

Program Report 2014 for Port Chester High 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 three cycles during the course of the year.

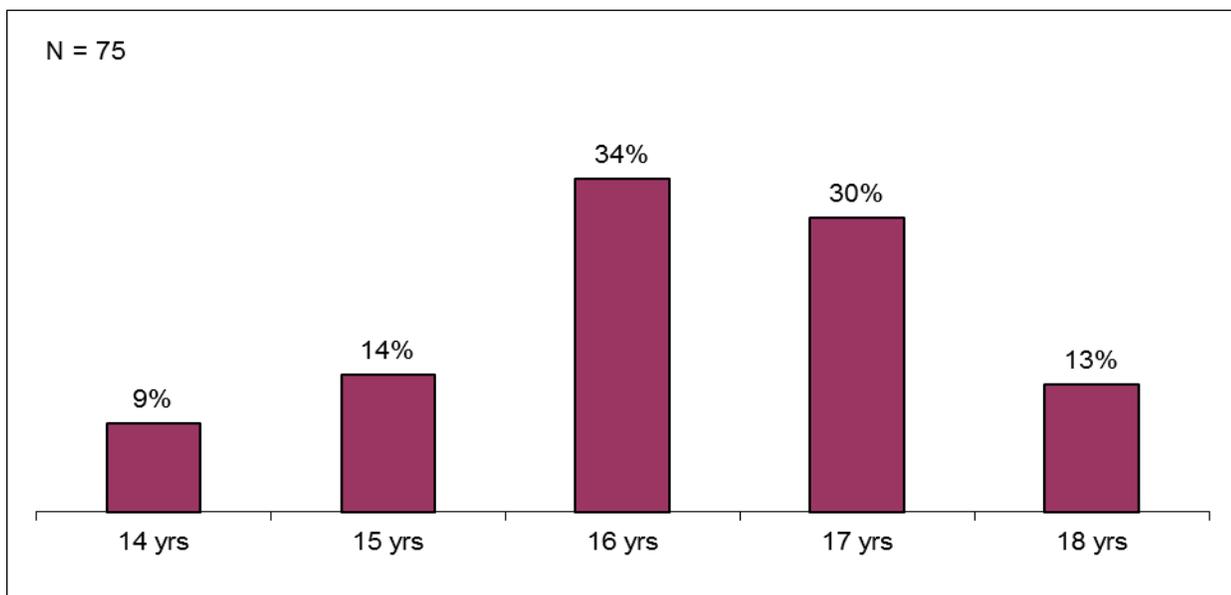
Program Description

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

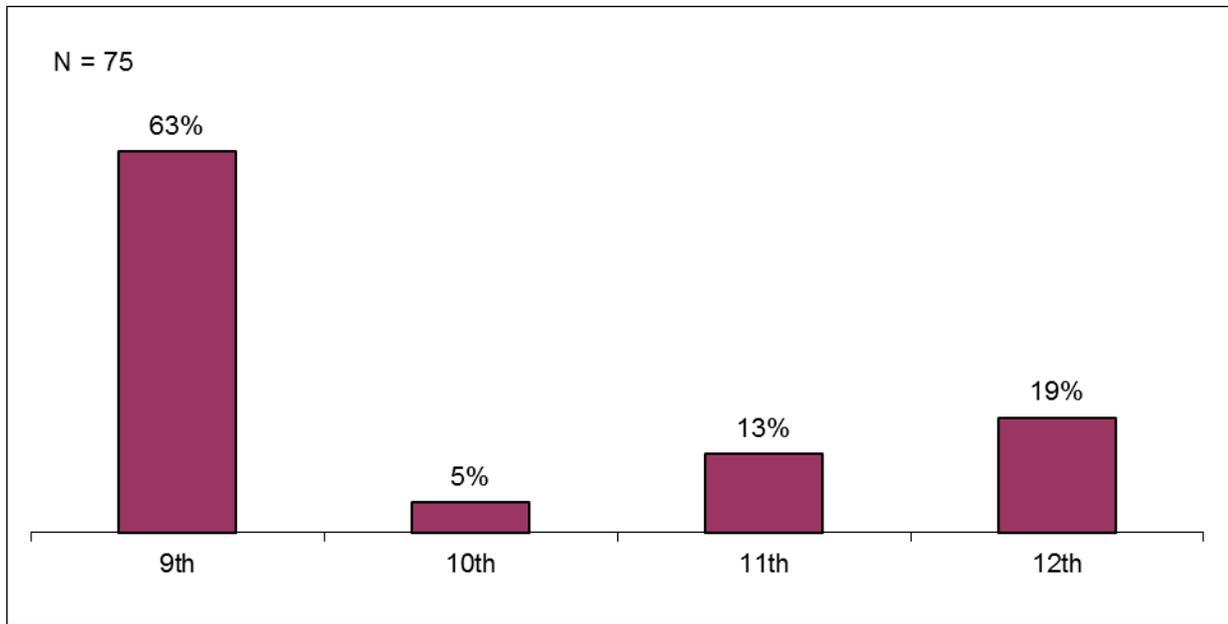
There were 75 students who participated in the 2-day Power of Peace workshops. The student group was comprised of 27 boys (36%) and 48 girls (64%) in grades 9 through 12 and ranging in age from 14 – 18. Distributions for age, grade and ethnicity are presented in the charts listed below.

