



Power of Peace Program 2010 Aggregate Report

Introduction

Michael Arterberry, the Founder and Executive Director of the Youth Voices Center, Inc., a non-profit organization which has the sole purpose of improving the lives of young people, is also the creator of the Power of Peace program. The Power of Peace program was introduced to Westchester County, NY and surrounding areas in 2005.

The results of the Power of Peace program for 2010 are presented in this report. The implementation of the program took place at five sites: 4 high schools (Peekskill, Ossining, New Rochelle, and Port Chester) and one Youth Bureau (Mt. Vernon) during six months throughout the year: March, April, September, October, November, and December. A total of 19 Power of Peace workshop cycles were completed in 2010.

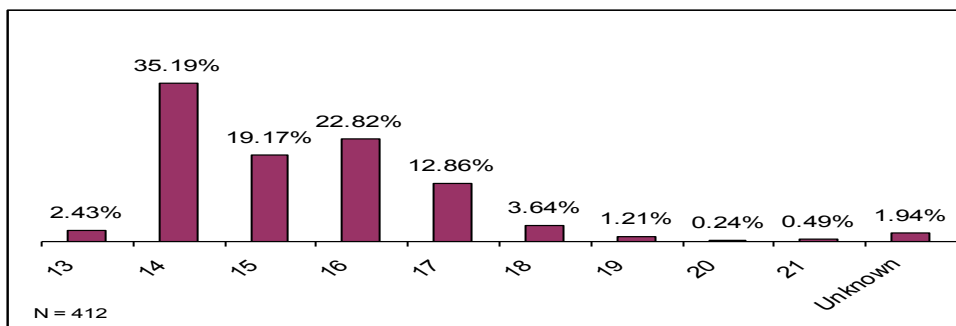
Program Description

Power of Peace is a succession of experiential workshops, with a focus on conflict resolution and anti-violence, designed to enable young people to use their voices to express their concerns, fears and dreams within a safe environment. The workshops address the issues that youth confront daily, the components of which include: positive youth development, leadership, conflict resolution, team work and collaboration, decision making, respect for others and self, and diversity.

Demographics

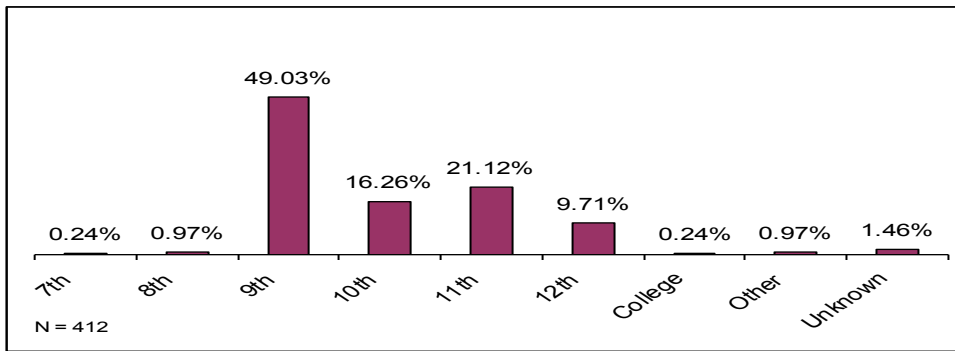
There were 412 students who participated in the 2-day Power of Peace workshops. The student group was comprised of 207 boys (50%) and 205 girls (50%) in grades 7 through college and ranged in age from 13 – 21. Distributions for age, grades, sites and participation are presented in the charts listed below.

Age



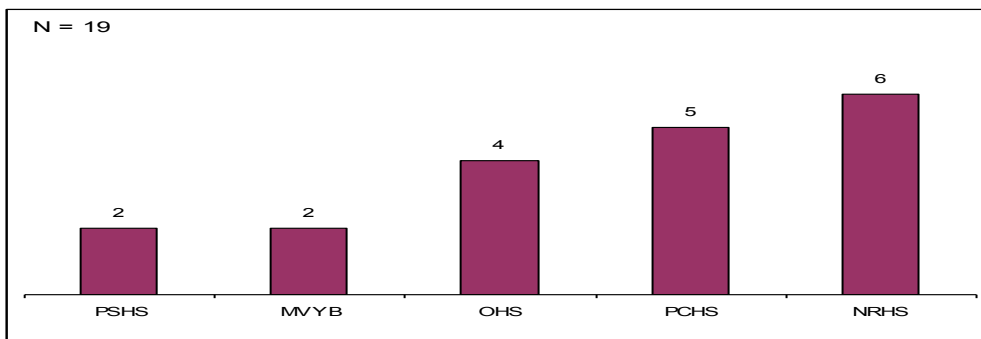
Just over one-third (35.19%) of the participants were 14 years of age.

