CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Children have a natural drive to play. We see this with infants that are easily distracted with mobiles and rattles. These games continue through the toddler stage with building blocks and noisy pots and pans. Children acquire knowledge through interactions with objects and people. We see kindergarten children's love for puppets and play house. Board games like Candyland are thrilling to a first grade student. This trend continues with children throughout their school years. Adults often enjoy games that include sports, a good game of basketball on television, or a game of golf with friends. Games are an effective way to socialize with others and express our feelings openly, while having a good time.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to determine if the icebreaker game had an effect on communication in a third grade small group counseling session as measured by the performance rubric scale. The following three research questions further delineate the statement of the problem.

Research Questions

1. Will third grade students communicate their feelings more frequently in a group counseling session when playing an icebreaker game compared to a group counseling session using conversation alone measured by a recording of self-disclosing statements using the rubric performance scale (see Appendix A).

2. Will third grade students stay on task throughout the icebreaker game measured by the number of recorded self-disclosing statements using the performance rubric scale (see Appendix A).

3. Will the icebreaker game lead to more frequent interactions between the third grade students and the therapist measured by the number of self-disclosing statements recorded using the performance rubric scale (see Appendix A).

Limitations/Delimitation's

Due to confidentiality issues, the researcher was unable to document conversations conveyed during the group counseling session in the study presented.

Definition of Terms

1. *Icebreaker Game* - This is a board game aimed at the third grade level to enhance communication in group counseling sessions. The game consists of a wooden platform with feeling pictures in a circular formation with a spin wheel at the center. The students are also provided with a sheet of paper which has a listing of the same pictures displayed on the wooden platform. After spinning the wheel the student is to look at the feeling picture in which the wheel is pointed, and to find it on their sheet of paper. After finding the picture they are to color the picture and explain to the group why the boy or girl may be feeling the feeling displayed in the picture or describe a time when they felt the way the boy or girl is feeling in the picture. This icebreaker game is similar to bingo in that the person who has colored pictures consecutively in a row across or down wins the game.

2. *Freely*- the extent to which the students are willing to express and communicate their feelings in the group counseling session using the icebreaker game opposed to their willingness to communicate in group counseling sessions without the icebreaker game.

3. *Performance Rubric Scale* - a scale that outlines and describes the performance each unidentified student scored on a scale of one to four using a performance scale of: minimal performance, basic performance, proficient performance, and advanced performance (see Appendix A).

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Because play and therapeutic board games are commonly cited in similar context, they are presented in the same context in this paper. Self-concept is the internal measure of one's worth. Self-concept may be defined as the perceptions individuals hold about themselves or as a set of beliefs about self. Play is a key factor in a child's development, learning and self-concept. Research studies have demonstrated a significantly positive correlation between self-concept and parental acceptance, academic achievement, classroom adjustment, perceptions of others, emotional adjustment, and overall personal adjustment. Children express their thoughts and feelings through play (Landreth, Homeyer, Glover, Sweeney, 1996).

The Importance of Communicating Feelings

Feelings are the way we perceive ourselves. Feelings are our reaction to the world around us. When our feelings are settled, we experience our highest consciousness.

Feelings tell us whether what we experience is threatening, painful, regretful, sad or joyous. Feelings can be described and explained in simple and direct ways. Not to be aware of one's feelings, not to understand them or to know how to use or express them is worse than being blind, deaf, or paralyzed. Because so much of what we know depends upon our feelings, to be in confusing or dimly perceived feelings is to be overwhelmed by a confused world (Viscott, 1976).

Learning to combine and express feelings and action in ways that are both understandable and acceptable, the ability to talk and accept limits will add even more to his or her capacity for social and emotional development (Greenspan, 1985).

When children can sort out their confusion and label the different feelings that contribute to their bewilderment, they can control themselves better.

According to David Viscott, the language of feeling is the means by which we relate with ourselves, and if we cannot communicate with ourselves we simply cannot communicate with others. When we lose touch with our feelings, we lose touch with our most human qualities. What we feel about anything reflects our history and development, our past influences, our present turmoil and our future potential.

