

Program Report Spring 2016 for New Lebanon High School

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 Spring 2016 are presented in this report. The implementation of the program took place in one cycle during the month of March.

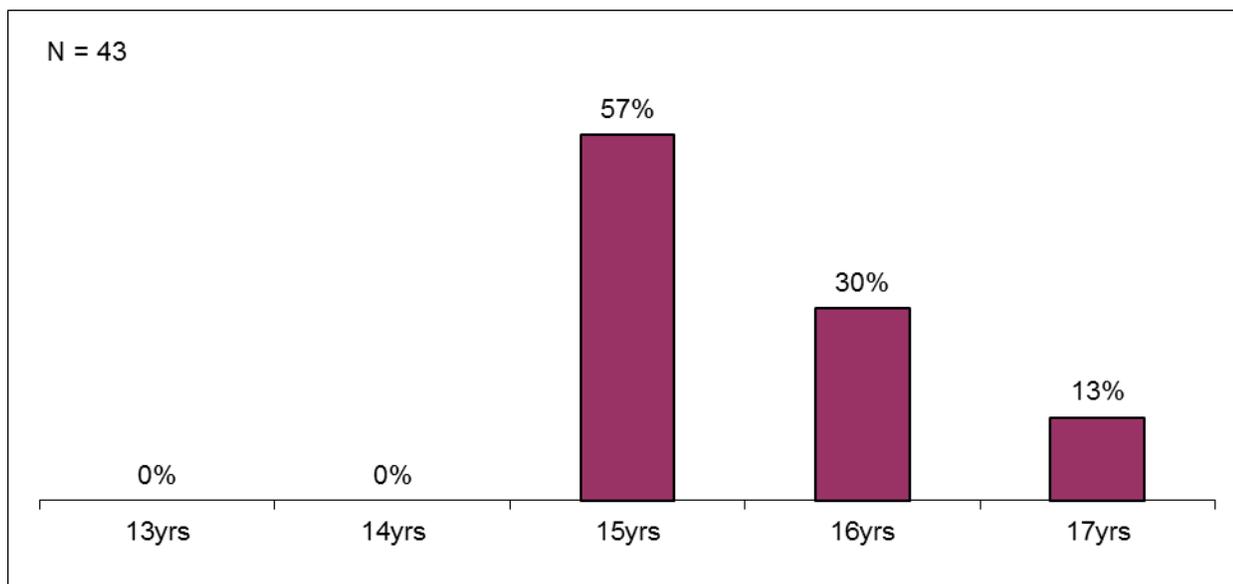
Program Description

Power of Peace is a succession of experiential workshops, with a focus on conflict resolution and management, 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

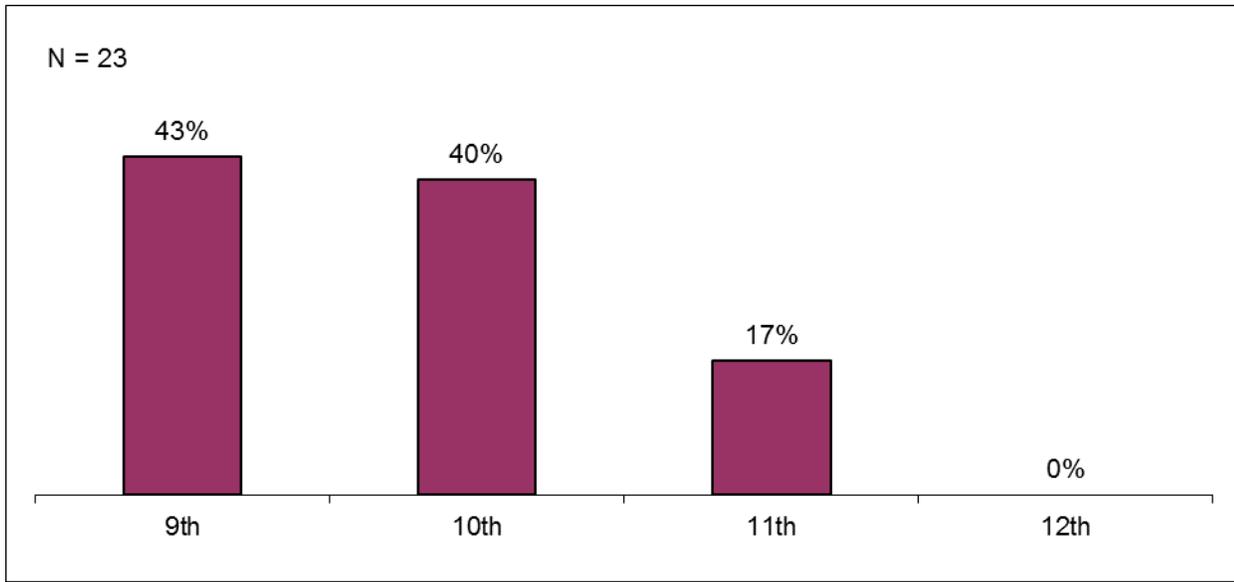
There were 23 students who participated in the 2-day Power of Peace workshops. The student group was comprised of 14 boys (61%) and 9 girls (39%) in grades 9 through 11 and ranging in age from 15 – 17. Distributions for age, grade and ethnicity are presented in the charts listed below.

