bullying Solutions: Evidence based approaches to bullying in Australian schools*" (McGrath & Noble, 2006, p. vii). While a recurrent theme in this book “is that a combination of actions has more chance of success than a single approach or action” (p. xxii), the fact that “bystander support can produce positive outcomes for specific bullying incidents” (p. xxi) is a repeatedly explored strategy. However, McGrath and Noble cautiously inform us that “implementing new anti-bullying practices is a slow journey and these practices can take from three to five years to become institutionalised” (p. xxiii).

Rigby is similarly cautious and in an Attorney General Department’s publication on bullying prevention approaches in Australian schools, Rigby (2002b) warns us that:

“There are grounds for some caution in supposing that anti-bullying initiatives will invariably produce the intended results. The examination of the evaluations has indicated that not all programs have proved to be effective. They indicated that the reductions in bullying have tended to be relatively small and to be related more to reducing the proportion of children being victimised than the proportion engaging in bullying. Further, ‘successful’ interventions have not shown that all aspects of bullying are necessarily reduced, for example, physical bullying may be lowered but verbal may not (p. 17).

Furthermore, in Rigby’s *Summary of Evaluations in Bullying* amongst various international and Australian schools, it was evident that there was more success in a reduction of bullying incidents and reports amongst the younger students in high schools and amongst primary schools following intervention and research projects. Secondary and older students demonstrated little improvement in bullying as a result of intervention strategies overall (Rigby, 2002b, pp. 60–62). Rigby (2002b, p. 18) also discovered that there is “persuasive evidence that a crucial factor in determining a positive outcome in reducing bullying in a school is the commitment of the staff to implementing the program” and that “a sense of ownership of the program by the school may be at least as important as any expert help that may be available from outsiders.” In fact, Rigby adds that too much interference or direction from research experts outside the school can lower the autonomy of the school and be counter-
productive towards de-escalating its bullying problem. He concludes: “the commitment of a school to a program and strong involvement by staff in its implementation appears to be an important and possibly crucial factor in reducing bullying” (Rigby, 2002b, p. 3).

More recently, Bauman, Rigby and Hoppa’s findings from a study of teachers’ and school counselors’ strategies for handling school bullying incidents provided grounds for concern regarding current practices in the training of educators to deal effectively with school bullying” (2008, p. 850). They also found that most of the educators who completed their online questionnaire had not received any form of anti-bullying training either in undergraduate pre-service training or in their graduate programs, and that a large proportion of teachers worked in schools without an anti-bullying policy (p. 850). According to Noble, “research shows that the six main contributors to effective school-based prevention programs are to take a whole school approach, to embed anti-bullying principles and processes in the curriculum, to start planning early, to involve parents and the community and to use multiple strategies (McGrath & Noble, 2006, p. 68). However, bullying interventions appear to have so far produced only modest positive outcomes. A study by Merrell, Gueldner, Ross and Isava (2008, p. 26) into intervention research in the last 20 years concluded that anti-bullying programs “are more likely to influence knowledge, attitudes, and self-perceptions rather than actual bullying behaviours.” However, they go on to suggest:

Because school environments provide a microcosm of sorts of the broader society and culture, and because schools are the only setting in which almost all children and adolescents participate, they provide an ideal naturalistic laboratory in which to study bullies, victims, and bullying behaviour; to develop bullying prevention and intervention programs, and to investigate the effectiveness of these programs (p. 27).

Similarly, in a report titled *Enhancing Responses to Bullying in Queensland Schools*, Rigby (2010, p. 2) assessed the guidance currently being provided by state schools in Queensland. He evaluated: “The use of reinforcing discrete positive or negative behaviours may in some cases … prevent some bullying behaviour from continuing. However, it is unlikely to affect covert forms, such as deliberate exclusion and cyber bullying. These latter forms of bullying are now seen as the most damaging of all the mental health of targeted children.”
Rigby therefore recommends “the use of evaluative procedures to discover what has been achieved following interventions in cases” (2010, p. 4) and has most recently urged the Minister for Education and Training “to review what is included on addressing bullying in schools in mandatory professional programs for pre-service teachers and make recommendations on what is to be covered” (2010, p. 5). This final comment is critical to the research reported in this thesis as the data here is focused particularly on the impact of teacher commitment to the project, and seeks to identify the outcomes for the teachers from structured professional development.

**Field Two: Peer Teaching**

A particularly significant feature of the overall *Acting Against Bullying* project was the use of peer teaching. Such an approach is not new however. In 1531, Valentine Trotzendorf used students to teach other students in an impoverished school. He felt “the best way to learn is to teach” so he made his best elder scholars teach the younger ones (cited in Briggs, 1998, p. 9). More recently, Johnson and Johnson (1993) and Slavin (1995) found that approximately 72% of studies showed enhanced student learning when teachers emphasised cooperative learning techniques in the classroom and a number of studies showed that the use of peer-group techniques enhances student self-esteem overall (cited in Gabler & Schroeder, 2003, p. 89). Delquadri, Greenwood, Carta and Hall (cited in Simmons, Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathers, & Hodge, 1995, p. 389) reported that peer teaching is more effective compared to teacher direct instruction. They claim:

> Peer-tutoring increases the time students spend in relevant academic behaviours. Other reported benefits include increasing opportunities to respond, providing additional practice, increasing time on tasks by decreasing independent work time, increasing feedback, and incorporating ongoing performance monitoring.

Furthermore, Simmons, Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes, & Hodge (1995, p. 389) also noted that a research experiment on low-level readers found that ‘Learning-Disabled’ and ‘Low-Performing’ students benefited from peer tutoring and that prior research further indicated the benefits of cross-age tutoring for oral reading accuracy and comprehension of students identified as underachieving and remedial readers.
Claims have also been made that peer teaching improves students’ overall general behaviour in school:

Students working in classrooms in which cooperative-learning techniques are a central feature tend to show more positive attitudes toward school in general, less disruptive behaviour, a greater feeling of autonomy in the classroom, and enhanced conflict resolution skills (Gabler & Schroeder, 2003, p. 89).

There is a general “consensus among parents, educators, and researchers that peer relationships provide a unique and essential contribution to emotional and social development” (Pepler & Craig, 1998, p. 176). Hartup, a psychologist, explains that peers influence each other by ‘acceptance or rejection’ and that peer relationships can affect children positively by promoting social skills or negatively by engaging in deviant activities. Pepler and Craig (1998) also report that “peer acceptance or rejection is a group referent construct that describes the central tendency for children’s relations within the peer group” (p. 117). Given the significant influence students have on each other, it is likely that peer teaching could have some positive impact on bullying in schools.

However, as stated earlier, peers can also have a negative effect on bullying. Peers can be drawn into a bullying situation via ‘mass hysteria’ thereby giving positive attention to the bully and reinforcing the bully’s power. Pepler and Craig emphasise that “peers are the audience for the theatre of bullying” (2000, p. 9). Furthermore, they add that lack of empathy for the victim only substantiates his or her role, encouraging those who align with the bully to become desensitised to the situation. Lastly, Pepler and Craig warn that there is an element of risk taking for the students who align with the victim in that they run the risk of becoming the next victim by gaining the bully’s attention (p. 9).

In the text Cooling Conflicts, this problem is dealt with by looking at the particular role of the ‘bystander’ during peer teaching. “The bystander may be one or more human beings, or may be an institution or agency that encourages or tolerates bullying, or allows it to continue” (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. 17) for fear of being bullied themselves or out of a misguided perspective that the bullied deserves what he or she receives.
A study by Morrison (2009) found that peer teaching helped ‘negative’ leaders as the act of ‘being a teacher’ offered her pupils “the opportunity for intense and immediate engagement with the world” (p. 58). She adds that in peer teaching “negative leaders can expect to have a voice and for that voice to be heard … there is the expectation that, as teachers, they will have something valuable to offer” (p. 61). Peer teaching should not however be confused with to peer mediation. Maskal (cited in Elliot, 2002, p. 104) explains that:

Peer teachers have taken on the roles of mediator, mentor, counselor, tutor or friend. The role may progress from that of a listener to that of tutor, helper, mentor and long-term be-friender. A mentor acts as a confidant, counselor and sponsor, encouraging those they are supporting to trust them, experience and understand feelings and take considered risks. The relationship is built on attraction and mutual trust and respect. It is similar to that of an elder sibling, who offers compassion but not competition.

Maskall advises that the best type of peer teaching is actually cross-age teaching, as often “it is helpful if the supporting peer is older, more knowledgeable or more experienced” (cited in Elliot, 2002, p. 105). In bullying situations, if the peer mentor has been through bullying experiences it also helps the younger student. He adds that peers have advantages over those who have authority or those who have to behave according to a formal code because “they can use and understand the same language as those whom they are helping” (Elliot, 2002, p. 105). Maskall also advises that students need training to be effective peer mentors and “it is also useful and empowering if students who have already done training can take over the training process with new trainees” (Elliot, 2002, p. 108).

Unlike peer teaching, peer mediation appears to be less successful in bullying situations, particularly among older students. “Peer mediation is ineffectual in secondary schools because many teenagers prefer to deal with conflict on their own” (Plunkett, 2002, p. 32). Research indicates that most secondary students feel uncomfortable about confiding their problems to other students. Furthermore, students are generally not confident about acting as peer mediators in case they invite criticism and distrust from other students. Nevertheless, Bouhours (2003) advises that any form of counseling or mediation is better than exclusion as suspension from school is likely
to be a risk factor toward delinquency further down the track and will not solve the bullying problem.

**Field Three: Drama for Empowerment**

“Drama is an art form which is directly concerned with living, with the way we lead our lives. Through drama we explore the way human beings think, feel and communicate, learning to understand others and ourselves much more fully” (Burton, 2002b, p. vii). By using drama in the classroom, students are given the opportunity to apply their emotional memories and in the process to develop empathy for others. Burton defines genuine empathy as “being able to directly share our feelings with someone else so they actually feel the love or anger or happiness that we are experiencing... being empathic means that we are able to feel the emotions of others just as they feel them” (Burton, 2002b, p. 10).

It is this ability to engage in empathy through drama that is an essential component in counteracting bullying. The *Acting Against Bullying* project employed Enhanced Forum Theatre and Process Drama to deal specifically with bullying in Queensland State schools. Brazilian theatre director, Augusto Boal’s ‘Forum Theatre’ (also known as Theatre of the Oppressed) was enhanced to cater for a classroom setting and a younger audience and elements of process drama were added. Through these forms of drama, students can practise what is described by Burton as their ‘rehearsal for life’ (cited in Plunkett, 2002, p. 35). Appleby adds that drama can also “be a curriculum integrator that can challenge and motivate students to achieve not only improved social education outcomes, but oracy, literacy, maths and other Key Learning Areas as well” (2002, p. 5). A number of different forms of drama and theatre have been used to empower young people within a range of contexts, including bullying, and these will be reviewed in the section below, commencing with Forum Theatre.

**Forum Theatre**

Augusto Boal, the originator of Forum Theatre, describes this approach as a language and calls it *The Theatre of the Oppressed*. He says:

> The Theatre of the Oppressed tries to develop that language: first, with the objective of trying to discover what oppressions we are suffering; second, to
create a space in which to rehearse ways and meanings of fighting against those oppressions: third, to extrapolate that into real life, so that we can become free – which means we can become subject, not object, of our relationships with others (Boal, 2000, p. 46).

Drama educator, Cecily O’Neill (1995) suggests that theatre in general provides a safe space in which to analyse and experiment with the emotions of others as it offers “an innovative laboratory for the exercise of our capacity to transcend the social roles and types that in real life we may have been unable to elude” (p. 79). She goes on to suggest that Forum Theatre, in particular, is the best means for experimenting with emotions in a safe zone where participants “remain free to feel without the danger of exposure while taking on the responsibility for the dramatic behaviour of those engaged in the interaction” (p. 128). Similarly, Bolton (1995, p. 33) notes that in Forum theatre the audience is encouraged to identify with the victim and that Boal’s audience “witness an act of repression which they are invited to overthrow – they are able to identify with a victim.”

Forum theatre has been used extensively in many contexts to affect change. In an intervention study aimed at the enhancement of fair play behaviour among high school children during sports games, Rutten et al. (2010) found that that fair play behaviour in soccer could be positively affected through forum theatre intervention (p. 67). The authors found that Forum theatre had the potential “(1) to make spectators gain insight into the ‘functioning’ of the sports practice and their own contribution to it; (2) to provoke a cognitive moral conflict that only can be solved by using higher levels of moral reasoning; (3) to stimulate communication about norms and values within sports; and (4) to reinforce the self-reflexive abilities of teams and athletes” (p. 68). Thus, they focused on these aspects “in order to improve the moral climate at high schools by making implicit rules explicit, by discussing these rules and by subjecting these rules to democratic decision making” (p. 68).

In universities, Forum Theatre has been used for training staff and administrators to analyse the university structure and comment on the politics and barriers of working within an institution. Sadler (2010) found that teachers and educators who self-identified as having no social justice background stated that they felt less confident to talk about these issues following the use of forum and interactive theatre. She
concluded that there was “a need for a parallel program highlighting some foundational knowledge on systems of oppression before using Theatre of the Oppressed [Forum Theatre] as a tool (p. 92). Nevertheless, Quinlan and Duggleby (2009) found, that with forms of participatory theatre, “the fourth wall is broken as “actors” and audience engage in an iterative form of collective problem-solving” (p. 209). Their study of caregivers using forum theatre found (p. 213):

With the fourth wall broken, so was the isolation that family caregivers often experience. Together, the activators and audience-participants were able to develop new ways of understanding the relationship between self and others. Their collaborative creation of representations of real-life situations made it possible for them to collectively test and evaluate their proposed modifications to those situations.

As noted above, within the Cooling Conflict and Acting Against Bullying projects, Boal’s Forum Theatre approaches were applied. However these were adapted to ensure that they more closely met the needs of the participants and the goals of these projects. In the following section, the emerging form entitled Enhanced Forum Theatre, “using process drama techniques as the enhancements to the basic forum theatre,” (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. 25) will be discussed.

Enhanced Forum Theatre

By enhancing forum theatre to fit easily in the school classroom, O’Toole, Burton and Plunkett utilised a theatrical system that “can be applied not just in the classroom, but within the curriculum, in a whole school context” (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. 5). Within Enhanced Forum Theatre, students share their bullying stories then create frozen images of their chosen bullying scenario. They then develop their characters through a role circle that deepens the characters’ motivations, but also fictionalises the story to safely distance its participants. Finally, students perform their three scenes (latent, emerging and manifest), with audience participants using thought tracking and hot seating to learn more about the characters’ feelings and motives.

In its original format, Forum theatre invites the audience to contribute to the performance and to alter the outcome of the scenario. In the Acting Against Bullying project, the audience is encouraged to intervene by role-playing a part differently, with the intent of de-escalating the bullying situation. If the intervention is seen as
unsuccessful or too easily achieved, the audience participants are invited to call out the word ‘magic’ and another member of the audience may try a different tactic. The participants are basically applying strategies aimed at solving the bullying problem, while the audience is identifying solutions that would not work in a real setting. The interventions can keep occurring until a participant comes up with a strategy that is seen as a practical solution.

Using this approach, the students do not always discover perfect solutions to their bullying problems, but when their improvisations are structured in the form of forum theatre this material can be utilised to discuss different ways of understanding the situations. As Burton (2002a, p. 155) argues that, “you can also use forum theatre to actually experiment with different solutions to the issues or problems you are dramatising”. In this way, students are also able to develop greater insight into their own culture as well as those of others.

Forum theatre has been used in many other educational settings. In Denmark, student teachers teaching second languages used Forum theatre to evaluate their experiences with their students. At the end of the day, the lecturers talked with the student teachers about how it felt being audience and actor (Lindberg & Jokobsen, 2008, p. 139).

Often they say that acting is a very good way to evaluate the problems that they have experienced in the schools. They stress that Forum Theatre is a good method of evaluation because it is not based so much on spoken words but on using the body to show and live out the experiences. During the actual plays, solution models have been presented by those taking part. Misunderstandings have been cleared up through active and physical actions.

Forum theatre has also been used by nurse educators to encourage nursing students to come up with their own solutions to potential problems. McClimens and Scott (2007, p. 206) discovered:

As the audience/learners are encouraged to find solutions to the problems presented, the actors/educators become the educated and the power shifts for the student to become spectators and subjects of the scenario. Solutions are found with the students, not presented to them as already having been discovered and imposed upon them. They become the experts. In this way, the educator (in forum theatre, the actor) does not try to impose their view.
There is concern among some drama educators that there is a danger that forum theatre may be applied too subjectively by some practitioners, however. Balfour (2009, p. 353) suggests that “the concern about intentionality in applied theatre is that if there are more complex motivations and ideologies in operation, it is important that practitioners are able to articulate and rationalise these.” He argues that if applied theatre is only practised when it is about types of social change that ‘we’ agree with, then it is not ‘theatre’, “but a specific set of ideological values” (p. 354).

**Drama Education Strategies**

Process drama is a central feature of drama in education and can be utilised effectively in an educational setting by allowing the students to place themselves in another’s shoes. In the case of bullying, students are able to see what it is like to be bullied, to be a bully or to be a bystander, in a safe fictional setting. O’Toole, Burton and Plunkett argue (2005, p. 25) that it is a useful strategy in the context of bullying, as it “concentrates entirely on the process, and there is no production in the form of a play to be watched by others.”

Process drama is a structured improvisational approach that has also been “described as drama for learning or drama in education, descriptions that highlight the shifts in understanding or meaning making that the participants develop” (Taylor, 1998, p. 16). In fact, Philip Taylor suggests that teaching curriculum through process drama can be one of the most powerful methods for teachers to use. “There is considerable evidence that when children experience drama in the curriculum they are more in control over their own learning” (Taylor, 1998, p. 17). This is because process drama permits “direct engagement with the event, a range or role taking, and an encounter with the power of drama without necessarily demanding the immediate display of sophisticated acting techniques” (O’Neill, 1995, p. xiv).

In process drama, the entire class is involved in the same ‘story’ and as events gradually take place, the complexities of the ‘story’ can be explored and expanded on in a way that engages each individual student. In process drama, we can raise questions without providing answers. Teachers can “ask participants to ‘tolerate the ambiguity’, rather than providing them with any solution” (Raphael & O’Mara, 2002, p. 84). Added to this is the fact that “the exploration of the possible experience of one
student through the form of process drama [gives] us an emotional experience that [changes] our perceptions of what life can be like for students in a way that power-point cannot do”(Raphael & O’Mara, 2002, p. 85). Even more importantly, the teachers are given permission to also join in the process drama alongside the students. Morgan and Saxton add that “in drama, teachers and students are engaged in collective enquiry and exploration” (Morgan & Saxton, 1987, p. v). Bagshaw and Halliday reinforce this message by saying that “drama in education is about developing creativity and the use of imagination and, as such, is a valuable tool for intellectual and emotional growth”(2000, p. 89).

Process drama has been used in bullying situations around the world. For example, Baer, Glasgow and Fink (2008) have applied this approach and believe that “process drama provides a safe place to teach about the role of bystanders in school violence because the situation allows for open discussion and the development of multiple perspectives” (p. 83). In process drama, there is usually no external audience or performance. The drama focuses on the process and not on the final product. Furthermore, “the teachers often engaged in the drama as a character, helping to shape the learning from the inside” (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. 25). Donelan believes that in process drama and in dynamic forum theatre settings “students can function as story tellers who fashion narratives to their own meanings, influenced by the mobile and diverse culture, which they are both making and living” (2002, p. 28).

Donelan and colleagues also did research into marginalised young people, The Risky Business research project (2002–2005), which investigated the effectiveness of creative arts involvement as a diversionary intervention for young people at risk. Here, O’Brien, Donelan, Martinec and Coulter (2005) concluded that “an integrated approach, with arts programs given equal priority alongside other services and programs, provides marginalised young people with opportunities for personal skill development and increased social inclusion” (p. 112). Similarly, Schultzman and Cohen-Cruz (1994, p. 1) argue that through process drama and forum theatre approaches, students become ‘spect-actors’ – “engaged participants rehearsing strategies for personal and social change”.

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Drama and Bullying Management

Drama is a useful tool for allowing its participants to look at conflict from many sides. Role playing in drama is a way a person can understand a different perspective and a way in which a person can experiment with different scenarios and outcomes. The point of view and emotional engagement can also move in a drama from the central event of the conflict to the edge, becoming fixed on the supporting characters, interested onlookers or chorus. The focus may also switch to outside the conflict and finally to the onlookers or the audience.

Dramatic enactment has proven effective in enabling students in both primary and secondary schools to understand and deal with bullying (Belliveau, 2007; Zins et al., 2007). For example, Zins’ research into anti-bullying strategies included using drama to help foster social skills. His findings were that “building social awareness and relationships skills can help develop positive peer relationships and being able to resist inappropriate peer pressure can help with bystander motivational issues” (2007, p. 5).

These views on dramatic enactment as an educational tool are reinforced by Fels who suggest, “Learning through the arts requires from participants a curiosity, critical and creative engagement, and a willingness to inquire in collaboration that which is not-yet known” (2009, p. 126). There is also some evidence that most school age students prefer to use drama in anti-bullying programs than other methods (Crothers, Kolbert, & Barker, 2006). For example, Suckling and Temple (2001) found that drama offered a positive way of approaching the problem from the perspective of the bullied, the bully and the bystander. If students are working in an environment that is active, invites participation and cooperation, drama works as a positive tool that is both fun and adventurous. Drama provides a place for trial and error and experimentation with stereotypes. It teaches students that negotiation, problem-solving and co-operation are elements of a challenging and gradual process (p. 16).

Beale and Scott (2001) have nominated drama as the best medium for communicating the anti-bullying message in schools because students can learn new skills by observing other students without directly engaging in the behaviour themselves and without any potential damage. They suggest this “peer-performed form of psycho-
educational drama is distinct from theatre and psychodrama in that it is brief and the intended purpose is to stimulate discussion among audience members” (p. 302).

The post-performance discussion is a significant part in the dramatic process of investigating bullying. Beale and Scott (2001, p. 303) add that because the drama does not resolve all the conflict it depicts, students are free to explore and evaluate possible alternative solutions and actions. They suggest that “while the drama lends crisp definition to selected issues associated with bullying at school, the most meaningful part of the process is the ensuing classroom discussion.” It is this lively discussion that occurs as a result of the drama performance that the authors of Cooling Conflicts suggest is critical to achieving transformation in understanding about bullying. Freire (1970) says that this is because “the teacher is no longer merely the—one—who—teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in their turn, while being taught, also teach” (cited in Taylor, 1998, p. 67). Taylor adds “learning in drama then is generated by frames that encourage a dialogue between being both participant and spectator (p. 56).

In any dramatic improvised environment, there are some boundaries that need to be respected. Teachers must help any students participating in drama to understand and adhere to a basic drama ‘contract’; what Byron defines as “a shared agreement to suspend disbelief in order to enter the fictional world of drama” (cited in Plunkett, 2002, p. 47). This belief in the fiction is essential for two reasons. Firstly, all participants can then collaborate seriously in a scenario that has the potential to affect all the participants in one way or another. Secondly, all participants feel safe knowing that the environment they are in is just fictional and therefore distant from their real life problems.

This mixture of illusion and reality is described by Dorothy Heathcote as “suspension of disbelief, the big lie, stepping into someone else’s shoes” (Heathcote, 1980, p. 37). The method that is used is based on Stanislavsky’s ‘emotion memory’ in that it allows us to “put ourselves emotionally in another person’s place” (Burton, 2002b, p. 43), but with the safety net of trusting that this is not really happening to us in real life. The teacher must also be aware of the participants’ tendency to sometimes do what O’Toole defines as ‘glamorise’ the very things that the drama is trying to deconstruct.
Maverick meanings may emerge that inadvertently glamorise the behaviours that drama purports to stand against. A fight scene, for example, in a drama purporting to carry an anti-bullying message, may become a compelling centrepiece for the drama and work to glamorise and reinforce the very behaviours it seeks to advocate against (cited in Cahill, 2002, p. 20). In order to avoid this, the teacher must be involved in guiding the drama and feel confident enough to stop the action when he or she feels it is not working. During this time, the students and the teachers evaluate and reflect on the action from a stance outside the drama. Boal feels that “the most essential definition of theatre is the capacity that all of us have, as human beings, to observe ourselves in action” (2000, p. 47).

After any process or improvised dramatic episode, teachers and students should be given time to de-brief. O’Toole and Burton suggest that “at the end of the drama, time should always be made for some kind of retrospective reflection” (O’Toole & Burton, 2000, Module 8.1 p. 6). This should be a shared experience as well as an individual one and one that can continue internally long after the process has been completed. It is through these group discussions and evaluations that much of the learning happens in the classroom and it is through the personal reflections that the individual students learn about themselves through drama.

Drama enables students, teachers and community members to explore, deconstruct and reflect on bullying, its causes and possible solutions in a safe, non-threatening environment and in an interesting, moving and educational setting. However, using drama to deal with bullying does not promise perfect solutions to the problem. In real life, as in schools, it is often impossible to find a neat resolution to a problem. Sometimes we have to be satisfied with a de-escalation of the conflict or a temporary solution that is found outside of the heated battle zone, often through external intervention or assistance. Similarly, “all dramas are fictional models of real life human behaviour” (Haseman & O’Toole, 1986, p. viii) and perfect happy solutions are quite rare.

As in real life, dramatic performances often leave the audience with a feeling that things aren’t complete or final. “All drama ends with the resolution of the dramatic tension that has been created and controlled” (Burton, 2002b, p. 107) and this can end
in a climax or anti-climax. Often it is the discussions that ensue after the students have participated in the drama that has the most meaning and significance and not the solutions.

Where human behaviour and human relationships are concerned, an anti-climax can be more believable and more satisfying than a dramatic climax. In our own lives, we know that experiences and relationships usually continue on after something dramatic has occurred. When we see this happen to characters on stage, we accept the truth of it and make the play part of our understanding of the world (Burton, 2002b, p. 108).

Overall, the use of drama to explore human concepts, challenges and relationships can be a useful method for investigating bullying, conflicts and solutions in school settings.

**Field Four: Teacher Professional Development**

At the core of this research project is the exploration of the impact of effective professional development for teachers in bullying management. This which proved to be a complex and at times difficult aspect of the essential conditions needed to ensure that schools were able to empower students to manage their experiences of bullying effectively. A range of literature relating to teacher professional development issues will now be examined.

Midthassel and Ertesvåg’s (2008) research has shown that “participants who perceive that a program meets a certain need, are more likely be motivated to involve themselves” and “motivated teachers are more committed” (p. 154). Much earlier, Boling (1989) declared that teacher empowerment requires “investing in teachers the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies and the right to exercise professional judgement about the content of the curriculum and means of instruction” (cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1994, p. 3).

Kayler (2009) builds on this notion of motivation, by suggesting that for teachers “it is not enough to simply read about an educational theory; teachers need to be provided experiences with theory within the context of teaching and learning” (p. 68). He adds “dialogue was one aspect that teachers identified as a way to enhance their
understandings and expand content knowledge” (p. 65). However, Melenyzer (1990) feels that professional development is not enough to make teachers change agents. He found that teachers were not “able to transform the social order in the interests of social justice, equality and the development of social democracy” and concluded that “empowered teachers have only a limited political vision and, in practice, rarely seek to be emancipated from institutional and societal constraints on their work” (cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1994, p. 4).

Conversely, and more recently, Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) suggested that “the success of ambitious education reform initiatives hinges, in large part, on the qualifications and effectiveness of teachers” and advise that “teacher professional development is a major focus of systemic reform initiatives” (p. 916). Despite the various theories on the effectiveness of professional development on changing teaching practice, it is quite likely that “if the staff has taken part in making a decision or formulating a policy they are naturally going to be in favour of it, and more willing to implement it, than if they are simply told what is to be done” (Mackie, 1977, p. 66). By the same token, “the more…teachers or others have had negative experiences with previous implementation attempts in the district or elsewhere, the more cynical or apathetic they will be about the next change presented regardless of the merit of the new idea or program” (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 74).

A factor that became evident as a result of the Acting Against Bullying in-service was the individual school’s influence on the implementation of the program’s new idea. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) suggest that while a program can be very successful in one school, it can be a complete failure in another. These variations may be due to time constraints, motivation, or any number of other factors. Freeman et al suggest that these sort of challenges need to be overcome as teachers need to develop their abilities to reinvent their teaching styles and strategies on a daily basis (Freeman, Strong, Cahill, Wyn, & Shaw, 2003). Freeman et al. also suggest that school-based interventions require “in-depth professional development, involving the transmission of skills and knowledge, as well as the development of learning communities” (p. 279). Thus, if the school community is supportive of the program and able to implement change during the school’s everyday schedule, the professional development is more likely to have a successful outcome.
It will be noted later, that the schools that were most successful in implementing the *Acting Against Bullying* program had sent teachers to the in-services who were already committed to the idea of change, to abolishing bullying and to generally accepting the effectiveness of the drama and the arts within the curriculum. This finding is reinforced by a study by the Department of Education in Queensland (Felton, 1991, p. 5) which found the following:

Groups were involved in promoting professional development activities because they wanted to have an impact on the way the arts were taught and learnt in schools and believed the best way to do this was by influencing the attitudes and behaviour of teachers. Their interest was sometimes focused on extending and reinforcing what was already occurring, but more often was directed at change.

In the arts, the concept of change is not usually an alien one. However, Bordieu suggests that the education system usually “takes the culture of the dominant cultural group and instantiates it as the legitimate selection and organization of knowledge against which all other symbolic systems are to be evaluated” (Bates, 1984, p. 16). According to Ray, in the demographics of change, the ‘fence sitters’ make up 80%, the ‘hell, no we won’t go’ make up 10–20% and the ‘change champions’ are the ones who have a thirst for learning and make up 10–20% (Ray, 1999, p. 25).

Another factor affecting change in teaching is the history of equality within the profession. In “such circumstances where teachers want the opportunity to influence their colleagues from a teacher’s base, but cannot gain authority or integrity unless they come from an unequal hierarchical position, completely confound teacher leadership” (Wasley, 1991, p. 167). The case studies reported in this thesis strongly indicate that teachers were only able to become effective leaders following professional development if the administration was very supportive or if the teacher was already influential within the school system. Gunter’s thinking aligns with this finding and he adds that leadership in school settings is highly political as “leadership in educational studies can be seen as the process and product by which powerful groups are able to control and sustain their interests (2001, p. 8). Furthermore, Smeets and Ponte (2009, p. 176) argue that teachers need to initiate activities themselves to improve the education in their schools so that leadership is defined as “a way of
working and living, in which both management and teachers are able to give their colleagues opportunities to make an active contribution to educational change and school development”.

Facilitation versus conventional teaching also emerged as a significant issue in the research. The facilitative leader is an enabler of change who assists employees and helps them with the change process, recognizing when to hand the ball off to organizational members” (Ray, 1999, p. 25) For example, in the research conducted by Ray, those who were more successful were teachers who were able to be group facilitators, a skill that most drama teachers have. Although group work is quite a new strategy for some teachers, drama teachers are usually used to working with groups in order to help them make meaning of their lives mainly because “the facilitator’s client is the entire group, not certain members” (Schwarz, 1994, p. 5). Research indicates that “dynamic teachers create, facilitate, question, connect and coordinate. They create an environment that is safe and rich with opportunities for children to make meaning” (Rallis, 1995, p. 76) Rallis’ definition relates specifically to leaders of change and clearly describes the average drama teacher. Most drama teachers who undertook the professional development were already comfortable with being facilitators and leaders.

However, Stinson (2009, p. 232) found in her research involving non-drama teachers that there was a significant challenge to de-emphasise their perception that talent was a prerequisite for any drama work. She discovered:

While the shift to the student-focused approach of process drama from the strongly teacher-directed methods that were common within this school challenged the teachers’ understanding of the learning purpose and potential of individual drama activities, it is not process drama that was at issue here; any change in practice which involved more student activity and less teacher-talk was cause for resistance.

Within the findings chapters of this thesis, it will also be noted that the non-drama teachers involved often needed support and encouragement to ‘let go’ of their students and to feel confident about their abilities to lead other teachers. Thus, although the professional development was usually successful in implementing the methods necessary for the project to work, it was often necessary for the researchers to return
to the schools in order to troubleshoot when teachers were having difficulty with the facilitation of large groups. During the program we found that “one of the key challenges facing designers of any staff development program is to figure out ways to extend the process of change beyond the life of the program” (Solomon, 1999, p. 158). Following a two year study in England on the effects of collaborative professional development workshops on teachers’ attitudes, Varga-Atkins, Qualter and O'Brien (2009, p. 328) discovered:

The majority of respondents felt that the impact of networks on their practice and on pupil learning was positive but not yet strong, with most respondents stating the network activities had medium impact on their practice and on pupil learning (50% and 42%, respectively). There was also a wait-and-see attitude in terms of professionals’ ability to embed network outcomes in the school (49% neutral) or their ability to collaborate with other network professionals (40% neutral). What was not yet clear was whether professionals had not had the time yet to experience the implementation of the network model or whether they were unsure as to its potential for change. The major inhibitors to working with other network professionals were cited as lack of time and resources.

Overall, it was evident during our action research that schools that supported their teachers in dealing with bullying through the Acting Against Bullying Project were more successful in general. Confident teachers took the project on board without needing much assistance, whilst the more ‘drama–timid’ teachers needed some extra assistance along the way, but eventually became more confident with practice. Once the teachers were comfortable and familiar with the system, they were able to maintain the program at their school without further assistance and were able to confidently act as leaders in training others teachers at their schools and neighbouring schools. This occurred mainly because “teachers as trainers are closest to the classroom in seeking to understand and implement the implications of centrally imposed educational reform for themselves and colleagues” (Burgess, Connor, Galloway, Morrison, & Newton, 1993, p. 86).

Teacher Leadership
Seashore (2009) found that effective school leaders not only manage an organisation, they also “stimulate serious intellectual interaction around issues of school reform; in learning organisations, the leader crosses boundaries to challenge the organization’s
culture, detect its dysfunctional features, and promote its transformation” (p. 135). Overall, we found that the teachers’ understanding and involvement was paramount to the success of the program and more important than any material resources or products. Nir and Bogler (2008) discovered that “the higher the control teachers have over job professional development processes, and the greater the resemblance of these processes to the typical teaching culture in classrooms, the greater the teachers’ satisfaction with job professional development processes” (p. 377).

In many schools that participated in our program, it was the passion and actions of specific individual teachers that drove the program, the students and other staff members toward a successful outcome, regardless of my involvement or the input by the principal. We discovered during the project that although the principal’s and administration’s support is an important factor enabling success in each school, “in the final analysis, it is the actions of the individual that count” (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 77). Cleary, Danaher and Harreveld (2006, p. 1) insist that teachers need to be at the forefront of school change. They suggest:

> Much contemporary teachers’ work is located at the interface of complex systems of policy and provision. That interface is increasingly the site of broader discursive tensions as change is enacted, with profound implications for individual classes and courses. If pedagogies are to be engaging in such a context, teachers need to be simultaneously facilitators and facilitated.

During the professional development of the teachers for the Acting Against Bullying program, I observed that teachers were a bit cautious at first, until they realised that the program worked within the curriculum and that I would be there for support. Once they were in the middle of and part of the implementation process, they learned more about their own strengths and weaknesses and the benefits of the program. “People often become clearer about their needs only when they start doing things, that is, during the implementation itself” (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 69).

Swanson and Kayler (2008) researched teacher empowerment through professional development and discovered that “teachers reported experiencing new found confidence in their professional abilities when sharing their areas of expertise with their peers (p. 12). They also discovered that sharing power in professional
Teacher empowerment and application of theory was listening to students’ voices [and] resulted in a redistribution of power and curriculum construction. Clearly teachers learned to value students’ critical insights, experiences and perceptions. The dynamics of teaching and learning in a community empowered both teachers and students.

Similarly, Harris and Spillane (2008, p. 31) state that distributed leadership is the idea of the moment’ and add:

The model of the singular, heroic leader is at last being replaced with leadership that is focused upon teams rather than individuals and places a greater emphasis upon teacher, support staff and students as leaders).

They argue that “there is increasing research evidence that distributed leadership makes a positive difference to organisational outcomes and student learning (p. 32).”

During the Acting Against Bullying Program, the successful teachers were often observed working selflessly together with their colleagues and students to make positive changes against bullying in their schools.

Another study found that teachers working together and learning from each other was a most effective form of leadership in schools. Berry, Daughtrey and Wieder (2010, p. 2) discovered:

A sophisticated new study has found that schools staffed by credentialed and experienced teachers who work together over an extended time generate the largest student achievement gains. Students of less–experienced teachers who had access to the most accomplished colleagues made the very greatest achievement growth gains … This finding nonetheless implies that the “master” teachers with whom they worked are spreading their expertise among colleagues.

Angelle and DeHart (2011, p. 4) have also found this to be true:

For teacher leaders to be effective, they must not operate in a vacuum. Their ideas and decisions must be shared with the rest of the faculty. Little (1995) suggested that when teachers learn from one another, teacher leadership is significantly enhanced.
However, the authors add that teacher leadership can only be successful if there is support from the school leadership such as the school principal (p.5). Teacher leaders in the *Acting Against Bullying* program when interviewed after their participation often commented on their need for support from their school administration.

Muijs and Harris explored three case studies of contrasting schools on school leadership and (2007, p. 112) found that “as the limitations of individual leadership have become increasingly evident through recent research … the idea of collective or teacher leadership has become increasingly well established.” They add that “the possibility of all teachers becoming leaders at various times … has most potency and potential for school improvement because it is premised upon collaborative forms of working among teachers (p. 113). Teachers who were seen as successful during their participation in the *Acting Against Bullying* program often took turns in being leaders amongst their peers and their students even if they weren’t seen as leaders consistently throughout the program.

The current literature reinforced the findings from observations, interviews and surveys conducted during the *Acting Against Bullying* program, which suggested that teachers who were viewed as successful during their participation in the program had the support of their administration and were encouraged to collaborate and share their expertise with their colleagues.

**Conclusion to Literature Review**

The four fields of literature that have been outlined within this review underpin this research project. Research into bullying has been significant since Dan Olweus pioneered it and has increased due to a desperate need to find a solution to this problem, particularly in schools and in the workplace. In Australia, Ken Rigby is currently one of the most prolific and passionate researchers into bullying in schools. Rigby’s extensive research into bullying and anti–bullying strategies in Australia is by far the most elaborate and up to date evaluation of what is being written and accomplished in terms of bullying in schools. Rigby outlines what has been happening in the last decade nationally and concedes that bullying can be reduced by well-planned interventions. He admits that although most anti–bullying programs tend to
contain similar elements, one area of difference is in the thoroughness of the implementation of the anti–bullying programs. In his chapter titled, ‘An Overview of Management Solutions for Bullying’ in “Bullying Solutions,” (McGrath & Noble, 2006), Rigby emphasises that “how the policy is implemented is at least as important as its specific content. There is now strong research–based evidence that bullying in schools can be substantially reduced in schools only when schools take their responsibilities seriously and respond whole–heartedly to the problem” (Rigby, 2007, p. 158).

Peer teaching was another important component of the program. Although some schools use peer mentoring or peer mediation in their anti–bullying programs, peer teaching is unique to our research. The students in the *Acting Against Bullying* program became the teachers and the advocates of the method. This significantly contributed toward empowering the students as the leaders in the schools’ anti–bullying policies. Student peer teaching also provided the teachers with dynamic allies in the fight against bullying and assisted the teachers to change the culture among the student population in their schools. Furthermore, peer teaching creates a domino effect among the students being taught. In participating schools of the *Acting Against Bullying* program, we discovered peer teaching, when combined with drama, was a significant element in contributing to the success of the program.

Drama was the vehicle which drove the *Acting Against Bullying* program to its successful outcome. Through role playing those in bullying situations and intervening in the action in a quest for a solution, the students experienced empathy and rehearsal for life. More importantly, drama created a forum for participating school students to discuss and explore bullying, motives and ultimate objectives for their school culture in an entertaining and non-threatening space. By using the forum theatre convention, students are given the opportunity to aim for the resolution of a form of conflict, in this case bullying. Furthermore, in forum theatre as in any educational drama activity, students are given many opportunities to reflect on and evaluate their beliefs and decisions.

Finally, although drama and peer teaching were two important ingredients that, when combined, empowered the students to deal with bullying in their schools, the
professional development of teachers was also highly significant in contributing to the empowerment of the teachers participating in the *Acting Against Bullying* research project, and was central to my research. In summary then, the literature reviewed here suggests the following:

Drama is often used successfully in group situations to explore conflict, offer reflection and engage in conversations regarding potential solutions. Peer teaching is found to be is highly effective in empowering students and in enabling teachers to become facilitators. Overall teachers can feel cautious initially about letting go of the teaching process and handing it over to their students, but peer teaching is often more effective for bullying scenarios as peers have a great influence over bullying incidents.

- Top down procedures in professional development are often ineffective as it is the teachers who invariably have more power to make changes than the principal. Unlike many top down models, the *Acting Against Bullying* program empowers those below. Teachers are empowered so that they do not have to rely on the administration staff to intervene and so that they can handle bullying situations themselves.

- Bullying can be managed in schools that take a whole school approach and embed their anti-bullying principles and processes within the curriculum.

The following chapter will demonstrate the methodology applied to the research, the rationale for opting to develop three case studies, the methods for collating data findings and the approaches used to analyse this data.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter explores the methodological approach I chose for investigating the three schools and justifies why I chose this approach. I explain how the multiple case study approach, using the tools of ethnography to collect the data, married easily with the larger Acting Against Bullying project. Further, this chapter explores my role as researcher, particularly how the ‘observer as participant’ roles I played compared and contrasted at each school. Finally, the tools for gathering data are outlined and the method for analysing the data is explained. Throughout this chapter, the focus is on my research approach as opposed to the action research approach undertaken for the larger Acting Against Bullying project. However, in order to understand the methodology for the case studies, the reader also needs to have understood the methodology for the larger project.

The Acting Against Bullying project was an action research project involving 18 schools, while my own research was a multiple case study approach exploring three case studies. The purpose of the overall Acting Against Bullying Project was to examine the potential of drama and peer teaching for reducing bullying in 18 selected schools, while my research purpose was to closely examine the project’s implementation in three schools to determine elements integral in assisting the participating teachers to decrease bullying in their schools.

An interest in this topic emerged during the research process itself, for although every school in the larger project had key teachers that were passionate and dedicated, there were teachers that were definitely more successful in eliminating bullying in their schools than other teachers. It was these teachers and their schools that eventually became the focus of my attention and manifested as my three case studies.
Within the overarching project I was the Coordinator and Senior Researcher in charge of the professional development for the teachers. Within my case study research I was in the role of fellow teacher, researcher and active observer–participant as I entered the three schools, collaborated with the key teachers and collected the data. Below is a diagram demonstrating how my own research methodology fitted in within the larger project:

**Diagram of Context**

![Diagram](image)

**Acting Against Bullying Project**

16 schools

- My Research Case Study 1 Southside
- My Research Case Study 2 Westside
- My Research Case Study 3 North Beachside

**The Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of my research was to isolate the key successful elements in the three different schools and to determine which of these elements were integral in assisting the participating teachers to decrease bullying in their schools after having completed the professional development. Although every school in the larger project had key teachers that were passionate and dedicated, there were teachers that were definitely more successful in eliminating bullying in their schools than other teachers. It was these teachers and their schools that eventually became the focus of my attention and manifested as my three case studies.
In order to determine the common key elements effectively, I chose the multiple case study approach. The central notion in multiple case study research is to use the case studies as the basis from which to develop theory inductively. “The theory is emergent in the sense that it is situated in and developed by recognizing patterns of relationships among constructs within and across cases and their underlying logical arguments” (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 25). Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) strongly believe that the multiple case study approach is possibly the best inductive approach. They suggest that “it is a theory-building approach that is deeply embedded in rich empirical data” (p. 26). The multiple case study approach was also chosen because it was the most functional method available to generate my findings from the Acting Against Bullying project.

Stake (2005), however, separates the case study from methodology by suggesting, “Case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be studied” (cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 438). I chose my case studies because all three were evidently successful in dealing with bullying, but each was very different in its environment and context. Flyvbjerg (2006) suggests that the case study can be misunderstood as biased and that “the proximity to reality, which the case study entails, and the learning process that it generates for the researcher will often constitute prerequisite for advanced understanding” (p. 236) However, this is a marginal view of the case study. Many researchers such as Tolman and Brydon-Miller (2001) argue that “rather than attempting to eliminate bias, we explore and embrace the role of subjectivity in psychological research. Embedded in these methods is the importance of trust and relationship between researchers and participants” (p. 5).

As I was profoundly engaged in the schools’ educational networks and worked closely with the teachers, I was able to see first-hand the data that emerged from the program. Van Wynsberghe and Khan (2007) suggest that “case study is not exclusively about the case revealing itself as it is about the unit of analysis being discovered or constructed. This is an important development because it means that researchers cannot definitively state the unit of analysis at the outset of the research; it must come into focus as the research progresses” (p. 90). This is definitely true about my research. The more I observed and analysed the schools participating in the larger
project, the more I discovered about what were the elements that contributed to an effective anti-bullying program in schools.

By using the case study approach, it was possible to fully understand how different schools and their teachers could deal with bullying by applying the *Acting Against Bullying* project and by molding it to suit their own particular social and cultural contexts. Merriam sees the case study as part of a larger ethnographic research approach and suggests “an ethnographic case study is a socio-cultural analysis of the unit of study” (Merriam, 1998, p. 23). I therefore found it beneficial to use the basic tools of the ethnographer to gather and study the data. I used interviews and data from what people said to gather findings for my research. I gave a strong emphasis to the participants’ voices because, as Burns points out, “The word ethnography literally means ‘writing about people’” (Burns, 2000, p. 223).

**The Importance of the Research**

Although many schools that participated in the project were successful in decreasing their bullying incidents, all the schools varied substantially in size, demographics, teachers’ enthusiasm and student population. Furthermore, the schools that were the most successful in decreasing bullying also demonstrated certain similarities among them. As these issues became apparent, it became important for me to record and explore the findings and in the process attempt to analyse if there were key elements or ingredients that contributed to successfully dealing with bullying.

I felt this study was a vitally important one to make in light of the larger project because I observed quite early in the project there were recurring concepts and findings among the more dynamic schools. As stated earlier, in each school that made progress against bullying, there were key ingredients. These key ingredients varied somewhat in the context of each school, but they had the potential to form a possible formula for the successful elimination of bullying in schools. As these schools thus developed into my case studies and these concepts became the categories that I used to organise each case study within this thesis, my objective became to find out what qualities successful participating teachers had and what circumstances in each school
empowered the teachers to become effective facilitators of bullying management, after having completed the targeted professional development.

**The Data Gathering Process**

Initially, the data gathering process for the larger project was mirrored by the data gathering process of my research thesis so it is important to note the approach to data gathering in the larger project first. As the overarching project was a three year action research project, stage one of the project was to incorporate urban schools into the program. During the larger action research project, many of the plans we had changed or were adapted by the teachers to suit their own different circumstances, thereby providing the project with interesting findings and adjustments to the second stage of the action research cycle.

Stage two of the cycle was to incorporate some regional high schools. We adopted two regional high schools, but eventually included a large variety of primary schools that had heard about the project from a principals’ workshop and that did not want to wait for their local high schools to lead them into the project (through the peer teaching). Initially, approximately twelve primary schools and two new regional high schools were involved with stage two of the project, but this number had reduced significantly by the end of that year due to schools pulling out once they realised what was involved. Some schools were either unable to implement the trial program that year due to timetable or curriculum logistics, or they realised that their teachers and students would be required to make commitments they were not prepared for them to make.

The third stage of the cycle was to incorporate rural schools. Two rural schools that had planned to be involved had to exclude themselves whilst one new regional one actively introduced the project into their school on their own initiative. By the end of the year, I had observed that some schools were playing significant roles within the project, while others were withdrawing for various reasons. Moreover, the teachers themselves were displaying a range of responses which appeared to determine the success or the failure of the project in their schools.
In all, after observing the most successful schools, I decided to use the multiple case study approach as I had started to observe patterns that were worth exploring and might warrant further deeper investigation in future. As Burns (2000, p. 460) points out the data from case studies can be very rich and worthy of deeper investigation:

Because they are so intensive and generate rich subjective data they may bring to light variables, phenomena, processes and relationships that deserve more intensive investigation…a case study may be a source of hypotheses for future research by showing that things are so, or that such an interpretation is plausible in a particular case and therefore might be so in other cases.

I eventually selected three schools to be my case studies. Southside SHS was chosen as my first case study because of its unique rate of success with the project, commencing as a school that appeared to be doing little then developing into a highly successful environment for the facilitation of the project. Westside SHS was my second choice because of the strong influence of the teacher coordinator in determining the success and failure of the project in the school. Finally, North Beachside SHS became my third choice because it broke all the rules and yet still managed to achieve significant success.

In the larger project, we had used questionnaires before and after the project to gather data. I used this data to inform my research, but also added my own focused observations, field notes, journals, respondents’ diaries, and tape recorded interviews and reflections. I did not investigate the entire school community in my research, focusing instead on the participating teachers and students of the three case studies and the context of their roles within the Acting Against Bullying project. My questionnaires, interviews and observations were therefore focused on the three case studies and the key players within them. After analysis of the case studies were completed, I identified the key elements that enabled the success of each school. These became the thematic focus of my research and are discussed in length in each case study chapter.
Ethical Considerations

In order to complete this research, two key ethical issues had to be considered. The most important issue was to protect the rights and privacy of the students participating in the program. The other was to protect the rights and privacy of the teachers participating in the program. By adopting this careful approach we were demonstrating that “researchers have a duty to avoid causing both physical and psychological harm to participants and to the socio-political environments in which and with which they work” (Briggs & Coleman, 2007, p. 112).

Full ethical approval was received from Griffith University before the research began. Furthermore, permission to include data from interviews, observations and questionnaires from the program was obtained from the principals of the schools as well as the participants themselves well before they were undertaken. Teachers and students were given time to decide if they were willing to be interviewed or questioned in any way. They were also aware beforehand of our visits and all students were allowed to decide if they preferred not to be involved in the program. When questionnaires or interviews were conducted, they were completed in school time, but not so they affected their mandatory curriculum. All questionnaires and interviews were conducted in public rooms in the schools, so that the safety of participants was never compromised. Finally, when data from the research was acquired and collated, the names of students, teachers, principals and schools were changed to maintain the privacy of all those who participated in the program. Pseudonyms for the schools, teachers and students have been used throughout this thesis, including the references, when relevant. At no time was the safety or privacy of anyone who was involved in the program compromised or used without permission.