Age



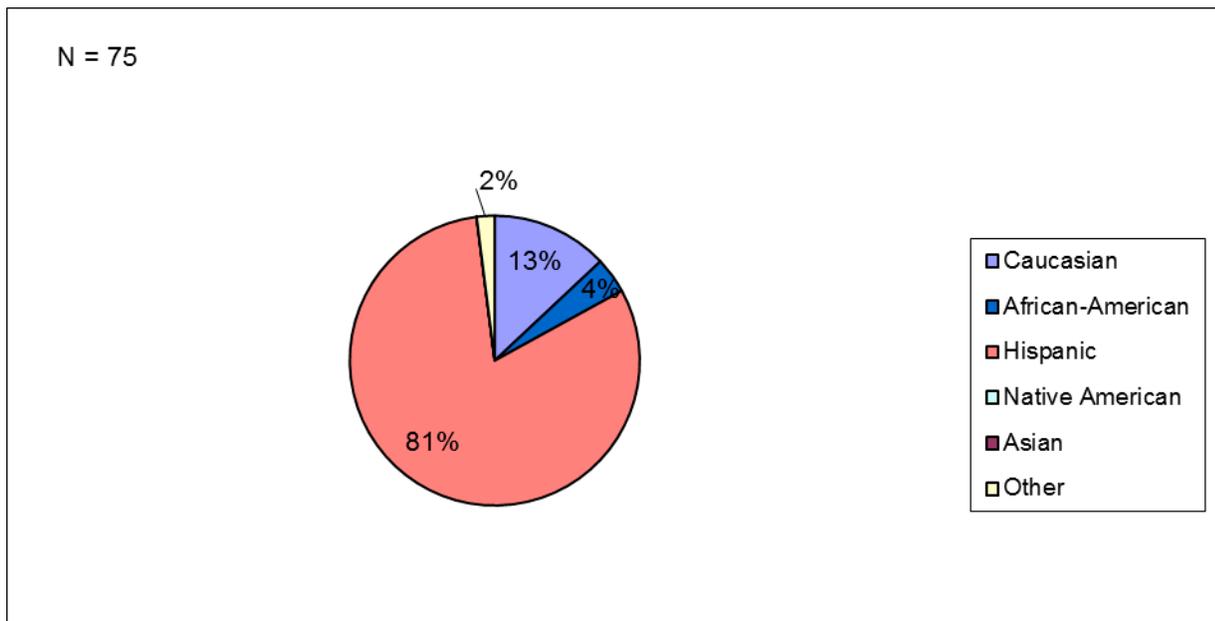
Just over one third (34%) of the participants were 16 years of age, followed by just under one third (30%) of participants at 17 years of age.

