AUSSIE OPTIMISM DISSEMINATION PROJECT
REPORT

FOR

THE OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH –
WA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

And

WA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

JUNE 2004

By

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School of Psychology
Curtin University of Technology
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1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In collaboration with the Western Australian Department of Education and Training, the Department of Health’s Office of Mental Health and Curtin University, the Aussie Optimism Program is being made available to all primary schools across the State, as part of the core curriculum.

The Aussie Optimism Program is an evidence-based intervention program for upper primary school children that enhances mental health and prevents depression and anxiety. The project also aims to enhance the capacity of schools to promote social and emotional well-being.

The project has two components:

- Train-the-trainer. The development of a staff training package and materials for the Aussie Optimism curriculum program.

- Teacher Training. The training of teachers including supervision and support in upper primary schools across the State.

2. PROGRESS REPORT

A decision regarding the choice of the second Department of Education and Training Education District to be involved in the dissemination of the Aussie Optimism Program was delayed in 2003/2004 due to the Review of Non-government Organisations and Related Services conducted by the Department of Health in 2003. This decision will be made at the Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project Steering Committee Meeting on the 3rd of June 2004.

2.1 OUTPUT 1: TRAIN-THE-TRAINER

Train-the-trainer Resources
Following on from the successful Train-the-trainer workshops held in 2002 the following progress has been made.

a) Three Train-the-trainer Workshop Manuals and participant handouts are currently in the final stages of publication. The 2004 revised versions will be ready for use at the second Train-the-trainer workshop series to be held in the second half of 2004.

b) Revised versions of the two Implementation Workshops Manuals and associated workshop participant handouts are also being published, following minor revisions after the 2003/2004 training workshops.
The range of resources that have been developed to disseminate the *Aussie Optimism Program* are presented below in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**
*Aussie Optimism Resources and Training Materials*

**Train-the-Trainer Workshops**
- **Workshop I**
  - Mental Health Promotion in Schools
- **Workshop II**
  - Implementation Ethics and Coaching
- **Workshop III**
  - Training Practice and Demonstration

**Implementation Training Workshops**
- **SLS**
  - Social Life Skills Implementation Training
- **OTS**
  - Optimistic Thinking Skills Implementation Training

**Implementation**
- **SLS**
  - Teacher’s Resource
  - Student’s Resource
  - Parent’s Resource
- **OTS**
  - Teacher’s Resource
  - Parent’s Resource
  - Parent’s Resource

**P&F**
- A Program for Parents and Families

**Train-the-trainer Workshops**
One Train-the-trainer workshop was conducted in Brisbane, Queensland, in April 2004 for four staff from Education Queensland and Health Queensland. This training was part of an early intervention initiative to prevent depression, in the Bayside suburbs of Brisbane. This workshop was contracted by Queensland Health and did not involve any Western Australian funding from this Dissemination Project.

The Train-the-trainer resources developed as part of the Western Australian collaboration between Departments of Health, Education and Training and Curtin University were used in the training. This inter-state training offered a valuable opportunity to receive feedback on the Train-the-trainer resources, and to determine if they generalise to program implementation in a different Education system. The workshops were well received and a formative evaluation report is currently being drafted.

Only one additional Western Australian trainer has been trained in 2003/2004. The research coordinator of the Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project, Yolanda Pintabona
has been trained to provide valuable support to the Department of Education trainers and the teachers implementing the program in Western Australia.

**Train-the-trainer Support**

All four Department of Education and Training staff from the Fremantle District have presented *Social Life Skills* and *Optimistic Thinking Skills* training workshops in collaboration with Curtin University trainers, in 2003 and 2004. Table 1 below shows the numbers of training workshops completed in each year, by the four trainers. In addition to regular contact with the project for support, the trainers have attended a half-day workshop in February 2004 to update their knowledge and debrief the experiences of training in 2003.