Case Study Data Gathering

From the research I had done on ethnography, I was aware that consciously or unconsciously, the ethnographer lets the data filter into his or her perspective resulting in interpretations that are often a product of the time and context in which they were written and that can be construed as subjective. Nevertheless, I still felt this was the best method for gathering data as this was the best way to truly know my participants and their environments. Gale (2010) believes that “spending time is perhaps the most
essential part of ethnographic research... an advantage of “spending time” in the setting is the opportunity to develop subtle understandings of the social environment” (p. 210). I spent three years working within the settings of my case studies, getting to observe and record my observations of the teachers first hand as well as recording their own accounts via interviews.

Recording observations involved a number of methods. According to Patton, “qualitative findings grow out of three kinds of data collection: in-depth, open-ended interviews; direct observations; and written documents” (2002, p. 4). All of these approaches were used within this research and within this report each one is represented with a code that supports the reader to identify the data source and context for that source. The key below provides an overview of these codes, while the table beneath it provides further contextual information. For example, the Southside Early (Pre) Teacher Questionnaire would be SETQ. However, when referring to journals and field notes, the initial identifying context letter has been removed as these entries often related to the overall project work and were not necessarily school specific. In this way all journal entries and field notes are simply labeled JE or FN.

**KEY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ETQ</td>
<td>Early Teacher Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTQ</td>
<td>Later Teacher Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESQ</td>
<td>Early Student Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSI</td>
<td>Group Student Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISI</td>
<td>Individual Student Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITI</td>
<td>Individual Teacher Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FN</td>
<td>Field Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JE</td>
<td>Journal Entry</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Below is a table of these codes as they have been applied within the three case studies.

**Code Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOUTHSIDE</th>
<th>WESTSIDE</th>
<th>NORTH BEACHSIDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SETQ- Southside Early Teacher Questionnaire</td>
<td>WETQ-Westside Early Teacher Questionnaire</td>
<td>NETQ-North Beachside Early Teacher Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLTQ- Southside Later Teacher Questionnaire</td>
<td>WLTQ-Westside Later Teacher Questionnaire</td>
<td>NLTQ-North Beachside Later Teacher Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESQ- Southside Early Student Questionnaire</td>
<td>WESQ-Westside Early Student Questionnaire</td>
<td>NESQ-North Beachside Early Student Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGSI- Southside Group Student Interview</td>
<td>WGSI-Westside Group Student Interview</td>
<td>NGSI-North Beachside Group Student Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SISI- Southside Individual Student Interview</td>
<td>WISI-Westside Individual Student Interview</td>
<td>NISI-North Beachside Individual Student Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITI- Southside Individual Teacher Interview</td>
<td>WITI-Westside Individual Teacher Interview</td>
<td>NITI-North Beachside Individual Teacher Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The approach I used in relation to each one will be outlined in detail below while an example of each of these data sources is located within the Appendices.
Questionnaires

Both pre-questionnaires and post-questionnaires were used in the broader Acting Against Bullying Project and were used to determine if any quantitative or qualitative changes had occurred at the schools after the project had been implemented. Pre – questionnaires were given to the participating classes at the three schools before they commenced participation in order to ascertain what the students’ views and experiences with bullying were prior to the implementation of the program. The pre-questionnaires also gave me as researcher some guidance on the contextual background of the students by seeking demographic and cultural data on the student and the school. Key questions in students’ pre-questionnaires included, “Have you been bullied?”, “How often?” and “What do you do about it?” In students’ post-questionnaires, the questions were more elaborate and checked to see if students had learned anything from the program. Questions given included, “What are the three stages of bullying?” “Do you think bullying can be prevented and if so how?” Teachers were asked different questions, which include, “Are you more confident in dealing with bullying after participating in the program” and “Who has supported you the most?” etc. (examples of these can be viewed in Appendices A, B and C).

After the project had finished its course for that year, post-questionnaires were handed out to the participating schools to determine if the project had had any effect on students or teachers. Again, questions were both quantitative and qualitative in nature [see Appendices B and C for examples]. Post-questionnaires were designed to determine if the students’ perceptions and attitudes toward bullying had changed since their participation in the project. The questionnaires also asked students if they felt better able to deal with bullying in their own lives since undertaking the training and peer teaching. Both pre and post-questionnaires had to be written and designed in a simple and easy to understand manner so that the students could readily and confidently answer the questions in their school environment and in the time normally allocated for one standard school lesson (in Queensland this is currently 35 minutes).

I used the pre and post-questionnaires from the larger project for my case studies initially as these were given to all schools to gain data for the larger action research. However, I took particular interest in collating the findings from my three case studies
and compared the data from the questionnaires to the data from the interviews and observations that were conducted later in the research.

**Interviews**
Once the data from the pre-questionnaires was collated and analysed, I also used extensive interviews to gain a deeper and more personal understanding of my case study schools. This is because “in-depth interviews yield large amounts of data in the form of interview transcripts” and “this method is useful when the researcher has a particular topic he or she wants to focus on and gain information about from individuals” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 120).

Within each case study I used group and individual interviews for students and individual interviews for teachers. I interviewed teachers and students at the beginning of the project and repeated the process with them each year until the end of the project. Teachers were interviewed individually due to time factors, but students were interviewed both individually and in groups. Principals of schools were also interviewed to gain their perspectives from an administration point of view.

At Southside, Westside and North Beachside, I undertook recorded interviews with students, teachers and administration during and after the project in order to determine in detail the participants’ attitudes and experiences with bullying and to determine if any changes (negative or positive) had occurred as a result of their involvement with the professional development during the Acting Against Bullying project. These interviews provided me with an in-depth knowledge of how the participants felt about a number of factors. The interviewees were very candid and honest with me, often pointing out what worked and what didn’t work for them as well as advising us on how schools could be better prepared in future. Through these interviews, the teachers demonstrated a great insight into the dynamics of their school culture, their own strengths and weaknesses and the aspects of the professional development that were/weren’t beneficial.

It is also important to note the contexts and conditions for the data collecting, especially the interviews. I purposely aimed at stimulating informal discussion prior
to the interview in order to inspire the interviewee to speak confidently and honestly. As Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006, p. 119) note:

In-depth interviews are a particular kind of conversation between the researcher and the interviewee that requires active asking and listening. The process is a meaning-making endeavour embarked on as a partnership between the interviewer and his or her respondent. The degree of division and hierarchy between the two collaborators is typically low, as researcher and researched are placed on the same plane, though variations occur.

However, once the interview began it was important not to interrupt in any way and to limit any comments on my part that might influence or colour the outcome of the interview. My intention was always to achieve as little attitudinal interference as possible from the interviewer, whilst maintaining that it was necessary for the interviewing process to be congenial and for the interviewer and respondent to be clearly communicating and on the same ‘wave length’.

Within the interviews I used many open-ended questions so participants had the freedom to discuss whatever was on their minds. Patton suggests using open-ended interviews to obtain qualitative data as “direct quotations are a basic source of raw data in qualitative inquiry, revealing respondents’ depth of emotion, the ways they have organised their world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions” (2002, p. 21). In addition, according to Burns, interviews also “need to be reported and interpreted through the eyes of interviewees who provide important insights and identify other sources of evidence. Most commonly, case study interviewers use the unstructured or open-ended form of interview, so that the respondent is more of an informant than a respondent” (Burns, 2000, p. 467). Through open-ended interviews, interviewees could take some control of the interview and inform me on whatever they felt was important to the research, thereby supplying information that was often surprising and vitally significant.

Pool argues that “every interview… is an interpersonal drama with a developing plot” (cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 663). It is fortunate for me then that the project eventually enlisted a research assistant who was also a talented actor, who was able to refine these interviewing techniques to a fine art and to obtain clear and honest
interviews from the case study participants. Her ability to interview without inflicting her own personal opinions on the respondent was an advantage. Furthermore, her ability to endear the respondent to her was an art form that became an asset to both the project and my own case studies. Fontana and Frey in their chapter on interviews in Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 664) have identified the importance of such interactions and suggest that the interview should be seen as “a practical production, the meaning of which is accomplished at the intersection of the interaction of interviewer and respondent.”

Timelines

Southside was the first case study to be involved in the project. Pre-questionnaires were given to teachers and students then collected during the pilot program for this case study in early 2004. Interviews were obtained from teachers and students as well as administration during the middle of the program in 2005 and repeated at the end of the program toward the end of the year in 2006. Post-questionnaires were given and collected at the end of the program late in term 4 in 2006 before the Christmas school holidays.

Both Westside and North Beachside entered the program at the end of term 1 (just before Easter) in 2004 and pre-questionnaires were given out to teachers and students immediately before they commenced participation. Interviews were conducted with teachers, principals and students during 2005 at both schools. Post-questionnaires were given out and collected at the end of the year in 2006 before school finished for the summer vacation.
Below is a table of the interviews undertaken with students and teachers at each school, using the codes mentioned earlier in this chapter to support reading.

**Table of Interviews**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Southside</th>
<th>Westside</th>
<th>North Beachside</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SGSI - same as individual participants</td>
<td>WGSI - same as individual participants</td>
<td>NGSI - same as individual participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SISI -</td>
<td>WISI -</td>
<td>NISI -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Penny</td>
<td>Navi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Quincy</td>
<td>Yani</td>
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<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Rae</td>
<td>Zac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Larry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave</td>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>Billi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jill</td>
<td>Ulu</td>
<td>Stefan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil</td>
<td>Vivian</td>
<td>Oliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITI -</td>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>Alison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie</td>
<td>Ali</td>
<td>Xavier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gail</td>
<td>Yani</td>
<td>Chris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>Wanda</td>
<td>NITI -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Rhonda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pip</td>
<td>Bob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WITI -</td>
<td>Jan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brenda</td>
<td>Owen</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erica</td>
<td>James</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kerry</td>
<td>Cindy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Amy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Once the interviews were completed, transcriptions of these interviews were generated. I then read these transcripts and clarified any ambiguous words. I also discussed the transcripts with my research assistant and transcriber – a process which often led to personal reflections which were recorded in a personal journal [see examples of journals and field notes in Appendices K and Q]. Indeed, throughout the research I worked very closely with my assistant researcher and the transcriber. I would often rehearse my strategies with them and discuss my observations. I was particularly influenced by the feedback given by the transcriber as she was much older and more experienced.

Transcription was often a long and tedious process so the person enlisted to do this wrote a set of guidelines to assist us in making her job easier and to make interviewing more efficient. By the time the transcriber and the new research assistant had added their input to the interviewing and evaluating processes, we had developed a data collecting and analysing system for the case studies that was far more sophisticated than the one we had begun using at the beginning of the larger project. Furthermore, after listening to the interviews, the research assistant, the transcriber and myself often had elaborate focused conversations about the findings and these discussions and our differing perspectives were then recorded in my journal to assist me in analysing the findings more efficiently. In this way, the data collection process and the data analysis processes became intertwined in a dynamic way. In a later section of this chapter I will address data analysis in more detail.

**Observations**

As a participant observer, I completed field notes based on my direct observations. Patton suggests that “during fieldwork…the researcher makes first hand observations of activities and interaction, sometimes engaging personally in those activities as a participant observer” (Patton, 2002, p. 4). To complete effective journals and field notes, I therefore had to become a reflective practitioner – developing a more immediate relationship to the events as they happened. Of course the opportunity to create notes often came by surprise and was undertaken spontaneously. During these occasions, I made notes of my observations and thoughts during my visits to schools, sometimes in an exercise book (titled ‘My Journal’) and, on occasion, on pieces of
paper. These observations and thoughts were based on my own perspective and hunches at the time. While field notes were often quick observations, written on small pieces of paper on the spot, my journal entries were more methodical, more elaborate and more reflective and written in an exercise book, often after the event had taken place.

**Field notes**

Observations at the schools were often made in haste and these notes would be often discussed with the rest of the research team at meetings or while travelling back to the university. I would instigate these discussions on purpose in order to gain other viewpoints and to make certain my observations were consistent with those developed by other team members. However, Marshall and Rossman (2000, p. 32) point out that a certain amount of subjectivity in the early phase of qualitative research is important and as such I was not concerned if my experiences and ideas did not line up with those of my peers. They note:

> The role of intuition in this phase of the research process cannot be underestimated … By allowing ideas to incubate and through maintaining a healthy respect for the mind’s capacity to reorganise and reconstruct, the researcher finds that richer research questions evolve.

For this reason, the observations I made and recorded in my field notes and journal entries often led me to develop categories of analysis that were later adopted in this thesis. The extract from my field notes below demonstrates a simple observation made in haste. It merely illustrates and describes events as I saw them without reflection or evaluation on any major themes or issues:

**Westside SHS [WFN]**

I visited Westside to see how they are going. They have been waiting for the former key teacher to contact them so they haven’t been in-serviced. The HPE HOD [Head of Department] had not told me any of this when I had phoned to check in the past. I immediately phoned and emailed the other school and asked her if we can do a joint in-service early in term 1 next year – 2005.
Journal Entries

My field note observations were also supplemented by a researcher journal. This journal contained my more elaborate thoughts, ideas, observations, judgments and any subsequent reflections on the field notes and the discussions held between the chief investigators, the research assistants, the transcriber and me during our weekly meetings. During the meetings, our different perspectives on the data were openly aired and the notes taken at these meetings were also entered into my journal.

In this way, my journal became a cross between observations and a personal diary. I took it with me everywhere, but unlike field notes that were written in the heat of the moment, my journal was usually written when I had more time to think about what I actually wanted to say. This meant my journal was often filled in at the university, after having discussed emerging issues observed at the schools with my co-researchers and the chief investigators of the larger project. By having more time to think and to analyse my own thoughts and those of others, my journal became a more reflective form of data. This deeper reflection is built not just on theory, but also on professional knowledge. O’Mara (2006, p. 42) suggests that such reflection enables researchers to act upon situations and to develop new theories of practice:

The process of reflecting on the novelty of the current situations through professional knowledge developed from prior experience can serve to generate a new understanding.

Below is an example of a journal entry that demonstrates the reflective nature of my journal entries.

Journal Entry 27th April 2004–Focus on Data [JE]

After a meeting with my supervisors and research assistant, the following issues were discussed. They advised me to put the data from Jane into something tangible. An extra meeting to discuss this data and findings will have to be organised. Once the data is collated, it will also have to be collated with other data arriving from other schools for an overall picture. I need to carefully analyse what I am seeing/reading and highlight areas that stand out.

Ask myself the following questions;

1. What themes are emerging?
2. What are they not saying? Gaps and Silences?
3. What are the answers to their questions?
4. What people do we follow through with to gain more information?
5. What will be the process and planning system from here on?

The chief investigators suggest that we look into developing master teachers who can teach each other. If we do this, the following questions need to be considered:

1. Can we still obtain the data from their observations during their teaching?
2. Will one of us have to be present?
3. What happens to the program when master teachers teach other key teachers and then relay teachers (from primary schools)?

It was suggested I write a checklist of things that need to be done, considered and discussed before our next meeting next week. As issues start to emerge, we need to carefully follow the findings, records them, discuss them, analyse them and see where they will lead us.

Overall, the process for data gathering and recording began with questionnaires and was then supplemented by interviews. Further on, field notes and journal entries were added to reinforce or add further viewpoints to the data.
Below is a flow chart illustrating the order the data gathering process took.

**FLOW CHART OF DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS**

- Pre Questionnaires
- Student Interviews
- Field Notes
  - Post Questionnaires
- Teacher Interviews
- Journal Entries
  - Student Interviews
  - Teacher Interviews
My Role as Observer: Participant/Researcher

In order to fully understand the data collection process for this research project, it is important to examine my various roles as participant, observer and researcher. Like Stake, I believe that “research is not helped by making it value free”. Stake advises “it is better to give the reader a good look at the researcher” (1995, p. 97). Burns adds that “participant observation is the usual technique in the group case study” (2000, p. 462), but he adds that “the major problems associated with participant observation are concerned with potential for bias. The investigator may become too closely involved and lose detachment, or assume advocacy roles detrimental to unprejudiced reporting” (p. 467). However, I believe as a qualitative researcher using this method, I have to reject the possibility of a neutral stance and accept the theory of embracing the researcher’s own subjectivity such as those given by Tolman and Brydon-Miller earlier in this chapter (2001).

My dual roles as teacher and researcher, as active participant/observer, made me aware that I was able to study the schools and the teachers from within their own arenas of practice. By working alongside the teachers and their students and by investigating their journeys, I was able to document what Hill (2009, p. 315) describes as “a view from within, or perhaps, more colloquially, a view from the ‘chalk face’.” She adds that an ethnographer goes out into the field and returns to tell of the uniqueness of the experiences observed (p. 315).

As participant/observer, I entered each school setting as a colleague and recorder. I observed peer teaching first hand, made field notes, interviewed teachers, principals and their students, analysed and collated the data and evaluated the key factors in each school that contributed to the overall success of their anti-bullying projects. Ethnography is a relevant method for evaluating school life since the school is essentially a cultural entity (Burns, 2000, p. 223). Since the purpose of ethnography is to uncover and describe a group’s social relations, an investigator must become totally involved in a particular situation in order to describe, interpret and evaluate the actions of those people involved in the culture. I became that investigator involved in the school culture and in each case study school I documented my observations and conclusions. Thus, the multiple case study approach using ethnographic tools to
gather and collate data became my overall methodology for the research for this thesis.

In order to gain the trust of the program participants, I had to gain entry into their groups. However, gaining entry to a particular group in order to undertake a qualitative case study can be a difficult and even intimidating task. Gurney in her chapter on female researchers quotes Burgess who believes “gaining access to a research site is not a one-off event: it is instead a social process that occurs throughout a research project... access is also based on the relationship between the researcher and the researched” (Shaffir & Stebbins, 1991, p. 52). My initial entry into the Acting Against Bullying project was understandably challenging at first. I had been a high school teacher for fifteen years prior to undertaking this research and was dealing with academia for the first time. I knew that the teachers might feel a bit suspicious or wary of me. Also, by entering into a group for field observation, I had to make sure I allowed the participants to be themselves, whilst recording my observations and without interfering with the research findings. Hughes in his chapter on fieldwork (Weinberg, 2002, p. 39) believes:

Field work refers to observation of people in situ, finding them where they are, staying with them in some role which, while acceptable to them, will allow both intimate observation of certain parts of their behaviour, and reporting it in ways useful to social science but not harmful to those observed.

This is not an easy undertaking as trust and rapport usually develop over a period of time. Burgess (1993, p. 45) suggests that “research access in common with ethnographic research depends on the relationships that are established between the researchers and the researched.” I therefore had to try to enlist the trust of the participants early in my research and then had to develop more rapport with them progressively.

Also as time goes by, your relationship with the participant changes according to the context and familiarity that has developed. During this research, my relationships with the teachers altered and developed according to the context of the project in their lives, their own confidence, the length of time they had known me, the amount of
interaction we had together and the social parameters they worked in. Indeed, even my field notes reflected my changing relationships with the participants in the language I used. Polkinghorne (2005, p. 138) emphasises the role that the language in field notes and journals play:

Evidence about human experience has inherent limitations compared with data about human behaviour. Because experience is not directly observable, data about it depend on the participants’ ability to reflectively discern aspects of their own experience and to effectively communicate what they discern through the symbols of language.

As participant researcher I had to acknowledge, check and be constantly aware of my own bias and relationship to the participants as well as my different roles within each case study. Angorsino and Mays de Perez quote Gold’s four categories of participant researchers; the complete participant, the participant–as–observer, the observer–as–participant, and the complete observer. The observer–as–participant role is often considered an acceptable compromise, allowing the researcher to interact ‘casually and non-directly’ with the subjects, the researcher thus remains as researcher and does not cross over the line into friendship (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 677). Patton suggests that “observational data, especially participant observation, permit the evaluation researcher to understand a program or treatment to an extent not entirely possible using only the insights of others obtained through interviews” (2002, p. 22).

For my part, I found that being the observer–as–participant was one of the most accommodating roles to be in as it enabled me to participate actively when necessary while enabling me to distance myself when more convenient. I also found that my role changed and molded itself intermittently into various other research participant categories according to the development of relationships and changes in context over time and this is illustrated in my case studies. It could be claimed then that my relationship with the teachers in the project was multidimensional in that my often close relationships with the informants in the project were concurrent with my more detached observations of them. Hammersley and Atkinson (1994, p. 249) argue that “because we cannot study the social world without being part of it, all social research is a form of participant observation.” There are inherent advantages in the ‘observer as participant’ approach. (Cohen, 2000, p. 188) leads into this:
Observations studies are superior to experiments and surveys when data are being collected on non-verbal behaviour; In observation studies, investigators are able to discern ongoing behaviour as it occurs and are able to make appropriate notes about salient features; Because case study observations take place over an extended period of time, researchers can develop more intimate and informal relationships with those they are observing, generally in more natural environments than those in which experiments and surveys are conducted; And case study observations are less reactive than other types of data-gathering methods.

This meant that as observer–as–participant researcher I could slowly and quietly observe firsthand what was happening at each school level. Even when visiting to interview teachers and students at the end of the project, I could observe if their comments were forced or genuine or if other circumstances or factors were contributing to their answers.

Interestingly, my experience as a drama teacher prepared me for the various participant observation roles I took on in each setting. (O’Neill, 1995, p. 79) suggests:

The whole concept of theatre is founded on the construction of possible selves and alternative realities, and dramatic activity is the direct result of our ability to play with and transform the roles we inhabit. Theatre is an innovative laboratory for the exercise of our capacity to transcend the social roles and types that in real life we may have been unable to elude.

The ability I gained from my theatre experience gave me the opportunity to exercise the different social roles that were required or expected of me at each school environment. I was therefore able to ‘play with and transform the roles’ I inhabit to suit each context, depending on what was required or expected from me.

My role as observer–as–participant also gave me the chance to talk candidly with the interviewees beforehand and afterwards and meant that I was often aware of what they were going to say before they said it. As a result of our shared experiences, our observations, reflections and opinions often became aligned by the end of the research, a factor that made our research easier. The conditions and experiences that formed the opinions of the participants were very relevant and important as they set
the concepts and hypotheses that eventually became the formula for successful anti-bullying strategies that arose from this research. In order to illustrate my own varied participant observation roles in each case study, the following sub-chapter will provide an insight on the complexity of my role and how each environment affected my research.

The Complexity of My Role in the Research
My official role within the larger *Acting Against Bullying* project had been to coordinate the teachers’ workshops and research the effectiveness of the project. This meant I was playing a dual role. On one hand I was a fellow teacher, facilitating and assisting other teachers in the drama skills and the peer teaching method that was to be applied via training sessions, school visits and the production of resources. On the other hand, I was an academic researcher, investigating and recording the data that was generated from observations, questionnaires and interviews and avoiding interfering with schools as much as possible. By wearing these two hats, I was able to be ‘inside and outside’ of the project simultaneously and to address the problems that had become evident during the *Cooling Conflicts* program.

However, I discovered that “the attempt to be both a member and a researcher can often lead to problems of role conflict” (Burns, 2000, p. 236). As a fellow teacher, I had to empathise with the teachers and their environments. As a researcher, I needed to remain detached during my observations and data collection. Nevertheless, in order to observe, understand and eventually record the findings of the teachers and their students, I had to immerse myself in some of the classes and school environments. Shimahara states that “the researcher becomes an instrument of inquiry by playing dual roles – by being present in the situation, but by standing outside to observe it” (cited in Plunkett, 2002, p. 58).

My own distinct role was mainly that of observer–as–participant usually, but sometimes I developed into a limited observer in some settings and other times my role grew into acceptance as a more ‘active’ participant in others. My drama teaching background gave me the necessary ingredients for adopting the dual role of researcher and participant within the case study research. In one of my case studies, Southside, I
utilised my complex role to organise an in-depth interview with the key teacher at a shopping centre during her holiday. Our relationship had become close and we held this interview over a coffee. I basically let her talk, without asking her questions [see Appendix L for a transcription of this interview].

An important issue related to the case studies is that my role as active participant was an important factor influencing each case study’s involvement within the research project. Furthermore, my role was also made more complex because it differed somewhat at each school. Firstly, at Southside, I was accepted as a collaborating teacher, as part of the overall school community and acknowledged as a fellow teacher. At North Beachside I was acknowledged as a fellow drama teacher and given some credibility as a visiting scholar, but geographical factors made me more of an important visitor in the school staff’s eyes. Due to its geographical distance from Brisbane, my visits there were given more impact and although I wasn’t seen as part of the staff, I was awarded substantial cooperation and information. Finally, at Westside, the teachers were a bit more suspicious of my role. Due to the changes and transfers of key staff members and the subsequent interruptions in the flow of information, the teachers saw me as more of an intruding ‘academic,’ and awarded me less cooperation and information on the occasions I was allowed to visit. My role as active participant at each school formed part of the dynamics in each case study, influencing how the staff related to me, how they took my advice and how they approached the systemic elements of the program. In this section below I will outline my roles within the three case study schools.

**My Role at Southside**

My entry to this school was by far the most accommodating of all the participating schools. Initially I worked with two teachers, the Head of Department, Gail, and a, part-time drama teacher, Marie. From the beginning, my chief investigators and I were seen in the role of ‘active participants’ and allowed free entry into the trial drama classes as teachers and observers. Although the Head of Department was promoted and transferred to another school in the second year, Marie, with the support of the new Performing Arts Head of Department, took ownership of the project and continued to facilitate it as an important part of the school’s behaviour management
policy. Marie gave me constant feedback and invited me to observe each new stage of the project or any complimentary developments within her school. Consequently, I not only got to know Marie well, I also became acquainted with her students and their personalities.

Soon after, my role as ‘active participant’ morphed into one of ‘privileged observer’ as Marie became more confident in her role and eventually earned the title of Master teacher in the project. I was still invited to participate in presentations and always introduced as a ‘very important guest’. By the third year I took more of a back seat and was more of a ‘limited observer’ during classes, but always welcomed as ‘part of the team’ by Marie’s colleagues in the drama staff room. By the end of the project, Marie and I had become good friends and colleagues, a privilege I enjoy to this day.

My Role at Westside

My entry into this school was problematic at first. Instead of starting the project with a drama teacher and a year 11 drama class as had been the previous plan, Westside started with a Health and Physical Education teacher and her Year 11 class. Erica was a very enthusiastic teacher who volunteered her class as part of a Health subject focus on Mental Health. Though initially I was uncertain on how she would manage the drama, she proved to be very confident, so much so that she organised the project herself, often omitting to give me feedback. It was often difficult to obtain an invitation to observe her classes and even then I found myself allocated to being allowed entry only to the ‘limited observer’ role.

At first, I believe Erica was unsure as to how well her class and she could achieve what they had taken on, so keeping the interfering university researcher at bay was her way of protecting herself from any potential personal sense of failure. Fortunately, my relationship with Erica developed substantially by the end of the first research cycle (one year) of the project, where she allowed me to be an ‘active participant’ in her classes. Unfortunately for me (and the project), Erica was transferred and promoted to Head of Department position at another school and although she continued to be involved in the project and my relationship with her evolved into one of casual
friendship, it meant that I had to start with a new key teacher at Westside all over again.

The second year and cycle of the project saw Brenda as coordinator of the project after Erica’s departure. Brenda was also a Health and Physical Education teacher and Head of Department and even more suspicious of my role than Erica had initially been. I was often told of a meeting that was being held with other interested teachers, only to discover once there that the meeting had been changed or that Brenda had already ‘in-serviced’ the teachers herself. This made it difficult for me to gauge how the project was developing and delayed the process of getting to know the teachers’ needs, concerns and attitudes towards the project. It also made me feel like an uninvited intruder at times. It took two cycles for me to progress from an often unwanted ‘limited observer’ to that of ‘privileged observer’, but by the end of the project Brenda had even started sharing her personal and career goals with us (the research assistant and me) and allowed me to supervise her class while she was being interviewed.

**My Role at North Beachside**

My role at North Beachside remained consistent throughout the project. I was allowed to be in the role of a ‘privileged observer’ throughout the project. The Coordinator there was the Guidance Officer while the drama teacher was Bob, who began the project with a small group of year 12 female students. Both teachers collaborated well together and both were committed to diminishing bullying at their institution.

From the beginning, I was introduced as both researcher and teacher and allowed entry into classes as well as access to data about the school. Although Bob was a confident and well respected teacher, he always showed the research assistant and I respect as did the principal and the overall school community. Bob would confidently tell me what he was doing, but would also ask advice and take guidance. Feedback was always given, albeit often informally, and any request for more information was met with a positive response.
Travelling to North Beachside meant a two hour flight to a regional area. On these occasions, we were usually collected at the airport by Bob and a schedule of instructions and interviews would often be arranged for us before returning us to the airport. Bob and other participating teachers treated the research assistant and me as colleagues and collaborators in addressing their district’s local youth problem.

**Data Analysis**

Once I began analysing my data, I realised I needed to adopt a theoretical framework with which to view my findings. Silverman (2010, p. 78) says that theory provides two main things:
- A framework for critically understanding phenomena
- A basis for considering how what is unknown might be organized.

Silverman also suggests thinking about five issues when carrying out research; chronology, context, comparison, implications and lateral thinking (2010, p. 84). My data was contextualised within three different school settings and involved group as well as individual student interviews in order to allow for different sets of experiences among the participating school children. As I analysed the data, I thought about the implications my findings might have on anti-bullying strategies within educational settings and reported my findings to reflect this. Finally, I tried to avoid erecting boundaries between concepts that emerged and basically reported them as observed. This enabled me to view the research data as realistically as possible.

Specifically, I began by looking at students’ and teachers’ perceptions of bullying before they participated in the program. I then looked at the effects of the program on the students and teachers during and after having completed their three year participation. In other words, I was interested to see if there was a change in the findings from the pre-questionnaires with the findings from the post-questionnaires and interviews given once participation in the program had begun. I analysed the students’ knowledge of bullying and their ability to deal with bullying within each school. I then looked at the effects of the program on the teachers, their knowledge of bullying and their ability to deal with bullying among their students. I also looked at
the drama and peer teaching elements of the program and how these were viewed by
the participating teachers and students. I looked for any benefits of the peer teaching
component and benefits of the drama component. Finally, I looked at the benefits the
program had on the whole school community, by checking what the principal and
other teachers had to say.

The process I took to analyse the data began with the pre-questionnaires that were
given out at each school before implementing the program. After collating these I was
able to identify that most students didn’t know what to do when someone bullied them
or another student and that teachers also lacked the skills to deal with bullying. As a
result of the findings from the pre-questionnaires, I realised students and teachers at
these schools did not feel confident in dealing with bullying. I therefore formulated
some more in-depth questions about bullying for the interviews for both teachers and
students. I was particularly interested to see if students and teachers had become more
empowered to deal with bullying after having participated in the program so the
interviews were given after the teachers and students had been given the chance to
participate in the program. While annotating transcripts from interviews with students
and teachers (that were undertaken after the program had been implemented), I was
able to identify some emerging themes developing at each school.

Issues such as needing the whole school’s support, timetabling and teacher
commitment developed from the teachers’ interviews while issues about enjoying the
drama component and benefiting from the peer teaching developed from the students’
interviews. As these themes emerged during the three year project, I cross checked
them with each case study to see if there was a pattern developing and then returned
to my research questions to check if these themes were related to them.

The findings from my interviews and post-questionnaires thus became my key data
set. Although not a large body of data, this body of information became something I
could work with effectively within the remaining time scale of the research project
and within the boundaries of the three case studies. Silverman’s (2006, p. 8) theory for
interpreting qualitative data is that a data set should be limited in order to make analysis of the data workable:

To make your analysis effective, it is imperative to have a limited body of data with which to work. So while it may be useful initially to explore different kinds of data, this should usually only be done to establish the data set with which you can most effectively work within the time scale open to you….The comparative method is indeed worthwhile, but it can be used within very small data sets.

Thomas (2006) suggests there are three aims in qualitative data analysis: to reduce data, to display data and to draw conclusions from the data. He advises that the best way to obtain meaning from raw data is to develop a “summary of themes or categories from the raw data” (p. 239) and adds that this should be the main method for analysing data:

The primary mode of analysis is the development of categories from the raw data into a model or framework. This model contains key themes and processes identified and constructed by the evaluator during the coding process (p. 240).

I thus used this form of data analysis to reduce my data to a workable amount, to display data and organize data within my case study chapters and to draw conclusions from the data for my research. These categories also became issues for discussion at our research meetings. By analysing the data that was revealed, I tried to develop a picture of what I had learned about the research question; the key successful elements in the three different schools that were integral in assisting the participating teachers to decrease bullying in their schools after having completed the professional development. Finally, I also checked for what the strengths and challenges of the program were. This became the overall structure for my data analysis.

I utilised a variety of means for obtaining the data by employing interviews (both individual and group), field notes, observations and several types of questionnaires. I also consulted my chief investigators and research assistants to assist me in reflecting upon and evaluating the data, as well as considering a variety of theoretical perspectives for interpreting that data. In the 1970s, Denzin identified four types of triangulation:
1. Data Triangulation – the use of a variety of data sources in a study (interviewing people of different status levels or different points of view);

2. Investigator Triangulation – the use of several different evaluators or social scientists;

3. Theory Triangulation – the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data;

4. Methodological Triangulation – the use of multiple methods to study a single problem or program, such as interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documents.

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 391)

Within this research project, the first and last methods of triangulation were used. In terms of data triangulation, I interviewed teachers, students and principals in order to obtain different points of views. For methodological triangulation I employed a combination of interview styles, pre and post-questionnaires, field notes and journal notes to gather the data from the schools, teachers and students from each case study. As Patton points out (cited in Merriam, 1998, p.137):

> Multiple sources of information are sought and used because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective...By using a combination of observations, interviewing, and document analysis, the fieldworker is able to use different data sources to validate and cross-check findings.

Thus, I began by using the questionnaires, then I added the data from the interviews and my own observations and more elaborate questionnaires to initially gather data. Multiple sources were used such as students and teachers from different schools in order to provide a comprehensive perspective. I also added my own perspective of observations through field notes and journal entries. As participant researcher, I was always observing and making judgments from my own perspective and recording these observations and reflections on these at our meetings. As Stake (1995, p. 41) outlines, it was important for me to acknowledge all the time my own perceptions in the process:

> Standard qualitative designs call for the person most responsible for interpretations to be in the field, making observations, exercising subjective
judgment, analysing and synthesizing, all the while realizing their own consciousness.

Most qualitative researchers would agree that it is difficult to establish the best view of a case when there are multiple views or perspectives of a case that need to be presented. Stake in his chapter on case studies suggests, “Triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation.” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 443) He adds that comparison is not always the solution for checking data in case studies as this can compete “with learning about and from a particular case” (p. 444). Nevertheless, he agrees that in order to validate one’s research, a researcher must reflect and extract meanings from their findings.

Qualitative case study is characterized by researchers spending extended time, on site, personally in contact with activities and operations of the case, reflecting, revising meanings of what is going on. (p. 445)

This elaborate method for checking data provides ways for the researcher to validate their findings. By keeping a journal of my personal observations and experiences, field notes, newspaper reports, interview responses and questionnaire responses, all of which were cross checked with other team members and reflected upon, I practised a triangulation of sources as well as of findings. With each source, it was important for me to remember my own perspective and subjectivity. This is known as being reflexive. Mason (2010) advises that we try not to pretend we weren’t at the scene of the research at the time, or didn’t have some kind of ‘informed interest’. Researchers might do this in order to appear more ‘objective’, but data are inevitably constructed during a process of interaction and there would be no point in my trying to ignore that fact.

I utilised the data and methodological triangulation methods when analysing the data because it is a powerful solution to using just one single method of enquiry that might be less valid or credible as one would like. By using these forms of triangulation to check findings one aims at maintaining integrity and purity of each of the
methodological approaches. This occurs because a variety of procedures and perspectives are used to collect findings.

As Patton (2002) points out:

> Multiple sources of information are sought and used because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective … By using a combination of observations, interviewing, and document analysis, the fieldworker is able to use different data sources to validate and cross-check findings. (p. 306)

Thus, by using multiple sources of information, by using a combination of sources, by comparing different case studies, by acknowledging my own involvement as participant/researcher and by reflecting and evaluating with other members of the program, I aimed at triangulating in a manner that was thorough and realistic and that remained true to the integrity of the program and its participants.

**The Participants’ Voices**

In an attempt to counter balance my own involvement and voice in the research, I also chose to give a strong platform to the participants’ voices. Morrow (2007) advises that the researcher’s respect for the participants is central to effective data gathering. She suggests this is the case because:

> Participants in qualitative investigations often disclose information of an emotional and sensitive nature, and because the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is often very intimate, the researcher’s responsibility to treat participants with high regard and respect is paramount (p. 217).

In order to avoid painting a picture that was driven mostly by my own perspective, it seemed more important to promote the participants’ voices whenever possible. By organising my thesis case studies around their specific stories, I aimed to demonstrate a true account of what occurred at each case study from the key participants’ perspectives. Although my own subjectivity could not be ignored in the language that I used in reporting the findings of this research, I hoped that emphasising the participants’ stories gave more credibility to the their experiences and enabled readers
to have a more genuine relationship with what happened at each school. Opie supports Said’s (1978) view that language “cannot be regarded as a transparent, truthful medium through which the world is simply apprehended as it is but, instead, that it is fully implicated in power relations” (Opie, 1992, p. 56). I tried therefore to promote the teachers’ voices exactly as transcribed as often as possible and eventually designed the sub-chapters on the effects of the program on teachers around the stories of the key participating teachers at each school. My objective was to attempt to overcome an authoritative reading of the data with a more deconstructive approach to analysing the data. Opie suggests this method helps the researchers move away from representing their own voices, “to the creation of a report which is more fissured, that is, one in which different and often competing voices within a society are recognized” (Opie, 1992, pp. 57–58).

**Conclusion to Methodology**

By using field notes and journals with my own observations and reflections, pre-questionnaires and post-questionnaires of students and teachers, and both group interviews and individual interviews with teachers, students and principals, I utilised a variety of sources from my three case studies from which to obtain data on the research. Once I gathered my data, I collated them to see if there were trends, themes or patterns. Once themes were evident, I evaluated the findings through discussions with my research assistants and other members of the research team. Finally, I acknowledged my own part and bias in the research as well as my relationship to participants of the program.

During my entire time as observer–as–participant at each school, I crossed from being outside to being inside the circles of teachers. In some of the schools, seeing the students and the teachers felt familiar and I was always welcomed there by my first name. As mentioned earlier, these teachers became my colleagues as well as friends and were so empowered by the professional development that they went on to become master teachers, acknowledged by Education Queensland as training other teachers in their schools and leading the research from their ends. Their confidence meant that
they could take over where I had left off and that my input was basically no longer necessary.

In the schools where I was more of an observer, the teachers saw me as an outsider/expert who came not only to advise them, but also to check up on them. These teachers were often more defensive or formal with me and less likely to enjoy my visits. The case study schools that had been involved in the project from the beginning were the ones that welcomed me as a friend, whilst the newer schools to the project still saw me as the outsider.

However, regardless of the intensity of my involvement with the different schools my objective was to understand the restraints and problems experienced by the teachers and to empower them to deal with bullying confidently in their unique environments through ongoing professional support. Overall, using the multiple case methodology approach with the tools of the ethnographer, I discovered recurring concepts that appeared in each case study and that enabled me to eventually report on the main elements that, when combined, enabled teachers to lower the incidents of bullying in their schools.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE CASE STUDIES

Organisation of the Chapter
In this chapter I will outline the analysed data from all three case studies using the following structure for each case:

- Introduction
- The Effects of the Program on the Students
- The Benefits of Peer Teaching
- The Benefits of Drama
- The Effects of the Program on Teachers
- The Effects of the Program on the School Community
- Challenges and Solutions
- Summary

In each category however, the sub headings may differ depending on what the specific findings were in that school. To complete the analysis for each case I drew upon the data from questionnaires, interviews, field notes and journal entries, while I focused on the individual teacher’s stories in the ‘Effects of the Program on Teachers’ sections of each case study. The objective here was to promote their voices and outline their in depth participation in the Acting Against Bullying program.

This chapter begins with the Southside SHS case study as it was also the first school we worked with in the larger project and was also officially titled our ‘pilot school’ in the first year of the action research. Southside was a central suburban school, not far
from the university, that had a reputation for being prepared to try new things and initially was recommended to us by the Queensland Department of Education.

Westside SHS was further away from the city (about 45 minutes’ drive from the university) and is the second case I outline. Although it initially didn’t look like it would benefit from the program due to many changes among teachers during the action research, it surprised us with its achievements and the data findings it provided. Finally, I explore North Beachside SHS as this school was the furthest away, two hours flight from Brisbane toward the north of the state. As a regional school, this case study provided me with interesting data findings because the school had less access to the university research team. Nevertheless, the teaching staff was highly enthusiastic and still achieved a very successful outcome during their participation the project.

**CASE STUDY ONE: SOUTHSIDE**

**Introduction**

Southside SHS was the first school involved with the Acting Against Bullying program and the longest participating school in the project since its collaboration lasted from the trial pilot stage in 2002 until the end of the project in 2005. My involvement with Southside was highly productive and rewarding as I learnt about facilitating in-services for teachers, about teachers’ needs, about the benefits of a whole school approach to anti-bullying programs and about the need to include the Acting Against Bullying program within the curriculum.

My research role at Southside was that of an active observer–participant and as a result of this I became good friends with the teachers involved in the project, as well as many of the students. By the end of the project the whole school community had become involved in the project in one way or another and the program had become an important part of their behaviour management policy. This was mostly due to the dedication and commitment of the key teacher, Marie, who later became a master teacher. The following is a summary of the overall data obtained from the student
surveys that were administered during the three years that Southside was officially participating in the project.

The students at Southside were predominantly working class, with a high proportion coming from single parent households with working mothers. We were told by the teachers that there was a competition with neighbouring high schools to increase enrolments, so Southside was apparently constantly trying new strategies to attract students to the school. Southside therefore had a reputation for being a school that was prepared to try out new projects and its active drama department had participated in the ‘Bullyingnoway’ program previously set up by Education Queensland as an anti-bullying web site.

This school was a particularly appropriate case study because it was actively confronting serious bullying issues and had the support of Education Queensland in its endeavours. My journal entry outlines my first impressions of Southside when I visited them for the first time:

My initial investigation of Southside SHS uncovered a school that was in a predominantly middle class neighbourhood, quite large (nearly 2000 students in 2003), of mostly white Australian descent, but with an increasing amount of foreign students from Asian and Islander backgrounds. Bullying had been an issue on the increase and the principal had encouraged and supported his Drama teachers to look at these issues in class. The students had eventually presented one of their class play-building performances at the Queen St Mall during Education Week the year before in order to launch Education Queensland’s new web site, ‘Bullyingnoway,’ dedicated to assisting students, teachers and parents by looking at bullying in schools. (JE)

Two drama teachers, Gail and Marie, consented to have their drama classes involved in the pilot program. Gail was the Head of Department of Performing Arts and had a year 11 Drama class of students she wanted to be involved with the project as peer teachers. Marie had a year 9 Drama class that would be suitable to be the key class the following year. Both teachers were willing to have us visit the school to meet their students and to practise our proposed procedure with their students. Southside thus became the first school in the Acting Against Bullying program and my first case study. At Southside we experimented with bullying management techniques that we
would then refine and use at the other participating schools and I practised my research role within the program.

The Pilot Program

The trial pilot program began in October in 2002. Initially, the research team introduced itself and the project to the year 11 class we were going to be working with while the teachers did all the facilitating. Eventually, we spoke to the students about the basics of bullying and the line of action that we would be taking. We encouraged the students to use the specific set of terminology that we had devised. We suggested that students could fall into the three categories of bully, bullied and bystander and we were intent on avoiding using the word ‘victim’. We informed the students that these categories are impermanent and students can interchange between them on different occasions. We tried to emphasise to the students that we are all capable of falling into any of these categories at any time in order to avoid labeling and stereotyping. We also employed some of the terminology from the Cooling Conflicts Project, by adding that there were three chronological stages of conflict – the latent, the emerging and the manifest stages. We taught the students that basically this meant that there was always an early sign that bullying was about to take place, a time when the bullying was escalating and a time when it became out of hand and somebody got hurt. It was at this stage that we taught the students that the earlier the bullying was observed and de-escalated, the better for everyone.

When asked what they thought bullying was at this stage, most of the students identified physical fighting. We emphasised that it need not be physical fighting, but that bullying could also be psychological and social and that these forms of bullying could be even more harmful. The students were encouraged to discuss their own experiences, without feeling obliged or coerced to discuss anything they did not feel comfortable talking about.

It is at this stage that the chief investigators of the project handed the teaching component of the project on to me and when the elements of forum theatre were first used. Initially I taught the students the basics needed to participate in the enhanced method of forum theatre that my chief investigators had devised. Then I directed them to trying out the method themselves. During this time, their teachers were present and
I encouraged them to participate in the facilitation of the process. My journal outlines this first drama session at Southside:

The boys’ group was not keen to ‘pair off’. They told their stories together as a group, with a multitude of jokes. They decided on the one story they all know about a boy they think is a ‘fag’. This is surprising for grade 11 boys doing drama. There is a reluctance for these boys to do anything intimate or serious as if they are a bit homophobic themselves. The smaller girls’ group of 6 was very keen, organised and serious. They took turns in telling their stories and had even worked out roles and possible lines by the time I got to them! The larger girls’ group of 8 contained the girl who says she has been bullied. She was very seriously taking notes as well as contributing much to the larger conversation.
(JE)

After the students had devised their forum scenes, each group was asked to perform them in front of each other. The student audience first watched the whole sequence without interruption. Then they watched the performance again with the option of intervening when they felt they needed to know what was really going on in the minds of the characters (via ‘thought tracking’ or ‘hot seating’ them) or if they felt they could find a solution by changing the action in the role of one of the characters (via ‘intervention’). ‘Thought tracking’ asks the performers what is on their minds at that moment. ‘Hot seating’ is when one performer, in role, answers a series of questions given by the audience, on their motives and history. ‘Intervention’ is when an audience member chooses to swap places with one of the performers and to take on their role in order to find a suitable outcome for the bullying situation. This form of theatre usually created a lively debate within the group that lead to interesting discussions as my journal entry will show.

We talked before and after [the forum] about bullying in general. The students seem more mature about the issues than when they were before. They agree that the bullied does not have to be the one to change. They focus on the bystander a lot. They agree about differences. Coming from ‘outside’ is an issue brought up a lot. The girls are not homophobic. The boys are silent on this topic. Race is not brought up at all. The 11s tell me the 9s will want to be able to find solutions. They (the 11s) want to be able to help others, to understand the year 9s, to learn about bullying and to have fun. (JE)

By using this enhanced forum process, the students were able to watch the action from a fictional perspective and to find solutions themselves without feeling any
interference from an adult. This also gave them independence and power to solve their own problems. My journal entry demonstrates their success of this stage in the program.

The year 11s arrive early to practise their Forum drama. They are keen and discussing the issues with interest. The year nines arrive and the 11s are ready to get on with it. The two boys are not sticking together as I had expected. R. is the joker [of the year 11s] and speaks well and confidently. She explains the rules as the 9s listen and ask questions. They are keen to intervene and seem to have picked up the formalities quickly. N. and L. have a group of all boys who are totally engaged. Marie tells me she thinks this is fabulous. I rotate and hear questions about power and in-depth discussions. The 11s are in control and the 9s are completely engrossed.

One group seems a bit disturbed by something. A year 9 girl, C. is crying. I ask Marie to come over and she takes her out to talk. When she returns she says this student has had major bullying problems, but she still wants to contribute. The year 11 girls in charge of that group gather around and seem to get very protective and efficient. The group is working well again with C. joining in.

When the year 9s do their forums everyone is quiet and listens, then they applaud. This is a real buzz and Marie and I are quite flabbergasted. All the students seem to have a strong belief in what they are doing.

(JE)

Eventually these students were asked if they would like to return to the school after the year 11s had finished for the year so that they could peer teach the year nines earlier. Most of the students returned and despite the reluctance observed earlier on, they were very enthusiastic to do the peer teaching this time.

**The Effects of the Program on Students**

After completing the program, data was collected and analysed. Students commented on their changes after participating in forum theatre and class discussions on bullying. Overall the data indicated that the students became better leaders after participating in the project. They developed confidence in their ability to speak to others and to teach others about bullying concepts. Marie’s thoughts outlined within one of her earliest interviews support this claim.
Marie:
The change that I have probably noticed the most is how well they have stepped into a leadership role, doing their mentoring, their peer teaching. In many ways it has been wonderful to see how some of them have grown and in fact are great little teachers, with relatively little training on our behalf, just from the few sessions that we ran. I have been very impressed by the way a number of them have just stepped into taking over that leadership role. That’s from the Year 11 point of view. A lot of the students who have been involved in this project have generally been those who have not participated in this sort of thing before and that’s absolutely delighted me to see how some of them have grown.

(SITI)

Also, some of the students that were seen as bullies by the school community before the program often benefited from the program as well by learning to receive attention and respect in a more legitimate manner, through leadership in peer teaching the forum theatre elements. Gail also commented in her interview about the changes she saw in her students:

I can think of one particular student actually who I think has really benefited from this and he was a student who interacted a lot with the school behaviour management focus – the program – he was often on suspension, things like that, and I have noticed, especially when we went to the primary school, that he was a bit of a role model. Now since we’ve gone down there, he’s certainly been a lot friendlier. I don’t know if I’d describe him as, yes I would describe him as having been a bully in the school. I don’t know if that’s all been eliminated, but I think something happened to him because of this involvement in this…the fact that he had younger kids looking up to him. I just noticed him being quite different in that context that he ever had been at school.

(SITI)

In a later interview, three years on Marie reflects that, like the teachers, “student awareness about the process and stages of bullying has been heightened” as a result of participating in the program. She added that “we now have a language to use to describe bullying and tools to decode situations” (SITI) as a result of the students’ participation in the program.

Straight after the program, 66.7% of the students surveyed said they were able to notice bullying more easily after their participation in the project and 33.3% felt there was no difference in their awareness. This increased awareness is a significant step in
the right direction toward abolishing a bullying culture according to recent research in
criminal justice. On being asked, “Who do you think is the person most likely to
change a bullying situation?” 63% of students answered ‘the bystander’ after they
completed the program. Of those students, 73% said the bystander could intervene
and attempt to negotiate or mediate between the bully and the bullied. The remaining
7% suggested the bystanders could make the bullying situation known to a teacher or
someone in authority (refer to Appendix D for an example of a Southside teacher
response).

