

Quabbin Mediation
TAB (Training Active Bystanders) Program

Stories of Implementation:

A Report on the Findings of
Qualitative Research

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For Quabbin Mediation
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This report is based on research carried out during the pilot implementation of the TAB (Training Active Bystanders) Program during the 2006-2007 school year.

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Appreciation to the entire staff of Quabbin Mediation and Dr. Ervin Staub, and to

Dr. Alexandra Gubin who led the quantitative study and with whom it was a

pleasure to collaborate.

While it is hoped that this report is of interest to many in the community and the field, it is prepared for Quabbin Mediation and no portion should be reproduced without their permission.

In addition to this report, complete transcripts of the interviews and focus groups and a handbook with data collection tools used-surveys and interview frameworks- have been provided to Quabbin Mediation under separate cover.

“... If I didn’t have TAB I would be like hey, let them be kids, I went through that, let them go through that. But now it’s...no, I have to say something.”

Youth Trainer

“The program is designed to stop [harassment] in the sense that a lot of times we will never hear or see it. The [incidents] that we know about, we can fix or come close...TAB helps those kids who would have never come forward to say ‘I need your help’”

School Principal

“I am no longer a passive bystander.... People say power comes in numbers but bigger power can come from one person. It only takes one person to create a chain of endless caring that is powerful in many ways.”

10th Grader

Table of Contents

	Page
Project Description	4
Qualitative Methodology and Research Questions	6
Findings and Analysis	10
List of Key Findings	11
Rising as Leaders: Youth Trainers	12
Commitment to Education Key: Police Trainers	21
Intersections with the Curriculum:	27
Teacher & Observer Perspectives	
On School Goals and Policy: Administrator Perspectives	39
A Continuum of Student Responses	43
Recommendations	52

TAB (Training Active Bystanders) Project Description

TAB (Training Active Bystanders) is a program created by Quabbin Mediation and Ervin Staub, Ph.D., an international authority on active bystandership in interpersonal violence. The primary goal of the TAB program is to prevent victimization and violence (called harm-doing, or HD). TAB reduces HD by reducing anti-social behaviors and increasing pro-social skills, behaviors and attitudes.

The TAB Program was piloted during the 2006-2007 school year in partnership with the Athol and Orange Police Departments, the R.C. Mahar Regional School District, the Athol-Royalston Regional School District, and two control schools. The program curriculum is based on experimental studies by Dr. Staub and others, and on the practical experience of Quabbin Mediation's staff. An earmark from Congressperson John Olver through the Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Programs provided seed money for the pilot project,

Quabbin Mediation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) community-based organization founded in 1995 with the support of North Quabbin schools, courts, businesses, police, agencies, and houses of worship. The stated mission of Quabbin Mediation is to 'weave the language and process of creative problem solving into the fabric of the community by teaching mediation, communication and conflict resolution skills, by mediating cases that arise in all areas of community life, and to implement other innovative forms of dispute resolution.'

The TAB program was initiated by Quabbin Mediation to respond to a critical need facing youth in the North Quabbin region of Massachusetts: reducing and preventing victimization and violence. The towns served by the regional schools where TAB was piloted are among the 50 poorest in the state: Athol, Orange, Wendell, Petersham, Royalston and New Salem in the North Quabbin, a rural region of Western Central Massachusetts. The North Quabbin has some of the state's highest rates of unemployment, school truancy and dropouts, low educational achievement, child sexual abuse, births to teens, and children in foster care and in juvenile detention. One-fifth of the children live below the poverty level. Juvenile violent crime was seven times higher in 1999 than 1989; by 1999 Athol ranked 16th out of the state's 351 cities and towns for child incarceration.

Stemming from needs assessments carried out by the Youth Policy Board of the North Quabbin Community Coalition, the TAB program seeks to reduce risk factors such as hostility and aggression; anti-social attitudes and behaviors; poor communication with authority figures such as police, parents and teachers; poor social relationships; lack of self-respect for one's self and others; and enhance protective factors by building on children's strengths and emphasizing their connectedness to their peers, the school, and the larger community.

The chief objectives of the TAB program and related curriculum are:

Decrease incidents of harassment, intimidation and assault by students against other students
Increase the number of times students act as positive bystanders thus decreasing the number of times students passively observe or join in such acts.

Provide a mechanism for local police and the community's children to interact positively.

To address these objectives, a 12-hour TAB curriculum was developed by Quabbin Mediation and Dr. Ervin Staub for middle and high school students. Previous mediation and conflict resolution lessons co-taught by peer mediators and Quabbin Mediation staff at Athol and Mahar middle and high schools were the inspiration for, and the base upon which TAB was created. The curriculum focused particularly on increasing active bystandership, that is, encouraging witnesses to harm-doing to try to interrupt harm-doing rather than watch passively. Portions of the TAB curriculum were field-tested in August of 2006 in a summer camp setting. In October of 2006, Quabbin Mediation staff and Dr. Staub provided a series of four, 1/2 day sessions to train 3 police officers and 24 middle and high school students to teach the TAB pilot curriculum. Teachers and those who would serve as lesson observers took part in a portion of these trainings as well. School guidance counselors using criteria set by Quabbin Mediation selected the youth trainers. Since involvement in TAB required a substantial time commitment, participation by students struggling academically was curtailed. Nonetheless, criteria for the body of trainers emphasized academic as well as gender, social, and ethnic/racial diversity. Some had previously been involved in Quabbin Mediation's peer mediation programs. The three participating police officers had been or currently were school resource officers. Throughout the pilot, school personnel were actively involved in program implementation, working closely with Quabbin Mediation to schedule trainings and trainers, as well as the extensive program evaluation.

TAB training teams- two students partnered with one police officer- taught the 12 session TAB curriculum to 800 middle and high school students (at four schools total) from October 2006 to June of 2007. A total of 30 classrooms participated in TAB (17 8th grade classrooms and 13 10th grade classrooms). The student trainers ranged from 8th to 11th graders and were volunteers, teaching their assigned trainings during the school day in lieu of their scheduled health, physical education, and at times academic classes. They attended periodic student trainer meetings and contributed to the on-going improvement of TAB. A cadre of Quabbin Mediation staff, teachers, and community members from social service agencies and the District Attorney's office served as observers for each lesson during the implementation period. Four Quabbin Mediation staff were involved in the TAB program: the executive director, the training director, the office manager, and the project assistant. Throughout the TAB pilot period, Quabbin Mediation maintained their other programming in the schools: peer mediation training, advanced seminars for mediators, and conflict resolution lessons.

In an effort to incorporate feedback and improve upon the program, some modifications were made to the TAB program delivery mid-way through the pilot. The curriculum was shortened from 12 to 11 sessions. Journal questions were revised to allow for more in-depth reflection among the trainees.

Qualitative Methodology and Primary Research Questions

The qualitative design complements the quantitative portion of the research, the process and results of which are provided in a companion report. Based on the goals, objectives, and activities outlined in the TAB project description and timeline, coupled with insights that had already emerged about the project as it was launched, two primary research questions guided the collection of data and the analysis that follows in this report. Whereas the quantitative evaluation focused on impact of the TAB program and curriculum on recipients of the training, the qualitative study focused on two complementary elements of the overall program: The impact on other project participants and stakeholders and the implementation design of the TAB pilot curriculum and program.

Primary Research Questions:

Does the TAB experience inform or transform participants' (youth and police trainers, school personnel and program observers, as well as 8th and 10th grade students) relationship to harm-doing and bystandership?

- Σ What changes do youth and police trainers as well as trainees see in themselves as target, harmdoer, bystander in regards to how they perceive situations, how they think about harm or conflict, and changes in their actions.
- Σ What changes do participants see in others as target, harmdoer, and bystander in regards to the way people talk about relevant situations, changes in their expressed beliefs, feelings and values, changes in their actions.
- Σ Is there any transfer to other situations in or outside school?
- Σ Are they more aware of situations requiring moral courage, and in their morally courageous action?

2) What works, and what does not work about the TAB pilot design, structure and curriculum in order to improve upon this model for future implementation and dissemination?

The evaluation inquired into topics such as:

Curriculum delivery model (duration and structure)

Relevance and real world application for youth

Curriculum and training Language

Skill building

Student/ Police collaboration

Integration with school curricula and policy

Methodology

To gather data related to these questions, a number of methodological tools were utilized.

Samples of the surveys, interview and focus group guides, as well as informed consent models are included in the companion handbook both for reference in regards to the report, and for adaptation for future use with the TAB program.

Open Ended Surveys were provided to project stakeholders: youth trainers, police, observers, teachers and guidance counselors, school administrators and the curriculum developers in the second month of project implementation. These provided an opportunity for research participants to provide feedback early on the project, and to offer such feedback in writing for those for whom prefer this medium of response. Surveys with explanatory letters and informed consent forms were provided to all adult participants by snail mail with email copies as requested; youth trainers received them in person from the researchers or guidance counselors, with an explanation of the purpose and use. Completion of the surveys, as with interviews and focus groups were optional. Responses ranged from minimal short phrases, to extensive commentary. Feedback on these individual surveys was reviewed prior to the interviews, and while a consistent format was used for the interviews as designed for each body of stakeholders, in many cases, individualized follow up questions were informed by the survey comments.

Observations of Trainer Meetings provided the researchers with insights through listening to the experiences of youth trainers, and the receptivity of Quabbin Mediation in regards to on-going program and curriculum improvement based on the information and concerns presented by trainers.

Interviews were carried out with ten youth trainers, two police officers, six teachers and guidance counselors, five program observers, four administrators, and the three curriculum developers. Interview frameworks were developed for each of these groups of program participants as relevant to their role in the project. Interviews took place in the school or participant workplace setting, and primarily in person but for one by phone. They were carried out from February through April, beginning approximately half-way through the implementation of the program. Depending on the extent of commentary of the interviewee, they lasted from 20 minutes to 50 minutes. Interviews were taped with the knowledge and consent of the interviewee, and then transcribed.

Journals were used as part of the curriculum itself. All students were provided with journals, and informed that these would be handed in at the completion of their training period. While the use of journals varied from training to training, they provided a relatively rich yet unobtrusive

means to gather qualitative insights from hundreds of trainees. Quabbin Mediation staff and interns transcribed all journals received. These transcripts were then reviewed by the researchers, with excerpts illuminating a continuum of responses: Resistance to the content or process of the TAB Program; New Awareness and Recognition- ability to describe what they might or could do, but without demonstrated action; Self-Identification- naming self as harm-doer, target, or bystander; and Transfer- demonstration of new skills and integration of the curriculum through an action that they take. The journals were also used to select focus groups with trainees, as below.