Grade



Nearly half (49.03%) of the participants were in the 9th grade.

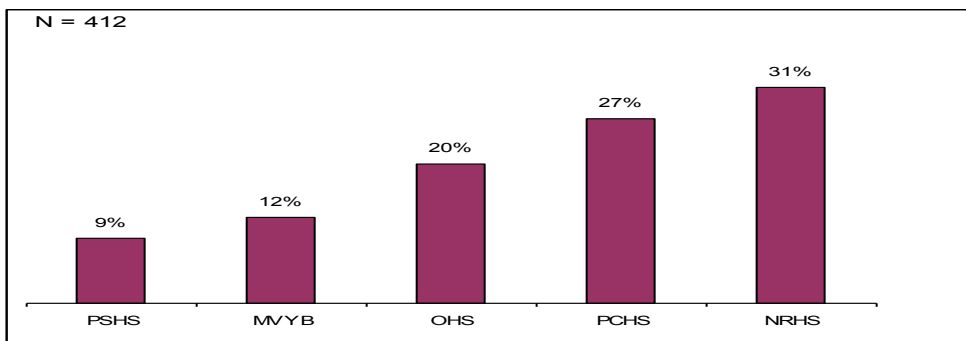
Number of Power of Peace Cycles by Site



One cycle = two days of workshops

New Rochelle High School (NRHS) led the way holding six cycles of Power of Peace, followed by Port Chester High School (PCHS) holding five cycles of Power of Peace and Ossining High School (OHS) holding four cycles of Power of Peace. Both Peekskill High School (PSHS) and Mount Vernon Youth Bureau (MVYB) held two cycles of Power of Peace in 2010.

Number of Participants by Site



While New Rochelle (NRHS) and Port Chester (PCHS) combined represent over half (58%) of the participation for 2010, they also account for nearly one-third (129 and 110 participants respectively) of the participation each, followed by Ossining (OHS) with about one-fifth of the participation (83 participants) and Mount Vernon (MVYB) and Peekskill (PSHS) weighing in at around one-tenth of the participation (51 and 39 participants respectively) each.

Program Evaluation

A six statement pre-survey and a seven statement post-survey, designed by Marie-Elena Grosett, Ph.D. of Creative Solutions Consultation Services, LLC, were administered to assess the effectiveness of the program. Students were asked to complete the pre-survey prior to the start of the first workshop and asked to complete the post-survey at the end of the second workshop. Of the 412 participants, 100% completed the pre-survey and 97% (398 participants) completed the post-survey.

Quantitative: Responses to statements were on a five point likert scale ranging from 5 = "Yes, definitely," 4 = "Mostly," 3 = "Sometimes," 2 = "Not Really," to 1 = "No, Never."

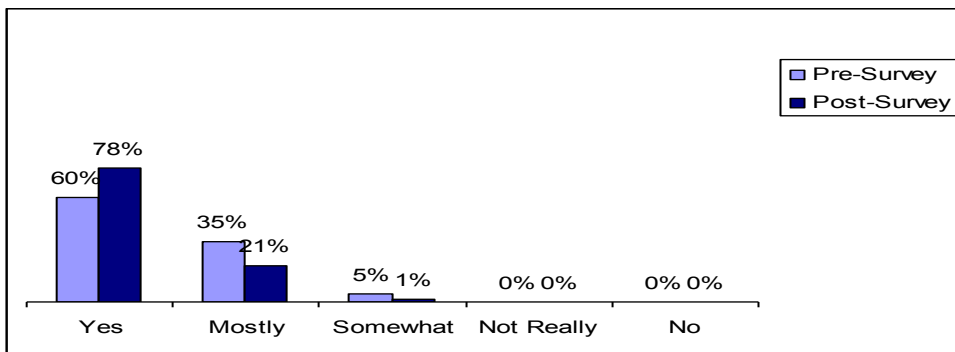
Qualitative: Two questions asking for feedback about the program were included at the end of the post-survey only regarding a) how participants felt about the Power of Peace experience and b) ways to improve the program in the future.

Results

From pre-survey to post-survey, significant ($p < .001$, $p < .01$ or $p < .05$) positive changes in attitudes were seen on five of the six items. Data were analyzed using t-tests comparing pre-survey responses with post-survey responses.

Item 1: I respect myself.