Self-disclosure

According to Melody Beattle, 1991, communication is the greatest single factor affecting a person's health and relationship to others.

Getting close means taking risks, showing more than usual. It means risking some damage to pride by disclosing an unvarnished truth, a private thought, an embarrassing impulse, a romantic feeling or any confession of classified information that might make someone think less of us or put us in emotional jeopardy. These riskier revelations that give away power and leave us vulnerable can bring us the strength and protection of intimacy.   Emotional isolation produces sickness; we need to disclose to stay sane (Goodman, 1988).

Children rarely talk directly about their worries because they rarely understand their role in their problems. Not only are they incapable of seeing that their present behavior is an incorrect effort to solve a problem, but they also are incapable of identifying the problem. the kind of help they need, or the kinds or relevant questions they should ask to get help. They have considerable difficulty involving themselves in adequate interchange with a helper about the task of coping with their problem. Adults need not only to create an environment in which children want to express their feelings, but also to teach children to communicate effectively (Kenndy, 1989).

Definition of Therapeutic Board Games and Play

To differentiate games from play, it is important to recognize the difference between the two widely used forms of therapy. In the literature in the subject of games, the term usually refers to formal, organized games that include rules (Avedon and Sutton-Smith, 1971).

Some examples of traditional games are: Monopoly, Uno, and Candyland to name a few. Game playing is an activity that shares at least two of the basic elements of play; both are meant to be fun and provide a context for fantasy experience (Moyles, 1989).

Opposed to play, games have much structure and set rules that inform players about the roles they will play. Games can also be very competitive; this can provide a useful analogy to naturally occurring conflicts. By their very nature, games arouse competitive feelings in children, but at the same time the rules of the game require that children compete within certain limited boundaries (Schaeffer and Reid, 1986).

Games with rules are social games that involve regulations imposed by the group for violation of rules. They deal with interaction problems in which the behavior of others must be taken into account. In monopoly, for example, the playing child must know the roles of the other players as well as their own role. Games are self-motivating and form an end in themselves (Reilly, 1974).

Games give additional emphasis and variety toward the accomplishment of the social, recreational, and, to some extent, the skill objectives of all game activities. There are many opportunities in games for developing the individual child's responsibilities in group endeavors. As in all types of games, however, the child needs direct and pointed guidance toward the satisfactory realization of these values in his own terms (Troester, 1950).

It is important to acquire knowledge and develop particular skills; it is just as vital to learn how to use one's knowledge and skills for fun and enjoyment. It is an invaluable lesson learned when one finds that mental gymnastics can be as fun as physical sports. It is important to know, too, that because a game makes us think, that does not make it less a game or less fun than an activity that does not require or challenge the mental process. When normal study work becomes fun an important barrier is hurdled. Learning takes on new meaning and importance. Chores become challenges. The disciplines of study seem less burdensome. The senses through which we learn become more acute. Awareness, without which life is dull and colorless, is developed, opening new doors to enrichment. Facts learned through games are no less informative, no less accurate (Mulac1971).

Games can be used to teach children their manners, generosity, responsibility, self-expression, and the spirit of inquiry (Paxman, 1962).

"Ice-breakers are games designed to set people at ease, to get them acquainted more quickly (Mulac, 1946).

According to Evelyn Sharp (1969), play is generally seen as a spontaneous activity that has no particular purpose and is motivated only by a desire for fun. Play also has an unrestricted, unstructured quality. Some play involves some structure, for example, when a parent puts limits on a child's play, but generally play is unstructured.

Play has numerous meanings and connotations; consequently, play is a term so loosely used that its real significance is frequently lost. One authority tells us that "play compresses the motor habits, spirit of the past persisting in the present." Another states that play is an attitude of mind which pervades any given activity (Harbin, 1951).

Parents, educators, and public officials do agree that the play of children is one of the most commonly observed activities of child life. They concede that play is the child's way of learning,

that it is fundamentally interesting and satisfying, and it offers abundant opportunity for all-round development and adjustment of the individual (Harbin, 1951).

