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The Case For Explicit, Skills-Based Resilience Building Instruction

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THE CASE FOR EXPLICIT, SKILLS-BASED

RESILIENCE BUILDING INSTRUCTION

By

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A DISSERTATION

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Abstract

The study of resilience in young children has captured the attention of many researchers over the last twenty years. A number of research questions about resilience have focused on the definition and use of the term, conditions under which resilience is likely to develop in children, the characteristics/traits associated with resilience, and how to best teach resilience. While there have been considerable advances in the ways that we think about and teach resilience, there is still much debate about how and when to teach resilience (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012). In addition, the procedures and methods used to provide scholarly explanations to these questions have varied and are diverse. The research questions associated with this study were crafted with this debate in mind.

> ➢ What impact might explicit, skills-based resilience building instruction have on preschool students' levels of resilience as indicated by both teacher and parent perceptions on a valid measure of social competence? And;

> ➢ How might the results be organized, given levels of significance, to inform a hierarchical approach to learning these skills-based resilience building strategies?

The research questions took into account the conditions required for learning new skills (skills-based vs. standards-based), as well as, the conceptual framework's assumption that the skills should be taught sequentially and collaboratively. The teachers and parents whose perceptions were the foundation of this study are associated with students who were enrolled in two of the four afternoon, half-day, four year-old preschool sessions in the Jones Township School District in the mid-Atlantic United States. One of these

sections served as the control group in which the teacher used the typically prescribed curriculum that includes five standards addressing social-emotional development (2014 New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards- NJPTLS) required by the district. The other section featured a prescribed series of twelve 30-minute explicit skills-based resilience building activities presented weekly by the classroom teacher over a twelve-week period. This instruction supplemented the district required instruction that took place in the control group section. This study employed quantitative methods in order to explore teacher and parent perspectives of preschool students' levels of resilience after the use of explicit skills-based resilience building instruction (ESRBI) over a twelve-week period. Pre and post-test data secured from participants from the Social Competence Scale SCS- parent and teacher versions yielded Likert scale data for analysis in this study. The results of this study indicated that the use of ESRBI did have a statistically significant impact on the identified treatment group in the study. The results also indicated that the academic benefits associated with ESRBI were considered to be statistically significant. Finally, ordinal item analysis data to inform a sequential or hierarchical approach to ESRBI was derived from the work.

University of New England

Doctor of Education

Educational Leadership

This dissertation was presented

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DEDICATION

This work is first and foremost dedicated to my brother, Anthony P. Maschi. His life and death have been the inspiration of this study and my entire doctoral journey. Without the indescribable impact Anthony has had on my life, I would not be the scholar practitioner that I am today. I share every aspect of this work and the successes and accolades it brings, with him. I would also like to recognize the incredible sacrifice of my wife, Kimberly Maschi. She has supported me unconditionally throughout my doctoral pursuits and is the reason I have been able to reach this incredible personal and professional place. I also dedicate this work to my children, Gianna Maschi, Alexa Maschi, Olivia Maschi, and Ryan Maschi. They are my motivation to be a better father and person and without them my life would be incomplete. Finally, I dedicate this work to my parents, Bruno and Johanna Maschi, to whom I owe everything as their parental sacrifices have positioned me for wonderful opportunities and life experiences.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Introduction

Recent mass violence incidents impacting school children in the United States

have had far reaching effects on schools, families, and communities. A photo of a young

student looking out the window of her school bus on the first day back to school after the

Newtown, Connecticut school shooting tragedy in late 2012 inspired research related to

this topic. One could wonder what it was about the student that had her returning to

school while so many others were unable to re-engage. Many discussions at that time

focused on a particular quality or personality trait such as courage or perseverance to

explain how some humans seem to bounce back from adversity while others do not.

Most clinicians and those interested in the study of social emotional learning knew that

what was actually being observed were human beings reacting to adversity with

extraordinary levels of resilience. Taket, Nolan, and Stagnitti (2014) describe resilience

succinctly and their straightforward definition has relevance to this work. They assert

that resilient children are those who are able to make progress even when faced with

difficult life experiences (p. 289). Questions surrounding resilience, particularly how to

define resilience and how children become resilient have captured the attention of several

researchers over the last decade (Coholic, 2011; Ginsberg, 2011; Kolar, 2011; Nelson et

al., 2015; Shastri, 2013; Taket, Nolan, & Stagnitti, 2014).

The Case for Explicit, Skills-Based Resilience Building Instruction

The intent of this work was to examine resilience and resilience building

instruction in the early years. Further, the work might extend the literature to provide

support for the use of explicit, skills-based resilience building instruction versus more

traditional, implicit resilience instruction- that tends to be standards-based. There was also potential to identify a specific, research-based, replicable, and explicit skills-based resilience building instruction (ESRBI) hierarchy/framework/curriculum for educators to implement to build resilience and capacity with preschoolers.

According to Mayr and Ulich (2009), "even for preschool and other teachers who deal with children professionally, the well-being of the children in their care is of paramount importance beyond all pedagogical methods and trends" (p. 45). This work was contributive in that the emotional and physical well being of the child is positioned centrally in the overall education of the whole child. It served as a springboard for cognitive development and establishes the need for thorough investigation within the educational leadership research community. This study examined the effects of explicit skills-based resilience building instruction (ESRBI), broadly defined as research supported skills-based qualities, on levels of resilience in preschool children. The first goal of this study was to establish that ESRBI would have a positive impact on resilience levels in the early developmental years. The second goal of this work was to demonstrate that moving from broader measures toward skill-based measures of resilience with preschool students would extend the existing resilience research. As the research progressed and was finalized, findings from the study were made available to PreK-12 educational leaders to promote the use of ESRBI to improve student outcomes via increased resilience. Data from this study was designed to inform future research, educational practice, and the social-emotional developmental curriculums schools employ to compliment the academic deliverables offered to students.

Explicit skills-based resilience building instruction (ESRBI).

ESRBI was explicit instruction that supplemented, but did not supplant the NJPTLS standards that are described later in this section. For the purpose of this work, ESRBI was a weekly, consecutive, series of twelve 30-minute explicit teacher modules in two key areas of preschool resilience building instruction, namely pro-social/communication skills and emotional regulation skills. The twelve modules covered the following skills-based, resilience building areas of preschool development:

➢ Accepting things that don't go your way

➢ Coping with failure

➢ Thinking before acting

➢ Resolving problems with friends and family

➢ Calming down when excited or frustrated

➢ Following directions

➢ Understanding the feelings of others

➢ Controlling temper/strong emotions

➢ Sharing with others

➢ Helping others

➢ Listening to other points of view

➢ Giving suggestions and opinions without being bossy

These pro-social/communication and emotional regulation skills were aligned with the parent and teacher versions of the Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group's (CPPRG) 1995- Social Competence Scale (SCS). The SCS teacher scale also included an academic skills subscale, which was used as an additional source of data. These scales,

both teacher and parent served as a pre and post-test for this work and yielded a mean score from a five-point Likert scale. This is discussed further in the Methodology section of this work.

The New Jersey preschool teaching and learning standards (NJPTLS).

The NJPTLS (2014) had five standards dedicated to the social emotional development of preschool children, these included (p. 20):

➢ Children demonstrate self-confidence

➢ Children demonstrate self-direction

➢ Children identify and express feelings

➢ Children exhibit positive interactions with other children and adults

➢ Children exhibit pro-social behaviors

The NJPTLS was a comprehensive standards-driven document that was revised in 2014. It served as the foundation for preschool curricula throughout the State of New Jersey at the time of the study. For each of the standards outlined above, the standards provided preschool educators effective teaching practices and indicators to monitor progress. In addition to the five social/emotional development standards, the NJPTLS included an additional 156 standards within the preschool content areas.

Statement of the Problem

Preliminary reviews of the literature in this area suggest that many have attempted to define and characterize resilience (Coholic, 2011; Naglieri, 2010; Meyer, 2008; Kolar, 2011; Unger & Liebenberg, 2011), have organized their research to predict a set(s) of skills associated with resilience (Brooks, 1997; Carlson, 2012; Wu et al., 2013), and contributed to the waves of thinking associated with the topic (Kolar, 2011; Meyer, 2008;

Richardson, 2002). The researcher was interested, as a result of earlier works, in providing further specificity with regard to what works most effectively to build resilience in preschool aged children. The researcher hypothesized that explicit skills-based resilience building in young people was needed to determine the most effective educational practices.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research was to examine teacher and parent perspectives of preschool student resilience using explicit skills-based resilience building instruction (ESRBI) as measured by pre and post-test responses on a valid and reliable social competence measure- the SCS.

The researcher envisioned three phases to the study including the first dedicated to an extensive review of the literature in order to situate the proposed study in the current base, another to examine a conceptual framework that would guide the work, and to determine the ESRBI factors that would be the focus of this inquiry. The second phase was to focus on potential subjects, research-based resiliency measures/tools, and methodology. The final phase would consist of a process to identify the meaning of findings, analysis and further considerations.

Research Focus

The researcher analyzed how the prescribed use of ESRBI affects students' scores on a particular research-based, valid and reliable resilience measurement tool. Pre-and post-test data provided a scholarly lens to consider the following research questions. Was there a significant effect on resilience associated with the provision of ESRBI? Can the results be organized according by given levels of significance, to inform a hierarchical or

orderly approach to learning resilience? While some students were exposed to this prescribed course of ESRBI as a supplement to standards-based instruction, others were following the 2014 New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards (NJPTLS), published by the New Jersey Department of Education that were in place at the time of the study.

The Conceptual Framework

According to Sinclair (2007), "a theoretical framework can be thought of as a map or travel plan" (p.39). The directional nature of this description was helpful to the researcher who desired to organize and manage his work. The use and recognition of a meaningful theoretical framework promotes the scholarly potential of a study and helps to solidify its place in the literature.   During the course of this research, the author had considered several theoretical frameworks to provide meaning and guidance to this study of resilience, with three in particular that have dominated the researcher's scholarly attention. These theories inform the researcher about the who, the what, and the how's of teaching resilience.

Who- Family Systems What- Maslow's Hierarchy How- Social Constructivism

Figure 1. Conceptual framework map

Family systems.

Family systems theory was the first theory that secured the attention of the researcher due to the family's role in educating the child. Essentially, family systems theory dictates that issues or problems one family member has are part of a larger

dysfunctional arrangement within the family (Nievar et al., 2014). At the other end of the spectrum, individual successes and resilience are a reflection of the strength of the family bond. According to Nievar et al. (2014), "some families beat the odds in at-risk situations through vigilant, proactive parenting and involvement in their child's life (p. 320). Nievar et al.'s (2014) work focused on family systems in response to stress and other at-risk situations. The researchers concluded that a healthy home environment could help with the development of "attachment and self-regulation" (p. 332). Nievar, Moske, Johnson, and Chen (2014) also pointed out that "a positive, enriched environment aids in the development of self-regulation" (p. 332). The family systems approach was hard to ignore given that 3 and 4 year old children are subject to the conditions in the home. Another feature of family systems theory related to this inquiry was the phenomena of members in the same family; siblings for example, bounce back from a crisis or tragedy in different ways. With this in mind, one could focus the work of resilience exclusively on families. Ultimately though, it was determined that the theory did not provide enough overall direction to answer the research questions associated with this study.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

The theory that provided the most guidance at the time of the study was Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs. There were two primary reasons that the researcher decided to use Maslow's work. The first had to do with where, in Maslow's well-known hierarchy, resiliency/resilience instruction and readiness resided; the second was the potential that the hierarchy provided as a model for the explicit skills-based work that has been proposed. The researcher has always found the hierarchical structure provided by Maslow applicable to many discussions about human motivation both in the professional

literature and everyday life. Maslow's motivation theory has not only been the framework that many scholars have used to organize their research, but according to Sinclair (2007), "successful theoretical constructs such as Maslow's pyramidal hierarchy of needs…can provide inspiring mental images of frameworks that have anchored previous knowledge and theory development" (p.39). It was this mental image that had inspired the researcher to use this framework for this analysis of resilience.

