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Working It Out Together: Teaching the Steps of Conflict Resolution to Preschoolers

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An Action Research Report
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Abstract

This action research explores conflicts among preschoolers and strategies for teachers to develop children's social problem-solving abilities, such as teaching the steps of conflict resolution. Research was conducted in a Montessori preschool setting with children ages 2.5 to 5 years of age. Data was collected on the number of conflicts, types of conflicts, how conflicts were resolved (independently or with teacher assistance), and types of solutions implemented by students. Methods used to collect data included observation, group discussions, and student journals. Results indicated when the steps of conflict resolution were taught to preschool children, the number of conflicts resolved without teacher intervention increased, the frequency students sought teacher guidance to solve conflicts decreased, and the number of journal responses that included positive independent solutions to problems increased. Findings reveal that conflict resolution skills can be successfully taught in preschool settings. Further research is needed to determine additional strategies to strengthen children's problem solving abilities with certain prevalent conflicts, such as sharing materials, and the effects of environment factors on conflicts, such as class size.

"Hey! I had that first!" "No, I did!" Do these words sound familiar? For most teachers and parents, this is an exchange they have heard at least once while in the company of young children. What should we do next as the responsible adult? Should we remove the source of the argument? Should we send someone to time out? Or is this an opportunity for children to learn about conflict resolution and how they can become problem solvers themselves? Conflicts are common among preschool children; however our response as the adult creates the defining moment in whether or not children's potential for social growth is optimized or hindered. This action research explores conflicts among preschoolers and strategies for teachers to utilize in helping to develop children's social problem-solving abilities.

I first imagined developing an action research project involving conflict resolution as I observed the children in our preschool classrooms interact with one another during free play activities, such as building with blocks or engaging in imaginative play as community helpers. I often noticed children would argue over certain types of blocks or which roles they would play. As they argued, sometimes they would ask teachers for help by reporting other children's offending behavior (Johnny has all of the blue blocks!) or by making eye contact with adults. Occasionally, physical means, such as pulling materials out of other children's hands, were used in an attempt to solve the problem. I began to realize through their behavior, the children were trying to communicate their genuine desire to learn to solve their social conflicts; however they were incapable of finding success without adult guidance.

I conducted my action research in a Montessori preschool setting with children ages 2.5 to 5 years of age. My teaching situation is unique in that our setting consists of

three smaller classrooms, each with different curriculum areas and specific teachers responsible for each curriculum area. Together we function as one classroom with children freely moving throughout the classrooms during a work cycle. We currently have 34 students, 22 male and 12 female, enrolled with varied schedules. Our teaching staff for our setting consists of four lead teachers and three teacher assistants. Through an informal discussion with faculty prior to selecting the topic of conflict resolution, many staff agreed that they had also observed similar behavior from children. Our common observations sparked our interest in learning how to help children solve problems with peers.

Review of Literature

Conflict is a natural element in social relationships regardless of age (Cain, 2005; Vestal & Jones, 2004). Conflict in preschool settings often stems from disagreements over sharing and taking turns involving younger preschool children, while older preschool children often have disputes concerning play choices, rules, opinions, and teasing (Chen, Fein, Killen, & Tam, 2001; Wheeler, 2004). Past research (Buckley, 2000; Nicholas, 1978; Selman, 1980, 1981, as cited in Vestal & Jones, 2004) has suggested that preschool children are not able to resolve conflict with peers; however more recent research suggests they can be taught social problem solving skills (Vestal & Jones, 2004) and they are able to then solve their own problems without adult guidance (Arcaro-McPhee, Doppler, & Harkins, 2002). According to Chen et al. (2001), opportunities for children to resolve conflicts with peers can lead to better understanding of other's viewpoints at an early age.

Conflict resolution in classrooms is classified into two main approaches: the traditional approach and the constructivist approach. The main goal of the traditional approach is to end conflict quickly with direct instruction from a teacher as to how children should resolve the problem (Doppler-Bourassa, Harkins, & Mehta, 2008). A teacher's role in the constructivist approach differs markedly from the traditional approach in that instead of imposing solutions, teachers guide children toward finding the solutions themselves (Arcaro-McPhee et al., 2002). Doppler-Bourassa et al. (2008) have argued that research has demonstrated the constructivist approach "fosters young children's development of negotiation skills, affective and cognitive perspective taking, problem-solving ability, and cooperation" (p. 889). Arcaro-McPhee at al. (2002) have also suggested the constructivist approach encourages respect for different viewpoints and emphasizes the importance of finding solutions that are mutually beneficial for all parties involved.

In the constructivist approach to problem solving, teachers facilitate conflict resolution by encouraging children to follow certain steps, "(1) identify the problem; (2) brainstorm three ways to handle it; (3) choose one way to try first and decide on a back-up plan; (4) try out the strategy; (5) evaluate how well the strategy works" (Pawlina & Stanford, 2011, p. 34). Crawford (2005) has suggested simplifying the steps for young children by using a visual cue to help preschoolers remember the steps, such as the colors of a traffic light. Red means to stop and identify the problem, yellow means slow down and think of solutions, and green means try the best solutions (Crawford, 2005).