Age



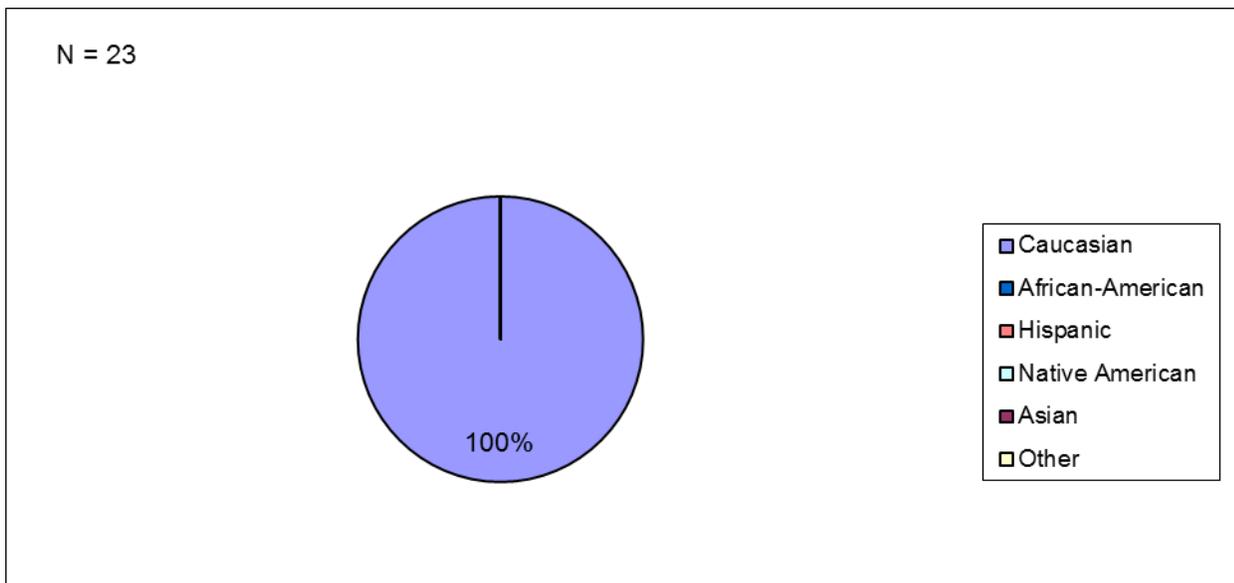
Over half (57%) of the participants were age 15.

Grade



The majority of participants were in the 9th and 10th grades combined.

Ethnicity



All of the participants identified their ethnicity as Caucasian.

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 10 participants, 100% completed the pre-survey while 90% 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."

