

Program Report 2014 for JAH-Dunbar School

Introduction

Michael Arterberry, the Founder and Executive Director of the Youth Voices Center, Inc., a non-profit organization that 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 2014 are presented in this report. The implementation of the program took place in two cycles during the months of April and May.

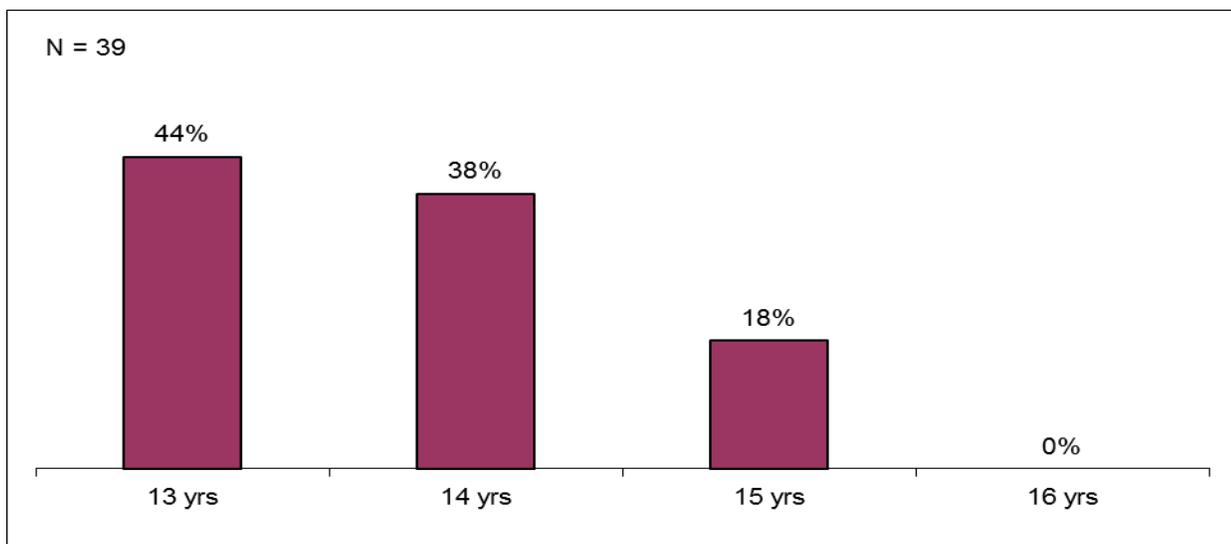
Program Description

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

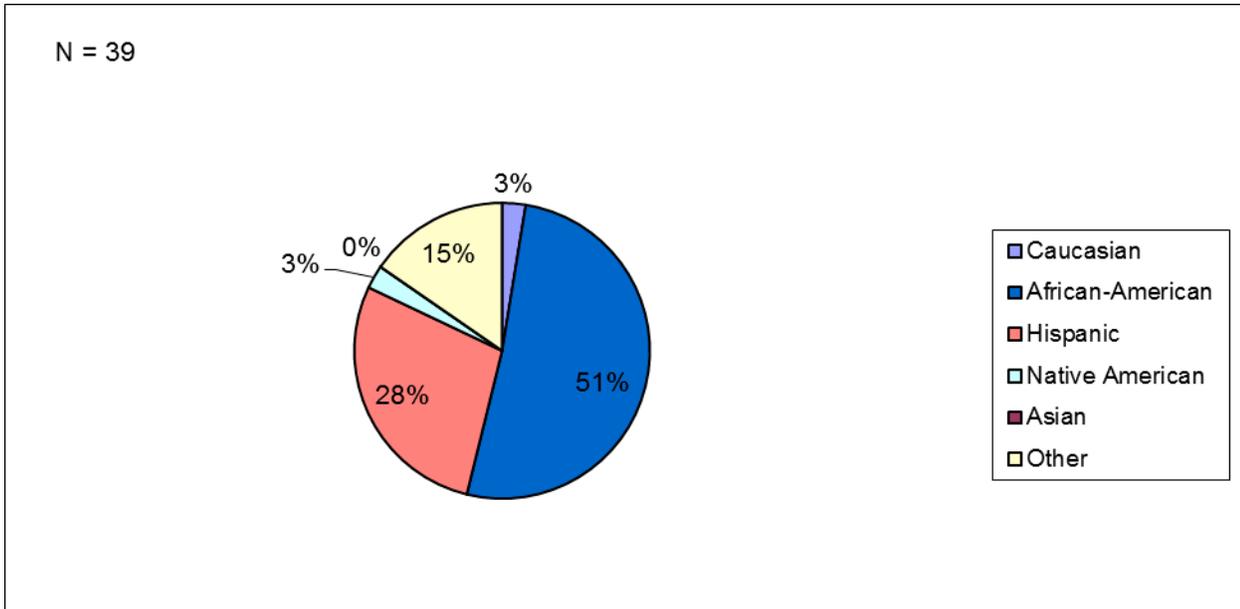
There were 39 students who participated in the 2-day Power of Peace workshops. The student group was comprised of 21 boys (54%) and 18 girls (46%), all in grade 8 and ranging in age from 13 – 15. Distributions for age and ethnicity are presented in the charts listed below.