The High/Scope model of conflict resolution involves the teacher as a guide utilizing concrete steps. First teachers peacefully begin an interaction with children in a

conflict, acknowledging each child's feelings. Then they rephrase the problem in the children's words and ask children for solution ideas. Together with children, teachers help to select an idea to try and offer continued support as children attempt to solve the problem (Arcaro-McPhee et al., 2002; Doppler-Bourassa et al., 2008). All of these multi-step guidelines for social problem-solving allow children to become empowered to find ways to solve their problems without relying on adults to provide the answers (Doppler-Bourassa et al., 2008).

According to Arcaro-McPhee et al. (2002), several common types of conflict resolution strategies are used by preschool children, including power assertion, disengagement, simple negotiation, and sophisticated negotiation. Researchers defined power assertion as a forceful act to end the conflict abruptly, while disengagement was defined as moving on to another situation. Simple negotiation requires one child to give a solution and the other to agree, and sophisticated negotiation involves both children conversing back and forth to reach a mutual agreement. Through a yearlong study of a preschool child in a constructivist classroom, Arcaro-McPhee et al. (2002) found that there was a progression of problem-solving strategies used by the child. At the beginning of the study the child often used power assertion; however toward the end of the year, his primary strategy was negotiation. He also required more guidance from the teacher at the beginning of the year to determine more appropriate solutions to conflict; however by the end of the year he was able to resolve more conflicts on his own. Arcaro-McPhee et al. (2002) concluded the respect between teachers and students in constructivist classrooms, particularly teachers' encouragement of communication between peers, leads to successful conflict resolution among children. According to Arcaro-McPhee et al.

(2002), "In a classroom that fosters mutual respect between children and teachers, it is likely that children will learn how to grapple creatively with conflict and to provide solutions that are agreeable for everyone involved" (p. 23). Arcaro-McPhee et al. (2002) also suggested that more research needs to be done to determine how empathy affects conflict resolution in a constructivist classroom.

Correlations between teacher education in conflict resolution strategies and increased positive student behavior have been found in the research of Vestal and Jones (2004). They studied the impact of teacher education and curriculum modification on student conflict resolution success in Head Start centers. Their study consisted of 64 children three to five years old, 37 students in classrooms with six trained teachers and 27 control students in classrooms with five untrained teachers. Trained teachers received a 40-hour course and instructional materials, while the untrained teachers received materials, but no training. The lessons were designed to follow the constructivist model that guides children to identify the problem and brainstorm ways to solve it. Vestal and Jones (2004) found that before implementation, children did not have knowledge of conflict resolution techniques; however after teacher training and implementation of lessons, children became familiar with conflict resolution and were able to identify more solutions to problems, including fewer aggressive solutions. Children in classrooms with untrained teachers used more negative forms of negotiation, such as forcing or withdrawing, as the most prevalent conflict solution techniques. The findings of Vestal and Jones (2004) have suggested that teacher training in constructivist problem solving strategies contributed to students' increased problem solving abilities and accounted for the difference in positive and negative outcomes between their two study groups.

Along with teaching the steps of conflict resolution, research points to regular classroom meetings as being another successful strategy in fostering problem-solving skills in children (Browning, Davis & Resta, 2000; Cain, 2005; Crawford, 2005; Drake, 2008). As described by Browning et al. (2000), classroom meetings allow students to build pro-social abilities by discussing problems and making decisions together. In their study, Browning et al. (2000) conducted action research with 20 first-grade students involving structured class meetings. The procedure included gathering in a circle, offering praise and thank you statements, revisiting prior solutions, sharing concerns or new problem-solving ideas, and discussing upcoming events. Also introduced to students was a "Wheel of Choice" chart that listed different choices for students to use in problem-solving. Through these interventions, Browning et al. (2000) found that there was a decrease in the frequency of physical and verbal aggression over the course of the eight week study and student surveys noted a change from actions of anger in conflict to the ability to think of positive solution strategies. They also found that the "Wheel of Choice" was not as successful during real time conflicts in the classroom; however they noted that during group meeting discussion of conflicts, students offered ideas from the chart.

In addition to the findings of Browing et al. (2000), other literature was found to support the use of classroom meetings and teacher modeling of effective communication skills. Heydenberk, Heydenberk, and Bochnowicz (2006) conducted a study of three fourth-grade classes to assess the effects of two types of check-in strategies, verbal and journal check-ins. They found that when teachers conducted daily verbal check-ins with students during group circles to allow them opportunities to express their emotions and

hear other students' emotions, class empathy and attachment increased. Students in the journal check-in and no intervention classrooms did not show an increase in empathy and attachment. When daily verbal check-ins were combined with other concrete strategies, such as the use of a peace ring to remind students of the steps of conflict resolution, and student peace journals to record peaceful behaviors, Heydenberk and Heydenberk (2007) found an increase in the conflict resolution skills of kindergarten and first-grade students, both inside and outside the classroom. Crawford (2005) also suggested the use of group meetings because they facilitate the development of children's oral language skills and allow children to participate in important dialogue that offers different perspectives. Crawford (2005) proposed teacher modeling during class meetings and throughout the school day as an effective strategy for developing communication skills in children as teachers can demonstrate how to listen, empathize, and converse respectfully. It was suggested that better communication by teachers can decrease potential conflicts (Crawford, 2005). Similar to Crawford's ideas, Drake (2008) suggested that teachers should model effective communication skills by accepting students' ideas without criticism, which teaches children to respect others' viewpoints.