In an article looking specifically at the role of the bystander in South Australian
schoolchildren, it was noted that “once a child has acted as a positive bystander he or
she is more likely to do so on subsequent occasions. Establishing this habit is
important. This can be encouraged through practising the use of ‘interventive’ [sic]
skills in role play situations and reinforcing attempts to do so in real situations”
(Johnson and Rigby, 2006, p. 8). Similarly, through the enhanced forum theatre
methods used in the Acting Against Bullying project, the students learned to identify
the early stages of bullying, to analyse and verbalise what was going on and to
intervene in a way that was safe and productive.

This movement toward a social conscience became apparent in the other case studies
also. Lean (1998), Salmilvalli (1999), Sutton and Smith (1999) and Rigby (2002b)
concur that unlike the past attitude that bullying is a result of individual differences,
the movement is now more toward seeing bullying in relation to the larger social
context in which it occurs. “There has been increasing emphasis upon the social roles
that bystanders of school bullying commonly adopt” (Johnson & Rigby, 2006, p.
425).

When the students at Southside were given a questionnaire at the end of the program
and asked if they were more likely to do something in response to a bullying situation
in order to de-escalate or end it, 77.8% responded ‘yes’, 14.8% responded ‘no’ and
7.4% felt ‘unsure’. Asked if they felt they could now manage bullying situations
better, 80% of students said ‘yes’, 13.3% said ‘no’ and 6.7% said they were ‘unsure’
(refer to Appendix B, for an example.) This is an important finding because “the
nature of the audience as bystanders or witnesses to bullying [is] crucial since it is this
group of people who have the power to act when they witness or suspect an act of bullying” (Cassidy & Watts, 2000, p. 213). Thus, students at Southside became more prepared to take responsibility in bullying situations after their participation in the program.

The Bullying Issue

The concept of bullying varied between boys and girls at Southside. The boys were often interested in exploring homophobia while the girls looked at jealousy issues. It became evident at Southside that teachers facilitating the program had to be aware of the possibility that the bullying scenarios could inadvertently glamorise bullying instead of exploring it as a culturally unacceptable issue. I mentioned my concerns about caricaturing people in one of my journal entries:

Group work varied. Boys tend to be more reluctant at this stage. Latent and Emerging [stages] were more successful than the Manifest stage which often ends up as a caricature. Letters by girls read from last week were mostly on sexuality and jealousy issues. 
(JE)

It is worth noting that two year 11 students understood that bullying was not just a high school problem. David felt it occurred more in primary schools and, interestingly, Bill could relate the bullying in his school to harassment in the workplace.

David:

Bullying always seems to end up with verbal or physical violence. Usually it’s about being different (not doing the same things or wearing the same clothes). Mainly in primary school, not so much in high school. It’s easier to deal with in high school, because you’re more mature
[SGSI]

Bill:

Like older people do get bullied, but its like classed as harassment like workplace harassment and like you get bullied at school like.
[SGSI]
Southside Update:
The girls had a tendency to focus on social bullying, on issues about gossip and jealousy etc, and the boys focused on physical bullying, often about homophobia, and usually ended up physically fighting in their forum role plays. The following data from my journal exemplifies some of the more complex and overt issues that girls have to deal with and explains teachers may find it difficult to assist with such issues:

Four groups formed. Some had rearranged themselves as a result of absences and other students joining in. One group is focused: The volunteer girls’ group. They have already started before I get to explain what they will be doing. Their story is about a girl who is flirting with boys she doesn’t like, then bitching behind their backs to her girlfriends. The girlfriends decide they don’t want anything to do with her. Many similar issues are brought up during intervention. I try to find a solution as one of the girls yells out ‘magic’. Apparently a 15 year old girl would not honestly say something to another girl. She would be too scared. She would only discuss things behind her back. This interests Gail and me and begins an interesting debate between many of the students and ourselves.

(JE)

One month later, my journal entry was focused on the boys. It suggests that while girls were focused on beauty, jealousy and competition, the boys were more focused on issues about homosexuality and manhood.

The boys’ group is a bit of a worry. They have decided on their story being about a ‘fag’ that thinks he’s cool. I try to make them evaluate their ideas and to question them, but they are not budging. Needless to say, their process drama ends up being very ‘silly’. There is little difference between latent, emerging and manifest and it is mostly punching. Homophobia is a big one for the boys.

(JE)

Overall, however, most of the students agreed that their own personal attitudes toward bullying had changed after their participation in the project. They were less likely to squabble over differences. John and Ken offer typical comments during a group student interview:

John:
When we had our little group, they didn’t like want to listen to us and when we told them we were going to teach them and talk about bullying they – all they could talk about was like smashing people and that. They kept saying words like “I’ll snap you” or something and then we…said we’re going to do a
play and some of the kids were actually bullies and they actually understood after we started teaching them and after that they just made good friends with us. (SGSI)

**Ken:**
With our class, before we did this they were a rough sort of group, but after that they kind of settled down and like learned to respect the other children, class members … You find that bullying is like just little things as well as bashing people up and name-calling and stuff. (SGSI)

**Ken:**
They got a point of view from the other side if they were the bully they’d get what the other people thought. And if you were the bystander you’d see what it is to be bullied and stuff. So you get a point of view from all different aspects. (SGSI)

Even students who admitted to being bullies in the past changed their attitudes as a result of their participation in the program. Bullies often didn’t realise what they were doing and what affect it was having on others until participating in the project and seeing the effect it had on their peers. Phil provides an example of this during an individual student interview.

**Phil:**
I used to be a bully… being a mean person, but actually I changed and I’ve actually stopped doing that. I really don’t like it. (SISI)

Interestingly, it was often the bully who was the one who changed the most as a result of participating in the program. Drama is a useful vehicle for children to place themselves in other peoples’ shoes and to learn to empathise with others. Nursey-Bray (1996) believes this is because. In a situation where conflict is the subject of the drama, the students, by assuming roles on both sides, can hope to understand more deeply the character of, and motivation behind, the conflict because they imaginatively project themselves into the minds and situation of the protagonists (cited in Bagshaw & Halliday, 2000, p. 90). One of the key teachers, Marie, reinforced this theory through her own observations of her classes.
Marie:
The interesting thing that we have come across is the students who tend to be bullies—when they are acting out the scenarios—have taken sometimes the role of the bullied and it’s very interesting to the speak to them about that role afterwards and they say “yeah I think I know now, Miss, how they feel and I know that it’s probably not a real cool thing to do”. That has been a bit of a trend that we have observed.
(SITI)

Overall, most of the students at Southside identified they had learned much and were less tolerant of bullying by the end of the program. They acted more maturely, seemed less likely to fight over differences and were more empathic to those being bullied.

The Benefits of Peer Teaching
Delquadri, Greenwood, Carta and Hall (1988) reported that compared to teacher direct instruction, peer tutoring increases the time students spend in relevant academic behaviours. Other reported benefits include increasing opportunities to respond, providing additional practice, increasing time on tasks by decreasing independent work time, increasing feedback, and incorporating ongoing performance monitoring” (cited in Simmons, Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes, & Hodge, 1995, p. 390). Once teachers were aware that the benefits outweigh their fears of letting go, they were more likely to be comfortable with their new roles as facilitators than teachers as controllers. The benefits of peer teaching were brought up by the students and the teachers at Southside and I even had the chance to observe the benefits myself early on during the trial pilot.

When asked why they had volunteered, the answers were sincere and mature— to help others, to understand year 9s, to learn about bullying and to have fun. Four groups were formed. They started off joking, but taking their roles as volunteers in authority very seriously compared to before. The two boys were doing exceptionally well. Year nines were very attentive. Their teacher was very proud of them and even emotional.
(JE)

During another peer teaching event, it was great to observe the older students actually protectively rallying around another female student who was emotional about the exercise due to her own bullying experiences. Although Marie and I were worried about her state of mind at the time, the older girls made sure she could take on any
role and stop at any time if she was uncomfortable. This peer support encouraged the year 9 girl and she ended up participating enthusiastically.

My task this week was to assist the year 11s to teach the year 9s the formalities of forum and the three stages of conflict. All students are extremely keen, very responsible and highly focused. Great discussions and questions forming on power issues. Students are all engaged.

(SJE)

One student in year 9 cried-[she] had been through bullying issues, but was very keen to continue. Marie gave her initial support, but the year 11s and some yr 9s eventually took over and were very protective of her. Students had trouble with practicalities like forming groups or repeating exercises. This is when I assisted.

(JE)

It was also interesting to note the different reactions from the 11s and the 9s towards each other following the peer-teaching phase. There were many varied reactions from both age groups at the beginning of the peer teaching component until the students began to feel more confident in the peer teaching. The Year 11s made the following observations during their first peer teaching experience at Southside:

It was difficult to get the Year 9s to listen.

(SGSI)

However, they emphasised that they felt quite comfortable in front of the Year 9s. Some students felt that the Year 9s were very keen to start, without really knowing what they were meant to do. One Year 11 group felt that their group was all right. “They [the older students] listened to us” they said. They felt the latent and manifest stages were the best as they would “help us to control things before they get out of hand.” The Year 11s felt the smaller groups were a good idea as “we could concentrate better.” Below are short comments made by various Year 9 students during a group interview at Southside at the beginning of the peer teaching component:

“The Year 11s were a bit bossy.”
“The teachers, “they can control us better”.

90
“The Year 11s helped “us to get up and feel what its like to be in other people’s shoes”.
“We would have preferred more time to prepare!”
“Helped us to understand how others think”.
“If someone bullied me now, I’d talk to them”.
“I get called stuff, but I don’t care”.
“It’s on and off”.
“Jealousy is a big issue for girls”.
“When boys get bullied, it’s about being different’
(SGSI)

My own journal entry (JE) follows through on the observations made about the year 11s’ reluctance and fears before they began peer teaching. I was hoping the confidence of the older students would increase with time and this proved to be true.

I found the year 11s to be more excitable than the year 9s. They joked about the year nines at first before they arrived. One student was concerned that his brother was in the year 9 class. Another girl pretended she would be bullying them! Once the year 9s arrived I saw signs of nervousness on the part of the year 11 students (nail biting, fidgeting, nervous giggles, hiding behind others at the back etc.) This made me realise how difficult it must be even for the older ones to take on the task of mentoring their younger peers. Nevertheless, the rewards must also be overwhelming for them once the barriers are broken. The confidence and self-esteem of the older students must surely increase as a result of this exercise!
(JE)

After several peer teaching experiences when the year 9s had also taught younger students, the year 11s and 9s were interviewed and asked what they felt about the peer teaching component of the project. Mostly, they said their ability to talk to other students at the school had improved and that they felt more confident dealing with each other as a result of the program. Here are some of the students’ comments made during individual student interviews held at Southside during the first year of the action research.

Ken:

It helped me with like talking to people, because I didn’t usually before this talk to people that much and it helped me like deal with kids, their attitudes and stuff like that.
(SISI)
Dave:
It helped us become better friends with the Grade 11s and within our class and with the students at Primary school as well. Just like it’s given us more confidence to speak to younger people and other people.
(SISI)

Ken:
When the Year 11s were teaching us what to do so we could tell the Year 5 students, I thought it was going to be kind of hard because we really didn’t like understand what they were telling us but when we got down there it was a lot easier because we’d gone through it a lot so that helped us help them.
(SISI)

Even the teachers were overwhelmed by the strength of peer teaching and the success it had on their classes once they were able to trust their students to attempt the peer teaching component. Initially, teachers were a bit reluctant to allow their students to lead, but were surprised by the maturity their students displayed.

Marie:
A very positive experience with the yr 11s! Not just some, but all of the students, especially the boys, were engaged. The peer students opened the gates to success. I felt a sense of pride for the little ones. I was very moved by C. and proud of the way she got involved.
(SITI)

Two years later, Marie had learned that the age gap between classes needed to be carefully monitored. We both noticed that it was preferable for the classes to be two years apart, no more and no less. If the classes are too close in age, then there is a sense of competition among the students. If the classes are more than two years apart, it is more difficult (but not impossible) for students to relate. Ideally, having the ages of the students two years apart meant that they could empathise without any communication problems, but there was still enough of an age gap to avoid any sense of rivalry. This was confirmed by the chief investigators of the project during an earlier research project. They discovered that “the program works best with a two or three year age gap between each level of peer teaching” (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. 80).

Although I knew as a result of the experiences from Cooling Conflicts that a larger age gap might not succeed and although I informed Marie what was preferable, I
allowed Marie to make her own decisions about the cross-age peer teaching component knowing that she might learn better if she tried things herself and then evaluated her own strategies afterwards. Oseteman and Kottkamp (cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1994, p. 7) say that “empowerment also includes expanding teachers’ knowledge base and enabling them to be free to reflect, thus enhancing their confidence about influencing how schools and classrooms will operate”. On reflection, both Marie and Gail discovered how best to organise the peer teaching during their individual interview sessions at the school during the first year of the research.

**Marie:**
I know that we targeted Year 5s, I’m just wondering had we been able to work with the Year 7 class. Taking Yr 9s and Year 11s to work with the Year 5s – this is just from a personal perspective – I’m just wondering if the age gap was just too big and the assumptions of our students of what they were capable of doing conceptually.
(SITI)

**Gail:**
[The] peer teaching component was excellent and I would agree with what Marie said – that’s the most evident success of the program and in particular in the case of particular individuals to see the respect that they receive from primary schools kids and how that made them feel in terms of their being a role model – it’s something that you can’t usually manufacture very easily in a school setting, so that is something that made a big difference and I think that improving self-esteem amongst those students should assist with anti-bullying in general, I would say.
(SITI)

Nevertheless, three years later, Marie was still as enthusiastic about peer teaching as she had been at the beginning. In her individual interview at the end of the research project, she continued to discuss positive changes she saw as a result of the program.

**Marie:**
And the other fantastic aspect of it is the strength of peer teaching. What a wonderful, wonderful strategy that is to be able to use students to teach other students.
(SITI)

The primary teacher from one of the feeder schools near Southside SHS also shared Marie’s and Gail’s sentiments about peer teaching. When interviewed individually at
her school at the end of the project, she commented on the fact that the primary
students were more likely to listen to the older students than to the teachers.

Lucy:
Oh, definitely the best of the whole program, the peer teaching.
I knew about three quarters of the high school children. They’d passed through
this school so I knew them and knowing what they were like at primary I
thought they did a very good job. They took it seriously and our children were
more inclined to listen to them than to listen to the adults. No, I thought the
peer system was great.
(SITI)

Johnson and Johnson (1993) and Slavin (1995) found that “from 50–72% of studies
completed showed enhanced student learning when teachers emphasised cooperative
learning techniques in the classroom” (cited in Gabler & Schroeder, 2003, p. 89).
They found that peer-group learning techniques enhanced how deeply students
learned material, how long they remembered it and how effectively they could use
higher cognitive level of reasoning afterwards. They also found that “a number of
these studies show that the use of peer-group techniques enhances student self-
esteem” (p. 89). Overall, the peer teaching component was received well by most of
the students and teachers at Southside.

The Benefits of Drama
The drama component of the program, when handled correctly, proved to be the most
effective and enjoyable learning tool of the program. Even so, if teachers had not
participated in the drama activities themselves prior to the program or if they had little
experience in facilitating such activities, then the drama component could prove to be
problematic for some teachers. My journal entry records some of the observations I
made while at Southside:

I observed an unsettled atmosphere at first due to many changes (room change,
new students, and students absent, late-comers.) Fewer words from their
teacher instructions worked best. Boys are still off track. 50% are disruptive,
whilst other 50% worked well, with 25% of them very enthusiastic and
working unsupervised. Students wrote letters in role- some very interesting
outcomes.
(JE)
 Needless to say, Marie, an experienced drama teacher, found the drama component effective and rewarding. She was able to see the ability to use drama in education as a means of dealing with conflict in schools. And this is something she discussed in her interview at the end of the project.

The *Acting Against Bullying* project was in fact an impetus for our framework for our proactive and preventative intervention strategies. We were able to see firsthand that drama conventions can be used very legitimately to engage students in very meaningful learning about conflict resolution.

(SITI)

Process drama, unlike drama in performance, is not designed to entertain or even to find solutions. It is, at best, a creative and effective tool used to explore social relations and to analyse, empathise with and discuss the feelings, emotions and potential outcomes of human behaviour. When discussing the value of drama in addressing problems of aggression, Bundy found that it was not necessary to directly address situations of anger or conflict, “rather the drama is designed to offer opportunities for the children (or adult clients) to explore a range of ‘ways of being in the world’ and ‘… to explore the construction of identity’” (2000, p. 265). Although the interventions during the forum drama activities were not always successful, the students often learned more from the discussion that followed as these discussions were often about social constructs, peer pressure and school culture. My journal entry outlines some of my observations about these discussions:

The video fully engaged the students. They were very interested in the ‘real people’ who had been affected by the ‘*Cooling Conflicts*’ project. Students commented on the fact that spontaneous bullying doesn’t always follow the three steps. Interventions were not necessarily successful, but conversation and debate that followed was reflective, intelligent and very interesting.

(JE)

Nevertheless, the students clearly enjoyed the drama component the most, while the teachers found it an effective teaching tool even if they were inexperienced in managing it initially. These were some of the comments the students made during group interviews about the drama component of the program:
John:
I liked the … acting. I didn’t like [it] when kids acted smart.
(SGSI)

Ken:
They [the younger students] weren’t scared to get out there and try new things and they liked taking roles of, like other people, and like, helping other kids get into the acting part.
(SGSI)

John:
When the Year 11s were teaching us I was a bit shy, like, too shy to get up there and actually do drama and then after a couple of weeks when we kept on going I just kept on doing it.
(SGSI)

The teachers also saw the benefits of drama. They reinforced what students said during their individual interviews by saying they found the program easy to implement once they know the system:

Gail
[I]thought the drama component…was excellent, but as a non-drama teacher, I’m an English teacher not a drama teacher, I thought the program was quite easy to follow and easy to pick up, but I think that perhaps there needs to be more guidance in the early stages, as Marie has said also, to develop those drama skills and certainly with the relay teachers at primary school – we found that perhaps Year 5 was a little young. We spent a lot of time initially down there just trying to get them to perhaps play a role and concentrate. Often things like that –they weren’t used to doing. They had no prior experience in drama, very much, I wouldn’t think. So perhaps some further development of how we build those drama skills would be something that could be looked at. Other useful activities as I’ve mentioned, – debriefing; Marie has suggested a range of possible activities; I think some writing activities would be appropriate as well as this was conducted through English.
(SITI)

Lucy:
[The drama is] definitely the part that the children enjoyed the most and participated in.
(SITI)

Ironically, Lucy, the primary teacher, felt her class eventually enjoyed the drama component despite her not feeling confident in it initially. Unlike Marie and Gail, Lucy had not contributed to the drama activities during her brief involvement with the
in-service. Had she participated in the drama, it would have been easier for her to teach some basic drama activities to her Year 5 class before the high school students came down to teach them and this would have made the peer teaching transition and the drama facilitation smoother all round.

**Marie:**

The parts that worked very well were the parts, of course, when the teachers were involved in the doing – where we actually experienced the components ourselves, we actually had to role play and participate and I think that is the greatest strength of the drama methodology is that you can experience it and you know exactly what the students will be going through. So I think any in-service program or peer mentoring it is important that the teachers do it themselves.

(SITI)

Overall, the drama component of the program was seen as a positive teaching and learning feature by the teachers and the students as was the peer teaching component.

**The Effects of the Program on Teachers**

As a result of the in-service experience at Southside, a series of changes were made by the *Acting Against Bullying* team that eventually helped me to organise future professional development sessions more successfully. We agreed that from then on we would aim to have the in-services at the university grounds whenever possible. This allowed the teachers to be less distracted, enabled them to concentrate on the program and also allowed the teachers to be away from their own ‘battlefields’, to relax and to feel important. We decided it best to make the in-services whole day procedures, with catered meals as a bonus. Solomon states that “although this may sound trivial in the larger world of teacher redevelopment, teachers frequently commented that catered meals made them feel valued and respected” (1999, p. 134). I then went on to ask myself how to treat the teachers once they were at the in-service.

I learnt from my experience at Southside that the teachers must actually participate in the forum theatre activity themselves in order to fully absorb and understand how it works. In this way, they would also feel confident and empowered to teach their own students further down the track. We felt that if we went through the principles in organising the workshops, we would also be taken more seriously by the teachers.
I also learnt that a larger group of participants was necessary for the in-service if we wanted to achieve something substantial on the day and that if we were going to implement the program successfully in the schools we needed at least three to four teachers from each school. In this way we could imitate the amount of students that are normally in a class and fully prepare the teachers for what was entailed if they wanted to facilitate their classes to participate in the program. We eventually decided that we should undertake an agreement with the principals that there must be a minimum of five teachers attending; the coordinator and at least two key teachers and two relay teachers participating from each school.

In the long run, the preliminary in-service we gave (trial pilot) at Southside SHS proved to be very significant. It provided me with a more practical and successful framework that I would eventually use for following in-services. What emerged from Southside between 2003 and 2005 fitted into the following themes; Bullying concepts, teacher commitment and empowerment, student empowerment, school autonomy, whole school approach, framing the program within a behaviour management policy, funding and/or timetabling, working within the curriculum, the drama and peer-teaching.

**Gail’s Story**
As a result of the trial pilot, I learnt that the teachers generally have a difficult time ‘letting go’ of their students and trusting the students to successfully undertake the peer teaching component of the program without much teacher assistance. Teachers are used to being accountable and therefore think if their students don’t look ‘polished’ that it is a reflection of their own teaching standards. My journal entry elaborates these observations:

I noticed a tendency for the teachers helping me to resist losing ‘control’. As they took a group each, there was a tendency for each of them to guide the talking and to question the students. This was done to help the groups and to assist me and was in no way meant to be counter-productive. Nevertheless, I feel that this exercise would have been more efficient if they had merely listened in to the students’ discussions and only assisted when asked. This leads me to ask these questions;
• Do we as teachers feel the need to guide the students in a certain direction as a result of inherent thoughts of assessment and learning outcomes?

• What can I learn from this when organising in-services for other teachers?
  (JE)

Gail later summed it up clearly for me when she commented during her interview that she was reluctant at first. She was concerned about the standard of the drama element of the program.

  Performance anxiety was an issue at first, but then I got over it.
  Non-drama teachers might be less frustrated than I was.
  (SITI)

When Gail described it as ‘performance anxiety’, she assumed that this problem was more relevant to her and other drama teachers than non-drama teachers. This eventually proved not to be the case as Health and Physical Education teachers at Westside seemed to suffer from the same problem. This suggests that it is important then to separate the process of the drama activity from the formative assessment tasks that are inherent in the curriculum of the subjects utilising the Acting Against Bullying program. This would alleviate the pressure from teachers to create a ‘performance’ per se that matches the assessment criteria, but would still enable teachers to incorporate it into their curriculum subject areas as a form of ‘summative’ assessment.

Gail’s experiences taught me to discuss these strategies during the teacher in-services as suggestions and logistics for incorporating the project in their schools. However, although I did that, I discovered toward the end of the project that teachers still needed more assistance and support from me. They wanted to be given written resources with suggestions, sample units and optional tasks and handouts that could be given to their students. Teachers wanted to be supported not only in facilitating the program, but also in developing the program as part of their curriculum in the form of units and lesson plans. It appears that if schools wish to deal with bullying effectively, someone is needed at the school with the role of assisting teachers with anti-bullying resources and providing on-going support and information on a regular basis. Otherwise, many teachers feel un-adventurous about treading into new waters.
Melenyzer found in her study on models of empowerment in education that empowered teachers were often unable to “transform the social order” and concluded that “empowered teachers have only a limited ‘political’ vision and, in practice, rarely seek to be emancipated from institutional and societal constraints on their work” (cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1994, p. 4). As a result of Gail’s involvement in the trial pilot, Southside asked to be involved with the action research project when it began the following year. However, this time a different group of students and teachers were involved in the project as the year 11s had gone to year 12 and were studying for their final exams and Gail had been promoted to another school. By the time the project was ready to be implemented at Southside, it was June in 2003. I was asked to come out and facilitate an in-service to a small group of teachers from the high school and the neighbouring primary school, Southside South, who were also interested in the project. Here is my journal extract of that in-service:

There was a dismal turnout of two relay teachers from the high school and two relay teachers from the primary school as well as one of the two key (drama) teachers who have done this before. One of the primary relay teachers and one of the high school relay teachers had to go half-way through the in-service and [another drama teacher] came and went as they chose. This frustrated me. I wanted to instill enthusiasm and passion for the project and found it hard to concentrate, let alone feel positive as a result of the rather casual and blasé atmosphere.

Firstly, I couldn’t understand why only one high school relay teacher been formally enlisted. Secondly, it seems only one primary school was asked to participate. Thirdly, Southside were the ones who chose this time to hold the in-service, but they were clearly unprepared as they were in the middle of exams, so that students and teachers were coming and going ad-hoc due to the erratic state of the timetable.

After lunch, there was only one focus teacher and one relay left. Neither of them wanted to do the forum workshop so students were brought in, with the intention of demonstrating the enhanced forum technique. Unfortunately, the students brought in were not familiar with the technique themselves. This means they rest had to be ‘quickly trained’ in order to show the remaining relay teacher it worked.

Marie had seemed seriously interested in making this happen last year, but she is on leave now. Her class was also the most effective last year. My agenda went out the window due to the small and informal nature of the in-service. Needless to say, this was a very unsatisfactory session for me and very
unsatisfying as a drama teacher also. I really wanted to make more of an impact.

(JE)

One of the relay teachers later referred to the lack of experience and confidence shown by the primary teachers, unaware that they had not stayed for the whole in-service and had also avoided doing the forum drama activity. The comment below by Gail (SITI) demonstrates that it was important for teachers to experience the entire program before participating in it with their students.

The in-service that we had here we had them up to the school where they went through a mini-program of what we’d experienced at the workshop but because there were only a few people here I don’t think they were anywhere near as educated about what the program was as we had been but I think it’s preferable that primary school teachers, relay teachers, perhaps go as a group and have an in-service together with the larger group in a larger setting so that they can experience more fully the activities that we participated in to learn about the program itself. I think they kind of got a shorthand version of it from us, in a way.

(SITI)

Marie’s Story

Marie and I collaborated and discussed ideas together initially, but she made up her own mind about what was good for her, her school and her students. Although some things did not work out well initially, the learning that resulted from those experiences was useful and empowered Marie even more to work towards success. Both Marie and I mentioned this in her interview and my journal:

Marie:

The thing we appreciate is you’ve given us our professional space and the other thing that I really appreciate is that you have given us the freedom to actually implement the program to suit our clientele, our teaching style, our resources and our time constraints … I think that has turned out to be a bonus and a highlight of the program- that it is not too rigid that we are seen to be doing it incorrectly … and we appreciate that.

(SITI)

When asked about our role and my role, Marie felt that it was good that professional freedom, space and flexibility were given. It laid the foundation, but it needed to be valued, accessible and to work through the curriculum.

(JE)
The following year I asked Marie where she received the most significant support from and she responded that the new Head of Department and I were the most supportive (Post-program questionnaire, January, 2006). I found that comment rewarding as I had tried very hard to empower Marie by guiding her with whatever knowledge or assistance I could give her, but by also allowing her the right to try other methods, to make mistakes and to reflect on what worked and what didn’t. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) suggest that “empowerment also includes expanding teachers’ knowledge base and enabling them to be free to reflect, thus enhancing their confidence about influencing how schools and classrooms will operate” (cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1994, p. 7).

Teacher empowerment was one of the main issues identified at Southside as a result of the program, along with student empowerment and school autonomy. The benefits of the drama component and the peer teaching component were evident in Southside as in all three case studies. The issue about teachers learning to ‘let go’ of their control over their students came up often during the trial pilot, but teachers said they felt empowered once they did so. At first, they would feel anxious about the peer teaching component, but once they could see that the students were good at this, they found that by letting go of the teaching reigns, not only did their students learn better from each, but they also became more confident when it came to dealing with bullying.

**Gail:**

At the beginning, I felt that they [the students] weren’t cooperating. Once I was reassured how the university was working with them, I felt happy about keeping out of it.

(SITI)

The teachers at Southside also developed a sense of confidence in dealing with bullying once they had finished participating in the program because they were able to utilise the vocabulary in context when dealing with bullies and they were able to see that there was a way of de-escalating the conflict situation before it developed into something more dangerous.

**Marie:**

I had an incident outside one of the blocks here a couple of weeks ago and it
was very interesting that I was able to say ‘well, you’re obviously the bystander’ ‘you’re obviously the victim’. There was a little bit of a ‘kerfuffle’ – these kids were just looking at me like “where is she from?” and it was really nice that I had never approached a situation of conflict like that before, where I was able to actually describe quite coherently what I had just observed – some kid pushing another kid into a wall and I needed to discipline them over it … yes I have applied that. I’d not really used that sort of language before in dealing with students.

(SITI)

Marie’s ability to deal with bullying confidently would eventually spread to her own students because she had participated in the program herself and it had helped her to deal with bullying issues personally. By understanding how the program worked for her, Marie was able to convey her findings enthusiastically and more effectively when teaching it.

Marie:

Well, I mean even the concepts within the process – the latent, emerging and manifest – I suppose that’s not such a big shock but the fact that someone had to define it that way. So I suppose, conceptually I learned things. And I suppose too there is a belief that it can – that intervention can be effective. You tend to assume it’s an ever present thing which really is just going to go on and on, but something like this can have you thinking that perhaps there is an answer to it.

(SITI)

My journal entry refers to the fact that Marie still felt the same way (confident) three years later when surveyed after the research project was finished at Southside. Her confidence to deal with bullying had not declined after the program had finished.

Marie answered ‘yes’ to whether she felt more confident in dealing with bullying among her own students, among other students and at an adult level within the school community as a result of participating in the program.

(JE)

Marie’s contribution to the program was her dedication and commitment to implementing the program into the school policy. Her enthusiasm won the respect of her peers and her principal and this contributed to her confidence in the project as well as her own way of dealing with bullying. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991, p. 77) suggest “in the final analysis it is the actions of the individual that count … since
interaction with others influences what one does, relationships with other teachers is a critical variable."

Bolin (1989) says that teacher empowerment requires investing in the teachers “the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies and the right to exercise professional judgement about the content of the curriculum and means of instruction” (cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1994, p. 3). Marie was invited to be involved with the school’s policy making committee on behaviour management by her principal. Furthermore, I gave her the professional freedom to adapt the Acting Against Bullying program as she saw fit into her own school context. I believe it was this combination of administrative involvement and professional freedom in the project that empowered Marie and assisted in her teaching success and empowerment.

My Role as Observer/ Participant with Southside Teachers

My experiences with Southside teachers helped me to develop my role as a research participant and in this case I became a confident ‘observer as participant’ in the classes. Once the chief investigators were absent, I found the students taking me more seriously as the following journal entry will outline.

John and Bruce are absent. Gail, the student teacher and I are present. The students are more attentive and responsive toward me this time. I was definitely more confident too, despite having locked myself out of my car (three students volunteered to open it for me and they succeeded!). Perhaps it was because I had had enough time to get to know the students and they had begun to get to know me. Perhaps it was due to my two drama gurus not being there and my feeling less nervous. Perhaps the fact that I was in charge meant that I had to be very organised and focused and therefore in control. Perhaps it was all of the aforementioned. One of my colleagues mentioned afterward that perhaps my appearing ‘vulnerable’ and ‘more human’ by locking myself out of the car made the students warm to me.

(JE)

After this episode, I was involved in just about every event that related to the drama classes and bullying in the school. The teachers and students accepted me as part of a team and this was very rewarding for an active participant–researcher as I was able to continue to see developments in the school first hand.
‘Smart Arts Day’ - Maureen was invited to observe and attended the 1st session. Photos and videos were taken of her with the yr 10s, in the three stages, of her teaching the year 8s and then assisting them to perform forum drama techniques.

(Extract from School Newsletter)

At Southside I learned the art of being a good research participant is practicing a combination of autonomy and collaboration with those you are trying to help. Bolin suggests that teacher empowerment requires “investing in teachers the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies and the right to exercise professional judgement about the content of the curriculum and means of instruction” (cited in Blasé & Blasé, 1994, p. 3). I adopted this philosophy by encouraging the teachers at Southside to determine with me what would work best for their school and classes.

The Effects of the Program on the School Community

Southside as a school also became empowered as a result of its autonomy. One of the themes that came up in each school was that they appreciated the program’s flexibility and ability to mould itself to the different school cultures. They also appreciated being given the independence to undertake the program their own ways, in ways that suited their teachers, students, timetables and contexts. Marie commented on this during one of her interviews.

Marie:

I thought it [the project] worked fairly successfully. Of course, the other thing is it’s quite possible, in the way you do it, – we didn’t follow the procedures exactly to the letter, in the sense that we allowed students to develop scenarios in ways that were perhaps more appropriate for them; to discuss things that maybe had happened in the playground when they wanted to act out bullying situations. But I think that maintaining flexibility is also important.

I think one of the strengths of the Acting Against Bullying program, and what we appreciated is that we were given the autonomy to shape the program to suit ourselves. And if future schools wish to use that project they do have that autonomy. Always maintain the integrity of the enhanced forum theatre process, but you have the autonomy to shape it to suit your personnel, your resources, your clientele and I suppose just the whole learning environment in a particular school.

(SITI)
I discovered during my research that “individual teachers and single schools can bring about change without the support of central administrators, but district-wide change will not happen” (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 74). Fullan and Stiegelbauer add that this is because “people are much more unpredictable and difficult to deal with than things [yet] they are also essential for success” (1991, p. 65). By giving the schools some autonomy to mould the program into their own local system, the opportunity is given to teachers to perform independently of any larger administrative constraints that might otherwise hamper success. However, teachers within schools still needed to be supported by the whole school community.

A Whole School Approach

In Southside, the data also indicated that a whole school approach was the most effective way of participating in the Acting Against Bullying project and of dealing with bullying. Gail indicated in her interview that the program was a good experience for the whole school.

Gail:

The project worked well for the whole school. I think that we probably have seen some changes in particular individuals. That could also be part of just a natural maturation process but it seems that certain students who were potential bullies before perhaps have moderated their behaviour somewhat since then. Also there seems to have been a positive spin-off from the connections between the year levels that was established at least with those students involved – and that is something that we could expand if there are any suggestions for improving this across a greater number of students to participate in this program.

(SITI)

When students at Southside asked to state those who supported them in the project the most, 96.3% of them replied ‘other students’, 100% replied that the ‘teachers’ had, 77.8% said the school ‘administration’ supported them and 81.5% stated their families were supportive [see Appendix K for an extract of Southside’s data]. This is an important finding in that it reinforces the message that a whole school community has to be part of the anti-bullying process. Marie pointed to the fact that the school had to have a unified vocabulary.
The whole school generally has a unified vocabulary in which to describe situations and students understand what it is.  
(SITI)

She also added that the whole school had to see the program as part of a whole school anti-bullying curriculum. She added that the whole school was involved in the program this way and that this was very effective.

Marie:
Some conclusions we’ve made; what were the most effective things, the peer teaching, the mentoring model, the community arts anti-bullying parents evening, and having the anti-bullying [policy] embedded into the curriculum and now it’s part of the year eight performing arts [curriculum]. And [it’s important to be] establishing a whole school approach to the bullying.

The whole school approach really, was based on two broad interventions; one that we call a preventative and proactive, which now has made compulsory Acting Against Bullying in Year eight, for all students, through their performing arts. Part of the intervention program is training the Acting Against Bullying tutors from these year levels. We also had some staff in-service, where we spoke at a staff meeting and explained to the staff what is Acting Against Bullying and made them aware of the policies that we have in place at the school, which were part of the responsive interventions. We also, at the same time, thought it was very important that we keep our parents informed…we had a parent evening. That was done also through a barbecue for year eight parents.  
(SITI)

The following year Marie maintained that she had felt supported by the whole school community during the Acting Against Bullying process. When asked if she felt supported by the school, the other teachers, the students, Griffith University and the administration, Marie answered ‘yes’ to all those questions [see Teacher Post Program Questionnaire in Appendix C for an example].

Support for the teacher is very important. Askew in her chapter on aggressive behaviour in boys concluded that “if the strategies to deal with bullying are compartmentalised, they will lack credibility with pupils and staff” (Tattum & Lane, 1989, p. 76). She adds that “equally clearly, support needs to be on-going and institutionalised” (p. 68). I later found out that when a school adopts an overall anti-
bullying policy and the whole school community is trained in the *Acting Against Bullying* program, it is easier for teachers and staff to develop a cultural agreement against bullying and to de-escalate its prevalence. During their participation in the program, 66.7% of students responded that they had seen support and encouragement from the community to increase during their participation in the program. By framing the anti-bullying program within a whole school behaviour management policy, the whole school was informed, involved and aligned.

**Framing the Program within a Behaviour Management Policy**

By framing the *Acting Against Bullying* project within the Behaviour Management Policy of the school, Marie succeeded where many other teachers didn’t. Most importantly, she was willing to change her own previous practices as a result of this involvement, to ‘look outside of the square box’ and to delve into the unknown territory of peer teaching because the project was significantly more important to her than just a classroom exercise. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1994, p. 5) state, “school improvement often requires painful change in teacher practices, which is why their active participation in some form is a prerequisite for commitment to innovation.” Marie reinforces this commitment during one of her interviews:

*Marie:*

The high school and the primary school together… the two schools had a vision to focus on the issue of bullying using the arts as a vehicle for exploration and discovery.

We had set up a reference group at the school…which is a very, very important thing to do…where I set up a committee of the school principal, the deputy, the principal of curriculum, the head of the performing arts department, our guidance officer, our youth nurse, our behaviour specialist and myself, the project manager, and we met a few times in the year. (SITI)

When asked to what extent they agreed that their involvement with the project was a valuable use of time and resources, Marie replied positively and added;

We now have established a school policy framework for anti-bullying and developed a dynamic anti-bullying curriculum unit for all year 8 students which incorporates the *Acting Against Bullying* program. (Post-program questionnaire, January ’06)
Marie was involved with the behaviour management policy of the school and was given a part in formulating that policy by her principal. “If the staff have taken part in making a decision or formulating a policy, they are naturally going to be in favour of it, and more willing to implement it, that if they are simply told what is to be done” (Mackie, 1977, p. 67). Mackie also adds that these decisions actually have to be implemented and acted upon for them to be meaningful. “People become more keenly involved when they are making real decisions than when the meeting is only an academic exercise” (Mackie, 1977, p. 68). Marie was not only asked by her principal to participate in the behaviour management policy making strategies of the school, but she was also asked to act upon it by implementing it in her classes through the *Acting Against Bullying* project. This proved to be an effective strategy as Marie enthusiastically took on the role of anti-bullying lobbyist in her school and successfully implemented the project in her classes, in those of the local primary school and in the local community.

Like their teachers, when students were asked about dealing with bullying in the school, 14.3% suggested the student could encourage those involved in the bullying situation to talk about the problem in a controlled environment by disciplining the bullies through an anti-bullying policy. The students’ suggestion is a valid one and one of the most prominent anti-bullying pioneers would agree. “Adult involvement in counteracting bully/victim problems is an essential general prerequisite to a school-based intervention program, and it is important that the adults do not view bullying as an inevitable part of children’s lives” (Olweus, 1993, p. 67). However, if adults in the school community are to be effective in counteracting bullying, they need to be able to do so within the curriculum and this would require some careful timetable planning.

**The Curriculum and Timetabling**

The logistics of timetabling the peer teaching component to compliment the different year levels was often a concern in Southside. However, Southside managed to obtain funding to develop its anti-bullying message and this enabled the project and participating drama teacher and her students to be taken more seriously and to receive
support from the community. My journal entry and Marie’s interview discuss this matter:

Gail and Marie won a $10,000 grant to apply anti-bullying strategies in their district as a result of their application to ‘Safe Schools’ and because of their past anti-bullying reputation.

(JE)

**Marie:**
We received funding through the *National Safe Schools Framework* to put into place a program that uses drama and the arts to look at the social issue of bullying.

(SITI)

Nevertheless, timetabling still continued to prove a challenge for the high school, not only in trying to link up the different units the classes were studying, but also because of assessment schedules. However, it appears that timetabling was not as much of an issue with the primary school as their schedule is somewhat more flexible and they have the same teacher all day to organise things. The only concern the primary teacher had was there was not enough time allocated to the program in her class and this would have occurred due to the high school’s time constraints. Marie and Gail discussed this in their interviews.

**Marie:**
We already work within very crowded time frames within schools and of course having to add other things to an already busy schedule will always create a few difficulties. I personally didn’t find the logistics overbearing, although I must say senior classes that had their own commitments like assessments and things like that happening, I did find at times that it was difficult to juggle the time allocation that I was able to give the students in class times and I had course work to complete as well and I think that needs to be thought through very future – whether in the future we make the *Acting Against Bullying* Program part of the curriculum for that year level, but in (senior) class when you have other components that have to be covered sometimes I found that there was a bit of tension when juggling time allocations.

(SITI)

**Gail:**
I was able to get down the high school and meet the teachers while the children were at parade. It took a fair bit of time, but not using up my own personal time on it. No I found it good. I didn’t find it unmanageable at all.
Chapter 4

The only negative that I saw out of the whole project was that it was [only] two sessions - that didn’t have any effect on the Grade 6 or what are now Grade 6 children. The ones that didn’t move on are still exactly the same and I’m sure it’s because it was just a ‘two off’ thing. It’s something that has to continue all year and start at the beginning.

(SITI)

Because of the funding, Marie was able to spread the school’s anti-bullying policy to the parents of both schools. However, time constraints continued to slow things down as outlined in my journal following an interview session.

Marie explained that Southside are looking at spreading towards the parents. A year 8 parent welcome barbecue included a short demonstration on *Acting Against Bullying* this year. *The National Safe Schools Framework* funding played a huge impact last year, but there is still little time to include all she wants to. Professional development still includes finding the time. Feels the program needs to be briefer as it can drag if it goes for too long. Later this year they will teach the parents of the year 5s and she will ask me to visit then.

(JE)

Marie referred to this issue during her interview later that month also. Marie and I became collaborators and co-facilitators of the research and program.

Marie:

We’re all feeling it, that its wonderful and we’d love to be able to do these things, but the pressures of time constraints often impede that great progress that you would like to make - and schools are doing lots of things, and I think the time factor is one element that is very, very real…in the sense that we are running out of time.

(SITI)

When developing planning, policy and practice in schools, Hargreaves and Hopkins (1994, p. 22) advise:

We would encourage teachers and school leaders to build a support system within the school that over time fuses development planning into school development and the improvement of classroom practice; examine carefully the school’s ‘management arrangements’ as part of the process of development planning; invest in teams and partnerships within and outside the school and to be willing to take significant risks in doing so.
By obtaining funding and the support of the principal, staff and parents of the school, it became evident that Marie eventually had less trouble organising timetabling, liaising with others schools and linking up with parents and staff at Southside than other teachers in other schools involved in the project had.

**Working within the Curriculum**

In terms of organising the program to fit into the classes, the *Acting Against Bullying* program followed the same principle that the *Cooling Conflicts* program had adopted previously and (O’Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005, p. 79) advised its teachers:

> In secondary school the key class would normally be a year 11 or year 10 Drama class, and the relevant unit [in Queensland] could be Improvisation, Political Theatre or Play building. The program then becomes part of the normal drama curriculum and is taught and assessed just like any other unit. Similarly, if *Cooling Conflicts* is being introduced at the senior level or a primary school, the key class unit of study could be in Health and Physical Education, English, Studies of Society or indeed Drama. In this way the students acquire valuable and relevant skills and knowledge that will flow through into the rest of their studies.

Since I aimed at giving the teachers the autonomy to fit the program into their own school context, I did not interfere after I had advised them of the suggested method for fitting the program into their curriculum. This meant that Marie and Gail, like many other teachers involved in the project, often tried other ways first before realising that the logistics advised were usually the most practical after all.

**Gail**

The in-service training I felt, with the workshop experience we just had, was very practical, excellent. As I previously said, I don’t think it worked as well for the primary school teachers when they had their in-service. They probably need a larger setting in-service. Logistically, it worked fine for me as a Year 9 English teacher – I didn’t have any problem allocating time because I found that in many ways it was a very useful use of time to have the students thinking about participating in drama, thinking about interpersonal relationships things like that, but I know that Marie was often pushed for time and we had to allocate perhaps a less productive time of the week to this so that she didn’t give up too much of her intensive time with Year 11s – for example like Friday afternoon which wasn’t necessarily the best time for this either. So I think that’s an issue, and I think perhaps conducting this over two half days rather than the less time is something we’d look at in the future.

(SITI)
Eventually Marie included the program in her year 8’s ‘Power Punch’ unit, and this made it easier for her to organise the peer teaching and drama components and incorporated the community components into the year 12’s Multi-Arts Practice unit as outlined in my journal.

Marie explained that the yr 8 unit now has a section designated to including *Acting Against Bullying* in it. The unit is called the ‘Power Punch’ unit. The year 8s need to focus on bullying while the year 10s are more into youth issues now. Marie wants *Acting Against Bullying* within the curriculum. The year 12s, as part of their Multi-Arts Practice, now go out to the local primary school and teach the program to the year 5s as part of their community involvement.

(JE)

Marie reinforced the importance of this later during her interview. She emphasized that the program should be implemented within the curriculum to be effective.

**Marie:**

I think if schools are going to do this… it has to be a meaningful and realistic part of the curriculum. Otherwise, teachers will walk. They will say, “Oh another thing to do”.

(SITI)

Later in the year, Marie added another comment on the utilising the curriculum by explaining how she and her primary colleague eventually fitted the program into their class units and how she included the support of the ‘Behaviour Management’ staff at the school.

**Marie:**

The program and resources we used were the *Acting Against Bullying* Program from Griffith University; the ‘Power Punch’ unit is something we developed ourselves; ‘Learning to Live Together’ was the philosophy and program from Southside South Primary School and their framework; ‘Community Arts’ was the unit that we were working on with the year twelve MAP class (multi arts practices), so it made sense to utilise those students in this whole process; our ‘No Blame’ program came from the behaviour support teachers and our student support team. So in fact, we were able to use other personnel in the school, not just the drama personnel because at the same time as implementing the arts program to look at bullying, we were also looking at responsive interventions to behaviour management as well.

(SITI)
By implementing it into the curriculum, the program became more relevant and effective in teaching the students about bullying. When asked if she had noticed any changes in the school culture in relation to bullying as a result of the project, Marie replied ‘yes’, specifically in “the implementation of the *Acting Against Bullying* program in the year 8 arts curriculum (Post-program questionnaire, January, 2006). One way of implementing the program into the curriculum was to install it as part of the drama curriculum.

**Challenges and Solutions**

The students and teachers made interesting and valid suggestions for what they would like to change should they participate in the program in the future. These changes were requested after they had learned things during their participation that they didn’t acknowledge or understand initially. In general, the teachers learned about the management of the program and the students learned about time constraints. “If we constantly remind ourselves that educational change is a *learning experience for the adults involved* (teachers, administrators, parents etc) as well as for children, we will be going a long way in understanding the dynamics of the factors of change” (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 66). Generally, the students agreed during group interviews that they wanted more time and more favourable spaces to participate in the project, to organise the drama component and to do the peer teaching.

**Ken:**

I reckon we could be given more time so that the children can understand a bit more and, um, sort of need more space, because it was kind of cramped where we were and if we got out into bigger space I think the children would come out a bit more.

(SGSI)

**Jill:**

Yeah. I reckon the same. A bit more time when we’re working with the kids and before so we can plan it and when we’re working with the kids we need a bit more time to actually make your play and tell them what they need to do.

(SGSI)

The teachers expressed a desire for more follow-up written resources and theoretical supplements to be given to them in order for them to continue teaching the bullying
components once the peer teaching was over. Teachers often expressed a need for continued classroom support in the way of lesson plans and activities.

**Gail:**

Generally I thought we got good support both within the school and from the University. I think with the outcome of what you’re doing at the moment, there could be some more practical and concrete things written down about how one might approach it. It’s good to have flexibility that every school can do it their own way, but there could be some more things written down about practical strategies to run a session and things like that. (SITI)

**Marie:**

We did a few little getting to know you- exercises and games. I don’t know if other schools do that as a starting point. We felt that that was necessary just to help establish relationships, rather than go in cold and that worked – we implemented that idea when the Year 11s worked with the Year 9s too. That helped cement some of the relationships and students were able to connect a little more easily. So I think there needs to be built in a little pre-program of getting to know you activities rather than just going in cold to the program. (SITI)

**Gail:**

As far as improvements to the program go, a lot of the information that was extended to us was through workshops and I think a lot more of that could be actually written down – what was already known about the background to the bullying project. Perhaps with some written case studies of what’s been the experience in other settings….of the bullying project has been and what outcomes have been observed already.

I also think, as Marie said, that there needs to be more follow up from the program. It seems to have been lost a little up in the air, even though I think the program itself was very successful, I think we could have, for example, had some debriefing sessions with the Year 9s getting them to talk about what they thought about the whole situation of bullying – would probably assist in alleviating some of the bullying programs in schools, making students reflect and probably also make more of a sense of completion of the program for themselves as well. I think now that they are probably wondering what happened to the project; and perhaps also to expand the project to other students within the school (SITI)

The following year, Marie and Gail made similar observations to those made in 2003, but added that, like their students, they would have liked to have put more time into it
and suggested that some sample timelines from other schools might have helped them to organise their own timetables better.

**Marie:**

Generally speaking, I thought the whole thing was fairly successful. If I was to say there was no follow-up, I really don’t know if that was a set component at this stage of the project, but I felt that ... I don’t feel we have any tangible evidence of something that did come out of it. It was more an experiential thing for those students who did participate. I felt that we needed to have, as I mentioned earlier, perhaps a more successful lead-in time, a getting to know you time. I felt the terminology needed to be broken down – we needed to use for the Year 9s ... simple language, and so in fact that’s I suppose a component that needed to be looked at, but generally speaking I can’t say that there was an area that did not work. I thought generally it worked well and its strength was the peer teaching … in the program.

I think time was against us. We only did two sessions. I think we tried to rush too much in the time allocation and if I was to have a criticism of the way that we operated, I really don’t know whether we allocated an appropriate time frame but I would really need to look at that more carefully But of course that also depends on the nature of the students and the classes that you are going to work with as well.

(SITI)

**Gail:**

I think mostly it was highly successful. The program was very well thought out. One area that I think I have mentioned is we could have some written case studies, perhaps. Sometimes when people read about the way things have worked before somewhere else, it might actually assist thinking how they can try to implement something in their own situation. Perhaps with some suggested procedures about how to follow a pattern. I think a lot relied upon just the experience and intuition of the teachers involved and perhaps some suggested timelines.

