



EVALUATION OF PEACEFUL PATHWAYS: AVP-YOUTH IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Basic, Advanced and T4F workshops, known as Peaceful Pathways (PP), were offered to selected students at Metropolitan High School (MHS) between 2007 and 2013. During that time the AVP Youth Program was an Endorsed Program with the Western Australia Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Years 10, 11 and 12 in WA schools. Students who successfully completed a workshop were able to gain one point for their WACE (Western Australian Certificate of Education) for each level in which they participated. Over the seven years that PP was running at MHS 225 students completed the Basic, 64 students completed the Advanced and 32 students were trained as facilitators. Many of these young facilitators then became team members for future workshops with other students. 34 adults associated with the school also participated in AVP workshops of whom, 5 went on to train as facilitators. Another 11 external facilitators from AVP participated in workshops at the school.

An evaluation of this program was carried out in 2014. It used a qualitative dominant mixed methods approach. It had been intended to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to corroborate results through a triangulation of data; however the response rate of student participants was too low for the proposed on-line quantitative survey to be reliable. The final design mixed several qualitative methods for complementarity, i.e. the elaboration, enhancement, illustration and clarification of the results from one method with the results from another method.

Ultimately, the evaluation was primarily based on interviews with the following people.

- Seven teaching and non-teaching school staff who had completed AVP facilitator training and/or who had facilitated Peaceful Pathways workshops.
- Six teaching and non-teaching staff likely to have some knowledge of Peaceful Pathways participants who had not themselves participated in Peaceful Pathways workshops and were not AVP facilitators.
- Nine current students (four girls and five boys) who had completed Peaceful Pathways. All students were or had been part of the school's peer support program. Five students had completed only the basic Peaceful Pathways program; the remainder had completed the basic, advanced and facilitator training programs. Two were in Year 12, two were in Year 11 and five were in Year 10 at the time of interviews.
- Four experienced AVP facilitators, three of whom had facilitated at least one Peaceful Pathways workshop at the school.
- The school psychologist, also a trained AVP facilitator.

From the analysis of the interview data two broad themes emerged – the way in which participation in PP impacted on individuals (themselves or others), and comments about the processes of PP, the ways in which it worked and why, and suggestions for what could be changed.

A range of positive impacts on individuals were reported by adults and students alike. These included the PP themes of conflict resolution skills, communication skills, community building, caring for others, empathy and tolerance. There were also a number of other incidental themes that emerged, namely, self-confidence, self-efficacy, a wider circle of friends, opportunities to explore leadership and to be seen as a leader, self-awareness, options and choices for decisions and actions, and PP's real world application and potential usefulness in later life.

Positive comments about PP workshop processes included the creation of an atmosphere in which participants felt welcome, the experiential learning approaches used, the fact that it was fun and active, and that there were no right or wrong answers. Experiences such as role plays, journaling and the use of the mandala were all found to be valuable. Participants also saw value in learning facilitation skills. The activities in general were seen to be meaningful and affirming and participants learnt how to give and receive feedback. Participants appreciated the development of trust and the importance placed on confidentiality. Many noted the difference in the relationship between adults and students compared to their school experiences.

Other comments made about PP included the high quality of the leaders. One or two students and adults considered it more suitable for those having problems although others recognised the importance of having a spread of different students in workshops and the AVP understanding that we all have within us the potential for violence as well as the essence of 'good' in everyone. Its limited reach within the school meant that it was hard for PP to effectively impact on the culture of the school as a whole, although it was deliberately targeted at peer support leaders and potential leaders as a means of mainstreaming it and embedding it within the school structure. The model adopted was costly in terms of time and human resources which means its capacity for transferability to other schools is questionable. Some staff, not directly involved, felt that more communication about PP with other school staff would have been helpful and would have increased support for the program.

Overall, despite the very real limitations of the study, PP seems to have made a significant and positive impact on at least some of those who had been involved, both students and staff. All who were interviewed had positive stories to relay about their experiences with PP despite the fact that it was more than 12 months since any of them had done any PP workshop and that in the majority of instances they had done only one workshop. While there were some reservations about some aspects these were limited and relatively minor. The most serious drawback identified was its cost, both in terms of time required from staff and students, and the dollar amounts incurred in replacing teaching staff who participated. However, no matter how tempting it is to do so these positive outcomes cannot be generalised to all students or staff who participated. Nor can it be assumed that these findings would be replicated elsewhere, although they certainly suggest that other evaluations would be worth conducting.

1: INTRODUCTION

This evaluation of Peaceful Pathways was funded by the Alternative to Violence Project (AVP) Western Australia with the aim of undertaking a rigorous evaluation of the Peaceful Pathways (AVP Youth Program) as carried out at a one metropolitan secondary school in Western Australia.

Despite the spread and longevity of AVP throughout the world and the mountain of testimonies and anecdotal evidence about its efficacy, there have been relatively few attempts at systematic, rigorous evaluations. The contained nature of this target school's experience with AVP (Peaceful Pathways) suggested it would be an ideal case study for this purpose. Three years later the researchers involved have a better understanding why this worthy goal is still so elusive.

1.1: The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP)

1.1.1: The Beginnings of AVP

In the 1970s, a group of inmates at Greenhaven Maximum Security Prison in New York, USA, who had witnessed the Attica riots, were also concerned with the 'revolving door' they clearly saw in their institution. Youth were appearing in prison for fairly minor offenses, only to return (sometimes multiple times) for increasingly more serious and violent crimes. The Society of Friends (Quakers), together with the inmates and other peace activists, developed a series of non-violence workshops in order to respond to this issue. The benefits of the workshops were evident to prisoners and staff alike and word about them spread, culminating in a widespread demand for them and eventually the workshops spread throughout the New York prison system. It was obvious that violence was occurring just as much outside prison walls as inside. Community and youth programs arose from that recognition, and AVP expanded across the USA, and eventually worldwide.¹ Today, AVP workshops are delivered in more than 40 countries and in all states of Australia in prisons, schools and the wider community. Sometimes AVP adopts different names, such as Peaceful Pathways, depending on the target group.²

AVP, whatever its name and whatever the target group, school children, youth, adults, prison inmates, special groups like refugees, or the wider community, seeks to assist people to gain skills to resolve conflicts (physical, social or emotional) in non-violent ways. It does so through an experiential program conducted over several days that consists of small and whole group exercises, discussions and self-reflection, games and role plays.

In Western Australia, AVP agendas are constructed around themes that broadly address the 'building blocks' of AVP. These building blocks are

- **Affirmation** – self-esteem and trust
- **Communication** – listening skills and assertive communication
- **Co-operation** – co-operative skills for working in groups
- **Creative Conflict Resolution** – creative ways to deal with conflict non-violently

¹ AVP International <https://avp.international/>

² Information here about AVP is taken from Sally Herzfeld, *This we can do*, 2015 Backhouse Lecture (produced by Australia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia Incorporated) and *Alternatives to Violence USA* website <http://avpusa.org/>

- **Community Building** – differences and similarities that individuals bring to forming communities and how to utilise them.³

The philosophy of AVP permeates all workshops at all levels. According to Stuart (1999), who identified the ingredients for successful workshops with young people and students by analysing AVP and HIP programs in NSW, this includes beliefs that

- all people are of value and worthy of respect
- there is 'good' in all people and that is when we respond to the positive in people we are likely to find it
- we learn best by being directly involved in the experience
- as facilitators our role is to offer choices, not tell others how to live, and
- in workshops, the participants bring a wealth of experience, insights and skills which can contribute to the group's (including the facilitator's) learning. (p. 47)⁴

Advanced workshops, which can be undertaken after participants have completed a Basic workshop, might focus on specific topics such as anger, bullying, power, love, fear, forgiveness or relationships or other topics as decided by the particular group of participants and the facilitators. The aim is always to reach a consensus decision within the group as to what topic to explore.

The concept of 'transforming power' is a pivotal idea in AVP and is based on an understanding that we all have within us the capacity to resolve conflict non-violently and that with support and practice we can more effectively draw on that when faced with conflict situations. The 'keys' to transforming power, commonly presented in the shape of a mandala or as large coloured keys, are 'respect for self', 'caring for others', 'expect the best', 'think before reacting', and 'ask for a non-violent solution'.

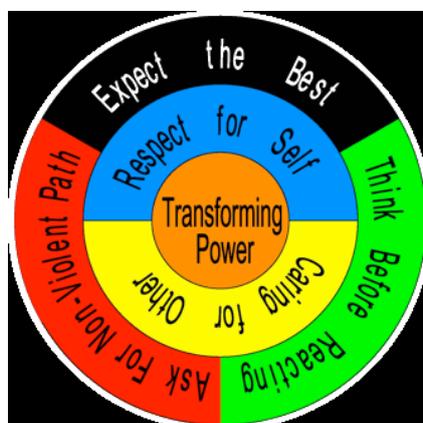


Figure 1: The Mandala⁵

³ Logic Model for AVP - see Appendix 1

⁴ Stuart, G. (1999). Conflict Resolution & Non-Violence Workshops with Young People. *Youth Studies Australia*, June, 37-41.

⁵ Taken from AVP Sydney Concise Manual Draft (2012).

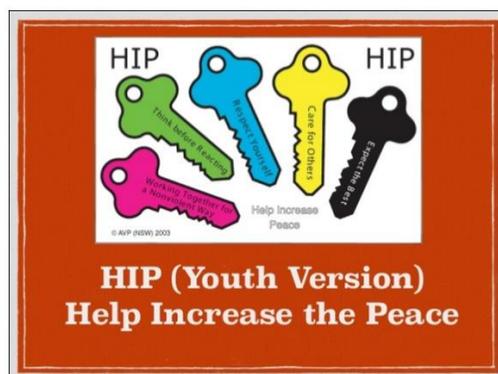


Figure 2: The Keys

The third and final workshop is what is known as a T4F i.e. training for facilitators. Not all people who do one or more Advanced workshops go on to do the T4F. Not all those who do a T4F actually go on to become active facilitators but those that do are deemed to be ‘apprentices’ for as long as they feel the need to be so, to ensure that new facilitators have as many opportunities as they need to ‘practice’ facilitation. It is not a formal process. No matter what the target, group participants are always urged to consider going on to become facilitators because AVP workshops are always facilitated by teams of facilitators, never by individuals, and wherever possible this includes facilitators from the target group.

The logic model which informed the implementation of AVP as Peaceful Pathways at Metropolitan High School⁶ outlines the logical sequencing of AVP workshops (see Appendix 1).