As mentioned earlier, the most important utilization of the hierarchy of needs for this work was in the framework's ability to predict the best level of need/motivation to teach the skills-based resilience concepts for analysis. Maslow's (1943) theory provided the following order in which needs should be met in order to achieve self-actualization. The needs started with physiological or basic needs such as breathing, food, water, and shelter. After these needs are met the individual can have safety needs met; security in employment, family, health and property are common needs at this level. Beyond these needs for an individual, needs at the third level of the hierarchy, are those related to love and belonging in the areas of family, friends and intimate partners. The first three levels of the hierarchy are often associated with the more tangible of our needs and motivations, while the tiers at the top are reserved for higher order psycho-social emotional needs/motivations. At the fourth and next to highest level, according to Maslow, is an individual's need for esteem. This area is not limited to self-esteem as it also includes confidence, achievement, and respect (Maslow, 1943). This level provided for a critical juncture in this theoretical framework discussion, as this was the level at which the researcher believed ESRBI was most likely to impact resilience building efforts. This was not to say that these efforts are not encouraged while individuals are at other levels in

the hierarchy. The fifth and highest level in Maslow's (1943) pyramid is called "self-actualization" (p. 380). Here the individual has the motivation to contemplate morality, creativity, and spontaneity among others. Those few who reach and remain at this level are highly satisfied and content. Having reviewed the major components of Maslow's theory it was possible to see how the ability to bounce back or bend in difficult situations might situate itself in this model.

The other benefit of the model within this study was the potential for the work to propose a hierarchy determining which skills were most likely to promote resilience building. As mentioned earlier it would be advantageous and contributive to the literature, should the researcher be able to develop a hierarchy from the data, to guide future efforts to provide ESRBI. There were several contemporary works that highlighted the hierarchical nature in acquiring resilience in young children. Nolan, Taket, and Stagnitti (2014) looked at the role of the preschool teacher with respect to resilience building and noticed that "in order for children to be emotionally healthy, socially adjusted and be able to achieve academic success, they need to have the ability to manage their emotions, and establish and maintain interpersonal relationships" (p. 596). This observation was consistent with work conducted by Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011), which looked at more than two hundred social-emotional programs with over two hundred thousand school-aged children. This work was considered one of the larger meta-studies of its kind. The researcher was aware of the implications of the quotation provided above. When the authors stated *in order for…they need*- it mirrored the hierarchical lens favored by the researcher (Maslow, 1943). Here the research was explicit with respect to order; first you must have emotional regulation

and interpersonal gains, then academic success. Another example of Maslow's (1943) influence was found in the work of Mayr and Ulich (2009). According to Mayr and Ulich (2009), when describing preschool educators and staff "they know that learning and developmental processes succeed best when children are healthy and happy" (p. 45). Essentially then, happy and healthy children need to exist before pedagogical methods and trends can take hold.

Maslow's (1943) work and subsequent works continued to be recognizable to many and offered the audience a vivid visual that is easy to understand without much explanation. The hierarchical nature of the model provided for a ground up approach to motivation that had yet to appear in the literature. The model also was logical, in that, if you can satisfy the needs at any particular level, then you can move up to meet the needs of the next level. People gravitate toward the idea of a theoretical framework that provides a roadmap, because it can shape thinking on a matter without all of the complicated theoretical explanations that often cloud one's understanding of the basic theoretical structure. The intuitive nature of the model was its biggest strength. It was this phenomenon in the literature that supported the researcher's theoretical lens.

Social constructivism.

The conceptual framework of this study has identified family systems theory and Maslow's hierarchy as the "who and what" with regard to the learning of resilience, social constructivism was the how. Based largely on the work of Vygotsky (1978), social constructivist theory asserts that learning and knowing is a process that is bound by social context and interaction, as opposed to individual enlightenment. Collaboration and shared experiences are the cornerstones of new understanding. Kalpana (2014) noted,

"by interacting with others students get the opportunity to share their views and thus generate a shared understanding related to the concept" (p. 28). This was furthered by Mathis (2011), "in social constructivism, language, mental, and social development are supported and enhanced by others through social interactions" (p. 67). Social constructivism presented a shift in educational and learning theory as it minimized the role of individual discovery and placed an emphasis on the co-created, collaborative experiences humans had with one another.

One of Vygotsky's major contributions to learning theory was his Zone of Proximal Development. This zone was conceptualized as a threshold where new learning occurred with support from adults. Vygotsky explained this concept as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

These important features of social constructivism as the third theoretical layer of the conceptual framework directly impacted the Methods section of this work. The prescribed activities that make up the twelve-week ESRBI were designed in the Vygotskian traditions of collaboration and co-creation and were considered the most developmentally appropriate for preschool aged students. Kalpana's (2014) work highlighted this important study specific concept "children learn more and enjoy learning more when they are actively involved. In a constructivist classroom students are actively involved, the environment is democratic, the activities are interactive and student-centered and the teacher facilitates the process of learning in which students are encouraged to be responsible" (p. 29).

Assumptions and Limitations of the Work

Maslow's (1943) work from a scientific perspective has garnered much criticism since the theory became popular in the 1950's and remains popular today. From the research design that Maslow employed (biographies of mostly self-actualized men from the United States) to the subjectivity of the findings, there has been much to debate about this particular theoretical framework (Maslow, 1943). Wahba and Bridwell (1976), provide one of the most critical reviews of the work, "there is little evidence for the ranking of needs Maslow described, or even the existence of a definite hierarchy at all" (p.212). Others described issues associated with generalizing the theory given Maslow's limited sample and inattention paid to culture and gender. Most that have come out against Maslow's (1943) work have questioned the exclusivity of the levels of need, arguing that needs in more than one area can be met at the same time. As with any theoretical framework, Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs is not without its critics.

The limitations of the work extend beyond the conceptual framework and into the proposed methodology. Small sample size, the age of the subjects, and the reliability of the research tool were important to discuss here. This study ultimately included a maximum of 20 preschool aged students in two classrooms; 10 students who were exposed to ESRBI in one classroom as a supplement to the NJPTLS and 10 student in the other who were not exposed to the supplement. The generalizability of the research findings will be limited, due to the small sample size, even amongst preschoolers and when discussing other age students. The age of the subjects would also be considered a limitation in that many preschool students were experiencing school for the first time and normally occurring and developmentally appropriate adjustment and attention issues may

serve as a barrier to the supplemental ESRBI proposed. To mitigate this issue the research was conducted exclusively with 4 year-old students who have moved up from the 3 year-old preschool classes. Finally, the peer-reviewed, scholarly work on the reliability of the Social Competence Scale (SCS) as it relates to preschool resilience building was limited (Howell, Graham-Bermann, Czyz, & Lilly, 2010).

Significance and Links to Educational Leadership

The study and knowledge of young peoples' acquisition of resilience related skills are an important aspect of public health and educational leadership. Recent studies in the area of resilience in young children have shown that there is a link between teachers' perceptions of prosocial/emotional regulation skills and adult outcomes (Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015; Moffit et al., 2011). In fact Jones, Greenburg and Crowley (2015) recently published work used the SCS, the research instrument central to this study, and commented, "our results demonstrate the predictive power of teacher-measured prosocial skills" (p. e5). Jones et al.'s (2015) quantitative study provided the literature base with compelling evidence that further studies that focus on these areas of development are necessary.

Further research-based understanding of resilience building in young children is also of critical value to 21st century school leaders. The contemporary school leader must be concerned with the social or personal welfare of their students in addition to children's academic progress. Schools are only second to the child's home in terms of the influence it can have on social-emotional growth and development. To this end, the professional standards adhered to by most school leaders, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards of 2015, include a new standard that speaks directly to

this link. According to ISLLC's (2015) fifth standard entitled "Community of Care for Students: An educational leader promotes the academic success and personal well being of every student by promoting the development of an inclusive school climate characterized by supportive relationships and a personalized culture of care" (p.1). This standard is in addition to ISLLC's emphasis on understanding the political, social, economic, and cultural environments within which our schools exist. The proliferation of mass violence is the most provocative reason school leaders must continue to explore means to promote resilience building in young people (ISLLC, 2015). The potential for meaningful educational impact using an explicit, skills based approach to teaching resilience, should concern all school leaders.

Definitions of Key Terms

- ESRBI- Explicit Skills-Based Resilience Building Instruction- refers to the model that the researcher intends to promote throughout this work as an alternative to more traditional, standards based approach to teaching students how to be resilient.

- Family Systems Theory- is a theory that focuses on the entire family as a system, rather than a set of individuals. Something that impacts one member of the family impacts the entire system.

- ISLLC- Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium- a group of professional school leader organizations in the United States that have attempted to codify a set of standards for principals, superintendents, and other school leaders.

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs- a motivation theory that requires basic needs be met before more advanced needs like learning can be accomplished.

- NJPTLS- New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards 2014- the New Jersey State approved educational standards for preschool. This research will focus on the five standards dedicated to the social/emotional development of preschool children.

- Social Constructivism- a learning theory that emphasizes the social and collaborative aspects of learning as opposed to individual learning that is not contextual.

- Standards-Based Instruction- An instructional approach that focuses teaching students a prescribed set of standards and assessing learning via those standards.

Conclusion

The topic of resilience has been the subject of numerous educational conversations across the county for many years in light of students' exposure to violence, crime, poverty and other negative societal influences. The conversation is intriguing for a variety of reasons but none more ubiquitous than the literature's focus on the "bounce back" phenomena associated with the study of resilience. In many ways the question of why and what are the conditions under which one can bounce back have continued to drive current research in this area. The research has suggested that resilience is not a fixed personality trait, but a set of learned skills (Fried & Chapman, 2012). This work focused on the "how" we teach our children these resilience building skills in order to move toward a more skills-based, explicit approach to teaching and learning.

The next section of this work focuses on the research associated with resilience. There were two main focus areas associated with the resilience literature covered here. The first was to establish that explicit, school-based resilience training could have a

positive impact on student functioning and learning. The second was to demonstrate that the existing resilience research could be extended by moving from broad measures of resilience toward skill-based measures of resilience in students. The literature review, organized historically, will have provided the reader with a comprehensive overview of the development of resilience theory. It also addressed why the theory is critical to student functioning and well-being (Bernard, 1991; Brooks, 1997; Coholic, Eys, & Lougheed, 2012; Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984), trends in the research with regard to general/broad approaches used to teach resilience (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012; Durlak et al., 2011 Ginsburg, 2011), valid and reliable measurement tools associated with the study of resilience (Fried & Chapman, 2012; Coholic et al., 2012; Naglieri, Goldstein, & LeBuffe, 2010; Howell et al, 2010; Shastri, 2013; Sun & Stewart, 2007), and the current limitations of the research base.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

While relatively new to the world of educational peer-reviewed research, the literature associated with resilience and resiliency theory is both diverse and informative. With this growing diversity, however, a universally agreed upon definition of resilience has eluded the major scholarly contributors to the literature base. There are many reasons the phenomena of resilience lends itself to interpretation, among them is the fact that resilience has research roots in several of the social sciences. In fact, there are several seminal works in the area of resilience worthy of review that illuminate what this writer calls the "diffusion effect" associated with defining resilience. This effect describes the writer's observation that many scholars who have reported on resilience over the past five decades have failed to forward an explicit definition of resilience for scholarly review. While definitions have been promoted or postulated, universally agreed upon definitions forwarded for meaningful scholarly debate are sparse- therefore few have been scrutinized critically and comprehensively. This diffusion has contributed to the nuances noted theoretically and methodologically in many of the works cited. Additionally, there has been little agreement in the resilience literature about promoting best practices associated with the teaching and learning of resilience. These gaps in the existing literature make the work proposed important and potentially contributive.