Grade



Over half (63%) of participants were in the 9th grade.

Ethnicity



The vast majority (81%) of participants identified their ethnicity as 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 75 participants, 100% completed both the pre-survey and 96% 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.”

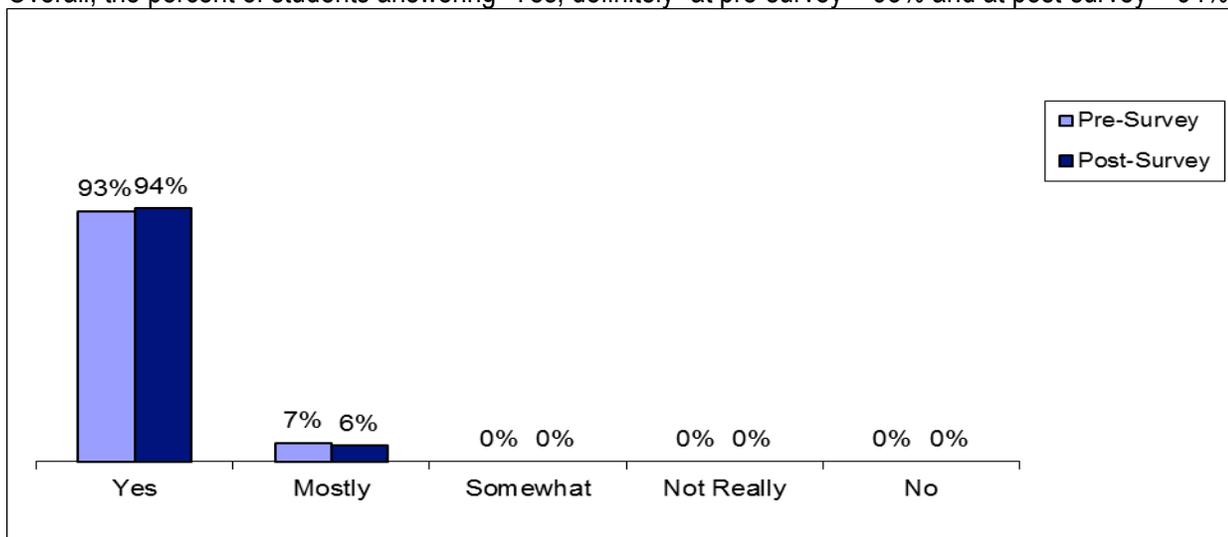
Qualitative: Two questions asking for feedback about the program were included on the post-survey regarding a) how participants felt about the Power of Peace experience and b) ways to improve the program in the future.

Results

From pre-survey to post-survey, significant ($p < .0001 - p < .005$) statistically significant positive changes in attitudes were seen on two of the six items. Data were analyzed using t-tests to compare pre-survey responses with post-survey responses.

Item 1: I respect myself.