Focus Groups were carried out with focus groups of three to four students; one group from each of the four participating schools. Focus groups were held during May, near the completion of the pilot implementation school year. To select focus groups, the researchers selected a pool of approximately 32 students, 8 per school from the journal entries, choosing prospective focus group participants from a range of responses evidenced in the journals, from resistance to transfer. This pool of potential students was then provided to the guidance department along with a letter of consent and focus group date; after distributing to the pool of students, guidance departments informed the researchers as to the students who had agreed to participate, which resulted in 3-4 from each school. The focus group followed a consistent framework, but as per the interviews, the researchers occasionally deviated from this framework to capture and build on unique comments. These focus groups lasted approximately 45 minutes, and took place after-school with pizza provided.

Limitations of the Research

While the above mechanisms were successfully employed to gather qualitative data, the limitations of the research are described in regards to this report, and for consideration in structuring future evaluations of the program. One constraint is the simple fact that this research was carried out in and with schools, and needed to conform to their time constraints and protocol. While the treatment schools were very generous with their time, in the cases of soliciting youth research participants, all contact efforts needed to go through the schools out of respect for student privacy. As such, if a youth trainer did not complete a feedback survey, or when we wanted to interview a trainer who had dropped out of the program, we were at the

mercy, albeit generous, of the schools to make and follow through with these contacts. In the latter case, at the end of the school year it was not possible for the schools to locate and arrange interviews with the few trainers who had left the program, one example of a story that would have likely added to the overall body of data. In addition, the researchers were aware of Quabbin Mediation's desire to maintaining positive and lasting relationships with the treatment schools. While the quantitative evaluation was designed along with initial program specifications, to have all students taking part in the training complete a questionnaire at three intervals during the year, the impact of this in terms of scheduling and out of class time was not fully realized until the program was underway. Given the extensive amount of time already granted by schools for the questionnaires, the qualitative researchers chose not to administer feedback surveys to all of the students trained at the completion of the school year. Because the quantitative methodology focuses extensively on the impact of the TAB program on the students receiving the training, the exclusion of additional written feedback from these students seemed reasonable. In addition, as discussed, the journals were then looked upon as a source of data, and while not as consistent as a survey instrument did in fact provide a relatively rich body of data.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The qualitative research component of the Training Active Bystanders (TAB) program examined the impact of TAB program on youth and police trainers, teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors, and students that received the training. Data was gathered through feedback surveys, student journals; 30 interviews with youth and police trainers, school personnel and program observers; and focus groups with students who received the TAB training at four schools.

The three project developers, Dr. Ervin Staub, an international authority on active bystandership in interpersonal violence; Sharon Tracy, Quabbin Mediation Executive Director and Susan Wallace, Training Director, participated in interviews. While excerpts are not used verbatim within this final report that focuses on the experiences and perspectives of project participants, the interviews are available under separate cover in a document provided to Quabbin Mediation and are recommended for those interested in the relationship between this

project and the larger field of active bystandership, and for their critical insights regarding the pilot program and ideas for improvement.

Above, key research findings are listed as presented in the executive summary. In the following pages, these and other findings are organized into sections by key groups of project stakeholders. Each section begins with representative quotes, followed by a summary of section findings that are then expanded on, along with participant quotes and evaluator commentary.

Key Findings

Leadership, self-esteem and courage increase among youth trainers as a result of teaching the TAB curriculum to peers.

Youth trainers exhibit behavior shifts, demonstrating active bystandership or utilizing TAB language and techniques in peer and family contexts.

The model of police officers as co-trainers is most successful when power is shared collaboratively with youth trainers and police exemplify a commitment to program content and concepts.

Relationships among police and young people may build trust among youth to come forward with incidents that can avoid potentially harmful situations.

Teacher engagement may support program implementation as they share classroom management strategies with youth and police trainers and model enthusiasm, while supporting trainers to take the lead.

Intra group support among youth trainers aids implementation; the extent of group bonding varies from school to school.

Class-time requirement is the primary implementation concern, due to youth trainers excused from other classes and health curriculum content missed among students trained in relation to pressures of MCAS high-stakes testing.

TAB impacts active bystandership among adult stakeholders in the project.

TAB supports anti-harassment policies, district improvement plans, and civic and social goals of school mission statements.

School administrators believe systemic and multi-year integration is needed to see full impact of program on school culture and climate—and are interested in program continuation.

Students who receive TAB curriculum demonstrate an ability to use new terminology and identify actions they can take as an active bystander

RISING AS LEADERS: YOUTH TRAINERS

“...It’s definitely brought my confidence and self-esteem up... Sometimes [kids] come up to me and ask me questions afterwards. I’m like ‘wow, they are coming to me instead of an adult.’ That’s a big step for me and I guess for them too.” Youth Trainer

“... If I didn’t have TAB I would be like hey, let them be kids, I went through that, let them go through that. But now it’s...no, I have to say something.” Youth Trainer

TAB’s given me more courage, definitely. [Before] I thought ‘just let those things happen- leave it alone.’ But the damage is too high to just ignore it...Those moments where you have a choice to make the decision to stand up in a moment of conflict—those are random, you never know when they are going to come up...It boils people down to their bare self- who they really are. If they are cowardly, they probably aren’t going to do anything. If they are courageous they are definitely going to stand up. Youth Trainer

Summary of Section Findings:

Becoming a TAB trainer was a rapid immersion; youth describe an experience that was initially intimidating then richly empowering.

Serving as a Youth Trainer Builds Confidence and Advances Leadership

Youth trainers are able to articulate the development of vocabulary and skills they can draw from when needed. Many identify ways they use TAB in scenarios requiring moral courage and action.

Youth trainers are able to distinguish how TAB offers a unique approach, different from previous experience with anti-bullying or even peer mediation techniques.

The youth trainers concur that the majority of the students are receptive to the curriculum.

Most trainers were able identify either an incident, small or large, or shift in interpersonal relations among students that they thought may have been impacted by the presence of TAB in their school.

Perspectives on co-training with police officers varied, in part due to the diversity of approaches modeled by the officers involved, coupled with the range of comfort and willingness to take leadership evidenced by the youth trainers.

Co-training can support positive relationship building among youth and police, in and out of school.

Feelings of success were often connected to how comfortable the youth trainers felt in sharing responsibility with the police co-trainers and their peers, and adapt the curriculum to make it their own.

Youth provide informed suggestions for curriculum improvement.

Drawing on the experiences described by the youth trainers from the four schools, this section explores the process of becoming a trainer and leader, the impact of the program itself on their perspective and behaviors, the joys and challenges of teaching the TAB curriculum, and their thoughts on program improvement.

Becoming a TAB trainer was a rapid immersion; youth describe an experience that was initially intimidating then richly empowering.

Many of the youth trainers did not know exactly what they were getting into at first when they were asked by school guidance counselors, or agreed to be TAB trainers. As Jasmine says, “I guess I got picked... I didn’t expect to be teaching it, I thought I was just learning it” Brittany describes her growth and evolving comfort as a trainer:

The first training I didn’t really know what I was doing. We had to look at the book all the time, but now that I’ve done it a couple of times I can kind of go along without looking at the book...I didn’t know that I would be able to just stand up in front of a bunch of kids and just start teaching a lesson that they’ve never even heard about... I think that was a good thing to find out.

Malcolm’s response echoes those of a few of the trainers who were self-assured from the start, some with prior peer mediation experience. But they often surprised themselves, learning much more through these new concepts and teaching experience:

I knew I wanted to do it right away. I was really into the peer mediation thing and I like the social justice cause... At the same time I didn’t really know what it was. I thought training a bystander was something completely different. I learned so much.

He sums: “ The learning is good but the teaching is even better... learning I’m gaining that power, teaching I’m giving it away. It’s even better than receiving it.”

The selection process varied from school to school but sought a mix of young people in terms of cultural background, academic success, and gender.

Josie, whose first language is not English, describes the initial challenge, and how the experience informed her career interests.

At first I was kind of scared to do it. I'm from another country... I said yes and then when we started learning about it, it was kind of difficult because some people know how to say everything there is to say.

Upon culminating the experience she reflects: "It was a great experience actually...now I love to do oral presentations in class... One of my goals is to be a teacher."

While the selection process and expectations can be improved upon for the future (see recommendations) young people might not fully understand that they have been given a role of teacher/leader until they begin; this immersion can result in a powerful experience. In addition, the goal of having a diverse training group, culturally, academically, and in terms of life experience seemed to enhance the collective understanding of TAB among the group while modeling a diversity of peer role models for the students they trained and others in the school, who might see themselves aspiring to that role.

Serving as a Youth Trainer Builds Confidence and Advances Leadership

The importance of the sense of leadership that the training experience has instilled in the youth trainers is consistently expressed; for many, this strengthened perception of self as leader spreads to other aspects of their lives. Says Heather

When I started I was so nervous standing up in front of the class... I was like, oh my gosh, I'm teaching my peers. So that day was a little shaky for me. Now, it's just like going up in front of my parents or my brothers and sisters... so it's definitely brought my confidence and self-esteem up...Sometimes [kids] come up to me and ask me questions afterwards. I'm like wow; they are coming to me instead of an adult. That's a big step for me and I guess for them too.

For several, confidence gained through teaching impacts extra-curricular activities, such as Jasmine who is "better at drama club" and can now more easily "go up there and be confident about trying out for a part." Those that were already comfortable standing up in front of a group further evolved their leadership or other interpersonal skills: Advises Bryon: "You have to believe in what you are teaching before you can go into teaching. If you go to the training and

think this is kind of a joke or this is cool because I'm getting out of class, then it's really going to be hard to stand up in front of 30-40 kids..."

For Bryon and others who had peer mediation experience with Quabbin Mediation, TAB created cohesion among previous skills and experiences. Continues Bryon, "so many of the things I learned in TAB I learned before-hand through peer mediation, so all that sculpted me into the person who I am... all the influence together has helped me become who I am with my listening skills, having to deal with problems, things like that." Successful youth trainers take their role very seriously while remaining open to learning. Morgan describes that she has "learned to be a lot more patient with people" and a better listener. Listening skills were also evidenced as youth trainers describe their increased ability to see things from multiple perspectives. Says Brittany,

You learn not to be so one-sided in a situation, even if it's like your best friend or someone you don't like, now I think about it and I'm like, well they're kind of right too. I'm not just on my best friend's side.... [And] I'm not just focused on my side like I'm always right or something.

Youth trainers are able to articulate the development of vocabulary and skills they can draw from when needed. Many identify ways they use TAB in scenarios requiring moral courage and action.

As Bryon describes,

When a situation does come up it's so much easier to recognize the who: the targets, the harm-doers, the bystanders ... those words always come up in my head now, thinking, ok, those are the bystanders, this is a target this is a harm doer. It's much easier to explain things to other people if something is going on. These two are having a problem. He's the one who is causing the harm. He's a target. The vocabulary most definitely comes up in my head now... I recognize the situation, those words come up...

Tamika describes new awareness: "I found out that anybody, including me can stand up and say 'hey, you guys need too stop it' and I think other kids think the same way since TAB has been going on." Some trainers were able to offer anecdotes that demonstrate an ability to put TAB skills learned into action. Greg describes his taking action while witnessing verbal abuse, sadly not uncommon to school settings. What is particularly notable is the ripple his actions had on other witnesses.