The Development of Resilience Theory

In the early 1980s, an important work associated with resilience theory was published (Werner & Smith, 1982). This longitudinal study of nearly 700 children from varied and difficult backgrounds demonstrated that many children, despite adversity,

grew up to be contributing members of society. Werner and Smith (1982) were the first to assert that there was something that these success stories had in common. They focused on individual personality and the supports available in one's community (p. 111). This work inspired a surge in research attempting to identify the protective factors associated with overcoming adversity (Brooks, 1997; Masten, 1998; Morrison et al. 1998), later described in the literature as the first wave of resilience research (Richardson, 2002). Another work central to the resilience research movement was the analysis provided by Garmezy, Masten, and Tellegen (1984) in which researchers studied the children of schizophrenic patients and found that most of these children enjoyed normal adulthood experiences despite extreme exposure to significant mental health stressors. This work narrows the focus of resilience to the individual characteristics or personality traits proposed to promote health and wellbeing.

Equally as influential as Werner and Smith (1982) was the seminal work of Rutter (1987) in which he concluded that resilience is less about how individuals are negatively impacted by risk, but the how and why some are able to overcome associated risks present in their lives. Rutter's (1987) work shifted the scholarly discussion from the effects of risk to how/why we adapt to risk. Later Garmezy (1991) offered his "triad of resiliency" to include personality disposition, a supportive family environment, and an external support system. All of these works lead to continued and important scholarly interest (Carlson 2012; Sun & Stewart, 2007) in what many have called levels of resilience- individual, family, and community. This concept will become important to the resilience literature for years to come.

The research problem

There are two main focus areas associated with this review of the resilience literature. The first is to establish that explicit, school-based resilience training can have a positive impact on student functioning. The second is to demonstrate that the existing resilience research can be extended by moving from broad measures of resilience toward skill-based measures of resilience in students. The literature review, organized historically, will provide the reader with a comprehensive overview of the development of resilience theory. It will also address why the theory is critical to student functioning and well-being (Bernard, 1991; Brooks, 1997; Coholic et al., 2012; Garmezy et al., 1984), the trend in the research of using skills-based approaches to teach resilience (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012; Durlak et al., 2011; Ginsburg, 2011; Jones et al., 2015), valid and reliable measurement tools associated with the study of resilience (Coholic et al., 2012; Fried & Chapman, 2012; Howell et al, 2010; Naglieri et al., 2010; Shastri, 2013; Sun & Stewart, 2007), and the current limitations of the research base.

The literature base will be explored to potentially identify an explicit, skills-based resilience building instruction (ESRBI) hierarchy/framework/curriculum that is research-based for educators to implement to build resilience and capacity with preschoolers.

Preliminary reviews of the literature in this area suggest that many have attempted to define and characterize resilience (Coholic, 2011; Kolar, 2011; Meyer, 2008; Naglieri, 2010; Unger et al, 2011), have organized their research to predict a set(s) of skills associated with resilience (Brooks, 1997; Carlson, 2012; Wu et al, 2013), and contributed to waves of thinking associated with the topic (Kolar 2011; Meyer, 2008; Richardson 2002). After a full analysis of the scholarly work that has come before, this work intends

to provide further specificity with regard to what works to build resilience and the path towards explicit skill building of the same.

The Purpose

The purpose of this research is to examine teachers' perspectives of preschool student resilience using explicit skills-based resilience building instruction (ESRBI) as measured by pre and post-test responses on a valid and reliable social competence measure.

Social science roots and perspectives on resilience

From some of the landmark work described in the opening of this review, and some from even before, the roots of the resilience phenomena have been in the social sciences. Educators, psychologists, and social workers have made critical contributions to the field of resilience research and have been credited with much of the foundational knowledge in most contemporary work. Bonnie Bernard's (1991) work was an example of one of the foundational works in the social sciences that has informed the debate. Reporting on the shift from what she calls the "pathological model" that was characteristic of 1980's research focusing on disease and illness was a move toward more preventative/risk-based 1990s work (Bernard, 1991, p. 5). Bernard (1991) argued that too much attention was paid to the diagnosis and the associated risk factors of diseases such as substance abuse and other mental health issues and focused on expanding the conversation to include the individuals' response to such distress (p. 5). This shift created a wave of research that began to focus on and identify the protective factors that preventative programs could address. Bernard's work is critical to the literature base in that she presented the idea of the "resilient child", or the whole child as a combination of

individual, family, and community factors that programs needed to address in a holistic way. The themes that emerged from Bernard's work can be found in many contemporary works related to resilience theory and her analysis helped to frame one of the most frequently cited categorical structures associated with the literature- *The Four Waves of Resilience Research* (Kolar, 2011; Meyer, 2008; Richardson, 2002).

A continuum- resilience research today

Before examining the waves of resilience research, a review of a contemporary work that borrowed from the solid foundational work is provided here to establish a marker on the resilience research continuum. Wu et al.'s (2013) work, for example, dedicated part of their review to the psychological underpinnings of the resilience research as they extend the literature base with a study of the neurobiology of resilience. With a focus on the impact and identification of individual psychological characteristics and the scholars who have written on the matter, Wu et al. (2013) identified several that are explicit in the literature including optimism (Scheier et al., 1989), cognitive reappraisal (Gross, 2002), active coping (Holahan & Moos, 1987), social support (Ozbay, Fetterling, Charney, & Southwick, 2008), and humor (Valliant, 1992). The findings of Wu et al. (2013) also focused on developmental factors important to the resilience discussion. These included "positive family functioning, supportive adults, planfulness, self-discipline" (p. 4) and others which have a direct impact on the development of protective factors. Wu et al. (2013) understood that "the developmental environment has significant effects on building and enhancing resilience from a young age impart clear messages for child rearing" (p.4). Wu et al. provided a sound argument that parental and community (school) influences are malleable and a potential area of intervention. Wu et

al.'s (2013) work would be considered part of the fourth wave of resilience research secondary to its neurobiological focus.

The four waves of resilience research. University of Utah's Glenn Richardson published an article in the Journal of Clinical Psychology in 2002 intended to describe the resiliency movement beyond the identification of qualities that seem to allow some to "bounce back" from a difficult situation. He described the resilience research in three waves so that his readers could appreciate the resilience phenomena beyond personal characteristics or qualities; this was, in essence, was the first wave of the resilience research. The second wave described the cycles and opportunities with regard to the "ups and downs" in life and the opportunities for what he calls disruption and reintegration, these are the opportunities for real growth and actualization. The third wave peers into the notion that it takes energy or motivation to reintegrate including where it is stored or where it originates. Richardson warns his audience that this wave of the movement is complicated as it encompasses many disciplines in the social sciences including biology, psychology, theology, and sociology. Richardson's work is the first in the literature to describe the evolution of the research in waves. Many have used this framework in their own work (Kolar, 2011; Meyer, 2008), with some extending Richardson's work to include a fourth wave (Lee 2012; Shastri, 2013).

The first wave of resilience research. The first wave of research is characterized by the shift previously noted in the work of Bernard (1991) from pathology to the strengths of the individual, or protective factors (Richardson, 2002). The debate surrounded the notion that people, despite facing adversity, had personal traits or character strengths that allowed them to overcome what was difficult around them.

Morrison, Robertson, and Harding (1998) provided an intriguing first wave account in the

literature. The authors of this article intended to examine the dynamics of resilience in

upper elementary Latino school children. The purpose posed by the researchers was to

gain a better understanding of the protective factors that were involved in placing

students in one of two identified groups: aggressive and struggling in school or

aggressive and not struggling in school. The protective factors examined were divided

into four areas including personal resilience, social support, school bonding, and parent

support (Morrison, Robertson, & Harding, 1998); this is reminiscent of Bernard's 1991

seminal work. The methods of analysis included classroom readiness behavior

inventories, self-description questionnaires, school membership scales, and student

perceptions of parenting involvement and supervision. Their findings revealed that

perceived parental supervision was the key variable in determining into which group the

students would fall. According to Morrison et al. (1998), "as a protective factor, parent

supervision rises above other variables in our study" (p. 224).

Another work associated with the first wave of resilience research that is

important to mention is Brooks (1997). In her article Brooks conducted an extensive

review of the literature to support the idea that schools can be as primary a source as any

other for incorporating resilience-building efforts to impact children and mitigate what

she calls the "hazards in their environment" (p. 69). Brooks (1997) described resilience

as the "ability to achieve positive outcomes despite risk" (p. 69) and she offered her

readers a history of the development of resilience research. Brooks made the case that

schools are in a unique position to offer these resilience-efforts primarily due to the

number of students who are served. She pointed out that while the family is, in fact, the

most significant learning environment to internalize protective factors, it is difficult to monitor if they are taught with any fidelity (Brooks, 1997). Brooks asserted that schools can strengthen resilience by focusing on the following six items: developing social competence, increasing bonding between students and caring adults, communicating high expectations for all students' academic and social performance, maximizing opportunities for meaningful participation of students in the school environment, promoting resilience in school teachers and staff, and creating partnerships with families and community resources (Brooks, 1997).

   The second wave of resilience research. The second wave of resilience research is characterized by a shift from merely the identification/location of protective factors to rich descriptions of how and why they work. The process or cycle by which protective factors interact with adversity and a theory of how/why the individual is able to return to homeostasis is the subject of wave two of the research.

   Carlson, Cicciatore, and Klimek (2012) provided insight into work that is characteristic of this wave. The authors of this qualitative article used the case study approach to suggest a lens for viewing resilience from the perspective of a refugee turned social worker. The refugee was described in the study as resilient, while his brother, arriving in the United States under very similar circumstances, had a very different outcome. Carlson et al. (2012) used a risk-resilience framework with an in-depth case study. The analysis was focused on several factors including outlook, coping mechanisms and religiosity, and connectedness (p. 259).   The authors used the conceptual framework sections of the article to focus on the psychological and emotional issues associated with being an unaccompanied refugee alongside a brief but meaningful

review of the resilience literature. The latter analysis narrowed the research to promote a

three tiered view of the factors most associated with resilient youth.   Starting with

internal or individual factors such as intelligence, easy temperament, and coping, the next

tier focused on family factors such as connectedness to a parent and evidence of parental

supervision/positive regard.

Finally, Carlson et al. (2012) speak to community factors such as being part of

prosocial organizations and relationships with community members that enhance or

predict the presence of resilience. Carlson et al. (2012) framed the factors that they

discuss from the literature based on the meaning and themes that emerged from the

interview of the Sudanese refugee who was the subject of the case study. This is not to

suggest that this is a weakness of their analysis, in fact, the writer would argue just the

opposite, essentially, they were able to support some of the major tenets of the research

with a rich, intimate portrait, of the phenomena of resilience.