(SITI)

**Marie:**

I think probably there needs to be development of follow-up modules or activities or something – that relay classes can do once the actual Acting Against Bullying process has been completed with them. Whether they do diary entries, or do storyboards or do cartoons, or making a little film clip about it. I think there needs to be further curriculum activities than can be integrated into the curriculum that they are doing so that the whole thing is not seen as “oh they were doing the bullying program and tomorrow we’re getting on with our normal work”. I think there needs to be that flow on, and if it can be integrated within the curriculum, either in their art work or their writing or whatever.

(SITI)
Gail:
I pretty much think that the primary school teachers are basically looking for something more now. You know, they are looking at it as a real intervention strategy, whereas we saw it as, yes, positive, but something that flows over time. Whereas they were looking, I think, in some ways quite desperately for some answer to the problem every day. Like when we left last week they were saying, like “where do we go from this? Can we follow up on this?” I think they were hoping for some spin-off that would be tangible.
(SITI)

Gail and Marie learned through experience and reflection. Fullan and Steigelbauer suggest that, “people often become clearer about their needs only when they start doing things, that is, during implementation itself” (1991, p. 69). Although I had given out a suggested time line and basic resources to help the teachers out, it was evident that this was no use to them initially. The teachers had to see what was entailed before they could make sense of that information and also they wanted to hear what worked for other ‘real’ teachers in other schools more than a theoretical suggestion. This was difficult to achieve at Southside as they were the first school that had participated in this program in Queensland. Towards the end of the project, I found myself struggling to obtain sample units from participating teachers and schools as they were often busy or unsure about sharing their units. My aim is to develop some sample units and lessons in future to give out to schools.

Southside in Summary
Southside was the best learning experience for me as a research participant as the learning experiences I had at this school during the trial pilot influenced how I implemented the program in other schools later on. I learned about the management of in-services and the best way to facilitate the empowerment of teachers. In-services for teachers are best held outside of the school grounds, so that the teachers can be made to feel important enough to be catered for and relaxed enough to leave their concerns aside for one day. I also realised that the teachers must participate in the drama activity themselves if they are going to facilitate their students peer teaching the forum exercise in their schools.

In order to genuinely empower teachers, I discovered that teachers must be allowed to take risks and make mistakes, just as teachers do in a drama class with our own
students. On the one hand I needed to be there for the teachers, providing them with information, advice and as many resources as possible. On the other hand, I had to allow the teachers the professional freedom to adjust the program to suit their own needs and context and to enable them to experiment with their own ideas. In this way, the project became a learning experience for the teachers as well as the students, which led to the teachers feeling more confident in the long run as they could take ownership for their own learning about conflict management.

Furthermore, the schools need to look at ways of dealing with bullying inside the curriculum. Teachers need to analyse their work programs and check to see where they can implement an anti-bullying unit relevantly and efficiently if they wish to be successful in engaging their own students in this topic. Otherwise, they are doing extra work and the students are not finding a connection with the program and their everyday learning. Marie and Gail succeeded because they were able to try their own methods, learn from their mistakes, implement the program into their own units and attach the program to their overall school policy on behaviour management.

Despite the amount of work a teacher puts into dealing with bullying, success is only likely if the whole school adopts the same policy and supports the teachers in their mission to abolish bullying. This requires a cultural shift from the school, an overall stance that is outside the normal attitude that bullying is just part of growing up. Research has found that when a school wants to create an anti-bullying initiative, a whole school approach produces the best results.

**CASE STUDY TWO: WESTSIDE**

**Introduction**

At Westside State High School a number of changes occurred during the Acting Against Bullying Program. Many of the key participating teachers were transferred to other schools during the first year of the program and this meant the project had to be re-promoted to the new teacher replacements. This held the program back slightly in terms of the anti-bullying progress in the school. However, despite this slight setback, the data at Westside identified significant development in teacher confidence and
student empowerment when dealing with bullying as a result of participation in the program. Three significant key categories of data emerged from Westside; the effect of the program on the students, the effect of the program on the teachers and the effect of the program on the whole school.

The Effects of the Program on Students
The data at Westside also demonstrated three main areas of significance when it came to the effect the program had on students; an increase in various aspects of bullying literacy, benefits gained from the peer teaching component of the program and increased confidence gained from the drama component of the program.

Bullying Literacy
The students at Westside demonstrated an overall improvement in their bullying literacy by the end of their participation in the *Acting Against Bullying* program. The data indicated that on completion of the program the students were more familiar with the subtle and insidious forms of bullying, the power of the bystander and a greater understanding of why people become bullies. Overall, they developed greater understanding of the ways bullying could be dealt with in schools.

Increased Understanding about Bullying
At the very beginning of the *Acting Against Bullying* program at Westside in 2003, year 12 students were asked what they believed was the definition of bullying. The data indicates that whilst the students had shown some understanding of the general types of bullying at the beginning of the program, once the program was completed the students had become far more proficient at giving more detailed and often more sophisticated definitions and explanations for bullying. The following interviews with students demonstrated their understanding of bullying:

**Penny:**
It could be continuous, unwanted harassment and then there’re so many different areas – physical, emotional, anything that can make a person feel less of a person than they actually are. I think the main key is that it is continuous. (WISI)
Quincy:
{I think it is} just the repetitive action that someone does to aggravate and annoy the other person, to make them feel bad or decrease their popularity. (WISI)

When asked about the people involved in a bullying situation, students’ answers were perceptive and even extended beyond the school setting. Students demonstrated a deeper understanding of what motivates bullies after participating in the program.

Quincy:
Most of the people that do bully… sometimes they’re like they want to be like the person they’re bullying. They find them a threat to their power. (WISI)

From these transcriptions it can be seen that the students had clear and valid ideas about what bullying was by the time they had finished their participation in the program. The students had evidently also learnt how relationships and social skills related to bullying by the time they had finished participating in the project. They learnt that relationships are often about power and that bullying is about an imbalance of power that is often abused due to insecurity or feelings of inadequacy in the bully.

Penny:
I think it’s got a lot to do with the background they come from. Like family-wise as well. So a lot of people who might have troubles at home … might do that to feel power within the school because they don’t feel power, or wanted, at home … I think they [bullies] might have a lower self-esteem. They just need something to feel superior and feel better about their selves. (WISI)

These interview transcripts reveal that, although students at Westside had had some understanding of the definition of bullying before their participation in the program, they had become more aware of the complex reasons that bullying occurred after participating in the Acting Against Bullying program. The program enabled the students to understand the subtleties of bullying that are often difficult to observe unless you are the victim. By experiencing the various scenarios and roles in bullying through the drama in the program, students developed a deeper awareness of the
details and complex facets of bullying and became more confident at verbalising them.

It is interesting to note that the students at Westside implied that they did not see bullying as a big issue or even ‘a bad thing’ before they participated in the program. However, following their involvement in the program, the data indicates the students were less tolerant of anything that appeared like bullying or looked like turning into bullying. The students demonstrated an increased awareness of the bully’s own ignorance or inability to deal with conflict and they indicated in the interviews that they understood the problem was worse in the junior grades.

**Penny:**
I would say that I have definitely noticed it a bit more- only because you tend to look at it as a lower standard [of behaviour]. I don’t know about the other two, but you tend to think “okay but what’s that going to lead to?” so you try to stop it at that level before it blows up in their face or anything.
(WISI)

Students were asked during a group interview if they thought that the person doing the bullying has to have the intention to make the other person feel less in order for it to be classified as bullying.

**Quincy:**
They don’t know how far they’re pushing it, so they’re not aware that the other person is really, really upset about it and so that person should confront that person and tell them what’s happening and sort it out.
(WGSI)

**Rae:**
The way we’ve taught the Year 8s is to be polite and not get up into the face of the bully. They’ve got to stand like equal, like it’s all about the power so with constant bullying and harassment, they need to learn to deal with the power issues, like stay on the same level.
(WGSI)

When students were asked why they thought people become bullies, their replies indicated they had learnt about bullies through participating in the program. Some of the replies were as follows;
Rae:
Most of the time, just by working with the Year 8s, I noticed it was because their parents or their family had bullied them and they feel they are at a lower standard, but when they get to school they feel like they have the power because they’re taking it out on the other kids.
(WGSI)

Quincy:
It’s just mainly about power and making themselves feel better – not thinking about others.
(WGSI)

Penny:
I think the main key, definitely, is power, but then there’s so many different offsets from it – popularity, peer[s] – they might not know anything else except how to react to that particular situation by bullying.
(WGSI)

Overall, the students interviewed admitted to being less tolerant of bullying following their involvement in the program. They also indicated an understanding of the bullies and a willingness to help them also.

Penny:
That frustrates me. Like it may be something simple like they want to be popular and show off to their friends, but it could go deeper into their emotions and they might be being abused at home and I think that’s why I get frustrated because I can’t help that person.
(WISI)

These students also demonstrated an ability to understand what makes a bully the way they are and what motivates them to target someone. They also showed an understanding of what makes someone a potential target to be bullied.

Rae:
I think it’s body language and confidence, like, within themselves. Because like the bullies are going to target someone who is ‘ kinda’ always alone so they don’t maybe have as many friends as other people, so, like, their body language doesn’t give off any confidence.
(WGSI)
Quincy:  
Like most of those people who are by themselves are usually quite smart and they just can’t handle that a person who isn’t popular may be better than them at something… the person they bully may be smarter at something else, but they can’t do anything to stop them because they’ve got no support group. 
(WGSI)

Penny:  
I think that people are bullied just because they have something different. They might look different – then you’ve got your racism – they might be smarter and there might be that jealousy relationship within that. 
(WGSI)

The data from Westside indicated that the students were better informed about the reasons why some people bully and why some people are bullied after participating in the Acting Against Bullying program. The students interviewed demonstrated that they were more aware of the nuances and subtleties of bullying that are not always evident by students. They also demonstrated an ability to see bullying situations while at the latent stage and the ability to find a way of de-escalating the tension by dealing with it outside of the conflict through calm communication. The students also indicated during group interviews that they were now more confident in intervening if they were to see a bullying situation in their school.

Quincy:  
Once – a boy who was in one of our classes, I talked to him outside of the class and he told what we did to all of his friends so they’re not doing it now. He told them about everything. So that was good. He used that information. 
(WGSI)

Rae:  
There was a boy in Year 8, he was in my class…and he was picking on one of the girls in his class and I had a talk to both of them and we just went over just ‘how do you think she would feel’ and ‘how would you think he would feel’ and that … and actually, like, they’re becoming friends now. They talk to each other and [have] gotten to know each other and it has worked out. 
(WGSI)

Furthermore, the students at Westside indicated a greater capacity for dealing with bullying themselves as a result of participating in the Acting Against Bullying program. The findings from the data at Westside also indicated that the students felt that bullying cannot be totally stopped, but that it can be prevented or de-escalated.
once it has begun. The students also felt the parents needed to be educated about bullying as they were their main role models and that bullying in schools is best dealt with by the teachers.

**Quincy:**
I think they’ll never stop bullying at all, but just de-escalate it by just having groups people can go to or telling them what to do if they are in that situation like walk away is better than listening to what they have to say about you.
(WGSI)

**Rae:**
It’s going to be, like, it’s a matter of cutting off at the latent stage. Like you can see it starting to happen so you have to cut it off there, like. More of a preventative thing – you’re ever going to stop it because people don’t know any other way.
(WGSI)

**Penny:**
I don’t think it’s ever going to stop because I don’t think enough people know about the effects and a lot of bullies don’t know they’re actually doing it. So I think that these innovative programs that are introduced will help prevent and reduce it but I don’t think it can be stopped altogether. I think we just have to expand people’s knowledge about the topic.
(WGSI)

When asked how you can reduce bullying, students’ replies varied during individual interviews. Students mentioned seeking help from parents as well as being good role models.

**Quincy:**
Be familiar and know what happens and what you can do. You just know the signs of bullying.
(WISI)

**Rae:**
I think also it’s got to do with the parents. The parents have to put in an effort to teach their kids the right way to do things and that way it’ll start up from a really young age.
(WISI)

**Penny:**
I think everyone needs to know a bit about it and every family should reinforce that no-one deserves to be bullied because everyone is going to be a role model to everyone else.
(WISI)
The students at Westside agreed that bullying could be de-escalated by everyone in the school community being more aware and pro-active about an anti-bullying attitude, including the teachers and parents. Although some students at Westside claimed they were not bullied at school, many of the participants did admit to being bullied elsewhere. They implied they were more aware and confident now as a result of participating in the project and Rae elaborated on how she now deals with her sister calmly, to the point that her sister has stopped ‘bashing’ her. Furthermore, the students said they intervened a little more than they used to, they agreed that it was not common, and therefore interference differed.

**Penny:**
I actually took what I learnt and had gone home and I have two younger brothers, ones 8 and one’s 10 and at that age you’re always at each other’s throats. You know homework’s due … who needs the computer and stuff like that. You tend to notice it a bit more. Like where could that lead to? (WISI)

**Quincy:**
That happens to me. I’ve got two older brothers. I still get bullied a lot and told what to do and when to do it, when they’re home, and so it’s always… (WISI)

One student indicated during her individual interview that she had become more confident as a result of her participation in the program. She admitted that her sister bullies her, but that she is better at handling it now after her involvement in the program.

**Rae:**
I just talk my way out of it pretty much so I can twist my words around so she gets confused and it just stops. I used just to get bashed. But now I can get her thinking about what she’s feeling and she just gets all confused and she just stops. It feels great. I don’t come to school with bruises! (WISI)

Many of the students indicated their own attitude about bullying in general had changed after participating in the program. When interviewed together, Penny and Rae indicated they were less tolerant of bullies and more likely to intervene after participating in the program.
Penny:
I think because we have more of an understanding of what maybe each person is going through in a bullying situation, that we tend to change our attitudes towards it – that it’s definitely not acceptable and that instead of it not being our business, if someone is being bullied then we do have a right to intervene and say ‘don’t do it’ because no-one deserves to be bullied.
(WGSI)

Rae:
I’ve learnt that you’ve got to treat everyone like ‘kinda’ equal – you’ve got to talk to them, be calm with them, like talk it through, help them through it … I’ve always felt as though everyone needs help and it is more along the lines of I know what to do now whereas before I was pretty much a bystander because I didn’t know how to help them, what to say to them, to help them get through it.
(WGSI)

The students at Westside indicated during their interviews that they were also more aware of how bullying occurred outside the school and in their home turf. They indicated that they were more proficient at controlling their own bullying and dealing with bullying from members of their families after their participation in their program.

The Power of the Bystander
Whilst the bystander was not seen as a major participant in bullying by the students before the program was implemented in their school, following their participation in the program, Westside students had acknowledged the concept that the bystander had some power to change the bullying situation.

In the Acting Against Bullying program, students and teachers were taught through role play that the bystander does have the power to change things. When asked in a questionnaire one term after the project who they thought was the person most likely to change a bullying situation how they thought they would do this the Westside students responded with 56.5% of students identifying the bystanders (or ‘friends of bully or bullied’) as those most likely to change a bullying situation. Of those students, 31% believed the bystanders could do this by approaching the bully and encouraging them to walk away, or telling them that the victim ‘wasn’t worth it’ etc., 19% said the bystanders could stand up to the bully and defend the bullied students, a further 19% said that the bystanders could go and find a teacher and 10.5% of students believed the bystanders could resolve the situation by mediating between
both the bully and the bullied to find a solution to the problem [see Appendix B, question E2 for an example].

These results are markedly different from the results obtained by Johnson and Rigby in their 2006 study, that found that “primary school students were generally more likely to directly help the victim; secondary students to ignore the bullying” (p. 4). The Johnson and Rigby study also revealed that only 28% of secondary students would support the victim in a verbal bullying scenario and 30% in a physical bullying scenario. These figures are significantly lower than the 56.5% of Westside secondary students who indicated that bystanders could intervene to change the bullying situation after participating in the Acting Against Bullying program.

Clearly, students at Westside developed an awareness of the power of the bystander following their participation in the program. When Westside students were asked if in the Post Questionnaires [see Appendix B for example] and how they thought differently towards any people in bullying situations as a result of participating in the Acting Against Bullying program, 36% of students said they were more aware of the power that a bystander has to change a bullying situation and 27% said they now understood that all parties (bully, bullied, bystander) play a role in preventing or stopping bullying and that there is always more than one perspective of a bullying situation.

This was an important finding because before their participation in the program students had little if any idea that the bystander had any powers and had felt that the bully was a permanent label given to a person who was always responsible for the bullying. During the forum theatre experience students learned that ‘the bully’, ‘the bystander’ and ‘the bullied’ all play a part in the bullying scenario and that all parts are interchangeable at any time. Teachers were also taught this as part of their professional development in order to assist them in allowing bullies to step out of that role and to avoid permanent labeling from the school. The findings from Westside indicate that the teachers had not only embraced this notion, but that they had also passed it on to their students successfully.
The power of the bystander to deal with bullying was an integral component of the attitude shift that occurred as a result of the program and emerged in many of the conversations during interviews with the students. The student comments below made during individual interviews demonstrate a sophisticated ability to see the responsibility bystanders have to act.

**Quincy:**
All bystanders aren’t innocent … they don’t want to be involved even though they should be involved to try and help.
(WISI)

**Penny:**
I realised that there are normally bystanders because a lot of the time bullying isn’t just a one person thing … the only reason the main perpetrator will bully is because he/she has a bunch of friends to back them up.
(WISI)

**Rae:**
I think that most people think that it’s none of their business. They should just keep out of it, like. But through the program we learnt that you can help other people. That it’s good to step in and help and try to sort it out, like help them sort it out.
(WISI)

When asked what they thought of the role of the bystander, all of the students interviewed were in agreement that after participating in the program they felt the bystander had a moral duty to do something to help someone being bullied. The students indicated they would no longer just walk away or do nothing.

**Quincy:**
You can’t really just say ‘oh that’s happening’ and just walk away, they [the bystanders] should do something.
(WISI)

**Penny:**
You might be going along and you might see something happening and you might just go up and say “guys just cool it down a notch”. I’ve had one instance where a girl came up to me and said “I’m not sure what to do.” I said “Would you remember how we learnt it and … what do you think you should do?” and she says “I think I should tell someone” and so she did.
(WISI)
In all, the data from the student questionnaires at Westside indicated that the role of the bystander was seen as an integral one for dealing with bullying in schools. This finding is also confined by international research in the field. It has been reported in Canadian studies that bullying typically takes place in schools in the presence of student bystanders. Teachers are rarely present and are generally never told about what has happened. Although bystanders sometimes speak out to discourage the bullying, the most common response is to ignore what is going on and the bullying simply continues. When a bystander actually does object, it has been reported that on 57% of occasions the bullying actually stops (Hawkins, Pepler, & Craig, 2001, pp. 512–517). By acknowledging the power of the bystander in stopping the bullying, the students at Westside demonstrated an awareness of the dynamics of bullying and also revealed their sense of empowerment in knowing how to address bullying.

**An Understanding of the Bully**

An interesting attitude shift toward the bully was also indicated by the data at Westside. While students originally felt very negative towards bullies, by the end of their participation in the *Acting Against Bullying* program, a more balanced approach towards bullies was observed. During their participation in the enhanced forum theatre component of the program, students were given the opportunity to intervene in a bullying situation and to nominate a possible manner in which to de-escalate the bullying conflict. The students learnt to consider the different methods that might be applied and to think about who might be the best person to change the outcome. During the activities, students often nominated a teacher as the person most empowered to change the outcome if the bystander sought help. When asked who might be the person to help change a bullying situation, 14% of the students identified parents and teachers as those most likely to change a bullying situation. Interestingly, of those respondents, 42% felt that punishment (such as suspension or detentions) was the most effective means for teachers and parent to use to stop the bullying. The large percentage of students keen on punishment demonstrates a consistent hostility among the students toward the bullies in their schools [see Appendix B for example of questionnaire].

However, by the end of the program the students at Westside demonstrated a change in attitude. From the same cohort surveyed at the beginning of the program, 27% of
those students said after the program they understood that often when a person is
bullying someone else it is due to the bully’s insecurities or other issues that they may
be suffering from, as opposed to anything directly related to the bullied person. This is
consistent with a study by O’Moore on bullying in Britain and Ireland (Roland &
Munthe, 1989, p. 2):

In growing up these children have often felt insecure, humiliated, inadequate,
been bullied by parents or siblings, have been made the scapegoat of the
family, been physically, emotionally or sexually abused, not been allowed to
show feelings, been subjected to enormous pressure to succeed, felt no sense
of accomplishment … Bullying behaviour is difficult to change because the
underlying motive is often self-hatred brought on by years of being made to
feel small and inadequate.

Students at Westside who had been bullies in the past also expressed a change in their
own attitude towards victims of bullying, with 9% saying after the program they could
see the damage that bullying has on their victims. Again, this understanding is
consistent with the evidence. Rigby states that “children who are bullied have higher
levels of stress, anxiety, depression, illness and suicidal ideation “(cited in Morrison,

This data suggests that students who are bullied and students who do the bullying are
both negatively affected by bullying incidents. The Acting Against Bullying program
enables students to see this by empathising with both roles and by providing
opportunities to discuss the motivations and effects of bullying.

The Benefits of Peer Teaching
The peer teaching component was an integral part of the Acting Against Bullying
program. By peer teaching the younger students in small groups, the older students
become mentors and buddies to the younger students and were able to become experts
in the process. General support and verbal advice were the main things that the
students felt they could give other students as a result of the peer teaching component
of the program. Without necessarily intervening, they felt that they could show others
students that it was not okay to bully by being vocal when seeing someone bullied.
Quincy:
I’d personally ask them why they did it and find out why – the person being bullied – like do they know if they’ve done anything that aggravated that person and just tell them it’s alright. You can speak about it. Don’t just hide. Tell them it’s okay to speak out, to get help. 
(WISI)

Rae:
I don’t know that I’d give them so much advice as to just be there for them, just help them through it by encouraging them to get support groups of teachers and just to confront the person and stuff like that. 
(WISI)

Penny:
Support them. Tell them that it’s okay to stand up and possibly go through the steps that if they have done anything wrong maybe try to find the reason why they are being bullied and go from there and tell them that no-one should be bullied because no-one has the right to bully a person, it’s not just acceptable. They need to be confident in the confrontation itself. 
(WISI)

All of the students interviewed said they felt they could help the younger students through the peer teaching component of the program and that they would feel confident in intervening as a bystander if faced with a bullying scenario as a result of their participation with the younger students.

The Benefits for Older Students
Brenda, one of the key teachers made a reference to the benefits of peer teaching in her feedback by outlining how allowing her students to teach the younger ones had helped them with their overall confidence. However, due to the fact that she was resistant to our input on occasions, I was unable to advise her that two kids to a whole class is not a very advisable ratio for peer teaching. Our program advised a ratio of two students per small group of six to eight students so that the peer teachers had more control of the younger students and felt less intimidated by the prospect of teaching them. One of the teachers commented on this during her individual interview.

Brenda:
[The project] gave them confidence … in their own ability … and also they internalised the content a lot more because they were teaching it, because they
knew that, you know, for the first time they were being taught with the vision that they were then going to be the teachers … and the way I set it up which was two kids per class to allow the Grade 8s to get taught, was fairly different from what your structure is. I had to weigh that up against not having the Grade 8s taught. I think the Grade 8s, what they really loved was the fun aspect. They really loved doing the plays; they really loved getting involved and wanted to do that.

(WITI)

When students are given advice on organisation and control before the peer teaching and when they are able to teach in small groups, they usually enjoy the role of leadership that is given to them and are better able to take command of the younger students. It was important for teachers to follow the parameters outlined by the program in order for the peer teaching to be successful.

**The Benefits for Younger Students**

There was a general attitude shift visible from the younger students when they were peer taught by the year 11s and told that the older students would be assessed. It seems that the younger students were more respectful toward the older students when taught by them and not by another adult teacher. This respect progressed to the playground where an unofficial buddy relationship seemed to develop between the peer teachers and those students being taught by them. Students commented on this during their individual interviews quite early in the program.

**Sandy:**

It changed straight after that lesson, as soon as Penny told them it was for our assessment and we’d be upset if they held us back.

(WISI)

**Penny:**

They were actually really supportive – we just stood up the front and said to them that ‘look guys we’re not on a power trip or anything. This is just our assessment and we just need the best input from you in order for us to do well in ours. They were really good.

(WISI)

**Rae:**

I found that they responded really well to us because I think they respected them a bit more because we weren’t the teacher figure or – and we weren’t trying to stand over them all the time. Letting them speak and just helping them out – and they really respected that we treated them as an equal.

(WISI)
Teachers and students commented that some of the students developed a form of humorous camaraderie in the playground as a result of their participation and collaboration in the program which wasn’t apparent before the program. They indicated the peer relationship developed from the program into a kind of default buddy relationship outside of the classroom.

**Sandy:**
We’d joke around with them on our own level.
(WISI)

**Rae:**
I found that the kids in my class would come up and they’d be joking around with me at lunch time and I’d have to walk pass them to get to my form and they’d joke around with me and stuff.
(WISI)

The feedback from the students demonstrated that the year 11s had clearly shown great success in their peer teaching of the year 8s. The observations made during the peer teaching are also noteworthy here. One of my colleagues recorded her own notes while observing the peer teaching and noticed although a ‘very vigorous and rowdy year 8 class’ earlier in the year, the younger students had posed some provoking questions to the person in role as the bully during hot seating sessions. One student had asked, “Don’t you think it’s a bit sad that this is what you have to do for entertainment?” while another student asked “How does bullying work for the future?” to which the student in role as the bully replied, “It’s not about the future. It’s about now and it keeps me popular”. Not only had the younger students displayed great skills at dealing with bullying through thought provoking questions, our colleague commented that ‘de-escalating the tension worked well with the changing of roles between bystanders … this interchange altered the dynamics realistically between bystanders and bully’ [see Appendix H for an example of a Westside teacher’s journal entry].

The class had also decided that rather than use the word ‘magic’ to identify that something wasn’t working they would prefer to use the word ‘bull’. Clearly, although they were loud and boisterous, the peer teaching and drama had successfully combined to allow the students to deal with bullying issues constructively and in their own way. One month later, our research assistant returned to interview some more
year 11 students, and two year 8 students. These interviews were brief and informal as a result of some timetable changes, but their responses were still interesting and worth noting. When asked what they felt was the most interesting or valuable part of the project, most of the students felt it was the peer teaching or the drama.

**Terry:**
You know now ways to help resolve issues [in order to] to make things better at school.
(WISI)

**Ulu:**
Going to the younger students and helping them out … with their own conflicts. When we taught it to someone else, then we understood more.
(WISI)

One student in year 8 said that he preferred the peer teaching system to standard teaching. He admitted he preferred learning from his peers than from teachers.

**Vivian:**
They [the year 11s] were probably helping us more with the bullying stages instead of the teachers.
(WISI)

Another group of year 8 students felt that the peer teaching combined with the drama was a more fun way to learn.

**Warren:**
Just not sitting down and learning about bullying off the board.
(WISI)

**Ali:**
I used to look at it my way and not everyone else’s which has changed a lot.
(WISI)

**Yani:**
Now everybody in the group’s getting good at watching for everybody and things like that.
(WISI)

Although these interviews were more informal and brief, the students’ responses were similar to those of students who had been interviewed eighteen months earlier. In the
end, cross age peer teaching led to a form of mentoring and default buddy system that expanded beyond the classroom.

**The Benefits of Drama**

Both students and teachers identified the benefits of the drama component in the program. Drama was seen as an engaging and fun way to teach and learn. Also drama was a way that students could gain confidence to deal with bullying in a safe space.

**Drama as an Engaging Way to Learn**

Both the peer teaching and the drama components helped teachers and students become more confident and empowered to become leaders during the program. Despite some initial concerns over the drama component of the program due to the fact that they weren’t drama trained teachers, the key teachers eventually softened to the benefits of its use in creating empathy among students. Overall, the year 11s being interviewed as a group said they found the drama a fun way to deal with bullying.

**Penny:**
I just loved it. I loved teaching the kids and I just loved the feeling that I was helping them in some way and possibly helping the community.
(WGSI)

**Quincy:**
It’s great to feel that you make a difference to the way that they look at different aspects of schooling.
(WGSI)

**Rae:**
It was good too to make it fun for them to learn. Not too boring for them.
(WGSI)

Some other Westside students were interviewed after their participation in the project one year later. It is important to note here that during and after the drama activities, the discussions on the bullying situations that occurred often indicated that those who bullied others were now more aware that what they were doing was actually very harmful. Prior to their involvement in the project the students had had no idea how detrimental the effects of their bullying had been on others. By placing themselves in
others’ roles they had been able to empathise with the bullied in a way they had never had the opportunity to do so before.

Corisini and Wedding believe that drama is the perfect tool for allowing participants to empathise with others. Drama was selected as the primary medium for communicating the anti-bullying message to students because according to social learning theory, students can acquire new knowledge and skills by observing other students and events without directly engaging in the behaviour themselves and without any direct consequences to themselves (cited in Beale & Scott, 2001, p. 302).

Drama allows students to explore bullying and other social behaviours safely. Lefkowitz et al. 1977 found that “children who experienced a lack of popularity and leadership opportunity we more likely to learn to respond aggressively as adults” (cited in Bundy, 2000, p. 265) and “anecdotal evidence regarding youth theatre involvement suggests that involvement in play-making processes offers opportunities for participants to experience popularity and leadership which might not normally be available to them” (Bundy, 2000, p. 265).

Whilst many teachers, students and parents may have been initially skeptical about the power of drama to affect bullying, they did however, agree that their responses to bullying changed after participating in the project. When the students were asked whose level of support changed during the course of the program, 42% of the respondents said that change in support came from their fellow students, 12% said the change in support came from their families and another 12% said the change occurred in their teachers.

The drama component of the program provides students with a vehicle for examining the various roles and facets of bullying in a safe and non-threatening manner. For this reason, most students are more likely to be engaged in the activity and more likely to learn from it. When the activity is also held in a fun and yet sensitive way, students engage and learn more readily. By the end of their participation in the program, it is common for most students to say they have increased their support for the bullied students.
Erica, the first key teacher, made it very clear that she enjoyed the drama and that her students not only enjoyed it, but saw the benefits of it for exploring bullying and developing confidence. She added that exploring bullying ‘in role’ was empowering.

**Erica:**
I think that they enjoyed exploring bullying and solving it under an alias. I know some of them had experienced bullying. So I know it was empowering for them and also solving it. The ‘magic’ idea was very good. Like I went in and said “I’d do this” and they said “no … [a] bully’s not that confident. They wouldn’t stand up to … a group of people. So they were very good at determining whether or not the solutions were appropriate for students.
(WITI)

Although Brenda, the replacement key teacher, initially expressed reservations with the drama component, she also added during her final interview that she and her students had seen its benefits and were keen to keep developing its inclusion in Health.

**Brenda:**
We’re not Drama … a bit challenged by that, but I found as a teacher, Bob was good to work with. And it became easy to understand and I think we’re all talking the same language now and we thought a barrier would be that the kids would find things like ‘latent’ and ‘manifest’ and ‘emerging’ just terms they just couldn’t deal with, but they seem to be able to understand it really easily.
(WITI)

Teachers were often initially suspicious of the drama component, fearing judgment and ridicule if they were not seen as proficient directors and if their students were not seen as successful performers. Eventually, they grew accustomed to the concept of educational drama and the benefits of learning through role playing. Process drama basically focuses on the process of developing the drama and the educational benefits obtained from this exercise with less emphasis on the polished performance factor. Once teachers and students understand this concept, they become more confident at exploring issues and emotions and less self-conscious about how they appear to an audience.
**Drama Increased Student Confidence**

Erica’s students were a striking example of confidence gained from drama as they were HPE students who had not studied Drama before. They displayed maturity during the in-service that I gave the Westside staff. While Erica was at a camp, she enlisted her students to talk to the staff that I was training and to role play in front of them. During this session, the teachers asked them a series of questions and the students answered them confidently, eloquently and independently without notes or rehearsals. The students discussed how they were now more confident talking to the younger students they had peer taught while in the playground and they were able to give advice to other students about bullying and apply their newly acquired skills at home. The teachers were notably impressed by the students and were inspired to allow their own classes to be involved in the project after that in-service because they could see the increase in the students’ confidence and empathy as a result of the program.

**Erica:**

Side issues that would benefit that may not have been targeted specifically with bullying are self-confidence, leadership skills, being a positive role model for the junior school, establishing relationships with the Grade 8s. They also led an in-service for staff which was very empowering for them to be experts and answer questions from other teachers, which really raised their confidence, which I’ve noticed big changes with some of the students.

(WITI)

Erica was also asked if there were any signs of buddies forming at Westside that she could see. She indicated that the older students were more likely to look out for the younger students as a result of the program’s peer teaching component.

**Erica:**

Yes, especially [with] the Grade 11s. We already have a buddy program so they already are working with some Grade 8 classes. I think it establishes relationships with Grade 11s and Grade 8s, and some of them have said to me some kids have seen me at lunchtime and offered some advice, like saying this is happening – so I think it opens up a channel of communication to kids actually, not to disclose to teachers, because as they know with bullying it could get worse.

(WITI)

Wanda was a year 11 student who was familiar with the year 8s. She also alluded to the fact that although she wasn’t that confident to begin with, but her ability to relate
and to speak in front of the younger students increased during the program as well as her overall confidence.

**Wanda:**
I really enjoyed the project because I could interact with the Year 8s and get to know them … when we first started I was a bit shy about it, but my confidence did get stronger.
(WISI)

Wanda felt that the year 8s were good at drama because they weren’t ‘shy’. Drama educators have found that younger students in particular are ‘naturals’ at drama activities even if they are shy to begin with because drama provides them with an avenue to take on other roles in a fictional and ‘safe’ setting.

**Wanda:**
The Drama component was really great … we were lucky that we didn’t have any shy kids in the class, they all liked to do it and they did it very well.
(WISI)

Wanda pointed out the fact that with peer teaching students were more comfortable learning from other slightly older students than from formal teachers. She added that students were therefore more likely to learn from the older students.

**Wanda:**
The peer teaching component was really great because we got to know the Year 8s more and just because Year 8s were more comfortable with students than teachers.
(WISI)

Wanda added in the end that while she had learnt to understand bullying better and how to deal with it, she thought that the year 8s would benefit the most from the program. Wanda believed this because they didn’t even know when they were bullying others until it was pointed out to them during the forum theatre discussions.

**Wanda:**
I know the terminology and how it’s started and how to stop it. Because some Year 8s … don’t … [know they’re] actually doing it.
(WISI)
Anne was another very clever student who demonstrated a very serious and even shy demeanor despite her obvious confidence with peer teaching and participating in the Acting Against Bullying project. Although not a drama student, she had developed by the end of the project an interest in the younger students and in the bullying issue at her school overall.

**Anne:**
I have enjoyed the Acting Against Bullying project. I enjoyed my interacting with the Grade 8s and being able to help them to learn. Least, I probably didn’t enjoy – how loud the Grade 8s were when we first began to take them outside for the role circle. Probably most valuable was … being able to learn how to de-escalate the bullying.
(WISI)

Anne’s confidence increased because the year 8s that she peer taught were responsive and ‘keen’ to join in. This gave her the chance to be a positive role model and a leader in the cross-age class setting.

**Anne:**
I found them very enthusiastic – very [keen] to intervene a little more and help us out. The drama work was quite valuable in the whole project because it allowed them to create a scenario where they could [deal with] … ones in their life and to try and find, to de-escalate the bullying in those scenarios. The peer teaching process worked very well because students get along with students better and are able to be taught by them off it.
(WISI)

Anne indicated that her friendship with the year 8s stayed in the classroom. However, she added that her ability to understand the younger students and to be aware of bullying in the playground increased as a result of her participation.

**Anne:**
I haven’t developed any new relationships, but through this project I am now able to recognise [bullying] in school. I understand bullying and especially all the terminology. We were able to put it into practice.
(WISI)

I reproduced the interviews in full to demonstrate the similarities between the former interviews given eighteen months earlier and under different circumstances. The same themes came up and similar comments were made. Overall, it is clear to see that both sets of students found the peer teaching and the drama methods effective. Both sets of
students learnt to be more confident in speaking out and dealing with bullying. It is also interesting to observe that Wanda and Anne added an overall improvement in their ability to speak with large groups and to understand the younger students occurred as a result of their peer teaching experience.

**The Effects of the Program on Teachers**

Overall, the teachers at Westside displayed an ability to derive what they needed from the *Acting Against Bullying* program and to reject what they didn’t want. From the beginning of the program, they did things slightly differently at Westside, choosing Health and Physical Education teachers as their key teachers and students as the peer teachers instead of nominating Drama teachers to install the program. Further on, a change in teachers due to transfers meant that different personalities chose different options from their predecessors. While the teachers who participated at the beginning of the program were positive and trusting of the program and of my role as research participant, the replacement teachers were more cautious about adopting the methods used in the program and more suspicious of my academic role. As Kayler (2009) suggests (see Literature Review), teachers need to be motivated through experiences and not just theory. The replacement teachers had yet to experience the program first hand like their predecessors had and were therefore more reluctant and suspicious.

Furthermore, as Kayler (2009) points out, with teachers “It is important to foster an attitude of continuous improvement, in which teachers are supported and yet challenged to examine their philosophies and assumptions for the purpose of empowering themselves to take ownership in their learning” (p. 67). The replacement teachers did not at first have ‘ownership’ of the program as they had not been the initial group of teachers who had volunteered to participate. With time and continuous support and discussions, these replacement teachers eventually developed an appreciation for the program and its effect on students.

**My Relationships with the Teachers**

In terms of my role as a facilitator of professional development, Westside was a worthwhile learning experience. My experiences with different teachers there taught me that to be effective I had to be a flexible and diplomatic facilitator. Ideally, this
meant helping the teachers as much as possible at first and then slowly decreasing their dependence on me as Schwarz suggested “to maintain the group’s autonomy and to develop its long term effectiveness, the facilitator’s interventions should decrease the group’s dependence on the facilitator” (Schwarz, 1994, p. 4). This also meant acknowledging the different teaching styles teachers practised and contexts they taught in. Timperley (2008, p. 6) points out:

Professional learning is strongly shaped by the context in which the teacher practices. This is usually the classroom, which, in turn, is strongly influenced by the wider school culture and the community and society in which the school is situated. Teachers’ daily experiences in their practice context shape their understandings, and their understandings shape their experiences.

The following are the stories of some of those teachers:

**Erica’s Story**

This method of facilitation was highly successful with the first project key teacher and coordinator, Erica. I initially in-serviced Erica and visited the school on a few occasions to advise and support her, but eventually lessened my involvement to the point that she became proficient and confident in utilising the drama and organising the peer teaching at her school. Erica went on to become a master teacher and even though she was transferred to another school continued to train and assist teachers at her new school in the *Acting Against Bullying* program. This was particularly significant because Erica had been a Health and Physical Education teacher and not a Drama teacher. Erica had become empowered in dealing with bullying with her own classes as well as empowered in assisting other teachers to deal with bullying as a result of her participation in the project.

One theme that came up during my time with Erica was the need for passion from teachers in order to make the program successful. Erica was the type of teacher who saw positive elements in everything and was willing to give anything a try. At the first in-service held at the university, Erica made it clear that being a non-drama trained teacher made her a bit wary about how she would handle the forum elements of the program, but that she was willing to give it a try. Once she had experienced the
benefits of the in-service, she was a willing participant of the program, never reluctant to call and ask advice or to ask me to come out and assist her.

By the time she had finished participating in the program, she had not only become very confident at facilitating the drama and the peer teaching, she had also become very good at it. During the second year of the project she was transferred to another school, but kept involved in the project in her new role as ‘master teacher’ by training other teachers in her new school and acting as a supporting mentor in her district.

**Erica:**
I’m very passionate when I get involved in a project and I did get some negativity in feedback – “Why are we doing drama when we chose health? We didn’t choose drama.” They never believed they could do that. I knew they could, but I needed to enable them to experience other things that were positive and they were successful.

(WITI)

Erica’s individual passion was what led to Westside’s initial success of the program in the participating classes. “Dynamic teachers create, facilitate, question, connect and coordinate” (Rallis, 1995, p. 76). Erica was a diligent leader who reflected and connected with her students and other teachers. Another issue raised by Erica was the support given to me as the active participant researcher on the project. From the start, Erica welcomed my input until she was confident to deal with the program herself, and even afterwards was a willing co-researcher in giving feedback on her observations and outcomes of the project.

**Erica:**
Maureen has been great. I found whenever I had a question, Maureen always contacts me. [She] goes out her way to be supportive in whatever the school needs … helpful with the students, helpful with the in-service. The in-service that I went to at the very start I found empowering as well. Not being a drama teacher, I think I undervalued the power of drama – experiencing the project first hand and understanding what the students are going to be through. I found that empowering for me.

(WITI)

In 2003, Erica and Kerry were the main teachers of the program, with Erica also playing the role of the coordinator as she was the Health and Physical Education Head
of Department. Erica taught the ‘key’ class, the year 12s and Kerry had been the teacher of the year 11 Drama class that had also peer taught the year 8s.

**Kerry’s Story**

Kerry brought up several interesting issues during her interviews. She mentioned that students were encouraged to become leaders through their involvement in the project. She also added that as a teacher she felt more confident to deal with bullying as a result of her own training during the in-service. However, she pointed out that it would have been better if her class had gone straight into the project and the peer teaching after the in-service as she had forgotten some of the things learnt and therefore was afraid that she wouldn’t be able to do the facilitating successfully well.

Although she was an experienced drama teacher, her confidence in facilitating the program was not as marked at Erica’s was. She did not begin with her class until several months after the in-service and this proved to be more challenging than doing it straight after. I supported Kerry on a few occasions with advice and visits to the school and eventually she participated in the program with her students successfully.

**Kerry:**

It worked really well as a team and they were all willing to help each other out. And if someone wasn’t good at explaining something, another kid would help out and help to explain, which was really good – in that group.  
(WITI)

When asked if they were still demonstrating an understanding of the bullying concepts four weeks after the project had ended, Kerry responded that they were.

**Kerry:**

They recognise it more … that bullying occurs and that some of them were bullies, but they didn’t realise … so now, even in the playground, they tell me about themselves. Some of them will go up to kids and say “what’s going on here?” They’re trying to be proactive themselves – I think it’s been really good in opening their eyes.  
(WITI)

Kerry discovered the empowering results of conversation and discussion that followed the drama activity in the program. She also learnt that the program had a positive effect on the students outside the classroom too.
Kerry:
When I went through the program with them, they weren’t … willing to speak up in their small little group. They just weren’t pro-active about it before. But I think using enhanced forum theatre and giving them the opportunity to express ways of dealing with it – they’re using that outside the classroom as well … There was one girl who told me she saw, waiting for a bus… a boy who was crying, he was upset, his pet rat had died or something like that – and other boys were picking on him and she came into that situation and said “what are you getting out of this? How would you feel if this was happening to you?”

When asked about her reactions to the program, she outlined that by being honest with the students about her own experiences, she was able to encourage her students to be more confident about sharing their own stories. She also added that by encouraging the students to being open about past bullying experiences, it gave them permission to change their attitudes and former roles.

Kerry:
Well, it brought me back to my childhood schooldays and I could tell a story to them that I was a bully at some stages. You don’t really reflect on it until later – think about how it affects people It allowed them to be very open back and they were willing to share their stories about them being bullies as well, to me.

I think they’d all been bullies or been bullied at some stage … I think by being very open about it you can change things, because you are reflecting and realising that there are problems and that sometimes you might be creating the problem.

When asked if she felt more confident in intervening with bullying situations as a result of her participation in the project, Kerry admitted she was more aware of the facets of bullying after participating in the program. She added that her students were also and that she was able to acknowledge when it was happening and obtain the students’ support if she saw it.

Kerry:
Because we’ve been through all the process in this Acting Against Bullying, they know now to try to prevent it. They can do it in their own situations. They’re not acting any more, they’re actually doing it.
Kerry was also asked what could have been improved about the program and gave very insightful answers. She explained that it was important to do the in-service early enough to plan the program around the existing units, but also close enough to the unit of work that the teachers didn’t forget what they had learnt. She also added that enough time to do the program must be given in order for the teachers and students to get enough out of it.

Kerry:
I’ve fitted [it] into the program … I would have loved to have spent more time on it. I think I could have done a better job, but with curriculum as well, you have to put a stop to it at some point so I would say that it is definitely hard to fit it into the program that you’ve already got. I think we should have started earlier, but I don’t think that there were some logistical problems that we weren’t able to start it … we were trying to fit it in with our units of work anyway so it didn’t really fit into the beginning of the year.
(WITI)

Kerry repeated her concern that the school had taken a long time to actually implement the program after the teachers had been in-serviced. It was about four or five months after the in-service that they actually started on the program and by that stage the teachers had become a bit nervous and lost some of their momentum. However she felt that once she got some help from me she was able to implement the program confidently.

Kerry:
The response and the help we got from Maureen was what we needed … she came out and gave us everything that we needed.
(WITI)

Once Kerry was supported, she became a very proficient facilitator of the program and her students developed into confident peer teachers. She and her students were able to significantly decrease bullying with the students they were peer teaching.

Brenda’s Story
The following year was a little more challenging as Erica and Kerry were transferred to other schools and I had to in-service a new key teacher and several relay teachers all over again. I had difficulty in getting in contact with the new key teacher, Brenda, who had replaced Erica as Health and Physical Education Head of Department as she
was always very busy. By this stage, Erica had been trained as a master teacher of *Acting Against Bullying* and was equipped with the experience and resources to train other teachers from her new school base.

My idea was to bring Erica back to Westside for one day as a trainer and thereby empower Erica as an *Acting Against Bullying* master teacher while making her colleagues feel more comfortable with their former colleague teaching them in their own grounds. Unfortunately, this idea was met with some resistance by Brenda and this meant the project did not get off the ground until quite some time after Brenda had participated in a larger in-service held at the university.

My experience with Brenda taught me that some teachers prefer to learn on their own and teachers can become very sensitive to learning new methods they feel uncomfortable with. Brenda clearly felt that she needed to try out the drama aspects of the program on her own and lacked the confidence to ask for help or be observed. This meant that she made some mistakes on the way, but she still learnt the benefits of drama and peer teaching in the long run. Although I would have preferred to have helped her in order to make her journey easier, Brenda eventually became empowered enough to lead the project and I believe the next few years will see her become a very confident anti-bullying teacher as a result of her participation.

Initially my role at Westside with Erica and Kerry was that of ‘active participant’ researcher at Westside. Brenda’ entry to the project reduced my role to the ‘limited observer’ category. Brenda seemed less confident in undertaking the drama aspect than Erica did and a bit more suspicious of an academic’s ability to help. This insecurity led Brenda to training the other teachers herself at Westside. When I was asked to help on one occasion and arrived at the arranged time, Brenda calmly told me there had been a rescheduling and that she had already trained her teachers herself. This became very frustrating for me, but I could see that she was not very trusting of my role, so I left her as much space as possible and ended up making only one visit at the end of the project. My journal entry provides some of my reflection.

I arrived at 1pm as planned only to discover they had changed it [the meeting] to 11am. No apology. My concern is that although I have asked them to
contact Erica a few times they have not done so and have ‘trained’ each other without going through the suggested method we have used so far. Also, there is a resistance toward the project itself being on their grounds (my coming out there). Hostility and suspicion seem to permeate even though they are always quite civil.

(JE)

My journal entry at the time demonstrates some of the confusion and frustration that occurred as a result of the change in staff. The new staff was less familiar with the university’s role, less trusting of my ability to provide assistance and less confident about our involvement with their classes. The initial in-service held one year earlier had served to break down some of these barriers and to prepare the schools for our involvement. I learnt that this initial in-service is an important form of preparation that needs to be organised into the program at the very beginning and needs to be repeated when new staff enter the school in order to create a more consistent positive culture in the school involved in the program.

Brenda suggested that barriers arose when teachers could not see the benefits of drama being relevant to their subject areas of HPE. Ideally, I would have suggested during my in-servicing that a year 8 English class would have been a better alternative and could have assisted Brenda in organising this had she allowed me to be a more ‘active participant.’

**Brenda:**
We had half our staff trained in the one day and half were just trained by me and that is another barrier but things are what are completely normal. And we also had a teacher who had gone through an in-service who is now acting in another job so another teacher just popped straight in and he had no idea what was going on.

(WITI)

Brenda had decided to train the teachers herself after participating in a brief preliminary workshop. This limited my capacity to ensure that the staff at Westside was given the same intensive training as the teachers in other schools and limited my ability to measure the results and anomalies Westside had demonstrated. While it is clear from the results that Brenda was seen as supportive and popularly received by the teachers at Westside, it is uncertain what support she actually gave to her colleagues.
One year later, I found myself still trying to organise an in-service and trying to facilitate Erica’s consultation at Westside, whilst still receiving a passive form of resistance that placed me in the ‘limited observer’ category. Here is an extract from my journal at the time.

Brenda was a bit defensive. She wants to in-service the staff later in the year. I suggested she ask the former Acting Against Bullying teacher, now master teacher, Erica, (now at Mala SHS) to do this. She mentioned there are about 12 projects she is involved in and she only thinks of the ones she is working on at the time.

When asked if there was something we (Acting Against Bullying) could do better, she said ‘no’. She felt that it was good that they were given some professional freedom and that the in-services had been good and that my visits and help had been useful. She felt that professional development avenues were OK, but no teacher had the time to do all this.

I learnt from this experience that I had to constantly play a very sensitive and diplomatic role at Westside, particularly with Brenda, who was unpredictable and less confident in the role of coordinator, unlike Erica.

**Brenda:**
I suppose I was a bit unclear about what the expectation was, but speaking to the project officers over that time, it became clear that I could sort of manipulate it to what best suited my school, which was the only way that I see that it could work for us; that we could change it – so that – when I first heard about it I thought, yes, we’ve got an issue of bullying here, it would be good to do some focus studies, but we need flexibility to be able to do it in our school.

I also learnt that Brenda felt ‘unclear’ about her role in the program. As stated earlier, we had not been allowed to in-service the teachers, during which questions are normally answered, queries are clarified and support is given in the form of problem solving and trouble-shooting strategies. Suspicions about academics from outside are not totally new and Brenda’s response suggests an initial mistrust of the program’s academic methods. Once Brenda had discovered that she could take ownership of the program and could mould it to suit her needs, she could see the benefits of the program. By the end of the year, Brenda was not only keen to continue the project and
praising the peer teaching and drama components, but was also more welcoming of our visit.

**Brenda:**
It became easy to understand and I think we’re all talking the same language now and we thought a barrier would be that kids would find things like ‘latent’ and ‘manifest’ and ‘emerging’ … terms they just couldn’t deal with, but they seem to be able to understand it really easily.