Through a review of the literature involving conflict resolution in early childhood classrooms, research indicated that well trained teachers who develop steps to conflict resolution and guide children through the steps, along with facilitating respectful classroom discussions on problem solving offer students the best opportunities for success in developing social problem solving skills. In my research I studied the effects of teaching the steps of conflict resolution on preschool students' abilities to solve social problems independently. I provided guidance to follow the steps of resolution during

conflicts and encouraged empathy and respect of others' perspectives through group discussions and lessons on conflict resolution.

Description of Research Process

I began my research by collecting data on the number of conflicts between students using a self-created Conflict Tally (Appendix A) for one week before implementing lessons on conflict resolution. Data was recorded on the conflict tally in several categories: total number of conflicts between peers, number of conflicts resolved without teacher intervention, number of conflicts in which students sought teacher guidance to resolve the conflict, and number of conflicts in which teachers intervened without a student's request. I collected data using the conflict tally each morning during imaginative play as children were arriving. I chose this time of day because I had informally observed this to be a time when many conflicts occurred. I observed for approximately twenty minutes each day (4 days), except Monday when we had a snow day. The intended purpose of the conflict tally was to provide data on the number of conflicts and type of resolution: whether students were able to resolve the conflict on their own or if they required teachers' assistance.

I defined conflict for the Conflict Tally and throughout my action research as anytime at least one child disagreed with another child verbally or with facial or body language. For example, I recorded a conflict when one child wanted to build a castle with blocks, but another child said, "No, I want to build a rocket ship," as well as when a child expressed their dislike of another child's behavior by moving away or frowning at the other child. I recorded a conflict as being solved by the students when they reached a solution together without asking for teacher assistance, walked away from the conflict, or

moved on to another activity. I tallied students seeking guidance to solve a conflict when students asked for help verbally or through eye contact made with a teacher during the conflict. I tallied conflicts requiring teacher intervention without student request when teachers observed that the behavior of students became physically or emotionally distressing to children and stepped in to help solve the conflict.

Along with the Conflict Tally, I also utilized a Conflict Observation Form (Appendix B) to record more specific information on conflicts occurring between students during the morning imaginative play and throughout the day. On the conflict observation form I recorded the date and approximate time of the conflict, the participants' initials and ages, the source of the conflict, how the conflict was resolved (by students or by teachers), and a description of the solution. This data collection was designed to give more detail about conflicts between students and aid in determining patterns in the sources of conflict and changes in conflict resolution over the course of the action research.

After observing conflicts for one week, I conducted a group discussion on conflicts to collect data on the types of solutions and total number of solutions suggested by students. I did this before beginning lessons on conflict resolution. I used two puppets, Moe and Zippy, to act out three types of conflicts and asked children to think of ways Moe and Zippy could solve their problems. The three scenarios involved a conflict of sharing a blue crayon, taking turns to be a doctor, and choosing between playing ball or chase. In each scenario, I acted out the problem and then asked children, "What should Moe and Zippy do?" Answers to each question were recorded by a teaching assistant on the Group Discussion Observation Form (Appendix C) while I was leading

the group discussion. The date, type of conflict, description of solutions suggested by students, and the total number of solutions were recorded. This data was collected to help determine if there was a change in the type and number of solutions offered by students from the beginning of the intervention to the conclusion.

Finally before beginning lessons on conflict resolution, I introduced our Friendship Journal and asked children to complete the first entry, "When I have a problem with a friend I…" During worktime, students completed this page by telling me how they would finish the sentence, and I wrote their answers. Children then drew pictures to illustrate their responses. I recorded the students' initials, ages, and descriptions of their journal entries on the Journal Entry Form (Appendix D). I designed this data collection tool to determine if there was a change in students' responses from prior to the intervention to the end of the intervention. All children completed their pages; however after noticing some children had difficulty thinking of a response on their own, I offered three options for them to choose from: ask a teacher for help, figure out the problem with your friend or walk away.

After collecting baseline data through the conflict tally, observation forms, initial journal entries, and group discussion, I began lessons with students twice a week during morning opening circle time to build their conflict resolution skills. We began our formal lessons by discussing our inner selves and how to calm ourselves using breathing techniques when we become upset. Then we moved on to exploring the idea of "peace" together and the three steps of conflict resolution using a traffic light symbol; red meaning stop and identify the problem, yellow meaning slow down and think of solutions together, and green meaning go ahead and try a solution. I introduced a diagram to help

children remember these steps (Appendix E) and posted it in all three of the classrooms used by our students and the lunchroom. We also explored lessons about making peaceful choices and the negative effects of using unkind words to assist students in finding respectful ways to find solutions for their conflicts in the classroom.