Age



Just under one half (44%) of the participants were 13 years of age, followed by just over one third (38%) of participants 14 years of age.

Ethnicity



Just over half (51%) of participants identified their ethnicity as African-American, followed by just over one quarter (28%) identified their ethnicity Hispanic.

Program Evaluation

A six statement pre-survey and a seven statement post-survey, designed by 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 39 participants, 100% completed the pre-survey and 92% completed the post-survey.

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

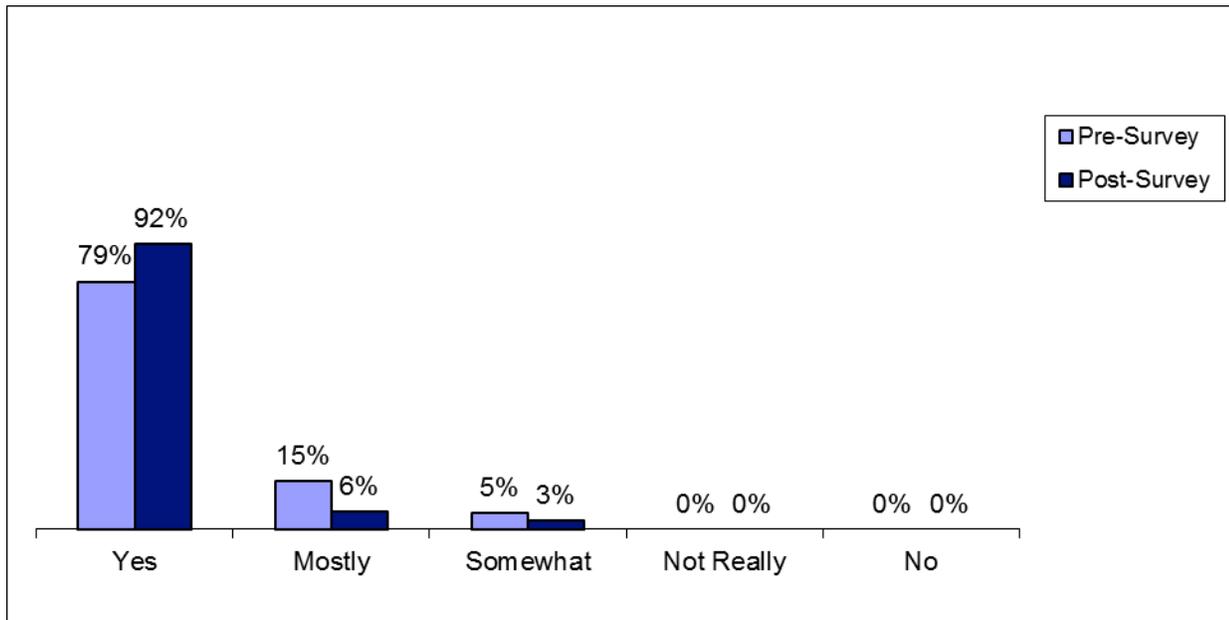
Qualitative: Two questions asking for feedback about the program were included on the post-survey regarding a) how participants felt about the Power of Peace experience and b) ways to improve the program in the future.

Results

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

Item 1: I respect myself.