There are these two bully 8th graders and I was on the computer and they were sitting with these two girls and all of a sudden this other girl came in and they started talking mean like 'it's here and it's moving.' I looked up and they were pointing at this girl... [She] sat by herself and it kind of reminded me of me... so I was just like 'why, are you

jealous of her or something?’ and they said ‘jealous of her? And I’m like why do you have to talk about her... we all like her, why don’t you just ignore her? And then the two girls were just like ‘why can’t you be more mature you guys.’”

Speaking generally about situations such as these and others that can arise often in school settings, Greg sums the impact TAB has had on his choices to intervene: “I think personally that if I didn’t have TAB I would be like hey, let them be kids, I went through that, let them go through that. But now it’s...no, I have to say something.” Malcolm echoes this increased willingness to stand up for what one believes is right in his discussion of courage:

TAB’s given me more courage, definitely. [Before] I thought ‘just let those things happen- leave it alone. But the damage is too high to just ignore it... Those moments where you have a choice to make the decision to stand up in a moment of conflict—those are random, you never know when they are going to come up...It boils people down to their bare self, who they really are. If they are cowardly, they probably aren’t going to do anything. If they are courageous they are definitely going to stand up.

Youth trainers are able to distinguish how TAB offers a unique approach, different from previous experience with anti-bullying or even peer mediation techniques.

Several youth note how conflict and the opportunity to be an active bystander is woven into the fabric of each day, not just in regards to the extremes sometimes described as bullying: Says Heather: “Well anti-bullying—everybody has heard that from kindergarten. You know, don’t push people around...but TAB, it’s around situations or things that happen everyday...” Morgan reflects the recognition that TAB embraces a ‘big picture’ view.

Anti-bullying is like ‘don’t bully people’ and TAB is more like ‘you’re never going to get a perfect world...stuff is going to happen, and you can either sit back and watch or you can do something about it and make your world better.

Says Greg: “[I realized that] it wasn’t going to be one of those ‘you shouldn’t be a bully’ and have that be the end of that. I thought that since I’d been bullied in the past maybe I could help some kids that are getting bullied now to stop.” Greg’s reflections imply that teaching TAB was healing to his own experiences having been targeted, plus he developed his understanding of forgiveness.

Through this I’ve learned that they’re bullies and either something happened to them when they were younger to be like this, or something is bothering them at home or they just want to feel good about themselves. Plus I’ve learned to forgive most of those people that picked on me because I go back to [the other town where I lived] every now

and then and I'll see them and they're like 'oh I am so sorry I was so immature' and I'm like... alright.

The youth trainers concur that the majority of the students are receptive to the curriculum.

Youth trainers are perceptive about the responses of students they teach, illustrating their important role as 'the eyes of the program.' They know the subtle culture of their school that is often not as visible or exposed to administrators, teaching staff, or other adults. Their perceptions about how the youth trained are responding seem astute and honest. Says Tamika: "There's more that enjoy it but they don't show that they enjoy it but they know that they learned something from it... there are more kids that think than forget about it." Greg talks about how reactions vary: "I'll have one class of really good class, and then the next class it will just be like...guys, I'm just asking you what courage is, c'mon."

One trainer describes how some kids "keep a certain image and playing [into] TAB isn't cool... their attitude was they were better than that and didn't want to do it." When asked if giving a grade would increase the level of seriousness among these kids, the trainers don't think so. "Some people don't care about their regular grades and they do it just to pass their classes. It would be like another class that you'd just have to pass." An interesting consideration is whether those that rebel outwardly are in fact taking in the material, whereas some that, as one trainer described, 'listened, were polite about it, but didn't put effort into it' are the ones that will 'just start stuff and completely forget about everything you taught them.' None of the trainers interviewed expressed a feeling of disempowerment, even when the classes were hard or they felt students were not as responsive as they would hope.

Says Malcolm:

They're there and they're exposed to it—I think it's good for them. They are not covering up their ears and humming the whole time. They are listening to it and they are going to take it in, one way or another. I feel like even though a class is hard, I don't feel like I've completely failed because I know that they are still receiving.

Morgan, talking about impact on trainees, references a theme that many of the interviewees, youth and school personnel alike spoke to, suggesting that impact may not be realized until the end of the complete training or beyond.

I think it kind of dawns on them, maybe at the end of class... I've seen a couple of kids who at the end of it are just like 'yeah, this makes complete sense.' I think they may not show it, but I think some kids, it dawns on them.

Morgan adds there are many kids that ‘don’t want to be taught that stuff even though it’s right” and that they are ‘just kind of rebelling against it.” When asked what it will take to more effectively permeate the school setting she explains that as more kids “know it and have been taught it and agree with it” this may shift. Her comments echo those of many school personnel interviewed whose comments appear later in this narrative. At the same time,

Most trainers were able identify either an incident, small or large, or shift in interpersonal relations among students that they thought may have been impacted by the presence of TAB in their school.

Brittany describes a subtle change “It’s not like I see it everyday, it’s not something that’s constantly happening, not that often, but there are certain things, little arguments that you can tell they probably would have been a little different before.” Shelby says she has not noticed anything out of the usual in regards to bystandership, but in regards to social interactions, in that “people that weren’t friends before became friends because of this.”

Bryon expresses the sense of safety that he personally has always felt at his school, while wondering if shifts he sees could be related to TAB.

The previous years I have gone here, my freshman and sophomore years, there were clearly more fights and abuse going on...I don’t know if that has anything to do with the training, it may or may not [but] the things that I have noticed in this past year have seemed pretty mellow.

Several trainers note the permeation of language and an expectation of action among school staff: Says Malcolm:

Soon after TAB started... there was a fight. I was back pretty far and it didn’t last for long... I heard people saying ‘somebody stop them.’ Before it would have been like ‘why did you get involved?’ Even the principal said ‘why did you get involved?’ And this time he said ‘Why didn’t anybody get involved? So it’s definitely changed the climate in the school I think.

A powerful scenario witnessed by a trainer supports the theory that one may not know how or if someone is integrating the material and who may step forward when a situation calls for an active bystander. In this case it was not someone who was vocally resistant, but instead often quiet in class.

There were two kids and they were arguing and it was escalating and it was about to become a physical fight and you see this girl who is usually like really, really quiet straight A student...[she] steps in and says 'this isn't the place, this isn't the time, you have better things to do' and then they just looked at each other and walked away from each other. And I was just like wow. It wasn't someone you'd expect to step in. The people standing around were like egging everyone on (they wanted to see a fight) and this little quiet girl just stepped in.

Perspectives on co-training with police officers varied, in part due to the diversity of approaches modeled by the officers involved, coupled with the range of comfort and willingness to take leadership evidenced by the youth trainers.

Several trainers in one school district reinforce how important it was to them that the police officer they worked closely with, as one young person says, "treated the trainers like we were adults, like we were the same as him. He would talk to us the same way he would talk to a teacher or even the kids..." "His enthusiasm was contagious, with the youth exclaiming that 'he brings the training to another level'" and aware that, as one trainer said: "He loved it, you could tell. He would come to class with a huge smile on his face and be like 'I know teaching, I love it'"

In another district, a trainer notes, "Sometimes the police can be a little bit overbearing. Them being in the classroom helps, they just take it too far sometimes" whereas in this same district, another trainer appreciated the officers assuming more leadership saying "the police officers definitely know what they are doing, they just kind of take stuff and run with it. If they have an idea they just kind of go with it. I also think this is fine because I did the same thing; if I had an idea I would just go with it and I'd talk about it." Other trainers had a different take, on police as well as teacher involvement:

Sometimes having [the police officer] in the classroom wasn't a positive because they are all intimidated and they didn't want to answer because they were like he's older and he might judge me. [Then] when it was just the [youth] trainers in the class and the teachers, the teacher wanted a part of it. When it was just us, they related more because they weren't afraid of people.

Co-training can support positive relationship building among youth and police, in and out of school.

Some trainers note that working together in TAB improved their relationship with police. One describes how if they see their police co-trainer on the street now 'they chat it up' and that 'TAB got us to know each other better,' Says another, "I used to think the police were just

bullies and that they go around harassing people for no reason. That's definitely changed how I think about some of the police... [now I realize] they're just looking out for me. I definitely have a better view of policemen...that they have a tough job... and that not all are bad.

Feelings of success were often connected to how comfortable the youth trainers felt in sharing responsibility with the police co-trainers and their peers, and adapt the curriculum to make it their own.

A group of trainers describe how they started with the recommended roles of Trainer 1, 2, 3 but shifted, saying that “towards the end of things, we didn't follow that so much... by the end of it we all felt comfortable around each other...we could pick up when others were having a hard time explaining something--at that point we would all jump in and take roles when we felt we had something to say. It just seemed to go so much smoother once we got it down.”

Others suggest that the defined roles aid in power sharing, and “who should say this and that,” especially initially. In regards to maintaining roles but with flexibility and teamwork, one trainer offered a nice image of “ a kind of pulley system that goes back and forth.”

On the whole, the youth trainers demonstrated awareness of how the youth trainer/police interactions impacted the experience of the training for all without feeling demoralized, even when they did not feel power was being shared equally. They also learned from observing the different styles of the police officers, and that an expression of excitement about a topic can be contagious, an important lesson for the youth to learn as educators and leaders.

Youth provide informed suggestions for curriculum improvement.

As familiarity with the curriculum grew, the youth seemed able to contemplate program improvements. Their suggestions mirror many suggested by school personnel, discussed in more detail in later section. Some of the suggestions articulated by the youth include:

A curriculum that is slightly modified for different age groups, especially in regards to more developed abstract thinking abilities among older students, or as one trainer describes: “In High School classes a lot of them could answer the broad questions, they understood it, but the middle schoolers kind of just look at you.” **A slightly revised curriculum for use with block (double) periods** so the flow of lessons better matches that model (e.g., no need to do the usual opening review for back to back lessons). **And more trainers** (or a more cohesive group as indicated in the section on curriculum integration later in this analysis) both because the youth enjoyed the

opportunity to bond with other trainers in their own and other schools, and because a broader group to draw from alleviates the need for trainers to miss as many of their other classes in order to teach.

COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION KEY: POLICE TRAINERS

“If we look at the kids who could be the targets or are being locked out, and they are hearing this curriculum... you are building up their software. [Then] You have the kid that is borderline going to be a harm-doer or has taken part in some harmful situation...maybe if they hear it and see it and learn it, they’re going to recognize what they are doing... everybody has everything to learn here.”

Police Officer/Trainer

“I was one of the ones in the beginning that said ‘ I don’t know if this is going to work’ ... but I was going to give it my all... I think it worked out a whole lot better than I thought it was going to...”