Throughout the implementation of lessons on conflict resolution, I used the Conflict Observation Form (Appendix B) to record detailed observations of conflicts occurring between students during morning imaginative play and both morning and afternoon worktimes for a total of four weeks. Several lunchtime observations were included as well, when time permitted me to observe. After beginning my lessons, I decided also to write down my overall observations of how students were responding to the lessons and activities in a personal journal.

Students completed journal entries each week during the intervention to correspond to the lesson topics. The last journal entry was the same as the first, "When I have a problem with a friend I…" I again asked students to finish the sentence verbally, and I wrote their responses. I recorded a description of their words and illustrations on the same Journal Entry Form (Appendix D) as I recorded their first journal entry responses so that I could determine any changes in their answers from the beginning of the action research to the end. If students had difficulty thinking of a response on their own I again gave them three choices; ask a teacher for help, figure out the problem with your friend or walk away.

During the last week of data collection, I again recorded information on the Conflict Tally (Appendix A). I observed the same time of day as my initial tally,

morning imaginative play time, for five days to determine if there had been any change in the number of conflicts and how the conflicts were solved (by students or by teachers). Finally, I conducted another group discussion on conflicts using the puppets, Zippy and Moe. I used similar types of conflicts as I did in the initial group discussion because I wanted to conclude if students were able to generate more solutions to social problems at the conclusion of the project. I used three conflict scenarios; conflict of sharing blocks, taking turns to make a book, and deciding between play choices of playing an imagination game or a board game. A teaching assistant recorded the number and types of solutions on the Group Discussion Observation Form (Appendix C) for me to compare later to the initial group discussion.

Analysis of Data

Analysis of data from the Conflict Tallies prior to intervention and at the conclusion of the four week intervention indicate there was a decrease in the number of times students sought teacher guidance to resolve conflicts and an increase in the number of conflicts resolved without teacher intervention (Figure 1 & 2). Prior to beginning the intervention, students sought teacher guidance to resolve their conflicts 78% of the time; however at the conclusion of the study, this number had decreased to 27%. Along with a decrease in students seeking out teachers for help, the number of conflicts resolved without any type of teacher guidance also increased from 0% prior to beginning the study to 46% at the conclusion. This seems to indicate a shift from students seeking teacher guidance to solve their conflicts, to students seeking to solve their conflicts on their own.

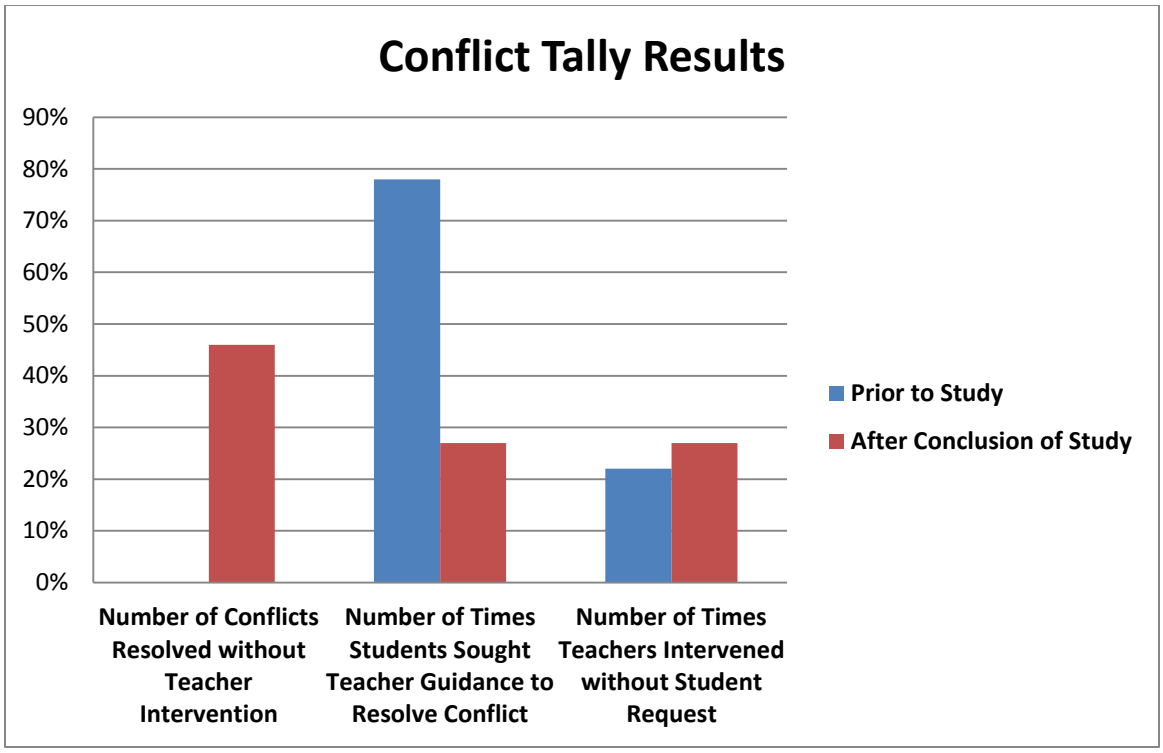

Figure 1. Conflict tally results.