In many ways the case is an illustration of the literature and it is more meaningful

because the study participant could also speak to the experiences of his deceased half-

brother who did not cope well with his circumstances. This interaction between

protective factors and adverse conditions creates the potential for disruption. Described

best by Richardson (2002) as "resilient reintegration" (p. 312), the idea is that there is a

period of time during which the individual's challenge is to adjust to the stressor during a

disruption. According to Richardson (2012), "resilience reintegrations result in the

identification or strengthening of resilient qualities" (p. 312). It is this process that

creates the phenomena described in the literature as bouncing back. The behavioral

momentum associated with successful resilient reintegrations leads to further

development of an individual's protective factors. There is also the potential however, for dysfunctional reintegration. According to Richardson (2002), "dysfunctional reintegration occurs when people resort to substances, destructive behaviors, or other means to deal with the life prompts" (p. 312). This is the opposite of resilience and it helps to describe the fracture in the case study described by Carlson et al. (2012). The difference between why some experience resilient reintegration and others dysfunctional reintegration is the essence of what Richardson (2002) referred to as the third wave for resilience research. Peer-reviewed works alongside foundational work from a variety of disciplines that scrutinize the energy and motivation associated with resilience reintegration are the subject of the third wave.

The third wave of resilience research.

The third wave of resilience theory according to Richardson (2002), borrows from a wide set of research whose aim is to address the question, where does the motivation to grow and adapt originate? A diverse mix of ecological, psychological, biological, theological and sociological explanations and theories are presented in the literature-from Abraham Maslow's work on motivation in the early 1940s to Werner and Smith's (1992) longitudinal work on high risk children. Maslow (1943) developed his now famous "hierarchy of needs" (p. 370) to highlight what motivated humans and the conditions under which they could move toward "self-actualization" (p. 374) - the pinnacle of his theoretical structure. Maslow's (1943) hierarchical structures can be found in several contemporary works (Mayr & Ulich, 2009; Nelson et al., 2014; Nolan et al., 2014). This wave is one of the most difficult to summarize. The third wave, which in many ways came long before even the first wave (Richardson, 2002), seeks to address

grand notions of the complexity of the human experience. This wave has been the subject of critical debate. According to Meyer (2008), "resilience theory seems to grapple with Richardson's "waves of resiliency" in uncovering the energy he describes" (p.24). This critique is followed with examples in the literature similar to Kolar (2011), for example, in which she provided a thorough account of the first two waves of resilience and only hinted at the third.

Scholars who have worked alongside Richardson in describing the third wave of research have an alternate description of the third wave that is important to note. Masten and Obradovic (2006) described the third wave in terms of "promoting resilience through prevention, intervention, and policy as a result of the concomitant rise of prevention science which emphasizes the importance of promoting competence as a strategy" (p. 21). This is an important alternate scholarly extension as the research most often associated with the third wave is likely to acknowledge the work of Masten and Obradovic. In fact, the study proposed herein will be situated within the third wave of the research on resilience theory.

The fourth wave of resilience research.

There is more agreement in the literature regarding the fourth and most current wave in the resilience research. According to Lee, Cheung, and Kwong (2012), the fourth wave focuses in on "advanced technologies of measurement, and analysis of multiple levels of functioning" (p.2). In other words, with medical/technological advancements researchers are using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and other neurobiological measures to isolate areas of the brain that may be significant to the study of resilience. Shastri's (2013) work builds on the work of Richardson (2002) who

describes the resilience literature in three waves and echoes Lee et al. (2012) calling for the identification of a fourth wave when he stated "increasing attention is drawn in recent years to the potential role that personality and neurobiology might play in determining resilience" (p. 225). Shastri's (2013) work provided a definitive example of the fourth wave of research that is now focused more on biology and genetics. A career psychiatrist, Shastri (2013) provided evidence that recent work with brain scans indicated, "the results of stress in the brain appear to include atrophy in the hippocampal neurons, other morphometric, and structural brain changes" (p. 229). Perhaps the most intriguing research question of this literature review was advanced by Shastri (2013), who asks whether resilience can "immunize against mental health adversities" (p. 224).

These fourth wave considerations are consistent with other fourth wave scholars who have advanced a wide range of neurological implications as a result of their work. Wu et al. (2013), for example, worked to advance their audience's understanding of the interrelationship between recent multi-disciplinary studies regarding the study of resilience. Their 2013 research provided analysis not only designed to promote the coping mechanisms associated with increased resilience, but to advance the literature base by including evidence of how maladaptive coping and the stress associated with various mental health conditions impact the individual (p. 1), particularly in relation to genetic, developmental, neurochemical, and psychological factors. The authors produced a comprehensive table in their work describing the entire central nervous system (CNS) and their associated genes. For example, the serotonergic system's 5-HTTLPR gene and the dopaminergic system's DAT 1 gene-which have various impacts on the ability to be resilient biologically. Wu et al.'s (2013) discussion on the neurochemical components of

resilience, as technically rich as their discussion on genes, offered the fourth wave's scholarly base a glimpse into the complexity of the brain's functioning between the synapses of neurons and their interaction with various neurotransmitters in the human brain.

Levels of resilience- individual, family, & community.

While some contributors to the resilience research have discussed the differences associated with the individual, family, and community levels of resilience (Carlson, 2012; Hall et al., 2009; Sun & Stewart, 2007), few have provided analyses that comprehensively address the complex interactions between the levels. This is critical as the debate about whether resilience is a fixed personality trait or a learned multi-dimensional, multi-level construct depends on the literature associated with the analysis of the interactions and interrelationships between the levels.   One study conducted by Kolar (2011) focused on "resilience on individual, social and societal levels" (p. 426). In relation to risk, this work helped to operationalize or organize protective factors in the context of self, others, and community. Kolar (2011) suggested individual-level factors might include personality traits, skills, and talents. The social-level included family and peer relationships and the support inherent in these connections, while societal-level factors were more macro and included "community, cultural norms, and school environment" (p. 426). Kolar's 2011 analysis provided the base with a continuum from the micro to the macro, a description of a particular protective factor, where the impact of its function lies, and the interaction between the levels.

The work of Sun and Stewart (2007) has also had an impact on this aspect of the resilience research. The authors set out to isolate test instruments that measure resilience

at three levels, the individual, family, and the community. Presenting the resilience literature to emphasize the need for accurate and valid measures to pull together the construct of resilience in the school setting, the authors provided a comprehensive overview of the levels' implications. Sun and Stewart (2007) also discussed the "salutogenic model" of resilience (p. 576), which departs from some thinking in the resilience debate and asserted that you do not need to have risk present in order to see resilience, the opposite of the risk/resilience framework. This perspective insisted on examining the healthy coping and adjustment of humans over the course on their lives. While it acknowledges the risks that interact often with competence and health, the model is strengths-based (Sun & Stewart, 2007).

The authors also described another perspective referred to in the literature, that being the "ecological perspective" (p. 576), which looked at the environment in which the child is expected to function. Sun and Stewart's (2007) perspective broke down the factors associated with resilience into three categories- individual, family, and community. Working with subjects in over 20 schools in Australia, Sun and Stewart (2007) administered the Resilience Scale (p. 579), developed by the California State Education Department, to over 2700 students. The Family Functioning Scale (p. 581) and the School Organization and Climate Scale (p. 581) were administered to over 1500 parents/caregivers during the study. Finally, nearly 500 teaching and non-teaching school staff members completed the Social Support Scale, the Social Capital Scale, and the Health Promoting School Scale (p. 582). The authors, using six different scales with three different groups were able to identify protective factors in students and families and gather diverse staff perspectives. They concluded that the scale that they used with

students "provides a validated tool for collecting data regarding the perception of students about resilience factors" (p. 596). Their work also pointed out that the family/parent scales that were used and mentioned previously were also a useful "tool both for measurement and to engage them (parents) in a dialogue about their perceptions of the school environment, family functioning, and social support for the family" (p. 597). Overall, this work and its use of various scales with all of the key ecological levels, offers comprehensive roadmap for the management of information/data gathering that is not limited to one measure or level. The levels of resilience literature is likely to continue to be part of the research due to the complex systems in which humans interact with adversity over extended periods of time.

Problems with the association of resilience.

With four waves of resilience theory and over fifty years of research with which to contend, an explicit operational definition of resilience has not been established in the literature base. There have been a number of scholars over the years that have addressed this problem directly in their work (Coholic et al., 2011; Kolar, 2011; Meyer 2008; Naglieri 2010). Called by some a "ubiquitous concept within the helping/health professions" the concept of resilience struggles to maintain the traction needed to form the deep understanding that is worthy of this phenomena (Coholic et al., 2011, p. 834). There are however some researchers who set out to address this gap or weakness in the literature.

Masten, Herbers, Cutuli, and Lafavor (2008) presented a systems-based definition:

Understanding resilience in any system requires the definition and measurement of two basic aspects of system function and adaptation: First, what does it mean for this system (e.g., a person or a school) to be doing well or operating effectively; and second, what can threaten or disturb the successful functioning or survival of the system? (p. 77).

This is an important description to consider as it helps to operationalize a loosely described research term. As far as the authors are concerned there are three components to examine: the positive or negative outcomes the system is experiencing, any particular threats to the survival of the system, and the protective factors and strengths the system has developed to sustain and/or withstand an imminent threat (Masten, Herbers, Cutuli, & Lafavor, 2008).

Ungar and Liebenberg (2011) sought to create an internationally sensitive definition of resilience, one that takes into the account the experiences of the "majority world" (p. 126). In other words, the authors argue that most of the research on resilience takes place in the Western world with little emphasis or attention paid to the vast differences in adversity and opportunity in what they term the Majority World or economically underdeveloped nations, marginalized populations, and eastern bloc countries (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). In order for resilience to be an internationally recognized, universal construct they proposed the following interpretation of resilience as the foundation of their work. "In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity

individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways" (Unger, 2008. p.225).   This is one of the most frequently cited definitions in the literature to date, due in large part to attempts made by the authors to address a diverse human experience.

Another example was provided by Lee et al., (2012) when they set out to operationalize a definition of resilience to advance research and policy. They pointed out that while diverse, broader definitions exist, collectively the literature base struggles to generalize and make sense of the results (Lee, Cheung, & Kwong, 2012). The authors promoted their definition by making sure there was agreement with the conditions of which the study of resilience exists. Lee et al. (2012) propose a narrow, working definition of resilience as "the process of effectively mobilizing internal and external resources in adapting to or managing significant sources of stress or trauma" (p.2).

Finally, Taket et al. (2014) proposed a definition of resilience based on their work with families and young children. It is one of the more contemporary definitions as well as the most concise. Taket et al. (2014), unlike the other work highlighted in this section, adhered to a definition that was closely aligned to that of a professional mental health association. According to Taket et al. (2014), "our definition is that resilient children are those who thrive and develop despite challenging circumstances" (p. 289). The authors credit the "American Psychological Association's (2011) definition of resilience as the ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress" (Taket et al., 2014, p. 289).

Valid and reliable tools to measure resilience.