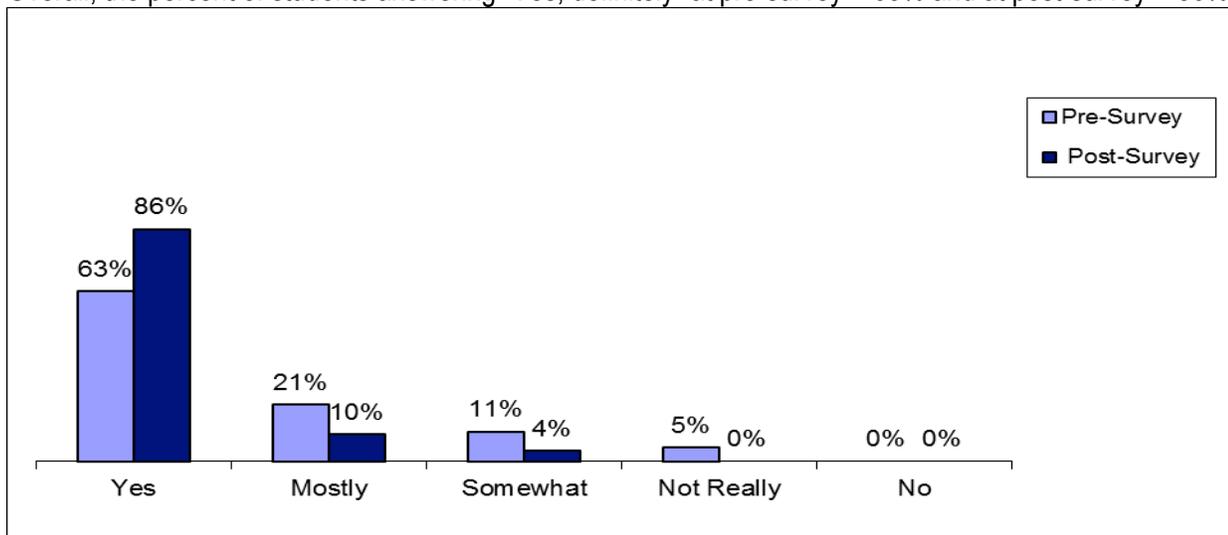
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 93% and at post-survey = 94%.



$t = 0.28, df = 145, not\ statistically\ significant$

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

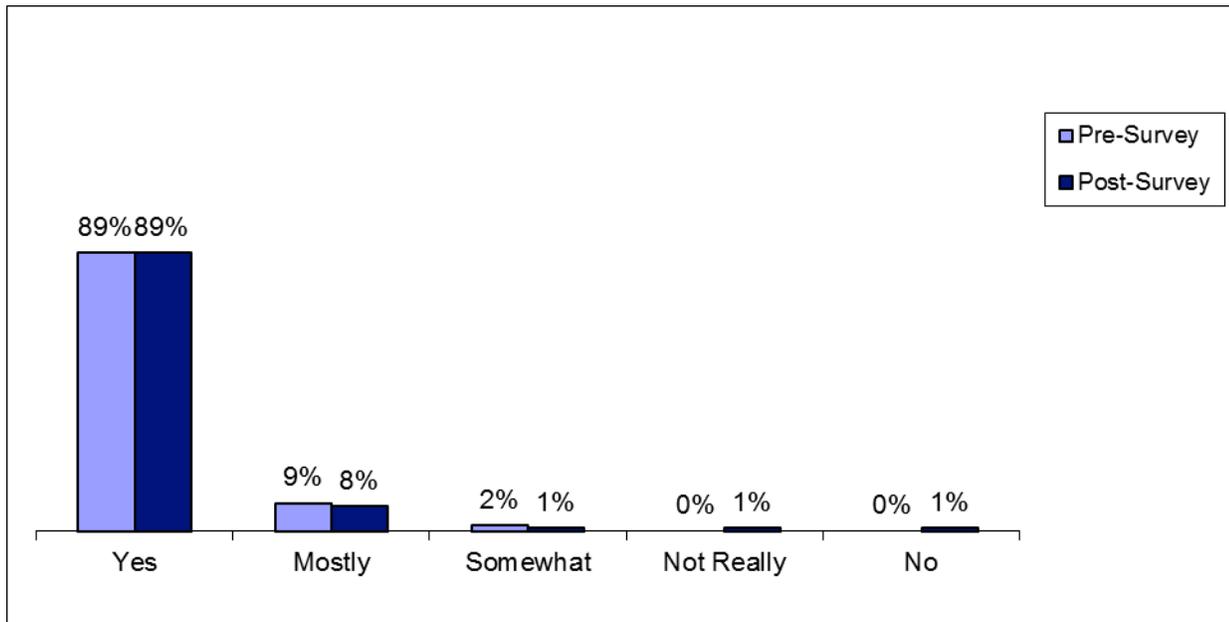
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 63% and at post-survey = 86%.



$t = 3.47, df = 146, p < .0001 = extremely\ statistically\ significant$

Item 3: I respect students different from me.

