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Evaluation of The Yello Dyno Child Protection Program

Now in the fifth year of research, The ***Yello Dyno Child Protection Program™*** is grounded in scientifically based research, which provides evidence that the program will help protect children from child predators as well as reduce violence and illegal drug use. Incidences of child abuse, drug abuse, peer pressure, Internet safety, sexual abuse, and violent kids are handled in a safer manner by students and reported to responsible adults. Conflict resolution is accomplished when children learn how to recognize and step out of dangerous situations. Children apply the “Tricky People” concept to behavior that is dishonest or dangerous to their safety. The *Yello Dyno* safety skills become a natural foundation for avoiding high-risk behaviors such as substance abuse (drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, prescription medicines, etc.), which are introduced and encouraged by peers. The results of the 2006 –2007 study reinforce the findings reported.

Self-Efficacy: The value of prevention education is difficult to qualify. The question is always one of self-efficacy: will a child, particularly a young child, be able to apply the knowledge in real life situations. Schools have acknowledged that students come forward with disclosures of “Tricky People” on a regular basis.

Adverse Effects: There were no adverse effects noted during the delivery of the curriculum. There could be a situation arise where the student could relay a story or situation that he or she have been confronted with. These incidents could cause the student to experience emotional outbreak or stress in reliving these experiences. Instructors are aware of policy that specifies the protocol for handling and reporting such situations. During the course of this investigation no such incidents were noted. Several positive instances, quite dramatic in their nature with children saving their own lives, did occur with students who were involved in the program or had previously been involved in the curriculum.

The research associated with ***Yello Dyno Child Protection Program*** reveals the ability of very young students to understand and retain the knowledge gained by the program. This is a significant accomplishment.

In the 2006-2007 Research, Grades K through 5th, both treatment and control groups were found to be homogenous at the start up of the program. In all cases the students in the treatment group far out performed the control group students on post-test results. The results of the treatment group students in grades 1, 2, and 3 display some interaction effects and the ease in which the knowledge is transferred between students. It also displays the potential for long-term outcomes associated with the ***Yello Dyno Curriculum***.

➤ **Evaluation Overview:**

The evaluation of the project will be completed to assess the effectiveness of the *Yello Dyno Curriculum* in public school elementary classes. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine how effective the curriculum is in creating changes in the knowledge of students participating in class instruction. The assessment will be completed for students in the target population.

- Instruments were utilized to measure the difference in knowledge and skills related to the expressed goals and objectives of the curriculum.
- The evaluation was conducted in a manner that produced quantitative data that was suitable for examining project outcomes and providing feedback for project guidance.
- Measures that were sensitive to the grade level and across demographically different populations were used to ascertain the level of knowledge and skill gain.

➤ **Methodology:**

The collection of the data associated with the project was a collaborative effort between the schools, Yello Dyno trainers, and Research and Educational Services (REdS). REdS is a Texas-based evaluation and research group with a long history of successful completion of both federal and state program evaluations. Data collection was completed in a fashion that was sensitive to the needs of the school campus and with a minimum of intrusion and was appropriate for the grade levels where instruction was provided. Students were given a pre-test prior to the beginning of instruction and a post-test at the completion of curriculum delivery. The testing was completed in the classroom and at the time students typically attend Yello Dyno instruction.

➤ **Reliability of Outcome Measures:**

The instruments developed for collecting data in the Yello Dyno Program were created by collaboration between the evaluator of the project and the instructors who work daily with the student population served. This was done to create a format that would be easy for students to respond to and to utilize the experience of both groups in putting together a measure that would reflect the lessons taught and be usable by a student population who may have very limited language and reading skills. Response to the items is very much like coloring objects that students do in the daily routine at school. The protocol for administration uses a script to help a teacher to refrain from injecting their own values and beliefs. Items related to substance use are not included in early grades due to lack of knowledge and exposure by this age group. These items would generate the baseline effect and not contribute to any changes generated by the curriculum.

➤ **Validity of Outcome Measures:**

The outcome measures were developed by the staff of *Yello Dyno* and reviewed by the evaluator. The measures were field tested in a variety of settings during the first year of the evaluation project. The instruments were tested to ascertain their validity in documenting the change in knowledge that was associated with participation in the curriculum. The instruments were developed to be grade appropriate for the students involved in the program. Instruments were developed to solicit useful data from all students engaged in the program. There was a concern for language and reading skills being a criteria for completing the measures. The instruments were designed to be effective with students in early grades who may not have advanced language or reading skills. The number of items was held to a minimum and the choices per item were also held to a minimum. Field-testing of the instruments indicated the instruments were adequate to measure knowledge changes and could be completed by students in the grades associated with the program delivery.