Feelings are our sixth sense. When you're allowed play, when you've learned to pay meaningful attention to them, you'll be on the way to getting free of emotional debt to the past, to discovering and being the best of yourself, without exaggeration or apology. Discomfort diminishes, pleasure is possible. Life renews (Viscott, 1976).

According to Harbin (1951), play is an important factor in child development. It is an all-absorbing, satisfying and wholesome activity with opportunity for doing, thinking, feeling, and becoming. It's spirit is joyous, yet serious and purposeful.

Play is believed to have an important role in such early developmental tasks as separation, individualization, exploration of the environment, mastery of anxiety, and achievement (Schaefer and Reid, 1986).

Through play and recreation, we make new friends, keep up with old ones, establish new contacts and generally "keep up with the world" (Mulac, 1946).

According to James Edward Rogers (1932), play activities are seen as being always of large value in modern educational procedure and sometimes of unique and unparalleled value. Play is always a "doing." Play is, almost by definition, "interesting and fundamentally satisfying." In a game under good leadership, the child's emotions, mind, and body are working together.   A boy or girl will give 100 per cent attention to play, though not always to studies. So leaders of childhood find in play activities their shining chance to develop right attitudes of mind, so fundamental to character.

We all need to play. We need to engage in a variety of play activities. We need the sports that demand muscular activity that keeps our bodies fit and healthy. We need the forms of mental play that keep our minds keen and alert (Mulac, 1946).

Play's primary contribution is the provision for abundant living. Because of its recognized importance for child development, each year more and more emphasis is given to play; hence, additional provision is being made for play opportunities in the home, the school, and the community (Mulac, 1946).

Group experiences will often evoke necessary imitation, social interaction, cooperation, and competition. A child's sense of self and personal awareness often develops in relation to his awareness of others. Discouragement may be avoided when frustrating experiences are rapidly adjusted and when "losers" in a game, for example, are given a chance to redeem themselves quickly. Shared experiences will solidify feelings of companionship and pleasurable learning. What is agreeably learned is long remembered (Reilly, 1974).

Competitive games should be minimized, except where kids compete against themselves. Try not to have too many winners and losers. It may be a good idea to give handicaps and to use more games that involve luck rather than ability (Edward's, 1965).

There is a feeling among a considerable number of educators and other persons interested in human welfare that the importance of competition as a factor in play has been considerably over-emphasized. Some even go as far as to charge that highly organized competitive programs are deterrents to the emergence of proper social attitudes. They insist that there should be larger use made of co-operative activities and that when competitive games are used they should be promoted without the harmful stimulation that comes from tournaments, championships, and awards. Play the game for the fun of playing is their slogan (Harbin, 1952).

History

      Through the ages, man has engaged in various forms of play. Through this play, primitive man learned many facts about life and came to recognize which things in life contribute most to his development (Mulac, 1946).

      Some games were introduced during the Great Depression, particularly Monopoly, now the best-selling board game in history. Monopoly offered individuals a chance to fantasize about overcoming the economic hardships that was part of American life during the 1930's (Radler and Kephart, 1960).

      Archaeologists have recovered game artifacts from ancient tombs and temples; for example, a Sumerian game board (c. 2600 B.C.) was recovered from the royal cemetery at Ur of Chaldees. Egyptologists have recovered dice and board games of the "Morris" type dating from 1400 B.C. Another indication that games were played in the early 1400's is graphic information. A number of tomb murals and paintings restored by archeologists depict ancient people playing games. Game playing has been an interest in therapeutic sessions since the 1970's (Avedon and Sutton-Smith, 1971).

      Increasingly, our generation recognizes play as a great and continuous learning experience essential to living in childhood (Troester, 1950).

      An increasing number of clubs, schools, and churches are making use of games. They root back in the culture patterns of the people of many nations. This latter value reflects a great need for better understanding between people and races (Harbin, 1952).

      According to Pluto, education should begin with the right direction of children's sports. Centuries later, Froebel, arguing for the use of play as a means of education, stated, "The plays of childhood are germinal leaves of all later life."