The literature base is ripe with examples of reliable and valid tools to measure resilience in humans (Coholic et al., 2012; Fried & Chapman, 2012; Naglieri et al., 2010; Shastri, 2013; Sun & Stewart, 2007). Hartley (2012), from East Carolina University sets out to address a number of complex issues involving resilience at the post-secondary level. With the ever-growing numbers of college students requiring mental health services coupled with the increasing demands (economical, academic, etc.) on 21st century students, the author concerned himself with examining a tool to help assess coping amongst this diverse population. Hartley (2012) posed the following research questions as to whether the "25 or revised 10 item- Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) was more stable, whether mental health and social support measures correlated with the CD-RISC, and if the control group (students who sought assistance from the college health center) would have significantly lower resilience measures" (p. 39). While the latter may seem like an obvious conclusion, it is important that Hartley (2012) demonstrated that promoting resilience and protective factors is another way to help support this population. If members of the control group who sought services were considered resilient, then promoting and teaching coping and resilience would be a waste of time. The author was able to demonstrate that the "10 item CD-RISC was more stable than the 25 item tool" (p. 45), that lower resilience correlated with "lower measures on the social support and coping skills measures" (p. 45), and that there was a significant difference in measure between "general" and help seeking students' resilience scores. The implication from Hartley's (2012) work was able to demonstrate part of my research hypothesis; teaching explicit resilience and coping may assist students in positive ways.

Donnon (2010) offers further evidence using the Youth Resiliency: Assessing

Developmental Strengths (YR-ADS) questionnaire to secure data from nearly 3000 high

school juniors and seniors students at seven different schools in Canada (Donnon, 2010).

The gender-balanced sample was able to yield a linear relationship between the

"developmental strengths" that student's self-reported and the act(s) of bullying or being

the victim of bullying they reported (p. 107). The YR-ADS includes the following

framework in order to organize the self-report data that the author relied upon for this

study. According to Donnon (2010), extrinsic resiliency factors included "parental

support, peer relationships, community cohesiveness, commitment to learning at school,

and school culture" (p. 102). The intrinsic factors associated with the YR-ADS were

"cultural sensitivity, self-control, self-concept, social sensitivity, and empowerment" (p.

102). This research tool and the implications of the author's analysis are critical to this

work as the writer will likely rely on a set of resilience indicators that are quite similar to

the YR-ADS. In addition, while the linear relationship that the author suggested in this

study does not prove or suggest how resilience can be taught, it does suggest teaching

these resilience/developmental strengths reduced bullying and/or victimization (Donnon,

2010).

Additionally, Duckworth & Quinn's 2009 work on the validation of the Short Grit

Scale (GritS) adapted for children is worthy of review. Duckworth (2009)

conceptualized grit as the "capacity to sustain both effort and interest in projects that take

months or even longer to complete" (p. 166). The authors pointed out that the measure is

made up of two distinct features dealing with the human condition, "interest and effort"

(p. 166), and advanced the notion that these are what make one more or less "gritty"

(Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). There is also a slightly longer version of the scale that was part of the original design. It is in this researcher's opinion that the intended purpose of this work, assessing resilience, could be conceptualized as strengths in the two areas forwarded by Duckworth and Quinn (2009).

Perhaps the most closely associated, valid measure of resilience in young children discussed during the course of this review appears in the work of Howell et al., (2010) - the measure is called the Social Competence Scale (SCS). The SCS, which has three versions (parent, teacher, and sibling), was "developed by the Conduct Problem Prevention Research Group (CPPRG) in 1995" (p. 154). Howell et al., (2010) used the SCS to assess resilience in preschool children who were exposed to violence in the home. The authors wanted to gain a deeper understanding of why some children exposed to such domestic traumas were able to bounce back. Citing the work of Hughes, Graham-Bermann, and Gruber, (2001), Howell et al., (2010) advanced that some of the key factors underlying the differences in the ways young people respond are found in "some of the more salient developmental tasks (to) include emotional regulation and prosocial skill development. During these years, children learn to develop appropriate and successful relationships, resolve problems, and regulate emotional reactions" (p. 151). Using the SCS Howell et al., (2010) were able to establish that higher scores on the SCS were associated with better outcomes for young people exposed to violence in the home. According to Howell et al., (2010) "the present study conceptualized resilience as strengths in emotional regulation and prosocial skills, two areas crucial to preschool-age children's development" (p. 158). This researcher, understanding the significant role the SCS played in the work of Howell et al., to assess resilience in preschoolers exposed to

domestic violence- is interested in pursuing a similar conceptualization- to assess resilience in the context of the provision of explicit, skills-based resilience building instruction.

Intervention programs and strategies in the research.

Most of the scholarly work included in this review attempted to provide an explanation for the existence and identification of resilience and a strategy or approach designed to capture the phenomena in a meaningful way. As discussed in this review, the bulk of the literature base falls into one of four waves and may examine one to three levels of resilience in order to lay the groundwork for various analyses. Beyond helping to establish a broad operational definition of resilience and the descriptive features that are common to scholarly writing, most of the methods associated with resilience work include a program, intervention, or approach designed to either increase or improve resilience. It would not be feasible here to demonstrate the vast number of studies that propose an intervention or solution, but it does make sense to review some of the work that has had an influence on the research focus proposed earlier by this writer.

Coholic et al. (2012) conducted an analysis within this line of inquiry. The authors were interested in whether there would be a significant increase in resilience for children in need who participated in a mindfulness-based versus an arts-based program. The particular program that served as the independent variable was a program called HAP- or "holistic arts-based program" (Coholic et al., 2012, p. 833) that according to the primary author, utilized qualitative measures one year prior to the current study design. Existing data about the program found that the HAP program was "feasible, suitable, and beneficial for children in need" (Coholic, et al., 2012, p. 833). With this in mind the

authors wanted to extend this qualitative analysis with a quantitative design that would include a control group, pre- and post-testing using valid and reliable measures, and statistical analysis. Essentially they wanted to prove that participation in the HAP program was linked with a significant increase in resilience measures. Using the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale "to assess self-concept" (p. 837) and the RSCA-Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents to look at resilience measures associated with "sense of mastery, relatedness, and emotional reactivity" (p. 837) the authors' secured data using these measures before, during, and after the HAP program. The researchers reported that the program did have a significant impact on emotional reactivity over the duration of the program but it was not linked to increased self-concept (Coholic et al., 2007). This type of inquiry provides this writer and other resilience researchers a lens to develop, refine, and critique their research questions, methods, and goals.

Fried and Chapman (2012), from the University of Western Australia, were interested in expanding the literature in the area of self-regulated learning. The authors pointed out that the framework is limited to the cognitive aspects of self-regulation and they were interested in the impact of emotional and motivational aspects of self-regulation. Additionally, they wanted to analyze the impact these might have on overall student engagement and resilience (Fried & Chapman, 2012). The researchers discussed that many school and institutional mission statements included language that point not only to the intellectual health of the student, but also to the emotional, physical, and spiritual health of the student. To that end, Fried and Chapman (2012) exposed a gap in the literature base as it relates to the need to "identify the specific strategies that

adolescents can and do use in regulating their own motivation and emotions, and on how these relate to positive educational outcomes" (p. 297). Nearly 200 middle school students participated in their study that included the administration of the Regulation Strategies Questionnaire (RSQ) and the Individual Protective Factor Index (IPFI) (p. 301). The authors used "Hierarchical multiple regression analysis (MRA) to attach significance to any of the relationships that were evident (p. 301). Ultimately, the researchers concluded that middle school educators should be aware that students who used "goal oriented motivation regulation strategies were more likely to be personally competent" (p. 305). On the other hand, students who used "avoidant strategies" (p. 306) such as minimizing effort and avoiding involvement in activities were less likely to develop resilience. In the end, Fried and Chapman (2012), two researchers with classroom teaching experience, believed it worthwhile to teach "goal oriented motivation regulation strategies and antecedent emotional regulation strategies to middle school students, to enhance their engagement and resilience" (p. 309).

Hall et al. (2009) focused their efforts exclusively on preschool children when they examined the impact of quality preschool programming on resilience. Focusing on students' cognitive development despite a host of "combined risks" (p.335), Hall et al. (2009) were able to demonstrate that "children whose development could be thought of as *at risk*, attending preschools of high process quality appeared to mitigate the impact of these risks" (p.344). Hall et al. (2009) proposed that future research should continue to explore the positive relationship between quality preschool and children's cognitive development as it relates to risk. Some of the combined risk factors used in this work

included, "gender, birth weight, number of siblings, ethnicity, family salary, mother's occupational status, maternal and paternal age, etc." (Hall et al., 2009, p. 336).

Explicit instruction in the early years, social-emotional learning (SEL)

While the research base does not comprehensively address the benefits of explicit, skills-based instruction in the area of resilience, there is satisfactory evidence for the use of skills-based instruction in the area of social-emotional learning, a closely related topic of interest and inquiry. That is not to say that there is considerable debate about how students' best learn or develop when viewed through a social-emotional lens. The 2012 work of Ashdown and Bernard captures many important points worthy of review here, including some of the debate about how to best deliver social-emotional information to children. According to Ashdown and Bernard (2012), "there is some disagreement in the early childhood field concerning the optimum and developmentally appropriate ways to teach young children social and emotional skills" (p. 398). The authors point to research that ranges from the idea that teacher-led lessons at the younger ages are not developmentally appropriate (Whitington & Floyd, 2009) to the assertion that games and stories are the most effective ways to teach social and emotional skills (Cohen, 2001). Alongside the debate though, in recent years, there has been a shift toward the explicit, skills-based instruction as indicated by the amount of work leading up to Ashdown and Bernard's (2012) seminal work.

According to the Ashdown and Bernard (2012), "studies have investigated the effectiveness of social and emotional learning (SEL) programs that include formal lesson and that begin during the preschool years and have demonstrated positive results" (p. 398). The positive results noted in the articles included the benefits of teaching social

skills in social emotional development on a daily basis (Joseph & Strain, 2003), the

positive effects on cognitive and academic outcomes in the short term (Nelson et al.,

2003), and that curriculum formats that included explicit lessons of greater intensity and

longer duration had a more positive effect on outcomes (Nelson et al., 2003). Joseph and

Strain (2003), strived to distinguish the groups of children that were at-risk for

developmental SEL delays versus those "socially competent children [who] fairly easily

learn strategies for interacting comfortably and positively with other during their

everyday experiences at home and at school" (p. 65). This work in particular, advances

the notion that children need to be taught skills early and in a way that is purposeful.

Ashdown and Bernard's (2012) study looked at the impact of a particular SEL

program called *You Can Do It* (YCDI) that was developed in part by Michael Bernard,

the study's co-author. Ashdown and Bernard (2012), identified components of the

program that were central to the research they conducted based on the YCDI program

including "five foundations- confidence, persistence, organization, getting along, and

emotional resilience" (p. 398). These foundations are supported by explicit teaching of

"12 particular ways of thinking (Habits of Mind)- I Can Do It, Accepting Myself, Taking

Risks, Being Independent, Giving Effort, Working Tough, Setting Goals, Planning My

Time, Being Tolerant of Others, Thinking First, Playing by the Rules, and Being Socially

Responsible" (p. 398). The authors wanted to highlight a program in this study that

moved from the broad to the explicit view to examine levels of social emotional

competence, well-being, and the potential for academic gains. While the last of these

hypotheses was difficult to advance, Ashdown and Bernard were able to measure the

other with positive significant results. In other words, according to Ashdown and

Bernard (2012), "the overall pattern of results are consistent with growing research evidence that indicates that a social and emotional learning program that includes explicit instruction in the form of teacher led lessons has a place in the early years" (p. 403).