While students sought teacher assistance less often, there was an increase in the number of times teachers intervened without requests from students, rising from 22% prior to the study to 27% at the conclusion. Teachers tended to intervene when conflicts turned physical or emotional, such as when children began taking materials away from one another or began to show visible signs of emotional upset. This seems to indicate that while students began to solve their problems more often independently, they continued to require teacher guidance when problems escalated beyond their conflict resolution capabilities.

Conflict observations were conducted throughout the intervention. Analysis from the data collected on the Conflict Observation Form (Appendix B) offers insight to the conflicts occurring in the classroom, as shown in Figure 2. The types of conflicts that arose between students involved the sharing of materials, taking turns, and other

conflicts, such as infringing upon personal space or interrupting the work of others. The majority of the conflicts involved the sharing of materials. This would indicate that future study should include more practice for children to learn how to resolve issues in these areas, especially with sharing.

Figure 2. Conflict observations: Sources of conflicts.

As shown in Figure 3, over the course of the four week study, the number of conflicts resolved by teacher-suggested solutions decreased, while the number of conflicts resolved by student-generated solutions increased. Included in the number of conflicts resolved by teachers' suggestions were situations that began with students trying to resolve conflicts, but then requiring teacher assistance. Included in the number of conflicts resolved by students' suggestions were situations that began with teacher assistance, but resulted in students determining the solution to try. This result would seem to show that the study was successful in helping students to find resolutions for their conflicts independent of teachers direct solution ideas.

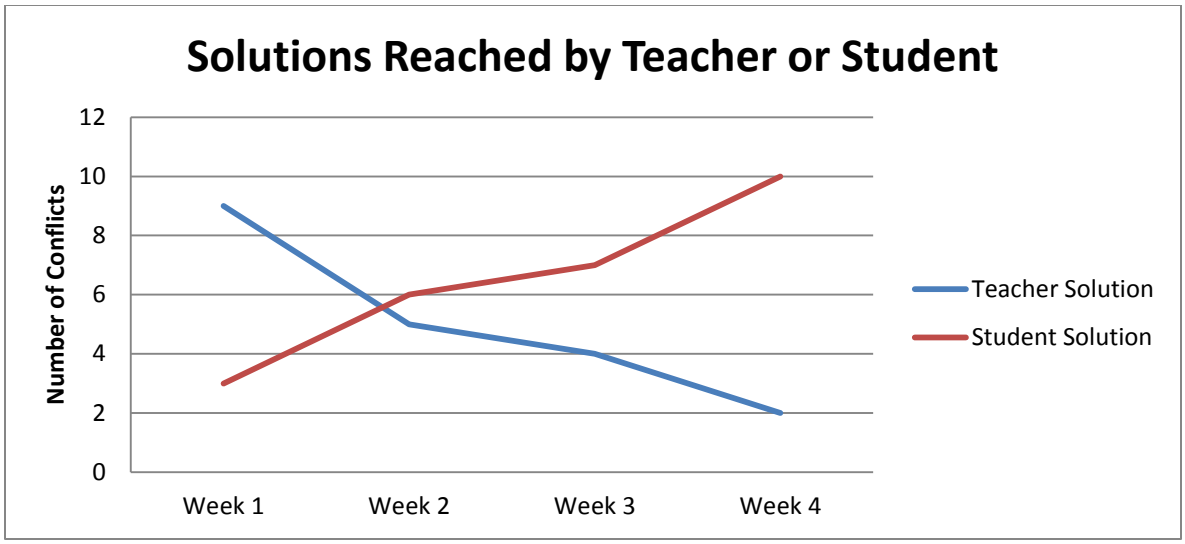

Figure 3. Solutions reached by teacher or student.

Prior to the intervention and at the conclusion of the intervention, students were asked to complete a journal entry, "When I have a problem with a friend I…" An analysis of the data, presented in Figure 4, showed that 46% of the students' journal entries demonstrated a positive change from the first week to the last week of the study. A positive change was recorded when students' responses went from a dependent response, such as "I get a teacher" to and independent responses, such as "I talk to them" or "I share." Also included were responses that shifted from avoidance responses, such as "I walk away and play with someone else" to more prosocial responses, such as "I share what I am playing with." Of the students who demonstrated positive change in journal entries, 11% quoted ideas from the "Traffic Light Model of Conflict Resolution" (Appendix E). There responses included, "I stop and think about the problem," "I look at the stop light for solving problems. Stop and slowly think of a solution and go ahead and try one," and "I stop and think about. Go and try it out."