Today books on child development and psychology devote several pages to a discussion of play and its potential value in child development (Troester, 1950).

Modern educational authorities agree that play contributes to joy and living and represents one of the most important forces in the child's physical development, social understanding,, and moral training (Troester, 1950).

Importance of Play and Therapeutic Board Games in Therapy

While traditional forms of therapy are effective with many children, there are some children who find it difficult for various reasons to respond to traditional approaches that require self-disclosing to the therapist in a one-to-one relationship or a group therapy session (Schaefer and Reid, 1986).

When we play with others, we come to know them and understand them better. We find ourselves becoming more tolerant and more appreciative of people of other races, religions, and nationalities (Mulac, 1946).

When children and adults meet, play provides a common language to express the depth of thoughts, emotions, and experience. Children's interests in playful approaches involving, games, imagination, fantasy, and story telling may initially appear irrelevant. But within these realms of meaning-making we find treasures that are central to the child's motivation and ability to resolve problems (Freeman and Epston and Lobouits, 1997).

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meaning-making we find treasures that are central to the child's motivation and ability to resolve problems (Freeman, Epston, Lobouitis, 1997).

The importance of joy or fun in playing is becoming more recognized. Play is of tremendous value in the lives of boys and girls since it contributes significantly to their harmonious growth and development. In his play experiences with other children, the child learns to share, to give and take, to co-operate, and to submerge his personality in that of the group (Mulac, 1946).

Playfulness is an important part of child counseling, and counseling with children in groups is no exception. Being playful, helps you enter the world of the child. As a normal human, the counselor can expect to feel positive, negative, and even a little angry toward some children. As Shaw (1966) states, the counselor must bear in mind that he is in constant interaction with other people's children who by definition have been reared in quite wrong ways! The counselor, however, must not become just another child. The reader will note that the authors suggest that the counselor get used to playfulness (Dinkmeyer and Muro, 1971).

Psychoanalysts, such as Anna Freud (1928), used play to lure children into therapy, to interest the child in therapy and the therapist (Schaefer and Reid, 1986).

Mead (1934) was among the first to recognize the importance of games in the socialization process. According to Mead, the child is seen as learning to differentiate themselves from others and also gain basic communication skills through participation in games.

Loomis (1957) explained the concept that many games are now used in therapy as a so-called "icebreaker." Loomis also emphasized the game as a vehicle for expression of resistance and unconscious conflict on the part of the child.

Coleman (1962) examined play under the concept of simulation and found that games could be designed to have a measurable impact on intellectual learning, attitudes, and strategies.

Herbert Spencer (1971), an early psychoanalyst, pointed out that play is a so-called "cathartic theory," according to which play has a definite function in the growing child in that it provides a means by which he or she can work off past emotions and find imaginary relief for past frustrations.

In Childhood and Society Erikson (1963) developed concepts regarding ego identity and group identity. He proposed that play was an effective safeguard in maintaining the stability and continuity of one's meaning for other people. Personal identity, he suggested, forms the matrix for developing identity, as a group member in a social role.

In Robert Waelder's classic 1933 article, "The Psychoanalytic Theory of Play," he emphasized that play leads not only to tension reduction, but also has values for wish fulfillment, the passive to the active, and for giving a temporary leave of absence from reality.

Games are a way for individuals to work out real life problems in a socially acceptable way (Harbin, 1951).

Recreation is as much a part of normal living as eating, when we stop playing our minds become starved and something vital within us dies, for recreation gives meaning to life. Through play we find means of self-expression. Through the creative forms of play, we rebuild what the tensions and disappointments of normal living have torn down (Mulac, 1946).

Through the active forms of recreation, we find constructive ways of "blowing off steam." We come back to face our problems with renewed vigor, a fresh outlook and a better sense of proportion (Mulac, 1946).

Under the influence of Freud and his disciples, the game has been regarded by some students of the subject as a compensation or substitution for instincts suppressed by the normal conscious. Presented in the innocent form of a game, they are accepted by society without

question (Schaefer and Reid, 1986).