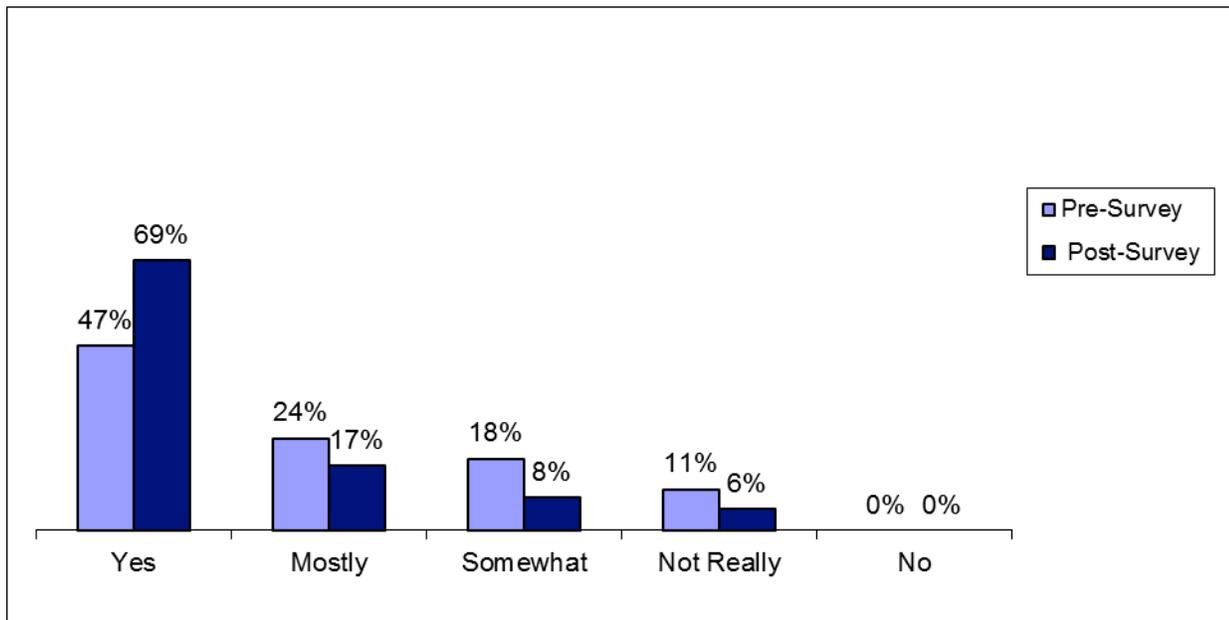
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 79% and at post-survey = 92%.



t = 1.3, df = 73, p = non-significant

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

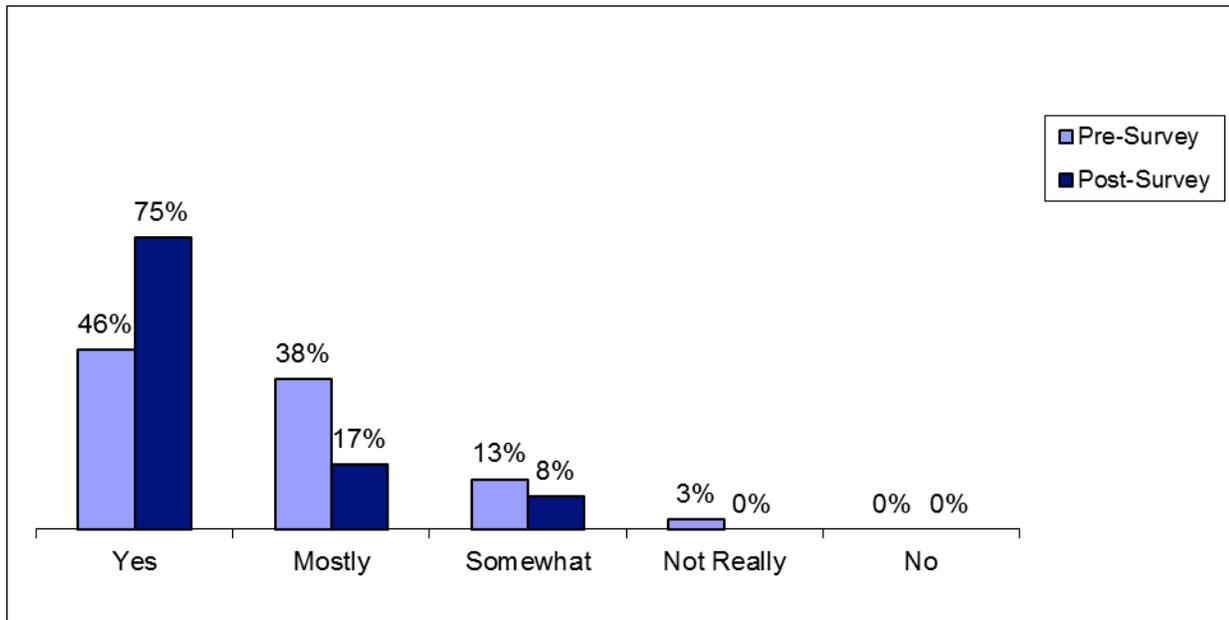
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 47% and at post-survey = 69%.



t = 1.9, df = 72, p = non-significant

Item 3: I respect students different from me.