1.1.2: AVP at Metropolitan High School

In 2007, AVP was introduced into a senior high school in an outer metropolitan suburb of Perth Western Australia. The then Student Services Year 10 Coordinator had responsibility for training the peer support leaders. She had heard about AVP and restorative justice⁷. The following year, with the support of a newly graduated school psychologist, who was also an experienced AVP facilitator with over 7 years’ experience, they applied for and received endorsement from the Curriculum Council of WA⁸, for Peaceful Pathways (PP), as it was now to be called, as a personal development program. It was on the advice of the Curriculum Council that the name was changed as it was seen to be a better

⁶ Metropolitan High School is a pseudonym.

⁷ According to the Victorian Association for Restorative Justice, restorative justice uses ‘the processes of peer mediation, peacemaking circles and community conferencing. Conferencing involves a formally structured conversation between people who are affected by conflict in a community. That conflict may be the result of some harmful act about which there is no dispute, and/or be associated with many unresolved disputes between individuals, and/or groups in the community. Whether there is no dispute, or there are many disputes, the Conferencing format enables everyone affected to consider *what happened, how each person has been affected, and what might be done to improve the situation.*’ AVP and especially AVP-Youth in many instances use these latter three questions as a model for debriefing exercises about violence in their workshops.

⁸The School Curriculum and Standards Authority, since 2012.

descriptor of what was being done in the school context. In this school, it was positioned as the training platform for the peer support leaders as a way to promote their ability to communicate and to resolve conflicts because there was an expectation that the peer support leaders would be peer mentors as well as demonstrate leadership.

Initially PP targeted students in Years 10, 11 and 12, but in 2009 the training of the peer support leaders became focussed on the Year 9 cohort and therefore was not eligible for Curriculum Council endorsement. Only students who did the Advanced and T4F in later years were eligible. The Basic PP workshops facilitated the development of the new peer support leaders in Year 9. The training was conducted at the end of the school year – so the Year 9 peer support students would establish a working community and be ready to transition into the role as a Year 10 peer support leader formally at the start of the new school year. Peer support leaders who wished to extend their leadership skill set, completed the three levels of AVP workshops. The overarching purpose of Year 10 students co-facilitating a PP workshop was to role model leadership to the incoming leaders and to extend the leadership capacity of the existing peer support leaders. The co-facilitation principles also allowed the student facilitators to be mentored by internal and external AVP facilitators and thus increase their leadership capacity. As a result of this extension activity, the Year 10 and older students were eligible to receive a WACE point⁹.

The program went from just 20 or so selected leaders in the first few years to having 40 or more leaders. At the start of Year 10 the peer support leaders then mentored the incoming Year 8s and took responsibility for helping with the Year 7 transition nights, parent nights, showing people around the school, and welcoming the new students.

It was a very deliberate decision to embed PP as peer support training because otherwise the ‘alternatives to violence’ name could seem to just target the ‘problem kids’. The belief was that it was not possible to change the problem student behaviour if all the difficult students were put together. As one informant noted ‘There was a conscious effort to create a Bell Curve distribution of the good kids with some of the problem kids so that the good kids’ behaviour and ability to reflect and participate pulled the students with negative behaviour into some form of conformity.’ To undertake PP, students either self-nominated or teachers nominated them.

PP was established as an internally run and operated program although external facilitators provided from the facilitator base of AVP-WA were added to the team especially in its early days, until there were sufficient staff members who had completed the three levels of AVP training and the program could be co-facilitated internally. External AVP facilitators continued to be used when possible, because they offered breadth and depth to the workshops. There was a concern that if it was just an external program that came into the school occasionally it would not be embedded in the school and thus able to influence the school culture. The position of PP as a training platform took some time for that to be understood and accepted by the school hierarchy.

Within the first year, two staff members completed the whole three levels of training and then this small internal team worked with external AVP facilitators to build capacity within the staff and student body. The school chaplain, who also trained as a facilitator, took over supervision of the peer support program and once the initial AVP training was done, she took responsibility for embedding the activities and the learning that had come out of the workshops into the peer support

⁹ That is, they earned credit towards their final school certificate viz. the WA Certificate of Education (WACE).

group's training schedule. Again, this was a deliberate initiative to reinforce PP values and approaches beyond the settings of the workshops.

In addition to providing PP for the potential peer leadership group a small number of Aboriginal only workshops were run. The perception was that the PP workshops could be used to consolidate the Aboriginal community of students as they often did not know each other and their particular experiences of violence and harm could be dealt with specifically. It was hoped to have a parallel leadership framework for some of the Aboriginal students but it didn't get any traction and so was discontinued.

When AVP first started at the school it was run as a camp (two days and an evening) but due to the difficulty in finding a campsite and the cost, the format was eventually changed and the program was run for two non-residential days. However, it was always held off-site and was seen as an immersion program.

The facilitation teams were composed of school staff (who had been trained), external facilitators and from one to four students, once they were trained student facilitators.

PP followed the school timetable starting at 8.30am but often finishing about 4.30 to 5pm. At the end of the day, the students would have an hour's free time or journaling time, and then a shared meal. The program would operate again from 7 to 9pm, finish up and then on Day Two the workshop would run from 8.30am to about 4pm.

Traditionally the AVP expectation was that it took about 18-22 hours to complete a workshop but this school did approximately 16 hours – not dissimilar to what has become the norm for AVP in the community and in prisons in Australia in the second decade of 21st Century.

The program agenda followed by the school was essentially that used elsewhere in Western Australia and described above, however, following AVP practice that has been developed and is used in NSW, PP at this school embedded the restorative practice (RP) questions especially in debriefing exercises viz.

- What happened? (the past);
- What was the hardest thing about that for you? (the present);
- Is there anything you would do differently next time? (the future).¹⁰

The restorative questions also linked to the ethos of the school, as the whole staff had already received RP training, and RP was part of the overall whole school behaviour management strategy.

The only other significant difference to other AVP workshops was the journaling process which was introduced, in part, because of the Curriculum Council requirements that a student had to show evidence of meeting the learning outcomes of the program. The journals were sighted and signed off by the lead facilitator and were shared with other participants. However, it should be noted that journaling by participants was initially encouraged in workshops when AVP was first introduced to WA in the 90s though it is rarely used these days with less time available.

As with AVP generally, the Advanced PP workshop operated using consensus decision-making. The participants worked through what consensus decision-making is, and used this process to decide the

¹⁰ AVP Sydney Concise Manual Draft (2012)

theme of the workshop and the facilitators developed a workshop around that theme. However, it was not completely theme driven because there were still core concepts and practices like role plays and activities which were required as part of the Advanced workshop learning outcomes.

In 2014, government schools in WA had significant cuts to their funding and many schools had to make difficult choices. Many ancillary services were cut. At this school, a decision was made to reduce the school psychologist's time and this particular staff member who had essentially driven PP in the school left the school and was replaced with another psychologist not familiar with the AVP program. In addition, the initial school chaplain who had provided significant support for the program left the school system, the Student Services Year Co-ordinator moved to another school, and there was a change in principal. The new school chaplain was required to provide an alternative peer support and student leadership training mode that was on campus, within school hours and at a lower cost.

In 2015 a change in requirements regarding the endorsement of school subjects for the award of WACE points by the now School Standards and Curriculum Authority (formerly the Curriculum Council) meant that PP temporarily lost its endorsement.¹¹ It is unlikely that PP will operate in this school again though it should be noted that senior personnel at the school who were interviewed for this project could see no reason why it should not. When the evaluation was carried out in 2014, PP had ceased to operate in the school.

¹¹ This has subsequently been restored which means that other schools can now offer PP in a revised format even it is no longer run at Metropolitan High School.

2. METHODOLOGY

This evaluation of the Peaceful Pathways program at Metropolitan High School was exploratory. As far as the evaluators are aware there have been no similar evaluations elsewhere in Australia or internationally although there have been some non-academic papers written about AVP as it is practiced in some schools in the USA¹². Those more systematic studies that have been undertaken have either not been of AVP in schools or not seeking to evaluate AVP (PP) per se¹³. The intention of this study was to investigate participants' responses to PP with as few predetermined expectations of outcomes as possible.

Initially it had been hoped to follow a year group of participants through with pre and post interviews and possibly testing as well, in addition to conducting interviews with past and present students and staff and others who had participated in PP at Metropolitan SHS. However, the process of persuading relevant AVP stakeholders of the value of the evaluation, the time taken in gaining permission from the local education authorities, the difficulty experienced in gaining parental consent from parents/guardians for students to participate, and the subsequent changes in state education funding impacted significantly on the school, meant that the initial ambitious intent for the evaluation was unable to be fulfilled.

The evaluation team consisted of an independent evaluation consultant who had no previous experience with AVP or PP, an experienced AVP facilitator/evaluation consultant who had no prior involvement with PP, and the school psychologist who was also a trained AVP and RP facilitator and who had championed PP at the school.

The evaluation was outcome focused and partially participatory¹⁴ in that the school psychologist participated in all phases of the evaluation. In addition, the evaluation design incorporated elements of the Most Significant Change (MSC) technique. MSC is a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation that engages stakeholders in deciding what sorts of change are to be recorded and in analysing the data¹⁵. It has also been called the 'story approach'. MSC entails the collection of significant change stories and the selection of the most significant of these stories by panels made up of stakeholders and interested parties.

The evaluation used a qualitative dominant mixed methods approach. It had been intended to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to corroborate results through triangulation of the data, however the response rate of student participants was too low for the proposed on-line quantitative survey to be reliable. The final design mixed qualitative methods for complementarity,

¹²e.g. Deeney, J. (2013) A Philadelphia School's Big Bet on Nonviolence in *The Atlantic* Jul 18, 2013 <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/07/a-philadelphia-schools-big-bet-on-nonviolence/277893/>

¹³ e.g. Morrison, M.L., Austad, C.S., & Cota, K (2011): Help increase the peace, a youth-focused program in peace education, *Journal of Peace Education*, 8:2, 177-191

¹⁴ Zukoski, A. and Luluquisen, M. (2002) Participatory Evaluation: What is it? Why do it? What are the challenges? *Community Based Public Health Policy and Practice*, Issue No. 5, http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/Evaluation.pdf accessed 26/1/15.

¹⁵ This outline of MSC draws mainly on the work of Dart, J. & Davies, R. (2005) *The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique: A Guide to Its Use* which can be found at www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm

i.e. the elaboration, enhancement, illustration and clarification of the results from one method with the results from another method.¹⁶

Approval to conduct the evaluation and all elements therein, was given by the Western Australian Department of Education Evaluation and Accountability Directorate.