The use of games in therapy is often used to bring the child's unconscious conflicts, expressed within the context of the game, into the arena of conscious awareness and verbal expression (Schaefer and Reid, 1986).

According to Schaefer and Reid, communication board games enable children to project aspects of self, both known and unknown to the child. Often these projections involve the presenting problem which was the cause for referral and additional areas of client concern which were not the initial focus of the therapist.

By the very nature, games arouse competitive feelings in children, but at the same time the rules of the game require that children compete with certain limited boundaries (Moyles, 1989).

Games are also used across cultures and serve many of the same functions from culture to culture. Game-playing is a nearly universal human activity; only a handful of the most primitive societies do not posses games. In many cultures, game-playing appears to presage social skills that are required later in life (Schaefer and Reid, 1986).

Play is a medium for children to express their experiences as well as their feelings about themselves. This experimental development through play lays the foundation for the cognitive styles of adults. Because play is the language in which children communicate, they must confront their pain experimentally through play (Norton and Norton, 1997).

There were no journal articles found, that were relevant. that dealt with games used in a group setting.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The purpose of this research study was to determine the effects an icebreaker game has on student's communication in a small group counseling session versus using conversation alone in a small group counseling session. The statement of the problem, therefore, was: do third grade students communicate more freely in a small group counseling session when using an icebreaker game opposed to group counseling using conversation only. The subjects in this research were a random group of third grade students who were currently enrolled at the Hayward Elementary School in Hayward, Wisconsin. The students of this group were asked to play the icebreaker game in a small group counseling session. The researcher presented and applied an icebreaker game to seven third grade student's in a small group setting on four separate occasions. The researcher minimally facilitated the group, intervening only to keep the game and group flowing smoothly. During each counseling session, the researcher observed the students as they played the icebreaker game and documented communication using the performance rubric scale. The researcher also facilitated a second group of seven third grade students at Hayward Elementary School using conversation alone to observe and document communication using the performance rubric scale on four separate occasions. This descriptive study produced qualitative data assessing the advantages of communicating feelings more freely using an icebreaker game in a small group setting compared to communicating feelings in a small group setting using conversation alone.

This short- range study began in early October and concluded in late November of the 1999-2000 school year.

To determine if students communicated their feelings more freely in a small group setting using the icebreaker game opposed to using conversation alone, the researcher documented communication using the performance rubrics scale (see Appendix A). The researcher hand scored
the results of each group to determine which group communicated feelings more freely in the four small group sessions.

Subjects

The subjects were seven third grade students who were currently enrolled in Hayward Elementary School in Hayward, Wisconsin. Hayward is a rural community in northern Wisconsin comprised primarily of blue collar workers. Hayward Elementary School has kindergarten through fourth grade students. The subjects were third grade students who were picked randomly to participate in the study.

Instruments

Data were collected using a recording of feeling statements communicated in each group counseling session using the performance rubric scale.

Data Analysis

A qualitative analysis was used to analyze the recorded information documented in each group counseling session to determine if an icebreaker game is an effective tool to open communication in group counseling sessions with third grade students. The researcher

qualitatively analyzed the recorded number of feeling statements documented and applied it to the performance rubric scale to determine if an icebreaker game is an effective tool in communication to third grade students at Hayward Elementary School.

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Calendar

The researcher began the study in early October and concluded in late November in the 1999-2000 academic school year.

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ABSTRACT

Linton	Kelly	R.
(writer)	(Last Name)	(First Name)	(Initial)

The Effect of an Icebreaker Game on Communication in a Third Grade Group Counseling Session
(Title)

Guidance and Counseling K-12   Dr. Bob WurtzDecember 1999   30 Pages
(Graduate Major)   (Research Advisor)   (Month/Year)   (No. of Pages)

American Psychological Association
(Name of Style Manual Used in this Study)

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects an icebreaker game would have on communication and self-disclosure, in a third grade group, versus using conversation alone. The researcher formulated two groups of students to participate in this study. The first group of participants included seven third grade students who were currently enrolled in the Hayward Elementary School and were given an icebreaker game to play in a group setting during four sessions. The second group of participants also included seven third grade students who were currently enrolled at Hayward Elementary School but used conversation alone in a group setting. The researcher attended each of the four sessions per group and observed and documented

communication. The data gathered was measured by using a performance rubric scale (see Appendix A). This short range study began in early October and concluded in late November of the 1999-2000 school year.