(WITI)

By this stage Brenda felt more confident in her ability to deal with the logistics and the less familiar components of the project and had seen the successes that the project gives the students and the whole school. During my personal observations, I saw Brenda change her attitude towards me as the observer–participant researcher of the project. During the interviews, Brenda allowed me to supervise and help her class while she prepared for the interview. This was after I had told her I was a registered teacher and had made the offer. Prior to that day, I had found Brenda was reluctant to ‘let me in’ compared to other schools I had collaborated with. Although I accepted my limited observer position at Westside, it never stopped me from trying to gain the teachers’ trust and I felt a certain pivotal moment had been reached when Brenda allowed me to look after her students, even though it came at the end of the program.

**The Effects of the Program on the School Community**

At Westside, the administration supported the project due to its desire to deal with bullying as part of its involvement in the *Health Promoting Schools* program. This meant the parents also supported the program. However, the whole school and other teachers were not involved in the *Acting Against Bullying* program and the benefits consequently only occurred in the participating classes. Smeets and Ponte (2009, p. 176) suggest:

The most intensive form of cooperation is where a group of teachers engage in a joint action research project and all members of the group are equally responsible for planning and carrying out the research. It is reasonable to assume that such collective forms of action research will not only help teachers with their own work in the class, but that they will become more motivated to take responsibility for educational improvements in the school as a whole.
As this school only supported a small group of teachers to participate, they were not as motivated to take responsibility for the improvements in the school as a whole.

**A Whole School Approach**

Westside demonstrated a whole school approach to many strategies designed to curb negative behaviour. The administration was supportive of the *Acting Against Bullying* program and gave flexibility to the teachers. However, the *Acting Against Bullying* program was only implemented at the level of individual classes and this meant that the effects of the program were limited to those classes and their participating students and teachers only. In order to see the full effects of the culture changing aspects of the program, Westside would have to implement the program at the whole school level and would have to continue its implementation for a significant period of time.

“Individual teachers and single teachers can bring about change without the support of central administrators, but district–wide change will not happen” (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 74). There was still a need for the whole school to be committed if Westside was going to succeed at countering bullying. Brenda emphasised that she saw a need for total support from the school to continue on the project for an extended period of time and to enlarge its anti-bullying involvement with the local feeder primary schools. Unfortunately, her attempt to teach all the year classes with only her students as peer teachers meant there were some logistical problems.

**Brenda:**

I think the previous two years were done extremely well, but I don’t think it impacted on the school because it was only a small, couple of classes that were being taught, which is what I tried to do differently. If we’re going to have a process like this, we’re going to need all the grade(s) to understand it – I’ve got the school to commit to doing it for 5 years, so I suppose if we continue to do it the way we are, we might see that the Grade 8s start talking about it … if we go down and teach the [local primary] kids they will probably come into our school talking about it. I know the older health kids were really empowered. (WITI)

When a whole school is involved, there needs to be an organised procedure put in place and some careful planning has to be undertaken beforehand in order to cover all the logistical issues that often occur. “Research shows that the six main contributors
to effective school based prevention programs are; to take a whole school approach, to embed anti-bullying principles and processes in the curriculum, to start early, to plan for program maintenance because long term programs work best, to involve parents and the community and to use multiple strategies” (McGrath & Noble 2006, p. 68).

**A Whole School Policy**

It is important to note here that Westside was also collaborating with the larger *Australian Health Promoting Schools Association* program at the time. This program is an initiative of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services and seeks to promote a healthy school environment with its aim “to strengthen current education and health initiatives and provide a coherent framework for school improvement.” (AHPSA, 2000, p. 13) It suggests that a multifaceted approach is likely to be most effective method for establishing a safe and healthy school environment, “combining a classroom program with changes to the school ethos and/ or environment and/ or with family community involvement. This is consistent with the ‘health promoting schools’ approach” (AHPSA, 2000, p. 11).

When Westside was first approached to be involved with the *Acting Against Bullying* program, Erica made it clear that their administration saw the project as complimenting the *Australian Health Promoting Schools Association* philosophy and would take it on for that reason. It recommends and advocates that “collaborative research activity, including school level participatory and action research approaches and partnerships with local tertiary institutions and health agencies be supported” (AHPSA, 2000, p. 26). Perhaps the teachers’ experiences with this program encouraged the teachers toward supporting a program that complimented it.

Westside’s involvement in the *Australian Health Promoting Schools Association* scheme and their determination to support an anti-bullying program meant that the administration were always supportive and flexible when it came to timetable changes and possible school disruptions as a results of the research project. During an interview earlier in December, 2003 with the principal it was outlined that the school had a past for being highly stressful and that whole school measures had been taken to alleviate this problem.
Principal:
We have ... over the years, [we’ve] taken steps to quiet down the school in a number of respects. We’ve got rid of the PA[intercom] system ... we changed the lunch hours in that our major break is the first break and we were finding there were issues of bullying that were still occurring in the second break ... and also we lengthened the period times, so there’s a more settling influence there. We’ve also eliminated all the bells ... we identified ... the issues of sort of hot spots in the schools.
(WITI)

The Principal had displayed an interest in facilitating a calm and safe environment early on in the project and I believe his legacy as the principal and the support of the administration assisted and contributed to the successes that the Westside teachers had with their students in participating in the program. Brenda’s interview two years later demonstrated the effects of this support.

Principal:
I suppose what worked really well was that the school allowed us to teach all of the Grade 8s, so this is the first year that they will have got to all the cohort and that cohort’s nearly 300 kids, so we got to every single kid in Grade 8 – which was one of our aims with what happened.
(WITI)

Westside gave Erica and Brenda complete support when it came to taking the students out of their normal class times, performing in front of parents and other staff and altering the timetable to facilitate the peer teaching of year 8s. Westside had been part of a Health Promoting Schools program for a number of years and was already in the mindset that this project was compatible with that program and that bullying was a serious issue that they were willing to undertake.

Erica:
Not only am I organising this project, but I’m the leader of the Anti-Bullying Action Group at our school, so luckily at Westside it’s nothing that we’re doing in isolation. We have a ‘whole school’ approach to bullying. Its one very small facet of the full school approach, so yes the Principal has been very supportive and probably because it’s embedded in Health Promoting Schools, so we’re always concerned about the welfare of our whole community, not just students but also teachers; teachers can be bullied by other teachers and students – parents, administration.
(WITI)
It was evident that Westside teachers were aiming at counteracting bullying at the whole school level. Erica’s final interview suggested a hope that this would occur in the future, possibly after the research project was over.

**Erica:**
I think we are trying very hard to make sure that, firstly bullying is not okay; changing that culture that it is okay to bully. We’ve also got resources for parents. We’ve also set up a professional library. We’ve got pamphlets on ways to identify if your child’s bullying, places you can go for help. Raising the awareness of the issue … providing a supportive environment for parents. We’ve had meetings with the P & C, presented what we’re doing as a school – run in-service for all of the staff about bullying.
(WITI)

Erica indicated that there were intentions for Westside to continue dealing with bullying by using the *Acting Against Bullying* program as part of a whole school anti-bullying program. This would assist in counteracting bullying in the whole school if the program was implemented in every class so that every student and teacher in the school participated in it. Although I estimate it would take several years to see the results, I believe that a cultural shift toward intolerance to bullying could eventually take place.

**The Curriculum**
Overall, the students and teachers felt the issue of complimenting timetables to do the peer teaching and finding ways of fitting it into the curriculum were problems at the initial stage of the program. However, once these issues were solved, the students picked up the details of the program easily.

**Pip:**
I believe that we got the support that we needed by our teacher. The only thing that I don’t think helped us was time – how to match your time up with the kids and with our lessons…We found out that they [the students] picked up on it, the acting, very well…. they’d learn that there are the three stages of bullying and they’d learnt latent, emerging and manifest and they’d incorporated it all, taking the information in.
(WISI)

By the end of the program, teachers at Westside were indicating that its success was largely due to the implementation of the *Acting Against Bullying* project into the
existing curriculum. One comment that was made by a teacher read, “It works better when incorporated into other programs – not as a ‘standalone’ project. We have made it a mandatory aspect of the year 8 Performing Arts program” (Post-Program Questionnaire). This suggests that the Acting Against Bullying project complimented other projects in this school. It was therefore easily able to be implemented into the existing curriculum and that this contributed toward the project’s success at Westside.

Encouraging Parent Support
Westside also demonstrated an interest in encouraging the parents to become involved in the Acting Against Bullying program and I believe this too would help in empowering the teachers further. During my interview with the Principal in 2003, he proudly explained how his school already demonstrated a commitment to including the parents in curbing negative student behaviour by promoting good behaviour of the students.

**Principal:**
That was an issue we had, that parents weren’t really getting the good data about how their kids were going. We’ve encouraged a policy of phoning home and a lot of teachers do that – some parents have seen reports for the first time. (WITI)

By allowing the participating students to demonstrate to their parents and even the local community the stance that they have against bullying and the methods they apply in their school, I would suggest that positive relationships and further support would be given to such an empowering project. Parent involvement and feedback is an important component of the whole school policy.

Challenges and Solutions
The teachers faced the challenges of making the program relevant to their curriculum, dealing with the practicalities of the timetable and moulding the program to suit their students’ needs. However, they discovered that if they were flexible and willing to look for solutions, the program could work in their environment. Swanson and Kayler (2008. p. 19) suggest that “the transfer of theory to classroom practice is a challenging process.” Teachers may have responded positively to the program during professional development sessions, but adapting what they had learned to their classrooms and
curricula meant learning to transfer the theories behind the program into classroom practice.

**Flexibility**

One of the main issues that became apparent at Westside was that teachers needed to be flexible and adaptive, to be willing to change and to look for solutions. There were clearly some barriers that teachers had to cross when it came to the curriculum and timetabling at Westside. Many teachers talked about the lack of relevance bullying had to their subject area they were teaching or the unit they were currently working on with their class. Teachers like Erica had never seen this as a major obstacle and managed to get around it through some planning and support from the administration and their own flexibility. She referred to this in her interview:

**Erica:**
I ran the task at integrated times so they are part of the process of how we implemented it for their assessment – into the Health syllabus time frames – that’s always a constraint too. Fitting in with whatever the other classes are doing, and that’s a timetabling issue with schools. I think the problems that you face – there’s always going to be those barriers and things that come up in a school situation. But just dealing with it and being flexible. There’s always a solution. It’s just a matter of finding it and working it out and whether I had to talk with admin, talk to Maureen, or talk to another school that was doing it, like involved in it.
(WITI)

Despite some setbacks, many of the teachers involved in the program brought up the fact that they were also grateful for the flexibility of the *Acting Against Bullying* program. Erica enjoyed the way the program allowed teachers to maneuver it to suit their own conditions and needs.

**Erica:**
I really enjoyed the flexibility. The project isn’t so that you’ve got to do this and this time. It allows flexibility which is essential in schools because there are so many things that we have no power over – assemblies, kids away for sport and things like that, so if the program is inflexible schools will not embrace it.
(WITI)
Another teacher later reinforced this message. She went out of her way to add this message to us at the bottom of her questionnaire:

We appreciated the autonomy we were given (from the University) to deliver the *Acting Against Bullying* program to suit our needs, personnel, resources and philosophy. (WLTQ)

This is data is significant as my aim was to make teachers feel empowered by not ‘standing over their shoulders’ and allowing them to assert their own independent style to the facilitation of the project. Schwarz advises that “to maintain the group’s autonomy and to develop its long term effectiveness, the facilitator’s interventions should decrease the group’s dependence on the facilitator” (Schwarz, 1994, p.4). This is the method I employed in each school, although some schools allowed me more participation than others. Erica suggested that as a teacher she had developed a better understanding of how to listen to the students and meet their needs after participating in the program. She admitted that she treated the differently after participating in the program.

**Erica:**
Understanding where students are coming from, meeting what their needs are, perhaps treating them differently, depending upon where they are coming from. Students are trying often to explain to you something that’s really important and just to be aware that it is really important to let kids be heard and explain themselves.
(WITI)

85.7% of teachers at Westside said they felt more confident in dealing with bullying among students other than their own and more confident in dealing with bullying at an adult level in the school community as a result of participating in the program [see Appendix C for example of teacher questionnaire].

This is a significant finding for the *Acting Against Bullying* program as a past project called *Cooling Conflicts* had found that although students felt empowered after participating in the project, the teachers often did not. It was my main role and objective as the observer–participant researcher of this project to empower the teachers through professional development and on-going support. Solomon believes “one of the key challenges facing designers for any staff development program is to figure out ways to extend the process of change beyond the life of the program”
(1999, p. 158). It was hoped that the teachers who felt empowered to deal with bullying would be able to continue to do so after the research project finished. Teachers were also asked if the overall culture of their classroom had changed in any way as a result of participating in the *Acting Against Bullying* program. To that question, the majority of teachers responded that it was too early to tell if the culture of their classroom had changed significantly, with 71% answering ‘no’ and 28.6% answering ‘undecided’. When asked if they had also noticed any changes in the school culture in relation to bullying, 100% of teachers replied ‘no’.

This data indicates that although many individual students and teachers involved in the program learnt a great deal about causes of bullying and ways of dealing with bullying, in order for the culture of the whole classroom or the whole school community to change, the program would have to run continuously for some time and would have to involve the whole school community.

When asked to illustrate other teachers’ attitudes at Westside, 28.6% of participating teachers responded that they had noticed changes in other teachers involved in the program, and 71.4% responded that they had not noticed any visible changes in other teachers involved in the program. However, when asked to describe the changes they had observed, the positive respondents said they had observed an increased level of confidence in their colleagues in “using drama conventions to address social issues such as bullying” [see Appendix G for responses from Westside].

The low percentage of teachers noticing change could be due to teachers preferring to downplay their own abilities as a result of not wanting to appear to be stepping outside of the group or because teachers who claimed to observe the changes were reluctant to admit they had seen increased leadership skills in their colleagues. According to Wasley (1991, p. 167), it is difficult for teachers to adopt or demonstrate any change in their role of power. She argues that;

> Given the history of equality within the profession, it is difficult for teachers to see each other any other way. Such circumstances, where teachers want the opportunity to influence their colleagues from a teacher’s base, but cannot gain authority or integrity unless they come from an unequal hierarchical position, completely confound teacher leadership.
Support
Nevertheless, all the teachers in the program responded positively when asked if they felt supported by other teachers and other students. On being asked if they felt supported by the teachers not participating in the program 57.1% of Westside teachers responded ‘yes’ and 42.9% responded ‘not applicable.’ The focus of this change in the questionnaire’s wording could again lie in the participating Westside teachers’ mistrust of academic research methods or their fear that any negative criticism of their colleagues’ lack of support might at some time be made public. This finding suggests room for future investigation into such issues.

Westside teachers were the only ones who altered the questionnaire to read ‘not applicable’. It is important to remember at this stage, that Westside is the school that only allowed me as the ‘limited participant’ role and often had their own meetings autonomous of the project or my facilitation. A study by Hargreaves found that “teachers are more interested in what other teachers are doing that works than in research findings” (Gunter, 2001, p. 51) and this suggests that the replacement teachers at Westside were more mistrusting of university academics than their predecessors.

It is also interesting to note that all of the Westside respondents added this response onto their questionnaire in lieu of responding ‘no’. This would suggest that the teachers answered the questionnaires together as a group and came to some kind of consensus as a group. Surprisingly, when asked if they felt supported by the Acting Against Bullying program coordinator, 100% of Westside teachers responded with ‘yes’. However, 85.7% of respondents identified their Head of Department (Brenda) as the person giving the most support during the duration of the program, When asked from whom did you feel least supported only 28.6% of respondents answered at all, with 50% of those identifying administration as the people who offered the least amount of support and the other 50% responding with the students. Again it is unclear why so few respondents answered this question and this leaves room for further questioning. Two possible reasons could be that the teachers do not want to be seen as negative or as critical of anyone who may read the outcomes or that these teachers simply didn’t feel this question warranted an answer because they are all very supportive of each other in this school.
When asked to identify if any other support would have been beneficial for them, 14.3% of teachers responded affirmatively that “more time to record our journey” would have been a valuable support for the Acting Against Bullying process” while 85.7% responded that no further support was necessary. Unfortunately, time constraints created by the termination of funding for the Acting Against Bullying project meant that interviews and questionnaires had to be undertaken rapidly and I cannot help than agree with the teachers that further time to record their journey would have been preferable.

When asked if the project was a valuable use of their time and resources, answers, 28.6% of teachers said they felt the project was valuable as it offered students a new and challenging way to look at, and deal with, bullying. 42.9% teachers agreed, but for different reasons and 14.2% were undecided. Interestingly, another 28.6% of respondents felt the program was too advanced for their year 8 students. Comments such as “the year 8s were too young to fully understand the terminology” and “students were not mature enough to benefit from this program” were given.

It is worth responding here as the research facilitator because my experiences at other schools proved contrary. In fact most of the primary school students that collaborated in the program displayed confidence and success in understanding and using the terminology. Again it is difficult to discern if the in-service provided by the Head of Department or my ‘limited observer’ participant researcher role affected the year 8s’ abilities to utilise the terminology.

Also, a further 14.2% of teachers said the program was effective due to the students’ enthusiasm in the performance side of it, but another 14.2% were concerned about the sustainability of the project. Those teachers further commented that as they had included community projects and involved parents, continuing the program at that level would have been a strain on the school’s resources. The challenges of administering and allocating resources and time is an obstacle that constantly came up when observing the participating schools’ attempts to introduce the Acting Against Bullying program within its curriculum.
**Westside in Summary**

The overall impact of the *Acting Against Bullying* program on Westside was diverse. Whilst the participating students identified increased awareness of methods for dealing with bullying, the rest of the school was not involved in the program except as a supportive mechanism and did not therefore receive the same benefits as the participants. Participating teachers identified greater confidence and skills in dealing with bullying as a result of their involvement and acknowledged the benefits of the peer teaching and drama components on their students. However, they were reticent to identify demonstrated leadership in themselves or their colleagues as a whole. Also, due to changes in staff it was difficult to determine if any cultural changes could occur at Westside at the time of writing.

In summary, the case study of Westside appears to indicate that the support of the whole school is essential in enabling teachers to become effective agents of change in regard to bullying in their schools. Westside’s involvement in ‘Australian Health Promoting Schools Association’ and their whole school approach toward dealing with bullying clearly assisted the teachers in achieving some success in implementing the *Acting Against Bullying* program with their classes, despite the setbacks that occurred. The philosophy of the *Health Promoting Schools* is “that collaborative research activity, including school level participatory and action research approaches, and partnerships with local tertiary institutions and health agencies be supported” (Australian Health Promoting Schools Association, 2000, p. 26).

Timetables factors and subject curriculum can be a barrier or an advantage when it comes to organising the peer teaching component of the program. Despite that, the key teachers were given support and cooperation by the administration in these matters and were able to successfully implement the program in their own classes. This experience taught me that when a school is committed to de-escalating bullying then no matter what problems may arise, a solution can be found.
CASE STUDY 3: NORTH BEACHSIDE

Introduction
North Beachside State High School was the most unusual and interesting case study of my research. First of all, the school approached the Acting Against Bullying project to take it on as a participating school from the very beginning, even though it had been decided previously that the project would not involve regional schools until the 2nd year of research. Secondly, North Beachside was led by a dynamic guidance officer, Mal, who had the cooperation of an equally dynamic drama teacher, Bob; an unusual partnership where both were passionate about using drama and peer teaching to deal with bullying in their school. A number of themes emerged from the North Beachside study; time management and curriculum constraints, increased awareness of bullying, peer-teaching benefits, drama benefits, the need for support for teachers and students and the need for a whole school policy.

The Effects of the Program on the Students
A finding that emerged from the data at North Beachside was that there was a general increase in an awareness and understanding of bullying among students after participating in the project. Students admitted to being more aware of bullying and teachers not only observed the differences between the genders and different types of bullying after completing the program, but they also were better empowered at dealing with bullying in general. Students indicated they were more aware of bullying situations around school as a result of being in the program and were more confident in dealing with bullying situations. When asked if they could explain what bullying was, 100% of students responded positively and that they could write down the three stages of bullying. Of those students, 89% said they felt they could also write down the three types of people in a bullying situation [see Appendix B for example of questionnaire].

During an interview on the 17th October, 2005, Navi, a year 11 drama said she felt the younger students were often too scared to tell if they were being bullied, but that the project allowed her to see that the younger students had the same bullying problems as most of the other students did.
Navi:
I did enjoy it. Probably the reason I most enjoyed it was that you got to be around the younger kids and see how they acted ... like ... if they were against bullying and see if they cared about it as much as our grade did ... and probably the least was probably the kids discipline ... when we were talking about it they didn’t really participate, they more held back. You could tell some of them were probably getting bullied, but they didn’t really want to speak up in their class 'cos [sic] they weren’t comfortable. Its consequences and how far it does get and how much it upsets people and how the smallest things some people do find as bullying.
(NISI)

Rhonda, the primary school teacher, explained in an interview (24th April, 2004) that the students could identify what bullying was after participating in the program; that she could see the signs earlier and that she felt more empowered about dealing with bullying as a result of this. When asked if they felt that bullying can be prevented, de-escalated or stopped 89% of students responded ‘yes’.

Rhonda:
I think all the students got to identify what constitutes a bullying situation and the different phases of bullying which they might have used or know before. For them to actually identify those phases they realised even what bullying is, they realised they had been bullied in the past, now they recognised what bullying is and maybe if I can catch it at a certain stage I have been empowered with the ability to do something about it other than just taking it.
(NITI)

In general, the teachers were positive about the fact that the students were more aware of the issues around bullying and how to deal with it since participating in the program. The teachers indicated that some form of acknowledgement of the problem had occurred and was being pursued by the school body.

Oliver:
Just seeing so many different ways that bullying can occur and just how it can affect ... that single person who is being bullied, on their life and how they go about things.
(NISI)

The students also agreed that their awareness of bullying had increased. The admitted to being more informed after participating in the program.
Yani:
I think it does bring awareness of bullies into the school, so that’s always good to know.
(NISI)

When asked if they felt differently toward bullies after participating in the project, 56% said they felt differently toward the bully, the bullied and the bystander. One student confessed to being a bully in the past and remarked that she no longer bullied others as a result of the program.

Zac: (Year nine student)
My attitude to everything’s changed now, but I used to be a bit of a bully. I used to bully the younger kids who were in a group, but now I understand that ‘hey, it’s not right – I shouldn’t be doing this”. I’ve played the bully, I’ve played the bullied person, [and] I know how they feel. So I try to be nicer to those people and generally we’re getting along really good now.
(NISI)

When asked if they were more likely to do something in response to a bullying situation in order to de-escalate or end it, 64% of students replied positively. Nobody replied ‘no’. Asked if they had learnt how to manage bullying situations better, 66% of students responded ‘yes’, 11% responded ‘no’, and 23% said they were unsure.

Larry: (Year 12 student)
If you were in a bullying situation and you didn’t know what you could do you could, like, flash back and remember ‘oh this is what they did in the activities’. (NISI)

One of the drama teachers became more aware of the bullying issue in his school by observing how much the students could relate to bullying during their participation in the program. She was also impressed by how quickly they learnt to deal with bullying through enhanced forum theatre.

Amy:
I was astounded at how much my kids knew inherently about how bullying takes place and the sort of things bullies do … and they were quite good at trying to use the forum process to try and alleviate that bullying.
(NITI)
When asked what they understood about bullying from the project, many students remarked that they knew bullying could be potentially very upsetting. Navi’s comment exemplifies many of the remarks students made:

**Navi: (Year 11 student)**

[I learned] its consequences and how far it does get and how much it upsets people.

(NISI)

It is important to note that while increasing the awareness of bullying in schools, the project aims to install in students various strategies and methods for de-escalating bullying. Sharp and Smith suggest that the first step in establishing an anti-bullying policy is raising awareness of its existence (cited in Rigby, 2002a, p. 27). Teachers indicated after completing the program that they believed there should be a whole school anti-bullying policy in place at their school.

**The Power of the Bystander**

Issues relating to the power of the bystander emerged from the data at North Beachside. Students maintained that they realised, after participating in the program, that they had the power to intervene when observing a bullying scenario. Bullied students also felt they had the option of soliciting the help of the bystander if they wanted to. Asked if they, as a bystander in a bullying situation, are now more likely to intervene to try to de-escalate the bullying, 78% said ‘yes’, and 56% replied they would report to someone in authority. Nobody answered that they would walk away or participate in the bullying even though those alternatives were given as choices for them to answer.

In a study by Johnson and Rigby (2006, p. 1) on bystander behaviour, it was reported that bullying often takes place in the presence of bystanders and that when a bystander does finally object to the bullying, 57% of the time the bullying stops. When asked to state who they thought is the person most likely to change a bullying situation 56% of students at North Beachside answered, ‘the bystander’. They generally indicated that they would not side with the bully any more when in the role of the bystander, but that
they would look for solutions to de-escalate the bullying [see Appendix E for example of a North Beachside teacher’s response to questionnaire].

**Billi: (Year nine student)**
Whenever I see people being bullied I always think to myself, ‘oh, they could do this to stop it or they could do that to stop it’ whereas usually I would probably want to get involved and see what was happening and take sides … so I think it’s really helped me.
(NISI)

Teachers at North Beachside indicated that a new awareness of the power of the bystander emerged from the program. Bob remarked that his students felt guilty that they had not used this power by objecting to the bullying being observed in the past.

**Bob:**
I’ve had a lot of discussion about whether the bystander would go in and break it up … A lot of the people who had been bullied let them in on the real world and said basically, “this does happen and people don’t step in and why didn’t you about two years ago?” … It’s really put a positive spin on the class. While they’ve been sort of challenging one another, they’ve all in a way felt horrible about the situation because they realised that it was happening and they did nothing about it.
(NITI)

Peer pressure is an important factor in de-escalating bullying situations. Studies have found that efforts to promote positive pressure are likely to be helpful in encouraging more positive behaviour among those students who have bullied others, and that once a child has acted as a positive bystander, he or she is more likely to do so on subsequent occasions (Johnson & Rigby, 2006, p. 8). In all, students at North Beachside demonstrated a tendency to feel that doing nothing at all was no longer appropriate and that the bystander had the power, if not some kind of responsibility, to de-escalate a bullying situation.

**The Benefits of Peer Teaching**
The benefits and obstacles to peer teaching was another major theme that emerged from the North Beachside study. Issues regarding the age gap there should be between the classes were mentioned as well as observations that the students matured in their approach to bullying once they became the peer teachers. Teachers also reflected on their own teaching styles from observing their students, as well as acknowledging that
they had to pass on some of their teaching strategies to their students before allowing them to peer teach.

A Buddy System
A significant buddy system appeared to emerge from this program as a result of the peer teaching component in all three case study schools. Students who wouldn’t normally have much to do with each other due to their different ages are required to work together in the program and start recognising each other in the playground, which often helps the younger ones and gives the older ones a sense of responsibility:

Rhonda:
With the peer teaching, it did give a foothold in the high school as they’re going over there – they can identify someone that they worked with in the program, this may be a buddy or whatever else and, peer teaching, it gives responsibility to the high school students; it gives responsibility to the primary schools too.
(NITI)

Once the age barrier was broken, students benefited from cross age teaching. When students of different ages and year levels were asked to work together, the need for cooperation came to the fore. Students found they had no choice but to cooperate in order to benefit from the program, often surprising their teachers:

Rhonda:
As a teacher, it was very beneficial for me to have my children working as a group. I felt that their interaction was very useful with the high school students. They got to take control of the teaching situation with the high school students which I thought benefited them and the primary students were not as intimidated because of the situation. For me as a teacher was really good to see that the kids could work together, and I was able to use some of that later on with them.
(NITI)

It became evident during the in-services at North Beachside that the students end up looking to the older ones as being their buddies, someone they can look up to for advice or help specifically with bullying, and it also emerged that older students take on that responsibility really seriously and end up looking after the younger ones as well. This can extend to the playground during breaks and can end up being an
informal buddy system that develops by default as a result of the peer teaching. This was often after the older students, the peer teachers, had gone through the process of being initially critical of the younger students.

**Yani:**
I enjoyed making up the skits for them, because I think that’s the part that they actually listened to. But, I didn’t enjoy having to explain the actual stuff about it, because they didn’t listen and it became very frustrating.
(NITI)

While Yani discovered the disadvantages and challenges of becoming a peer teacher, she did, however, succeed in teaching the younger students about bullying. Yani, like other students, eventually formed friendships that wouldn’t have had the chance to form outside of the program. The teachers observed this later on in the playground:

**Bob:**
Using the peer tutoring – those relationships are out there still – that interaction between the different year levels in this environment works. By using bullying and the situation, those kids see each other around. While they may not interact, the knowledge is there that they know one another; that they know they have that common link.
(NITI)

Students also indicated the possibility of forming friendships as a result of the program. The indicated that this was a benefit of participating with other students in peer teaching during their interviews:

**Stefan:**
Yes I was working with people I mightn’t necessarily muck around with.
(NISI)

**Oliver:**
Yeah I did. I made friendships with the group that I worked with and so yeah we had a bond.
(NISI)

Because the students were of different ages, the competition that often occurs between peers tends to dissipate. Askew in Tattum and Lane (1989) found that “cross-age grouping encourages a more caring and less competitive ethos among children and that this discourages the emergence of bullying” (p. 50) in general within the school.
The evidence indicated that peer teaching worked best when students had a two year age gap. If students were closer in age the peer teaching was not as successful due to the possibility of competition between them. Students tend to look up to those students who are clearly older and will more than likely listen to their advice. Thus, we tried to encourage participating schools to organise their peer teaching by crossing over two year levels at a time so that Year 11s would teach Year 9s, who would teach Year 7s and so on. This usually provided a more successful outcome than if students taught those who were only one grade younger.

**The Benefits of Peer Teaching for the Younger Students**

Teachers at North Beachside also remarked that it was noticeable that the younger students, during peer teaching, were excited about the prospect of having the older students in their classes teaching them instead of their own teacher. This was evident during interviews with the teachers:

**Jan:**
I really liked the peer teaching components. It particularly works well with the younger kids – like primary kids get a real kick out of having high school kids take over. It didn’t work so well with the Year 9s working with the Year 12s and I think that’s because perhaps some of the Year 12s could have been a little more confident or authoritative with them – at times they … had to step in, and my kids, Year 9s, if they were a bit daunted by them to start with.[They’re] older and they can be really intimidated by them. (NITI)

Goodlad and Hirst (1989, p. 39) found that “having been helped by older children acting as tutors, the younger children started to adopt a helping relationship towards other people – a sort of transfer of tutor role to the tutees who extended this role to their peers.” Whilst the younger students appeared to benefit from the peer teaching, it became evident that the older students needed some ‘training’ from their own teachers before they too could benefit from the process.

**Bob:**
While I don’t think it’s important that we teach them how to teach, personally I think it better to give them a few little hints before they go into the class. That wasn’t discussed – not that I can remember – at the in-service and it is probably something I would probably do next time is teach the kids a little bit, just very, very basic structures around teaching, focus, the class and that type of thing – which they should pick up from me and my style. (NITI)
Comparing the data with the two other case studies it is clear that older students need to be briefed on some basic teaching strategies before they peer taught younger students. This is something the teachers can facilitate, ensuring the students are fully prepared to deal with the younger students before they met them. In interviews, Bob confirmed that teachers needed to give their students some basic teaching skills before sending them out to peer teach. Although this had not been initially a feature of the program, it became evident that teachers needed to ensure that their students had some basic teaching strategies and skills before they went out to peer-teach the younger students.

The Benefits of Peer Teaching for Older students

One of the teachers remarked during interviews that once her students became the peer teachers, she really saw the benefits of letting go of the teaching reins. The students who had normally been classified as ‘troublesome’ became effective leaders and teachers when given the chance:

**Rhonda:**
Like I said, what didn’t work well was probably that initially the kids were a little bit shy. But what worked really well was when my Year 9 class became the key class for the younger Grade 6 class and they actually really surprised me. I thought “I wonder how this is going to go” and I just handed it over to them to sink or swim and they were really good.
(NITI)

The students also reflected on their own teaching experience during interviews. They demonstrated a new understanding of what teachers face and made ‘teacher–like’ criticisms about their classes:

**Stefan:**
They were pretty well behaved once they’d be quiet!
(NISI)

Once the older students were prepared and had some experience teaching the younger students, they quickly developed confidence and skills for passing on the anti-bullying message. The older students commented on the fact that they felt satisfied that they could make a difference as a result of the peer teaching:
**Alison:**
I really like the fact that we can teach them – and even though there may be a teacher there, the students were more relaxed and more willing to open up and stuff like that and I really liked that fact. I just liked the fact that we could really make a change even though we’re just students – that we could go out there and make a change for the next students coming into the high school.

(NISI)

The students also found that their confidence and self-esteem improved as a result of the peer teaching experience and that by teaching younger students their own knowledge of bullying increased. The same student summarised the peer teaching system perfectly:

**Alison:**
It makes you feel good and gives you self-esteem and you get more confidence while you’re doing it, and the more you do it the better you know about it and [you] get more experience and as you get more experience you can use that and pass it on to younger people, and then they’ll start learning and they’ll pass it on. It is like a snowball effect and will keep going on.

(NISI)

The results from the data of the program showed that the peer teaching benefited both the younger and the older students. Firstly, the older students appeared more confident in the subject they were teaching once they were placed in the role of having to teach the younger students. By experiencing this more than once, they were able to refine their skills in the subject and to thereby develop even more confidence. In 1967 during the National Commission on Resources for Youth in England a formal evaluation on the impact of youth tutoring youth found that peer tutors “improved their language skills, achieved a more positive self-image and developed an increased interest in going to school” and that the younger children started to adopt a helping relationship towards other people – a sort of transfer of tutor role” (Goodlad & Hirst, 1989, p. 39).

Secondly, despite there being a registered teacher in the classroom, students like Alison indicated that they felt empowered by the fact that they could ‘make a change’. Finally, the peer teaching appeared to improve relations between the younger and older students in the school grounds:
Alison:
People just get to know people better and even if it’s just a glance now and then it still means … they’re thinking about me or they’d say hello – even if it’s a bad day, it still helps a lot.
(NISI)

Alison’s improved self-esteem and peer relations that occurred as a result of the peer teaching are significant. Students appear to develop a certain amount of social development as a result of peer teaching. Maskell (2002, p. 107) found that “in many evaluative studies it has been seen that their personal development is accelerated… one of their greatest rewards is that of working alongside adults in an equal and responsible relationship.”

The Benefits of Peer Teaching for the Teachers
Besides the benefits for the students, the teachers saw the benefits of peer teaching for themselves. By facilitating the peer teaching, they were able to step outside, observe and reflect on their own teaching practices by being managers of the peer teaching experience, instead of acting as the knowledge–giving instructors.

Bob:
Where the peer teaching happens was just brilliant. The kids do it all and that’s where they learn. It’s not when I teach them – it’s when they have to teach and that’s the beauty of it. And I tell that to the staff we are working with and they see that their kids are thrown—for want of a better word—in the deep end if you like. They have to learn it to be able to teach it and I always take my kids and give them a bit of time with the class where they do have to teach and then I take a lesson and we break it down, what didn’t work, what worked, why wasn’t it working – just passing on a few teaching skills. And the kids have the content there – they just don’t know how to get it across, so that break and going back to the class really works, I find.
(NITI)

Bob experienced the satisfaction of observing his students learning for themselves through a very student-centred teaching process of peer teaching. He also was able to observe his students copying some of his own teaching styles in the process.

Bob:
I actually saw a lot of my bad habits coming out in my kids, so they reflect how I teach, so that’s really a good learning tool for me – to see what I was doing wrong and where I’ve been wrong etc. And it’s really empowering for
me to be able to say to the kids “It’s all yours and you’ve done that” – and it’s not me doing it, or leading them, it’s them doing it on their own bat. I’ve helped them, I’ll guide them, but it’s empowering for the students and that empowers our relationship and in the classroom that’s a positive thing. (NITI)

Bob found that by passing on his teaching skills to his students, he was not only able to analyse his own teaching techniques, he was also able to reflect on whether his teaching techniques were still effective. By facilitating the peer teaching, Bob was forced to contemplate his own teaching habits and to learn from that experience. This indicates that teachers as well as students benefit from the collaborative group teaching process that occurs as a result of peer teaching.

Group work involves cooperation, sharing and negotiation. It offers endless possibilities for students to learn the necessary skills to join in, to be accepted, and to contribute successfully to the group’s goals and objectives (Linke, 1998, p. 36). By encouraging peer teaching after providing some necessary teaching strategies, teachers can empower the students to teach themselves as well as each other. Furthermore, teachers can step outside as facilitators of a student centred learning approach and become more empowered in teaching pedagogy.

The Benefits of Drama
Generally, drama was seen as a worthwhile vehicle for dealing with bullying in schools. Drama teachers were excited that their expertise could be applied to de-escalating bullying in their schools, while non-drama teachers saw the benefits of using an experiential enquiry method to deal with the issue. All the teachers felt that using drama had a greater impact on the students in teaching them about the negative consequences of bullying.

Some students with no drama experience found it more challenging than drama students did because they had had little experience in confidently expressing their feelings. This is because generally “the best teachers of process drama … feel comfortable with listening to the voices of their students” (Taylor, 2000, p. 135) and therefore encouraging them to speak. Students who don’t take drama in schools may never have had an opportunity to speak their thoughts out loudly and confidently
before their participation in the *Acting Against Bullying* program. Some teachers have already identified the effects of process drama on their students in terms of the peer teaching.

**Owen: (Year nine teacher)**

One of the classes went really well and the kids really responded. They were a drama class so it made it a little easier. And they did respond and asked questions and got involved in the hot seating and knowing the characters … and actually started to share their own stories as well, which was great. Whereas, another class we went to weren’t involved with the arts so it was harder for them to be, I guess, confident in speaking in front of everyone. (NITI)

Students with drama experience were generally seen as more effective peer teachers. Owen also identified the special properties drama has for providing a safe space to capture experience:

**Owen:**

A lot of personal ideas were coming out and being shared, but explored in a way that wasn’t too close to home for the students … but they were still able to look at the issues that were relevant to everyone as a whole and put them into a more … in a way … entertaining form that was, for the other students, good to watch, that also they could relate to. (NITI)

Other teachers were excited by the use of drama as an effective tool for exploring social issues. Although they had not used drama before, they were no longer intimidated by the drama, but excited to see how effectively it could be used as a teaching tool.

**James: (Year 11 drama teacher)**

I was quite excited about being involved in the AAB program – I accept the inherent power that drama has as an educating tool and … using it with topics, like bullying, I think it has great scope used with kids like that. Another reason I was really excited about it, is it also cuts into the notion of forum theatre which is a really cutting edge style of theatre which the kids really enjoy. So it sort of worked well in both – it’s a good drama tool and it’s also good way to address bullying. (NITI)
Two teachers identified the effectiveness of drama as a learning medium in general. Rhonda and Cindy mentioned that it fitted in their curriculum and that having students that had done drama helped with the peer teaching.

**Rhonda:**
I was very happy with it being carried out through the medium of drama because that was something that was relevant with my class at the time – part of our curriculum is to teach drama – working with bullying – was very relevant in the Grade 7s, so I probably would say that it’s the best way to deliver that program because it is an easier way of communicating about bullying rather than writing it down, because they can actually act out these problems which would be more meaningful to the students.

(NITI)

**Cindy:**
We were very fortunate that the Year 12 group was a Drama group and in fact that was an advantage because they felt comfortable doing the role plays and they were a very good kick-start group … preferably if you have a good drama group as the kick-start group it does help the program because of role play, because they seem very comfortable performing that.

(NITI)

Drama as pedagogy is an effective method for educating students to develop better social skills. When Helen McGrath and Toni Noble explored and collated all the effective anti-bullying solutions being implemented in Australian schools, they recorded Rigby and Bagshaw’s (cited in McGrath & Noble, 2006, p. 134) estimate of the value of educational drama in dealing with all forms of conflict:

Educational drama can be used to enable students to develop skills that can help them to handle conflict more constructively, as opposed to using force to impose their will on others (as bullies do) or withdrawing from conflict situations if possible (as victimised children often do) … In many ways the separation of the fields: drama–in–education and conflict resolution is artificial. Effective conflict resolution requires experiential knowledge about the nature of conflict, and this can be acquired by reliving or exploring conflict in all its dramatic intensity. This is precisely what is done in drama–in–education.

Drama as pedagogy doesn’t just benefit conflict resolution, however. There are extra dimensions to drama that benefit the students to gain deeper understandings and to use high order thinking. Appleby (2002, p. 8) suggests:
To use drama as a pedagogical device, teachers need to acknowledge that drama has the potential to challenge and support students to work artistically and poetically. The transformation of meanings and understandings into artistic/poetic forms supports important learning outcomes as students intertwine rational thought with feelings and imagination. Students gain deeper meanings and personal insights and essentially use higher order thinking.

Drama enables students to use their imagination, but to deal with reality. This assists students to deal with significant issues from a safe distance. Corsini and Wedding (1995) suggest that Drama is one of the primary mediums for communicating the anti-bullying message to students because, according to social learning theory, students can acquire new knowledge and skills by observing other students and events without directly engaging in the behaviour themselves (cited in Beale & Scott, 2001, p. 302).

According to Urtz and Kahn (1982), this is a form of ‘psycho-educational’ drama that resembles psychodrama in that characters are dealing with real-life situations. It also resembles theatre in that action is tightly controlled and compressed in time in order to produce the desired impact. Yet, peer-performed ‘psycho-educational’ drama is distinct from both psychodrama and theatre in that it is brief and its intended purpose is to stimulate discussion among audience members (cited in Beale & Scott, 2001, p. 302). Because the drama does not resolve all the conflicts students are free to explore and evaluate possible alternative solutions and actions in a safe space. While drama encourages exploration, the most meaningful part of the process is the resulting classroom discussion.

Experience has shown that, because the students are dealing with fictional referents on whom they focus their discussion, they do not feel personally intimidated or threatened by the process and are therefore more likely to respond honestly (Beale & Scott, 2001, p. 200). The discussion period that follows the drama also provides students with an opportunity to clarify their own opinions and evaluate alternative ways of dealing with bullying.

Interacting with other students who have similar problems and discussing alternative methods of solving these problems are perhaps the most effective means of encouraging students to find their own answers. The teacher's role as discussion
leader is then not to provide solutions, but to facilitate the flow of discussion among the students. Interestingly, when the students were interviewed about the drama component, their answers identified the same characteristics of drama that were popular among the teachers. However, the students focused on the fun aspect of drama also and the fact that being in another person’s role helped them to understand bullying better. Here are some comments made by a teacher and students individually during their interviews toward the end of the program.

**Xavier: (Student)**
The drama component made it fun … like it made it … it helped us … it helped us become other people to show how we got bullied or how other people got bullied. (NISI)

**Stefan: (Year nine student)**
Acting in front of the people, at least, [without] pee-ing[sic] my pants! (NISI)

**Owen: (Teacher)**
I enjoyed working with the students and acting in front of them and showing them that bullying can affect many students … the least maybe … not having enough time with them to actually get the point across. (NITI)

It became evident by the end of the program from the data that students in general would have liked more time to really engage in the drama component before having to teach it to another class. Drama provides a safe place for children to explore social issues and feelings. “When situations are fictionalised in drama, distance is created and participants 'de-centre' from their own culture and become observers of culture” (Donelan, 2002, p. 30). This distance from reality also creates a parameter of safety for students, often enabling them to explore deep issues without having to be confronted by the harshness of such issues. Fictionalising what might potentially be a real story gives students the opportunity to empathise without feeling endangered.

When students are asked to share their stories, they are also encouraged to alter them as a group. This transfers the ownership of the story to the group, who all contribute to adding a new or different element to the story. It also removes the ownership from the student who originally presented the story from real life experience. The story is then fictionalised enough that issues arising from it are less confrontational for the
student who shared the original version, yet rigorous enough that the whole group is able to deal with the issues effectively. Overall, the data indicated that students were more likely to benefit as a result of the drama process. Bagshaw and Halliday (2000, p. 90) found:

In a situation where conflict is the subject of the drama, the students, by assuming roles on both sides, can hope to understand more deeply the character of, and motivation behind, the conflict because they imaginatively project themselves into the minds and situation of the protagonists.

Drama is a perfect vehicle for allowing the participant to empathise with another role. The data obtained from the program indicated that it has succeeded in enabling the students to empathise with those who are bullied.

**Facilitation in Drama**

Knowing when to intervene in the drama was clearly a major recurring issue brought up by teachers during and after the in-service. Teachers had to learn to balance letting go of their students and allowing them to learn through the drama process and or interjecting if they felt the students were not up to the task. Drama teachers are generally trained in the skill of facilitating learning experiences without too much teacher direction or intervention. A good teacher needs to assess when to interfere and when to stay outside during peer teaching. Just as young children learn through play, students learn through teaching. Linke (1998, p. 35) argues that one of the most difficult tasks for an educator is to know when to intervene in order to facilitate new learning experiences, and when the children’s own interaction should be sufficient to warrant non adult intervention. Schwarz, (1994, p. 4) suggests that “to maintain the group's autonomy and to develop its long term effectiveness, the facilitator's interventions should decrease the group's dependence on the facilitator.”

In drama, students need time to question the consequences of their actions and to learn from their mistakes. This requires the drama teacher to create a safe space for students to learn themselves, while observing to see if they can assist when necessary. “Dynamic teachers create, facilitate, question, connect, and coordinate…create an environment that is safe and rich with opportunities for children to make meaning” (Rallis, 1995, p. 76). However, when drama teachers do intervene in the action, they
are usually accustomed to attempt to do so unobtrusively or through discussion. During the interviews it became evident that some teachers felt they should be allowed to mediate in some way if they saw an issue brought to the surface during the drama process, while other teachers felt they really should stand outside the experience and only assist with behaviour management during the peer teaching:

**Rhonda:**
Perhaps just to note that it’s hard as a teacher just to stand off and let your class take over and often they’re fumbling a bit and you want to step in and so I don’t know what you can do about that, but I just thought sometimes a bit of the teacher interaction or mediation if it’s needed … I think sometimes when dealing with high school students and primary students and there is not a great deal of input from the teacher, that sometimes the kids can get off task and I would query how often we were to interject and maybe bring the students back around to their main objective.
(NITI)

**Bob:**
Probably the only thing, and this is probably particular to my situation, is one particular staff member doesn’t really “get it” and tries to become involved, and as much as I’ve tried, the teacher becomes too involved and doesn’t let their kids learn and they want to be involved in it. I’ve got two teachers – one is brilliant, stays right out and only helps when he has to and just observes and lets the kids run with it, whereas another teacher gets quite involved and answers for the kids – which is a real danger, I think, and that’s one of the problems. Sometimes I leave parts out – depends on the situation. Sometimes we add a few little things, but most of the time it’s a flexible thing which I quite like about it and that’s the way I work.
(NITI)

It is worth noting here that the teacher who felt most comfortable keeping outside of the learning experience was the drama teacher. Drama teachers are normally accustomed to facilitating learning experiences through process drama without interference. Dorothy Heathcote (in Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 29) suggests:

We need to train our teachers to structure for a learning situation to happen rather than a sharing of information in a final way to take place. We have to train them to withhold their expertise to give their students the opportunity for struggling with problems, before they come to the teacher’s knowledge, and to reach an answer because of the work they do rather than listening they have done.

Drama teachers are trained to facilitate learning experiences in the classroom through drama processes that allow students the opportunity to experience learning through
doing rather than through listening. By teaching non-drama teachers this skill, students in other classes can learn to deal with bullying similarly. Herman and Mandell (2004) advise all facilitators to treat learning projects and studies as occasions for dialogue and problem solving, rather than as transmissions of knowledge from expert to novice. In the *Acting Against Bullying* project at North Beachside, much of the learning stemmed from the energetic discussions that occurred between the students after the enhanced forum experience has been completed.

**The Effects of the Program on Teachers**

Just as teachers questioned when to intervene in the peer teaching process, teachers also had issues about interfering with bullying incidents in their classes in general. Knowing when to allow the students to work things out themselves and when to mediate was brought up by one teacher at North Beachside. Crothers and Kolbert (2008, p. 137) suggest “encouraging teachers to tackle bullying as a common behaviour management issue may help them effectively address peer victimization in the school environment.” This theory gives permission for teachers to intervene in bullying scenarios and to seek solutions.

**Amy:**

As a teacher though, I certainly do see it in the playground and I certainly do see it in classrooms at times and it can be a very difficult to address and to appropriately deal with. With my form classes particularly, the kids that I have on a regular basis I’ve already had to deal with a couple of instances of it. They all sort of come to Year 8 and they’re all trying to work out who’s boss and how they deal with each other and stuff like that. It’s hard to, in those sorts of situations as a teacher, to give the kids the skills they need to appropriately deal with bullying when it happens to them later on. (NITI)

In the post program questionnaires, the majority of teachers felt that the concept of silence amongst teachers and students was the same as condoning the bullying. Teachers and students indicated they now saw alternatives to bystander action. One anonymous teacher’s response from the teacher post questionnaire read:

I feel this opened my eyes as to how students see different situations and the approach they would take – being silent. This helped students to think of
mature alternatives to problems rather than silence being more like an answer for them.
(NLTQ)

Observations of this nature suggest the possibility that these students might act differently in the role of the bystander in the future as a result of their experiences during the program. The data at North Beachside indicates that the bystander students, once they are able to empathise with the bullied students through the drama process, appear to be more aware of the negative consequences of bullying and less likely to encourage the bullied as a result of having participated in the project. By being more aware of what makes someone a bully and understanding their motives, many previously bullied students felt more confident that they could manage the bullying incidents themselves in future, as a result of participating in the program. Teachers commented observing this also in the post program questionnaires:

By understanding the process of bullying, the bullied students were empowered to keep resisting the bullies and to enlist support from bystanders. The other students realised their power position as a bystander and this also empowered them. I have seen a few cases of extreme bullying turned around through this.
(NLTQ)

Overall, the data indicated that students that been bullied in the past and students that had found themselves in the position of the bystander felt more empowered as a result of participating in the project. Overall all the students demonstrated more confidence at dealing with bullying after participating in the program.