2.1 Stage 1

2.1.1. Literature review

Literature on the limited number of evaluations of AVP was sourced from electronic databases and recommendations. Despite requests to the worldwide network of AVP very few evaluations were unearthed. Below are a sample of the few that came to light.

In 2005, Coggins¹⁷ undertook an outcome evaluation of a 'Help Increase the Peace (HIP)' program¹⁸ conducted with sixth grade African American students in a middle school located in a high poverty, high crime urban neighbourhood in the USA. It used a strong experimental design with students randomly assigned (stratified by sex) to 'treatment' and 'control' groups, the treatment group being the ones that participated in a regular HIP program. The program had four goals:

1. *To decrease incidence of aggression and victimization among students.*
2. *To improve students' attitudes toward interpersonal conflict (reducing students' attraction to escalation and retaliation while increasing their attraction to peaceful problem solving options to resolve disputes).*
3. *To increase students' self-confidence in being able to "keep the peace."*
4. *To increase students' conflict resolution knowledge.*

... Both treatment and control groups completed a pretest questionnaire one week before the HIPP workshops started and one week after the intervention ended. Self-report measures of behavior, attitude and self-efficacy as well as a curriculum knowledge test were included on the questionnaire to assess achievement of the four program goals listed above. (p.2)

There were a number of statistically significant results in the achievement of several of the goals, sufficient for the researcher to conclude that

The HIP Program appears to be effective in holding the line on victimization by peers of African American 6th grade boys in a challenged urban middle school and increasing their self-confidence in being able to stay out of fights. This makes it a promising program for these situations...The program appears to be more effective for boys than for girls. The fact that results for African American boys were accomplished in a challenged setting without a particularly strong implementation makes it more likely that the program can prove successful in other similar settings, as long as the trainer is willing to persist in modeling the program despite disruptions. Stronger implementation might improve effect sizes. (p.7)

¹⁶ Greene, J. C. et al (1989) Toward a Conceptual Framework for Mixed- Method Evaluation Designs *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* Vol. 11,, Issue No. 3, pp 255-74.

¹⁷ Coggins, C. (2005) *Help increase the peace middle school program evaluation – Summary Report* [Coggins, HIP Middle School Program evaluation \(2005\)](#)

¹⁸ 'Help Increase the peace (HIP)' program (or HIPP) is the name given to the slightly modified AVP program used with primary age school children.

However there were also significant limitations including the quality of the delivery of the program, the small number of students who participated in the evaluation, possible self-reporting biases, no alternative explanatory factors were considered and there was no later follow-up to determine any lasting effects. Thus its outcomes still need to be treated with great caution.

Another study of HIPP¹⁹ carried out in 2009 in the USA

'...investigated specific attitudes and beliefs, related to the concepts of peace education, of participants in an 'Introductory, basic help increase the peace program' (HIPP) workshop. Pre- and post-workshop ratings showed significant differences on two important attitudinal variables: first, the importance of being familiar with the concepts of communication, cooperation and trust, conflict resolution and understanding diversity, and, second, participants' beliefs about the importance of the philosophical themes of HIPP. The authors conclude that HIPP can be considered an important model program to be incorporated into peace education (p. 278)

However, the focus of this study was, peace education not AVP programs per se.

The most comprehensive document found was a British study²⁰ undertaken by Tomlinson in 2007, which reviewed the then available literature on AVP evaluations. She identified some 17 studies, only some of which had been published and mostly not in peer reviewed journals. Most of them focused on AVP programs run in prisons. Almost all showed positive results for AVP on a number of measures of effectiveness. The evaluations used varied approaches, included qualitative and quantitative studies, focussing on effects central to the AVP programme, as well as logical but not specifically planned impacts. The quality of the evaluations reviewed also varied. Not all were considered to be valuable because of this, including the three that were not positive about the impact of AVP. She noted in conclusion that

As this review has shown, internationally there is an evidence base for AVP effectiveness in prisons. But as there exist few evaluations of AVP workshops in community settings, and none to date that look at specialised circumstances, including workshops run for mental health organisations (such as MIND) or for young people, this is an area worthy of further investigation (p. 23).

2.1.2. Document analysis

Documents relating to PP as implemented at Metropolitan High School were reviewed and its fidelity to AVP principles and processes confirmed by the external AVP facilitator on the Evaluation team²¹.

2.1.3 Informed consent

Letters were sent, either by mail or by hand, to all past and present students who had participated in PP workshops at any level and to their parents or guardians, informing them of the evaluation and seeking their consent to participate (see Appendix 2). The response rate was very low. Out of 75 students still at the school only nine returned signed consent forms. The process, stipulated by the WA Department of Education, required the school psychologist to give the information letter and

¹⁹ Morrison, M. L., Austad, C. S., & Cota, K. (2010) Help increase the peace, a youth-focused program in peace education. In *Journal of Peace Education Vol. 8, No. 2*, August 2011, 177–191

²⁰ Tomlinson, K. (2007) *A review of the literature concerning the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP)* AVP Britain.

²¹ She had nearly 10 years' experience in AVP has facilitated dozens of workshops in WA and NSW as well as serving on the AVPWA committee for six years.

consent form to students, the students to give the letters to their parent/guardian, the parent/guardian and the student to sign the form and the student to return the signed consent form to student services office. Such a convoluted process may account in part for the low response rate. 146 letters were posted to past student participants at their last known address; none returned a consent form.

Thirty letters about the evaluation were also sent to school staff and allied workers (e.g. youth workers, staff from other schools) who had participated in workshops, and eight agreed to be interviewed. A selection of school staff who had not participated in the workshops but who might have knowledge of the impact of the workshops on individuals or the school community were also sent letters and nine agreed to be interviewed.

Seven external AVP-WA facilitators were identified and four agreed to participate in interviews either by phone or in person.

2.1.4. Interviews

Interviews were conducted with school staff, students and AVP facilitators using an interview guide (see Appendix 3) and all but a small number of short interviews with school staff who had not participated in PP were recorded and transcribed. Students were interviewed face-to-face at the school but the remaining interviews, with two exceptions, were done by telephone. The interviews were conducted either jointly or individually by the two non-school members of the evaluation team.

Those interviewed included:

- Seven teaching and non-teaching school staff who had completed AVP facilitator training and/or who had facilitated PP workshops.
- Six teaching and non-teaching staff likely to have some knowledge of PP participants who had not themselves participated in PP workshops and were not AVP facilitators.
- Nine current students (four girls and five boys) who had completed PP. All students were or had been part of the school's peer support program. Five students had completed only the basic PP program the remainder had completed the basic, advanced and facilitator training programs. Two were in Year 12, two were in Year 11 and five were in Year 10 at the time of interview.
- Four experienced external AVP facilitators, three of whom had facilitated at least one PP workshop at the school.
- The school psychologist.

In analysing the data from the interviews, the responses were grouped according to the themes that emerged. Because of the 'emergent' approach used in this evaluation all themes were accepted with equal weight and seriousness, regardless of whether they were recognised as an intended part of the PP programme or not. The themes were then organised according to whether they reflected the impact of PP or whether they were more about the process of the AVP workshops.

2.2 Stage 2

2.2.1 Survey

An on-line survey was developed in Survey Monkey towards the end of Stage 1 and provided to the Evaluation and Accountability Directorate of the WA Education Department for approval prior to distribution (see Appendix 4).

Due to the low response rate from the initial letter, a further letter was sent to current students and their parents specifically requesting their consent to take part in the survey. 73 students were identified as still being at school and 64 consent forms were handed out (9 did not get handed out as students were absent). The school psychologist arranged for those students from whom informed consent had been obtained to complete the survey in the school computer laboratory. Twenty students completed the survey.

Unfortunately a problem in the design of two of the questions meant that those questions could not be analysed. A corrected version of the survey was sent by the school psychologist to those students who had provided their email addresses but too few completed the revised survey for the responses to be meaningfully analysed.

Survey results were analysed using descriptive statistics however the response rate (31%) is too low to consider the survey results as a reliable sample of participants' views on Peaceful Pathways.

2.2.2 Most Significant Change

An MSC question was included in the student interviews. The responses to this question together with other information in the interviews were collated into an MSC story for analysis.

Students attending Peaceful Pathways workshops in 2013 completed a feedback form which included an MSC question. The students' responses to that question were obtained for the nine students for whom informed consent was available.

The two sets of stories were analysed by a panel comprised of a very experienced AVP facilitator who had not participated in PP at the school (and not part of the Evaluation Team) and another person with no knowledge of AVP. In accordance with MSC processes the stories were read aloud, discussed by the group, the most significant story from each set was chosen and the reasons for the choice were documented (Dart and Davies, 2005).

3: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Metropolitan High School is a co-educational secondary (Years 8-12) public²² school in an outer metropolitan suburb of Perth. It has over 1000 students.

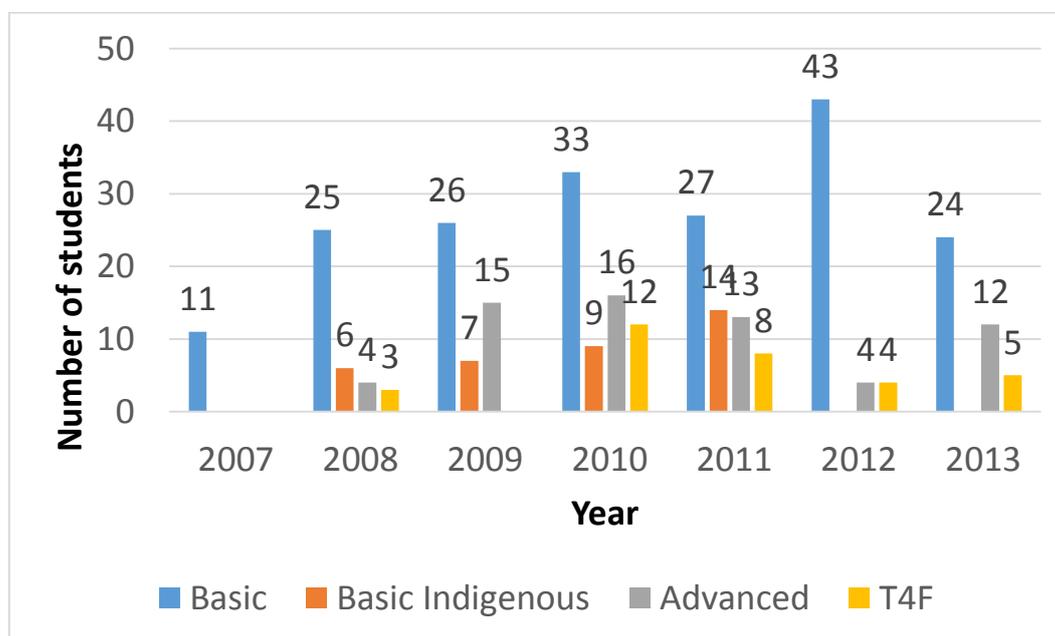
Between 2007 and 2013, 24 Peaceful Pathways workshops were conducted providing training in conflict resolution to 225 students, 27 Metropolitan staff members and eight others.