The four trainers conducted coaching sessions with Year 6 teachers from 20 schools implementing the *Social Life Skills Program* in 2003. These 20 Intervention Group 2 schools have been offered four individual coaching sessions for Year 7 teachers who are implementing the *Optimistic Thinking Skills Program* in 2004. Alternatively they can access a half day coaching and de-briefing session for Year 7 teachers in Term 3 of 2004.

**Table 1**

Department of Education and Training Trainers Facilitation of Aussie Optimism Teacher Training Workshops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DET Position</th>
<th>Social Life Skills</th>
<th>Optimistic Thinking Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan Robinson</td>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
<td>2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Di Richards</td>
<td>Curriculum Officer</td>
<td>2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Lay</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celia Byass</td>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
<td>1 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 OUTPUT 2: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM PROGRAM

**Implementation Workshops**

Six training workshops in the *Aussie Optimism: Optimistic Thinking Skills* program were conducted in Term 1, 2004 and 106 teachers were trained. Four training workshops for *Aussie Optimism: Social Life Skills* were conducted in Terms 1 and 2, 2004 and 80 teachers were trained. Teachers were provided with a resource kit for the implementation of the program, workshop handouts, and logbooks to record their implementation progress during Terms 2 and 3 2004.
Table 2
Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project Training and Implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Staff trained</th>
<th>Students receiving program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interv</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Interv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Life Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 – Year 5/6, 6 &amp; 6/7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>3574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 – Year 6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimistic Thinking Skills</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 – Year 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aTeachers new to school in 2004

All training workshops were evaluated in terms of teachers’ interest and awareness of mental health promotion, their knowledge of mental health promotion, their confidence in implementing the program, and their satisfaction with the training workshops. Qualitative data relating to teachers feedback on this training are contained in Appendix A of this report. The quantitative data is currently being analysed as part of an Honours Thesis entitled, Diffusion of a School-Based Depression and Anxiety Prevention Program: The Role and Efficacy of Teacher Training. A summary of this research will be provided to the Office of Mental Health in 2005.

Number of Schools
As of June 2004, Table 3 shows the number of schools that have been recruited and retained in the second year of the Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project. We recruited 69% of the available schools to the project, with fairly even numbers of schools across groups. The reasons for schools not participating included involvement in other research projects or use of alternative mental health promotion programs. Fifty-nine of the 63 (94%) schools were retained in the second year of the project. Schools cited staff changes and changes in school priorities as the reasons for not proceeding with the Aussie Optimism Program in 2004.
Table 3
Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project – School Participation Rates 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Group</th>
<th>Number of Schools Allocated to Each Group</th>
<th>Number of Schools Participating</th>
<th>Group Participation Rate</th>
<th>School Attrition in Year 2 – 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intervention 1 Intervention &amp; training</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>19 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention 2 Intervention, training &amp; coaching</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>19 (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Delayed intervention &amp; training</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>21 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
<td><strong>69%</strong></td>
<td><strong>59 (94%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Teachers and Other School Staff
School staff, teachers, principals and deputy principals have participated in the Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project in a number of roles. Table 4 shows the numbers of school staff that have been involved in the project in 2003 and their response rates to questionnaires.

Year 6 and 7 teachers have attended training workshops and have implemented the program in their classes. In addition teachers have completed questionnaires about their attitudes towards mental health promotion, school climate, personal health and well-being and evaluations of training.

Other teachers and school administration staff have been involved in coordinating the implementation of the program in schools, ensuring a positive focus for the program, keeping parents and teachers informed of matters to do with mental health promotion in schools, and coordinating the collection of data and flow of information from the researchers to the schools.