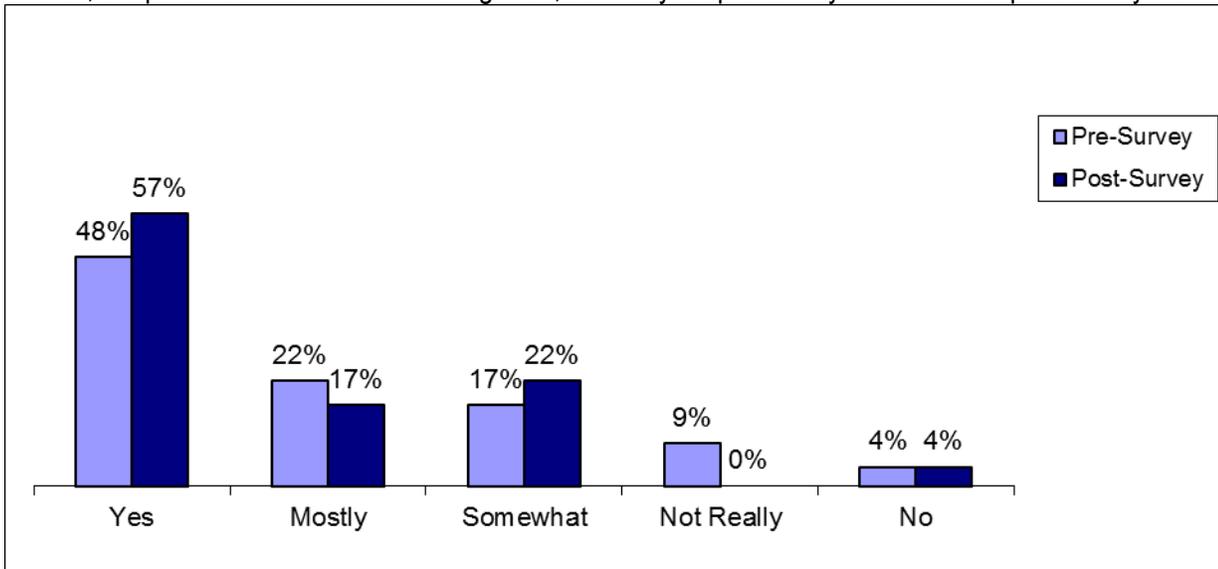
Qualitative: Two questions asking for feedback about the program were included on the post-survey regarding a) how participants felt about the Power of Peace experience and b) ways to improve the program in the future.

Results

From pre-survey to post-survey, positive changes in attitudes were seen on four of the six items.

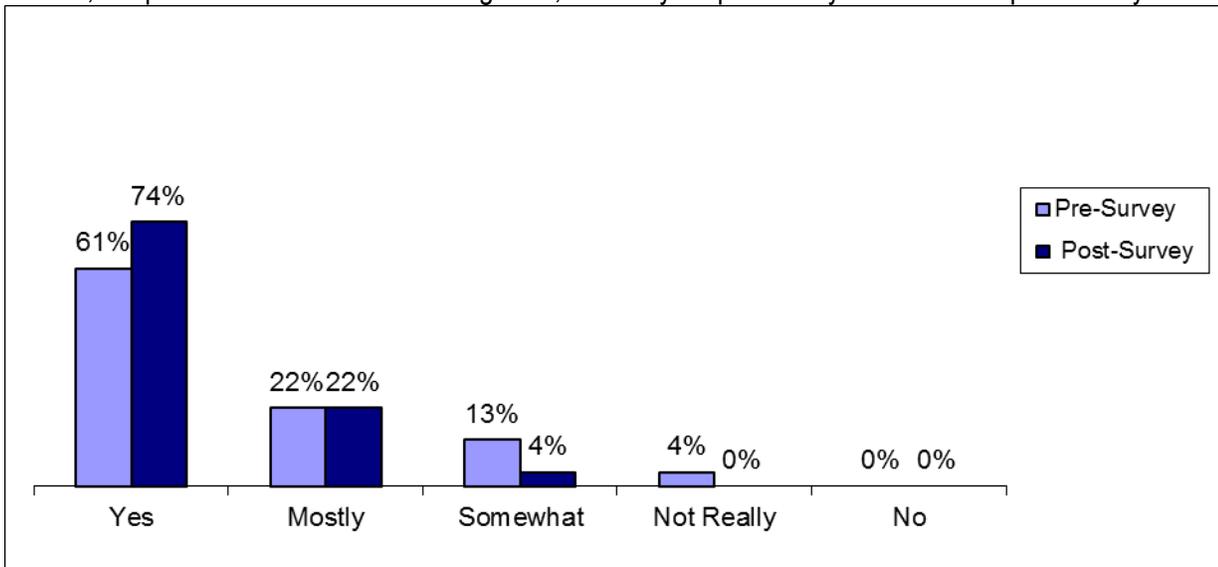
Item 1: I respect myself.

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 48% and at post-survey = 57%.