The seven C's of resilience- an example of an explicit, skills-based approach

As has been mentioned earlier in this work the resilience specific literature base has been criticized for lacking specificity with respect to what specific skills changed in order to promote resilience or coping (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012). There is one work specific to the resilience base that balances the analysis and provides explicit and teachable skills associated with the development and sustenance of a resilient human profile. The most significant contribution in this writer's opinion is the work of The University of Pennsylvania's Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg. In his book entitled *Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Kids Roots and Wings*, Ginsberg (2011) makes the case for resilience building for children and teens by focusing on what he calls the "7 C's" of resilience (p. 6). Geared towards parents, educators & researchers, this work is central to my research topic and has significantly impacted this writer's thinking about the topic of resilience. From the idea that resilience is not a fixed personality trait to how to explicitly teach and talk about resilience- the C's are central skills to be taught in order to promote resilience, or what is essentially the independent variable. The 7 C's include "competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping and control" (p. 6). According to Ginsberg (2011), competence is the ability to handle situations effectively, while confidence is the "belief in one's own ability" (p.25). Connection refers to the relationships children have and how those relationships foster positive values and norms and character is about the ability to tell right from wrong. The idea behind contribution is

that children understand "that the world is a better place because they are in it" (p. 27), while coping is a measure of how children face adversity and the quality of the strategies they employ to prevent emotional harm. Finally control, one of the most important, is when a child understands that they have power over the "outcomes of their decisions and actions" thus they know they "have the ability to bounce back" (p.29). Ginsberg's work provided a stimulating and provocative inquiry into how educators, researchers, teachers, and parents foster or inhibit the development of these skill-based elements of resilience. He offered explicit strategies to promote thinking and action around these ways to build resilience, in essence, these seven skill sets. Like Bernard (1991), through his thoughtful social-emotional work, Ginsberg (2011) provides explicit lessons to become proficient with the 7 C's including deliverables such as "Going with the Flow, Defining Success, It Isn't Good to be a Perfectionist, Thinking Clearly and Recognizing Real Heroes in the areas of Competence and Confidence" (pgs. 41-75).

Conclusion

This analysis of the literature was designed to provide a comprehensive account of resilience research to date and to provide the most accurate scholarly descriptions of the phenomena. The review highlights a major debate in the literature regarding a universal definition of the term resilience and a potential gap in the base with regard to explicit skills based measurements and analyses. The research questions provided earlier in this literature review are designed to address the latter of these scholarly dilemmas.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The study of resilience in young children has captured the attention of many

researchers over the last twenty years. A number of research questions about resilience

have focused on the definition and use of the term, conditions under which resilience is

likely to develop in children, the characteristics/traits associated with resilience, and how

to best teach resilience. While there have been considerable advances in the ways that we

think about and teach resilience, there is still much debate about how and when to teach

resilience (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012). In addition, the procedures and methods used to

provide scholarly explanations to these questions have varied and are diverse.

The research questions associated with this study have been crafted with this

debate in mind.

> ➢ What impact might explicit, skills-based resilience building instruction
>
>   have on preschool students' levels of resilience as indicated by both
>
>   teacher and parent perceptions on a valid measure of social competence?
>
>   And,
>
> ➢ How might the results be organized, given levels of significance, to inform
>
>   a hierarchical approach to learning these skills-based resilience building
>
>   strategies?

The research questions guiding this study were considered within the conceptual

framework described in the Introduction. Family systems theory, Maslow's (1943)

hierarchy of needs, and social constructivist thought provided a roadmap by which skills

of any kind might be acquired. The hierarchical nature and socially collaborative nature

of the theories within the conceptual framework essentially prescribed the conditions under which learning new skills can occur. The research questions took into account the conditions required for learning new skills (skills-based versus standards-based), as well as the conceptual framework's assumption that the skills should be taught sequentially and collaboratively.

Setting

This study was conducted in the Jones Township School District in the mid-Atlantic, United States. Jones Township is a preschool through grade 12 public school district that educates over four thousand students in six schools. The district consists of three elementary schools, a preschool, a grade 5/6 building, a middle school, and a comprehensive high school. Approximately 7,600 families (US Census Bureau, 2010) reside in Jones Township, which is home to the three towns of Riverview, Cedar Harbor, and Forked Lakes. Jones is a tight-knit, prideful community that is attractive to families due to its proximity to mid-Atlantic's famed coastline, well-maintained schools and recreational facilities, and low crime rate.

The district's preschool is located at the Deep Pond Elementary School, which is also home to all students who live in Jones Township attending grades 5 and 6. The building's architectural configuration makes it a developmentally appropriate setting for Jones Township's three and four year old-learners. The school features dedicated entrances, exits, restrooms, classroom furniture, and recreational space for the preschool program. The preschool consists of four classrooms with no more than twelve students in each classroom. The district conducts both half and full-day programs for this population. Two of the preschool classrooms are designed for learners who are three,

while the other two are geared toward four year-old learners. The district's total

preschool census can be as high as seventy-two. The preschool was staffed with four

certified teachers and four preschool trained paraprofessionals at the time of the study.

The students in the preschool program are residents of Jones Township and can start the

program as long as their third birthday occurs before October 1st of that year. The

program provides educational services for general and special needs learners.

Participants

The teachers and parents whose perceptions formed the foundation of this study

were associated with students who were enrolled in two of the four afternoon, half-day,

four year-old preschool sessions. The afternoon session was selected by this researcher

for convenience, as there were similar numbers of 4 year-old students in each section.

The reason the research was limited to four year-olds was due to the developmental,

skills-based nature of the intervention. One of these sections served as the control group

in which the teacher used the typically prescribed curriculum that includes five standards

addressing social-emotional development (2014 New Jersey Preschool Teaching and

Learning Standards- NJPTLS) required by the district. The other section featured a

prescribed series of twelve 30-minute explicit skills-based resilience building activities

presented weekly by the classroom teacher over a twelve-week period. This instruction

did not supplant, it supplemented the district-required instruction that took place in the

control group section.

The sampling method chosen provided the researcher with pre and post-test

teacher and parent perception data to test the study's research questions.   This method

was chosen based on convenience and access. The total number of participants in the

study was those teachers and parents associated with the seventeen, 4 year-old students in the afternoon preschool sessions. As a result of this work, the researcher expected approximately seventeen teacher perception pre-tests and seventeen post-tests. In addition, the researcher encouraged up to two parent perception pre and post-tests per student yielding a possible total of eighty pre and post-tests. This study was conducted over a twelve-week period during the course of the 2015-2016 school year.

Data

This study intended to employ quantitative methods in order to explore teacher and parent perspectives of preschool students' levels of resilience after the use of ESRBI over a twelve-week period.

The social competence scale (SCS).

Pre and post-test data secured from participants from the Social Competence Scale SCS- parent and teacher versions yielded Likert scale data for analysis in this study. The SCS teacher version is a 25-item measure that assesses a student's pro social/communication, emotional self-regulation, and academic skills. The SCS parent version is a 12- item measure that assesses a student's pro social/communication and emotional self-regulation skills. The only discernible difference in the two scales is that there are more items on the SCS-teacher version for the instructor to address academic skills.

The SCS teacher and parent versions were created by the Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group (CPPRG) in 1990 and 1995 respectively and are available for public use via the Fast Track Project at www.fasttrackproject.org. The SCS has appeared in several recent peer reviewed studies to help determine levels of social-emotional skills

and resilience in young learners and has proven to be a valid and reliable tool (Howell et al., 2010; Jones et al., 2015; Moffit, Arseneault, & Belsky, 2011). In fact, Jones et al. (2015) in their work with preschool students concluded, "our study demonstrates the unique predictive nature of early social competence on important outcomes in late adolescence and early adulthood" (p. e7). Jones and his team used data from the Fast Track Project, including longitudinal SCS data to determine outcomes. Consistent with these findings Howell et al. (2010), also working with preschool students, also established that higher scores on the SCS were associated with better outcomes.

Corrigan (2003, 2002), a Fast Track Project researcher from the Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group (CPPRG), published two technical reports in which the internal consistency of the both the teacher and the parent versions of the SCS were validated in a study conducted by CPPRG with nearly five hundred subjects. According to Corrigan (2003, 2002), both the teacher and parent SCS "show significant differences between the normative and control groups…the internal consistency measure (Cronbach alpha values) indicates that the total score and subscale scores are useful" (p. 2, 2003; p. 2, 2002).

These studies and the psychometric properties of the SCS have prepared a foundation for its use in this study to best measure early childhood levels of resilience.

Data collection protocols.

The raw data collected from the SCS from the teachers and the parents of the students in each of the preschool sections selected for this study was individually recorded in a Google sheets spreadsheet. The SCS is a traditional Likert scale and the teacher and parent version yielded ordinal values ranging from zero to four.   Both the

parent and teacher versions of the SCS that were used in this study included descriptor

values that are ranked identically for each item. The ordinal values available to describe

student/child behaviors included (CPPRG 1995, 1990; Jones et al., 2015; Trolchim,

2006)

- ➢ 0 = Not At All

- ➢ 1 = A Little

- ➢ 2 = Moderately Well

- ➢ 3 = Well

- ➢ 4 = Very Well

Google sheets, a commercial spreadsheet/data application was chosen for this study

because its features accommodate several layers of data at one time. The data was sorted

into two individual sheets, one for the test group and the other for the control group.

Columns for the test group were entitled:

- ➢ Class A/Pre-Test/Teacher

- ➢ Class A/Post-Test/Teacher

- ➢ Class A/Pre-Test/Parent

- ➢ Class A/Post-Test/Parent

Sheet #2, with the following column titles, included data from Class B, the control group:

- ➢ Class B/Pre-Test/Teacher

- ➢ Class B/Post-Test/Teacher

- ➢ Class B/Pre-Test/Parent

- ➢ Class B/Post-Test/Parent

Collection and management of data.

The researcher and the teachers who participated in this study collected anonymously completed SCS data sheets at specific intervals during the study period. The first collection was at the start of the twelve-week period and included all teacher and parent pre-test responses from both Classes A and B. The second and final collection occurred fourteen school weeks later. The term school week referred to the school calendar, which was likely to include holidays and other interruptions to the schedule. As the study encompassed twelve weeks of instruction, the additional two weeks were needed to compensate for holidays and interruptions. The purpose of the second collection was to provide an opportunity, post ESRBI, for parents and teachers to assess the items on the SCS a final time. At the end of each collection period, data was entered into Google sheets and hardcopies of the SCS were not maintained. Aside from the challenges of ensuring that all parent and teacher data was submitted to the researcher by the deadline, there were no potentially harmful effects to the study or to its participants known to this researcher in terms of the methods of data collection described herein.

Analysis

The researcher began the Results chapter of this work with this analysis. The two-group experimental design was recommended for studies such as this in which the researcher was interested in any differences in statistically similar groups (Class A and Class B) after a program or intervention has ended. According to Trochim (2006), when "we are most interested in determining whether two groups are different after the program- we measure the groups on one or more measures and we compare them by testing for differences between the means using a t-test" (p. 1). The collective teacher

and parent responses on the SCS during each of the two collection periods for both class's generated means and standard deviations for each item measured. Using a t-test, the researcher compared the classes and parent/teacher perceptions both on the pre-test before ESRBI and on the post-test by testing for differences between the means. The t-test analyses comparing teacher and parent responses on the SCS before and after the implementation of ESRBI were conducted to address the first research question.