Police Officer/Trainer

...We’ve had people come to us with information about a situation. [Among them] TAB trainers. So I think possibly within their moral fiber or moral courage, to use a term in the program, I think that they probably would have done that before but I think they had that comfort level because they’ve done classes with me, they know who I am. They almost feel-- maybe not quite as a peer, but more able to approach me. Two of them helped us solve what could have been a violent situation within the school in record time. I think that spoke for the program.

Police Officer/Trainer

Summary of Section Findings:

A commitment to education and working collaboratively with young people among police involved enhances the success of this program training model.

Investment in the program can build through the actual process of teaching and seeing the response of students.

Like their youth co-trainers, the officers confer that while student classroom response may vary, students are impacted by the curriculum.

TAB develops connection among police and young people, which may aid in shifting previous perceptions of each other as well as build trust among youth to come forward with incidents, avoiding potentially harmful situations.

Two of three police officers involved as trainers in the project, one from each of the two districts involved, chose to participate in the research. They both offer important perspectives on the project implementation in the two districts, and with somewhat different approaches to the training itself.

A commitment to education and working collaboratively with young people among police involved enhances the success of this program training model.

As resource officers, both were familiar with the school setting and working with schools, which influenced their decision to become involved in the TAB program. Other factors, such as past career or volunteer positions relating to caring for others, and being raised within a family of educators appears to have influenced their initial interest in the TAB program. Officer Buck describes how he got into law enforcement and why TAB fits with his experiences caring for others.

...I came into the career through firefighting and through ambulance work, which is where you connect with people on different levels than you do as a police officer. As the firefighter and EMT you are there to support them, be kind to them—literally hold their hand in the back of an ambulance and say—I’m going to do everything for you that I can—I’m going to do everything I can for their son or daughter or grandmother...

Sergeant Haigh emphasizes that he has always enjoyed teaching, and that “both of my parents are teachers. I like that interaction... I like getting into the classroom and interacting with the kids...” He adds that the TAB experience has shifted his perspective on the demands of teaching.

I have a lot more respect for teachers... I definitely have a newfound appreciation for what they do on a regular basis. Before, they’d ask me to teach one class a year- no problem. Now you are in there every other day and it’s kind of interesting.

Investment in the program can build through the actual process of teaching and seeing the response of students.

A bit skeptical at first, the Sergeant Haigh reflects: “I was one of the ones in the beginning that said ‘ I don’t know if this is going to work’ I was more than willing to teach it the way they wanted--I honestly did not have positive outlooks, but I was going to give it my all.” Haigh describes the initial training, with the Quabbin Mediation staff and Dr. Staub modeling the curriculum and teaching to a group of youth and police trainers that ‘wanted to be there,’ and are ‘attentive to what they are doing’ and thinking “It’s not like that when you get

into the classroom.” “I was the most verbal about it being... this is going to be rough.”

Reflecting on the program at mid-stream through the pilot period, Haigh says “ I think it worked out a whole lot better than I thought it was going to...it’s a pilot so now we build on it.”

While investment in the program itself can evolve, both officers suggest that it is critical to involve police who are truly interested in working with students. Officer Buck describes his own experience of being bullied, and how that motivates his interest and investment in a program like TAB. His comments and actions as a trainer demonstrate how an officer or other trainer who had been targeted in their past, and/or has experience as an active bystander can draw from their own real life experience to make the curriculum meaningful for others. Stresses Buck,

If you have the wrong officer in the school with the kids...if they’re not connecting, the program is not going to connect. If they don’t see that the person teaching it either has lived it—[and] I don’t give them a ton of personal experience because I don’t necessarily think that is the right relationship between faculty and a student-- but I think that if they only come in and they just read it to the kids and they’re not showing that they’re living it, then I think they’re not going to connect and it’s not going to work.

The officers, as with the youth, are honest about some of the challenges of co-training, implying the need for more emphasis placed on the dynamics of the youth/police training relationship in the initial orientation, and perhaps a better screening process for all at the onset so everyone has a very clear sense of the program expectations, hopes and collaborative responsibilities.

Says Haigh:

I think all the kids had good hearts going into it [but] sometimes you’re putting people in a position not to succeed... I think we had some that were really good. Some that weren’t very good ended up being really good as they did it more. And others, I’m not sure why they signed up for it. I don’t know what the screening process was. There were definitely some that wanted to be there, others didn’t, and there were some that were real prepared and others that’d walk in and be like ‘oh what lesson are we on today?’ And read right out of the book.”

He talks about his strategy with trainers that struggled more with the teaching, sometimes standing at the back of the classroom to encourage them to be up front, giving them cues and remaining in the back so the class focused on the youth trainers rather than him. He also notes that at times “the scheduling came apart” impacting co-training and police/trainer relationship building. As he says, “I’d go in one day and have two or three of four [trainers] showing up and then the next day trainers and then have none.”

In the other district, the way in which the group of youth themselves at one particular school “gelled” and supported each other seemed to have a positive impact on the overall relationship with their police co-trainer, a reminder that the layers of training dynamics are factors that contribute to success are complex.

Like their youth co-trainers, the officers confer that while student classroom response may vary, students are impacted by the curriculum.

Officer Buck speaks of how he sees the curriculum affects students differently and puts forth the concept of “building up kids’ software.”

If we look at the kids who could be the targets and they are hearing this curriculum, I think that you are building up their software. I think that if you have the kid that is borderline going to be a harm-doer or has taken part in some harmful situations...or even a person who does it regularly...maybe if they hear it and see it and learn it, they’re going to recognize what they are doing. So I think that everybody has everything to learn here. There are going to be one or two that are just not going to listen—sure. ... Yes, if I had a class of 30, I’d like to think I am reaching 28, because you know you’re not hitting 30. But if it’s just that one person or if it was that one person who was going across that line into harm-doing and remembers ‘oh, wow, I remember the effects of it’ then I think we did something well.

Buck also describes his efforts to adapt the curriculum to encourage student engagement in the curriculum activities, using an example of the role plays:

I’m [was] a little disappointed they weren’t going well the second time around. I don’t think that was the curriculum’s fault; it was the students’ involvement. Some of them just don’t feel comfortable getting up in front of the class. So what I adapted was instead of having them act them out, I would have them stand up as a group, a team, and present them like that because they felt more comfortable in front of the class.

Although he uses the TAB vocabulary while teaching, Sergeant Haigh questions some of the terminology, offering the example that using the phrase ‘the person being hurt’ may be as clear as using the word ‘target.’

I use them when I teach [but] I don’t really like them, to be honest. Those terms are great if you’re going to be giving tests and you want to teach psychology... but in real life...If they don’t remember that it’s called a passive bystander [but understand that it’s] somebody just standing around that works for me because as least they remember it... I think it’s more the definition and the understanding of that definition than it is the actual word they are defining.”

In some cases, Buck says he's applied the "TAB language" and viewed some scenarios through a different lens than before, and in ways that are later become useful examples in class.

I like to start especially when we get into the lesson- I like to say 'alright anything active bystander happen to you since last time we had class?' I find that I've been taking some scenarios that I probably would have thought twice about before and using them as real life examples for them. The kids have been doing the same thing with us. When there was a fight or a car accident or things that they saw. They're showing me how they relate TAB to life and I'm able to give them examples of how I do it.

Buck and Haigh confer on the particular importance of the curriculum to middle school aged students. Buck suggests 5th and 8th for core training with a refresher in 10th and 12th with the idea that "if you keep instilling it, it will work better." He suggests, with a touch of humor:

Hey, here we are, remember that stuff, have you been able to apply it? You're heading out into the real world, you're going to college next year, these are the challenges that you're going to face hopefully you can use it there.

Buck's suggestions seem to stem more from the class-time pressures of increased academic and MCAS demands in high school than the efficacy of the curriculum whereas Haigh's comments, while attuned to the patterns and needs of early adolescence, may also be informed by an overall more successful and gratifying implementation in his district's middle school than the high school.

The 8th grade classes went exceptionally well compared to the 10th grade classes. At that age they're still pretty interested, listening to adults, to their fellow classmates... I don't think they're as judgmental at that age...by the time they get to be sophomores their identify of where they are going to be in the school environment is there already—different cliques, sports, clubs--.... it was rough with the 10th grade... there were a couple of kids that liked it but most couldn't care less about it. I'm glad they did the 8th grade and continued on with that—I felt that went a lot better.

Haigh also stated concern about impact on the health class topics such as sex education and preventative health measure topics. He observed that "a lot of kids would come see [the health teacher] and ask 'can I talk to you after school about something?' noting the lack of time to address other topics in class. At the same time, Haigh describes that when the TAB curriculum addressed some hot topics—such as [derogatory] racial and sexual orientation terms, 'things you hear in the hallway,' noting that students "wanted to hear more about it, they wanted to talk

about it” adding, “a lot of these classes that we’re teaching can hit on [such issues] really quickly.”

TAB develops connection among police and young people, which may aid in shifting previous perceptions of each other as well as build trust among youth to come forward with incidents, avoiding potentially harmful situations.

Sergeant Haigh describes that by being in the classroom with a variety of kids you meet many that you wouldn’t otherwise, and differently than when he was a resource officer in that TAB “made the relationships a lot quicker.” He is pleased that they’ll see him at a local grocery store or Wal-Mart and say hello, telling their parents “he was my teacher this quarter.” Yet Haigh also talks about the challenge of being seen as intimidating “just by walking in the room.” Reflecting that “we’re police officers and we’re intimidating whether you want to be or not, intimidating in keeping the kids attention or keeping them from maybe going overboard on some of their comment or actions.” He encourages other police officers and departments who do this work to “be approachable” and notes that he tries to model that in all aspects of his work as a police officer. Haigh noted that in a couple of situations he needed to respond to kid’s houses due to other issues, and was able to develop a new outlook, or better understand behaviors “it explains some of the issues that they may or may not have that you didn’t know about... I see how they act in school, I see how they interact with others and go, okay.”

Officer Buck discusses that TAB built on existing relationships with youth he had as a school resource officer. At the same time, he works nights which is, as he says, ‘when people seem to find their way into trouble.’ He is saddened that some relationships with students have been lost after a few such interactions, and they “may walk by and not want to exchange a hi” anymore. Still, Buck believes that most students are more likely to call on them if something is wrong or going on. A portion of a dialogue from a focus group with 8th grade students who received the training offers one example of relationship building that might be unique, but nonetheless compelling.

(Interviewer) Do you have a different feeling about [the officer that taught your class] now?

He was cool since I’ve known him since I moved to this town. I’ve had little run-ins with him. He’s not the greatest guy to me but that’s my fault. Pretty much he’s a good guy.

Do you feel like having him as a teacher has changed your relationship with him?

Yeah, a lot more.

In what way?

Not being in the back of a police cruiser.

So you see him differently, do you think he sees you any differently?

Probably. I was nicer in that class. I was more respectful.

While the above conversation shows how a modest but meaningful shift in a youth/police relationship is a possible from one student's perspective, Officer Buck makes reference to occasions in which students came forward with information that aided the resolution of potentially harmful situations.

