

Training Active Bystanders
R. C. Mahar Regional School
Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment Data
7th Grade Basic TAB 6 Lesson Series
May 30, 2018

On September 28 and 29, 2017, 24 (from both Mahar and AHS) students participated in the Training Active Bystanders Training for Trainers curriculum. The Mahar TAB trainers taught the TAB basic 6 lesson curriculum to all 7th grade Middle School students at Mahar Middle School (the Athol TAB trainers taught at ARMS). Before the lessons began, each student was given a pre-training assessment. At the conclusion of the 6 lesson curriculum, an assessment was administered to each of the 7th grade students. What follows is a comparison of the results of these assessments, providing quantifiable results of increased or decreased understanding of the basic TAB concepts. Additionally, every student is given a journal on the first day of the training. At the conclusion of each lesson, students are asked to respond to questions about that lesson in their journals. These journals are intended to elicit information from students in an open-ended manner, and give students an opportunity to interact with the curriculum in a manner that allows for different learners. These journals also encourage students to provide concrete examples of ideas presented in the curriculum. All assessments and journals are completed anonymously. These two methods of assessment – the pre and post assessment forms and the student journals form the basis of this report.

The Quantitative Information

The following information reflects the comparison of the results of the pre and post assessments administered before and after the training.

Question 1 - There was an 8% increase in understanding of the term Target (84% pre training and 92% post training understood the term).

Question 2 – There was no change in understanding that spreading rumors is harmful (97% pre training and 97% post training understood this concept).

Question 3 – There was a 18% increase in understanding of the concept of a Passive Bystander (73% pre training and 91% post training understood this concept).

Question 4 – There was a 13% increase in the understanding of complicity in Active Bystandership (62% pre training and 75% post training understood this concept).

Question 5 – There was a 9% increase in the understanding of Moral Courage (70% pre training and 79% post training understood this concept).

Question 6 – There was a 10% increase in the understanding of empathy (77% pre training and 87% post training understood this concept).

Question 7 – There was a 2% decrease in understanding of one good strategy for intervention (87% pre training and 85% post training understood the use of this strategy- but these percentages are large both pre and post).

Question 8 – There was a 3% increase in understanding the concept of inclusive caring (54% pre training and 57% post training understood this concept – this is the lowest percentage of understanding of any of those tested).

Question 9 – There was a 5% increase in understanding of the concept of Evolution of Helpful Behavior (91% pre training and 96% post training understood this concept).

On both the pre and post assessments, the top four kinds of harm identified were:

- being called mean names or being made fun of,
 - being excluded or left out,
 - being pushed, kicked or shoved around,
 - saw negative rumors being spread
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- **88% of the students self-reported that they had gained skills to use as an Active Bystander** (52% stated they had gained a few skills, 36% stated they had gained many skills, 12% gained no new skills)
 - **83% of the students self-reported that they had gained leadership skills** through the TAB training (60% stated they had gained a few skills, 24% stated they had gained many skills, 16% stated they had gained no new skills.)

The Qualitative Information

As stated in the introduction, students are given a journal in which to record their responses to questions asked at the end of each unit. What follows are selected quotes

from students' journals. Spelling, grammar and punctuation have not been changed; the quotes are transcribed exactly as they appear in the student journals.

Unit 1 Journal Question: "Tell about a time when you were a bystander, either passive or active. What were the consequences of that situation for the target? For the harmdoer? What were other consequences?"

Not only are students reflecting on the language of TAB here, but also acknowledging their role, describing the harmdoing and analyzing consequences and potential outcomes.

"Once in fourth grade my brother (who was in 6th grade @ the time) would get bullied because of his weight. For about 2 months I was a passive bystander. The situation got me so nervous, and boosted my anxiety level to about 100,000%. Some more time passed by and I decided I couldn't take it anymore. I gathered some courage and told my principal. Everything was lifted off of my shoulders."

Unit 2 Journal Question: "Write about a time when bystanders did not take action because of one of the inhibitors. Which inhibitor was it? What could have been done to interrupt or break down that inhibitor?"

This journal question encourages students to recall a personal situation, examine and recognize a situational inhibitor that affected the situation, and suggest possible actions that would have positively affected the harmdoing.

"Someone had dropped their books in the hall, this person was unpopular so nobody stopped to help them. This was the fear inhibitor. Someone could have helped them with their books or at least asked if they needed help."

Unit 3 Journal Question: "List who your allies could be in a bystander situation. Describe a time when having allies made a difference for you."

Allies are a key protective factor for active bystanders and encouraging students to create a list of allies increases their access and acknowledged value.

"My allies in this situation would be my teacher, friends and parents. This made a difference for me because when I was younger someone was calling me names and pushing me around and my friends came in and told the bully to stop and they helped me stand up for myself and make me feel confident to stand up for myself."

Unit 4 Journal Question: "Write about how empathy and inclusive caring could change a bystander situation. List what you could say or do to show empathy or inclusive caring." These two promoters of active bystandership, once recognized and enabled, encourage

active bystandership. This question also encourages students to concretely describe how they would enact these promoters.

“You could show empathy or inclusive caring by standing up for someone even if you don’t know them, helping someone get what they need and being kind to one another. This could change an active bystander’s situation because instead of only standing up for a friend or family member, they could look into everyone’s story and see everyone’s point of view.”

Unit 5 Journal Question: “What groups or communities are you part of? Make a list. Write about an action that changed you. Did it change any of the groups or communities you are part of? How?”

With this reflection, students are encouraged to think of themselves in the broader context of community and to recognize their potential within the communities they are a part of and their potential to change those communities.

“I am part of a field hockey community, school community, and a town community. An action that changed me is when people went out of their way in my field hockey community to make friends with me. It changed the community because everyone became friends.”

Unit 6 Journal Question: “How has TAB changed your thinking about being a bystander? Write about a time when you had to use your moral courage to do what you knew was right.”

With this final journal question, students are being asked to consider the changes that TAB has made in their thinking, commit themselves to active bystandership and reflect on their use of a major tenant of TAB, moral courage.

“TAB training has taught me that being an active bystander might be risky but it is worth it to help someone out. A time when I had to use moral courage is when I was a target. I was scared to ask for help because I thought the bully would be more mad. I used my moral courage to tell a teacher and stop the bullying.”

“One time a kid was getting told that he was unloved and I turned around and told him ‘I like you just the way you are, so don’t give up, keep trying,’ and it made me feel very proud and happy. TAB training helped me with this situation because it made me feel like I don’t have to be afraid about being unaccepted or disliked.”

Conclusions

- The journal entries from this class of 7th grade students were exceptional examples. They were articulate, detailed, personal and showed growth, even over a small subset of time.
- Students were asked if they had gained skills – as an Active Bystander and as a leader. 88% and 83% respectively, stated that they had gained skills in these categories.
- TAB language and concepts showed an increase after the training, most significantly in the category of understanding what a Passive Bystander is. There was an 18% increase in this category.
- 97% of the students responded that they understood that spreading rumors is harmful.
- The students were able to make significant connections between their personal experiences and utilizing the skills they learned in the TAB curriculum to support them as active bystanders.