

Training Active Bystanders
North Quabbin – Athol Regional School and
R. C. Mahar Regional School
Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment Data
Training for Trainers
October 18, 2017

On September 28 and 29, 24 students participated in the Training Active Bystanders Training for Trainers curriculum. These TAB trainers will teach the TAB basic 6 lesson curriculum to all 7th grade Middle School students at Athol Regional Middle School and Mahar Middle School. At the conclusion of the training, an assessment was administered to each of the student trainers. A pre-training assessment was not administered. Each of the students participating in T4T had experienced the TAB curriculum in the 7th grade. The TAB program has been embedded in these schools for 10 years. The post training assessment forms the basis of the quantitative evaluation. 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. All assessments and journals are completed anonymously. These two methods of assessment – the post assessment forms and the student journals form the basis of this report.

The Quantitative Information

The following information reflects the results of the post evaluation questions administered to the students participating in the T4T. As stated above, these students are familiar with the content of the TAB curriculum; they were experiencing the curriculum for the first time with a Trainers' perspective, that is, with the intent of teaching the curriculum themselves.

Question 1 - 96% of the students had an understanding of who the target is in a harmdoing situation.

Question 2 – 100% of the students had an understanding of negative rumors as harmdoing.

Question 3 – 96% of the students had an understanding of what a passive bystander is.

Question 4 – 87% of the students had an understanding of complicity in passive bystanders.

Question 5 – 100% of the students had an understanding of using moral courage as an active bystander.

Question 6 – 96% of the students had an understanding of empathy.

Question 7 – 100% of the students had an understanding of how to clarify confusion in a harmdoing situation.

Question 8 – 91% of the students had an understanding of inclusive caring.

Question 9 – 100% of the students had an understanding of the evolution of helpful and harmful behavior.

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

- being called mean names,
 - being excluded or left out
 - mean names or comments about race
 - mean names or comments about sexual orientation
- 100% of the students self-reported that they had gained skills to use as an Active Bystander (13% stated they had gained a few skills, 87% stated they had gained many skills)
- 100% of the students self-reported that they had gained leadership skills through the TAB training (13% stated they had gained a few skills, 87% stated they had gained many 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.

“I took part in a rumor that was spread. I didn’t make it up, but I went along with the story and encouraged its passing on. The consequences for the target were having a bad reputation. For the harmdoer it was guilt. The other consequences were having to own up to spreading the rumor and losing the trust of a friend.”

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.

“There was a time when a boy was getting in a fist fight with another boy. The one that attack first had a bunch of friends backing him up but the other one had no one. The witness didn’t say anything because they too were scared they would get hit as well. The witness could have gone to an adult to stop the situation instead of being afraid to do anything.”

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.

“Friends, family, teachers, pets, teammates, counselor, coaches. A time when allies made a difference for me is when I needed advice on something on when and if I should confront someone.”

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.

“Empathy and inclusive caring could change a bystander situation by making a person an active bystander. You could say ‘How are you?’ or ‘Can I help?’”

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.

“School, clubs, sports, work, town. Being a part of clubs and others has changed my opinions on how important it is to do them.”

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.

“I had to use my moral courage when I saw that this boy was getting made fun of for being gay. TAB training has taught me not to be afraid to stand up for what I believe in.”

“TAB really makes you aware of what to do in a tough situation. It teaches you how to solve a conflict reasonably. On the bus I had to stand up for a girl being picked on. I knew it was right to stand up for her because I wouldn’t want to be in her situation and have no one stand up for me.”

Conclusions

Following are several significant findings from both the qualitative and quantitative assessments.

- The student trainers self-reported a significant increase in their Active Bystander skills and in their leadership skills, a 100% increase in both categories. In both categories, they were asked if they had gained skills.
- A significant understanding of TAB language and concepts was reported by the student Trainers.
- The lowest percentage of understanding in the TAB concepts was complicity, where 87% of the students responded correctly to the prompt.
- The student trainers 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.