Both in the school and out of school we've had people come to us with information about a situation. [Among them] TAB trainers. So I think possibly within their moral fiber or moral courage, to use a term in the program, I think that they probably would have done that before but I think they had that comfort level because they've done classes with me, they know who I am. They almost feel-- maybe not quite as a peer, but more able to approach me. Two of them helped us solve what could have been a violent situation within the school in record time. I think that spoke for the program

INTERSECTIONS WITH THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM:

TEACHER AND OBSERVER PERSPECTIVES

... I'd tell another school district to explore it, get involved... I would say whole-heartedly that this is something that they should get involved with and it's getting better all the time... it cannot hurt; it can only help. *Health Teacher*

I don't think I was ever a shrinking violet to begin with, but I think I'm more willing to speak up when something doesn't quite flush with me... it's almost automatic, sometimes it's subconscious. I don't feel like I'm always up on a soap box but I'm definitely [less willing] to let the idle comment go by at any level.... Take time out of a lesson during school or even between colleagues to say 'you know, I kind of have an issue with that and here's why.' *Health Teacher*

Summary of Section Findings:

Developing allies among school personnel supports program initiation.

Demands on class time were the primary integration challenge.

Teacher engagement may support implementation as they share classroom management strategies with youth and police trainers and model enthusiasm, while supporting trainers to take the lead.

Intra group support among youth trainers aids success; extent of group bonding varies from school to school.

Student responses vary; seeds of integration germinate

TAB impacts active bystanders among adult stakeholders involved in the project. Teachers, counselors and observers are able to generate ideas to extend TAB into other segments of the school community.

This section draws from the voices of health teachers and guidance counselors from the four schools, as well as lesson observers. In addition to their project liaison and classroom support roles, several of the teachers and counselors also served as lesson observers. Additional observers were community members and representatives from agencies, and some Quabbin Mediation staff doubled as observers thus provided perspective from multiple angles. This section looks at their perceptions of what worked, and what did not work about the TAB design, structure and curriculum in the pilot implementation. As noted previously in the introduction to the analysis, excerpts from the data gathered from the project developers, Sharon Tracy and Susan Wallace of Quabbin Mediation and Dr. Ervin Staub, are not included in this section that focuses on the experiences of project participants. The full transcripts of their interviews are available under separate cover and contain valuable insights about the program evolution and implementation.

Developing allies among school personnel supports program initiation

One theme that recurs among many of the research participants- youth trainers, police officers, and school personnel--is the importance of “buy-in” to the program coupled with an

understanding of the roles and expectations of each stakeholder. Quabbin Mediation succeeded in assembling diverse and representative people from within schools as well as the greater community such as community agencies and the District Attorney's office for involvement in this project. Initiation of a multifaceted and extensive pilot project coupled with the busy start of the school year meant that some stakeholders, project staff included, could not realize the full magnitude or communication needs that would arise until project onset.

School guidance counselors at the treatment schools had been the liaisons for peer-mediation programs carried out in partnership with Quabbin Mediation, and then became key contacts for the TAB pilot implementation. Mary-Ann Miller, guidance counselor at Athol High School describes the foundation of commitment to the program at her school before program initiation.

I had the support of my principal, the guidance director, the lead teacher that was going to institute it in her 10th grade health class, as well as Officer Buck. I felt I had a good foundation of people to bring it in with me.

Enthusiasm among key liaisons is critical for project initiation. At Mahar, guidance counselor Paula Swenson, was excited by the program from the start, reflecting:

I'd always for years had this idea of getting the middle school kids to sign pledges that they would be allies for other students who were getting picked on... when [TAB] came about I was really thrilled about the whole thing. It seemed like it was bigger and better than what I had planned to do all these years.

Enthusiasm for the program sometimes shadowed the reality of the scheduling efforts to come. Says Swenson: "I didn't have any concerns. I probably should have!"

While some of the health teachers in the two schools were actively involved from project conception, in retrospect, Quabbin Mediation staff agreed that they should have directly communicate with all of the health teachers, to ensure that they had ample time to plan around the classroom time required for trainings as well as to build their investment and involvement as project allies. Says one health teacher: "I did not find out about it until two weeks before it was supposed to start which really threw my curriculum in an upheaval. We worked on it and it was okay, but I wish I would have known... was it bad? No, I survived."

Demands on class time were the primary integration challenge.

While there is consensus that the Health class is the appropriate place for the TAB program, there is consistency among teachers who hosted the curriculum in their classroom that the duration of the 12 sequence curriculum (plus the addition of two sessions for pre and post evaluation questionnaires) was a challenge for a number of reasons. This was a bit of a “red flag” concern even before the curriculum began, but school personnel were willing to give it a try. Several health teachers comment that since this is the only health block they may have with these students all year, they were unable to cover some issues important to adolescence related to sexuality, drugs and alcohol use. In a few cases, the first day of TAB was also the first day teachers were meeting their new group of students, which was challenging in regards to relationship building and classroom management. Others noted that while repetition can be important in order to drive forth points and concepts and allow new vocabulary to take root, some of the lessons seemed repetitive and could have been condensed.

After experiencing several sections of the 12-session pilot implementation (which itself was already shortened from the 20 hour training originally recommended by Dr. Staub), it was suggested by some teachers that the curriculum could be effectively condensed in the future, shortened to maintain student attention while allowing time in the block or semester for other health topics to be taught. *(It should be noted that following this pilot implementation year, Quabbin Mediation did in fact modify the duration of the training)*

Because the approach to scheduling varied at the four schools depending on their daily and semester structure, so did, to some extent, the approach to program implementation. Keely Malone, a Quabbin Mediation staff member and program observer reflects on the block period model at one school that allowed trainers and students to “really get into the material” as they doubled up the lessons, resulting in 6 longer rather than 12 shorter periods. Says Keely,

I think that it's worked best in Athol High. I think that in Athol High you piggyback lessons...each class is twice as long but we covered two lessons. To me that is really doable... having that extended period was really helpful too because it allowed you to really get into the material. It allowed the kids to engage and make more connections -- when the lessons were grouped together it really showed how these ideas built upon each other instead of having to break them down in isolation. The fact that the [trainers and students] were together for longer periods of time allowed more bonding...

While manageability and capacity remain factors, there is recognition among some school personnel that systemic, school-wide integration might result in greater impact. Considers Guidance Counselor Paula Swenson: ...In some ways it might be more effective to have fewer lessons and to have it go through the whole school at once because now we have 10th graders [doing the training] but we haven't had the same conversation with 11th graders..." In regards to time management, Guidance Counselor Trudy Berkovitz talks about the commitment needed for observation, and how the appearance of an intern helped a great deal with manageability in that regard. "I couldn't spend two hours in that many sessions observing... just the fact that we had an intern that was into that made it feasible." This unplanned addition to the program suggests that should observers continue to be a part of the training model, college interns studying school guidance or psychology could be a wonderful pool from which to draw, while they simultaneously have the opportunity to experience a unique model like TAB in action.

While honest about the challenges of allotting class time for the curriculum implementation, teachers are quite positive about the program on the whole. Sums Kathy Horrigan when asked whether she'd recommend the program to another district:

I think that I would say whole-heartedly that this is something that they should get involved with and it's getting better all the time... I'd tell another school district to explore it, get involved... it cannot hurt; it can only help.

Teacher engagement may support implementation as they share classroom management strategies with youth and police trainers and model enthusiasm, while supporting trainers to take the lead.

In some cases, the classroom teacher provided implementation support that resulted in program improvement. Quabbin Mediation has not historically provided grades for peer mediation nor for the TAB training with the philosophy, as training director Susan Wallace says "that you don't have to give grades for people to care." However, some classroom teachers felt the need for a system to help hold students accountable for their learning. Health teacher Kathy Horrigan suggested the idea of adding student folders and handouts so that the students had something to refer back to, something they may have made notes on from one session to the next. *(Building on the success of the folder and handouts, Quabbin Mediation incorporated info sheets for each unit into the 2008 school year implementation. Says QM training staff and program observer Keely Malone: 'they have made a huge difference this year. Students are*

much more likely to participate in classroom discussion when they have something in front of them to refer to.’)

Guidance Counselor Paula Swenson recognizes the important role that the classroom teachers can play in the program, helping youth trainers learn to teach “it takes a lot of teaching experience to bring students along [then] have them teaching... it’s nice when the kids can deliver but they need a lot of support delivering... so you’re not only just teaching, you’re bringing the kids on board as teachers.” Observer Brian Eno conveys that teachers could be included more effectively in that “they are the primary role model [and] should be included more for their professional teaching experience”

Relevant to their positioning and potential as support system, the teachers convey pride at the commitment demonstrated by the youth trainers. Teachers note that the approaches may differ, but as Health teacher Kate Blair says, “the main messages have been consistent.” Kathy Horrigan suggests support with classroom management techniques: “how to project voice, to speak clearly, to move around the classroom (physically) a little more to maintain attention.” She adds: “I think the trainers are having the time of their life. They think they are special and they are... they are comfortable, more and more.” Teacher Carol Payes observed other students impressed by their peers as trainers such as “when a student in a class looks [at the youth trainer] and says ‘hey, you’re not different than I am. How do you know all this?’” Horrigan offers a similar observation from her school: “Today a kid said ‘ how do I get involved in training?’” noting that there are more students, and not necessarily the kids that one might assume would be inclined, that want to be trainers. Referring to the time commitment on the part of the trainers, Kate Blair says: “there have been a lot of kids, student trainers, who have given up a lot to be TAB trainers. Their participation does come at a price.” She suggests that future student trainers can now talk to past trainers to learn from their experiences during the pilot year.

One Mahar teacher noted that having the police officers in the classroom was really very good in that they were “able to pull from their own experiences and [describe] how different situations ended up resolving [making] situations become realistic.” Aligned with previous discussion regarding the importance of participation by police who are committed to education, a guidance counselor at another school suggests that it was helpful that they had “an officer that really had a good rapport with the kids, that the kids felt comfortable with, that had respect from them and was really compassionate about the topic.” An Athol teacher describes that having a

police officer is good, but she also notes that a teacher could co-lead, or the students trainers themselves “if the teacher keeps a pretty good eye on it.” Another teacher suggests “a little bit more warmth” and describes that she sometimes felt “an intimidation factor whether it’s intended or not”—a comment that a police officer themselves offered as a concern. An observer who is also school personnel describes the dual challenge of training while supporting co-youth trainers “I’m not sure if the police officers necessarily have enough experience to do the development of the kids who are teaching- to help them and support them in their ability to deliver the curriculum. Some might have that, others don’t. [Just like] some teachers have it, some don’t, some Vice Principals have it, some don’t.”

These comments serve as reminders that because the curriculum flexibility that allows trainers to have ownership as they adapt the TAB program can sometimes result in different approaches and classroom climates. Some teachers may be well skilled to support youth and police trainers in maintaining their personalized approach while becoming more effective educators.