**Teachers’ Increased Understanding of Bullies**

The teachers generally agreed that they also saw some positive changes in their more problematic students’ attitudes toward bullying after they had participated in the program. Interestingly, students who had previously displayed bullying tendencies often became the leading advocates of the program during the peer teaching sessions. One teacher commented that it was her more troublesome year nine students who took hold of the reigns during the peer teaching, enthusiastically advocating against bullying to their younger peers.
Rhonda:
Real troublesome boys in the class took over, they were getting up and explaining things and instructing all the kids.
(NITI)

When bullies change as a result of an anti-bullying program, this is a significant and positive side benefit. Farrington found that “those who bully are more likely to drop out of school, use drugs and alcohol, as well as engage in subsequent delinquent and criminal behaviour” (Morrison, 2002, p. 1). This indicates that students who normally obtain satisfaction from negative behaviour might possibly gain a similar if not greater amount of satisfaction from achieving leadership status in a more legitimate way.

Several students in each of the case study schools indicated that they had bullied before, but after participating in the program and realising the consequences of their actions and effects on others, had learned to deal with their anger differently. Also, on occasion, teachers would comment that it was the ex-bullies who had become the leading promoters of the program and who would advocate its benefits during the peer teaching.

Although the program aims to empower students who are normally bullied, if it encourages alternative and positive behaviour from those who normally bully others, then the positive benefits for the whole school and the community are multiplied. At North Beachside, perhaps by being accepted and respected for the peer teaching, these Year 9 students had similarly found an alternative form of belonging that may have been missing from their lives. This is suggested by criminologists who report that attachment and connectedness are important protective factors against delinquency (Bouhours, 2003). Certainly the teachers observed that some of the students significantly changed their behaviour as a result of their participation in the project.

Rhonda:
The best of them was … those boys who were—I wouldn’t call them bad kids—but had a tendency to act up in class a bit and dominate the classroom, very confident and cocky, and sort of class clowns. They were the ones who took over … they took it really seriously in the end. They were up there talking to the kids and explaining things and not acting like they normally act – so it definitely changed them. And my class, actually as a whole was a small
group. There was no bullying in the class and I couldn’t see any change in power relationships there, but I think it definitely had a positive effect as a whole. (NITI)

However, this teacher added later in the same interview that unless the program was reinforced further on in the school, then the positive attitude change tended to decline in time.

**Rhonda:**
Initially, when we completed the program with the high school students, I did immediately see them taking it on board and I did see some changes in the students, but as time has gone by and there has not been any more working with those students – and of course I don’t have the same students as that was at the end of the year – I don’t have the contact with those students to really be noticing that. (NITI)

This indicates that a concerted effort on the part of the school administration to continue the program each year with all the classes would be an advantage. Teachers could then more easily observe if the program is having a real and sustained impact against bullying. Bob added that once the older classes left the school it was hard to ascertain if they had continued to develop what they had learned as part of the program.

**Bob:**
Last year, I used my Year 12s and I saw a really good effect with them in their structures within the group. I had two groups, basically, and after doing the bullying project and going away and teaching the other class, they broke down the walls a lot in that class, which was really good and that was effective. It’s a shame they were Year 12s and left because it would be nice to have them now. (NITI)

Teachers indicated that the students who did participate in the program usually displayed an enthusiasm for the project and for repeating their participation in it the following year. Teachers also indicated during their individual interviews that the students had developed an appreciation for drama.
Cindy:
I did notice that the students that I took in my English class last year, they’ve now moved into Drama with Bob and they’ve put their hands up to be part of the program. So I don’t know about bullying, but I do know they enjoyed the program – that they want to be part of it – they’re year 10 now – they were Year 9 – but now they’re going around to other groups so that’s a positive thing.
(NITI)

Students, when asked if they would do the program again all said they would. When interviewed during a forum performance at a conference for guidance counselors on bullying, two students said they would still like to do it [the program] again and I suggested Bob and Rhonda ask the students to do an in-service for the staff at both the primary and high schools-together. This would give the students another chance to be peer teachers, this time in front of the school staff. One student commented that she benefited from doing it twice, once as the peer teacher, because that way she had the issue of bullying reinforced to her.

Yani: (year twelve student)
I got to do it twice, ’cause I was year nine when they first started doing it and then I had to do it in year eleven. But you just don’t realise how serious bullying can get until you actually listen to these programs and … like you see it every day in the school but when someone actually confronts you about it, it’s a bit different.
(NISI)

In the post-program questionnaires, teachers were more confident in voicing a visible change in their students. Teachers indicated there had been a power shift away from the bully:

The bullies no longer hold the balance of power and by simply reminding the groups about the power of the bystander they continue to deny the bully that power and opportunity.
(NLTQ)

Another student added that her life was easier now as a result of the program because she had been bullied in the past and could now handle herself better. She had become more aware of the others who were being bullied also after participating in the program.
Chris:
Oh it’s a lot easier now. I used to be bullied all the time, so I was always the bullied, but now it’s a lot easier for me to see who is being bullied.
(NISI)

If a student has been bullied, simply exploring these issues with other students may be of benefit. Johnson and Rigby (2006) found in their studies, that whatever can be done to promote empathic feelings towards the victims of bullying is likely to have a positive effect of motivating bystanders to help. Overall, the students at North Beachside displayed greater awareness of bullying and increased empathy toward the bullied after participating in the Acting Against Bullying project. One of the students commented during her individual interview:

Alison:
I could relate to problems they were having and situations that may go on at the school and … I found that helpful, that I could relate to them – and that helps them relate back to me because they know that I’ve gone through the same thing, and it was good to know that they could trust me.
(NISI)

Many students stated they felt personally empowered after the program. Some students indicated that their increased awareness of the consequences of bullying as well as empathy for how others feel in a bullying situation helped them to deal with their own conflicts when they arose.

Chris:
Before I did Acting Against Bullying, I didn’t know how to deal with a situation when I got into it … I didn’t think about what I was doing and about the consequences of what I was doing and about how it would make other people feel. But since doing the Acting Against Bullying project, people have said that whenever I get into fights and stuff—which I sometimes do—that I’ve dealt with it in a more mature way and it hasn’t got me into as much trouble.
(NISI)

The data emerging from these interviews would appear to confirm that the students have an increased awareness of the negative consequences of bullying and its impact on others after participating in the program. It also indicates that the students were more capable of dealing with bullying after the program.
Bob’s Story
Meeting with their colleagues to share ideas about the program was also challenging for the teachers due to timetable constraints. The key coordinator and drama teacher at North Beachside, Bob, tried to deal with this by shortening the Acting Against Bullying program to two weeks, but this didn’t alleviate the problems teachers faced with fitting everything in to suit their timetables. In the post questionnaires, this was evident in some of the teachers’ comments:

More effort could be made to block off time for program to work effectively. A block of time would be great to ensure more students benefit from this course.
(NLTQ)

Apparently, the administration gave verbal support for the project, but did not facilitate sufficient time for participating teachers to meet with Bob or to investigate the possibility of altering the timetable temporarily to match participating classes together. This made it difficult for Bob to meet with other teachers in the first place and then he had to limit the peer teaching sessions because his classes did not match with many of the prospective relay classes. During interviews, this problematic issue was reinforced and elaborated on by Bob and also other teachers at North Beachside;

Sally: (Year nine teacher)
Getting together is actually a problem because we have so much going at this school – and it’s actually getting too difficult. The group that kick-started the program – we haven’t got together on a regular basis at all. Bob himself is extremely approachable, as is Teacher H [the guidance officer], so if you have any ideas you can go straight to either of those people and obtain advice, but it really needs to get together more often and really need to inform other teachers.
(NITI)

Bob: (Year 12 drama teacher)
The time [we] take out is always restricted. What we’ve done is try to speed up the process by just making it basically a two-week project. It doesn’t interrupt and impact too much.
(NITI)

Bob attempted to alleviate the time problem without the help of the administration by shortening the program’s unit to two weeks, which made it much more difficult to achieve substantial outcomes. Students and teachers would have preferred more time on the project and this is clearly revealed in the data. This problem was also
exacerbated by the fact that Bob had to find time to fit in his role as year nine coordinator along with his involvement in the *Acting Against Bullying* project.

**Bob:**

[It’s] problematic – just trying to fit it in … I’m the Year 9 coordinator as well so just trying to find classes on at the same time is also a difficult problem – without taking my kids out of other classes, that’s always a little bit difficult and that, in a way, restricts the spread of this … As Year 9 coordinator I was flat out and so I never this organised as well as I could have and should have, but that’s always, I think, going to be the case – you know, just take a little bit of time to get into the mode and know what to do earlier on and it all becomes easier each time we do it.

(NITI)

Bob’s attempt to find his own solutions provided some relief. He was able to organise some peer teaching sessions at the end of the term when space and time was less restricted, but this was only temporary, and timetable matching continued to be a problem for participating classes in the school. Many teachers like Bob enthusiastically take on many jobs, but find time pressures eventually force them to take short cuts or to look for solutions outside of the curriculum. One of Bob’s relay teachers found that she could only participate in the program at the end of the year when assessment was over and the school schedule was less restricted by using some of the rooms left spare by the older students.

**Rhonda:**

It could be a problem, but so far it hasn’t been for me. When I had my key class, Year 6 just came up from the school next door. It was right at the end of school at the end of term so there were a lot of free classrooms so I got the performing arts area for that, for all of those lessons. Space wasn’t really a problem, but I think just getting the lines of classes to match … to get my classes to get involved, but basically none of my classes match up – [that’s] the only problem.

(NITI)

Other teachers found that they simply could not participate, despite their interest in the program, due to timetable constraints. One teacher who had completed the in-service earlier mentioned that she was very disappointed that she could not participate in the program, due specifically to her timetable restrictions and not being able to match up her classes with Bob’s key drama students.
Rhonda: (Year nine teacher)
I thought I would have been involved with it during 2003, but the way my timetable was, it meant that I didn’t get a class that matched up with Bob’s teaching class so that was really disappointing for me. I was really looking forward to it and I think that we just didn’t have enough people on the ground who could match up our classes, so that’s a bit of a difficulty in the program for teachers who are interested and trained to do it, to match up with the other class, to manage that.

(NITI)

It was a feature of the experience at North Beachside that Bob had to struggle so hard to facilitate the program himself when he was already very busy. Like many dedicated teachers, he gave up much of his own time and energy trying to make the project work, but lack of administrative support in this area was his main obstacle. Although the principal had given verbal support, the administration did not devote sufficient time to arrange timetables to suit the peer teaching, as well as considering the relevance of the curriculum units of the participating classes to the anti-bullying theme. This may have been seen as time-consuming process by the administration initially, however, Sharp and Smith suggest “schools which are attempting to change attitudes and behaviour in their school must make a concerted effort to address the problem in all parts of the school system” (cited in Rigby, 2002a, p. 23) if they are to succeed.

The Effects of the Professional Development on the Teachers
The teachers at North Beachside said they felt the in-service was the most beneficial form of support in general. Nevertheless, there was a reoccurring theme that emerged from the data that after the in-service there needed to be further support and reinforcement. Teacher confidence was high after I in-serviced the teachers, but unless the teachers remained confident throughout the program, the data showed that there could be problems with communicating the major aspects of the drama and peer teaching components with the students further down the track.

Teacher confidence proved to be a significant issue throughout the project and this was particularly evident at North Beachside. Although North Beachside teachers were very enthusiastic, they needed a lot of help from Bob in learning not to direct the students, but to facilitate the learning through the peer teaching. My initial reaction to meeting the teachers was very positive as seen in an extract from my journal:
REPORT ON 23 JUNE, 2003 VISIT TO NORTH BEACHSIDE

These teachers are so dynamic and enthusiastic that I felt very confident and positive. Rhonda said she found my workshop refreshing and this made me feel good. I found them refreshing. They picked up the tricks quickly, tried things out readily and were thinking up ideas as quickly as I was.

The [year 12] students were also great. They obviously knew what to do before I told them – thanks to Bob. Bob is respected by his students. He and Mal get on well too. It seems Mal got things going initially.

It also seems Bob has been bullied by the deputy principal in the past. The teachers don’t seem to be getting much support from the deputy. Nevertheless, this hasn’t stopped them from trying or from being passionate about the project. Rhonda expressed concern that she would need more support and this is where I felt I needed to organise the network as well as promise the chance that I would come back.

Rhonda seemed a bit solo, but she thinks she will be able to get other teachers on board from the primary school. There was definitely strength in numbers that came from organising meetings and networking schemes. For teachers who are non-drama there has to be a drama teacher available who is able and willing to help and who gets along with all of them: One who is organised, confident and knows what to do. If it can’t be me then someone there is even better – one who knows the school, the teachers and even the students – a leader to replace me when I am not there. Bob fits that perfectly.

However, on visiting later in the year, it was evident that Bob had not been able to easily relay his own expertise to the other teachers easily. One teacher, Jan, had misunderstood some of the drama concepts that he had tried to teach. My journal pointed out the following:

OBSERVATION OF YEAR 9S PEER TEACHING THE YEAR 6S.
27TH JUNE, 2003

Jan is the year 9 English teacher and Rhonda is from the primary school in charge of the year 6s. Rhonda appears to be a bit nervous. Meanwhile, I notice that Rae interferes a lot with the peer teaching of her students.

It is very fast moving. I see that they are trying to fit in too much. Rae forgot that hot seating and thought tracking terminology must be taught first. She appears to be teaching them while they are peer teaching! She also used the word ‘stop’ instead of ‘intervention’. I spoke to Mal and Bob about this and
suggested Bob talk to her about it later on. I kept out of it and just took photos. I feel she needs further in-servicing and that Bob should be the one to do it.

The year 9s were slow to warm up, but they gained confidence and improved by the end of the session. The year 6s are very excited and talkative and good at role playing, although I noticed the freeze frames were not really frozen. I also mentioned this to Bob. I feel he will need to work as master teacher here. (JE)

My observation indicated that the teachers need to firmly understand the drama process before they can facilitate the drama process to their students. Geographical distance had made it hard for me to fly to North Beachside regularly so Bob was made the ‘instructor’ early on. Therefore, Bob gave an in-service himself before I came out and he did this without allowing the teachers to experience the forum theatre component themselves. Furthermore, due to his own time constraints, he found it hard to visit Rae afterwards to see if she had understood what he had taught her. It was evident to both of us once we observed her teaching that Rae needed clarification on some matters and had probably been reluctant to admit that she had not understood all the components of the project.

Jan’s lack of confidence with the drama component not only confused her students and made it hard for them to warm up, but it also denied them the power of being autonomous peer teachers. It then made Rhonda, the relay teacher, nervous about what her primary students were able to deal with. Later that day, I held an in-service myself, using Bob’s students to demonstrate the enhanced forum theatre component of the program. This proved to be more successful as the teachers participated in their own forum following this and demonstrated a greater understanding as a result of their own participation. A final reflection in my journal demonstrates this:

**Reflection of In-service Held at North Beachside on 27th June, 2003.**

**The Students’ Forum**

Bob had taught his year 12s the main aspects of the project before so it was easy to get them to come up with some forum. They devised a story to fictionalise for our purpose, but it was based on what had happened to one of their teachers. Bob admitted it was based on his own story initially. The students did a great job and this brought out great hot seating, thought-tracking and interventions (as well as the occasional magic moment). The
discussions that followed went on into lunch time, with the teachers discussing their own experiences with bullying and the possible reasons for these.

(JE)

This proved to be an interesting learning experience for me and one that reinforced what I had learnt at Southside during the trial pilot. By allowing the teachers the opportunity to engage in the drama experience before they taught it to their students, the teachers were able to understand the program better and were more confident at discussing and analysing bullying as well as facilitating the program. This finding emerged from the North Beachside interviews with teachers during the in-service.

**Bob:**
I was really happy with the in-service. I thought it was great. I still use all the booklets and Teacher pamphlets and sheets and everything that I got during the in-service so I’ve got no problems with the in-service – I thought it was great.

(NITI)

**Rhonda:**
I did the in-service at the end of last year – no, the previous year with Bob and Cindy and Teacher H and Quincy. So I was one of the four teachers from this school who took part in the in-service, so it was really worthwhile doing that.

I feel totally confident from the training that we did that I could manage it. The program is good, I think. I look forward to teaching it. And it means that that training is suitable to get it started. And its been interesting because I know that Bob has worked with some other teachers that his class has taught, other teachers’ classes, and the feedback from the other teachers has been quite confident, and that’s among humanities teachers or other teachers who wouldn’t see themselves usually as drama teachers so that’s good.

(NITI)

**Jan:**
The in-service was very good. One of the best in-services I’ve ever been to. What worked really well—I can’t remember very clearly—but is that one where Mr. K. [Bob] and Year 12 drama classes had prepared I guess skits or whatever for each phase of the stages, which made it really, really clear, made the whole thing clear in the performance. So straight away I knew what Maureen was on about.

(NITI)
Rhonda:  
The in-service training was good—that the high school students were actually involved in that—because I could then actually see how well they would do teaching the primary schools. That was really exciting to be a part of. I felt that the in-service training that I did receive was beneficial and I came away from it very excited.  
(NITI)

It is interesting to note here that Rhonda felt that she could finally see what Bob was trying to teach after seeing Bob’s year 12 students participating and experiencing the forum for herself. By the final year of the project, the teachers were feeling confident and empowered in dealing with bullying in their classes despite the delays in getting the in-services up and running and the constrictions based on our geographical distance. Clearly, once teachers participate in the drama themselves, they are in a far better position to understand the workings of the peer teaching component: They are better equipped to relay this information to their students and to facilitate the program confidently and successfully. One teacher said the following in her post-program questionnaire:

At the time, other teachers really took a lot of notice of the activities and seemed to be made more aware of the situations faced by their students.  
(NLTQ)

Bundy (2000, p. 26) strongly emphasises that when there is careful guidance given by the facilitator, drama projects can potentially offer participants opportunities to explore their relationships and “simultaneously, participation in such projects offers opportunities to build self-esteem and self-confidence.” Once the teachers had participated in the drama themselves, their own confidence in dealing with bullying situations increased.

More Support for the Teachers  
Although the teachers said they felt supported by the university research team and Bob, the school’s drama teacher, they indicated that they felt greater support could come from the school administration, through timetables, and the government department of education, through curriculum support. In post-program questionnaires, when asked where they felt the most supported, they answered:
When asked from which teachers/administration they felt least supported, they responded that they needed more support from the government. Teachers indicated they needed more support from Education Queensland:

Education Queensland; nothing will be done or changed without their influence. With so many changes happening at the moment with curriculum it would seem staff aren’t willing to do something else if it isn’t going to last because Education Queensland haven’t backed it. (NLTQ)

When asked if they felt supported by the school administration in post-questionnaires, they replied that they would appreciate more support. Teachers indicated they needed more time to implement a program:

Yes, but more effort could be made to block off time for program to work effectively. (NLTQ)

Bob elaborated on this problem toward the end of the program at his interview. He suggested that the primary schools collaborate in the program at the same time, rather than waiting for the high school students to peer teach them.

Bob:
A bit more … directive from Education Queensland to the administration of the schools to try to make in happen a little bit easier. Our administration are pretty good, but I think [Education Queensland] needs to come on board a little bit more. I know it’s in its infancy, this program and it’s a trial project, but I think administration would, in all the schools, would have a lot more of an approach to it. But yes, I think a bit more push from Education Queensland, and I know that’s probably in the stages of the trial project it may not be able to happen. I think it’s working quite well. (NITI)

Research observations also showed that support needed to be an ongoing thing between teachers and coordinators of the project. When Bob went down to the primary school next door, he was only there for a short time and the teacher visited would have liked more consistent support. Other schools asked him to go out and train
them also, but they were not willing to start on their own after just one in-service. Here is an extract from my journal:

**NORTH BEACHSIDE SHS REPORT**  
24 and 25.11.04

Bob tried to in-service the primary school but was only given 1 hour and this was not sufficient. Bob felt Rhonda was OK on her own, but she said she would have liked more help. We asked her if she would like to be a Master teacher next year and she seems a bit wary. Her principal said she would support that however.

Bob had to in-service teachers at the primary school also and they seemed to need him to return and were not willing to do things on their own. He is going through the same process I am going through now.

(JE)

Many of Bob’s obstacles appeared to be due to lack of time. This was due to the fact that his school timetable did not allow Bob to fit in visits to other teachers during school time and this made it hard for him to peer-teach his colleagues.

**Bob:**

[It was] problematic, just trying to fit in to everything. I’m the year nine coordinator as well, so just trying to find classes on at the same time is also a difficult problem, without taking my kids out of other classes. That’s always a bit difficult and that, in a way, restricts the spread of this [program].

(NITI)

The students also indicated that there was a need for more support from the administration. When asked before the program which group supported them the most, 12.5% said their fellow students, 75% said their teachers, 12.5% replied their families, and nobody gave the administration as an answer. However, when asked after the program who supported them the most, 88% of students replied that the other students were the most supportive. This indicates that even students who were not directly involved with the program saw its benefits and increased their support for it after the school had participated in the program [see Appendix C for copy of questionnaire and Appendix E for example of North Beachside teacher response].
This data would indicate that teachers and students are keen to find a successful program that deals with bullying. There needs to be a concerted effort from the administration to allow teachers and students to train each other in anti-bullying strategies and there needs to be a system of cross-curricular activities aimed at teaching anti-bullying philosophies implemented by the education department. This would enable classes to be matched more easily according to the unit of conflict that bullying fits into as opposed to being restricted to a particular subject. Some educators argue that “cross-curricular activities, aimed at implanting a specific skill or concept, have been widely practised, often in response to a perceived educational priority or the supposed absence of a fundamental aspect of learning” (Varnava, 2002, p. 62).

An anti-bullying or anti-conflict philosophy within the curriculum must be seen as an important priority for this to happen. As the research was finishing, Education Queensland was introducing in all schools a new school behaviour code that outlined that “state schools in Queensland are committed to providing quality learning opportunities that enable all students to achieve within safe, supportive and disciplined learning environments” (Queensland Government, 2006, p. 2). A policy such as this would be efficiently implemented across the school if it was made a compulsory topic that could be implemented across units in all year levels within most of the subjects that deal with humanities and social sciences. If peer teaching was an added component, the timetables would more readily match under these circumstances.

The Effects of the Program on the School Community
The teachers at North Beachside strongly indicated there should be a whole school anti-bullying policy in place at North Beachside after participating in the program and Bob particularly liked the use of drama to implement conflict resolution techniques into the school. One of the students felt it was great that her peers and the younger students had found a forum to speak about bullying and try to deal with it in class.

Combining Drama and Peer Teaching in an Anti-Bullying Policy
In an interview with Bob in April 22nd, 2004, Bob was very passionate about saying that Education Queensland needed to do more about bullying in schools. He added that not enough was being done from the government level:
Bob:
My initial expectation was a new approach … to bullying. I feel that the Education Department is really lacking in that particular – of harassment – there is fighting and violence and everything like that. But especially at our school there wasn’t a particular policy to deal bullying. I’d started some stuff in Drama, but that was on our bat and it … wasn’t directed like the Cooling Conflicts [Acting Against Bullying program]. It didn’t have a good focus. It was just a lot of drama activities based around bullying situations. When I heard of this it was very good opportunity to work with Bruce Burton and John O’Toole and to get involved in something which I saw as something really focused and, particularly the way they do with the Forum Theatre; it’s quite empowering to the people, rather than being threatening and I think that’s really important.

(NITI)

Bob suggested that using drama was an effective tool for implementing the anti-bullying message in the school. The main positive benefit of combining drama techniques and peer teaching to deal with conflict is the increase in empathy that results. Johnson and Rigby (2006) found that the inclination to help others during bullying appears to be dependant on a combination of the influence of peers and the ability to empathise. They suggest that “the expectations of the peer group, especially one’s friends, appear to be particularly important, evidently more so than the expectations of parents … The degree to which students had empathic feelings for victims also made an important contribution” (p. 7). While drama enables students to empathise with others, the peer teaching provides an avenue for peers to influence each other positively to assist in de-escalating the bullying through the role of the bystander. Overall, the data at North Beachside indicated that the teachers felt positively about schools dealing with bullying through drama and peer teaching. Teacher indicated they felt that the program was a good way of achieving this.

(NITI)

Bob:
Bullying is such a major issue, but the normal response borders on bullying the bully into leaving the kid alone or provoking the bully to take revenge. The victim remains just that, a victim. Until the skills are taught to students that they don’t have to give the power to the bully they remain powerless. The eyes open when the bystander realises their direct role in allowing the bullying to happen. It also showed me the stages involved and how to identify them and thus attempt to put a stop to it all earlier rather than later.

(NITI)
The data indicates that the combination of drama and peer teaching enables students and teachers to deal with bullying by empowering them to be aware of the stages of bullying early on and by teaching strategies that can be used to de-escalate bullying once it happens.

**Implementing a Whole School Anti-Bullying Policy**

The teachers at North Beachside also indicated a desire to see the program implemented throughout the entire school. They felt that it stopped short and needed to continue on to the other classes to be self-perpetuating. Bob enthusiastically wanted to train the teachers throughout the district also.

**Bob:**

I think it’s a great program. If we can get it implemented right across the school board it would be great. As far as what I would like to have – I would like to get some of those videos that John and Maureen had to have when I have in-services and teach the staff. That’s really important, I think. Just to see that it’s not me doing it. This is this big thing and these other people – on the success. I think it would be great for the staff to see … that it’s not just in its infancy. It has this history that it has worked and [to] jump on the bandwagon because it’s going to take the kids a long way … and really work.  

(NITI)

Bob’s comment suggested that the school needed to see that the program had previously worked in other schools successfully in order for the rest of the teachers at North Beachside to fully embrace the program also. In a study on educational change, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1999, p. 74) found that “the more teachers or others have had negative experiences with previous implementation attempts in the district or elsewhere, the more cynical or apathetic they will be about the next change presented regardless of the merit of the new idea or program.” The study also found that interaction with others influences what one does, so that teachers’ relationships with other teachers is often a critical variable (p. 77). Thus, if a program has been successful in the past, a teacher who shares this experience with other teachers is more likely to be listened to. Generally, the participating teachers at North Beachside felt the program needed to be extended to the whole teaching and student body in order for it to be more effective.
Owen:
I would, but I’d also try to look at different ways it would really benefit all our kids, rather than just a select few. So we’re talking with Bob and Mal about actually having a block period that we block off with these classes and make sure that it continues on … not just stops.
(NITI)

Cindy:
Once the program is initiated, you know that you’ve got the message across and that’s fine, but it tends to end there. It’s very difficult to monitor the progress of potential bullies and see if it has any effect on them – it’s almost impossible. I don’t know how to do that. I mean like the class I had last year is not the same class as this year so you’re moving in different directions again so you haven’t a clue about their behaviour, so that itself is a problem and I think maybe the school needs to think of a way they could monitor the behaviour of some of the problem students who may be victimising others or something, or even some of the victims, of course, you know?
(NITI)

Some teachers indicated that they did not see any direct change in their class or school culture, but they still felt optimistic about the program. In the post-program questionnaire, they insisted that if it had enough time to reach all students that there would be a likelihood of greater positive impact on their school.

It needs to become more widespread and for this to happen needs the backing of Education Queensland to ensure all staff take it on board. When teachers are aware of it, they have seen changes, but it is too narrow of a spread.
(NLTQ)

The data confirms a general consensus among the participating teachers that a whole school anti-bullying policy, outlining the strategies for teachers to use for dealing with bullies, is necessary for an anti-bullying program to succeed. Sharp and Thompson add that “a whole-school based policy should be central to any efforts to tackle the problem of bullying in schools” (in Sharp & Smith, 1994, p. 23). By combining the benefits of peer teaching and drama within a whole school policy, the research data would indicate that this could be more easily achieved.

Challenges and Solutions
The challenge of managing time was a recurring theme discussed by teachers at North Beachside. They felt there wasn’t enough time to work on the program with their classes, or to facilitate the peer teaching by matching timetables with other
participating classes and teachers. Teachers clearly felt pressed for time in general and would have liked more time to work on the *Acting Against Bullying* program with their students. Assessment schedules and other essential curriculum activities hindered the amount of time teachers could spend with the program if it was not part of their regular curriculum. This issue regularly emerged from the data, especially during interviews, when teachers had time to elaborate:

**Owen:**
Time is a really big issue ... and having the other teachers interested in doing it ... because it kind of just stops. We've done our work in the peer teaching ... we've done two different classes and then it just stopped from there. It couldn’t carry on. I think if we were given, say, a three-day block ... and all the teachers knew what was happening and that was what was focused on, it would work. But, just with the school being so big, and so much assessment that other teachers are trying to get through with their kids, it’s just really difficult that way.

(NITI)

Teachers often indicated during interviews that they lacked sufficient time within the crowded curriculum. Comments were made in the post program questionnaires by teachers about not having enough time to work on the program:

I don’t believe I wasn’t supported, but time was a problem due to assessment etc.

(NLTQ)

Students reinforced this problem in their own responses during their interviews. They indicated that they would have liked more time to work on peer teaching with the younger students.

**Xavier: (Year nine student)**
Probably the amount of time we had with them, it wasn’t really ... like we had one lesson with them and have that lesson was taken up trying to get organised into the groups and just showing what we did. So it wasn’t really enough time.

(NISI)

**Yani: (Year eleven student)**
I found it frustrating because we didn’t get enough time with the younger kids so we couldn’t put the message across. They just thought it was a bit of a joke. They didn’t take any notice of it. So I reckon if we had a few more lessons, or a bit more time, I think it would have ... had a better result.

(NISI)
In the other two case study schools, time was an equally important issue. It appears for the *Acting Against Bullying* program or any serious anti-bullying program to be implemented successfully in a school, sufficient time needs to be allocated, along with resources, space and teacher support. Sharp and Smith (cited in Rigby, 2002a, pp. 24–25) argue that the administration must demonstrate commitment to tackling the bullying problem through an elaborate anti-bullying policy, adding:

This will not only require the allocation of time and resources to the development and implementation of the policy, but also necessitate their direct involvement in the development process; support for other staff during the development process and their management skills in ensuring that the policy is put into practice by all staff taking prompt action if it is not.

The older students also expressed a desire for to more time with the younger students to really teach them the drama techniques (previously discussed in sub-chapter 1.1) Often drama activities take time to form as participants slowly become engaged in the fiction through drama processes that assist them in understanding the relevant roles. In order to fully appreciate the roles and implications, a drama activity often lends itself to reflection and discussion also.

This would indicate that the student peer teachers need sufficient time to prepare, facilitate and assist the younger students to participate fully in the drama activity and to evaluate their experiences afterwards. This data reinforced the findings that initially emerged at Southside, from teachers like Gail who also felt that students needed time to get to know each other before and time to be de-briefed after their intensive drama session.

**Gail:**
Some period of time in which the students get to know each other is quite critical … and I think we could have had … some de-debriefing sessions with the year nines … making the students reflect and probably also make more of a sense of completion of the program for themselves as well.
(SITI)

The data that emerged throughout all the case studies indicated that “students need a substantial chunk of time in which to develop their skills as facilitators, unfold their
Chapter 4

ideas, and refine their roles as active listeners … exploratory talk should be encouraged” (Henkin, 2005, p. 35).

Teachers also commented on there being too much time between learning about the program and actually commencing it and between the peer teaching phases of the program. Pam, the relay teacher of the year six class at the nearby Southside Primary School, felt she had to wait too long before the high school students came down to her class to facilitate the peer teaching:

**Pam (Year six teacher)**
Some of the changes that I think would be beneficial would be shorter time period allotted between the teaching phases, I suppose you could call them, where the peers actually come and work with the other students, because I feel that with such a long time coming in between that much of what is being taught is sometimes forgotten or lost.
(NITI)

Again, this would suggest that the organisation of time was a problem. Teachers and students indicated they would have liked more time to spend on the program.

**North Beachside in Summary**
North Beachside was a case study that revealed significant data about school administration, teacher facilitation and student confidence in dealing with bullying. The teachers’ abilities and confidence to deal with the drama and peer teaching components of the program varied greatly and altered throughout the three years of the research project.

Communication was often hampered by lack of time, geographical distance and the restrictions imposed by the school timetable and administration. Nevertheless, a dedicated drama teacher and guidance officer acting as coordinator, and an equally dedicated group of teachers at North Beachside, were able to successfully overcome the obstacles they incurred by persevering, reflecting on their teaching practices, and adjusting their strategies as they and their students participated in their project.

The students at North Beachside enjoyed the drama and the peer teaching components of the program, but would have liked more time on the drama and teaching advice
before the peer teaching. They became aware of bullying issues more after completing
the program and recognised the power of the bystander to change the outcome of a
bullying situation. Like the students at the other school case studies, the bullied
students benefited and were empowered by the program, while the bullies learnt to
empathise with other students and to use their leadership skills more beneficially
through peer teaching. Overall, North Beachside reinforced much of the data that
emerged from the other two case studies, indicating that the program was successful
in de-escalating bullying, if implemented as a whole school policy within the
curriculum.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION OF RESEARCH THESIS

Introduction

The *Acting Against Bullying* action research project took three years to complete and involved 18 schools within Brisbane and outer regions. It developed as a result of findings in the *Cooling Conflicts* project that teachers should be “trained to implement this program for themselves in their schools, so that their professional development becomes the focus” (Plunkett, 2002, p. 248).

This research, *Addressing Bullying in Schools: Strategies, Structures and Scaffolding* has been conducted as a comparative multiple case study focusing on the professional development aspect of selected schools within the broader *Acting Against Bullying* project. My goal was to identify the conditions needed to empower teachers to manage bullying – specifically through the use of forum theatre and process drama, with peer teaching playing a key role in these processes. By using the tools of an ethnographer and acting as a researcher/active participant, I participated in the training, the research, the observation and recording of findings across three years.

My role was to support teachers as they facilitated the project approaches with their students and colleagues following their participation in an in-service that involved utilising enhanced forum theatre techniques to explore and find solutions for bullying. Their students would then apply the same system and teach their younger peers at each year level until all students at the school had participated in the program. To gather and record the findings from the research, I used questionnaires, group and individual interviews, observations recorded in my journal and field notes from a variety of sources throughout the three years of the program. Findings were then collated to determine any patterns or recurrent themes and these themes then developed into the categories in my thesis.

Each case study school had its own culture and its own strengths and weaknesses, but across the three cases there were key findings about the role of the teacher in each
school that were common to each of the case studies: Teachers at each school indicated needing in-servicing in the drama and peer teaching methods of the program, needing strong administrative whole school support and needing to be committed and consistent in their passion to counteract bullying in their schools. However, as teachers in these schools were successful in reducing bullying in their schools, it was evident that teachers at each case study school were also capable and confident following their participation in the Acting Against Bullying in-service and program.

**Case Study Summaries**

Each case study, although different in geographical location and in various conditions, demonstrated similar findings in promoting effective management of bullying. Each school embraced or focused on one or more of the pedagogical strategies taught by the program to gain success. Each school experienced different administrative structures and environments in their quest to deal with bullying. Finally, each school required different amounts of scaffolding and in-servicing for classroom teachers to effectively manage bullying.

Southside demonstrated that the teacher in-services needed to be hands on, emphasising that it was important to model for the teachers the program the students would be participating in. By initially making the teachers go through each part of the program themselves before they taught the methods to their students, the program empowered the teachers and gave them the confidence to deal with bullying situations effectively.

With regards to school structures, Southside demonstrated that the administration needed to implement the program within the curriculum in order to create an effective anti-bullying whole school policy. The drama teachers at Southside were successful because they not only taught the program within their drama units, but they also succeeded in convincing the school to embed it as part of a whole school policy.

Finally, Southside taught me that drama teachers needed less scaffolding when it came to some of the program’s pedagogy. However, the teachers at Southside valued
a certain amount of professional freedom and permission to embrace the program to fit their own needs. Marie often mentioned that she was successful in implementing the program because although I supported her, as an experienced drama teacher, she was confident and competent enough to deal with the drama component of the program, but just needed more room to experiment and to mould the program to suit the school’s context.

Westside demonstrated that the teachers needed more in-servicing in drama than at Southside. There were initial setbacks due to teachers teaching themselves as new teachers arrived, without enough guidance from or communication with the program’s coordinator and without undergoing the initial in-services provided by the program for the teachers early on.

With regards to school structures, it was important at Westside to maintain teacher consistency and commitment during the implementation of the program. If teachers volunteered for the program rather than being coerced into it by the administration, they were more likely to be committed to the rules of the program and consistent at maintaining the program methods.

With regards to pedagogy, at Westside we discovered the benefits of peer teaching outside the classroom. Students who peer taught each other when participating in the program developed buddy relationships outside of the classroom that ideally de-escalated many bullying scenarios in the playground.

At North Beachside, non-drama teachers demonstrated that they needed a consistent and more formal in-service experience. One drama teacher did not have enough time provided to teach other teachers the terminology and drama elements necessary to embrace the program’s system.

Many teachers at North Beachside embraced the peer teaching component of the program and saw its benefits. However, for those that were new to drama pedagogy, it opened their eyes to its effective teaching methods and to drama’s ability to provoke empathy and understanding when dealing with bullying.
In all, North Beachside did not have as much administrative support as Westside and Southside. Thus, North Beachside demonstrated that whole school administrative support in terms of curriculum support, timetabling and time management was necessary and that support from non-participating teachers within the school was also very important. When the administration merely gave permission for one or two teachers to trial the program, without the infrastructure of the school catering for the program’s long term success, then the program only affected a small group of students and teachers for a short amount of time. Ideally, the whole school needed to be involved and dedicated to the program’s success for the culture to change within the school community.

**Overall Findings**

As a result of the findings in each case study, I have concluded that three main ingredients are needed in order to empower teachers to successfully counter bullying in their schools. Firstly, it seems that in these three cases at least, an anti-bullying program worked successfully if it was implemented as a whole school strategy or policy within the curriculum and was supported by the administration and maintained for a consistent length of time. Secondly, all three schools reported positive benefits for the teachers from the drama and the peer teaching in-service and follow up support, which means that teacher professional development is vital in school anti-bullying strategies. Thirdly, all three case studies demonstrated that it was highly important to have at least one or more passionate teachers to voluntarily lead the program. The teachers in all three case studies were teachers who selflessly devoted their time to the program and who shared their knowledge and expertise with their colleagues. Without these key teachers’ commitment and confidence, the program would not have taken off or would not have been maintained.

In the section below, these key findings, their implications and recommendations relating to each one will be discussed. These recommendations could usefully be used to support anti-bullying approaches in schools, both within Australia and beyond.
Whole School Curriculum Policy

Across the three case studies I noted that in order for anti-bullying programs to be implemented within the whole school curriculum, school administration needed to provide teachers with timetabling support. Both teachers and students benefitted from the program if the whole school community was involved and if the administration gave the program its full support by arranging the timetable so that the peer teaching and drama could be taught from class to class. I also determined that the theme of bullying should not be an added on unit. If the school develops an anti-bullying policy that incorporates a program such as the *Acting Against Bullying* program, it must be taught within units that embrace issues such as life skills, personal care, communication skills and problem solving strategies. These themes can be taught easily in most humanity subjects such as English, Drama, Studies of Society (SOSE), Health and Physical Education (HPE) or a Pastoral Care class.

At North Beachside and Westside, the classes that participated in the program were successful on a small scale, but without the full support of the school community, the program eventually disintegrated. To keep the momentum going, every teacher and student in the school needs to be involved in the program. More importantly, the program must be embedded in a whole school anti-bullying policy which aligns with the local community and declares that bullying is something the community takes seriously and that the school staff and students have a strategy for. As Welsh (in Tattum & Herbert, 1997, p. 125) also found:

> Individuals, schools and organisations within the community must accept a shared responsibility for implementing effective anti-bullying strategies….When contradictory messages are being given, parents and community organisations can take the initiative to instigate working together to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to the problem of bullying.

It is also important to remember that this whole school cultural shift takes time. I was able to observe Southside slowly change its culture after approximately three years of consistency. During these three years, the same teachers were actively involved in the program the whole school embraced the program as part of its whole school anti-bullying policy and even the local community and feeder primary schools were invited to participate in demonstrations and information giving sessions. This
indicates that a cultural shift against bullying begins to occur if an anti-bullying policy is maintained and cultivated in a school – although it can take many years for the results to be evident.

An investigation into whole school anti bullying strategies in the Northern Territory reached a similar conclusion also noting that time and consistency were major contributing factors toward success (Northern Territory Department of Education, 1998, p. 11). Schools which are working towards whole school change need to work to a time line to get things done. It is very important to bear in mind that whole school change is complex with many interweaving facets need to be addressed. Schools must be prepared to make a long term commitment and they should be prepared to accept that projects will take several years before desired results are achieved. This requires the full advocacy and support from the administration and a consensus among staff to implement the program’s principles throughout the whole school community, at each year level and in as many subjects (key learning areas) as possible. In this way, a cultural shift can occur in a school within a three year time span, significantly reducing the occurrence of bullying among its students.

**Teacher Professional Development**

This study has determined that teacher in-services, professional development and ongoing support are important for a variety of factors. They enabled teachers to experience the methods employed by the program first hand, making it easier for them to teach their students the finer aspects of the peer teaching of drama and phases of bullying that they themselves had discussed and explored during their in-service. Secondly, the in-services created collegial support networks. The teachers bonded with each other during the initial in-service due to the discussions opened up by the drama activities. They also bonded with project staff, which assisted in creating a strong alliance further down the track if and when they needed support. The networks created meant teachers could share with each other methods and resources that worked. These factors contributed to developing the teachers’ confidence levels for dealing with bullying in their schools. The teachers gradually and slowly built up a level of skill and expertise in dealing with bullying situations which they were able to pass on to their students.
More importantly, increased teacher confidence and empowerment meant fewer problems for the administration. A top down approach in most schools means that teachers have to send their students to the principal for support or discipline in a bullying situation. The school administration is usually inundated with a variety of behavioural issues each day and is rarely able to solve bullying situations easily or in the long term. If a teacher is able to deal with a bullying situation without having to resort to administrative interference or support, then the school as a whole benefits and the teachers are not only empowered, but respected by their students. More importantly, if a teacher is respected and empowered by the school administration to collaborate and share his/ her findings and expertise with other teachers and students, then the whole school community benefits.

**Teacher Commitment**

The three case studies also revealed that the commitment of teachers had a significant impact upon the success of the program. Whether the teachers volunteered for the program or if the teachers were coerced into the program often contributed toward the success or failure of the program. The coerced teachers acted cynically towards the program and were more likely to view my role as less useful to them. Moreover, the coerced teachers were less likely to put time and effort into the program and were more likely to pull out of the project or find excuses for it not being able to be developed further.

Conversely, the teachers who volunteered for the program had a strong interest in reducing bullying and were more positive towards my role as a researcher. They were more likely to persevere with the program, despite facing challenges or obstacles along the way and more likely to ask for assistance or to find solutions to problems. Furthermore, these teachers were more likely to win the admiration and respect of their students and fellow teachers which then enabled them to spread the findings and benefits of the program further within their school community. Teachers must want to be involved in the program and be willing to participate in the in-services. They should not be ‘volunteered’ by their administration as this tends to cause resentment and lack of motivation on the teachers’ parts and can cause the program to fail before it even takes off.
The research also confirmed that teachers need to be treated with respect and given some professional freedom within a whole school anti-bullying strategy. Teachers are constantly being confronted with new issues that they need to fit into their already packed curriculum, and are frequently being ‘volunteered’ by their administrations to engage in extracurricular or repetitive activities. Hargreaves (cited in Gunter, 2001, p. 51) found that “teachers are more interested in what other teachers are doing that works than in research findings.” Teacher professional development therefore needs to cater for the practical needs of teachers if it is going to be effective. Researchers have discovered that “democratic decision making in schools will not succeed if the ‘democracy’ consists only in majority votes which leave the defeated minority un convinced and resentful. Majority rule is thus not enough. There must be a climate of concern for other members of staff, and for pupils” (Mackie, 1977, p. 67). Thus, teachers must want to change bullying culture and must see the advantages for them and their students if an anti-bullying policy or strategy is going to be in-serviced and potentially implemented in their school. They must also be given the opportunity to work with other teachers and other schools in order for them to take the findings seriously.

Teacher consistency is also an important component of teacher commitment. When teachers are transferred during the program, this significantly and detrimentally affects the success of the program. Therefore, teachers who are more permanently placed and not looking for immediate transfers or promotions are best suited to the program. At Southside, most of the teachers that were involved in the research project are still there and still involved in facilitating the peer teaching and drama. This is an important contributing factor to the school’s success in dealing with bullying. At Westside, there were successful outcomes, but teacher transfers caused challenges and delays and the continued success of the program is hard to predict. At North Beachside, the two main teachers involved in the research project are still there and success within the participating classes continues, despite the school never having implemented a whole school policy.

Teachers also need to be given time to develop confidence. Even teachers who were enthusiastic from the beginning developed better skills at dealing with bullying some time. Often coinciding with a whole school policy, it takes time for teachers to
develop confidence in facilitating the peer teaching and drama and to practise finding solutions to bullying. Thus, teachers need to be supported consistently by their school administration and given time to share and reflect with their colleagues in order to be fully empowered and successful. Similarly, a whole school policy against bullying appears to take approximately three years before a cultural shift is evident in the school community.

**Future Research**

One possible area for future research is the application of these structures and strategies outlined in this thesis for exploring workplace bullying. The incidents and scenarios in schools are often mirrored in workplaces among adults. Newspaper and academic articles that address workplace bullying often discuss the ramifications of such incidents. In a web article from *News.com.au*, the editor explains why bullying in the workplace has often been difficult to deal with. Here the editor, Southam (2010) suggests;

> Allegations of bullying were usually investigated by human resource staff who soon became the “meat in the sandwich” with responsibilities to both the employer and employees. In many cases, the focus is on minimising legal risk to the organisation rather than changing the workplace culture to stamp out bullying.

In another article by Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy and Alberts (2006, p. 15) it is suggested that workplace bullying not only negatively impacts an employee’s work quality outcomes (e.g. satisfaction, stress), but also negatively affects those outcomes for workplace witnesses. They add that witnessing co-workers have “significantly more general stress and mental stress reactions” and “co-workers who see their colleagues abused more often leave their jobs as a result of their contact with bullying”.

As bullying in the workplace can have a negative impact on all workers, in-servicing workers using the drama and peer teaching strategies outlined in this thesis might possibly be a useful preventative tool to use whenever there are new recruits to reduce the aggressive competition among co-workers. While Drama was found to be a useful tool to increase empathy, peer teaching also encouraged a sense of cooperation and
camaraderie among students and this might be worth re-examining in an adult workplace.

Another possible area for future research is to use the structures and strategies outlined in this thesis to explore the possibility of all schools networking together nationally by creating a data-base in order to eradicate bullying in the long term. Recently, while writing this, an article in the ‘Courier Mail’ newspaper in Queensland outlined a proposal by leading anti-bullying expert to record bullying in schools like NAPLAN. Chilcott and Stafford (2011, p. 30) reported that Professor Phillip Slee was addressing the first national symposium on bullying on Thursday, March 17th, and suggested “there was a need for ‘some national monitoring data’ like NAPLAN rather than just in small sample for national research.” He warned that Australia could fall behind the fight against bullying if it didn’t “seize the current momentum and raise the bar” (Chilcott & Stafford, 2011, p. 30) in its fight against it. Professor Slee added that “you can’t just do it as a one off thing. There has to be ongoing commitment” (2011, p. 30).

Also at the first national symposium was School Education Minister Peter Garrett, who focused on ‘bystander behaviour’. Mr. Garrett acknowledged a girl who intervened in a bullying episode. Mr. Garrett suggested that, “to step in and take decisive non-violent action and to say this isn’t acceptable, rather than simply being a passive bystander, was the right thing” (2011, p. 30).

Given such wide interest in eradicating bullying on a national level and the devastating impact which bullying can have on individuals, schools must actively promote an ongoing system that significantly deals with bullying on a national level. In addition, all teachers across Australia must be trained to actively and confidently engage in this anti-bullying system in order to protect students on a daily basis. They must be supported with regular state and federal funded in-services and professional development that will empower them and their students to deal with and prevent bullying in their schools and that will create a school culture that respects the rights of all students and teachers to engage in learning in a bullying–free environment. Without positive action, schools will continue to sustain bullies and neglect victims that carry on into our adult society, recreating their playground scenarios within the
workforce. It is vital that we empower students and teachers to deal with and counteract bullying in schools immediately if we wish to create a healthier democratic culture and society in the future. Longitudinal studies tracking the effectiveness of these programs are also needed in order to sponsor and monitor future undertakings.

Conclusion
This study has determined that anti-bullying programs, when implemented consistently over an extended period of time, as part of a whole school policy and within the curriculum, by committed teachers and with administrative support can greatly decrease the bullying culture. Specifically, it has also noted that quality professional development does have an empowering effect on teachers’ abilities to successfully and confidently manage bullying in their schools, with an understanding of and ability to implement two educational drama techniques, forum theatre and process drama, as well as peer teaching being at the heart of this work.
REFERENCES


Appendix A: Student Pre-Questionnaire

STUDENT

ACTING AGAINST BULLYING

QUESTIONNAIRE

Take your time to read each question in turn and answer it as best as you can. Please write down your own answers. Remember that we are only interested in your opinion. If any questions are unclear please indicate this next to the questions, by writing a comment or a question mark (?).

Answers to these questions will help us find out more bullying and develop ways to empower you to manage bullying in your own lives.

Your answers will be looked at by the Griffith University research team and your peer teachers. There is no need to write your name on the questionnaire.

Most questions can be answered by drawing a box or writing your answer on the line provided.

Please read each question carefully.

- Draw a square box for each correct box.
- Fully erase any mistakes.
- Do not make stray marks on this form.

EXAMPLE QUESTION

Q. How often do you go to the cinemas?

If your answer is ONCE A WEEK, then you would fill in the box like this:

- □□Never
- □□Now and then
- □□ONCE A MONTH
- □□ONCE A WEEK
A few times a week

If there are any questions you do not wish to answer, skip over them. If you don’t want to participate or if you decide you want to stop at any time just fill this box and your questionnaire won’t be used.

I do not want to participate

1. Are you male or female? (Please fill one box only).
   Male ☐☐(1)       Female ☐☐(2)

2. In what year were you born? (Please fill one box only).

3. In what country were you born? (Please fill one box only).
   Australia ☐☐(1)
   Other ☐☐ (Please specify) ______________

4. Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?
   Yes ☐☐(1)       No ☐☐(0)

5. What is the postcode where you live?
   POSTCODE

6. What is the main language spoken at home?
   ______________________________________

7. What is your father’s job? Please write down exactly what he does, for example, bank teller, postal worker, nurse or unemployed. If you don’t know, write don’t know.
   ______________________________________

8. What is your mother’s job? Please write down exactly what she does, for example, business manager, housewife, unemployed. If you don’t know, write don’t know.
   ______________________________________
9. In your opinion: What do class teachers generally think about your school performance compared to your classmates? (Please fill one box only).
   