The results indicate that using the icebreaker game, opposed to using conversation alone was much more effective in opening up communication and self-disclosure. The results indicate without a doubt that the icebreaker game outperformed conversation alone by getting students to self-disclose and communicate ninety percent more frequently.

In conclusion, using an icebreaker game in a third grade group setting is an effective tool in opening communication and self-disclosure.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

       The purpose of this study was to determine the effects an icebreaker game had on students communication in a small group session versus communication in a small group session using conversation alone.. This chapter will provide a discussion of the documented results from the study. These results will be related in qualitative form. A summary of the results will conclude this chapter and provide an introduction to Chapter 5.

Discussion of Results

       In order to answer the research questions, the researcher formulated a performance rubric scale to determine communication in each group session (see Appendix A). The performance rubric scale consisted of four ratings: minimal performance, basic performance, proficient performance, and advanced performance. Each student was given the option to talk about how the person in the picture was feeling on the game or if they ever felt that way. The students were only documented if they communicated if they ever felt the way the person in the picture was feeling and followed up by explaining why. If they only discussed how the person in the picture was feeling, for example, happy or sad, they were not documented.

       The results will be presented by addressing the group sessions using the icebreakers game and conclude with the control group using conversation alone. The highest possible score proving

that all communication areas were advanced on the rubric scale, is one-hundred and twelve.

There were seven students in each session and four questions with four possible points. Each

individual

student who self-disclosed in the group session was measured on the rubric scale, and were able

to earn a maximum of sixteen points and a minimum of four points using the rubric scale.

Each individual student who self-disclosed was measured on the performance rubric scale.

Using the performance rubric scale (see Appendix A), on the first group counseling

session when presented with the icebreaker game the final score of the first session was sixty-

one out of one hundred and twelve. This included five students who made a self-disclosing

statement; the other two students in the group did not self-disclose during this session. The

students in this group scored an average of two, which is **basic**, on use of eye contact, an average

of one on use of facial expressions, which is **minimal performance**, an average of two on

gestures and vocal variety, **basic**, and an average of two for identifying feelings in self and others,

basic. The second session score was four documented self-disclosures and the final score was

thirty-four out of one hundred and twelve. The averages were as follows: two for eye contact,

two in facial expression, two in gestures and vocal variety, and three in identified feelings in self

and others. The third session ending score was five self-disclosing statements with a total of

fifty-one out of one hundred and twelve. The averages were as follows: three in demonstration

of eye contact, three in facial expressions, two in use of gestures and vocal variety, and three in

identifying feelings in self and others. The final session using the icebreakers game resulted in

six self-disclosing statements with a final score of sixty-five out of one hundred and twelve. The

averages were as follows: three in eye contact, three in facial expression, two in gestures and vocal variety, and three in identifying feelings in self and others.

The control group consisted of seven second grade students in a small group setting using conversation alone (See Appendix B). The first session resulted in three students self-disclosing statements with a final score of twenty-six out of one hundred and twelve. The averages were as follows: three in eye contact, three in facial expressions, two in gestures and vocal variety, and

one in identifying feelings in self and others. The second session resulted in four self-disclosing statements with a final score of thirty-seven out of one hundred and twelve. The averages were as follows: three in eye contact, two in facial expressions, two in gestures and vocal variety, and two in identifying feelings in self and others. The third session resulted in two self-disclosing statements with a final score of sixteen out of one hundred and twelve. The averages for this session are as follows: three for eye contact, two for facial expression, two for gestures and vocal variety, and one for identifying feelings in self and others. The final group session concluded in three self-disclosing statements with a final score of thirty-two out of one hundred and twelve. The final averages are as follows: three for eye contact, three for facial expressions, two for gestures and vocal variety, and three for understanding feelings in self and others (See Appendix B).