Intra group support among youth trainers aids success; extent of group bonding varies from school to school.

Keely, QM staff and program observer describes the spectrum of trainer responsibility and group dynamics s she witnessed. At one school success constituted trainers showing up regularly—and this consistency resulting in increased comfort teaching the curriculum. Whereas at another school, trainers became “this really tight group” juggling training schedules when some were concerned about their grades and missing class time, often working out sharing and swapping of lessons on their own. While the factors leading to this unified group were not examined in this research study, Keely at one point simply suggests that “we lucked out” in the selection of trainers, describing how “It was really great to watch them really become this tight, cohesive group.” Mary Ann Miller also observed the closeness of the particularly bonded group, noting that it was exciting to see how the trainers supported each other, in some cases sharing personal issues with the youth and adult team. Says Miller “this has been really awe-striking because I wouldn’t have expected it.”

Keely also observed how student response was informed by trainer delivery:

I see the students honestly responding in a similar fashion to that of the trainers that stand before them. At Athol High School where the trainers took the material really seriously and really digested it well and came up with their own examples and were really interactive, I saw the high school students reacting to that and getting more into it and coming to class with their own bystander stories.

Among younger student trainers, Keely observed that the trainers that really stuck with the program often demonstrated increased empowerment, sometimes “a little too empowered for their britches.” Keely describes how at one middle school “there were a few comments, one of the trainers challenging the Principal and things like that.” She considers that “it’s possible that this kid would be doing it without but I think that the empowerment is huge whether it’s being applied in appropriate ways. They are really taking seriously sticking up for themselves and other people around them.”

Observers, for the most part, speak highly of the youth trainers, identifying the difference in student reaction when trainers are engaged and compelling, and impressed with their evolving ability to handle challenging students. One observer reflects on times he felt students being trained were bored, saying “sometimes the curriculum was being followed so as not to have any life. You get the feeling [they] are running through stuff. People pick up on that.... The more engaged the trainers are the more the kids are.” Another observer was impressed by their evolving skill saying “the way trainers handled the students who were ‘trying to make it difficult’ was phenomenal.” Observer Ruth noted how a lesson came across when a trainer seemed to embody the material: “She is really good. It really comes from the heart for her...” Brian, seeing both “weak and strong trainers” and that “some of the pairings worked really well” suggests for the future matching new trainers with those who have been doing it for a while.

The qualitative research did not specifically compare and contrast whether the grade level of the trainers (8th, 10th or 11th) impacted success of the training, but for anecdotal information, though this would make for an interesting study: whether or not older youth trainers have an easier time commanding respect among their younger peers (high school teaching middle school) than those trainers of same age as their peers (eighth grade teaching eighth grade).

Student responses vary; seeds of integration germinate

In addition to the perspective of teachers and observers this section is peppered with some comments from students who received the training and participated in focus groups carried out at the four schools.

Teacher and observer perceptions of student response to the curriculum resemble those expressed by youth trainers, police officers, and the students themselves as described in their journal entries. While, as observer Ann Marie says, some were “engaged, others disengaged, and others trying to make it difficult for the trainers,” many of the students demonstrated some level of integration of a new vocabulary and skill set with which to understand and make meaning of the TAB concepts. Health teacher Carol Payes describes that “with TAB the students really learn to see things from different angles... and how everyone else’s reaction is going to build or decrease another person’s.”

While the companion quantitative research component analyzes observations of specific lessons and activities in regards to program fidelity, anecdotal information about the diversity of techniques in the training suggest a nice balance that addresses diverse learning styles, though perspectives on the efficacy of the role plays and the video varied.

Students comment on the games during a focus group conversation:

I liked games, they had a game where you took balls and you were throwing them and you had to remember the peoples names that you passed them to or received them from and once you did that a couple times you’d go backwards so you got to learn everyone’s name in the class get to know them better so they were in trouble you would be more apt to help them because simply knowing their name would better allow you to I dunno make contact with them.

Yeah I think those games helped make teamwork and realizing that you have to work together to solve serious problems like that.

Interesting, several students noted without prompting that they were interested in Dr. Staub’s story and how he came to be involved in this work, and would have liked to learn more through a personal visit or a video about his life and work. Chime students in a focus group:

Get the guy who invented it to come and talk. Maybe if we throw a fundraiser and get him a plane ticket... We could ask him why he felt the need to start the program, what problems he saw and expand upon that with what problems actually exist today.

As previously noted, trainings often varied considerably from school to school. Says Health teacher Carol Payes “ you have some classes that are really really vocal and are really willing to get into it. Other ones, it’s like trying to pull teeth, trying to get them to respond. That can make a difference as to whether or not you cover all of the material or whether you get to a point where you are hitting a road block.” Opinions on the training and trainers from students in the four focus groups were across the map as well, reinforcing that each training varied a great deal.

Some focus group commentators really like the peer teaching model:

I think how you picked the kids from the school, that really was good because instead of somebody--you guys coming in and just trying to be like--I liked the part about how you picked kids and they learned everything and they taught the classes. I think that helped.

While others weren’t so sure:

I think that’s the purpose even though again the students who were teaching the program were not very serious and organized about the whole plan that’s why I’m sort of neutral about whether it should be taught by students or not.

A few students commented specifically on liking the balance of the youth/police teams.

I feel that since there was a police officer there we were seeing the stuff we were learning as facts, not just point of views. And we learned better because I think its better when our peers explain stuff to us not just the teacher. I dunno it just seems more friendly. I think that’s a good idea.

While there is certainly a good chance that those students confused about the presence of a police officer as part of the training missed the explanation early on, this shift in role from the usual resource officer position might be better reinforced throughout the training, so that the students really understand that they are learning along with everyone else.

My friends and I talked about it and we were like ‘why is he here?’

The only thing that I realized about why the cop was there was maybe questions about law. That’s the only reason why I think he was there. It seemed like he knew more about it than our peer teachers. Did he go through the program too?

I think if he is going to be there I think he needs to tell people that ‘oh, I went through this training’ so that people will be like, ‘oh, now I know why he’s here now.’

In regards to the TAB key concepts, Health teacher Kathy Horrigan sees that “the kids are becoming well versed in the vocabulary and the meaning behind it.” Though the extensive

questionnaires used for program evaluation at three points during the school year were agreed by many to be extremely time and scheduling intensive, counselor Paula Swenson notes that students “revisiting the evaluations” which were administered at the beginning, end, and several months after each training served as a sort of reflective tool for students to “keep it alive...to bring their mind back to it.” Swenson also noted that she sees use of the vocabulary and concepts in her guidance office, giving the example of a student coming into her office and saying “‘something happened’ and [was asked] ‘what did you do as a bystander?’” She feels “...The expectation is that you won’t just allow it... I think with that kind of an expectation, especially as it continues in training through the whole school and then everybody has that training, I feel it’s opened a conversation between adults and students and so it’s an expectation.”

TAB impacts active bystandership among adult stakeholders involved in the project.

A number of the teachers and observers described the impact the TAB program had on their increased awareness of incidents past or present, and their role as active bystanders.

Describes one health teacher:

I don’t think I was ever a shrinking violet to begin with, but I think I’m more willing to speak up when something doesn’t quite flush with me... it’s almost automatic, sometimes it’s subconscious. I don’t feel like I’m always up on a soap box but I’m definitely [less willing] to let the idle comment go by at any level.... Take time out of a lesson during school or even between colleagues to say ‘you know, I kind of have an issue with that and here’s why.’”

An observer notes his shift in awareness from belief to necessity:

I believed in the bystander idea before but this has really changed it into a necessary thing. I wouldn’t have noticed before if people weren’t active bystanders. Now I notice when there are lost opportunities.

Another observer describes how he would now more likely intervene and follow his intuition in a situation he witnessed, watching a mother hit their child in a grocery store “It’s altered my belief in that the instinct to do something was right.” but adds that it’s still not that simple in that “undermining someone’s authority can be harmful.”

An observer and staff member immersed in the work of mediation describes “pushing the limits of her own ideas about active bystandership,” discussing the concept of evolution of helpful actions, and the impact that had on her considering the reasons why she would take

action, recognizing that “By being much more explicit and much more sensitive and if I [am] able to put myself a little more out of my comfort zone then that might inspire [another] person later on if they were in the position to take more action. “

Teachers, counselors and observers are able to generate ideas to extend TAB into other segments of the school community.

Even though the in-class time was an intensive commitment on the part of the teachers, their ideas about extending the TAB concept and curriculum into other realms of the school community demonstrate their buy-in to the program philosophy and goals, and recognition that the tools for violence prevention offered through the program can benefit extra-curricular activities, parents, and other factions of the whole school community. One guidance counselor describes being at a meeting in which there was a student who was feeling targeted around some specific issues. She recalls: “ I was very proud to be able to say that we have some bystander training [in response to] people saying that you’re not doing enough.”

Among the suggestions for further integration with school activities and programs, A health teacher suggests using elements of TAB in extra-curricular groups and activities related to social justice, community action and service, such as the Gay-Straight Alliance. A school counselor and health teacher (at separate schools) each address the possibility of a TAB program for parents to, as the counselor suggests:

“...[To] train parents around these issues so that they can support their children. That would be a really beautiful thing. When I talk to parents a lot of them really don’t know what to do...the kids say certain things are happening and some of the [parents] are going to react and they way that they react is not always useful and some are struggling to do it right... offering training to parents on how to help their kids [would be] a really positive thing.

And the health teacher:

I’m not sure how many people we could get here, but find some means by which we could get all parents involved...These kids don’t learn from nothing, they learn from what they see at home, from what they see in the community... maybe it needs to be something that is expanded much farther than just some classes.

Community observers from other social service organizations are also able to consider the potential of the TAB program in response to certain community-wide issues noting that ‘it could be used to teach advocacy to people’ or in programs such as reinventing justice or for a course in probation or anger management.

ON SCHOOL GOALS AND POLICY: ADMINISTRATOR PERSPECTIVES

“The program is designed to stop [harassment] in the sense that a lot of times we will never hear or see it. The [incidents] that we know about, we can fix or come close...TAB helps those kids who would have never come forward to say ‘I need your help’” School Principal

“It aligns with every school’s social and civic expectations of teaching the whole community to be active... whether it’s a participant in social change within a culture, or in becoming a change agent.” Superintendent

Summary of Section Findings:

The TAB program supports anti-harassment policies, district improvement plans and stated civic and social school mission.

Primary concerns are in regards to class, student and personnel time required, particularly in light of high stakes testing pressures.

Administrators concur that systemic and multi-year integration is needed to see full impact of program such as TAB on school culture and climate—and are interested in program continuation.

Community member involvement benefits schools and sparks potential for program expansion

Quabbin Mediation was attentive to involving administrators from the four schools during program inception and onset, as well as midstream with project staff. While for the most part they did not observe many trainings given their time demands, their active presence in the school building, communication with school personnel and observations in regards to discipline issues inform their perspective on the pilot implementation.