Table 1 below provides a breakdown of the number of workshops and workshop participants. All participants undertaking Advanced workshops had completed a Basic workshop; similarly all participants undertaking a T4F workshop had completed an Advanced workshop. Eighteen of the 32 students who did a T4F workshop went on to facilitate at least one workshop for other students.

Table 1: Number of workshops and workshop participants

Workshop Type	Number of workshops	Student participants	Adult participants
Basic Peer support	7	174	14 staff, 5 external to the school (others)
Open Basic	1	7	1 staff
Education Support Basic	1	8	4 staff
Indigenous Basic	4	36	8 staff, 3 others
Advanced	6	64	7 staff, 2 others
T4F	5	32	5 staff, 1 other

Figure 3: Number of students participating each year by type of workshop



²² In Western Australia, 'government' and 'public' are synonyms for schools funded and operated by the government education system.

3.1 Impacts

As noted above, the themes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews broadly fell into two groups – the way in which participation in PP had impacted on individuals or others, and comments about the processes of PP (or AVP), the ways in which it worked and why – and suggestions for what could be changed. As with any classification in this sort of procedure, these themes did not fit into nice neat categories and arguments could be made about any specific comment as to which group it might come under. Similarly, some of the comments about ‘impacts’ might equally have been grouped under AVP processes because they are deliberately addressed in workshops. So the following headings should be understood as a heuristic device for the purpose of discussion, not an analytic tool for the purpose of measurement.

Within the themes that focussed on the impact of PP there were those that are specifically targeted as part of the PP program, and those that were incidental to it.

3.1.1. Peaceful Pathways program themes

3.1.1.1 Conflict resolution skills

Obviously ‘conflict resolution’ is at the very heart of the PP program so it is not surprising that these skills were mentioned frequently and often at some length by adults and students. The students were able to identify many situations in which they had used elements of Transforming Power and the conflict resolution skills they had learned in PP to help them deal with difficult situations they encountered. Staff and students both gave some powerful examples of how they were better able to handle difficult situations and/or resolve conflict. Students said

I tend to be a lot hot headed and I get angry fast... I have learned that there are so many ways if you approach people differently and even the way you say something to someone can come across totally different even if you say the same words in a different tone... It has made me realise you don't have to be like that, you can be like cool, calm and you don't have to get angry.

I broke up a fight the other day... I pulled them apart and spoke to them... I did not know either of them. Because they are going off at me and I stayed calm... I spoke to them... Asked them to calm down because I was there to help. And they did calm down? Yes. It felt really good.

I used to think you could solve a problem with violence, almost anything. Doing the program made me realise that is not the way anything works so I am a bit more positive about it all now. It sort of did in a way but it kinda changed back when a gang of Maoris wanted to bash me that's when this sort of came into place, like I didn't fight them like I would have used to and by not doing that someone stuck up for me. Someone older even though when there was like 10 of them so it has actually changed quite a bit. So I actually know it works.

An adult commented

I think the process has got some real merit. It has got some value to give to the individuals as they do it. People like myself who would be peacemakers or able to help people talk through conflict, it helps to give a structure and to be able to identify certain things that you are looking for to make that happen so it's not ad hoc. You feel like you are going through the motions sometimes. You can see the steps, the phases that you are going through. For

those that don't I think it is very helpful in giving them a sense that they can with certain confidence find a method of resolving conflict and to recognise the stages that you go through with people, the way that they are responding, that they can see a progression in the conversation and there will be a confidence lift up, particularly for those that feel disempowered in normal situations. They can see that this is part of the stage where we are going. Yeah it's got quite a bit of merit to it.

A question in the on-line survey asked students to complete the sentence 'since doing Peaceful Pathways during a heated argument I am more likely to...' The 19 students who responded all provided non-violent options such as 'ignore and walk away', 'diffuse the situation', 'think before I say something that could harm someone or the friendship', 'get the point of view of both sides of the argument'.

MSC Case study

The panel selected this story written by a 15 year old boy immediately on completing a T4F workshop as the most significant change story because it illustrated 'gaining respect for self and others'; 'understanding the outcomes of violence' and 'identified a personal strategy'.

What had changed for me?

- Choosing different choices
- Gained more respect for others/myself

What was the situation before the change?

- Wanted to hit someone if frustrated
- The problem would stick to me/bug me

What happened to change things?

- Understanding of the outcomes that can be harmful
- Calming myself down in a confined space with music

The situation now?

- More respectful and more liked by people
- Better grades at school

Why is the change significant for me?

- Wasn't doing well at school
- Grades/friends I was losing.

3.1.1.2 Communication skills

Communication and the development and practice of communication skills is a fundamental ingredient of all PP (AVP) workshops. Listening is a particular part of communication that is stressed and is continually practised in AVP. A majority of the nine students interviewed explicitly identified ways in which they had been able to more effectively communicate since participating in PP workshops and included the following comments.

Being in Y12 and a girl there is lots of drama and rumours and stuff so I am like, let's just take a step back and listen to both sides because I am pretty sure there is more than what people are telling us. Let's not jump to conclusions... I just try and make everyone's positive and tell them don't jump to conclusions.

It has changed the way I communicate with people because I stop and listen to what people say. I don't always think I am right and that is the only way to go. I stop and think they might be right.

Well I tend now to give people a choice to speak. What they might like to say. You should give them a chance to speak and not question their thought and leave them alone with an answer instead of questioning them.

There were comments from some adults about this too.

It gave us more of a tool to actually listen and then work it out. Get information about what is really the problem and then try to discuss it and calm the situation.

And it gives you tools to think about things differently and not always react. You don't always have to react. Sometimes it's being a good listener. Sometimes you don't need to do anything. You actually just have to be there.

3.1.1.3 Community building

'Building community' is a basic building block of PP (AVP) so it is perhaps not surprising that several of the students identified this element. A sense of community implies a group of people who are like-minded, who share similar ideals, who are supportive of each other. For many students, school does not provide this – but their experience with PP did.

When I walk around the school I recognise someone from the PP program, just like say 'hi'. I see them around the school and you know if something does happen there is someone close by because they are everywhere.

I think it gave them the venue to feel safe within the group and to make more friends.

3.1.1.4 Caring for others

One of the elements of Transforming Power is 'caring for others', not something that is necessarily supported in the thrust and competitive environment of big secondary schools, especially in fairly difficult socio-economic areas. The following comments from students are indicative of how they experienced this.

It has also made me see that I can help other people because before I did not really think about it as much.

I was helping Year 8s get around the school... Make them feel good, feel comfortable... because they were thinking bad stuff about the school and you tell them this is a great school, a great environment and it's whatever you make of it.

3.1.1.5 Empathy

The concept of empathy is stressed in PP because this is a critical element of emotional intelligence necessary when seeking a non-violent solution in a potentially violent situation. Students and staff

gave examples of the ways in which they had been helped by their involvement in PP to develop empathy for others – and of its importance. For example, one student noted that

The trouble is it becomes like everything is OK and it's not OK and I think you need to see the hurt in the experience before you can understand it. Before- I didn't understand it.

And a staff person who became a facilitator found that

Thinking more about students' backgrounds, I give more consideration to that before jumping in at the deep end with some students... It makes you tread a little bit more carefully or makes you delve a little bit more deeply into what information you do have on record about them before you go into a discussion or to deal with any kind of situation you are having with them.

3.1.1.6 Tolerance

Tolerance is closely related to empathy. Indeed one might consider it to be sub-set of the concept of empathy. Setting aside any conceptual issues however, a number of students identified ways in which they believed PP had helped them to become more tolerant, and some of the staff who became involved also commented on the change in some of their own attitudes. One student commented that *'You have to think about how you are judging someone. You have to think about is there more to the story? Is there more to this person?'* and another said *'it did open your eyes that there is stereotypes attached to others and some of them are true and some of them aren't'.*

A staff person who went on to become a facilitator noted that

Every time I see people on TV and they are discussing should people wear head scarves and all that kind of thing. I think we sometimes just need to let people be who they are... We are all different. They might find us quite frightening at times too with our habits, our religions.

And another student put it this way

Just thinking before you do. It gave an open mind. I was open to every possibility in life. Two reasons for everything that overcame me and I was able to see two stories for everything that came around.

3.1.2 Incidental themes

3.1.2.1 Self-confidence

A majority of the nine students interviewed identified confidence in themselves as something they had gained from their involvement with PP. While this included one who had only done a Basic Workshop (2 days), in general, the more engagement the students had had with the program the more they perceived their confidence had been enhanced. Some adults interviewed also noted an increase in students' self-confidence. Students described this as, e.g. having *'broken me out of my shell'*, or being prepared to *'put their hand up for those sort of things'* such as provide support to another student, or stand for election to the student council. As one staff member said *'I see them go through the journey and they walk out with a different relationship, a different sense of themselves.'*

3.1.2.2 Self-efficacy

A sense of self-efficacy is about a feeling one is capable and competent to achieve one's goals. Two students noted that PP had helped them to feel more able to 'stand up' for themselves and speak out. As one student put it '*When someone says something I stand up for myself and I don't take it. I defend myself.*'

3.1.2.3 Wider circle of friends

The way in which PP was organised at this school meant that students from different years and different classes got to know each other – often in very deep ways. On the whole, students at secondary school tend to mix with a small number of students from their own classes and there are few, if any, other programs that actively support them in reaching out across those class divides in their own years and across the different years. PP was very different in this respect. Through it they recognised that there were others in the school with whom they shared a common bond of wanting to behave non-violently. A majority of the nine students interviewed commented positively about this. Some staff noticed this too. The comments included meeting new people, and people from different cultures, developing a broader spectrum of friends or, as one student put it

I think just knowing that other people share the same viewpoint as me and knowing that things don't have to resort to violence and we can help people without it was really good. It seems like there are so many people in the school who don't care what is going on. To just see that there are people who do and knowing that there are other people it can help make a difference. We know that there will be someone there to help you stop something from happening. So you know you are not on your own when you try to avoid a fight or something. Soon there will be someone else to help you in the situation.