Principals and deputy principals have been involved in reviewing the Aussie Optimism materials, completing questionnaires relating to factors that predict successful implementation and sustainability, and supporting their staff in implementing the program.
Table 4
School Staff Participation and Response Rates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-intervention Term 1 - 2003</th>
<th>Post-intervention 1 Term 4 - 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention 1</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention &amp; training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention 2</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention, training &amp; coaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed intervention &amp; training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Students and Parents
Table 5 shows the number of students and parents that have been recruited and retained as of June 2004. Participation rates are shown as percentages of the number of teachers, students and parents that have actively consented to take part in the research evaluation of the project. However, as indicated in Table 1, all 1986 students in Year 7 intervention group schools (and 590 Year 6 students in split classes) receive the Optimistic Thinking Skills Program as part of the Health and Physical Education Learning area in 2004, regardless of whether their parents have consented to the evaluation component. In addition, 1129 Year 6 students in control group schools are receiving the Social Life Skills Program, as are 1043 Year 6 students in intervention group schools that chose to continue with this program for a second year. All parents receive the parent booklet that accompanies the relevant classroom program and Year 7 parents in intervention group schools will receive the Aussie Optimism Parents and Families program.

Table 5 shows that all students participating in the research study have now completed pre-intervention and post-intervention1 questionnaires. 64.6% of parents completed pre-intervention questionnaires and 63.0% completed post-intervention1 questionnaires. In addition, 42.5% of intervention group parents returned process questionnaires relating to their perceptions of the Social Life Skills – Parent Booklet and their observations of the impact of the program on their child’s behaviour.
### Table 5
Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project – Student and Parent Participation and Attrition Rates 2003 - 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Students</th>
<th>Consent Students</th>
<th>Pre-Intervention</th>
<th>Post-Intervention 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interv 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention &amp; training</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>865 (78.6%)</td>
<td>798 (72.5%)</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>453</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interv 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention, training &amp; coaching</td>
<td>1038</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>794 (76.5%)</td>
<td>747 (72.0%)</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>455</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed intervention &amp; training</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>629 (54.7%)</td>
<td>579 (50.4%)</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>3288</td>
<td>2310</td>
<td>2288 (69.6%)</td>
<td>2124 (64.6%)</td>
<td>2261</td>
<td>2070</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>(42.5%)</td>
<td>(63.0%)</td>
<td>(68.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Program Implementation
The Social Life Skills Program was scheduled for implementation in 115 Year 6 classes in 2003. Of this number, the majority of classes received a high level of implementation. Eighty-five classes (74%) received all 10 Social Life Skills modules (100% implementation), 101 (88%) classes received at least 8 modules (80% implementation), and 110 (96%) classes received at least 6 modules (60% implementation).

Only a small number of classes experienced lower levels of implementation. Two Year 6 classes did not receive the program, one class received only 2 modules, one class received 3 modules, and another class received 5 modules. The reasons for lack of implementation related to teacher stress, lack of training in one case and staff changes in others.

Research on the sustainability of health promotion interventions in schools has defined sustainability as; the program is retained in a school for two years following the initial implementation, the critical components are used with 65% fidelity to the original program, & implemented by 80% of the eligible implementers with 80% of the eligible students (Bosworth, Gingiss, Potthoff, & Roberts-Gray, 1999). The level of implementation of the Aussie Optimism program in the first year of dissemination suggests significant promise for the sustainability of the program.
Mental Health Outcomes at Pre-intervention
The total number of students who completed a valid screening questionnaire, the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire – Student Version (SDQ-S; Goodman, 2001), was 2288. This included 1170 boys (51%) and 1118 girls (49%).

A clinical cut-off of 7 on the Emotional Symptoms Subscale was used to estimate the number of students with clinical levels of mental health problems at pre-intervention. These cut-offs for caseness were selected based on previous validity studies, to concur with the 90th percentile in general population samples (Goodman, 1999).