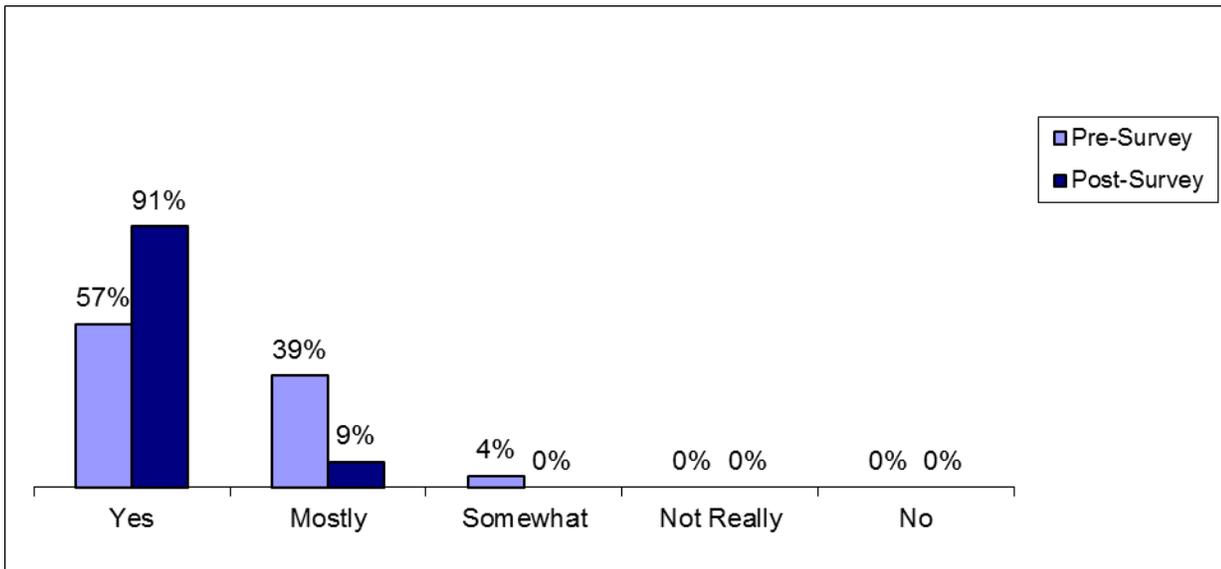
Item 2: I am willing to talk to a student different from me.

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 61% and at post-survey = 74%.



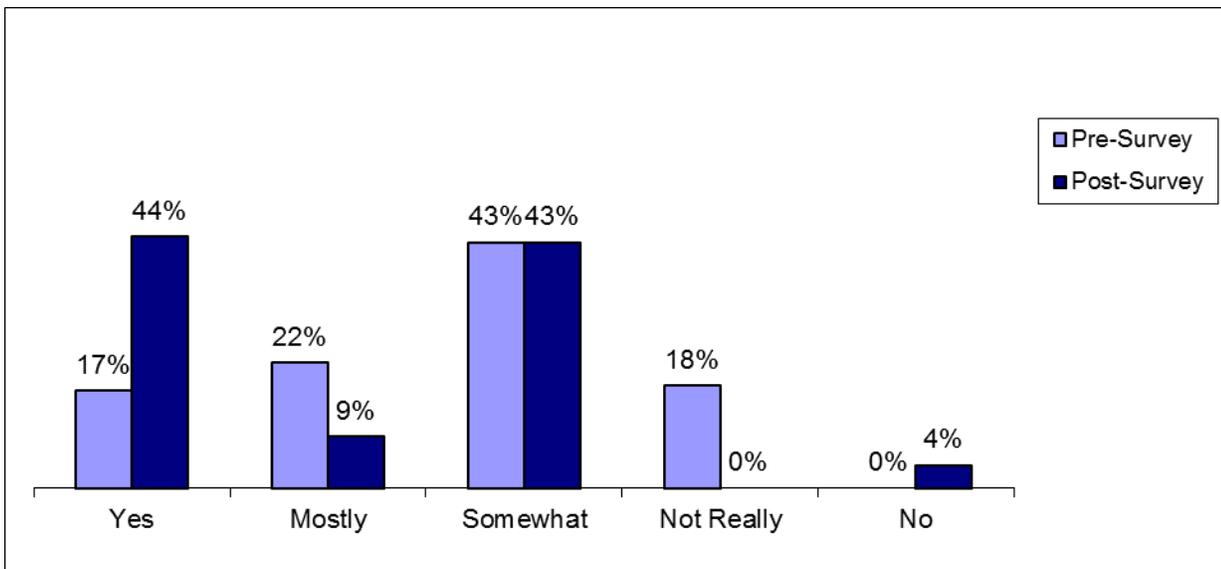
Item 3: I respect students different from me.

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 57% and at post-survey = 91%.