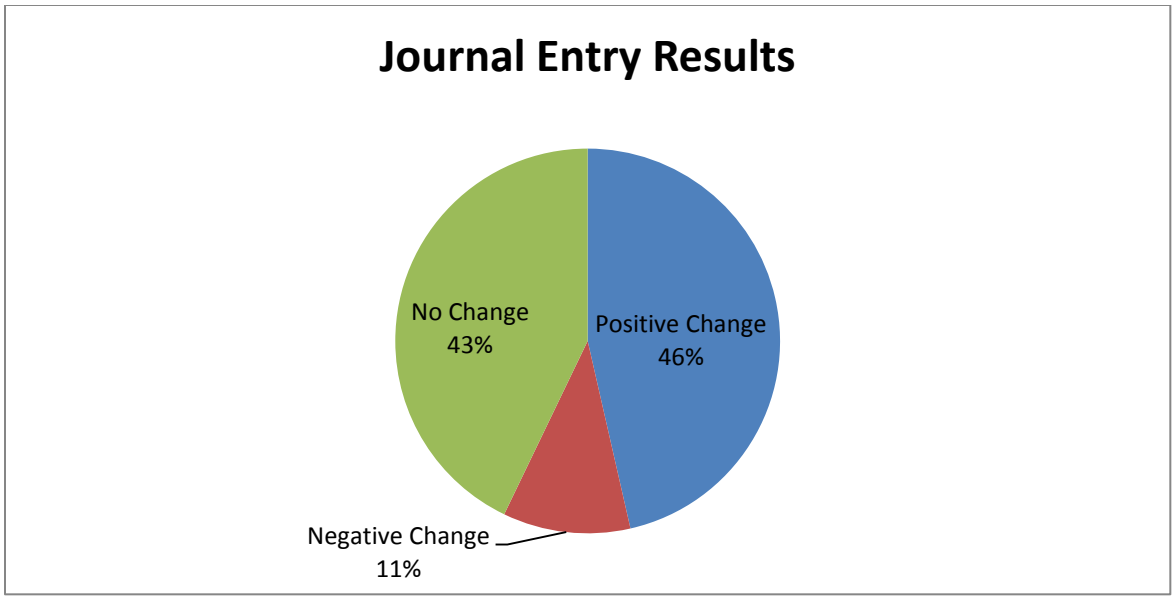

Figure 4. Journal entry results.

While the majority of students' journal entries indicated a change in responses from dependent to more independent solutions for conflicts between peers, 43% of student responses suggested no change in the type of solution offered. While this seems to indicate that a large number of children were not affected by the study, it is important to note that of the 43% of student responses that remained constant through the study, 75% were independent solutions, such as "I talk to them," while only 25% were dependent solutions, such as "I tell a teacher." This data, presented in Figure 5, suggests that although there wasn't a change in a large number of student responses, there also wasn't a need for a change because students already demonstrated positive conflict resolution skills.

A small number of student responses, 11%, also showed a negative change in the type of solution offered by students. This included responses that shifted from "I talk to my friend" to "I get a teacher for help." Further study is needed to determine the cause of this result.

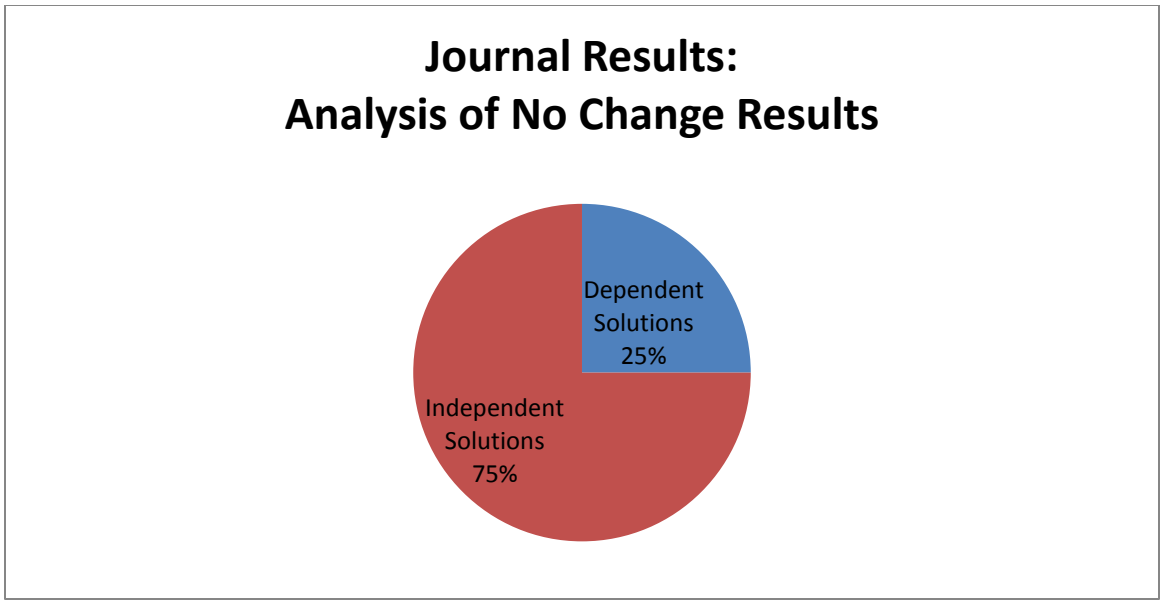

Figure 5. Journal results: Analysis of no change results.