Table 6
Incidence and Point Prevalence of Anxiety and Depressive Disorders in Boys and Girls in the Total Sample \( (n = 2288) \) at Pre-Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disorder</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incidence</td>
<td>Prevalence</td>
<td>Incidence</td>
<td>Prevalence</td>
<td>Incidence</td>
<td>Prevalence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressive Disorder</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.14%</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety Disorder</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1.84%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>4.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDD Past</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.79%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDD Present</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.48%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.96%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.66%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.14%</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.74%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAD</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Phobia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Phobia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panic Disorder</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCD</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.74%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.31%</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2.06%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two hundred and seven students (9.04%), 70 (34%) boys and 136 (66%) girls, obtained scores above the cut-off on the SDQ-S and were assessed using a computerised diagnostic interview, the Diagnostic Interview for Children and Adolescents – IV, Child Version (DICA-IV, Child Version; Reich, 2000). Of the 207 children interviewed, 92, 26 boys (28%) and 66 girls (72%), met the DSM-IV criteria for Major Depressive Disorder (Past and/or Present), Dysthymic Disorder and/or any of the following anxiety disorders; Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD), Separation Anxiety Disorder (SAD), Panic Disorder, Specific Phobia, Social Phobia, and/or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.
These 92 students represented 4.02% of the total larger sample of 2288 students, 26 boys (1.13%) and 66 girls (2.88%), and 9.04% of the sample of 206 students with scores above the clinical cut-off on the SDQ-S, 26 boys (13%) and 66 girls (32%).

2.3 OTHER OUTPUTS

Three student research projects have been conducted as part of the Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project. Two projects have been completed. The abstracts for these projects, summarising the findings, are presented below. One Honours project is currently proceeding.


This study investigated the relationships between school organisational factors, teacher job-related affective well-being, and students’ emotional symptoms. Organisational factors explored in this study were work pressure, participation in decision-making, and resource adequacy. This study tested the proposition that teacher job-related affective well-being mediates the relationship between school organisational factors and students’ emotional symptoms. Systems theory was used to guide hypothesis formation. Data were collected from 137 teachers and 1761 students in 57 primary schools in Western Australia. Structural equation modelling (ESQ) was used to test the hypotheses. Results showed support for the proposed mediator model in which teacher job-related anxiety mediated the relationship between teacher work pressure and students’ emotional symptoms, as well as mediating the relationship between teacher resource adequacy and students’ emotional symptoms. Teacher job-related depression mediated the relationship between teacher participation in decision-making and students’ emotional symptoms. These results provide support for the utility of systems theory in the conceptualisation of the school environment. However, results further suggested that the strengths of the relationships between variables were low. Thus, caution may be warranted when implementing school change interventions based upon systems theory, as the size of the intervention effects may be minimal.


This study investigated the gender differences in depressive and anxiety symptoms in students in late childhood. A quasi-experimental design was used to study gender differences in the clinical levels of emotional symptoms in a representative community sample of children aged 10-12 years. Out of 2287 children, 207 students obtained a score above the cut-off on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire – Student version (SDQ-S; Goodman, 2001). These 207 children were then assessed using a computerised diagnostic interview, the Diagnostic Interview for Children and Adolescents – IV, Child Version (DICA-IV, Child Version; Reich, 2000). Of these 207 children, 92 met the DSM-IV criteria for depressive and/or anxiety disorders. The participants in the present study included 26 males and 66 females.
Girls reported higher rates of depressive disorders and higher rates of anxiety disorders than boys with the exception of Social Phobia, where boys outnumbered girls at a rate of 4:1. Boys were more likely than girls to have a diagnosis of two or more disorders. Boys reported significantly higher rates of comorbid depressive and anxiety disorders, with major depression and/or dysthymia occurring concurrently with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder most frequently.

Twice as many girls as boys had a present or past diagnosis of Major Depression, and 1.7 times as many girls as boys had a diagnosis of Dysthymia. Girls had 1.5 times as many diagnosable anxiety disorders as boys. There were no significant gender differences in symptom patterns for either depressive or anxiety disorders. The results suggest that children in late childhood from a community sample represent a predominantly homogenous group when it comes to their reporting of depressive and anxiety symptoms.

The following Honours project will be completed in November 2004.

Keene, R. Diffusion of a School-Based Depression and Anxiety Prevention Program: The Role of Efficacy of Teacher Training.
REFERENCES


4. FINANCIAL REPORT
5. APPENDIX A – EVALUATION OF TRAINING WORKSHOPS 2004

Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project
Optimistic Thinking Skills Training 2004

Participant Feedback

Training 30/3/04
• Good to use both adult and student examples. Gave a heightened understanding of activities when you do them.
• Quite interactive, very beneficial in gaining more realistic perspective of what goes on in classroom situations and different problems that may arise. Clare very interested in personal feedback.