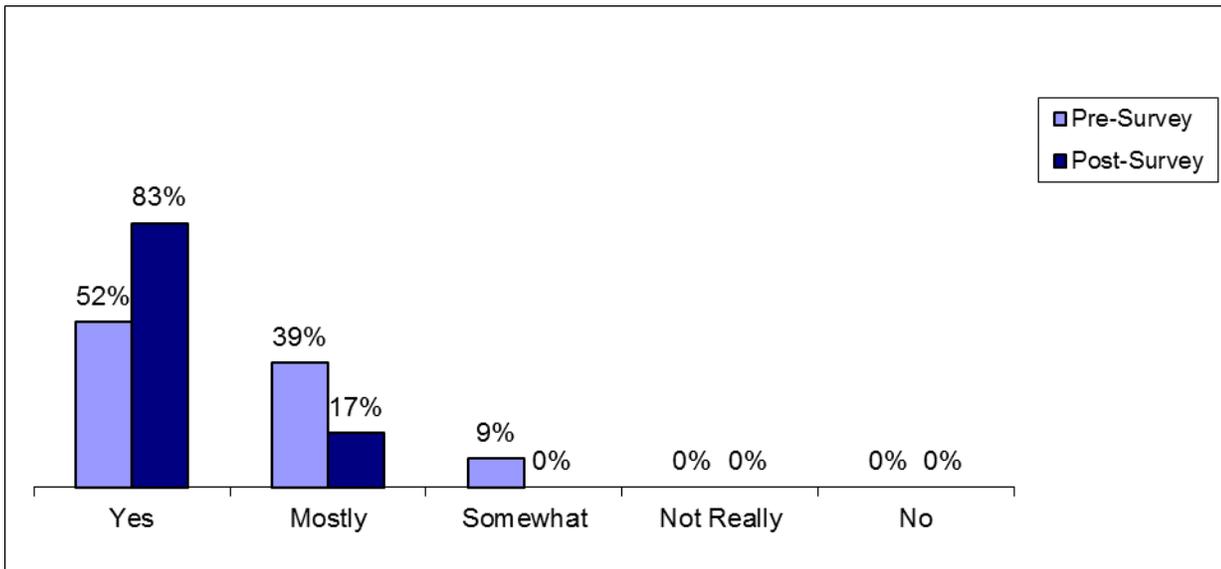
Item 4: I believe violence will not resolve conflict.

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 17% and at post-survey = 44%.



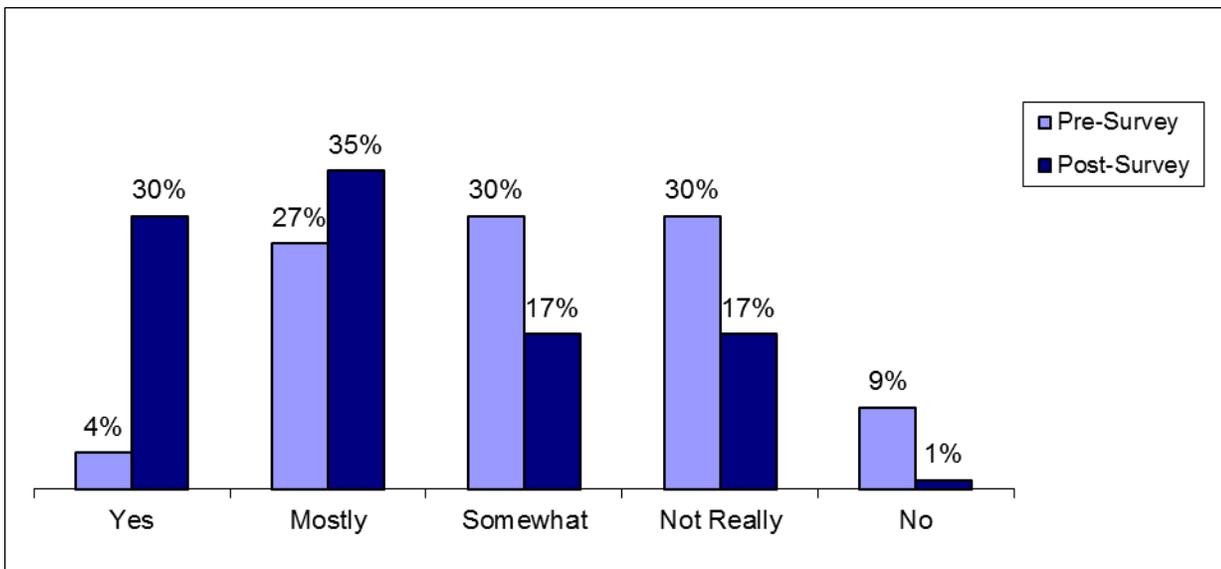
Item 5: I am aware of alternatives to violence.