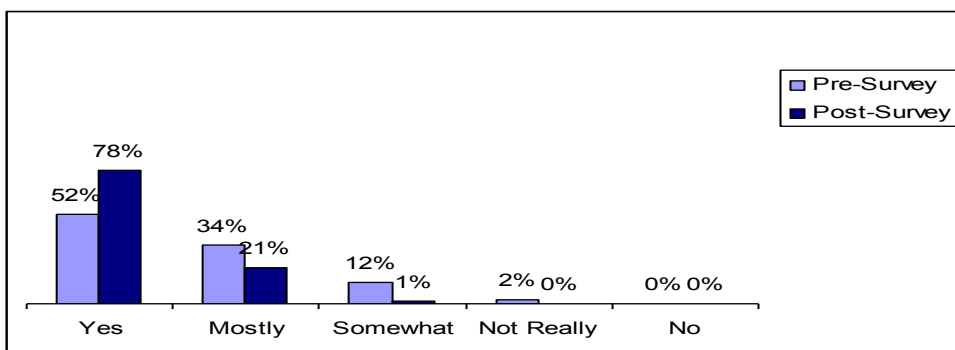
Overall, the percent of students answering "Yes, definitely" at pre-survey = 60% and at post-survey = 78%.



$t(36) = 2.61, p < .05$

Item 2: I am willing to talk to a student different from me.

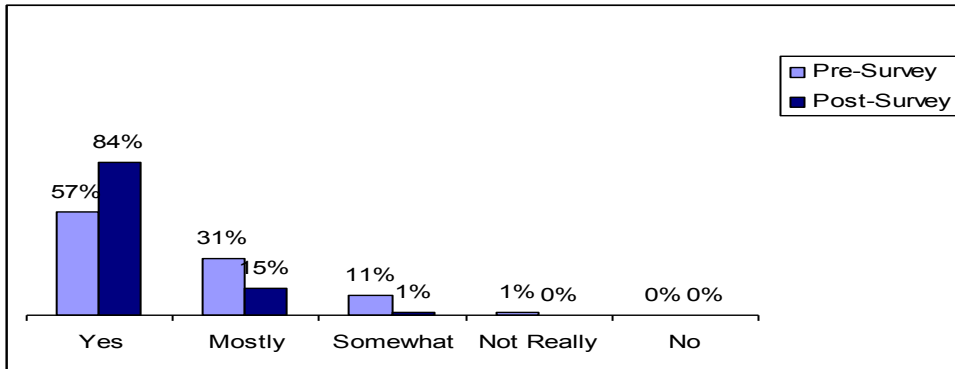
Overall, the percent of students answering "Yes, definitely" at pre-survey=52% and at post-survey=78%.



$t(36) = .759, p = \text{non-significant}$

Item 3: I respect students different from me.

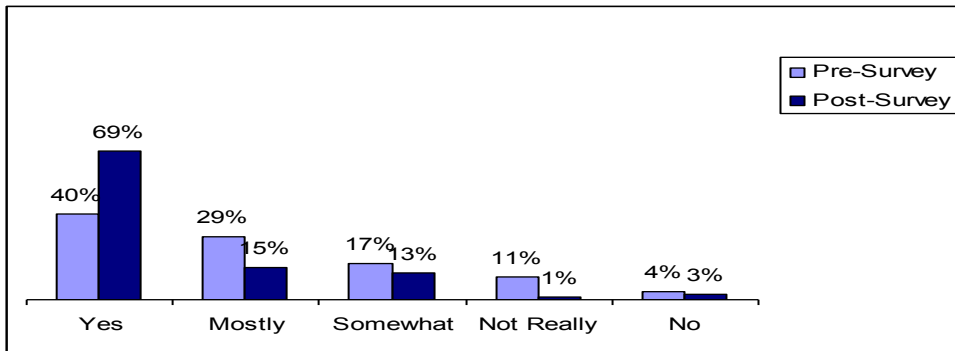
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 57% and at post-survey = 84%.



$t(36) = 5.01, p < .001$

Item 4: I believe violence will not resolve conflict.

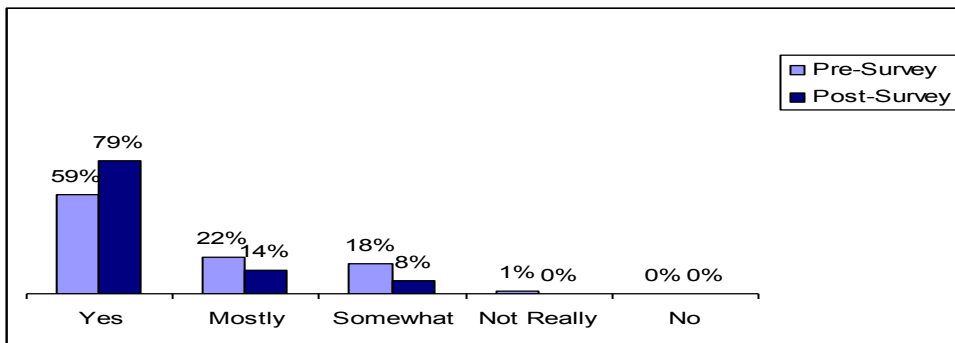
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 40% and at post-survey = 69%.