3.1.2.4 Opportunity to explore leadership / to be seen as a leader

As noted above, PP had been identified by the school as a preparation program for students who were to be peer leaders in Year 10 and while PP is not specifically designed for this purpose several of the students felt they had opportunities to develop leadership skills. The very fact that students were given the opportunity to train to become facilitators in the program with equal status to, and responsibility with adult facilitators, meant that they were exercising leadership within the PP environment. This included some who had not been identified by the school as necessarily potential leaders.

Staff noticed this too, as one staff person said:

It made kids rise above and do something that they would not necessarily have done and I think that built a lot of strength within their character... Like being able to stand up and talk at assembly, to lead a group...more of a leadership role and that is a big step for youth. And you can see that in the classroom... more respectful, more content to do their work...That was a couple of boys but even the other kids you could see them stepping up...

Or the example of another boy:

One of the boys who when he did it, we did a camp. He had never stayed over in anyone's house and it was hugely traumatic for him to come on the camp but he really, really wanted to come on the camp. Because he was so shy he wasn't even naturally considered a leader but he went to the workshop. He just blossomed. He was a bit dramatic. He loved doing the

role play and drama and then he went on and became school captain. And now he is working in XXXX... this is a boy whose mum had to peel him off to come to the first camp. He went all the way. He is now looking at how he can use AVP to bring some leadership into [another] senior high school.

3.1.2.5 Self-awareness

A number of AVP exercises encourage self-reflection which is perhaps the first step to self-awareness. Several students interviewed seemed to have become more self-aware as a result of their participation.

We had to write a letter about ourselves and it helped me to work out what I might like to do after I leave high school. It taught me that I might like to enjoy teaching or it's got something to do with children in a leadership role...

I have more potential than I thought I had. I had stuff I thought I might not be able to do and I shouldn't compare myself to other people and just be who I am and not try to be what other people are and be happy for who I am.

3.1.3 Real world application

Lack of transferability of workshop experiences is a much studied phenomenon and is an on-going challenge for those involved in delivering professional development programmes etc. so it would seem to be significant (though not in a statistical sense) that four of the young people interviewed were able to articulate clearly and without prompting cues, some ways in which they had subsequently used their PP learning. Debriefing of PP exercises often asks participants to reflect on how this relates to 'real life'. Several students, including one who had only done a Basic Workshop, felt that they were using strategies they had learned in PP in situations they had subsequently encountered. Staff members observed it too and some recounted their own experiences of change.

I actually use quite a lot outside of it and I try and help my friends and give them information about what I have learnt from it. So I actually use it a lot without even realising it. It has helped me so much. It helps me to handle situations amongst co-workers and peers. It just helps so much without realising it.

Because the stuff I have learned in PP can help me outside or when I am out and about but the stuff we learn in the classroom doesn't really do that. This has given us the outside knowledge we need when we are out in the world.

Gives you life lessons – a lot.

At netball I used to get angry at the umpires for pulling me up for things... I used to feel like I have to find someone to blame for it but now I know they are fair and I just have to accept that and abide by the rules of the game. I learnt to bite my tongue.

When I came out of it on a Friday afternoon I felt much more mature and a lot more prepared, because I have started to look for jobs and things, a lot more prepared to be in the adult world. You are not just a little kid anymore and you know how to deal with situations like an adult would deal with it...

Life skills that I actually use now day to day cos some sections of my life have been rough situations so trying to change around.

I know a couple of students who are 22 or 23 and for them it has really been a marked thing in their development like they still talk about the importance of us and their future pathways and the concepts and they really account the AVP journey is a big part of that.

3.1.4 Options and choices for decisions and actions

PP is not a didactic approach, rather it involves experiential learning. Participants are not provided with ready-made answers to problems; nor can they be looked up in the back of a book. They are encouraged to see that when faced with a potentially violent situation they always have a choice to behave differently. So it is perhaps not surprising that several of the students interviewed gave real life examples of where they or others had chosen to behave non-violently.

It helps you with the choices you can make to help out a friend or yourself. It gives you options and choice on how to make decisions.

I had the choice to squash the fight or video record it and tell people about it or I had the choice to just resolve it and it is whatever you make of it I reckon. You can choose to use it or you can just choose to waste it.

3.1.5 PP training will be useful

Some of the students were aware of the instrumental value of participating in PP as the following comments illustrate.

I put on my resume that I am part of the PP and I have done all this training and everything. So I reckon it will definitely help me when I get a better job later in life.

I intend to go to university and it will be a good thing on my record that I was part of it. It's good.

And as well I find having the books, what's it called, still like the activity and the affirmation names...and the manual that's a good point, I have that still and it is useful for stealing activities out of that kinda target what you need them to.

I have a WACE point.

3.1.5.1 Student survey results

All but one of the 20 students who responded to the on-line survey identified something that they had used from PP. About a third of the responses related to conflict resolution, e.g., 'controlling an aggression situation with more confidence', 'being able to solve situations calmly', 'helping to solve negative situations in everyday life'. Several commented on being more positive e.g., 'more positive feedback', 'positive thinking and actions' while others referred to aspects of the program such as the mandala, the interactive games, leadership skills and self-reflection.

That 16 (80%) of the students who responded to the on-line survey would like to continue with PP in some way is an indication that it has been of some use to them.

3.2 PP (AVP) Workshop processes

Not every part of the PP processes was commented on by every interviewee. Nor did the questions specifically probe the individual elements of the workshops. However, a number of them were commented upon quite spontaneously by students and adult participants. A sample agenda for the

Basic workshop which can be found at Appendix 5 provides an outline of the processes participants would have experienced.

3.2.1 Welcomed

There are many deliberate activities built into PP (AVP) workshops to ensure that participants feel welcome. The setting is deliberately less formal and different to a 'classroom'. Only first names are used for participants and facilitators alike, an often novel experience for school students to find they are expected to address all adults, facilitators and any other adult participants by their first names – and sometimes a challenging experience for staff. Everyone sits in a circle, and facilitators do not stand in front of the rest of the group. Facilitators participate in experiences along with everyone else. Shared meals and eating together is another integral part of it. Some of the students noticed these things and commented on them. It is worth noting that these interviews were conducted more than 12 months after any of the students or staff had done a PP workshop.

Well I felt good. I felt that I was wanted. I felt that I was needed to do something. Not just because I wanted to do it but because people needed me to do it so it gave me a good conscience. That I was doing something for the better.

It definitely does because you all share meals in between the facilitation and the group work and the program itself and when you are away from school that's when these good things happen. You have the in between stuff, you've got the program, you've got the facilitation...

3.2.2 Experiential learning

As well as being a less formal environment, the learning is structured around activities, not lessons. The facilitators are there to facilitate learning and develop skills, not teach subject matter.

Well we weren't really sitting in the classroom the whole time and listening to teachers going on and on about stuff. What we were talking about it would be like in a group, more of a discussion everybody could put in their input. X wanted us to put in our input and was encouraging us... We did a lot more moving around and stuff we were not just sitting... and I think that helped.

It was more hands on. More your own learning than a teacher telling you what to do. It was not just one answer... Everyone had a role in it, everyone had their own answer. You had your own choice. There was no rights or wrongs so that was what I really liked about it.

Once they get started that talking is really important in the discussions after exercises or when you start really spreading out that's when the magic happens. When you are given the opportunity to really thinking deeply through that processing – what does this mean, what did you learn, how can we bring that into our daily life etc. etc...

It was something totally different from what they had been used to doing, you know the 3 Rs, learning the 3 Rs. It was fun and they were learning at the same time. It made a big impact on them at the end of the 3 days.

3.2.3 Fun and active

Effective facilitators of groups know the importance of changing the pace in workshops, the need to follow something very serious with something lighter to shift the mood, and that sitting down all the time does not equal learning. PP workshops (and AVP workshops generally) always have 'games' or

‘energisers’ or ‘light and livelies’ (they have many different names) interspersed throughout the workshop. Young people are particularly responsive to this – but adults too find it helps their learning. And many of the adults who became involved with PP also saw the benefit this had for the young people’s learning.

Activities like this can also be seen as ‘physical analogies’ even when they are not termed as such. Playing non-competitive cooperative games requires ‘effective communication’. They help build community and develop participants’ self-confidence.

There is just so much fun and it is easy to learn when you are not stuck at a table and we get to decorate our books with colours and everything and we get food...

It is way they laid out the program as well so we did not have too much time sitting down or too much time talking. We would be doing activities. Can’t sit down for too long or it gets boring.

And from adults:

The success factors are that the program has a lot of fun incorporated into it, a lot of activities.

Often what they learn most from is some of the more active program elements.

Being very clear when you are delivering a workshop and not bogging it down with too much rhetoric or too much explanation.

There is the fun element, the learning element, learning about others, hearing what they would do, basically their suggestions and you are able to reflect on whether that might work for you. So it is the practice part plus learning new skills and it is the practicing part that I think is the effective part of PP.

3.2.4 Affirmation

From very early in any AVP workshop ‘affirmation’ is woven into every part of it so it is not surprising that students would remember that and feel positive about their experience of it. In part, this derives from the AVP philosophy that sees ‘good in everyone’, but it is also about creating a positive respectful atmosphere recognising that conflict cannot be solved in a negative space.

Well I felt good. I felt that I was wanted. I felt that I was needed to do something. Not just because I wanted to do it but because people needed me to do it so it gave me a good conscience. That I was doing something for the better.

I feel like I have more respect for myself, I feel like everything I am doing has a reason for it... Cos’ before I used to have my doubts when I was doing something but now I think before I do and before I say anything.

Ways to think positively about yourself.

MSC Case study

The panel selected this MSC story taken from an interview with a 15 year old boy approximately 12 months after he had completed a PP Basic workshop because it 'articulated things from the program', i.e., 'referred to specific elements', gave 'evidence of personal growth' and illustrated a 'change from a violence perspective to one where he has alternatives'.

What changed?

Probably my outlook on life has changed. It has become more positive. The way I think about things like Metropolitan for example is a bit different, a bit more positive, instead of just saying Metropolitan.

What was the situation before?

I used to think you could solve a problem with violence, almost anything. Doing the program made me realise that is not the way anything works so I am a bit more positive about it all now.

Why was that significant?

Because it has probably made me a better person. A bit more glass half full not empty sort of thing. So yeah it has changed quite a bit.

What happened to change things?

We did like the role playing things so I learnt all these other things I can do instead of violence. We also did these things like everything that we learnt we put into a book which we get to keep and look over that all the time so we get to see our own personal change like a journal sort of thing.

3.2.5 Giving and receiving feedback

Learning to give and receive feedback (as opposed to praise and blame or correction) is a crucial part of facilitator training in AVP. It is also a fundamental part of resolving conflicts.