   She/he thinks I am:
   
   Very good ......................... □□(4)
   Good ................................ □□(3)
   Average ........................... □□(2)
   Below average .................. □□(1)

10. How do you rate your school performance? (Please fill one box only)

   Very good ......................... □□(4)
   Good ................................ □□(3)
   Average ........................... □□(2)
   Below average .................. □□(1)

11. How do you rate your sports performance? (Please fill one box only)

   Very good ......................... □□(4)
   Good ................................ □□(3)
   Average ........................... □□(2)
   Below average .................. □□(1)

12. How do you feel about school at present? (Please fill one box only)

   I like it a lot .................... □□(4)
   I like it a bit ..................... □□(3)
   I don’t like it very much.. □□(2)
   I don’t like it at all........... □□(1)

13. Because
   
   of illness... □□(0) □□(1) □□(2) □□(3) □□(4) □□(5) □□(6)

14. Because you
   
   wagged school □□(0) □□(1) □□(2) □□(3) □□(4) □□(5) □□(6)

15. For other
   
   reasons ..... □□(0) □□(1) □□(2) □□(3) □□(4) □□(5) □□(6)
Do you think these things are bullying? (Please fill one box for each statement).

Yes  Not sure  No

16. Hitting a student ................... [ ] (3)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (1)
17. Pushing a student ................... [ ] (3)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (1)
18. Scaring a student ................... [ ] (3)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (1)
19. Teasing a student ................... [ ] (3)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (1)
20. Calling a student names ........... [ ] (3)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (1)
21. Telling nasty rumours about a student ................... [ ] (3)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (1)
22. Not letting a student join the group ................... [ ] (3)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (1)

A number of statements that people use to describe themselves are given below. Give the answer that seems to best describe how you generally feel. Please fill in one box for each statement.

23. I am quick tempered.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   [ ] (1)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (3)  [ ] (4)

24. I have a fiery temper.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   [ ] (1)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (3)  [ ] (4)

25. I am a hot-headed person.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   [ ] (1)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (3)  [ ] (4)

26. I get angry when I'm slowed down by others' mistakes.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   [ ] (1)  [ ] (2)  [ ] (3)  [ ] (4)
27. I feel annoyed when I am not given recognition for doing good work.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   □□(1) □□(2) □□(3) □□(4)

28. I fly off the handle.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   □□(1) □□(2) □□(3) □□(4)

29. When I get mad, I say nasty things.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   □□(1) □□(2) □□(3) □□(4)

30. It makes me furious when I am criticised in front of others.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   □□(1) □□(2) □□(3) □□(4)

31. When I get frustrated, I feel like hitting someone.
   Almost  Almost
   never  Sometimes  Often  always
   □□(1) □□(2) □□(3) □□(4)

32. In general, how do you feel about life at present? (Please fill one box only).
   I feel very happy .................... □□(4)
   I feel OK ............................... □□(3)
   I don't feel very happy ............. □□(2)
   I am not happy at all............... □□(1)

33. Do you ever feel lonely? (Please fill in one box only).
   Yes, very often ..................... □□(4)
   Yes, rather often ................... □□(3)
   Yes, sometimes ..................... □□(2)
   No...................................... □□(1)

The following section is about bullying.

We say a student's being bullied when another student, or group of students, repeatedly say or do nasty and unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a student is teased repeatedly in a way he or she doesn't like. But it is not bullying when two students about the same strength quarrel or fight.
34. Have you been bullied in school this term? (Please fill one box only).

   I haven’t been bullied in school this term ...... ☐ ☐(1)
   Once or twice ........................................... ☐ ☐(2)
   Sometimes .................................................. ☐ ☐(3)
   About once a week ....................................... ☐ ☐(4)
   Several times a week .................................... ☐ ☐(5)

Please answer this question only if you have been bullied. If you have been bullied, did you? (Please fill one box for each statement).

   Yes  Sometimes  No

35. Get back at the bully........................................... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐(1)
36. Tell a friend .................................................. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐(1)
37. Tell a parent .................................................. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐(1)
38. Tell a teacher .................................................. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐(1)
39. How often have you taken part in bullying other students in school this term?

   (Please fill one box only).

   I haven’t bullied others in school this term .... ☐ ☐(1)
   Once or twice ........................................... ☐ ☐(2)
   Sometimes .................................................. ☐ ☐(3)
   About once a week ....................................... ☐ ☐(4)
   Several times a week .................................... ☐ ☐(5)

40. How often does it happen that other students don’t want to spend time with you at school and you end up being alone? (Please fill one box only).

   It hasn’t happened this term..................... ☐ ☐(1)
   Once or twice ........................................... ☐ ☐(2)
   Sometimes .................................................. ☐ ☐(3)
   About once a week ....................................... ☐ ☐(4)
   Several times a week .................................... ☐ ☐(5)

Please fill in one box for each statement.

Not

Agree  sure  Disagree

41. I wouldn’t be friends with

   students who let themselves
be pushed around .................. (3) (2) (1)
42. Students who are weak are
    just asking for trouble .......... (3) (2) (1)
43. It’s OK to call some students
    nasty names........................ (3) (2) (1)
44. I like it when somebody stands up
    for students who get bullied.. (3) (2) (1)
45. Soft students make me sick ..... (3) (2) (1)
46. It makes me angry when a student
    gets picked on without reason  (3) (2) (1)
47. It’s funny to see students get upset
    when they are teased .......... (3) (2) (1)
48. A bully is really a coward ...... (3) (2) (1)
49. It’s a good thing to help students
    who can’t defend themselves (3) (2) (1)
50. Students who get picked on
    usually deserve it ............... (3) (2) (1)
51. Nobody likes a wimp............. (3) (2) (1)
52. Students should not complain
    about being bullied................ (3) (2) (1)
Appendix B: Student Post-Questionnaire

STUDENT POST-PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE

QUESTION A
How would you explain to someone what bullying is?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION B
Can you write down the three stages of bullying?

1. ........................................

2. ........................................

3. ........................................

QUESTION C
Can you write down the three types of people in a bullying situation?

1. ........................................

2. ........................................

3. ........................................
STUDENT POST-PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

PART TWO

QUESTION D
Do you now notice bullying situations more than before the program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

QUESTION E
E1: Do you now think that bullying can be prevented, de-escalated or stopped?

☐ Yes
☐ No

E2: Who do you think is the person (or people) most likely to change a bullying situation?

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E3: How do you think they would they do this?

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................................................................................................................................................
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................................................................................................................................................
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................................................................................................................................................
................................................................................................................................................
QUESTION F
Do you now think or feel differently toward any or all people in bullying situations and, if so, who?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Bully</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Bullied</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Bystander</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTION G
Are you now more likely to do something in response to a bullying situation in order to de-escalate or end it?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure

QUESTION H
H1: Have you learned how to manage bullying situations that you are involved in (as the person doing the bullying, the person being bullied or a bystander) better?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure

H2: As a bystander in a bullying situation, are you now more likely to:

☐ Intervene to try to de-escalate or stop the bullying
☐ Watch and/or do nothing
☐ Participate in the bullying
□ Report to someone in authority

QUESTION I

I1: Has your usual role in a bullying situation changed because of your involvement in this program?

□ Yes
□ No

I2: If ‘yes’, in what way?
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...................................................................................................................................................................
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QUESTION J

J1: Tick the box/boxes for any of the following groups of people who supported or did not support your involvement in this program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supported</th>
<th>Did Not Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administration</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of your family</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

J2: Which group from the above list supported you the most?

...................................................................................................................................................................

J3: Which group from the above list supported you the least?
QUESTION K

K1: Did anyone’s level of support change significantly during the course of the program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

K2: If yes, who was this person/people?

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

K3: Did their support or encouragement:

☐ Increase
☐ Decrease
Appendix C: Teacher Post- Questionnaire

TEACHER POST-PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTION A
A1: Have you observed any changes in your students who were previously bullies, bullied or bystanders as a result of the program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

A2: If so, how would you describe these changes?
Student awareness about the process and stages of bullying has been heightened. Can not identify any other changes.

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QUESTION B
B1: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying among your own students than before the program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

B2: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying among students other than those you teach?

☐ Yes
☐ No
B3: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying at an adult level in the school community?
  □ Yes
  □ No

QUESTION C
C1: Has the culture of your classroom changed?
  □ Yes
  □ No

C2: If so, how would you describe the change?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION D
D1: Have you noticed any changes in teachers involved in the program?
  □ Yes
  □ No

D2: If so, how would you describe these changes?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION E
E1: Have you noticed any changes in the school culture in relation to bullying?
  □ Yes
  □ No

E2: If so, how would you describe these changes?
QUESTION F

F1: Did you feel supported by the students involved in this program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

F2: Did you feel supported by the student body as a whole?

☐ Yes
☐ No

F3: Did you feel supported by other teachers involved in the program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

F4: Did you feel supported by teachers not in the program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

F5: Did you feel supported by the school’s program coordinator?

☐ Yes
☐ No

F6: Did you feel supported by the school administration?

☐ Yes
☐ No
F7: Did you feel supported by the staff at Griffith University?

☐ Yes
☐ No

QUESTION G
G1: From where or from whom did your most important support come?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

G2: From where or from whom did you feel least supported?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

QUESTION H
H1: Can you identify other support which would have been beneficial for you?

☐ Yes
☐ No

H2: Where should this support have come from?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

QUESTION I
I1: To what extent would you agree that your involvement with this project was a valuable use of?

☐ Strongly agree
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Undecided

I2: Why do you feel this way?
Appendix D: Southside Teachers’ Response

TEACHER POST-PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTION A
A1: Have you observed any changes in your students who were previously bullies, bullied or bystanders as a result of the program?

☐ xYes
☐ No

A2: Can not identify any other changes?
If so, how would you describe these changes?
Student awareness about the process and stages of bullying has been heightened
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION B
B1: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying among your own students than before the program?

☐ xYes
☐ No

B2: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying among students other than those you teach?

☐ xYes
☐ No
B3: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying at an adult level in the school community?

☐ xYes
☐ No

QUESTION C

C1: Has the culture of your classroom changed?

☐ xYes
☐ No

C2: If so, how would you describe the change?

We now have a language to use to describe bullying and tools to decode situations………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION D

D1: Have you noticed any changes in teachers involved in the program?

☐ Yes
☐ xNo

D2: If so, how would you describe these changes?

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION E

E1: Have you noticed any changes in the school culture in relation to bullying?
E2: If so, how would you describe these changes?
The implementation of the *Acting Against Bullying* program into the Year 8 Arts curriculum
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION F
F1: Did you feel supported by the students involved in this program?

☐ xYes
☐ No

F2: Did you feel supported by the student body as a whole?

☐ xYes
☐ No

F3: Did you feel supported by other teachers involved in the program?

☐ xYes
☐ No

F4: Did you feel supported by teachers not in the program?

☐ xYes
☐ No

F5: Did you feel supported by the school’s program coordinator?

☐ xYes
F6: Did you feel supported by the school administration?

☐ No

☑ Yes

☐ No

F7: Did you feel supported by the staff at Griffith University?

☐ Yes

☐ No

QUESTION G

G1: From where or from whom did your most important support come?

Maureen, Elsa

HOD……………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

G2: From where or from whom did you feel least supported?

NA

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION H

H1: Can you identify other support which would have been beneficial for you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

H2: Where should this support have come from?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
QUESTION I

I1: To what extent would you agree that your involvement with this project was a valuable use of
Your time and resources?

☐ xStrongly agree
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Undecided

I2: Why do you feel this way?
We now have established a school policy framework for anti bullying and developed a dynamic anti bullying curriculum unit for all Year 8 students which incorporates AAB.
Appendix E: North Beachside Teachers’ Response

North Beachside Response
TEACHER POST -PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTION A
A1: Have you observed any changes in your students who were previously bullies, bullied or bystanders as a result of the program?

☐ Yes
A2: If so, how would you describe these changes?

…By understanding the process of bullying, the bullied students were empowered to keep resisting the bullies and to enlist support from bystanders. The other students realised their power position as a bystander and this also empowered them. I have seen a few cases of extreme bullying turned around through this………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION B
B1: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying among your own students than before the program?

☐ Yes
B2: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying among students other than those you teach?

☐ Yes
B3: Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying at an adult level in the school community?
Very hard question. With the fear of grievances I would have to say no, due to the individuals involved.

QUESTION C

C1: Has the culture of your classroom changed?

☐ Yes

C2: If so, how would you describe the change?

………………The Bullies no longer hold the balance of power and by simply reminding the groups about the power of the bystander they continue to deny the bully that power and opportunity.

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………Q

QUESTION D

D1: Have you noticed any changes in teachers involved in the program?

☐ No

D2: If so, how would you describe these changes?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION E

E1: Have you noticed any changes in the school culture in relation to bullying?

☐ No

☐

E2: If so, how would you describe these changes?
It needs to become more wide spread and for this to happen needs the backing of Ed. Qld. to ensure all staff take it on board. When teachers are aware of it they have seen changes but it is too narrow of a spread…………………………………………………………………………………

QUESTION F

F1: Did you feel supported by the students involved in this program?

☐ Yes

F2: Did you feel supported by the student body as a whole?

☐ Yes

F3: Did you feel supported by other teachers involved in the program?

☐ Yes

F4: Did you feel supported by teachers not in the program?

☐ No

F5: Did you feel supported by the school’s program coordinator?

☐ Yes

F6: Did you feel supported by the school administration?

☐ Yes

F7: Did you feel supported by the staff at Griffith University?

☐ Yes very much so!!!
QUESTION G
G1: From where or from whom did your most important support come?

……Griffith, that is Maureen Owen.

G2: From where or from whom did you feel least supported?

Ed. Qld. Nothing will be done or changed without their influence. With so many changes happening at the moment with curriculum it would seem staff aren’t will to do something else if it isn’t going to last because Ed Qld haven’t backed it.

QUESTION H
H1: Can you identify other support which would have been beneficial for you?

No

H2: Where should this support have come from?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………

QUESTION I
I1: To what extent would you agree that your involvement with this project was a valuable use of your time and resources?

Strongly agree

I2: Why do you feel this way?

……………………………Bullying is such a major issue but the normal response borders on bullying the bully into leaving the kid alone or provoking the bully to take revenge. The victim remains just that, a victim. Until the skills are taught to students that they don’t have to give the power to the bully they remain powerless. The eyes open when the bystander realises their direct role in allowing the bullying to happen. It also showed me the stages involved and how to identify them and thus attempt to put a stop to it all earlier rather than later.
Appendix F: Collation of Student Data from Three Case Studies

Overall Collation of Data from Student Post-Questionnaires
Westside, Southside, North Beachside, Yrs 8, 11 & 12, 2005
Total Response: 124 Students

QA.
Can you explain what bullying is?
Yes 82.9%
No 17.1%

QB.
Can you write down the three stages of bullying?
Yes 92.9%
No 7.1%

QC.
Can you write down the three types of people in a bullying situation?
Yes 91.9%
No 8.1%

QD.
Do you now notice bullying situations more?
Yes 79.9%
No 20.1%

QE.1.
Do you think that bullying can be prevented, de-escalated or stopped?
Yes 92.1%
No 7.9%

QE.2.
Who do you think is the person most likely to change a bullying situation?
Bystander 59%
Teacher 20%
Self 1%
Bullied 13.7%
Bully 14%
Everyone 4.3%

QE.3.
Can you explain how they would do this?
Yes 75%
No 12.3%

QF.
Do you now think differently towards any of these people?
Bully
Yes 51.5%
No 48.5%
Bullied
Yes 60.8%
No 39.2%
Bystander
Yes 55.1%
No 44.9%

QG.
Are you more likely to do something in response to a bullying situation in order to de-escalate or end it?
Yes 64.3%
No 5.9%
Unsure 29.8%

QH.1.
Have you learned how to manage bullying situations better?
Yes 70.3%
No 10.4%
Unsure 19.3%

QH.2.
As a bystander in a bullying situation are you now more likely to:

Intervene to try to de-escalate the bullying? 73.5%
Watch and /or walk away? 6.7%
Participate in the bullying? 1%
Report to someone in authority? 35.5%

QI.1.
Has your usual role in a bullying situation changed because of your involvement in the project?
Yes 28.3%
No 70.3%

QJ.1.
Tick box or boxes for any of the following groups of people who supported or did not support you in this project:

Students
Yes 89.4%
No 10.6%

Teachers
Yes 96.7%
No 3.3%

Admin
Yes 52.9%
No 42.1%

Family
Yes 67.1%
No 27.2%

QJ.2.
Which group from the above list supported you the most?

Students 22.9%
Teachers 58.4%
Admin 1.7%
Family 10.4%

QJ.4.
Which group from the above list supported you the least?

Students 17.2%
Teachers 20.6%
Admin 33.6%
Family 23.1%

QK.1. (NOTE: Only answered by Westside SHS and Southside SHS)
Did anyone’s level of support change significantly during the course of the program?
Yes 34.7%
No 65.3%

QK.3.
Did their support or encouragement:
Increase 73.7%
Decrease 26.3%
Appendix G: Westside Data from Questionnaires

1. Bullying Statistics

Originally, during the pre-program stage, students at Westside indicated that 65% had “not been bullied” during the term the questionnaires were given, while 16% claimed they had been bullied “once or twice”, 8% said they had been bullied “sometimes” or “once a week” and 4% admitted they were bullied “several times a week”. Compared to Olweus’ original study at Norwegian schools in 1983 when “approximately 9% of students were victims” (Olweus, 1993, p 13), this data from Westside demonstrates that bullying has not decreased substantially twenty years later and that Australia is very similar to the rest of the world on that issue.

When Westside students admitted that they had been bullied, 20% said they would often “get back at the bully”, 20% said they would “tell a friend”, 8% said they would “tell a parent” and 4% would “tell a teacher”. When asked how often they take part in bullying other students in school during the term, 29% felt they “hadn’t bullied others” in school that term, 50% admitted to bullying others “once or twice” during the term, 3% said they bullied others “sometimes” during the term, 4% said they bullied others “about once a week” and 4% said they bullied others “several times a week” during that term.

Bullying was clearly still a relevant issue at Westside.

2. The Importance of Teachers’ Roles for Students

The students agreed that teachers don’t always do enough for the bullied, sometimes pretending not to see the conflict because they don’t know how to deal with it or because they think that the bullying is not significant. The students agreed that they did not always feel supported by the teachers in bullying situations and that they would prefer more input from them. One of the students also added that those students that have been bullied needed support from the school in terms of a mentoring program.
A:
The teacher has to be open-minded and … the students are under a lot of pressure and they can’t be expected to just go ‘bang, don’t bully me’ … scared to turn around and say ‘don’t bully me’ in case they’re going to be bullied, but they’re going to be bullied anyway.

B:
But you also need support from teachers. Like, I won’t say like who, but if there is bullying going on, some teachers just say ‘cut it out – just go somewhere else’ or something.

Some students expressed they did not feel supported by teachers overall.

B:
They’re just saying ‘get out of here and do it somewhere else’ but they’ll just walk around the corner and it will start up again. As long as they can’t see it, they’re happy.

It is highly important for the teachers to be diligent at countering bullying in their environments as they have a duty of care towards making schools safe and supportive environments. If children do not feel supported by their parents or teachers, they are less likely to try to ask for help or to do something to stop the bullying.

Student Quotes

B:
I’d first ask them why they do it. Just give them time to explain themselves and ask ‘why would you treat them like that because I know you wouldn’t want to be treated like that?’ just so give them advice like “treat them like you’d like to be treated”.

C:
I’d probably give them the advice to go and talk it out with the person. Maybe have it happen in the room with a supervisor even us or something like that so they could talk and try and get through it without resorting the violence and that.
A:  
I think that if we were to do Belinda’s suggestion that the students and the teachers would be there, I don’t think they should intervene unless necessary though.

C:  
If there was a whole big group of people watching a fight or something, I’d try and show them what to do by doing it myself. That way they’d learn how to do it.

C:  
I’d intervene and try and talk it out and like you know just stop them from fighting first and let them have the power, both of them equal power, so that they can work it out and get through it together and like.

B:  
Just give them the knowledge to stand up and just tell them that you’d be more welcome in most groups if you did stand up for that person – you’d be seen as a nice, helping and supportive friend that they could confide in.

C:  
I’ve just been noticing small things that have been happening lately. Just constant little things that is bullying, but people don’t actually realise it. Like name-calling and stuff like that. It’s just on a low level, but it’s continuous and I’ve tried a couple of times to help out the person – like people involved – just like try to get involved a bit more.

A:  
If they can manage to reduce it or overcome that then maybe they can give hope and positive input for others. I think, I guess just maybe telling your teacher by having an input towards the teacher, the teachers maybe mediate.

A:  
I mean after you’ve learned this, you definitely would back off. Thinking of past experiences you think maybe I could have handled that a little better and prepare yourself if something did happen. I think there’s a lot of more emotion in the Grade 8s
and 9s that they hit that awkward stage of finding their feet – “I’ve just found boys” and whatever goes on.

Teacher Quotes

A:

We have also, over the years, taken steps to quieten down the school in a number of respects. We’ve got rid of the PA system which used to drive me crazy, as well as the students. We changed the lunch hours in that our major break is the first break and we were finding there were issues of bullying that were still occurring in the second break, because were at a loose end with this very long break later in the day. And also we lengthened the period times – so there’s a more settling influence there.

We’ve also eliminated all the bells, which also drives me crazy and that’s an attempt to be a more calming environment. Because a lot of students here did bring a lot of emotional baggage with them to school and some of them do act that out and it may not be classified as bullying behaviour but they – because of some quite distressing and disturbing episode that’s occurred at home that they bring that with them to school. Now we believe that we’ve taken steps and this program is another one of those steps, to improve I guess the tone and the climate in the school.

We identified – and I say ‘we’ in terms of the admin team and the staff generally – the issues of sort of hot spots in the schools and students certainly were acting out, and by some, really didn’t appreciate it, and by some pro-active measures to work against this. To make, you know, areas in terms of conflict out of bounds, to be calm, to be very vigilant in terms of smoking and that sort of thing

B:

All of them seemed to have a depth of understanding that was either acceptable or high or very high. So – I was pleased about that. So – they went in with trepidation. Like, they didn’t sort of say “I can’t wait”, to do it. Some of them didn’t – one of them, a very quiet girl, nearly had meltdown about going into classes.
B:
I’m not a drama teacher – if we got critiqued we’d be fairly average but, you know, some of my kids in Health were drama kids so they were much more comfortable in that forum or whatever, but some of them that is not their thing at all, but teaching and advocating for health is – so once they found that they knew the content they got over the fact that it was Drama and they surprised themselves, actually.

C:
This project is very valuable in Westside because … we have above the state average of bullying in Westside and its very valuable because it allows the Grade 8s and up and coming students to learn more about bullying before it actually happens to them at high school. [But] I don’t know how it will fit into the [overall] curriculum.

When asked if they had observed any changes in their students who were previously known to be bullies, bullied or bystanders as a result of the program, 71.4% responded ‘yes’ while 28.6% responded ‘no’. When we asked the teachers to described any changes observed in their students, 50% of teachers who answered ‘yes’ to observing changes in their students described the change as a general increase in an awareness of bullying as a serious form of harassment that can have damaging affects on people’s self-esteem.

A typical response was given from one teacher who said, “Students are more aware of bullying as a legitimate social issue – not just a rite of passage”. The remaining 50% of teachers described an improvement in their students’ confidence in their ability to handle bullying situations. One teacher stated that her students had begun to “sort out lunch time arguments themselves” and were talking about bullying as if it were “not ok” anymore.

This is an interesting response compared with the 71.4 % of teachers who observed changes in their students who had been classified in the past as bullies and 50% of teachers who felt their students now had a general awareness that bullying is not OK and should not be seen as a rite of passage. It would seem to suggest that although changes have been observed by the teachers, they are not sufficient to imply a change in the cultural trend of the classroom or the school in relation to bullying.
In the quantitative part of the post questionnaires results were similar to those in the qualitative questionnaires. Westside students were asked a series of short answer questions and these were their responses. When asked “can you explain what bullying is?” 93% were able to respond ‘yes’ while 7% responded ‘no’. Asked “can you answer what the three stages of bullying are” 86% answered ‘yes’ and 14% replied ‘no’. Asked if they could write down the three roles in a bullying situation, 94% said ‘yes’ while 6% said ‘no’. This demonstrated that after the project the students felt confident enough to say they understood the concepts of bullying that they had been taught.

Asked if the students noticed bullying situations more now as a result of the project, 84% said ‘yes’ and 16% said ‘no’. This is a significant finding as it demonstrates that, while some students may have taken bullying situations for granted before, they were now more aware of it as a social problem following their involvement with the program than before participating in the project.

Even more significantly, when students were asked if they thought bullying could be prevented, de-escalated or stopped, 91% of them answered ‘yes’ and 9% answered ‘no’. This response shows a more positive attitude from the students toward being able to de-escalate bullying and demonstrates indirectly a more positive attitude facilitated by their teachers. Interviews further on in this chapter will show that while teachers often felt wary initially at the early stages of the project, their own observations of their students’ changed attitudes provided them with a more optimistic outlook for de-escalating bullying at the completion of the project.

When asked who they think is the person most likely to change a bullying situation, 58% of students answered ‘the bystander’, 20% of students suggested ‘the bully’ might be the best person, 12.5% of students responded that they felt ‘the teacher’ would be best suited to changing the situation, 4.5% of students felt ‘the bullied’ could do something, 3% felt that they as ‘self’ could do something and 2% believed ‘everyone’ could do something to change a bullying situation. When students were asked if they could explain how they would do this, 47% answered ‘yes’ and 15%
answered ‘no’. Again the power of the bystander is a major concept that was grasped by the students as a result of their involvement in their project.

Students were also asked if they felt differently towards anyone involved in the bullying role. When asked if they felt differently toward the bully, 54% answered ‘yes’ and 46% answered ‘no’. Asked if they felt differently toward the bullied, an outstanding 82% said ‘yes’ and 18% said ‘no’. Again this shows a marked increase in empathy for the ‘victims’ from fellow students, some who may have been the bullies of those victims initially. Not surprisingly, 65% of students said they now felt differently toward the bystander while 35% said they did not as a result of doing the project.

When students were asked if they were more likely to do something in response to a bullying situation in order to de-escalate or end it, 51% replied ‘yes’, 44% replied ‘no’ and 3% said they were ‘unsure’. This shows that a large percentage of students felt empowered to deal with bullying better after completing the project. In addition, when asked if they had learned to manage bullying situations better, 65% said ‘yes’, 28% said ‘no’ and 7% said they were ‘unsure’.

Students were also asked what they would do as a bystander in a bullying situation. Surprisingly, on that question, 72% said they would ‘intervene or try to de-escalate the situation’, 16% added that they would also ‘report it to someone in authority’, 9% said they would ‘watch and walk away’ and 3% said they would ‘participate’. While the project has never encouraged students to try to take the law into their own hands or place themselves in harm’s way, it is clear that students felt better equipped following the project to deal with bullying situations themselves when in the role of bystander. When students were asked if their usual role in a bullying situation had changed because of their involvement in the project, 48% answered ‘yes’, 48% said ‘no’ and 4% were unsure how to answer.

Finally, students were asked who supported them or didn’t support them while they participated in the *Acting Against Bullying* project. Teachers were rated the highest at 90%, students were rated at 84%, family were rated at 49% and administration were rated at 31%. This response was an important one for me personally as the reflective
participant in the project and the coordinator of the professional development for the teachers. It demonstrated for me that teachers felt confidence towards the project and this meant that they felt confident themselves in their roles within the project and their abilities to deal with bullying situations.

When asked if anyone’s level of support changed significantly during the course of the program, 80.6% answered that support for the program increased, while 12.4% replied that support for the program decreased. Again this signified that once there was an understanding of how the project worked and an awareness of its success rate, support for the *Acting Against Bullying* project generally increased substantially.

From this questionnaire, 43.4% of students answered ‘yes’ to seeing a change in the level of support they received from people following the program while 42% of those respondents said that this change in support came from their fellow students. Meanwhile, 12% said the change in support came from their families and another 12% said the change occurred in their teachers.

**Data 3: Re Westside Teachers’ Perspectives**

When six teachers were asked if they felt confident in dealing with bullying among their own students than before participating in the program, 85.7% of the teachers responded ‘yes’ and 14.3% responded ‘no’. The 85.7% also responded positively to the question “Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying among students other than those you teach?” and the question “Do you feel more confident in dealing with bullying at an adult level in the school community?”

When asked if they felt supported by their students involved in the *Acting Against Bullying* program, 100% of teachers responded with ‘yes’. When asked if they felt supported by other teachers, 100% responded ‘yes”. When asked if they felt supported by the school student body as a whole, 71.4% of teachers responded, ‘yes’ and 28.6% responded ‘no’. On being asked if they felt supported by the teachers not participating in the program 57.1% of Westside teachers responded ‘yes’ and 42.9% responded ‘not applicable’ although this option was not originally written into the questionnaire.
When asked if they felt supported by the *Acting Against Bullying* program coordinator, 100% of Westside teachers responded with ‘yes’. When asked if they felt supported by the school administration, 71.4% responded ‘yes’ and 28.6% responded ‘not applicable’. When asked if they felt supported by other staff at Griffith University, 71.4% responded ‘yes’ and 28.6% responded ‘no’.

When asked “from where or from whom did most of your support come?” Westside teachers responded in the following manner: 85.7% of respondents identified their Head of Department (or program coordinator) as the person who offered them the most support during the duration of the program, 28.6% were grateful for the support they received from the Griffith University staff, 14.2% listed the principals of both their school and the primary school as being highly supportive, 14.2% received most of their support from their “staff peers” and another 14.2% felt it was their senior students who offered them the greatest amount of support.

When asked “from where or from whom did you feel least supported?” only 28.6% of respondents answered this question, with 50% of those identifying administration as the people who offered least amount of support, and the other 50% responding with the students. Again it is unclear why so few respondents answered this question and leaves room for further questioning. Two possible reasons that come to mind are that the teachers do not want to be seen as negative or as critical of anyone who may read the outcomes at a later date or that these teachers simply didn’t feel this question warranted an answer because they are all very supportive of each other in this school.

Despite their wish for more time to reflect, when asked to register the extent that they would agree that their involvement with this project was a valuable use of their time and resources, 28.6% of teachers strongly agreed, 42.9% of teachers agreed, 14.2% disagreed, 0% strongly disagreed and 14.2% were undecided. When asked to explain their answers, 28.6% said they felt the project was valuable as it offered students a new and challenging way to look at, and deal with, bullying.

A further 14.2% said the program was effective due to the students’ enthusiasm in the performance side of it and another 14.2% were concerned about the sustainability of the project. They further commented that as they had included community projects
and involved parents, continuing the program at that level would have been a strain on the school’s resources.
Appendix H: Westside Journal Entries

1.
I visited Westside to see how they are going. They [say they] have been waiting for Erica to contact them so they haven’t been in-serviced. Chris had not told me any of this when I had phoned to check in the past. I immediately phoned and emailed Erica [again] and asked her if we can do a joint in-service early in term 1 next year – 2005. Book entry, 23rd November, 2004)

2.
My own entry written at the beginning of that year just prior to the teachers beginning the peer teaching responds to this statement with my own concerns at the time.

My concern is that although I have asked them to contact [the former teacher] a few times, they have not done so and have ‘trained’ each other without going through the proper method used so far. Also, there is resistance toward the project itself being on their grounds (my coming out there). Hostility and suspicion seem to permeate. (Book entry 4/7/05)
Appendix I: Westside Interviews

Focus Class – Year 11 Drama. Teacher
30.10.03

Interviewer:
We’ll talk about the program about your teaching experience and the Year 11s and how you found them. I just wonder whether you observed any significant changes in any of the students who took that class.

Respondent:
More so in one group. In my class, I’ve divided them up into two smaller groups and they worked basically in those. TAPE BREAKS.

… … just listened and comprehended that. A lot more of them were action. In preparation, we tried to do that as well – make everyone have a bit of a leadership role in each of the lessons.

Interviewer:
And that’s…when it was their turn to do that, they took to that…

Respondent:
Yes. Some of them more so than others. And then on the other hand there were some kids who are normally leaders and didn’t like that sometimes they had to fit that….onto…power a bit….
I found basically that with the two groups, one group worked better than the other group.

Interviewer:
And why was that?
Respondent:
In the class that I have, the group dynamic in the second group wasn’t very good. As well as that, a lot of the kids that I have are irregular ‘attendants’ so it made it a problem with planning and delivering lessons and so on. There were a couple of kids who weren’t here and they had some materials or whatever, which would leave the other kids a little bit distraught and frantic and felt a little bit let down, I guess. But the other group worked really well together.

Interviewer:
And were the personality types in each of the groups different as well?

Respondent:
Other Respondent: Probably, I think – yeah. A lot of strong characters in one of the groups I think – the one that didn’t work well.

Interviewer:
And before we talking about the quieter kids who started taking on the leadership roles, did they sustain that through …

Respondent:
Yes. They did. Yes. It worked really well as a team and they were all willing to help each other out. And if someone wasn’t good at explaining something, another kid would help out and help to explain, which was really good – in that group.

Interviewer:
And how long is it since they stopped their teaching?

Respondent:
About two or three weeks, something like that.

Interviewer:
And do you think they are still carrying some of that stuff?
Respondent:
Yes, I guess so. Well, they recognise it more themselves, that bullying occurs and that some of them were bullies, but they didn’t realise the … of bullying, so now, even in the playground, they tell me about themselves. Some of them will go up to kids and say “what’s going on here”. They’re trying to be proactive themselves, they’re trying to – I think it’s been really good in opening their eyes.

Interviewer:
Do you think they’re seeing it more?

Respondent:
Yes I think so. They’re switched on to it a lot more now. They tell me stories all the time, so from the feedback that I get, they definitely are.

Interviewer:
So you think there’s been an attitude shift around the notion …

Respondent:
Yes.

Interviewer:
- And how would you describe that – the shift…or what would the attitude … before …?

Respondent:
Well, when I went through the program with them, they weren’t, I don’t know, they just weren’t willing to speak up or – they did know it was happening but they didn’t realise it was everywhere. That it was happening in their small little group. They just weren’t pro-active about it before. Even if they did realise it, they just didn’t do anything about it. But I think using enhanced forum theatre and giving them the opportunity to express ways of dealing with it – they’re using that outside the classroom as well.

Interviewer:
Are they less tolerant of it?

Respondent:
Yes. From the stories that they’re telling me, definitely. There was one girl who told me she saw, waiting for a bus, there was a boy who was crying, he was upset his pet rat had died or something like that – and other boys were picking up on him and she came into that situation and said “what are you getting out of this? How would you feel if this was happening to you and. ”

TAPE ENDS.

RESTARTS OVER OTHER SIDE.

Respondent:
… when they started teaching, I guess, was when I started hearing stories …

Interviewer:
Have any of the student attitudes towards school in general or towards teachers in general changed?

Respondent:
I don’t really see much of a change there, I think. I think … leadership … lost their inhibitions a little bit because more required of them, which makes of course the attitude to me change because they are willing to contribute a little bit more.

Interviewer:
So that makes your relationship a little bit easier?

Respondent:
Right. They’re opening up to me a little bit more.

Interviewer:
So has there been a shift in the culture of the class, to any extent or just with isolated students?
Respondent:
I think because they’re in two separate groups it is reflected in the groups rather than collectively over the whole. They were in a team and they felt ownership for their team, I think.

Interviewer:
Is that class functioning better since the program?

Respondent:
I think so. But more so the group that it worked with, because I’m never going to get the kids who didn’t turn up to turn up. There’s always going to be the group dynamic problem because some kids feel let down by those kids who didn’t turn up, but like I said that was more so in the one group.

Interviewer:
Okay. Did doing the program change the way you feel about dealing with the problem …

Respondent:
Well, it brought me back to my childhood schooldays and I could tell a story to them that I was a bully at some stages. You don’t really reflect on it until later – think about how it affects people. You hear issues in the media all the time – really starts to open your eyes and you say “hey, look, This can’t go on” because it just, it ends up too messy.

Interviewer:
How did they respond to you on that?

Respondent:
Well, because I’m very open it allowed them to be very open back and they were willing to share their stories about them being bullies as well, to me.

Interviewer:
And how many of them were bullies? Had been?
Respondent:
I think they’d all been bullies or been bullied at some stage. Some more significantly than the others. But, I would say probably half a dozen, significant bullies, say?

Interviewer:
And what sort of things did they do as bullies? Serious things?

Respondent:
I think it was more so at Primary school. Just picking on people for difference, I guess, not really thinking, thinking it was a joke and not thinking about the other person’s feelings. Just realised after reflection, I guess, that that’s what they were, what they did and “I must have been one of those”.

Interviewer:
And did that create a shift in their attitude towards bullying?

Respondent:
Yes I think it did. Right from the beginning. Because the way I approached it was by being very open about it, which allowed them to be very open about it, because I think by being very open about it you can change things, because you are reflecting and realising that there are problems and that sometimes you might be creating the problem so …

… Tape problems …

… carried it over to sharing with the younger children too. But they were told they didn’t (have to) share anything they didn’t want to … right over their heads …

Interviewer:
Have you intervened in bullying programs since the bullying program started?

Respondent:
In the class I have, yes.
Interviewer:
And is it easier to do that?

Respondent:
Yes. I think so. Because of we’ve been looking at it so much you just spot on to it – and the kids are as well. “Bullying!” straight away. It doesn’t mean I’ll say, but they’ll be not far from my heels.

Interviewer:
What happens then? What do you do?

Respondent:
Basically it’s just the fact that they reflect on what they’ve done and think about it and realise that they need to change their own attitudes, I guess.

Interviewer:
So naming it, you feel like that makes a difference?

Respondent:
Yes, I think so. Yes. Because we’ve been through all the process in this acting against bullying, they know now to try to prevent it. That they can do it. They can do it in their own situations. They’re not acting any more, they’re actually doing it.

Interviewer:
And you’ve got the confidence that they actually have the tools to deal with it?

Respondent:
Most of them. I wouldn’t say all of them. Because like I said, its hard with some of the kids who were never here, so I feel got very little out of the project because they weren’t here to contribute, but on the whole, yes.

Interviewer:
So what’s your rough guess – as far as percentage of the class that would feel confident to intervene in some way?
**Respondent:**
Fifty-five percent?
Probably. All of the kids that were involved, I think, you know.

**Interviewer:**
Right. Okay. Has doing the program affected the way you relate to any of those students?

**Respondent:**
Not really. Because we had quite a good relationship so I guess it just built on that relationship.

**Interviewer:**
I’ll ask you this question but it may be a bit early for a response but I’m just wondering about whether there has been any change at the school as a result of the bullying program coming here.

**Respondent:**
I think it’s too early to say, because we’re so early in the program ourselves and the fact that we’ve just sort of piloted this year rather than have all one year level involved in it, so it’s kind of been very interspersed just at the moment with the kind of reactions and changes that we get until we can implement it fully, I mean.

**Interviewer:**
And how do you feel it will go. Do you think that the culture of the school can be changed?

**Respondent:**
I think it can. Because look with my kids, for example. If they can change themselves, then they can get other kids over and up and reflect on their bullying experiences. I think so.

**Interviewer:**
Yes. Thanks.
Tape starts again:
… if they have – you know. They’re not teachers. So I found it very hard if the kids weren’t getting it NOT to intervene and stuff. Some of the structures of their lessons – they needed to improve those a little bit. We reflected on each of our lessons. Also the bad class I’m talking … TAPE BREAKS DOWN AGAIN

… to go back and just do a bit of reinforcing of ideas … class.

TAPE DISTORTS

Interviewer:
[Distorted] Would you have liked … …class …

Respondent:
Yes. It is kind of hard to. I’ve fitted into the program I guess. I would have loved to have spent more time on it. I think I could have done a better job, but with curriculum as well, you have to put a stop to it at some point so I would say that it is definitely hard to fit it into the program that you’ve already got. Probably one of the major problems that I had myself.

Interviewer:
And your class … Drama class?

Respondent:
Yes.

Interviewer:
And what about the timing of the program. Doing it at this time of the year, is that …?

Respondent:
I think we should have started earlier, but I don’t think that … there were some logistical problems that we weren’t able to start it … we were trying to fit it in with
our units of work anyway so it didn’t really fit into the beginning of the year. I think because we sort of needed to be doing the in-service for that now and then start it next year, rather than having in-service on the first day back and trying to fit it in from there, because you could plan it right from the beginning of the year – you know, it progresses much more naturally.

**Interviewer:**
Is there stuff that we, from Griffith University – is there anything that we could have done to help the process be easier?

**Respondent:**
It was hard to contact different people at different times. It was a little bit difficult to contact Maureen because she wasn’t working on all the days and our lives are busy teaching as well, so – yes it was a little bit hard to get in contact with her, but you know, eventually we did, even though it took some time, and the response and the help we got from her was what we needed … but … trying to maintain contact … leaving messages on answering machines …

TAPE BREAKS INTO TOTAL SILENCE AGAIN.

**Interviewer:**
You were happy about the number of times we’ve come out … been done … Or were you expecting …?

**Respondent:**
Maybe a bit more. Like I said, it was hard to contact Maureen but when we did she came out and gave us everything that we needed – but we kind of got to a stage where we were panicking a little bit, going ‘urrrrr’ …?

**Interviewer:**
What was that time? When you were teaching your peer class.

**Respondent:**
Before we … one of us had the idea that … …[TAPE INDECIPHERABLE]
Interviewer:
How long was that after the in-service?

Respondent:
It was probably quite a while. Probably about 4 or 5 months. Quite a wait.
Yes. That was the problem … you probably need to have the in-service before you do it. Probably even a couple. To get the idea of the program and then …
(TAPE BREAKS AGAIN)

Interviewer:
You … What were … those … if at all?

Respondent:
I’m not sure. Depends what … you know, doing a couple …

Interviewer:
Thanks a lot.

TAPE ENDS.
Appendix J: In Depth Interview with Westside Teacher

Focus interview with Westside Teacher
THURSDAY 30TH OCTOBER.

Respondent:
Some of the concerns that have been raised with the Primary school teachers is the understanding of the three phases of conflict and how Grade 3s can understand that and also the understanding of such small children in relation to role play, ethics and what is appropriate to … it was just a concern as to whether Grade 3s would have that kind of understanding and whether or not the project could address that or is there ways of simplifying it.

Interviewer:
Okay.
So they’re concerned because they’re teaching concerns? Is it possible for us to relay these concepts to Grade 3s?

Respondent:
Yes, Absolutely. And I just sort of wondered from the experience with Griffith University whether or not that’s being incorporated. Because whether or not those terms are quite complex for Grade 3 literacy understanding. And also their knowledge of what a role play is, and that was just … I have no primary school background either, so it’s not something I even considered, but speaking to the focus teacher at the local primary school, she raised it — she raised those concerns. You know, “can we modify it slightly, is it an ethical thing you need to go through with them?” You know, high school students understand what a role play is, they have experience that, it probably in primary school its not a strategy that’s used very often. So. I’m not sure if it has gone down to the primary schools that far anywhere else, so, whether or not that’s been looked at?

Interviewer:
Yes. That’s good. It will be interesting to see if other primary school teachers have mentioned that one.
Respondent:
‘Cos obviously they were going to try to prepare the kids and it could be difficult for them to understand those adult concepts.

Interviewer:
With your key class, did you notice any changes in any of the kids in that class as a result of doing the program?

Respondent:
Absolutely. We didn’t really have too many bullying issues with the Year 11 Health class. Predominately they are high academic, good kids. However, other side issues that would benefit that may not have been targeted specifically with bullying are self-confidence, leadership skills, being a positive role model for the junior school, establishing relationships with the Grade 8s. They also led an in-service for staff which was very empowering for them to be experts and answer questions from other teachers, which really raised their confidence, which I’ve noticed big changes with some of the students.

When I first introduced this model, they gave me lots of feedback and I’m very passionate when I get involved in a project and I did get some negativity in feedback – “why are we doing drama when we chose health? We didn’t choose drama.” So I realised that I needed to convince them that this would be a good thing and that they would get positive things out of it, so a lot of them said “oh I won’t be able to teach in front of a class. I’m not confident enough”. So yes. In my teaching strategies I addressed that. They were involved in a full school assembly where they had to perform role play in front of the full school. So once they did that, they could do anything. So I sort of addressed that before. They never believed they could do that. I knew they could, but I needed to enable them to experience other things that were positive and they were successful. Excellent feedback from the whole school population – Admin. – … watch them doing role play in front of the students, in front of the classes – after that Grade 8 is very easy.
**Interviewer:**
So the stuff that was working for them is the peer teaching?

**Respondent:**
Absolutely.

**Interviewer:**
The fact that they were doing drama, was that …?

**Respondent:**
I think that they enjoyed exploring bullying and solving it under an Alias, especially as I know some of them had been bullied as younger students because they are such academics … and that’s just from my relationship and knowledge of the students at the beginning, having … for Health … getting to know them. I know some of them have experienced bullying. So I know it was empowering for them, maybe if they’d been bullied throughout school – in the role play to become the bully. And also solving it. How can you do that. The magic idea was very good. They picked that up. Like I went in and said like “I’d do this” and they said “no – bully’s not that confident. They wouldn’t stand up to … group of people. You might do that, because you’re really a teacher.” So they were very good at determining whether or not the solutions were appropriate for students.

**Interviewer:**
And does the class – when you go into that class now – do they feel different as a class?

**Respondent:**
I think that they realised that no matter how many barriers we faced in getting this project up and running, it would happen, because there are obviously other things – getting other teachers on board; a teacher leaving and another class then not wanting … to work and so, lots of barriers that we faced as a group, getting the project up and running. But because of Health, I ran the task at integrated times so they are part of the process of how we implemented it for their assessment – into the Health syllabus. And that’s very empowering for them, because we used things like
barriers, inequality, how do we address that. So instead of them writing about it, they are actually doing – which is real life, which is an empowering thing.

**Interviewer:**
And was it good for you that the program did fit in to the Health group?

**Respondent:**
Absolutely. And I really enjoyed the flexibility. The project isn’t so that you’ve got to do this and this time. It allows flexibility which is essential in schools because there are so many things that we have no power over – assemblies, kids away for sport and things like that, so if the program is inflexible schools will not embrace it.

**Interviewer:**
Have any of the students’ attitudes about behaviour and about school in general changed as a result of this program?

**Respondent:**
Like I said, it’s difficult because they are academic; there are no behaviour problems in the class and I don’t have any problems with their not handing in assessment. However, I still think that the realness, the context of doing it, it is a real audience; there’s a real outcome. They’re not just making up something that’s not relevant and obviously that’s the way that the Education Department’s going with assessment so the kids feel it is something that they can get their teeth into. Not just writing about bullying – like, what’s that going to do?

**Interviewer:**
And those kids really grabbed it?

**Respondent:**
Absolutely. They made a teaching resource. They had folders. It taught them organisational skills – interacting with students – behaviour management, which I went through with them, because it’s probably something you don’t think of. I’ve actually done a teaching unit with some Grade 3s previously and behaviour
management is really important. Kids really need to have some knowledge, like ‘this is going to happen. What am I going to do about it”

**Interviewer:**
It seems to be that’s probably the most … key teachers … other teachers say …
(tape not clear)

**Respondent:**
Time frames – that’s always a constraint too. Fitting in with whatever the other classes are doing, and that’s a timetabling issue with schools, so for us – they’d be doing it in Grade 8 and they’d be doing Egypt and they’d be doing the bullying project. How do you make that relevant – for Health and for Drama it was easy to fit it into our curriculum. But we managed and it was great.

**Interviewer:**
Are the kids coming into … I mean are they intervening in bullying do you think?

**Respondent:**
I think so. Yes. Especially with the Grade 11s. We already have a buddy program so they already are working with some Grade 8 classes. As I said earlier, I think it establishes relationships with Grade 11s and Grade 8s, and some of them have said to me some kids have seen me at lunchtime and offered some advice, like saying this is happening – so I think it opens up a channel of communication to kids actually, not to disclose to teachers, because as they know with bullying it could get worse. Teachers might not take on their feelings, just ignore it, “that’ll work”. Or “I don’t have time for this”. So I think it is another avenue for the school to provide a supportive environment for victims of bullying.

**Interviewer:**
OK. Do you feel … has your own teaching [been changed] by the program?

**Respondent:**
Obviously I’m not a bullying but I don’t think my teaching has changed. I’m very interactive with projects that I take on board. I always believe that relationships are
important with students – that’s the essence of teaching. Understanding where students are coming from, meeting what their needs are, perhaps treating them differently dependent upon where they are coming from – social justice – and giving them time to be heard because, unfortunately, we’re so busy. Students are trying often to explain to you something that’s really important and just to be aware that it is really important to let kids be heard and explain themselves.

**Interviewer:**
Do you feel like you’ve had much support from the school, being involved in the program? Has the school sort of embraced the program?

**Respondent:**
We are very lucky. Not only am I organising this project, but I’m the leader of the Anti-Bullying Action Group at our school, so luckily at Westside it’s nothing that we’re doing in isolation. We have a Whole School approach to bullying. Its one very small facet of the full school approach, so yes the Principal’s been very supportive and probably because it’s embedded in that group – by (help?) promoting schools(?) the bullying group stemmed from that, so we’re always concerned about the welfare of our whole community, not just students but also teachers; teachers can be bullied by other teachers and students – parents, administration.

**Interviewer:**
How long has that sort of Whole School approach being going on for.

**Respondent:**
This is the second year.

**Interviewer:**
Is it starting to bite? Is the culture of the school starting to shift as a result of it?

**Respondent:**
I think so. I think we are trying very hard to make sure that, firstly bullying is not okay; changing that culture that it is okay to bully. Getting some help. Where can you go? It is very difficult. We’ve also got resources for parents. We’ve also set up a
professional library. And it’s growing. Not only bullying. We also have other issues now that parents may be concerned about. Parents can borrow books relating to those things – drugs, studying, bullying. We’ve got Teacher pamphlets on ways to identify if your child’s bullying, places you can go for help. Raising the awareness of the issue. Providing a supportive environment for parents. Sometimes they don’t know what to do either – they may be experiencing bullying. We’ve had meetings with the P & C, presented what we’re doing as a school – run in-service for all of the staff about bullying.