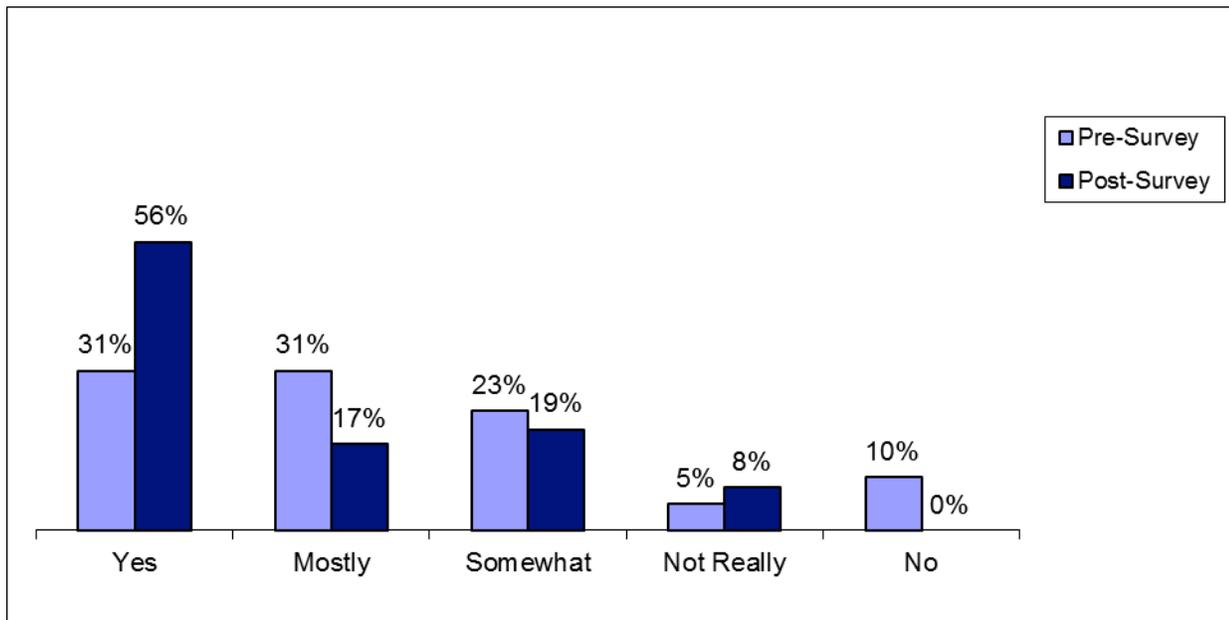
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 46% and at post-survey = 75%.



t = 2.3, df = 73, p < .03 = statistically significant

Item 4: I believe violence will not resolve conflict.

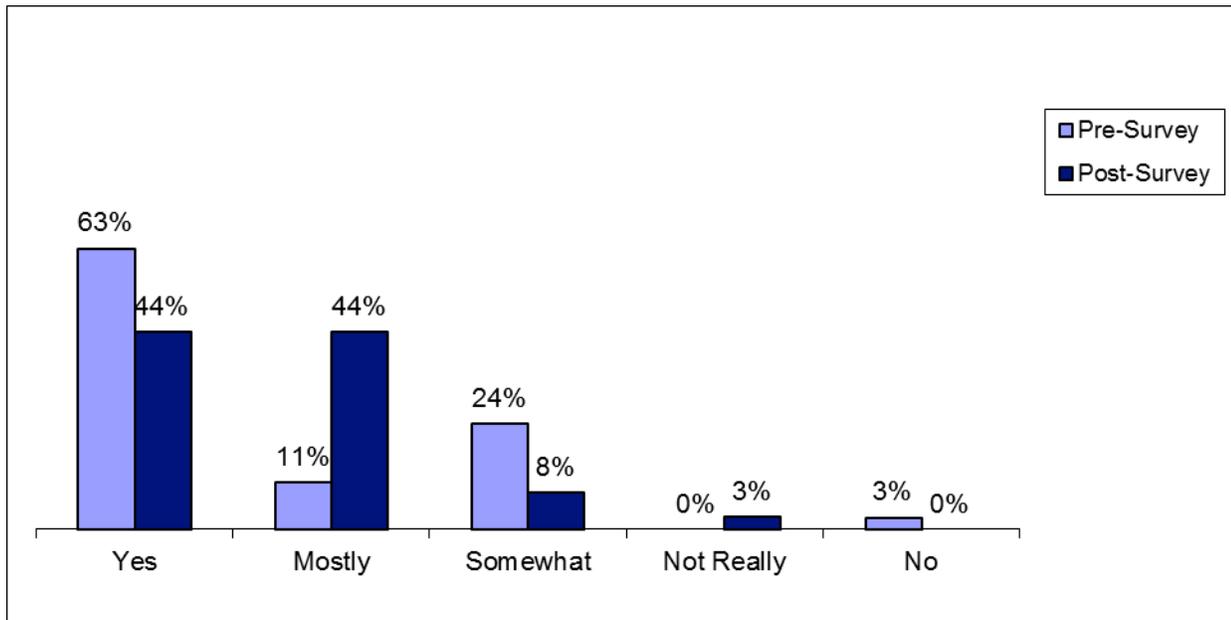
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 31% and at post-survey = 56%.