To address the second research question the researcher conducted an item analysis for the 12 items on the SCS parent version in the areas of pro social/communication and emotional self-regulation skills. Items 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12 on the SCS parent version fall into the category of pro social/communication skills area, while items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8 measure parent perceptions related to emotional self-regulation. These 12 items also were addressed in the SCS teacher version. An item analysis from parent and teacher responses for both pre and post-tests included an examination of differences in the means using a t-test. The researcher was interested in emerging patterns within the larger categories (pro social/communication or emotional self-regulation) or within the individual items that might lend to a hierarchical approach to introducing and teaching skills associated with resilience building (Corrigan, 2003).

Triangulation of data.

The researcher was also aware that the additional descriptive prompts on the SCS teacher version were designed to assess the teacher's perception of a student's academic skill level. It was the intent of this work to examine the relationship between SCS teacher perceptions related to academic skills in order to inform results related to statistical comparisons of academic skill/functioning both pre and post ESRBI. These

items were examined in a similar fashion to the analysis described above and will further

inform both research questions associated with this work.

Participant Rights

The researcher submitted a formal application to The University of New

England's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval to conduct this study. The IRB

granted the applicant's request for an exemption from the full application and approval

process since the research was to be conducted in a public school setting with the

intention of improving instructional practices. While preschool children were considered

members of a special subject population, the data associated with the proposed research

did not involve the direct observation, surveying, or interviewing of the preschool

children. The only data that the study collected was related to the perceptions of the

parents and teachers of the preschool students in the identified classes.

The rights of the parents and teachers who were also considered subjects of this

study were protected by anonymity and confidentiality. All SCS-related scale materials

did not include respondent's names or any other identifiable information when presented

to study participants. Self-addressed, identical, postage paid envelopes were provided

with each SCS scale request for parents and teacher both pre and post-test for their

consideration and return. Upon receipt, all SCS data was entered into the Google sheets

database and archived. At no time was the researcher aware of which SCS

documentation was associated with a particular study subject.

The researcher discussed the parameters of the study with the entire preschool

team and the building based administrators that were associated with the program during

a preschool faculty meeting. This standing meeting includes all preschool personnel and

was conducted prior to the initiation of any study related activities and after IRB approval. The researcher reviewed all facets of the study, obtained feedback from the study related staff, and reviewed all consents, safeguards, and procedures. This was designed to facilitate a thorough understanding of the purpose of the study and help staff answer any questions that study participants may have had about the study.

Unintended outcomes.

There were several potential unintended outcomes that could impact study participants during and after the study was conducted. Student subjects that were exposed to ESRBI, in addition to the standards-based approach, could have experienced some curricular overstimulation or confusion with regard to the skills, which could cause some disruption in class. Conversely, student subjects in the control group might have benefited from ESRBI but will not have received the program due to study design. It was noted that should ESRBI prove effective, the twelve-week program would be delivered to all preschool students. It was expected that this program would be replicated for all sections of preschool prior to the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

An unintended outcome with regard to parent subjects was thought to be guilt about not wanting to participate or agreeing to participate but then failing to do so. Parents may have also felt uncomfortable reporting their perceptions when these perceptions caused any embarrassment or shame.

Finally, participating teachers could have experienced anxiety teaching ESRBI in addition to the standards-based curriculum and may have questioned if the study was having either a positive or negative impact on their students.

All of these unintended outcomes along with the purpose and goals of the study were addressed with potential subjects more explicitly during the consent and assent processes that the researcher ensured was in place.

Potential Limitations

There were several potential limitations to the study design described including issues with sampling procedures, sample size and generalizability, reliability of the research tool, and the researcher's relationship to the teachers in the research study.

As mentioned in the Participants section of this chapter, the method by which the researcher identified potential subjects for this study was one of convenience and access. As an administrator for the district in which the research was conducted, the sample was identified without the pre-requisite randomization efforts usually associated with scholarly research. The researcher was able to select which two sections of the preschool program were included in the study. The researcher also had full physical access to staff, students, and parents participating in the study. The potential for a conflict of interest as the researcher could be noted in this section as a limitation; however the risk of this conflict of interests ranges from no to low risk.

Another limitation of this research study was the small sample size. The overall sample was limited to seventeen preschool students, two teachers, and up to forty parents. The SCS pre and post-test data generated from this group exceeded the total number of subjects, so it was difficult to fully generalize the findings.

While the SCS has proven to be a valid resilience research tool (Corrigan 2003, 2002; Howell et al., 2010; Jones et al., 2015), its reliability to predict skills-based resilience levels was less developed at the time this study was conducted. The predictive

value of the SCS with regard to positive adult outcomes, however, has been demonstrated in the research (Jones et al., 2015; Moffit et al., 2011).

The researcher's authority over the teachers participating in the study should also be considered a limitation of the work. As the Director of Special Services in the district in which the study was conducted, the teachers indirectly report to the researcher. There was a risk that these study participants' perceptions might be influenced in order to please or accommodate the researcher. To limit the potential of this study limitation, the researcher did not evaluate the teachers during the course of the study.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of the use of explicit skills-based resilience building instruction on teachers' and parents' perceptions of preschool students functioning using a valid and reliable social competence scale. For the purposes of the this work, both the parent and the teacher versions of the Social Competence Scale (SCS) developed in consultation with Fast Track Project were selected. The following research questions were the foundation of the methodology proposed in Chapter 3 of this work:

> ➢ What impact might explicit, skills-based resilience building instruction have on preschool students' levels of resilience as indicated by both teacher and parent perceptions on a valid measure of social competence? And,

> ➢ How might the results be organized, given levels of significance, to inform a hierarchical approach to learning these skills-based resilience building strategies?

The results of this study are presented in this chapter. The researcher used a quantitative design to examine the differences between two like preschool classrooms with ten, four-year old students both before and after a treatment variable was introduced. In this study the treatment variable was the provision for the explicit skills-based instruction in the area of resilience. More specifically twelve (12), thirty-minute explicit skills-based resilience building lessons once per week over the course of twelve (12) weeks. The control variable was the typical and district approved use of a standards

based curriculum. The study commenced in December of 2015.   Exactly seventeen (17)

preschool students were selected from two of the district's four preschool programs to

participate in this study. These particular sections were selected based on the similar

enrollment numbers in each preschool class. While unclear whether all pre-identified

subjects would consent to participate, the researcher determined these sections

appropriate to provide the best chance for similarly sized treatment and control groups for

analysis. When the study officially started in mid-December 2015 there were 9 students

enrolled in Classroom A and 8 enrolled in Classroom B. At the end of the consent

period, 7 families from Classroom A agreed to participate, while all 8 families from

Classroom B provided positive consent for a total of 15 preschool student participants.

The administration of the SCS parent and teacher versions, both pre and post

ESRBI intervention, in both identified preschool sections provided the researcher with

several avenues for statistical analysis. These included the following:

- Pre A/Pre B-Teacher- (SCS teacher differences/similarities between classes pre

  ESRBI intervention)

- Pre A/Pre B-Parent- (SCS parent differences/similarities between classes pre

  ESRBI intervention)

- Pre A/Pre B-Teacher & Parent- (SCS teacher and parent- differences/similarities

  in T/P perceptions pre ESRBI intervention)

- Post A/Post B- Teacher- (SCS teacher differences/similarities between classes

  post ESRBI intervention)

- Post A/Post B- Parent- (SCS parent differences/similarities between classes post

  ESRBI intervention)

- Post A/Post B- Teacher & Parent- (SCS teacher and parent-
  differences/similarities in T/P perceptions post ESRBI intervention)

- Item Analysis- (a review of statistical variation amongst 12 SCS identified items)

- Academic Item Analysis- (a review of SCS academic readiness subtest data)

Analysis Method

The data that were collected and used in this study, referenced in the previous section were organized in two files that were specific to classroom A (treatment group) and classroom B (control group). These two files were divided into five sections to provide access and confidential storage for study participation informed consent forms, pre ESRBI/SCS teacher data forms, post ESRBI/SCS teacher data forms, pre ESRBI/SCS parent data forms, and post ESRBI/SCS parent data forms. In addition, all consent and data documents associated with a particular preschool student were coded using the following system- students in classroom A were assigned codes A1-A9, while students in classroom B were coded B1-B8.

As the researcher collected the informed consent forms, they were scanned for a signature and date. The forms were signed by the researcher and immediately copied and distributed back to study participants to use as a reference during the course of the study.

The coded SCS data forms, both pre and post ESRBI, were recorded on four spreadsheets using Google sheets. These spreadsheets were designed to capture the seven areas of inquiry mentioned previously in this chapter. Again, data was arranged using the coding system described to ensure the organization and accuracy of the data. Statistical analyses (averages, standard deviations, and t-tests) were performed using the data tools that are available in Google sheets.

Presentation of Results: SCS Pre-Test Data

During the course of the administration of ESRBI lessons in Classroom A, pre-test parent and teacher perception data using the SCS was collected, codified, and analyzed. Descriptions of this data were important to set the baseline for pre-post ESRBI-SCS analysis (Research Question #1), discuss any baseline variability of the treatment and control groups (to minimize any sampling error), and to preliminarily describe trends in the resilience associated items on the SCS (Research Question #2). These statistical descriptions used in this discussion of pre-test SCS data included rank, average, and T-test data to determine statistical significance at the .05 level.

The SCS-parent- pre-test.

The SCS-Parent consists of twelve questions that measure parent perceptions regarding a particular skill associated with resilience. There are five values that could be assigned to each of these twelve questions by the parent ranging from "0"- Not at all to "5"- Very Well. As mentioned previously in this work, the SCS-Parent was administered twice during the course of the study to both the control and treatment groups- essentially before and after the 12 weeks of prescribed ESRBI. This section was focused on the parent pre-test data obtained as part of the approved study design.

Pre ESRBI test data on the SCS-Parent indicated that the control and treatment groups were not statistically dissimilar when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Parent. The treatment group, or Classroom A, received an average score of 1.71 and the control group, or Classroom B, received an average score of 1.90. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the groups. The t-

test yielded a value of 0.590, a value not considered statistically significant at the .05

level. Mean scores for classrooms A and B appear in Table 1:

Table 1

Mean Pre-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Parent

Subject	Classroom A n=7		Classroom B n=8			
1	NP		1.67			
2	1.25		2.25			
3	1.83		2.75			
4	2.50		2.33			
5	NP		1.17			
6	1.50		2.00			
7	1.83		2.50			
8	1.00		0.50			
9	2.08		-----			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Total	1.71	.509	1.90	.752	.590	>.05

Note: NP refers to a non-participating student

The SCS-teacher- pre-test.

The SCS-Teacher consists of twenty-five questions that measure teacher perceptions regarding a particular skill associated with resilience. There are five values that could be assigned to each of these twenty-five questions by the teacher ranging from "0"- Not at all to "5"- Very Well. As mentioned previously in this work, the SCS-Teacher was administered twice during the course of the study to both the control and treatment groups- essentially before and after the 12 weeks of prescribed ESRBI. This section is focused on the teacher pre-test data obtained as part of the approved study design.

Pre ESRBI test data on the SCS-Teacher indicated that the control and treatment groups were not statistically dissimilar when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Teacher. The treatment group, or Classroom A, received an average score of 1.89 and the control group, or Classroom B, received an average score of 1.85. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the groups. The t-test yielded a value of 0.939, a value not considered statistically significant at the .05 level. Mean scores for Classroom A and B appear in Table 2:

Table 2

Mean Pre-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Teacher

	Classroom A	Classroom B
Subject	*n=7*	*n=8*

1	NP		2.75			
2	0.00		2.50			
3	3.33		1.00			
4	2.08		1.50			
5	NP		1.83			
6	1.75		2.42			
7	0.92		1.75			
8	2.50		1.08			
9	2.67		-----			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Total	1.89	1.13	1.85	.654	.939	>.05

Note: NP refers to a non-participating student

The SCS-teacher & parent- pre-test.