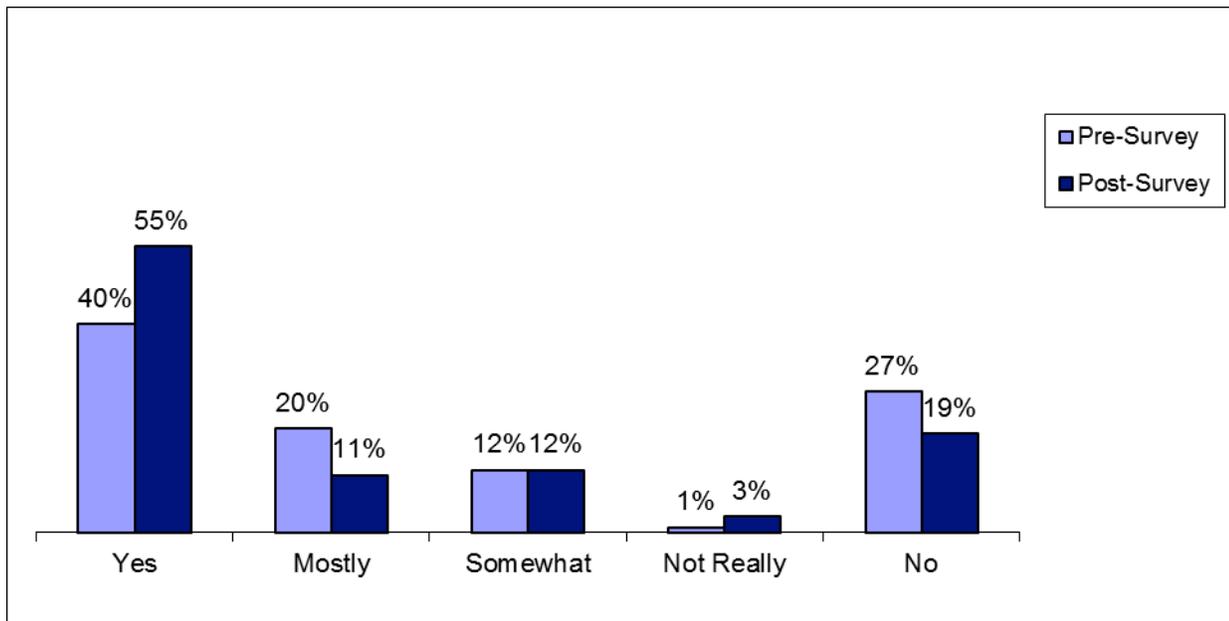
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 89% and at post-survey = 89%.



$t = 0.58, df = 145, not\ statistically\ significant$

Item 4: I believe violence will not resolve conflict.

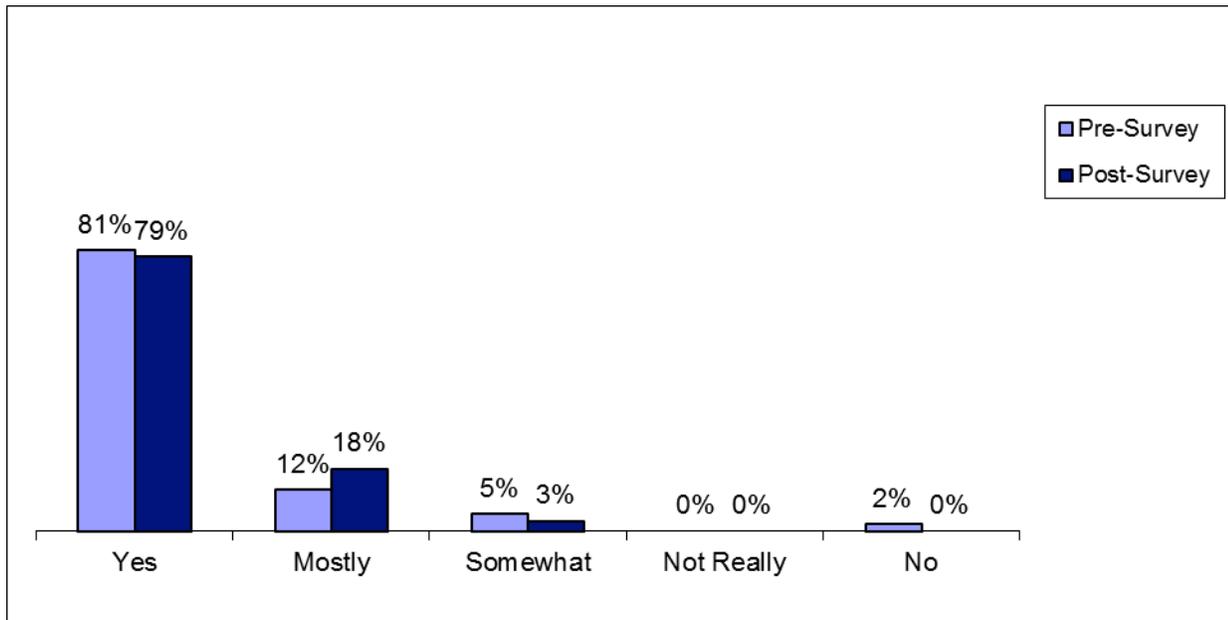
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 40% and at post-survey = 55%.