Training 31/3/04
• Presenters were fantastic - provided relevant information in a manner that kept us interested and involved.
• I was most impressed with the presentation. The content was very relevant but it was presented in a most enjoyable and collegiate manner.
• Excellent presentation - especially from Jenny.
• A responsive group with great ideas facilitated well by the two presenters. Enjoyable & informative.
• Very balanced between instruction, discussion & engagement in activities. Great to be able to share concerns, issues & clarify.
• Very helpful presenters, open to suggestions & comments, knowledgeable & thoughtful.
• Excellent - should be a very interesting experience.
• Presenters provided clarity & ? for our learning.
• A really good piece, covering all aspects, but not dwelling on the obvious.

Training 2/4/04
• Very good program and great to see teachers concerns integrated. Thanks.
• Well done.
• Perhaps model the activities via video tape. That is, we could watch a teacher doing an activity with children on video. Some teachers find role playing quite difficult to do themselves.
• As with the first program all facets of what is required to implement the Aussie Optimism program. It, the workshop, is an essential part of the successful administration of the modules.
• Would be great to be done over 2 days to really get to know and explore the content.
• A good range of activities both individual and group. I question the relevance of the quiz for optimism and pessimism.
• Takes a lot more time than estimated.
Training 5/4/04
- All questions answered relevantly.
- Great - I now have an idea of what the program is about.
- Flexible, 2 way feedback.
- Very good. Sometimes, to begin with you may need to use some 'energiser' strategies to get all groups involved. I believe one group hardly participated verbally at all. I enjoyed the day and believe the Aussie Optimism Program is very valuable.
- Enjoyed the presentation. Very relevant to the material we were given. Should be a very worthwhile program to undertake.
- Good pace. Convenient location.
- Clear, structured and logical.
- I'd have appreciated little more personal/small group reflection and sharing time - though it's hard to see how that could've fitted in, I admit. Some areas could've done with a little more depthing - eg. dealing with vulnerable-making material.
- No lunch??

Training 6/4/04
- Well presented, kept moving & dealt with individual concerns. Cut off 'talkers' where needed.
- Well done, better than 1st one.
- Good job - thanks!
- Presenter reading from two booklets and sometimes hard to know where she was working from. In a workshop designed to get to know the materials this was a little frustrating. Attribution style questionnaire - a waste of time, poor questions, what did we learn?
- More development, & clarification of the PEST concept.
- Very helpful - well presented.
- Not overloaded. Moved smoothly through each session. Time for feedback about Yr 6 social skills program.
- Coupled with the 2003 workshop - the relevance and value of the program has been enhanced greatly. All stuff dealt with - most worthwhile.
- A lot to take in but points covered will help in delivery of the program. A lot of discussion about 'confidentiality' - in the end up to the teacher's discretion.

Training 7/4/04
- Very good in that it encouraged the children to examine situations in a more positive light. It allowed children to recognise that the 'I can't' attitude can be examined & seen in a more positive light. It allowed for the recognition of the positive in many threatening (or potentially threatening situations).
- Very fuzzy and unclear in parts.
- Could be run in just a morning session rather than a day long PD.
- Could have been completed in 1/2 day.
- Worked through quickly (which was good).
- The workshop was pacy and ahead of time. Well covered and I enjoyed the day and presentation. Well done ladies.
- Always good to be re-energized about 'self-esteem'.
• Great, practical, realistic, achievable.
• Interesting - good coverage of what the program is about.
• Delivered at a good pace, excellent opportunity to air concerns and hear other points of view.
• Interesting. Many 'deep' questions asked - answered clearly. Enjoyable.
• The main presenter was highly skilled and motivated as well as being able to identify with classroom teachers (as she is a classroom teacher herself).