An analysis of the solutions offered from the Group Discussions, as shown in Figure 6, yielded no obvious change in the number or type of solutions suggested by students from prior to the study to the conclusion. In both cases students suggested the same number of solutions for the types of scenarios and similar solutions, such as sharing the materials evenly, taking turns to use materials, and playing separately. Modifications in types of scenarios, such as adding situations when children use unkind words, could offer more insight in future studies.

Figure 6. Group discussion results: solutions for conflict scenarios.

Action Plan

From this research, I have determined the preschool age children in this study were able to initiate the steps necessary to solve social conflicts on their own when teachers provided instruction on the three steps of conflict resolution and offered guidance as children tried using the steps on their own. The teaching of the three steps of social problem solving: (a) state the problem; (b) think of solution with peers; (c) try the best solution, allowed students to gain the confidence and knowledge to begin to solve problems without asking teachers for help. This is evident in the decrease of students requesting help from teachers during conflicts. The number of conflicts resolved by students without intervention from teachers rose during the study, which indicated instruction in social problem-solving contributed to students' ability to solve conflicts independently. Positive changes in students' journal entries, from teacher-dependent solutions to independent student solutions, as well as direct quotes from students' journal entries further showed students' ability to apply conflict resolution steps to hypothetical

situations. Data was not collected to determine if these same students were able to apply the steps in real classroom situations. Further study of the correlation between students' abilities to solve hypothetical conflicts and real life conflicts would be beneficial.

These positive results correspond with other research that also found young children are capable of learning how to solve social problems independently (Arcaro-McPhee et al., 2002; Vestal & Jones, 2004). As found in the research of Arcaro-McPhee et al. (2002), this study suggests the constructivist approach of guiding children toward finding their solutions, rather than teacher imposed solutions, promoted the students' success in independently solving their social problems. The findings of this study also correlate with the research of Doppler-Bourassa et al. (2008) that suggested facilitating the steps of conflict resolution empowers children to become problem solvers who rely on their own abilities, rather than teacher intervention, to find solutions to conflicts.

While group discussions on conflict resolution using puppets did not yield an increase in the number of solutions generated by students during the discussions, these conversations and the use of the puppets to role-play problem-solving may have contributed to the ability of students to generate and apply solutions during actual conflicts. Role-playing may have influenced the decrease in the students' need for teacher intervention, as I observed children frequently utilizing the puppets during their work periods and asking for lessons when I added new problem cards to the work. Further study on the direct effects of role-playing activities on children's conflict resolution skills would be helpful to determine if it indeed improves students' abilities to solve social problems independently.

Through the research, I found the majority of conflicts resulted from disagreements over shared materials. These results are also directly reflected the findings of previous studies (Chen, Fein, Killen, & Tam, 2001; Wheeler, 2004). Occasionally, the conflicts involving sharing escalated to situations in which children physically took materials out of each other's hands. During our group discussions and role-playing with puppets, we examined conflicts concerning the sharing of materials; however, this type of problem continued to be the most frequent cause of conflict throughout the study. Further action research would be useful to determine additional strategies to decrease the number of conflicts or increase children's ability to solve problems over sharing with peers. Examining environmental factors in future action research, such as size of classroom space and number of desirable materials per student, could also determine if having more space for each child and/or more materials available for each child may decrease the number of conflicts occurring within the classroom.

The results of this action research project have impacted my teaching practice by demonstrating to me the importance of beginning conflict resolution instruction as early as possible in children's lives. Studies have corroborated my research findings that preschool age children are capable of solving their social conflicts and, therefore, benefit from being offered lessons that strengthen their problem-solving skills. Based on the research, I will begin lessons on conflict resolution at the beginning of the school year and continue throughout the year. I will also allow children more opportunities to solve their problems with peers before offering assistance. I now view my role as an observer first and if students are not able to solve the problem on their own, next as a facilitator of the steps of conflict resolution. By giving children the opportunity to solve problems

independently, I will demonstrate my confidence in their skills and empower them to see themselves as problem solvers.

It is my hope that this research will also inspire other teachers to view teaching social problem-solving skills as an essential element in early childhood programs and increase teachers' confidence in students' abilities to solve conflicts. I believe that by focusing on these skills at an early age, we can help children reach greater potentials in their social abilities and create more peaceful cooperative classrooms.

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Appendices

Appendix A
Conflict Tally

A Conflict Tally will be recorded one week prior to intervention, and one week following the conclusion of the intervention. Data will be analyzed to determine any changes in the number of conflicts in the classroom, number of times students solve their problems without teacher assistance, and the number of times students seek out teacher assistance to solve problems. Data will be collected for one week at a time due to the many different schedules of the students.