t = 2.0, df = 73, p < .05 = statistically significant

Item 5: I am aware of alternatives to violence.

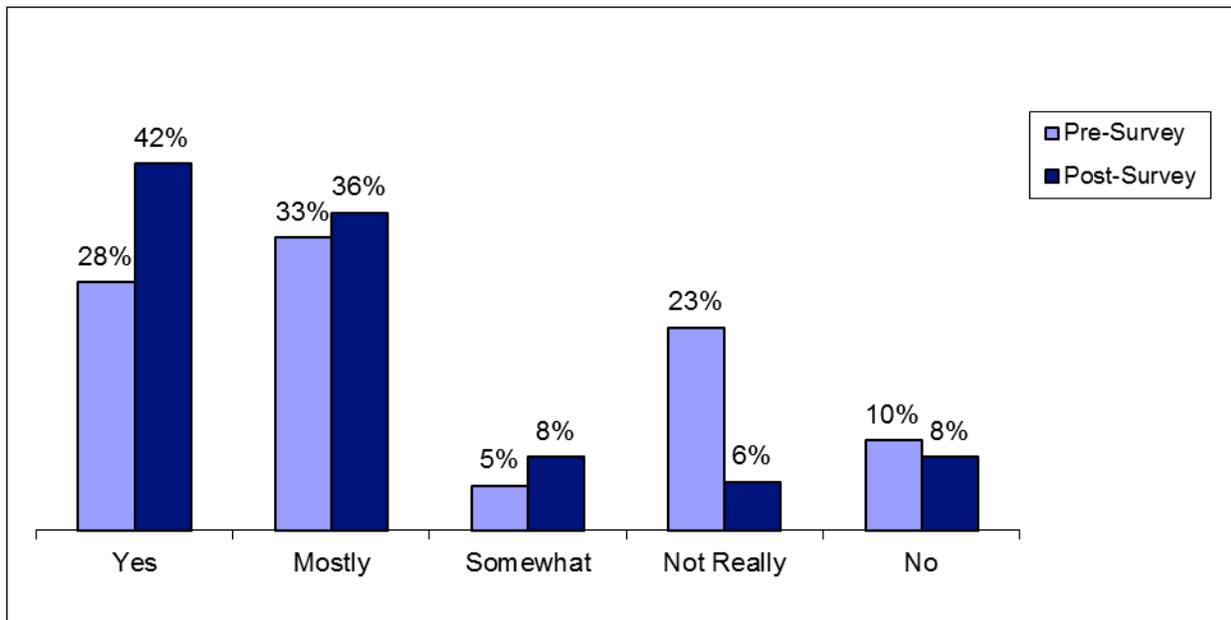
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 63% and at post-survey = 44%.



t = .05, df = 72, p = non-significant

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

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 28% and at post-survey = 42%.