**Interviewer:**
Is that where the kids did that thing?

**Respondent:**
No, that was specifically for the project, but we’ve had role plays that we’ve performed in front of staff about bullying issues and we’ve kind of done it as a bit of a snapshot and continued it on – like a soap opera. So we’ve done sort of little snip bits and then the characters grow. So the start – to get staff interested we didn’t want handouts, the overheads, which is really boring stuff, so we’ve had some key people doing some role play and each staff meeting the role plays grow. So you might have seen a person bullying – for example for me I was a Grade 9 bullying at school and they would have seen that in the first staff meeting, then in the next one it would have been a flick-shot of my home life. So, for people to realise that behaviour is learned and motivated by your needs. So and then they get a snapshot of what is going on at home. As a child, I was actually being bullied by my parents, so then to make myself better, will I go to school and do that. So just raising the profile of the issue in the school and helping the teachers’ personal skills and how to deal with that. Teachers obviously don’t always know – what do I do. What do I tell students?

**Interviewer:**
Has the support from Griffith been what you’ve needed.

**Respondent:**
‘Fantastic. Maureen has been great.
Interviewer:
Is there any stuff that we could have done that we haven’t done?

Respondent:
No, I don’t think so. I found whenever I had a question, Maureen always contacts me. Goes out her way to be supportive in whatever the school needs. Helpful with the students, helpful with the in-service. The in-service that I went to at the very start I found empowering as well. Not being a drama teacher, I think I undervalued the power of drama – experiencing the project first hand and understanding what the students are going to be through. I found that empowering for me. And the staff that – because I was on camp when the teachers here went to the in-service – they said the same thing. They really … the stories were so different from what the Grade 8s … the power of what you can do … with … drama.

Interviewer:
Is there anything else about the programme … [relating to] the school … that you want to say anything about? As far as you know, a particular thing that you remember or anything that’s a problem.

Respondent:
I think the problems that you face – there’s always going to be those barriers and things that come up in a school situation. But just dealing with it and being flexible. There’s always a solution. I’m very solution-focused. I’m not a –this is too hard – there’s always a solution. It’s just a matter of finding it and working it out and whether I had to talk with Admin, talk to Maureen, or talk to another school that was doing it, like involved in it. Yes, there’s always a solution.

Interviewer:
Was it more work than you thought it would be?

Respondent:
No. Not really. I don’t think so. If you want to do something effectively, and not just do it as small group of students, I think it involves work. And I think as a school we have a responsibility to do something bullying so with that responsibility there comes
hard work I think if it has better outcomes and makes school a better place and students aren’t truanting because they can’t face coming to school, well then it’s really important that we do it.

**Interviewer:**

Thank you.
Appendix K: Southside Data from Questionnaires

Bullying

In the qualitative surveys the students were asked to define bullying. A typical exemplary response described an individual or a group, deliberately inflicting verbal, physical or psychological injury on another person. One example read, “Bullying is deliberately hurtful treatment towards someone that causes the victim physical and mental pain.” (Southside Student Post Questionnaire, 2005)

In all, 22.2% of students identified bullying as an ongoing situation, 29.6% of students listed the use of power and domination of one student over a less powerful student, in their answer, 48.1% of students identified physical acts of abuse, such as hitting and shoving, as examples of bullying, 22.2% identified verbal acts, such as teasing and name calling, as forms of bullying and 51.9% included emotional and psychological abuse, such as exclusion and isolation, as a form of bullying.

Bystanders

When asked “Who do you think is the person most likely to change a bullying situation?” 63% of students identified the bystanders (or ‘friends of the bully or the bullied’) as those most likely to change a bullying situation.

Meanwhile, 14.8% of the students identified parents and teachers as those most likely to change a bullying situation. Of those respondents, 57.1% believed that education and awareness about bullying, its effects and how to prevent it, would be the best way to create change.

Finally, 22.2% of students identified the bully or bullies as the persons most likely to change a bullying situation. Suggestions of how this could occur included seeing a guidance counselor, speaking to a student or realising that what their behaviour was wrong.
Changes in Attitudes
When students were asked if they felt differently towards any people in bullying situations following their participation in the program, only 26% of those surveyed offered a short answer response to this question but of those who did: 33.3% said that since participating in the program they now had different options for reacting to bullying situations, 50% said they now had an increased understanding of all parties involved in a bullying situation and 16.7% said they now believed that bullies should be reprimanded for bullying behaviour.

To the question “In what way has your usual role in a bullying situation changed because of your involvement in this program?” the students answered in the following manner:

37% of students answered ‘yes’ to experiencing a change in their usual role in a bullying situation since their involvement in the program. Of those students, 20% said they no longer partake in bullying behaviour. Another 30% said they were now more aware of the damage that bullying has on people and 50% said that as bystanders of bullying they were now equipped with better skills to deal with and/or stop bullying when it occurs.

Support
When asked whose level of support did change during the course of the program, 26% of students answered ‘yes’ to seeing a change in the level of support they received from people following the program, 28.6% of those respondents said that this change in support came from their fellow students. Another 14.3% said the change in support came from their families and 57.1% said the change came from their teachers.

Bullying Definitions
When surveyed quantitatively, the students responded to a series of short questions.

As asked if they could explain what bullying was, 55.6% responded with ‘yes’ while 44.4% answered ‘no’. When the students were questioned on
THEIR ABILITY TO DEFINE THE THREE STAGES OF BULLYING, 92.6% OF THE
STUDENTS RESPONDED ‘YES’ AND 7.4% RESPONDED ‘NO’.

The majority of students also felt they could successfully identify the three roles in a
bullying situation, with 96.3% responding ‘yes’ and only 3.7% responding ‘no’.

Southside students demonstrated a positive attitude toward bullying after the project.
When asked, “Do you think that bullying can be prevented, de-escalated or stopped?”
96.3% of students responded ‘yes’ and 3.7% responded ‘no’. 14.8% responded with
‘teachers and parents’, 3.7% felt the person bullied could change things and 22.2%
felt the bully could. When asked if they could explain how they would do this, 100%
said ‘yes’ and nobody answered ‘no’.

**Changes in Attitudes 2**
The students were also asked how they felt toward the people involved in a bullying
situation. They were asked if they felt differently toward any of them after being
involved in the project. To that question, 44.4% of students said they felt differently
towards the bully, the bullied and the bystander and 55.6% said they felt the same as
they always had.

**Bystander 2**
The students were also asked if, as a bystander in a bullying situation they were now
more likely to:
*Intervene to try to de-escalate the bullying*, to which 70.4% said ‘yes’, *watch and/or
walk away*, to which 11.1% said ‘yes’, *participate in the bullying*, to which 0%
responded to and *report to someone in authority*, to which 18.5% responded ‘yes’.
When asked if their usual role in a bullying situation changed because of their
involvement in the project, 37% of students replied ‘yes’ and 63% replied ‘no’.

**Support 2**
When asked which group from the above list supported you them the most, 22.2%
said their fellow students did, 44.1% said their teachers did and 3.7% said their
families did. When asked to state whoever supported them the least, 11.1% said other
students, 51.9% said teachers, 25.9% said the administration and nobody mentioned
their families while 11.1% of students did not respond. The students were also asked if anyone’s level of support change significantly during the course of the program. To that question, 25% said ‘yes’ and 75% said ‘no’. (Note 55.5% of the respondents completed an older version of survey that did not include this question. The percentages have been taken from the remaining 44.5% of respondents who did answer.)

Overall, Southside students responded positively to the program and demonstrated a greater knowledge and awareness of bullying as a result of participating in the program. 2/11/05
Appendix L: Southside Teacher In Depth Interview

Marie:
Maureen, I would like to give you a copy of our final report, that we put together based on the anti-bullying project which Acting Against Bullying is a major component of. We received funding through the National Safe Schools Brainwork, which was the best practice grant, to put into place a program that uses drama and the arts to look at the social issue of bullying. And this project was a transition program, using peer mentoring and drama, and we also incorporated dance as well … movement into the project … between Southside High School and Southside South Primary School. The front cover of the program is just a collage of pictures of the evening … so, students who were participating (at the formal?).

The first section of the formal report is just a summary of what the report contains and I have actually had to use, in this report, the guidelines from the National Safe School’s Brainwork. However, it’s just what our cluster, and we’ve used the word cluster to describe the high school and the primary school together. The two schools had a vision to focus on the issue of bullying using the arts as a vehicle for exploration and discovery. We speak about here why we decided to work together, because we have many quality transition programs working. We also needed to have a realistic program for our year twelve MAP class, which we incorporated into their curriculum … and a principal of the primary school that a year five level be targeted with this. We also have in place, at the same time, our year tens working with our year eights so, it was multifaceted.

It was quite an enormous program overall. The program and resources we used were the Acting Against Bullying Program from Griffith University; the Power Punch unit is something we developed ourselves; Learning to Live Together was the philosophy and program from Southside South Primary School and their philosophy and framework; Community Arts was the unit that we were working on with the year twelve MAP class, multi arts practices, so it made sense to utilise those students in this whole process; our No Blame program came from the behaviour support at our school and our student services support team so in fact, we were able to use other
personnel in the school, not just the drama personnel because at the same time as implementing the arts program to look at bullying, we were also looking at responsive interventions as well. We had set up a reference group at the school … which is a very, very important thing to do … where I set up a committee of the school principal, the deputy, the principal of curriculum, the head of the performing arts department, our guidance officer, our youth nurse, our behaviour specialist and myself the project manager and we met a few times in the year. In fact, we do have one more meeting that I have yet to convene, at the end of the year, just to tie up the whole process. Learning to Live Together, as I said, was the anti-bullying project from the Southside South State School and we also liaised with the principal there, the two year five teachers, the head of arts at Southside and me.

We also had some technical assistance from our former television teacher because we produced a DVD and we have documented the whole process. Structures and procedures, as I said it was multifaceted. The lead school, which is Southside State School, established broad framework which highlighted the key components of our whole school approach … and maybe if I speak about the preventative and proactive interventions and the responsive interventions, which I have a table of in here. The whole school approach really, was based on two broad interventions; one that we call a preventative and proactive, which now has made compulsory Acting Against Bullying in Year eight, for all students, through their performing arts … and they will usually have Year ten or eleven peer tutors who will deliver that. Part of the intervention program is training the Acting Against Bullying tutors from these year levels.

We also had some staff in-service, where we spoke at a staff meeting and explained to the staff what is Acting Against Bullying and made them aware of the policies that we have in place at the school, which were part of the responsive interventions. We also, at the same time, thought it was very important that we keep our parents informed … where we had a parent evening. That was done also through a barbecue for year eight parents; I’ve written some articles for the school magazine; I am yet to speak at a P and C meeting in November … on the 15th of November I think that meeting is; we have open evenings and cultural evenings where we recognise students who have
performed in these areas, so they’re also given recognition for their work. Peer mentors.

One very, very big aspect, and I don’t know whether this is going to be sustainable, is the community, where we wanted to then include parents because we believe that parents are an integral part of this. Where the Southside South Primary School, the Year twelve students went up to the primary school to work with the Year five students with drama training and then also that culminated into a celebration of our learning on a special evening about anti bullying with our DVD shows. The responsive interventions are that we now have in place peer mediation and conflict resolution, policy flow charts which are all in this program that you can have a look at. We have no-blame response procedures in place, that staff has been told about. We have made contact with parents if there are incidents, and also outside agencies.

So this is all very futuristic, but at least we now have in place ‘this is our policy’. It’s a living policy in the sense that we have a proactive intervention and then when, ‘cause we don’t have our heads in the sand, we know that conflict situations will appear in high schools so we need to have a responsive plan in place as well, not just have education. But we think that part of our process should be to educate the community and the students, but we also put that in place.

Maureen:
Obviously you’ve got a large part concentrating on the preventative, with responsive as an ‘in case’ sort of thing.

Marie:
Yes, but it must be there to show that we are managing conflict as well. When it does occur. … so this part of the report talks about what we have done, which is an outline of all of those things. The Year eight compulsory unit we’ve called the Power Punch unit and I’ll talk to you about the in a moment. That’s just a description of what we did. The special evening was able to engage parents and the quality transition program. Students performed there artistic interpretations of bullying scenarios and then parents were invited to participate in a drama workshop based on the Acting Against Bullying work designed by Griffith University. The evening was a wonderful
celebration of learning about important social issues through arts education. So, the aim of our project was to create safe and supportive environments … sorry another thing we’ve done is produced a teacher pamphlet that goes out to all parents when they enrol in the school, they get one of our Teacher pamphlets that talks about our philosophy that we’re creating a safe and supportive environment … so that has happened too. The school has established a relationship with the Acting Against Bullying unit at Griffith University, the project manager attended the Master’s Workshop. Additionally, I attended a conference on Mind Matters, which I had done and liaised with other personnel there.

So that part of the report just talks about that a bit. What did we use to evaluate how we were going? I’ve got copies of the surveys that were based on the Griffith University material. The Acting Against Bullying report. We have in here a statement from the Principal from the Southside South Primary School, who has given a description of how she thought the project went in her school. So that is from Judy Dale, and she has said what she believes has been of benefit to her school. Some conclusions we’ve made; what were the most effective things, the peer teaching, the mentoring model, the community arts anti bullying parents evening, and having the anti-bullying embedded into the curriculum and now it’s part of the Year eight performing arts. And also establishing a whole school approach to the bullying.

I just want to talk to you about some of our references and appendages. 7.1 is that model that I’ve just spoken to you about … that overall model. The whole school approach; the Acting Against Bullying: an executive summary from the AAB, what that is about; and also we’ve made reference to the Cooling Conflicts which are just source materials that we used to inform our philosophy and what we wanted to do. This is a conflict incident report that we have devised that is part of our responsive strategies that if a conflict situation does occur this is a copy of a sheet that is just a very easy tick and flick sheet that we would recommend. “Who was involved?”, “we’re there any witnesses?”, “the nature of the incident?”, “how would we refer” and then “action that would be taken” etc.

Summary sheets … we need to for our NSSF funding just do some summary sheets that I’ve included in there for you. From appendix 2 onwards the whole school model,
sample surveys that we adapted from the *Acting Against Bullying*, we surveyed all the teachers in the school. This now is a copy of the power punch unit that we now have in the Year eight curricula.

Because it’s part of our performing arts year eight program we have actually taken this from the curriculum materials but we have made it into a dance/drama unit, so we’re looking at using the *Acting Against Bullying* methodology and conventions/program but we also have added a whole lot more to make it into a bigger unit. This is the anti- harassment and anti- bullying unit, these are just core learning outcomes that we’ve had to include. Which is a description of what we do.

What we found really works for us is when the whole school can have anti bullying included into the curriculum and have the *Acting Against Bullying* program included into that curriculum.
That is a copy of the assessment.

**Maureen:**
Marie this has been amazing. I’ll probably end up, once I’ve gone through this, asking you more questions, but it’s just been wonderful hearing what you’ve done. You’ve gone above and beyond the project. Thank you so much.

**Marie:**
It’s a pleasure.

**Maureen:**
Can you just talk about how you said the *Acting Against Bullying* was an (impetus) for the whole thing?

**Marie:**
The AAB project was in fact an impetus for our framework for our proactive and preventative intervention strategies. We were able to see first- hand that drama conventions can be used very legitimately to engage students in very meaningful learning about looking at conflict resolution.
Maureen:
You mentioned the peer teaching as well.

Marie:
And the other fantastic aspect of it is the strength of peer teaching. What a wonderful, wonderful strategy that is to be able to use students to teach other students … and we’ve played around with many structures of this. I know in the early days when we very first started out about three or four years ago with the Acting Against Bullying program there was a set system of two, year levels, above. But we’ve found using the Year 12s with the Year fives worked, our Year tens with our Year eights, and then having our students also work with parents was very interesting as well. So, we wanted to mix it up a little bit and I think a strength of the Acting Against Bullying program, and what we appreciated is that we were given the autonomy to shape the program to suit ourselves. And if future schools wish to use that project they do have that autonomy. Always maintain the integrity of the enhanced forum theatre process, but you have the autonomy to shape it to suit your personnel, your resources, your clientele and I suppose just the whole learning environment in a particular school.

Maureen:
Thank you so much.
Appendix M: Student Interviews – Southside

Researcher:
Starting with D., each student answer the same question and I will not repeat the question three times. I will ask the question once and each student will give their own reply. Okay, D.

Researcher:
Have you enjoyed the Acting Against Bullying Project and if so what have you most enjoyed about it? And then, what have you least enjoyed about it?

D:
I liked the most – um – I liked the (acting?) I didn’t like when kids acted smart. Yeah. That’s it.

E:
Yes, well I liked how the kids were like willing to join in and they weren’t scared but I didn’t like how some of the kids got smart to us.

F:
Mine’s Just about the same. I just liked working with the little kids and yeah having fun with them.

Researcher:
Okay. When you talk about the kids being smart, what Year level was that? The Year 5s etc. Okay.

Researcher:
What have you found most valuable or helpful about the project? And then what have you found least valuable or helpful? Righto, students we’ll start with you.
F: Helpful? It helped me know how to talk to little kids and how they act to different things that you say and how they have different maturity levels.

E: It helped me with like talking to people, because I didn’t usually before this talk to people that much and it helped me like deal with kids, their attitudes and stuff like that.

D: I thought it was helpful because like it taught me and the kids something – something – didn’t know much about.

Researcher: Did you feel anything that was not helpful or not valuable with the project? Was there anything that you felt or was there anything – or did you think it was all quite valuable and helpful?

D: Agreed. Positive.

Researcher: E., did you think it was – all aspects were valuable and helpful?

E: Yeah, but I didn’t think it, like the kids – when it first started they weren’t taking much notice of it but they had been a part of bullying, and most people said that. They weren’t really into listening and talking to other kids about it so I didn’t think that part was.

Researcher: Anything, F. that was invaluable or not helpful about the project?
F: Probably only when the kids didn’t listen, that was just so in-helpable!

Researcher: That’s a good word (general laughter). And remember when we’re talking about ‘the kids’ we’re talking about the Primary School children. Okay?
D. What did you think of the drama work?

D: It was pretty good and, uh, yes it was good with the kids, like ‘cause at first they didn’t want to do it and then after that we, like, helped building their confidence up and we Just helped them to do it. Yes. Good.

E: Yes, much the same. They weren’t scared to get out there and try new things and they liked taking roles of, like other people, and like, helping other kids get into the acting part.

F: Pretty much the same. They were all shy at first until they like came out and then they all come out and they’re all helpful and, like, doing stuff with the other students.

Researcher: E. Has the project changed your relationships in your class or in the school?

E: Yes, it has actually. Because we did it with the Year 11s last year so they’re Year 12 now so you sort of get to know them and then we got to know the people in our class better and work with them.

F: Yes, it helped us become better friends with the Grade 11s and within our class and with the students at Primary school as well.
Researcher:
Good one. Right. Now have you noticed any changes in your teachers during or after the in-service work? If so, what were they or are they?

D:
When we got down to the Primary School I noticed that Mr. G was a lot quieter with the primary school children and also that he listened a lot to them. He listened to us as well, but he, just … listened.

D:
Yeah. Mr. G like acted nicely to us, like, yeah, down at the school there he was acting like nicely to us as well. Yes.

F:
Yes. He was nice after and during it and also nice to kids….which was nice.

Researcher:
Yes. I’m glad to know he was nice! Have there been any difficulties for you during doing the program or how the project was organised?

D:
No. Not really. Just like it’s given us more confidence to speak to younger people and other people.

E:
When the Year 11s were teaching us what to do so we could tell the Year 5 students, it thought it was going to be kinda’ hard because we really didn’t like understand what they were telling us but when we got down there it was a lot easier because we’d gone through it a lot so that helped us help them.
D:
When the Year 11s were teaching us I was a bit shy, like, too shy to get up there and actually do drama and then after a couple of weeks when we kept on going I Just kept on doing it., Yes.

Researcher:
Now you were a Focus Class, so you peer taught the littlies – so what did you think of the peer teaching when you were doing it with the younger students and have you changed your opinion of your younger peers and have you made any relationships through this peer teaching with the younger kids?

E:
Well, yes. Like at first they didn’t respect us like they respected their teachers and then they knew where we were coming from so then they knew – they like respected us more and yeah, and they were more friends to us than like students. Because I knew some of them already and yeah and so after a while …

F:
I thought the same, yeah. At the start the children were kind of shy towards, but when they realised we weren’t like teachers and trying to be like teachers – we were more like their friends and trying to help them they did a lot more with us.

D:
When we had our little group, they didn’t like want to listen to us and when we told them we were going to teach them and talk about bullying they – all they could talk about was like hitting people and that. They kept saying words like I’ll snap you or something and then we … [indecipherable] … we said we’re going to do a play and some of the kids were actually bullies and they actually understood after we started teaching them and after that they Just made good friends with them.

Researcher:
Do you think you understand more about bullying after the project and, if so, what is it you understand about bullying?
E:
There’s 3 stages of bullying. The latent, the emerging and the manifest and you can – usually you don’t point that out when people are getting bullied, but now you know you point it out and you notice that when people get bullied. And that’s what we taught to the younger people.

F:
I noticed that if you see someone bullying now, you know what they’re doing. Not that you do, but, um. I didn’t really understand what it was before I did this, but now that I have I understand that it does happen to quite a lot of children at primary school and high school.

Researcher:
Has anything changed for you following the project regarding bullying, in terms of your own behaviour or others, like have you notice other kids in your class that have maybe changed a little bit because of it or any of the younger children that you peer-taught?

D:
Yes. Sort of. With our class, before we did this they were kid of a rough sort of group but after that they kind of settled down and like learned to respect the other children, class members.

E:
Yes, I felt the same too and the same with the kids, the little ones. They got a point of view from the other side if they were the bully they’d get what the other people thought. And if you were the bystander you’d see what it is to be bullied and stuff. So you get a point of view from all different aspects.

D:
I understand like way more. I didn’t know like any thing like bystanders and stuff. I thought it was Just the bullying and that’s it – I didn’t know all the other things, the stages.
Researcher:
Has anything changed for you – like you three as individuals – following the project regarding bullying – either in terms of your own behaviour or that of others? We’ve virtually covered others’ behaviour in the previous question, but have you noticed a change in yourselves because you’ve done this project?

D:
No. I haven’t noticed any changes in me. I’m like Just the same. And ah, yes.

F:
Yes, I have sort of noticed a change in me, because you like try to be nice to everyone else ‘cause you find that bullying is like just little things as well as bullying people up and name-calling and stuff. Yes I’ve noticed that as well.

D:
Pretty much the same as that. What F. said. Yes, I’ve noticed I sort of understood what people were going through like after all the drama and what we did with the children.

Researcher:
Has your increased understanding helped you to recognise bullying behaviour and when others are being either a bully or being bullied or being the complicit bystander?

D:
Yes. I understand all three of them now. I used to never. But now I do.

E:
Same. Yes. I understand them too. Like you see them more when you know what they are.

Researcher:
Has your increased understanding helped you to avoid becoming either the bully, the bullied or the bystander on any occasion and if so, has it been more than once. And if you can, describe that occasion.

**D:**
Well. I’ve seen some sort of bullying things. Like people bullying each other in the playground and I’ve like – go away from each other – like break them up and nothing happened. Yeah.

**E:**
After doing all the stuff that we did I learnt that Yes, I have a better understanding of it obviously, but I notice that when you do see things that – I don’t know how to say it – not when they’re being bullied but when that could occur, come out, you notice it. You try and prevent it.

**F:**
Yes, same here.

**Researcher:**
Has your increased understanding helped you to avoid becoming the bully, becoming bullied or becoming the bystander as well, and if so can you describe an occasion when it did occur?

**D:**
When you know what it is, you like try and not make it happen and you try and get everyone out of it. Yeah.

**E:**
I don’t really think I have since then been a part of any bullying or bystander of any sort, but before that I have and haven’t really understood what was going on.

**D:**
I’ve never been bullied before. Like I’ve had a few ….I bullied, like back in primary school and then when I learned about this stuff I changed and I never bully any more.

**Researcher:**
Have you any suggestions as to how the project could be improved to make it more effective? E?

E:
I reckon we could be given more time so that the children can understand a bit more and um sort of need more space, because it was kind of cramped where we were and if we got out into bigger space I think the children would come out a bit more.

F:
Yeah. I reckon the same. A bit more time when we’re working with the kids and before so we can plan it and when we’re working with the kids we need a bit more time to actually make your play and tell them what they need to do….
[tape crackles. Indecipherable momentarily]

D:
I think it was pretty fun going to the school – and teaching the kids and I would have liked more time to do things. I enjoyed going there and teaching.

Researcher:
Last question, guys. Would you like to take part in the project again next year or sometime in the future – when I say next year, I guess I mean this year – and as I said, sometime in the future?

D:
Yes. I would. Not just because you get out of school, but yes its fun interacting with the younger kids and like informing them of the bullying aspects that take place in the school grounds.

E:
Yes. I’m the same. I would like to do it again. I thought it was really fun and like later in life it would be good because you know that the children understand bullying a lot more and that they would try and prevent it from happening after they’ve learned all about it and what we taught them.

F:
Yes. I’d do it again if I had to. ‘Cause it was a good experience, like, yeah.

**Researcher:**
If you had the chance to do it again sometime this year, D. – would you like to or in future would you like to take it up again?

**D:**
Yes. I would. Yes. Fine.

**Researcher:**
Right, thanks.

TAPE ENDS.
Appendix N: North Beachside Data

17/10/05
Interview with the Principal

Maureen:
What effect, if any, has the Acting Against Bullying Coordinator, That’s Bob, had on teachers in the school? Has he had any influence at all as guidance officer or the person who coordinated the project?

Principal:
Bob has been heavily involved. Bullying has been a passion for Bob and as part of this whole program he has been very committed towards it. Being on the Student welfare Committee, linking up with year Level coordinators and various people on that Student service – Bob is heavily involved, so Bob has certainly been the link up here with … student services and been able to follow the process…

Maureen:
What effect, if any, has the in-service we had on Acting Against Bullying project had on any of the teachers. Lance attended the in-service and a couple of other teachers did as well. Has there been any influence on any … at all … [indecipherable]

Principal:
I think there has. It has complemented our School Behaviour Plan and it has also been able to link in where we have been accepted under a three year plan cycle with Ed. Qld. looking at school-wide positive behaviour support program. It’s been able, with the work that Lance and Bob have done has set the scene to enable us to continue to review our managing skill behaviour and linking in to the 3 year cycle plan for whole positive school-wide behaviour. This has been a critical platform to help build that. I have to say that it’s been able to work with a small group of staff first, but I suppose it’s worked very well where we’ve been able to link it, this program’s been able to link – target – a couple of staff and I’m sure having Bob with the Student services and having Lancer as Year coordinator having it link in with our behaviour review
committee on whole school-wide positive behaviour has … (indecipherable). I personally feel it’s been a lynch-pin in where we’re going …

Maureen:
What effect have teachers who have done the project had on young teachers in this school that you might be aware of?

Principal:
We’ve still got some way to go in that area and part of our whole school package is to try to develop professional learning communities within the school and with the staff and management area is a critical area we’re developing with whole staff and particular focus professional learning community. So it’s in its infancy stages and we’ve tried to do some things – we’ve had small successes with some groups getting together and had a few teachers drop off the radar and a few coming in, but to me it’s a step in the right direction helping us to develop those professional learning communities within the school.

Maureen:
Has there been any impact on the school from Master Teachers – Bob is now what’s called a Master Teacher – he’s admitted he hasn’t had a lot of time, he’s been flat out, to do a lot of master teaching but he has gone out to the primary school and spoken to the Principal there and I think did a half day in-service. Are you aware of any impact there has been if there has been any?

Principal:
The impact that I would see happening is that while Bob may not been able to get into master teaching (a term used by our program for teachers who became mentors for other teachers in other schools) here, we’re trying to link up…..linking up with the primary school.

Again, we’ve still got a long way to go but there are discussions and a level of awareness–raising trying to get a link between the two schools, in a number of areas and I would say, while we’ve always had it, having Bob has helped to … continue … so you may not be able to see a lot at the moment, but the work that Bob is doing and
few other teachers with that link – I see it as a good way to help that middle phase … conditions … across … the two. A lot of discussion and work that will be happening further down the track.

**Maureen:**
That was what I was going to be pretty much what I – if there was anything at all on what you see happening in the future or if you have any plans for what is going to happen with Bob or something along … (indecipherable).

**Principal:**
I think I’ve touched on that in a couple of areas, like I said where this is our first year of a 3 year cycle of schools wide behaviour positive intervention program and I see this as an element of that, with our behaviour management. I see the work that Bob is doing linking up with … middle phase of learning … so that we can look at that transition and Bob will have Year 10 coordinator now. He’ll move on and take those children through to Year 11 so he’s looking now at working with students on the Thursday and Fridays – a coordinator – (indecipherable) schools Year 11 linking to Year 8 and anti-bullying will become part of that program. So it’s starting to get … through a number of aspects of the school, and Bob has been critical at putting all that stuff together whenever he’s working. So we’ve still got some work to do over the long term in bringing other people on board so we don’t put all the work on Bob. But Bob is filtering it through in his roles he’s doing now, so we’re hoping that that ripple effect will spread across and keep going.

**Principal:**
I Just think that if it wasn’t for the initiative of Bob and Bob, when they saw it originally, to get us on board … because there was a need … when you look at our school data a few years ago when it started there was definitely a need for it. I haven’t got the data in front of me to say what’s the data to show whether we’ve made a change but I can see with the work that our behaviour management and professional learning community are starting to do and the work that Bob is involved in linking with it, that we’re not going to see the outcomes of that till further down the track. But I, if you like, have a gut feeling that we’re in the right direction and you can see I’m not getting the people through my door that I used to get before and I suppose I’m not
getting all the phone calls about harassment and bullying that I used to get before. Now whether they’ve been directed to Bob and all that I haven’t got that sort of information, but I don’t believe there’s as much as in the past. It’s still there, hasn’t gone away but people are now accepting that our school does have strategies in place, procedures in place to address these issues and students are starting to say ‘I don’t have to accept this anymore and I will put my hand up and have something done about it’. I know that previously people were saying ‘if I say something it’s only going to get worse’ and there’s been a lot of culture to change that this isn’t the way to deal with it and you need to speak out and if we don’t know about it we can’t do anything about it. So a lot of work has gone on down that track with Bob and Manly and as I said it links into where we’re going with behaviour management. So I’m keen on it, I think it has been a very good step in our transition with using this program as a foundation to link into other things.

**Maureen:**
Thank you for your support. It’s a shame the project is finishing up but it would be nice to comeback maybe in two or three years’ time and be able to see then if there has been data. But, you know, you can always feel it.

**Principal:**
And we’re putting in processes now that we actually collect that data with some of I.T profiling of students and with our … (CUT OFF)
… to develop, to actually target some of that and that’s been built into our managing our whole school wide behaviour program so we will be able to get that hard data so I don’t Just come to you with a ‘gut feeling’ sort of thing. We want to have some of that data down the track. So it’s helped establish some of those things where we’re going.

**Maureen:**
Thank you. Thanks very much.

**Principal:**
You’re welcome
Appendix O: North Beachside Teacher Interviews

Interview with YR 11 Drama Teacher
17/10/05

Researcher:
Teacher J, have you enjoyed the Acting Against Bullying project?

Teacher:
Yeah I did. Any kind of acting is good with me … so yeah.

Researcher:
What did you enjoy most about it and what did you enjoy least about it?

Teacher:
I enjoyed working with the students and acting in front of them and showing them that bullying can affect many students. The least maybe … yeah like Gail said, not having enough time with them to actually get the point across.

Researcher:
What have you found most valuable or helpful about the project?

Teacher:
Just seeing so many different ways that bullying can occur and just how it can affect … that single person who is being bullied, on their life and how they go about things.

Researcher:
What have you found least valuable about the project, if anything?

Teacher:
No, can’t say that much.
**Researcher:**
What did you think of the drama component of it Teacher J?

**Teacher:**
Yeah I thought it was quite enjoyable. Something different to do so yeah I thought it was good.

**Researcher:**
Was the hands-on part enjoyable for you?

**Teacher:**
Yeah it was ‘cause I like acting and to do it was great.

**Researcher:**
What about peer teaching? What did you think of that?

**Teacher:**
Yeah that was a good he helped out, if you ever needed something to work out or … he gave you a situation to go with. So yeah that was good.

**Researcher:**
When you say ‘he’, do you mean Bob?

**Teacher:**
Yeah, the teacher, yeah.

**Researcher:**
Have you made new friendships with the peer teaching? With the younger kids, for example, that you might have been working with?

**Teacher:**
Yeah I did. I made friendships with the group that I worked with and so yeah we had a bond.
Researcher:
Has the project changed your relationships in the class at all, again school friends or people in the class who you may not necessarily knock around with but you worked with in the group during the project? Did you work with people that you did not know beforehand?

Teacher:
Umm no, basically everyone in the class I had encountered with before so … it was good.

Researcher:
Do you understand more about bullying since doing the project?

Teacher:
Yeah I do. It suited me a lot … it was great.

Researcher:
And any other comments that you’d like to make about the project itself?

Teacher:
No, not really.

Researcher:
Ok thank you Teacher J, conclusion of interview.

Interview with Drama Teacher at North Beachside
17/10/05

Maureen:
When selected by the program, by Bob, what was your initial idea of what it was about or, did you have any ideas?
Teacher:
I knew, I understood what the project was about because Bob explained it in detail to me. But I Just wasn’t sure how I’d be able to have the kids enthused in doing something like that because they tend to shy away from those issues.

Maureen:
Was Bob able to help you in any way with that? Or did you find that you learnt as you went along? Or both?

Teacher:
Umm, more I learnt as I went along as to how to put it in a way that the kids really understood and were interested in.

Maureen:
When Bob went through the process with you did you feel you could understand what was expected of you?

Teacher:
Yeah I understood what the task was asking and how it was going to benefit the students.

Maureen:
And what about the actual, three scenes … you know … the forum theatre … when Bob taught you that you feel that you could understand the process? Or enjoy it? Or that sort of thing?

Teacher:
Yeah it was easily understood and the process worked well.

Maureen:
So it was mainly working out whether or not the students were going to take it on board. So when you did end up having your students, how did they react to you and your teaching of it?
Teacher:
My students were actually quite professional about the whole experience and really enjoyed being able to talk to each other about certain problems they’d had, because they’re a really tight knit group. So it made it a lot easier than expected.

Maureen:
And did you observe, you know, their interventions and their forum theatre? And if so, what did you see in the process?

Teacher:
A lot of personal ideas where coming out and being shared but explored in a way that wasn’t too close to home for the students … but they were still able to look at the issues that were relevant to everyone as a whole and them into a more … in a way … entertaining form that was, for the other students good to watch, but also they could relate to.

Maureen:
Have you had any feedback from the students as to if the project affected them and their attitudes towards bullying in any way?

Teacher:
The group of kids who I’ve got for year eleven they’re quite mature so they took it all on board and Just saw it as something that was in the past for them. But the other students that they took it to really took it on board and looked at different ways they could deal with their problems rather than being so upset about it.

Maureen:
When you say they took it on to the other students, you’re talking about the peer teaching?

Teacher:
Yep
Maureen:  
When they went to teach the other students did they develop any rapport with the younger students at all? Or if not, were there any problems?

Teacher:  
One of the classes went really well and the kids really responded. They were a drama class so it made it a little easier. And they did respond and asked questions and got involved in the hot seating and knowing the characters … and actually started to share their own stories as well, which was great. Whereas, another class we went to weren’t involved with the arts so it was harder for them to be, I guess, confident in speaking in front of everyone.

Maureen:  
Are there any problems that you’ve observed either for yourself or the students, so far, during the process of doing the project?

Teacher:  
Umm, I think its time. Time is a really big issue … and having the other teachers interested in doing it … because it kind of Just stops. We’ve done our work in the peer teaching … we’ve done two different classes and then it just stopped from there. It couldn’t carry on. I think if we were given, say, a three-day block … and a block period and all the teachers knew what was happening and that was what was focused on, it would work. But, just with the school being so big, and so much assessment that other teachers are trying to get through with their kids, it’s Just really difficult that way.

Maureen:  
How have you found the master teaching that Bob, and the guidance officer as a coordinator, how have you found them? Have you been able to, in any way, get support or assistance or information from them? Or have you found them busy themselves? Whichever?
Teacher:
Information, in the initial stages was not a problem to get. But I Just, once it's finished there’s just no way to carry it on because everyone is so busy and trying to keep up with everything else they’ve got to do.

Maureen:
Would you take on board the project again next year, if you were given the choice?

Teacher:
I would, but I’d also try to look at different ways it would really benefit all our kids, rather than just a select few. So, talking with Bob and the guidance officer about actually having a block period that we block off with these classes and make sure that it continues on … not just stops.

Maureen:
And lastly, I guess, doing it in class time … would that have benefited you in some way? If you had to do it outside of class time … that would have made it more difficult for you?

Teacher:
In class time was still good with the kids, but outside of class time wouldn’t have made a difference. I’m busy outside of class time so it doesn’t matter.

Maureen:
You’re a dance teacher as well aren’t you? Thank you very much.

Teacher:
You’re welcome.
Appendix P: North Beachside Student Interviews

YR 11 DRAMA STUDENT
17/10/05

Researcher:
Alana, have you enjoyed the Acting Against Bullying project? And if so what have you enjoyed most about it and what have you enjoyed least about it?

G:
I did enjoy it. Probably the reason I most enjoyed it was that you got to be around the younger kids and see how they acted … like … were against bullying and see if they cared about it as much as our grade did … and probably the least was probably the kids discipline … when we were talking about it they didn’t really participate, they more held back. You could tell someone of them were probably getting bullied but they didn’t really want to speak up in their class ’cause they weren’t comfortable.

Researcher:
What have you found most helpful about the project?

G:
Most helpful … I don’t really know.

Researcher:
Anything that you felt wasn’t helpful when you were doing the project that you had to do?

G:
Probably the amount of time we had with them, it wasn’t really … like we had one lesson with them and have that lesson was taken up trying to get organised into the groups and just showing what we did. So it wasn’t really enough time.
**Researcher:**
What did you think of the drama component?

**G:**
The drama component made it fun ... like it made it ... it helped us ... it helped us become other people to show how we got bullied or how other people got bullied.

**Researcher:**
What about the peer teaching?

**G:**
That was good, except for the fact that they didn’t want to participate ... that’s all it was.

**Researcher:**
How did you handle that?

**G:**
We just really tried to get them involved, but it didn’t really work. We didn’t really have enough time to get it to work either.

**Researcher:**
So time has been the main factor?

**G:**
Yeah time was a big factor yeah.

**Researcher:**
Have you made any new friendships through the peer teaching ... with the younger kids?
G:
With the younger kids no not really ‘cause it was only one lesson. In our group, with Mr. I was our teacher, he makes us mix with all of our grade so it’s really … we didn’t really make any new friends.

Researcher:
Has the project changed your relationships in the class? Well I suppose you’ve answered that from what you’ve said just before.

G:
Yep.

Researcher:
Do you understand more about bullying since doing the project?

G:
Yeah, its consequences and how far it does get and how much it upsets people and how the smallest things some people do find as bullying.

Researcher:
Gary, other comments that you’d like to make about the project itself?

G:
No, that’s about it.

Researcher:
Thank you, Gary. Conclusion of your interview.

YR 11 DRAMA STUDENT
17/10/05

Researcher:
When selected for the project what was your initial expectation of it?
H:
I thought it was going to be fun … nothing else … I don’t know.

Researcher:
Can you suggest any changes or modifications that might be made in the project to improve it?

H:
I have no ideas whatsoever.

Researcher:
What components of the project worked for you?

H:
Umm … being a bullied person

Researcher:
Being the bullied person?

H:
Yeah

Researcher:
Now, did you enjoy the project?

H:
Yes I did.

Researcher:
What did you most enjoy about it? And then what did you least enjoy about it?

H:
Acting in front of the people, and least … peeing my pants.
Researcher:
Would you like to take part in the project again next year if it was offered to you?

H:
I would.

Researcher:
And why would you Hal?

H:
Because I’ve got nothing else to do. No, it helps me get my drama skills up.

Researcher:
What have you found most helpful about the project?

H:
Nothing really.

Researcher:
What did you think of the drama component?

H:
I don’t know.

Researcher:
That’s alright, what did you think of the peer teaching?

H:
Alright, I suppose.

Researcher:
Can you add anything to that? Why you thought it was good?
H:  
Explained it clearly and stuff like …

Researcher:  
Was it easy to work with the kids?

H:  
Yes.

Researcher:  
Did you find discipline a hard thing to cope with, with the younger years?

H:  
No, they were pretty well behaved once they were quiet.

Researcher:  
Has the project changed your relationships in the class? When you were doing the AAB project were you working with people you mightn’t necessarily ordinarily knock around with?

H:  
Yes I was working with people I mightn’t necessarily muck around with.

Researcher:  
And how did that go?

H:  
It went well.

Researcher:  
Was that a valuable thing … a valuable lesson to learn? Just to learn about how other kids click or tick in your class?
H:
Yes, it was very helpful yeah.

Researcher:
Do you understand more about bullying since doing the project?

H:
I do. I know there’s manifest and the other …

Researcher:
The stages?

H:
Yeah, the stages. There’s three isn’t there?

Researcher:
Yeah. Any other comments, Hal, you’d like to make about the project?

H:
No, not really.

Researcher:
Alright, thank you Hal that concludes your interview.

H:
Thank you.

Interview with YR 11 Drama Student
17/10/05

Researcher:
Patricia, have you enjoyed the Acting Against Bullying project?
I:
I did, but I found it frustrating.

Researcher:
Why did you find it frustrating?

I:
Because we didn’t get enough time with the younger kids so we couldn’t put the message across. They just thought it was a bit of a joke. They didn’t take any notice of it. So I reckon if we had a few more lessons, or a bit more time, I think it would have done a bit … had a better result.

Researcher:
What did you enjoy most about it and what did you enjoy least about it?

I:
I enjoyed making up the skits for them, because I think that’s the part that they actually listened to. But, I didn’t enjoy having to explain the actual stuff about it, because they didn’t listen and it became very frustrating.

Researcher:
So did you find the discipline, with the younger grades, difficult to undertake?

I:
Yep.

Researcher:
What did you find most valuable about the project, and then again least valuable?

I:
I think it does bring awareness of bullies into the school, so that’s always good to know. But then, least valuable …
Researcher: Nothing?

I: No, not really. There’s no harm in doing it.

Researcher: What did you think of the drama component?

I: Yeah, it was good … it was good. For year elevens, its good getting escape from the class work for a bit, so it’s just a bit of fun.

Researcher: And what did you think of the peer teaching component? Like, you talked a bit about it before … you said it was difficult to discipline the kids.

I: I don’t know.

Researcher: Nothing much else to add there?

I: No.

Researcher: Has the project changed your relationships, like, in the class? I was saying to Hal, you might have worked with people you might not normally knock around with. Did you work with people that you didn’t know?

I: No, not really, because in drama classes they tend to be a bit smaller and you’re friends with everyone in it … doing games and activities.
Researcher:
And do you understand more about bullying since doing the project?

I:
Yup.

Researcher:
In what way? Can you add to that?

I:
Well I got to do it twice ‘cause I was a year nine when they first started doing it, and then I had to do it in year eleven. But, you just don’t realise how serious bullying can get until you actually have to listen to these programs and … like you see it every day in the … at school … but when someone actually confronts you about it, it’s a bit different.

Researcher:
Any other comments you would like to make on the project itself?

I:
No.

Researcher:
If it was offered to you next year would you like to take it on?

I:
It depends if I did get to spend a bit more time with the kids, I probably would.

Researcher:
Great, thank you that’s the conclusion of your interview.
Interview with YR 11 Drama Student
17/10/05

Researcher:
G., have you enjoyed the Acting Against Bullying project? And if so what have you enjoyed most about it and what have you enjoyed least about it?

G:
I did enjoy it. Probably the reason I most enjoyed it was that you got to be around the younger kids and see how they acted … like … were against bullying and see if they cared about it as much as our grade did … and probably the least was probably the kids discipline … when we were talking about it they didn’t really participate, they more held back. You could tell someone of them were probably getting bullied but they didn’t really want to speak up in their class ‘cause they weren’t comfortable.

Researcher:
What have you found most helpful about the project G.?

G:
Most helpful … I don’t really know.

Researcher:
Anything that you felt wasn’t helpful when you were doing the project that you had to do?

G:
Probably the amount of time we had with them, it wasn’t really … like we had one lesson with them and have that lesson was taken up trying to get organised into the groups and just showing what we did. So it wasn’t really enough time.

Researcher:
What did you think of the drama component?
G:
The drama component made it fun…like it made it…it helped us….it helped us become other people to show how we got bullied or how other people got bullied.

Researcher:
What about the peer teaching?

G:
That was good, except for the fact that they didn’t want to participate…that’s all it was.

Researcher:
How did you handle that?

G:
We just really tried to get them involved, but it didn’t really work. We didn’t really have enough time to get it to work either.

Researcher:
So time has been the main factor?

G:
Yeah time was a big factor yeah.

Researcher:
Have you made any new friendships through the peer teaching … with the younger kids?

G:
With the younger kids no not really ‘cause it was only one lesson. In our group, Mr I was our teacher, he makes us mix with all of our grade so it’s really … we didn’t really make any new friends.
**Researcher:**
Has the project changed your relationships in the class? Well I suppose you’ve answered that from what you’ve said just before.

**G:**
Yup.

**Researcher:**
Do you understand more about bullying since doing the project?

**G:**
Yeah, its consequences and how far it does get and how much it upsets people and how the smallest things some people do find as bullying.

**Researcher:**
G., other comments that you’d like to make about the project itself?

**G:**
No, that’s about it.

**Researcher:**
Thank you G., conclusion of your interview.
Appendix Q: Some of my Journal Entries

Southside SHS – Evaluation of Interview with Marie
17\textsuperscript{th} May, 2005, 2.15pm

Marie explained that Southside are looking at spreading towards the parents. A year 8 parent welcome BBQ included a short demonstration on AAB this year. The yr 8 unit now has a section designated to including AAB in it. The unit is called the Power Punch Unit. The year 8s need to focus on bullying whilst the year 10s are more into youth issues now. Marie wants AAB within the curriculum. The National Safe Schools Framework Funding played a huge impact last year, but there is still little time to include all she wants to. PD still includes finding the time. Feels the program needs to be briefer as it can drag if it goes for too long.
The year 12s as part of their Multi-Arts Practice now go out to the local primary school and teach AAB to the year 5s as part of their community involvement. Later this year they will teach the parents of the year 5s and she will ask me to visit then.

June 14\textsuperscript{th} there will be a staff meeting in service of AAB, but it will be a power-point presentation, not an in-service. When asked about our role and my role, Marie felt that it was good that professional freedom, space and flexibility were given. It laid the foundation, but it needed to be valued, accessible and to work through the curriculum.

She felt that patience was needed, that admin support was a must and that communication was important amongst staff. The less inconvenience to the school, the better. She wanted everyone in the school to speak the jargon. I will be coming back for the next committee meeting into bullying that had been formed. The principal has been part of this since he was in-serviced! (Maureen Owen)

Westside Update
23.11.2004

I visited Westside to see how they are going. They have been waiting for the former key teacher to contact them so they haven’t been in-serviced. The HPE HOD [Head of
Department had not told me any of this when I had phoned to check in the past. I immediately phoned and emailed the other school and asked her if we can do a joint in-service early in term 1 next year – 2005.

They gave me feedback on the Primary School and said the morale is very low there as they have had many changes and no permanent principal or DP. However, most of their kids go to Westside after year 7 and they are just across the road so it is still the best school to use.

**Westside S.H.S Update**

11/8/05

This was the first time an AAB performance had been attempted without breaks. Whilst the performance group was outside working with the student, the teacher worked through the three stages, i.e. latent, emerging and manifest. As he worked through and instructed students as to what would happen once the AAB role play began, the students displayed a very clear understanding of the forthcoming process in regard to their questions and ideas.

The class had four separate interjectory periods after each scene:

- Observing
- Hot seating and thought tracing
- Intervention via magic
- Intervention and de-escalation of tension/s within the scene.

The entire class joined in with great vigor and interest in regard to role playing and interpretation of all scenes. Extremely vocal – no holding back. I took that on board as a great positive. Wonderful characterisations were given over to the three characters, i.e. Bully, Bullied and Bystander.

Students’ insights into questions given over to the performers and also the responses given back in turn by the performers really gave food for thought. I found them to be wonderfully powerful. Below are a couple of examples.
Questions to the bully:
1 “Don’t you think it’s a bit sad that this is what you have to do for entertainment”
2 “How does bullying work for your future?”

Response from the bully to last question:
“It’s not about the future. It’s about now and it keeps me popular”.

De-escalating the tension worked well with the changing of roles between bystanders. This interchange altered the dynamics realistically between bystanders and bully.

The host was the Year 11 student, who took on the role magnificently. Though this was a vocal and extreme class of Year 8s, the teacher worked exceptionally well with all students and had obviously given these kids great groundwork with regard to AAB.

The word “magic” was changed to “bull”.

Overall I was very impressed.

**North Beachside SHS – Report**

**24 and 25.11.04**

We visited North Beachside SHS to investigate how things were going. It seems the year 11s did the AAB with yr 7s. They skipped year 9s altogether. This caused some problems. Also the drama teacher tried to in-service the primary school – but was only given I hour and this was not sufficient.

He felt the primary teacher was OK on her own, but she said she would have liked more help. We asked her if she would like to be a master teacher next year and she seems a bit wary. Her principal said she would support that however.

He had to in-service teachers at another school too and they seemed to need him to return and were not willing to do things on their own. He is going through the same
process I am going through now. He will do up an overview of the unit he does for the newsletter. His email has been down for 3 months! We talked about doing it with yr. 9s next year and he agreed.

We interviewed about 5 students and they were all very good. Two were from the Guidance Officers’ Conference performance. They would still like to do it again and I suggested the drama teacher and primary teacher use the students to do an in-service for the staff at both schools – together.
Appendix R: Diagram of Whole School Approach

Whole School Approach to Safe Schools

Students
- Yr 8: Acting Against Bullying Program
- Yr 10/11: AAB Peer Tutors
- Yr 10/11: Peer Tutor Training

Staff
- Professional Development: What is AAB?
- Policy Awareness

Parents
- Information Evening: What does RSRS do to maintain a Safe School?
- Parent Information Pamphlet / School Newsletter:
  - Yr 8 BBQ - 2005
  - P & C Meeting - 2005
  - Open Day - May 2005
  - Open Evening - May 2005
  - Cultural Evening - Oct 04/05

Community
- Rochedale South SS: Student drama training
- Rochedale South SS: Parent Information Evening about Bullying

Students
- Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation (Stage 1 or 2 of Policy flowchart)
- Discipline Procedures (Stage 3 or 4 of Policy flowchart)

Staff
- Conflict Response: Teacher conducts interview (Trained in 'No Blame' response)

Parent
- Contacted re incidents: (May be involved in Community Council Process)

Community
- Outside Agencies: contacted to support families, targets, and bullies.