Week of:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Total number of conflicts with peers					
Number of conflicts resolved without teacher intervention					
Number of times students sought teacher guidance to resolve conflict					
Number of times teachers intervened without student request					

Appendix B
Conflict Observation Form

When a conflict arises between students, details will be recorded below. Data will be analyzed to determine any changes in how students solve social problems.

Date & Time of Conflict	Participants' Initials & Ages	Source of Conflict	How Conflict Resolved (by students or by a teacher) & Description of Resolution

Appendix C
Group Discussion Observation

Group discussions will be conducted before beginning the intervention and at the conclusion of the intervention to generate social problem solutions. Each discussion will include the three different scenarios listed below; however, the details (characters and settings) of the scenarios will be changed for each discussion. Data will be collected to determine the change in number and type of solutions offered by students from the beginning of the intervention to the end.

Date	**Discussion Topic**	**Description of Solutions Suggested by Students**	**Total Number of Solutions**
	Scenario #1: Conflict of Sharing Materials		
	Scenario #2: Conflict of Taking Turns		
	Scenario #3: Conflict of Play Choice		

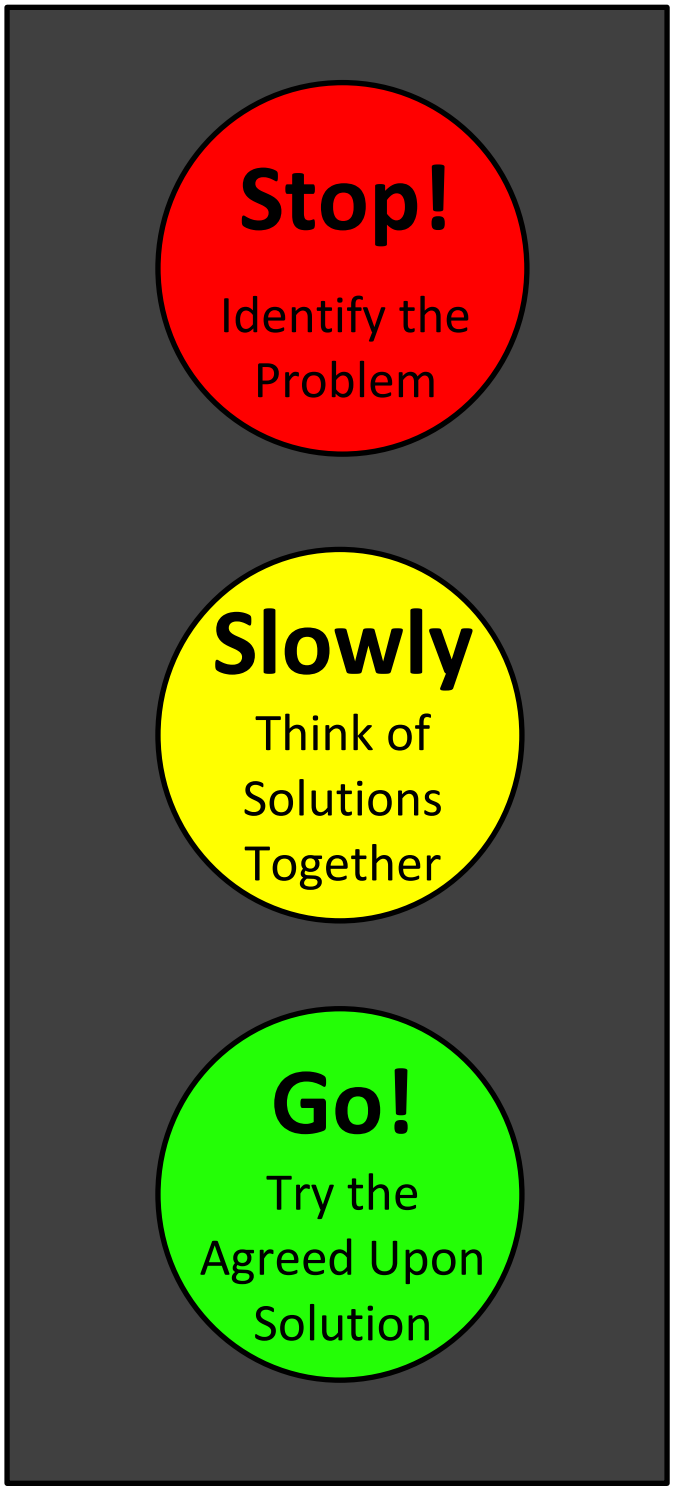
Other Observations from Discussion:

Appendix D
Journal Entry Form

Students will complete prompts in their journals related to conflict resolution one week prior to beginning the project, each week of the project, and after the conclusion of the project. The first and last journal entries will be the same. Journals will be studied to determine the change in how students answered the first and last journal prompt: "When I have a problem with a friend I should…"

Initials of Student & Age	**Description of First Journal Entry**	**Description of Final Journal Entry**

Appendix E
Poster of the Three Steps to Social Problem Solving



3 Steps to Problem Solving