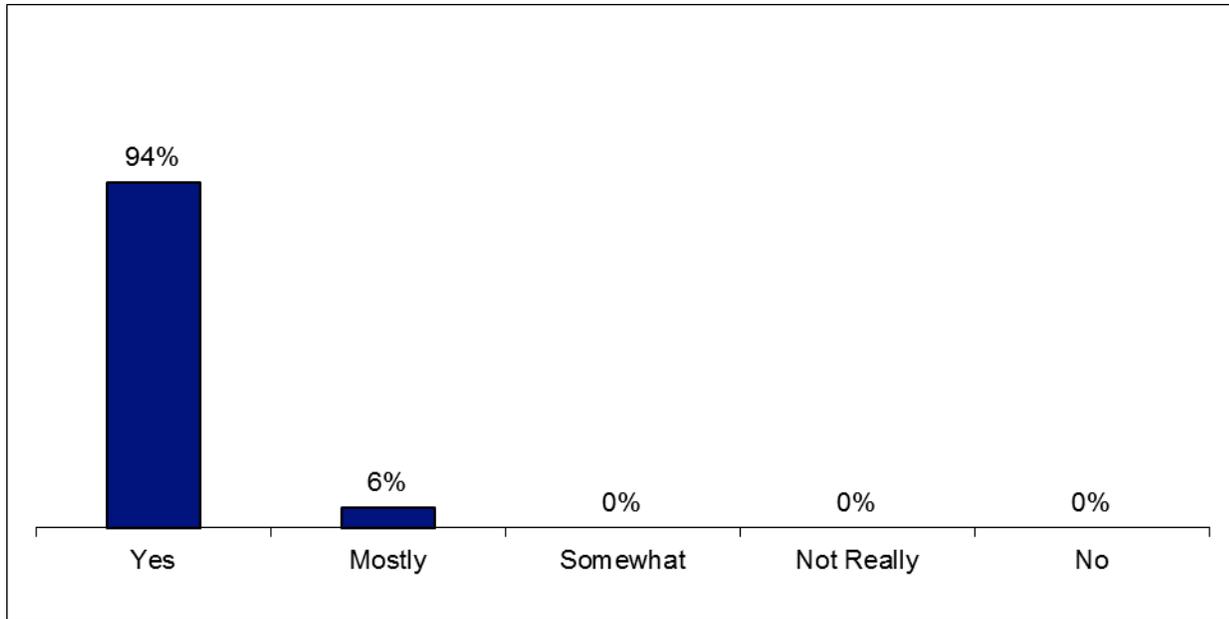


t = 1.7, df = 73, p = non-significant

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.

Of the participants, 94% answered "Yes, definitely."



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

The feedback received on how students felt about the Power of Peace experience was overwhelmingly positive. Adjectives used to describe the Power of Peace program in response to this survey item include: eye-opening, great, amazing, informative, awesome and excellent.

Quotes from participants include:

- This program helped me see things from a different perspective.*
- I got to let everything out that I had inside of me.*
- Power of Peace needs to be a part of all schools across the USA*
- I received a lot of good life advice and I learned a lot.*
- Power of Peace allowed the student to be open minded and strong*
- It gives people the opportunity to get insight to people's personalities.*
- It is a good program because it allows you to release things in your past – tragic things that happened.*
- Power of Peace is a great cathartic program with profound effect on students.*
- I will remember this program for the rest of my life.*
- Teaches us to listen to each other and not judge each other.*
- This should be a National program and every student should have a chance to meet Mighty Mike.*
- Power of Peace made a big difference in my life.*
- It made me feel better about myself and it helped me stop talking about other people.*
- Power of Peace is something all kids need in their life.*
- I'm going to use what I learned in Power of Peace for the rest of my life.*
- Now I feel good about myself and I love life.*
- This program gives hope to youth and should become a mandated part of school curriculum.*

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

The majority (90%) 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:

- Stay longer than two days.
- Share this program with younger kids.
- Conduct program at the beginning of the school year, with a follow-up before 8th graders graduate.
- Include an activity devoted exclusively to bullying/acceptance, self-esteem and self-love.

Discussion

The one statement indicating the highest change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was Item 3: I respect students different from me (an increase of 29%). The statement indicating the least change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was Item 5: I am aware of alternatives to violence (a decrease of 19%). It is noteworthy however, that despite the fact that fewer students indicate “yes, definitely” from pre-survey to post-survey on Item 5, when one combines the responses of “yes, definitely” and “mostly” from pre-survey to post-survey, while still the least change among the items, an increase of 12% is observed.

Conclusion

The results presented in this report indicate that the Power of Peace program did have a positive effect in changing student attitudes in from pre-survey to post-survey. Statistically significant change was demonstrated in two areas represented by the following statements:

- I respect students different from me.
- I believe violence will not resolve conflict.

It is important to consider that with a larger sample size ($N > 39$), statistical significance might be demonstrated on additional 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.