$t(36) = 3.82, p < .001$

Item 5: I am aware of alternatives to violence.

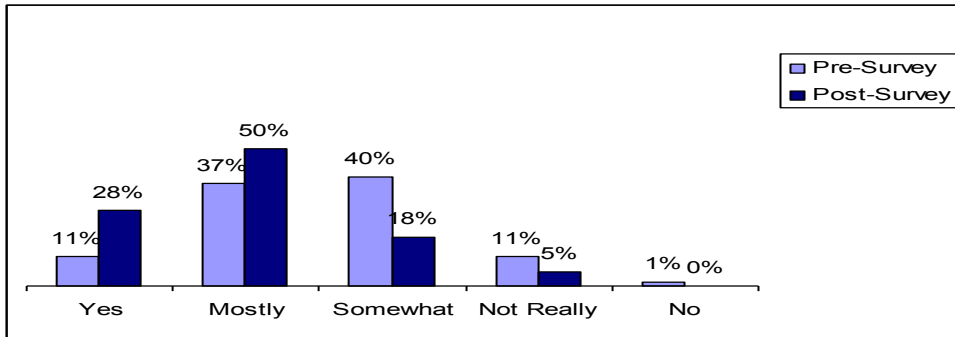
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 59% and at post-survey = 79%.



$t(36) = 4.40, p < .001$

Item 6: I think I know how other people see me.

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey=11% and at post-survey=28%.

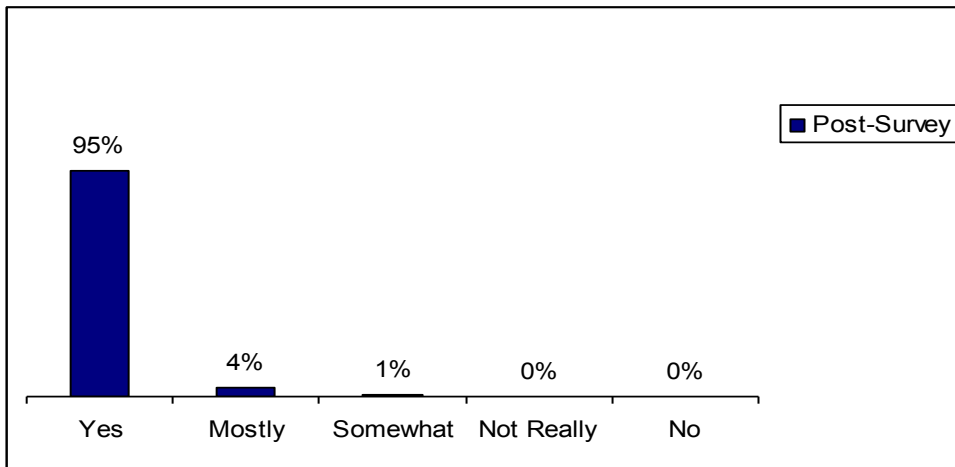


$t(36) = 3.75, p < .001$

In addition to the six previous items listed, the three items listed below were included in the post-survey.

Item 7: I think it's a good idea for other students in my school to attend the Power of Peace workshops.

The overwhelming majority (95%) answered “Yes, definitely”; while 4% answered “Mostly”; and 1% answered “Somewhat.”



Item 8: Please tell us how you feel about Power of Peace

The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive. Adjectives used to describe the Power of Peace program in response to this survey item include great, awesome, fantastic, fun, deep, eye-opening, and enlightening.

Quotes from participants include:

It strengthened the bond between everyone here.

It really did change my perspective of life and how I view others.

It changed me as a person and how I look at other people

I think it was good because it helped me talk about my feelings.

It helped me open my eyes and realize other things I wouldn't have realized on my own.

It brings different people of different groups, of different races together to become one.

It brings a diverse group of people who may not be friends in school to share personal information with each other.

I learned a lot about myself and a lot about my friends.

It was a life changing experience for me.

It is a learning experience that encourages teens to be better at treating their peers with respect.

Item 9: Please tell us what we could do to improve Power of Peace

Over three-quarters of the respondents indicated that they could think of nothing that would improve the Power of Peace program. Among the comments suggesting ways to improve the program the following were listed: more time, more kids, more days, more activities, follow up, more adults, all students, and parents too.

Discussion

The statement indicating the highest change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was Item 5: I am aware of alternatives to violence. The statement indicating the least change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was Item 1: I respect myself.

Conclusion

The results presented in this report indicate that the Power of Peace program did have a positive effect in changing student attitudes. It is noteworthy that from pre-survey to post-survey, statistically significant positive changes in attitudes were seen on five of the six items. These results are primarily limited by the fact that this was not an empirical study. Without follow up measures, it is impossible to know the extent to which any attitudinal changes will be sustained.