Sometimes I get a bit too excited and happy and I took it a bit too far. I was a greedy one who wanted all the power for themselves. ...The rest of the facilitators gave me feedback on how I can control my excitement. It was really good feedback. I enjoyed it so much.

3.2.6 Role Plays

Role plays are an essential part of AVP. They enable participants to try out different options, make choices about the persona they might be, and experience vicariously experiences and situations they might not otherwise encounter. They are a safe way to start to practice non-violent ways of resolving conflicts.

I think the most memorable part was most probably some of the role plays in Advanced when things started to click.

3.2.7 Trust and confidentiality

If people, whatever their age or situation, are to open up about themselves, admit that they are sometimes violent and have a go at trying some different approaches they need to feel safe, to trust the facilitators and other participants, and to be confident that what they say and do will remain

confidential. It is a sad reality that many children do not feel safe or able to trust other students or staff in many schools. The fact that some students chose to mention this specifically suggests that this may have been true for them.

Because we trust each other and what we say there stays there...

We did a lot of teamwork games to get people to trust each other and so you know who is around you and who can help.

3.2.8 Relationship between adults and students

Adults (especially staff at the school, but not only) and also students commented positively, on the different relationship they had with each other in PP workshops. All those factors designed to help participants feel welcome are also designed to break down hierarchical barriers. Not only did facilitators believe they treated students as equals, the students perceived that to be so. The first two of the following comments were made by adult participants in the program.

I do think they see you in a different light when you are working alongside them. They see you more as a real human being rather than as an authority figure.

I think it is really powerful for students to see teachers particularly on a level. To go oh a teacher is a person just like me and a person with experiences. I think that is quite powerful.

You get to experience more things when you are an adult and you don't get put on the end where you are a kid and have to do what other people say. They teach you to be mature and stuff. I think in AVP you get the tools that we are all equal. That everyone has the right to be safe and to be accepted within that group. I think it's what you learn is those sort of skills.

3.2.9 No right or wrong answers

Because of the process is experiential learning, the fact that there is no formal assessment, and the general environment is constructed so there are no 'right' and 'wrong' answers, participants very quickly come to understand that.

It was not just one answer... Everyone had a role in it, everyone had their own answer. You had your own choice. There was no rights or wrongs so that was what I really liked about it.

3.2.10 Journaling

Journaling is not an integral part of AVP processes, however amongst learning strategies it is recognised as a powerful tool for reinforcing learning and self-reflection. In the school setting where AVP was being recognised for a WACE point some evidence of achieving the learning outcomes had to be gathered – and journals were chosen as a suitable tool for that purpose. For some students it worked very well – but for others, for whom writing is not preferred means of communication this was not so enthusiastically embraced.

I always say I expect at least ½ a page. And it's not hard. Some of them take photos and draw. And at the very end before they get their certificates we have a show and tell and they have to go around and show all their peers what they have done.

In my journal all the things I have learned. This is my journal from Y9. I have got everything in here. And I have got all most posters. My certificates, my letter saying I can be a facilitator.

We also did these things like everything that we learnt we put into a book which we get to keep and look over that all the time so we get to see our own personal change like a journal sort of thing.

On the other hand, one student said

I think sometimes it could have been a little more practical. It felt like we did a lot of sitting down and writing.

Several adults also commented positively.

I always use a reflective journal in my teaching practice anyway. And because we use visual journals in art I thought it was a really good way for kids to get out a lot to do with their feelings, their emotions and their experiences.

I think like the journaling and the very visual nature of it is really important.

3.2.11 The Mandala

The 'mandala' is a metaphor that summarises the elements of 'transforming power' i.e. the capacity to resolve a conflict situation non-violently. Some places and some programs, such as those used with younger children, call the elements 'keys'.

The whole mandala – just every part of the mandala because that helps so much with conflict. (looks at journal) I have asked for a non-violent path, think before reacting, expect the best. I have used all of them...

You need to have a conversation with young people all the time. What does that mean to you, what does 'expect the best' mean to you? ... for that to make sense to the participant. You can't just say well there is that part of the mandala 'expect the best' and this is what we mean by that; it actually needs to be 'what do you think?' 'What does that mean to you?' 'Expect the best' and once they wrestle with that they get an understanding of what that really means to them. They can apply that section of the mandala. That is the experiential learning part. It needs to happen.



Figure 4: The Mandala²³

²³ AVP-WA certificate mandala image

3.2.12 Facilitation

AVP and PP are rare in the field of intervention programmes insofar as they always aim to offer the opportunity to eventually become a facilitator to anyone who is willing and able to do so. There are no other formal pre-requisites beyond doing the three levels of AVP, and upon application, being accepted by the local AVP community. This of course, implies having learned some facilitation skills which are very different to 'teaching', didactic skills. So even at this school level, students were able to develop facilitation skills, be recognised as facilitators and eventually, to help to facilitate workshops for other students.

The content was interesting and I got something out of it but what I most got out of it was the T4F and the facilitation stuff.

For me it was the facilitation stuff when we go through and do the Advanced and T4F programs to help the younger kids and that was what I really liked. Even the games and how we run the programs. In the T4F we learnt how to run the games and that...That worked really well.

3.3 Implementation considerations

Many of the interviewees made other observations to about the PP program and suggestions about how it might have been improved. On the whole their comments were very positive, which is perhaps not surprising insofar as they had volunteered to give up their time to speak to the evaluators.

3.3.1 Quality and commitment of leaders

It is significant, that unsolicited, there were staff and students who commented on the quality of the leaders in the program. Perhaps, in part, because of the after-hours commitment it required, only thoughtful people were attracted to the program. Even the external facilitators who came into the school to work with the program were essentially volunteers, only being paid a small honorarium if they gave up paid work to do so.

The linchpin of PP at Metropolitan SHS was the school psychologist who provided both the vision and the organisation for program.

I think it was fortunate for the school that they had XXX and that they could do that and she was in a position where she was able to see it through and it wasn't just a one-off. Because quite often things that are a one-off they build up this extreme sense of excitement and then it all just gets left up to the teachers to keep carrying it through and the teachers cannot add more into their personal day so it is really not something that you can't expect the teachers are going to keep thumping within the school environment. So it is good to have the school psych there that was able to take that on.

3.3.2 More suitable for those having problems

One student who had been through all three levels and worked as a facilitator was somewhat dismissive of the value of PP in this school as the following comment shows.

Does PP work? I think for a different demographic maybe. Maybe choosing the kids that don't have problems to attend a workshop about dealing with problems seems rather counter intuitive. So I have all this training that I never use now. It started off in prisons to

deal with how other inmates are being treated so I always thought that it should...I think it would be useful with a group of people who do have issues with violence or issues of any kind of conflict problems or anything like that but to me personally I don't think it worked as well as it could. It is a very enjoyable experience. At some places I found I had great fun with it but once again I don't think it is a program for the right group.

And some of the adults interviewed also felt that it would have been more effective if students who were involved in violence had been targeted rather than those who were expected to become leaders in the school.

I think it is more effective to be used with students who aren't being used as peer support role, particularly as they are chosen already because they exhibit certain skills. So it would be better to be delivering this sort of stuff to children who are actively engaged in the conflict situations or who are associating whether it is with their family or whether it is peer groups who are renown for being involved in that sort of environment. It would be more effective for us to use it with them. But that is just the way the school had set it up.

However, the main driver of the program in the school explained it this way.

Early on when we started the Principal really misunderstood what AVP was about and he wanted us to change behaviour. We could just fix them by giving them a workshop and that has not really been the case and I think slowly over time he has realised it is not really about that and you change the culture of the school by increasing the capacity of the peer support leaders to deal with conflict and hopefully that will go out but also not just deal with conflict but increase their ability to communicate, to build community within their own friendship groups and the wider school community.

3.3.3 Culture of the School

The hope had always been that eventually PP could lead to a change in the culture of the school and one of the adults interviewed at least felt that it had made some overall impact. Nevertheless even from this interview it is clear that the numbers of students and staff trained did not reach the critical mass necessary to significantly influence the school's culture and that school structures did not facilitate those trained to use the skills that they had learnt except through personal influence.

I think in some small ways it did [make a difference to the culture of the school] but it depends how much individuals picked it up and how influential those individuals were, because it was such a small number of students in terms of a school like this where there is over a thousand kids and only about 30-40 would go through each year so it is a very low percentage of the population. When we had the most effect was when there was students who were really popular and had a lot of influence; that is probably where it had the most impact.

3.3.4 Costs – time and resources

A recurring issue raised primarily by staff but also by others, was how to find a way to operate PP in a way that was not so costly on school time and resources. The way it operated at this school was that students were usually taken out of class for two or three days and taken to a camp style location. This meant that they missed classes – and some students and teachers did not want to have that happen especially in upper years. If teachers or other staff were involved, (and there was

strong encouragement from the school PP co-ordinator for them to be involved) then they needed to be replaced with relief staff – and that was a significant cost to the school budget. On the other hand the rationale for this block time was that participants gained more from immersion in the program and being away from school premises. For staff who attended, it meant they were not called upon for their other duties. It remained a constant tension throughout the time the project operated and was seen by some, as a deterrent to its expansion at that school, or its adoption by other schools. Some offered alternatives for how it could be delivered.

When I did the Basic course I missed 2 days of school. When you are in Y9 that is alright but when you are in Y10 it is your job to catch up.

Missed 2 days of school – not an issue. Nothing negative about the program, just the way it was set out, how long it was because after a while you trail on one thought and you kind of get behind on it. You think about something for too long and then you lose track of what you are doing. It is just a long course but it is better than doing like short periods over a long time so you get it done.

I think the big issue for those using it within the school context is getting the schools to understand that this particular program has to happen over a certain period of time. It can't be rushed, it can't be compacted... We need to understand its value and give it the time resources that it requires and allow the students to engage in the program effectively rather than pushing them, pushing them, pushing them to get through the material in a short period of time.

I think it should be an integral part of a year group's program. I think just working with a select number from a year group wouldn't have as many benefits as working with a whole year group. So it could become part of the health education program in schools or even like we have home group at school where we have a small group of students for whom we are responsible in terms of pastoral care and wellbeing so it could become part of that program.

One of the things we actually identified was we really needed to modify the timing of the program like we condensed it down to a two day program with one really big day on the first day. [But] it needs to be spread over 3 days to make it more manageable for facilitators. In government schools the costings, particularly when you are bringing in external facilitators can be quite prohibitive.

3.3.5 Communication with other staff at school about PP

Several staff who had not been involved with PP commented that they would have liked to know more about it.

One of the things that could be done a little bit better, all the staff know that we have a PP program in place but no one necessarily knows the ins and outs of it and what it involves. I guess to have that whole school buy in we really need to hear the result and the end product.