The TAB program supports anti-harassment policies, district improvement plans and stated civic and social school mission.

School administrators describe what impresses them about the program in its pilot year.

Athol Royalston Middle School Principal John Doty notes that

The language seems to have gotten into the school culture, the language of bystanding. Every now and then it just kind of pops up in discussions and those hard spots that teenagers have while working with each other.

Athol-Royalston High principal Kent Strong is succinct: “the kids buy it, the trainers buy it.” [Former] R.C. Mahar principal Dr. Frank Zak describes how TAB ties in with a primary goal of the health curriculum, which he sums as “how do we get along in this life?”...Saying, “so far as it fits in, TAB is a natural.” Zak also notes that TAB ties in especially well with the civic and social elements of their mission including demonstrating respect and responsible membership in society, expressing emotions appropriately, and practicing intelligent decision making, stressing that “as far as [these components of] our mission and expectations there is not question in my mind that [TAB is] supportive of that.”

R.C. Mahar Superintendent Dr. Reza Namin also sees the relationship to the district’s mission and message: “it aligns with every schools social and civic expectations of teaching the whole community to be active... whether it’s a participant in social change within a culture, or in becoming a change agent. “

Three of four administrators interviewed were able to identify ways in which they see TAB interfacing with school safety and anti-harassment policy and goals. Principal Doty notes that in 40 years of working in schools, he feels anti-harassment policies are among the most difficult to actually administer, due to changing language and judgment calls on determining how the person who is harassed feels. He suggests TAB makes existing anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies “easier to follow” and adds that the program is “pretty consistent with the school improvement plan and district improvement plan.” Principal Doty describes a potentially serious, confidential incident at their school, in which a student involved in TAB coming forward because “he felt that it was his obligation to report that” may have averted harm. Says Principal Strong: The program is designed to stop [harassment] in the sense that a lot of times we will never hear or see it. The [incidents] that we know about, we can fix or come close...[TAB helps] “ those kids who would have never come forward to say ‘I need your help’”

Along the lines of curriculum and policy requirements, Superintendent Namin describes being able to use the fact that they were implementing TAB in relation to the EQA (Educational Quality Assessment) recommendations regarding some curriculum shortages and incorporation of student feedback.

Primary concerns are in regards to class, student and personnel time required, particularly in light of high stakes testing pressures.

Says Principal Strong: “Next year we have science MCAS and we need that 10th grade health class to support biology so hopefully we’ll find a time to let that happen again.” Dr. Zak named personnel and student time as concerns. Referring to student trainers, and the importance of a diverse mix within the group for all involved, Zak is aware that

[The program] takes a lot of their time away from classes to work with the rest of the students... this is a problem, where do you find the time? Understanding that you need a good cross section of your student body, you can’t just have the national honor society kids. I’ve had kids [trainers] who failed courses and complained because it was because of the TAB training.

Dr. Namin contemplates how TAB related to the core academic curriculum as part of social studies content. “We talk about existing and pasts conflicts but we don’t talk about when we have the conflicts, what are some of the solutions- what are other ways to prevent it or to help” noting that the program could bring more depth to this study of conflict in the social studies curriculum.

Administrators concur that systemic and multi-year integration is needed to see full impact of program such as TAB on school culture and climate—and are interested in program continuation.

They are in agreement that the full impact may not be seen for several years. Doty says he “hasn’t observed enough to make a clear connection as to what is resultant from TAB. Name’s comments resonate with those of several teachers, suggesting, “you don’t see it as a whole yet because we haven’t implemented it systemically yet,” in the first year only reaching two grades "but I think you will.”

Zak describes the potential as geometric rather than additive strength saying

I think that as you roll it for a couple of years that it gains... it’s not additive it’s geometric strength that you’re going to gain... I’d want to do this program again and see how we can do it differently, better. One-shot deals in a school are bad. Kids catch on very quickly that it was only here for a year. What’s here a second year they believe is real. And it’s part of the culture.”

Community member involvement benefits schools and sparks potential for program expansion

Administrators note the high level of community support for the program, and how that enhances it for all. Says Principal Doty:

There are people in and out of the school a lot when this program is going on, and just for the kids to see and administrators and teachers to see what's happening that you're getting this level of community support to implement a program that people feel very strongly about I think is really gratifying...Everyone knows that something is happening... they may not know what is happening if they aren't directly involved with it but they know that some effort is being made on behalf of the kids in the community.

In talking about next steps, Superintendent Namin suggests extending the training to others beyond students "if you want to own this as a whole, as a community, then we need to take this to the parents and to our teachers and faculty."

Principal Strong hopes that the training "blossoms out" into the community, that it can help the community if the training allows students to "deter people in the community from being bullies...even with parents if the parent becomes aggressive." He responds to the question of the program extending into other settings, simultaneously naming an overarching goal of the program:" if students buy into the program they just don't [solely] buy it here...it becomes part of them and how they react to situations whether they are here or out there."

Continuum of Student Responses to the TAB Training

I am no longer a passive bystander. People say power comes in numbers but bigger power can come from one person. It only takes one person to create a chain of endless caring that is powerful in many ways.
10th Grader

This section of the report utilizes excerpts from student journals gathered from 25 of the 30 trainings (approximately 500 students) throughout the pilot implementation school year, 2006-2007. The excerpts and accompanying commentary depict a spectrum of experiences among those 8th and 10th graders who received the TAB training in four treatment schools and illustrate a range of internalization of the material presented in the training:

- Σ **Resistance:** To the content or process of the TAB Program
- Σ **New Awareness and Recognition:** Ability to describe what they might or could do, or recognition of TAB concepts in other individuals or settings but without action.
- Σ **Self-Identification:** Naming and reflecting on self as harm-doer, target, or bystander
- Σ **Transfer:** Demonstration of new skills and integration of the curriculum through an action that they take.

While the journals provide rich material, a continuum of responses categories by primary themes that emerged is the most reasonable way to present student insights given that throughout the year, there was great diversity among the trainings themselves in regards to the amount of time allotted to journal writing following each lesson and thus great variety in quantity and quality of student journal writing. Not every student responded to every journal question and in a few some cases, did not complete their journals at all. In addition, the journaling questions and process as a component of the TAB program was revised midway through the program itself as a result of Quabbin Mediation's efforts toward on-going program improvement.

Although program participants were informed that their journals were "public" and would be collected at the end of the training period names are changed in order to protect the privacy of the program participants. Spelling and grammar has not been changed in journal excerpts, and are thus authentic in regards to student voice and writing style and ability. These are but a few of the representative excerpts; the entire body of excerpts was provided to Quabbin Mediation.

The Key Finding through journal analysis is:

Through their written reflections, students who receive TAB curriculum demonstrate an ability to use new terminology and identify actions they can take as an active bystander.

The majority of responses conveys an increased recognition of harm-doing and bystandership in school, peer and community settings and implies acquisition of skills to take action in response to harm-doing.

In the following pages, selected quotes representing each category, evaluator commentary provide readers of this report with a sense of the diversity of student response, integration and meaning making.

(All student names are changed; spelling and grammar are original)

Resistance: To the content or process of the TAB Program

While this should not be used in isolation from other data such as quantitative evaluation findings or trainer and personnel observations of student dis-engagement, less than 5% of student responses demonstrated any significant resistance to the program through their journals.

Some resistance-oriented comments appear to stem from consideration of, rather than complete ignorance of the TAB content resulting in a relatively conscious decision on the part of the student to remain unchanged by the content.

If I was a bystander I would not do anything.... I do not care for any target or harm doer if it is not my family or friends. I could walk right past a fight and sleep as well as ever that night. I don't think it is my responsibility to be an active by-stander. I don't like to do anything about anything or anybody.

Don, ARMS

I really don't think that TAB has changed the way I think. Maybe I will stop and help a couple people if I need to but I was brought up to deal with my own problems.

Ashley, Mahar 8

A few are either explicitly uninterested or don't see the relevance.

I have no idea whenever this is going to come in handy, but all I know is this has nothing to do with health and should be cancelled from the school immediately.

Steve, ARMS

Others express ambiguity, on one hand suggesting they see some importance while on the other noting that they are bored of the program.

...We are getting more out of this than we think. I have seen more people from this class do more than what had done before. I think that we should go to something else now because this is getting really boring. I mean, it is fun in all but, we are pretty much doing the same thing over and over again every week. But today I kind of liked this class. Well, except for this part, journals. LOL. But today was fun.

Lawton Mahar 8

A few are simply not comfortable with the teaching and learning style of dialogue and interaction that permeates TAB, which may have appeared as disinterest in the training.

I disliked discussing everything in front of everybody. At least, not the people in our class. It's hard for me to talk to people I don't like and that's why I barely talked in this class.

New Awareness and Recognition

The greatest quantity of responses constituted new awareness and recognition. Excerpts that demonstrate an ability to use vocabulary in meaningful ways are included in this category as are writings that describe what students see they might or could do, but without demonstrated action. Some are able to recognize and apply TAB conceptually in other individuals or settings, but again, without action. While efforts have been taken to select entries that seem to demonstrate authentic meaning-making rather than rote response, readers should consider that the journal writing was carried out in school settings as part of a school based curriculum, and subsequently, some expectation for students to "give the right answer" might exist.

While the most frequently occurring phrases in the journals contain the term bystander, other terms appear often in context and with meaning.

I have learned a lot in the past few classes. First thing was that an active bystander is someone who steps into a situation and stops it. A passive bystander is someone who stands there and watches a situation pass. You can become an active bystander everyday if you wanted.
Jeremy AHS

If I see a situation that I think needs help, I will be an active bystander and do something or say something instead of pluralistic ignorance. [which she defines as] When people do not show their feelings in public.
Kiersten, Mahar 8

I could use this information to stop fights, support the target, or even support the harmdoer.

Thomas, ARMS

Notes a student who, in another entry describes having been in a psychiatric institution:

Moral courage is showing valor in a time when you have been persecuted for your virtues. When you stand up for something you strongly believe in, though it is hard to do so, even if the odds are against you and you risk something. When your morals are tested and you brave through you are showing moral courage. When you see someone being ridiculed or harassed for something, then this is where your moral courage is either pushed to the way side or used with integrity.

Developing a vocabulary for qualities they feel they possess can validate these personal characteristics.

Today I learned the meaning of the word complicity. It will help me understand that in future cases even smiling can make the situation worse. I also learned the meaning of moral courage and realized that I use that often. ...Tab has changed my thinking about

being a bystander because it has made me see how I can help. I already do tap into my moral courage. If a little kids being picked on or if an animal is being abused I get involved.
Chelsea, ARMS

The expanded definitions of harmdoing help some students realize the impact of “not acting” and consider right action.

Not doing something about the problem is just as bad as throwing a punch towards the victim being harmed. Don’t always follow what other people say. Do what you believe in even if it isn’t always what other people think is the “cool” thing to do. What is “cool” may not always be the right thing to do.
Tom AHS

As they reflect on their past actions, knowledge gained through TAB helps students create a context for their past harmful behaviors or caring qualities.