$t = 1.29, df = 146, not\ statistically\ significant$

Item 5: I am aware of alternatives to violence.

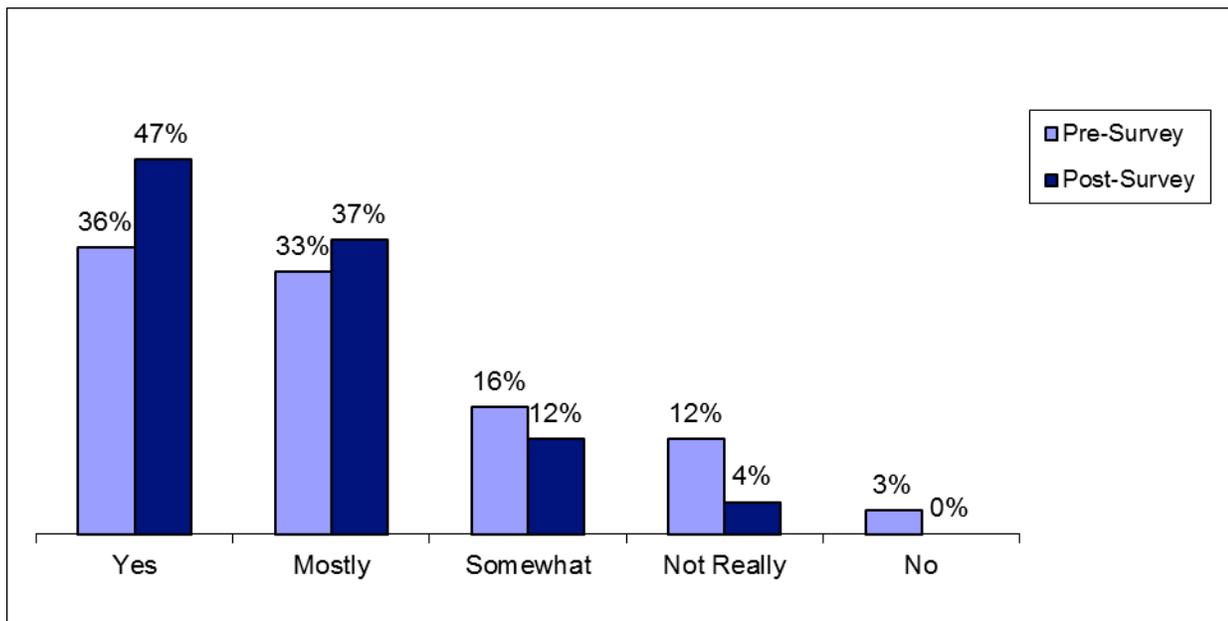
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 81% and at post-survey = 79%.



t = 0.48, df = 146, not statistically significant

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

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 36% and at post-survey = 47%.