Knowing a bit more about it would be helpful, to sort of know how beneficial it is...I was not part of it and I am not sure where it went. It would be good for the whole school to be a bit more aware of what it is about.

4: CONCLUSIONS

In the seven years that PP operated at Metropolitan High School 225 students and 35 adults received training in conflict resolution and communication skills through PP. Sixty-four students completed advanced training and 32 completed facilitator training; 18 of the latter went on to facilitate at least one workshop. As all participated voluntarily, these results can be regarded as one measure of PP's success in the school.

4.1 Personal benefit

Although caution must be exercised because of the small number of respondents, the evidence from student interviews, corroborated by the on-line survey and staff interviews, suggests that students gained personal benefit from PP. They perceived PP as having had positive outcomes for themselves around their ability to resolve conflicts and personal development, for instance increased confidence, the opportunity to take on leadership roles, enhanced communication skills and self-awareness. Those responding the survey were able to identify things that they had used from PP and things that they had learnt about themselves from doing the program.

4.2 Wider benefit less evident

Whether PP had an impact on the culture of the school is less clear. From the beginning its main driver hoped that PP would lead to positive cultural change in the school. PP's positioning as part of the preparation of peer support leaders was intended to support such change through increasing their capacity to deal with conflict, communicate and build community within the school, and be positive role models for others. However the extent to which this was widely understood is uncertain and some of the adults and one of the students interviewed considered that it would have been more effective had it been targeted at children actively involved in conflict situations. This was countered by the main driver and most other facilitators who believed there was a strong need to have students across the spectrum, but especially those who were leaders or potential leaders, trained in AVP as these were the ones who had the capacity to make change in the school.

Although individual students were able to identify occasions on which they had used conflict resolution skills learnt through PP in their interactions with their peers, and occasionally by intervening with others, neither the student nor the staff interviews suggested that Metropolitan High School's structures or processes enabled students to make generalised use of the skills learned in PP. Interviews with staff did not indicate any school-wide impact from PP.

Over the seven year life of the project only 225 students participated in PP workshops. In any one year the maximum number was 40. In a school over 1000 students this was probably not sufficient penetration to bring about cultural change.

4.3 Workshop processes effective with secondary students

Interviews with staff and students point to the experiential learning approach of PP and the combination of role play, affirmation and fun activities being an effective and enjoyable approach for engaging adolescents in learning new skills. PP's less formal, egalitarian style allowed students to establish a different relationship with teachers and other adults than would normally prevail in a school setting.

The only aspect of PP that some of the staff interviewed thought needed re-appraisal was the requirement that the students be withdrawn from the school for two days and immersed in the

program. The cost of relief staff to free teachers and other school staff to be involved in PP was the main reason for the suggestion that other models of program delivery be considered. While the immersion model is clearly effective with students, as it is with other external participants, would other models which could be more easily incorporated into the school curriculum be equally effective?

4.4 Frequency of workshops

While the number of participants involved in this evaluation study was clearly insufficient to draw any meaningful conclusions, some of the students and teachers implied that the more workshops the students were involved in the more impact it had on them. This is consistent with informal observations (not rigorous research) in other settings like prisons, where it is clear that the more engagement people have with AVP, the more impact it has.

4.5 Other programs

While no specific questions were asked about what other programs students who did PP were involved with, comments by one or two of them and some staff suggest that there were many other programs being offered in the school to support students. It may be that a variety of programs have a cumulative effect. This again is consistent with informal observations in prisons.

4.6 What can be learnt?

4.6.1 PP as a vehicle for cultural change

The evaluation has shown that it is possible to implement AVP (PP) in a school situation to the probable benefit of individual students. It may also be that PP could be a suitable vehicle for cultural change in a school wanting to address ways to manage conflict, but to achieve this, a whole of school approach, not evident at Metropolitan, would be needed.

The factors associated with effective change management include a clear purpose and shared vision, good planning, a sound understanding of the organisation, clear communication, cultural compatibility, strong leadership and stakeholder commitment (Forsyth, 2012)²⁴.

PP in this school had strong leadership and great commitment from those directly involved in its delivery but no evidence was found in the interviews of a formal change management plan of which PP was a part, nor did any such intent appear to have been communicated to staff in general. The potential for wider change from allying PP with the Peer Support Program does not appear to have been realised, possibly because complementary structures and processes were not in place. Stakeholder commitment to PP appeared limited to those most directly involved.

In situations where it is desirable for AVP or PP to have a reliable impact beyond personal growth for the individuals concerned it is recommended that implementation be informed by change management principles at a whole school level.

4.6.2 Other directions

Despite its limitations the evaluation has demonstrated that AVP (PP) is effective in engaging young people and it provides them with useful, transferable skills in how to manage conflict in their lives. AVP may wish to consider offering the program to youth groups and sporting bodies which are engaged with young people.

²⁴ Forsythe, P. (2012) *Managing Change (Creating Success)* Kogan Page Ltd. London.

4.6.3: Future evaluations

Randomized control trials are often considered as the ‘gold standard’ in evaluation. These are usually extremely expensive and, as seen in Coggins’ study, not guaranteed to be effective. If a quantitative evaluation is desired, the weaker, single sample, before and after design is more easily achieved but if random assignment along the lines of the Coggins study is feasible then it should be used, although this still assumes control over other variables which is virtually impossible in a school setting. The addition of qualitative data, like interviews and MSC, add valuable dimensions to evaluation studies of programs like AVP.

It is recommended that the future evaluations focus on the acquisition of conflict resolution skills as these are the core of AVP and some measuring instruments exist which may analyse these factors (see for example Campbell & Skarakis-Doyle, 2011)²⁵. Based on the evaluators’ experience necessary informed parent and student consent for participation in possible evaluations should be obtained prior to workshop participation.

Should AVP be desirous of evaluating the impact of AVP programs on any organisation, it is recommended that the evaluation be incorporated into a change management plan and change measures be identified before AVP programs are implemented.

Future AVP research in schools may also need to be linked to the CASEL²⁶ framework and explore its five dimensions - self-management, social awareness, self-awareness, responsible decision making and relationship skills - as these are increasingly seen as non-academic skills to be developed in school environments. Schools are being increasingly asked to select programs which have evidence based research. AVP is a program which demonstrates clear social and emotional learning outcomes and skill building capacity.

4.7: Limitations

While the evaluators actively sought to obtain a representative sample of students and staff for interviews and the on-line survey, it was impossible to achieve. Those students and staff who did agree to be interviewed and/or complete the on-line survey painted quite a consistent picture of a program that had benefited the students who participated but the numbers are small and selection bias cannot be ruled out. For this reason the results should be interpreted cautiously.

²⁵ Campbell, Wenonah N., & Skarakis-Doyle, Elizabeth. (2010). Innovations in measuring peer conflict resolution knowledge in children with LI: Exploring the accessibility of a visual analogue rating scale. *Journal of Communication Disorders*, 44(2), 207-217.

²⁶ Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a major USA organization promoting evidence-based academic, social and emotional competence for all students.

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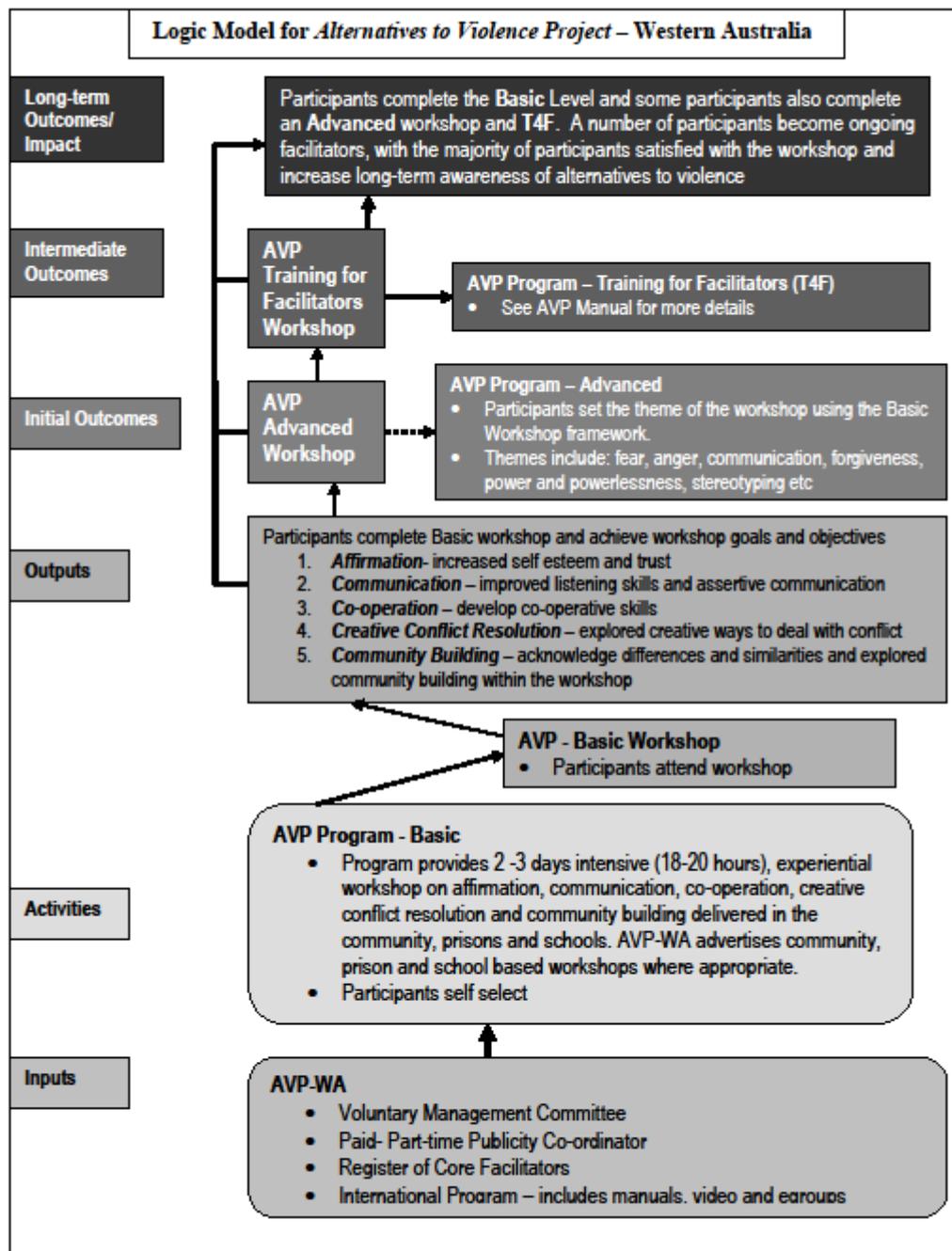
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Appendix 1: Logic Model for AVP



SOURCE: Adapted from AVP-WA Management Committee Minutes and AVP Education Committee (1992), Training for Trainers Course Manual, Alternatives to Violence INC, New York.
 Logic Model created by Olwyn Maddock – olmad@primus.com.au



Alternatives to Violence Project-WA (Inc.)
Peaceful Pathways

Appendix 2: Information letter for parents – child and parent participation

Dear Parent/Carer (and Student)

Peaceful Pathways: AVP-WA Evaluation Project – 2nd Stage

You may recall that we wrote to you earlier this year about an evaluation of *Peaceful Pathways: AVP-WA* at Metropolitan High School (MHS). The aim of this project is to document the way in which the program works and what impact it is having on students and other members of the school community. It began early in 2014 and should be completed by the end of the year.