I learned how stupid it makes the person you are picking on feel. And how stupid you look picking on them. I’m not gunna do that again.
Susie Mahar 10

In all honesty, I knew this already. But I never really needed to use it that much. If need be I will use the skills locked away in my head. I think I have a certin gift for helping, I just hav’nt opened it yet and given it to myself.
Craig Mahar 8

I’ve learned a lot of stuff in TAB and after doing this class I disided I would love to become something that can help people not so much a cop but you know. I can also use this stuff by teaching others.
Marisol ARMS

A number of students expressed general strategies that describe shifts in how they would respond to harmdoing, some with great enthusiasm.

I learned many things to do during Active by stander class. I learned how to break up fights the safe way. Also I learned how to comfort both the target and the harm doer. There are many ways to solve problems and to deescalate them. This was a good class because it was very helpful and informing to me and it will make me think twice next time if see a conflict somewhere
Steve AHS

Tab has made me want to break up fights and gave me more ideas how to. I just don’t want to see people get hurt. I’ll try to break up or stop things so they won’t get hurt as much.
Hunter Mahar 8

TAB has changed my thinking about being a bystander I think instead of egging on a fight I'm going to say something get involve instead of be a passive bystander I would be active. My moral courage is very great. Joanne, AHS

I can use what I learned in TAB to help intervene in a situation. I learned how to diffuse a problem quickly and safely. I am now more inclined to act in a situation where someone is being harmed. Thank You!!! TAB is great!!! Michael ARMS

Others were very specific in the steps and actions they now feel they could take, both as an active bystander in protection of a target or victim during an incident and in relationship to the harmdoer.

You can recruit other active bystanders by calling attention to the situation. Second you could have a lot of friends and asked them for help. Third you could say something like "they need help" or "come on guys help out". You could even say "don't pretend it's not happening" "are you blind or something?" Last you could promise that they won't set into trouble.

You could help the harmdoer by letting them talk about their personal problems. Second you can ask what's wrong. Third you can tell them there's more safer and better ways to take out your anger. Fourth you can tell them it's not any better to make someone feel like you are below you. Don't be mad be glad. Kourtney, ARMS 8

While not resisting or reject the program concepts, several students grapple with active vs. passive bystanding, representing some genuine attempt at internalizing the material to see if it "fits" with their worldview.

Why is it important to solve yourself when someone is being hurt? It is always important to involve yourself because if you don't the victim could get badly injured. Also if you don't involve yourself you could loose a close friendship with the victim. Next it is important to involve yourself because if you do it once (standby and be passive) you could become passive every time. You should involve yourself and put a stop to any harm before you get into trouble for something you didn't do. In conclusion you should always involve yourself because put yourself in their shoes wouldn't you want help? Emily ARMS

Sometimes it is very difficult to be confident especially when you aren't very good at what you are trying to do. You have to worry about what will happen to you and the others involved. You aren't sure if you'll make it better or worse. It's a hard decision deciding whether or not you want to be an active bystander. Lara Mahar 10

A few students went demonstrated a progression of not seeing the value of the training, or disliking the fact that their peers were teaching to embracing it.

I thought that it is creepy that a kid in the same grade is teaching us but it is cool with me now. I liked that I practily knew everything and understud how it led to my life. I could show that I can help in most ways and try to keep my life in order sort if. I would like to have this class longer and learn more.
Ramon Mahar 8

These entries by the same student were made at three intervals over the two-week duration of the training.

Active bystanders, I don't see the point of it. People need to learn how to deal with a situation on their own. That gives you experience for the life ahead.

What we used today can help the world. If people didn't judge others, the world would be peaseful. America trys to change other countrys because we think our government is better. Other, smaller, countrys will bomb the bigger ones for power. These are the kind of things that cause wars.

I can use what all of what I've learned to help people. Being an active bystanderd can make you a target and complete strangers feel good. Helping spreads and soon so many people will be active that there is no one left to bully people. YAY FOR HELPING

Tracy, ARMS

While the journals elicited a surprising number of meaningful entries, one student participant in a focus group sums the need for more time to integrate and reflect on the training experience before deciding how they might or might not weave the concepts into their lives and behaviors.

...The journals were trying to have you put down your personal thoughts about that, As of that point I had not yet decided based on what I learned and based on morals or whatever I had not yet decided what I do. So I didn't feel like the time was right that soon to write about how you'd change.

Compassion, empathy and caring for others emerged among a number of students as they described how they could put their new learning into play in social relationships or beyond their immediate sphere of life.

...I have learned so many things over the week...Now I will at least stop and ask the homeless guy or the people that didn't a thing all day and ask them if they are hungry. If they are, then I'll stop and go to any store that is near and buy them food, not any old junk food, more like a sandwich, drink, and some chips.
Rafael, ARMS

...I can use what I learned today to talk to my friends and tell them that I have felt the same pain and that they can get through it no matter what happens if they just believe in

themselves that they are not a failure. That there are people that care about them even though it seems like the world is over it's not.

Kiera AHS

TAB has changed my thinking about being a bystander by making me want to be more active and care about everyone, even people who I really dislike. Pema Mahar 8

I can use what learned today by next time I do something with my team I will know how to include everybody in the activities. There is a girl on my soccer team who isn't really involved with us so next time I see her alone I am going to include her. Shauna AHS

I have learned so many things in active bystander in every day life. I have learned to be active in conflict I witness. Not only do I know how to involve myself properly but safely also. I feel this program has made me a better person in many ways. Being able to help harmdoers and targets will benefit me with everyone and sprading the work of active bystanding make the school a better place.

Torin AHS

Self-Identification

There were not an extensive number of entries in which students self-identified as harm-doer or target but for those who did, the writings appeared to be part of a healing process for them, either by reducing the experience of [self] "blaming the victim" with the expanded understanding of why people cause harm, or as self defined harm doers coming clear and proposing change in themselves.

When I went over to Scotland, they don't like Irish and my mother was born in Ireland some guy called me an Irish rat and that I don't belong there and I'm filthy. Everyone just stood there and watched as this guy beat me up and spit on me all because I'm Irish. That was a horrible feeling and I couldn't believe everyone just watched or turned away pretending it wasn't happening. That's why it's good to be an active bystander and not let something bad keep on happening to someone who doesn't deserve it.

Caitlin ARMS

Last year I used to get picked on in chorus. All of my friends were passive some even laughed when I was crying. I would have made out a lot better if my friends were active. Some said it was funny, others didn't want the harm-doer to turn on them but I would've liked the help and support.

Maureen Mahar 8

Today was a very akward day for me in this class. I got in trouble and someone told me or reminded me about this class. After that I felt really bad about myself and what I did to that other person. This class hasn't really done anything to me, but after that thing

happened, it just dawned on me how much this class can help. After I did that I now I have to pay the price for my actions.

Josh

I could be considered a harmdoer because my friends and I like to make people feel bad sometimes if I don't like them. The only way maybe have friends who don't harm people or just don't befriends with them and tell them you don't like them and leave it at that. Tab had changed me a little because now I try to stay out of drama and little things if I hear something I don't go around telling people did you hear this and that I find better things to do like school not drama and little fights people have they end up friends in the end.

Sophie Mahar 8

Transfer: Demonstration of new skills and integration of the curriculum through an action that they take.

The training periods sometimes lasted for two weeks, other times over a few months depending on the implementation model. Journal entries documented actions taken during this time period or perhaps just before. While there were no more than 10 total entries that described action taken during the training period itself, one might hope that more such actions were carried out beyond the scope of the training and journal period. Most examples demonstrate relatively simple, yet powerful actions that illustrate how active bystandership can be carried out in response school based and relatively safe (to act), yet potentially hurtful scenarios.

My friend was getting picked on and everyone I sat with at lunch picks on her and I stood up for her and said theirs nothing wrong with her shes like everyone else so knock it off or I'll bring this up with an adult but what pushed me to do it was I put myself in her shoes and thought of a good way to stop it. And not to think its fun to watch. That is how I can use and have used what I learned today in class,

Lacey ARMS

This morning I stopped a fight when someone was picking on someone. This can help us to be a better school.

Hilary ARMS

I had the courage to stand up to someone that was being judgmental and picking on one of my friends so I stuck up for her.

Celia Mahar 8

When I was in the lunch room I saw someone getting made fun of. People were laughing at her and calling her names. I stud up and started to tell them to stop. I can use what I learned in this class out in the real world.

Chelsea Mahar 8

When Athol and Orange get together, things escalate, and when this kid decided to kick one of my teammates in the head when he was on the ground, I told that kid to knock it out.

Thomas, 10th

An excerpt from a focus group with Mahar 10th graders elicits an interesting progression of bystandership, one that may not have been identified by the youth as significant without the focus group conversation that probed into the circumstances and surrounding feelings.

I feel that I been more like if I see a fight or if I hear about it I would be more likely to pay attention because previously I would think that's none of my business that doesn't affect me. But that was one of the main things the program tried to do was get people more concerned about fights and other conflicts in the school and how to deal with them.

(interviewer) That's amazing right there, the words you used right there 'pay more attention'

I'm not going to say any names but there was this kid that was getting picked on and I didn't ever pick on him but I didn't stop it. After the training I kind of tried to be his friend a little bit. Just let him know that if he needed to talk to someone, so he wouldn't get angry he could talk to me and some of his other friends.

(interviewer) How did you feel? Talk a little more about that experience.

Well I tried to better understand how he felt and how he was looking at things and it might not be all his fault the way he was acting. People would pick on him because he's kind of annoying but it might not be all his fault and he might have a reason that he's not really sure of he may be trying to get attention in any form.

(interviewer) How did you feel like he reacted when you started speaking to him differently?

Um well he got a little less annoying to me anyway and I didn't find him as much of a pain and it wasn't really hard to be around him anymore.

Be an active bystander, just imagine how you would feel.

Steven, ARMS

Recommendations

Develop clearer criteria for youth and police trainers and implement initial interview and screening process.

Emphasize youth leadership development among trainers as a key element of program. Increase emphasis on on-going support for youth trainers by Quabbin Mediation staff, community volunteers or mediators, or peer support models.

Clarify roles of, and more effectively utilize classroom teachers as mentors during implementation.

Consolidate length of curriculum towards manageability and ease of implementation by schools. *(Evaluator note: following the pilot curriculum upon which the research is based, Quabbin Mediation pursued this as part of their project improvement efforts)*

Continue to incorporate opportunities for student reflection in program content through on-going journal writing and focus groups to assess impact of program while encouraging students to make meaning of content in their lives.

Consider efficacy of a program model that provides intensive training during early adolescence (middle school) for the full training, with refresher training in the high school years, towards manageability combined with school-wide integration.

Provide schools with professional development that complements the TAB program and illuminates links to curriculum frameworks and district policies. Consider expansion through adaptation of the program for parents and community agencies.