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 52% and at post-survey = 83%.



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

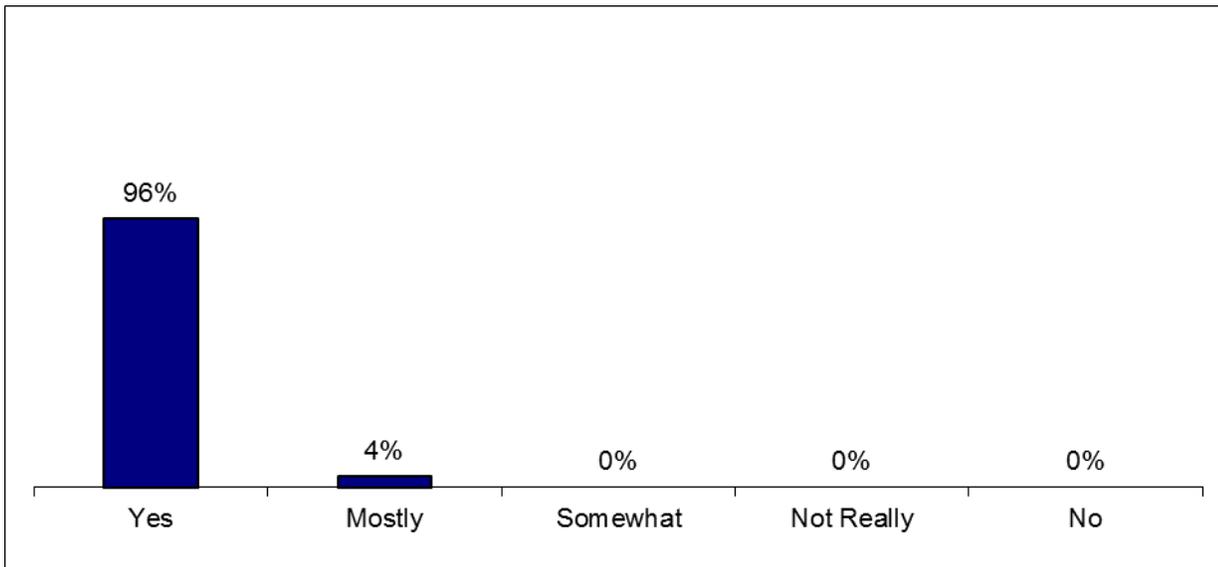
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 4% and at post-survey = 30%.



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 vast majority, 96% of the participants answered "Yes, definitely."



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

The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive.

Quotes from participants include:

- It's a good program. It really helped me out and I think kids should do this more often.*
- It's an amazing program that helps a lot*
- The program provides a great chance for kids to open up in a safe environment and to form bonds with others*
- I enjoyed the experience and I feel like it can really help people*
- I'm grateful for getting a chance to experience Power of Peace. I hope I can attend next year.*
- Power of Peace is a great place and brings us closer to fellow students.*
- Power of Peace is an awesome program that I would recommend to any and every school*
- It is a great program and it helped me a lot and it helped many other students deal with their problems*
- Great program that can inspire and make changes in some lives*
- Power of Peace is fun and helps friendships be made*
- It is very helpful to get to know each other. I felt like less pressure.*
- I feel that it's a great experience for people that are going through things*
- It's a great experience*
- Helpful, raises awareness*
- I think it's a very helpful experience*
- I love it. I think it's an experience that everyone should go through*
- I feel good, I feel free*
- It was a fantastic experience*
- Felt really good about myself*
- Amazing experience, I wish I could do it again!*
- It is helpful to get stuff off my chest*

Adult: I think that this is such an exceptional program! I am extremely happy to have been a part of this. This program is such a great outlet for the students and an even better reflection opportunity for us educators. Thank you.

Adult: This is a great program for our students. Many of our students have gone through a lot at a young age and it's great to understand where they come from. It's also good for the students to know they are not alone on their journey.

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

The majority 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 more than 2 days

Make it last more days

More days

Talk more about diversity

More activities and longer to see how other people think

Discussion

The statement indicating the greatest change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was: Item 3: I respect students different from me (an increase of 34%). The statement indicating the least change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was Item 1: I respect myself (an increase of 9%).

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. 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.