The project is being conducted by *Rosemary Cant (Social Systems Evaluation)*, *Dr Anna Alderson (AVP-WA)* and *Olwyn Maddock (AVP-WA and DoE/ School Psychologist)*.

The interview phase of the project is now complete and we would like to invite your child to take part in the second phase of the project. This is because *your child has participated in a Peaceful Pathways: AVP-WA* workshop in the past. We encourage you to discuss this letter with him/her.

What does participation in the Evaluation Project involve?

Your child will be invited to complete a short on-line survey (about 5-10 mins to complete) in the school computer laboratory in third term in 2014.

Does my child have to take part?

No. Participation in this evaluation project is entirely voluntary. All decisions made will be respected by members of the evaluation team without question.

What if my child was to change his or her mind?

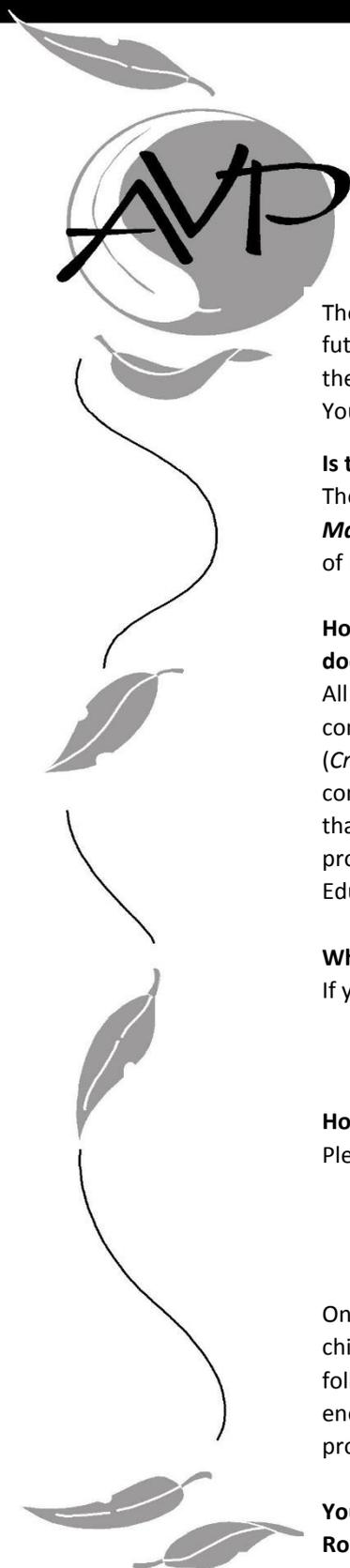
Once a decision is made to participate, your child can change your mind and withdraw from it at any time. To do this your child should contact Olwyn Maddock at the Student Services Office.

What will happen to the information collected, and is privacy and confidentiality assured?

Information that identifies anyone or the school will be removed from the data collected. The data will be stored securely at the AVP-WA office and can only be accessed by the Peaceful Pathways: AVP-WA Evaluation Project team. The data will be stored for a minimum period of 5 years, after which it will be destroyed.

Confidentiality of information disclosed by participants is assured at all times, except in circumstances that require reporting under the Department of Education *Child Protection* policy, or where the research team is legally required to disclose that information.





Alternatives to Violence Project-WA (Inc.) Peaceful Pathways

The data will be used only for this project, and will not be used in any extended or future research without first obtaining explicit written consent. It is intended that the findings of this study will be reported in various academic and professional journals. You may request a summary of the evaluation findings on completion of the project.

Is this research approved?

The research has been approved by the **Alternatives to Violence Project-WA Management Committee** and has met the policy requirements of the Department of Education, WA.

How do I know that the people involved in this evaluation have all the appropriate documentation to be working with children?

All persons undertaking evaluation activities on Education Department sites must complete a Confidential Declaration. Also, under the *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*, people undertaking evaluations that involve contact with children must undergo a Working with Children Check. The evidence that these checks are current for each member of the research team has been provided to the Principal of Metropolitan High School (MHS) and the Department of Education, WA.

Who do I contact if I wish to discuss the project further?

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please contact either
Rosemary Cant: Ph. 9328 3086 or
Anna Alderson: Ph. 6143 1175.

How does my child become involved?

Please ensure that you:

- discuss what it means to take part in the project with your child before you both make a decision; and
- take up the invitation to ask any questions you may have about the project.

Once all questions have been answered to your satisfaction, and you and/or your child are willing to become involved, please complete the **Consent Form** on the following page which both you and your child should sign and return them in the enclosed envelope to Olwyn Maddock at school for your child to be included in the project. This project information letter is for you to keep.

Yours sincerely
Rosemary Cant and Anna Alderson



Appendix 3: Peaceful Pathways Interview Guide

Interviewer Guidelines – for use of interviewers only (not to be distributed)

Where appropriate the prompts -‘Can you tell me more? Could you explain what you mean when you said...? Can you give an example?’- will be used to elicit fuller information.



1. Interviewee details - role, gender, age, ethnicity, school year etc.?
2. What has been your experience with Peaceful Pathways?
3. What is your understanding of Peaceful Pathways?
4. **For STUDENT participants only:**
 - a. What was positive about your experience?
 - b. What was negative about it?
5. **For Peaceful Pathways participants (current students, ex-students and adult participants):**
 - a. What, if anything, have you learnt about managing yourself when faced with a conflict situation?
 - b. In what way, if at all has your perception of others from diverse backgrounds changed since doing the Peaceful Pathways program?
 - c. In what way, if at all, has Peaceful Pathways changed the way you communicate with and listen to other people?
 - d. How has Peaceful Pathways helped you to form relationships with others (not already your friends) at school?
 - e. What have you used from Peaceful Pathways to resolve conflict?
 - f. Can you tell us a story about a time when Peaceful Pathways changed the way you made choices in a social situation?
 - g. Is there anything else you have learnt about yourself as a result of Peaceful Pathways?
6. **For school staff and parents:**
 - a. What difference, if any, do you think Peaceful Pathways has made to the way participating students (your child) manages conflict situations?
 - b. What difference, if any, do you think Peaceful Pathways has made to the way participating students (your child) relates to other people?
 - c. Can you think of any other ways in which Peaceful Pathways has made a difference to participating students (your child)?
7. **For school staff only:**

In what way, if any, do you consider Peaceful Pathways has an influence beyond the individual participants? How?
8. MSC question (see generic ‘Most Significant Change question) – may be asked or given as a written exercise during the interview.
9. What do you think makes Peaceful Pathways work?

Appendix 4: On-line survey

- Q1. What year are you in at school?
- Q2. Are you male or female?
- Q3. Are you or have you been a peer support leader?
- Q4. Which Peaceful Pathways Programs have you completed?
- Q5 and Q6 omitted because of design problems.**
- Q7. Please complete the following sentences:
- Something I have used from Peaceful Pathways is...
 - Since doing Peaceful Pathways during a heated argument I am more likely to...
 - Something I have learnt about myself since doing Peaceful Pathways...
- Q8. Would you like to continue with Peaceful Pathways in some way?
- Q9. Is there anything you would like to change about Peaceful Pathways? (optional)
- Q10. Are there any comments you would like to make? (optional)

Appendix 5: Sample Basic Workshop agenda

Day1: Session 1 – Affirmation

- Welcome and acknowledgement of country
- Facilitator Introduction and what's on
- Journal show and tell (Facilitator exemplar)
- Positive Name game
- Pattern Balls
- Housekeeping
- Opening Talk
- Light and Lively
- Duty or care
- Group Agreements – guidelines
- Good Listening/Bad Listening exercise
- Concentric Circles
- Journal Reflection

Day 1: Session 2 – Transforming Power and Communication

- Open circle
- Mandala exercise
- Light and Lively
- Quick decisions
- Light and Lively

Day 1: Session 3 – Communication

- Open circle
- Virus communication game
- Light and Lively
- What is violence? What is non-violence? What are the 'Roots and Fruits' of violence?
- Closing circle
- Journal reflection

Day 1: Session 4 – Cooperation (evening session)

- Group circle
- Non-verbal birthday line up
- Going Dotty
- Light and Lively
- Broken Squares
- Cooperative construction (optional)
- Closing circle
- Journal catch-up and free time

Day 2: Session1 – Community Building

- Welcome back and greeting STRETCH
- Agenda and housekeeping
- Welcome circle
- Crossing the line
- Hand pushing
- I – Messages skits
- Win - Win skits
- Assumption Face 2 Face/Back 2 Back (optional)
- Trustworthy Scale (or perceptions based on partial knowledge)
- Light and Lively
- Journal reflection

Day 2: Session 2 – Role Plays

- Welcome circle
- Role plays preparation
- Role plays
- Journal reflection

Day 2: Session 3 – Trust and closing

- Journal writing
- Welcome circle
- Trust games
- Picture reflection
- Affirmation posters
- Certificates
- Where to from here and goodbyes
- Closing circle.

Please note: Specific detail regarding the activities are contained within the various AVP Manuals that are available in the public domain. Please contact the authors if you require additional information.

- <http://avpwa.org/>
- <http://www.avp.org.au>
- <http://avpusa.org/resources-pub/>

Appendix 6: Participant Workshop Evaluation (Most Significant Change - MSC)



AVP – Youth: Participant Feedback

Name: _____

DOB: _____

Year Group: _____

Workshop Level: _____

Workshop Dates: _____

Looking back over the time that you have been involved with AVP - what has been the most significant change for you? Please write it as a story describing:

- *What is the change?*
- *What the situation was **before** the change?*
- *What happened to change things?*
- *What is the situation now?*
- **Why** is the change significant for you?