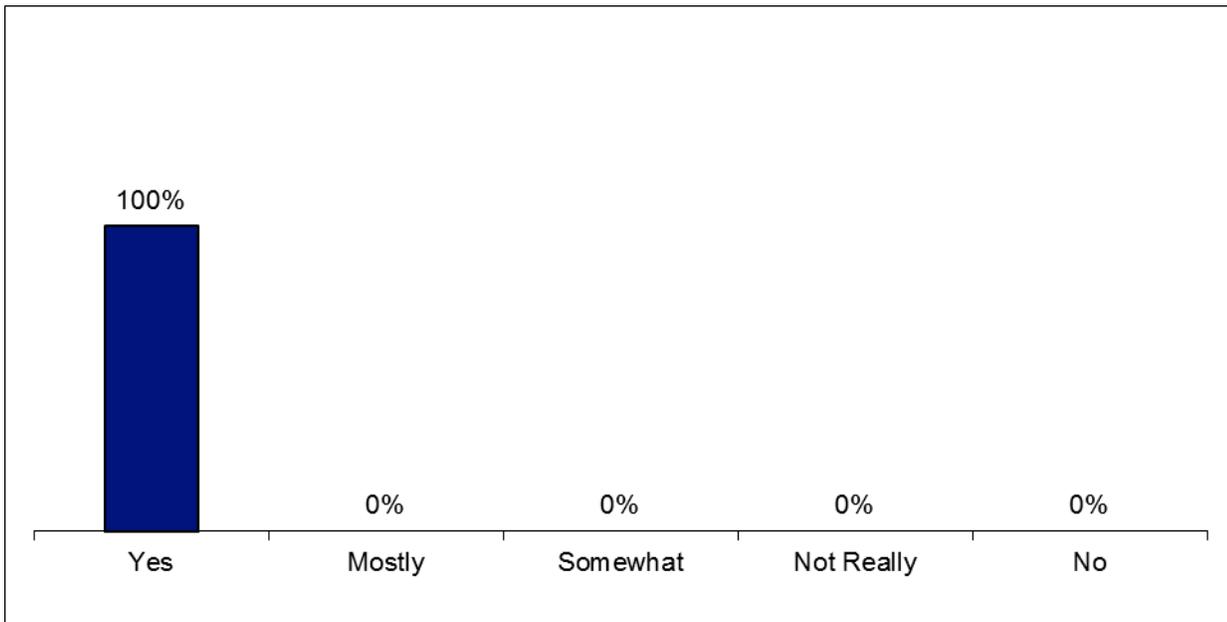


t = 2.35, df = 146, p < .005 = statistically significant

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.

All of the participants answered "Yes, definitely."



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

Of the 72 students who completed the post-survey, 92% of them took the time to comment on how that felt about the Power of Peace experience. The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive. Adjectives used to describe the Power of Peace program in response to this survey item include: great, amazing fantastic, awesome, inspirational and wonderful.

Quotes from participants include:

*Power of Peace helps people share their feelings and emotions which they can't do on the regular.
I feel happier after taking the workshops – like a weight has been lifted off of me and life is better.
I feel so honored to have been part of this inspiring experience.
Power of Peace gave me the opportunity to express things have been holding in for a long time.
It taught me how to be aware of other people's feelings and what they might be going through.
It helped me to see that I am not the only person who goes through stuff in life.
Power of Peace changed a lot of my views about different things.*

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

Of the 72 students who completed the post-survey, 91% of them took the time to comment on improving the Power of Peace experience. The majority, 89% 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:

- Make it three days instead of two
- Make it a week long program
- Make it a requirement for all students

Discussion

The one statement indicating the highest change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was Item 2: I am willing to talk to a student different from me (an increase of 23%). The statement indicating the least change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was Item 3: I respect students different from me (0%) remaining at 89% from pre-survey to post-survey.

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. The following two of which achieved statistical significance:

- I am willing to talk to a student different from me.
- I think I know how other people see me.

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.