Aussie Optimism Dissemination Project
Social Life Skills Training 2004

Participant Feedback

Training 28/4/04
• Some parts of the workshop could have been shortened.
• A bit too much content for the time.
• Work packages well put together. Clear, easy to use.
• Discussion time too much/needed more time on ideas/ it seemed a little scattered. Booklet & resources seem quite good.
• Good stuff but really nothing new. Presenter knew her stuff but was very boring.
• Good information, but a long day.
• A more direct informative process was required. It is safe to decide that more content delivery, as opposed to teaching instruction is appropriate.
• Very useful - I can see great benefits for it in my class & can't wait to use it.

Training 29/4/04
• Excellent & interactive & applicable.
• Venue great, I enjoyed the workshop - getting groups to present. Lollies good!
• (Related to #8) Presentation was highly appropriate for the amount of content covered. Information was disseminated effectively and efficiently. Covered a lot without wasting valuable time. Thank you.
• Interesting and informative.
• Informative, friendly. Activities were a great way to find out about some of the modules.
• I would have liked to had some time to discuss organisation with other staff from my school who attended the course.
• Extremely interesting, enlightening, helpful, practical and motivating. Thank you for a great day.
• Lunch provided perhaps, even if at a cost.
• Would have been nice if lunch had been provided - even at our cost.

Training 4/5/04
• Very interesting & informative.
• Great to interact with teachers from a variety of schools - always stimulating to share ideas with other teachers.
• Comments made by presenter and participant's "hands on" experiences were valuable. The materials pull together, many concepts I already know about, into a workable program.
• Enjoyable presentation, lots of discussion about important topics.
• Found parking & the workshop building at Curtin difficult to find & expensive. A nicer venue & easier parking would be better i.e. heard from 2 teachers that Swan Yacht Club was excellent for both!
• Excellent presentation Lindsay! Well done.
• Could have been longer - I would have liked more time for discussion, reading and internalization. I feel that I will have to take some time to read and discuss these materials with others at the school before I attempt activities, because I would like to do it WELL. Especially needed at the school I teach at, I know it will lead to quite 'heavy' discussions or disclosures & I would like to feel I could adequately handle it.
• Very relevant to clientele at our school.
• Great resources for the classroom. Very informative workshop.
• Great group work and combination with resources.
• Really enjoyed it! Feel very enthused to run program.

**Training 7/5/04**

• Very interesting. Perhaps we could have gone through the modules a bit quicker.
• Good and precise. Provided some very valid and important strategies.
• Very informative and useful.
• Excellent!
• Well run, interesting, informative.
• Well presented and informative.
• Thanks Clare, The unit of work is excellent and ties in lots of strategies from great programs such as Friendly Schools Protective Behaviours as well as some great new strategies for me. I particularly like how the units build on students' skills (accumulatively).
• Excellent presentation. Very informative and very much needed for all teachers - thank you.
AUSSIE OPTIMISM WORKSHOP POEM
By Darrell Ward
Samson Primary

From various schools we have come - most as bewildered as I am
To learn of the various benefits - from the Aussie Optimism Program.

Our expectations are many and varied - with none of us knowing the norms,
Though one thing we all have in common - is that we've all filled out numerous forms.

We've started with an introduction - with a survey of our personal traits,
And I've had a bit of a jolt - to find how my personality rates.

The next bit of the program came round - and made me as happy as can be,
Cos that was the time when all of us got to go out for morning tea.

Next we were all given jelly babes - which we weren't allowed to eat 'til the end,
So I started to dislike the presenters - but they relented so now they're my friend!!

We then got embroiled in the strategies - we took issues and got to the crunch.
I was just starting to get to 'overload' - when we stopped and all went to lunch!

We then returned to the venue, and sluggish and bloated were we,
But soon had introduced levity, 'cos we did role-play for others to see.

The morals were worthwhile and positive - we therefore all got our rewards.
I feel compelled however, to tell you - none of us got Academy Awards.

Next came the evaluation - something effecting each one of us
But with planning, forethought and professionalism - can be achieved with minimum fuss.

Finally came the evaluation where we considered the presenters' follies
I thought they were pretty good overall - but best of all I LIKED THE LOLLIES!!!