Summary

In summary, the qualitative data proposed that the majority of students communicated more freely when using the icebreaker game compared to using conversation alone. The researcher found that the majority of feelings communicated in the small group setting took place while using the icebreaker game, when students used conversation alone, the number of feelings communicated in the small group setting were lower than the group using the icebreaker game.

1

THE EFFECT OF AN ICEBREAKER GAME ON COMMUNICATION IN A THIRD GRADE

GROUP COUNSELING SESSION

by

Kelly R. Linton

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Master of Science Degree
With a Major in

Guidance and Counseling K-12

Approved: <u>2</u> Semester Credits

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CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Summary

      The purpose of this study was to determine if students will communicate their feelings more freely using an icebreaker game versus using conversation alone in a small group counseling session. The participants involved in this study were third grade students who were currently enrolled at Hayward Elementary School. The first group consisted of seven third grade students who were given an icebreaker game to play during four group sessions. The second group of participants consisted of seven third grade students who used conversation alone in four group counseling sessions. The researcher used a performance rubric scale to determine the results of this study. The researcher calculated each student individually. If a student did not self-disclose they were not documented on the performance rubric scale. If the student did self-disclose, the researcher used her observations and the performance rubric scale to determine the concluding results.

Discussion of Conclusions:

      The investigator discovered that there was a significant difference in the amount of open communication between the two groups. The investigator found that in a small group setting,

students communicated more freely when using the icebreaker game compared to using conversation alone.

In reviewing and calculating the results of both groups, the researcher concluded that there was a substantial increase in feelings communicated using the icebreaker game in a small group setting versus feelings communicated using conversation alone. The results of this study indicated

that the use of the icebreaker game increased self-disclosure by ninety percent compared to using conversation alone.

Recommendations

Application

Based on the results of this study, using an icebreaker game in a small group counseling session will allow students to communicate their feelings more freely compared to using conversation alone. Based on other research findings, it is supported that the use of a game will benefit communication. Researchers have found that games can be a medium to express their experiences as well as their feelings about themselves. "Play is the language in which children communicate, they must confront their pain experimentally through play (Norton and Norton, 1997)." Because of the substantial increase in communication when using the icebreaker game versus using conversation alone, it is   highly recommended that counselors use an icebreaker game in a small group session to enhance communication and self-disclosure.

Further Research

Because there was very little research done in this area, I recommend that more research

be done. Although there has been some research done in this area, there is very little recent research on this topic. It would be beneficial if counselors working in the field would share their experiences and offer suggestions. Further research on this topic should be done to better determine the effects an icebreaker game has on communication in a group setting in the schools.

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Performance Rubric Scale: Appendix A

COMMUNICATION

Communication   Grade 3   1999-2000

1. Use of eye contact to gain   1 2 3 4
   interpersonal communication

2. Use of facial expressions   1 2 3 4

3. Use of gestures and vocal variety   1 2 3 4

4. Identified feelings in self and understood the   1 2 3 4
   feelings others might have

Name of Counselor_____   Grade 3

Ratings
Advanced   4
Proficient   3
Basic   2
Minimal   1

MINIMAL PERFORMANCE	BASIC	PRO.	ADV
Rarely Demonstrated eye identified contact, no gestures or vocal variety. Did not identify feelings in self or understand the feelings others might have.	Frequently demonstrated eye contact. Showed some facial expression. No gestures or vocal variety	Showed eye contact when appropriate, demonstrated body language when appropriate, demonstrated on occasion, gestures and vocal variety	Successfully feelings in self and understood the feelings others might have. Appropriate use of eye contact, gestures, and vocal variety.

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Results Chart: Appendix B

Group 1/Icebreaker Game	Group 2/Conversation Alone
Session 1: 61 out of 112	Session 1: 26 out of 112
Session 2: 34 out of 112	Session 2: 37 out of 112
Session 3: 51 out of 112	Session 3: 16 out of 112
Session 4: 65 out of 112	Session 4: 32 out of 112