Pre ESRBI test data on the SCS-Teacher & Parent, when analyzed together indicated that the control and treatment groups were not statistically dissimilar when analyzing tabulated scores on both the SCS-Teacher & Parent. The treatment group, or Classroom A, received a combined teacher/parent average score of 1.80 and the control group, or Classroom B, received a combined teacher/parent average score of 1.86. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the groups. The t-test yielded a value of 0.855, a value not considered statistically significant at the .05 level. Mean combined scores from Classroom A and B appear in Table 3:

Table 3

Mean Pre-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Parent/Teacher Combined

Subject	Classroom A n=7		Classroom B n=8			
1	NP		2.21			
2	0.63		2.38			
3	2.58		1.75			
4	2.29		1.92			
5	NP		1.50			
6	1.63		2.21			
7	1.37		2.13			
8	1.75		0.79			
9	2.37		-----			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Total	1.80	.680	1.86	.517	.855	>.05

Note: NP refers to a non-participating student

The SCS-pre-test item analysis.

A pre-test item analysis was conducted using both the parent and teacher perception data gathered using the SCS-Parent and Teacher. Teachers and parents average assigned values for each of the twelve items on the SCS were tabulated. This

item analysis was coordinated in order to determine how ranked results might be organized, given levels of significance, to inform a hierarchical approach to learning skills-based resilience building strategies. Data from the SCS administered during the pre-test phase of this study yielded the following ordinal ranked data associated with resilience. The data that appears in Table 4 indicates the mean parent/teacher item data and the three most and least developed skills upon the combined administration of the SCS pre-test. The most and least developed skills are identified with parentheses.

Table 4

Mean Pre-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Item Analysis Combined

SCS Items (n=12)	Teacher *M*	Parent *M*	Rank *1-12*
Accepts things going ones way	1.76	1.52	9
Copes well with failure	1.64	1.61	(10)
Thinks before acts	1.65	1.50	(11)
Resolves problems with family & friends	1.31	1.77	(12)
Calms down when excited	2.10	1.84	4
Follows directions	2.02	2.07	(3)
Good at understanding others feelings	1.81	2.07	5
Controls temper	1.70	1.70	8

Shares things	2.22	2.27	(2)
Helpful to others	1.96	2.57	(1)
Listens to others point of view	1.72	2.08	6
Gives suggestions without being bossy	1.66	1.91	7

Note: Rank: 1=most developed perceived skill- 12=least developed perceived skill

The combined pre-test SCS parent and teacher item averages and ordinal ranks were re-analyzed with post-test data and a t-test determined if any change in combined item averages are significant as a result of ESRBI.

The SCS-pre-test item analysis- teacher (academic).

An additional pre-test item analysis was conducted using the teacher perception data gathered using the SCS-Teacher (academic). Teachers' average assigned values for each of the seven academic items (questions 1, 4, 5, 10, 15, 17, and 21) on the SCS teacher were tabulated. This item analysis was coordinated to assess the teachers' perceptions of students' academic skill level in both groups participating in the study. The intent was to examine any statistically significant differences in the control and treatment group with respect to academic skill/functioning both pre and post ESRBI.

Pre ESRBI test data on the SCS-Teacher indicated that the control and treatment groups were statistically dissimilar when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Teacher. The treatment group, or Classroom A, received an average academic score of 1.68 and the control group, or Classroom B, received an average score of 2.16. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the groups. The t-test yielded a value of 0.010, a value considered statistically significant at the .05 level. Mean scores for Classroom A and B appear in Table 5:

Table 5

Mean Pre-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Item Analysis Teacher Academic

SCS Items (n=7)	Classroom A	Classroom B				
Functions with distractions	1.44	1.88				
Is a self-starter	1.67	2.38				
Works/Plays without adult support	2.00	2.62				
Stays on task	1.22	1.75				
Works well in a group	2.00	2.25				
Pays attention	1.67	2.00				
Follows teacher's verbal directions	1.78	2.25				
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Total	1.68	.284	2.16	.302	.010	<. 05

The table above reflects that while the treatment and control groups are statistically similar with respect to teacher and parent perceptions about resilience and social-emotional functioning, the classrooms are statistically different in terms of teacher perceptions about the academic skills often associated with resilience. Post-test data

investigated any changes in this apparent dissimilarity and Chapter 5 discussed the implications of this analysis.

Presentation of Results: SCS Pre & Post-Test Data

After the course of the administration of ESRBI lessons in Classroom A, post-test parent and teacher perception data using the SCS was collected, codified, and analyzed. Descriptions of this data were provided in following sections. The same analyses were conducted during the post-test phase of the study as were conducted during the pre-test phase, with the exception that any changes as a result of the independent variable were closely monitored. In other words, during the pre-test phase, the treatment and control groups were analyzed in relation to one another. During the post-test phase, the groups were primarily monitored independently to account for any change as a result of the intervention, or independent variable.

 The SCS-parent- post-test.

Post ESRBI test data on the SCS-Parent, when compared to pre-test data, indicated that the treatment group experienced statistically significant growth when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Parent. The treatment group, or Classroom A, received an average post- test score of 2.35 as compared to an average of 1.71 on the pre-test. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the pre and post-test data. The t-test yielded a value of .022, a value considered statistically significant at the .05 level.

Post ESRBI test data on the SCS-Parent, when compared to pre-test data, indicated that the control group did not experience statistically significant growth when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Parent. The control group, or Classroom B,

received an average post- test score of 2.28 as compared to an average of 1.90 on the pre-

test. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference

between the pre and post-test data. The t-test yielded a value of .075, a value not

considered statistically significant at the .05 level. Mean pre and post-test scores for

Classroom A and B appear in Table 6:

Table 6

Mean Pre & Post-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Parent

Subject	Classroom A				Classroom B			
	n=7				*n=8*			
	Pre	*Post*			*Pre*	*Post*		
1	NP	NP			1.67	2.25		
2	1.25	2.08			2.25	2.25		
3	1.83	2.50			2.75	3.00		
4	2.50	3.00			2.33	2.75		
5	NP	NP			1.17	1.75		
6	1.50	2.50			2.00	2.33		
7	1.83	2.25			2.50	2.75		
8	1.00	1.83			0.50	1.17		
9	2.08	2.25			-----	-----		
	M	*M*	*t*	*p*	*M*	*M*	*t*	*p*
Total	1.71	2.35	.022	< .05	1.90	2.28	.075	> .05

Note: NP refers to a non-participating student

The SCS-teacher- pre & post-test.

Post ESRBI test data on the SCS-Teacher, when compared to pre-test data, indicated that the treatment group experienced statistically significant growth when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Teacher. The treatment group, or Classroom A, received an average post- test score of 3.08 as compared to an average of 1.89 on the pre-test. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the pre and post-test data. The t-test yielded a value of .045, a value considered statistically significant at the .05 level.

Post ESRBI test data on the SCS-Teacher, when compared to pre-test data, indicated that the control group experienced statistically insignificant growth when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Teacher. The control group, or Classroom B, received an average post- test score of 2.51 as compared to an average of 1.85 on the pre-test. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the pre and post-test data. The t-test yielded a value of .160, a value not considered statistically significant at the .05 level. Mean pre and post-test scores for Classroom A and B appear in Table 7:

Table 7

Mean Pre & Post-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Teacher

	Classroom A		Classroom B	
Subject	*n=7*		*n=8*	
	Pre	*Post*	*Pre*	*Post*

1	NP	NP			2.75	3.08		
2	0.00	1.67			2.50	3.83		
3	3.33	3.92			1.00	0.75		
4	2.08	3.58			1.50	3.08		
5	NP	NP			1.83	2.08		
6	1.75	3.00			2.42	3.58		
7	0.92	2.25			1.75	1.92		
8	2.50	3.50			1.08	1.75		
9	2.67	3.67			-----	-----		
	M	*M*	*t*	*p*	*M*	*M*	*t*	*p*
Total	1.89	3.08	.046	< .05	1.85	2.51	.160	> .05

Note: NP refers to a non-participating student

The SCS-teacher & parent- post-test.

Post ESRBI test data on the SCS-Teacher and Parent combined, when compared to pre-test data, indicated that the treatment group experienced statistically significant growth when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Teacher and Parent. The treatment group, or Classroom A, received an average post- test score of 2.71 as compared to an average of 1.80 on the pre-test. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the pre and post-test data. The t-test yielded a value of .016, a value considered statistically significant at the .05 level.

Post ESRBI test data on the SCS-Teacher and Parent combined, when compared to pre-test data, indicated that the control group did not experience statistically significant

growth when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Teacher and Parent. The control group, or Classroom B, received an average post- test score of 2.40 as compared to an average of 1.86 on the pre-test. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the pre and post-test data. The t-test yielded a value of .075, a value not considered statistically significant at the .05 level. Mean pre and post-test scores for Classroom A and B appear in Table 8:

Table 8

Mean Pre & Post-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Teacher & Parent Combined

Subject	Classroom A *n=7*		Classroom B *n=8*	
	Pre	*Post*	*Pre*	*Post*
1	NP	NP	2.21	2.66
2	0.63	1.88	2.38	3.04
3	2.58	3.21	1.75	1.88
4	2.29	3.29	1.92	2.92
5	NP	NP	1.50	1.92
6	1.63	2.75	2.21	2.96
7	1.37	2.25	2.13	2.34
8	1.75	2.66	0.80	1.46
9	2.37	2.96	-----	-----

	M	*M*	*t*	*p*		*M*	*M*	*t*	*p*
Total	1.80	2.71	.016	< .05		1.86	2.40	.075	> .05

Note: NP refers to a non-participating student

The SCS-pre & post-test item analysis.

A post-test item analysis was conducted using both the parent and teacher perception data gathered using the SCS-Parent and Teacher. Teachers and parents average assigned values for each of the twelve items on the SCS were tabulated. This item analysis was coordinated in order to determine how ranked results might be organized, given levels of significance, to inform a hierarchical approach to learning skills-based resilience building strategies. Data from the SCS administered during the pre and post-test phase of this study yielded the following ordinal ranked data associated with resilience. The post-test data slightly shifted the ordinal values associated with rank. These shifts in rank are for informational purposes only and not considered significant. The combined pre-test SCS parent and teacher item averages and ordinal ranks were re-analyzed with post-test data and a t-test determined if any change in combined item averages are significant as a result of ESRBI. The t-test data associated with the item analysis revealed statistically significant growth in all of the items that were used in this study. The strongest development post ESRBI was Item #2- accepting things going ones way ($t=. 005$, $p <. 05$), while the weakest development occurred with Item #24- gives suggestions without being bossy ($t=. 013$, $p <. 05$). It should be noted that this should be considered a relative weakness, as the change is still considered significant. The data that appears in Table 9 indicated the mean parent/teacher item data and the three most and

least developed skills upon the combined administration of the SCS post-test. The most

and least developed skills are identified with parentheses:

Table 9

Mean Pre & Post-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Item Analysis Combined

SCS Items (n=12)	Teacher		Parent		Rank	
	M		*M*		*1-12*	
	Pre	*Post*	*Pre*	*Post*	*Pre*	*Post*
Accepts things going ones way	1.76	2.35	1.52	2.76	9	5
Copes well with failure	1.64	2.24	1.61	2.35	(10)	9
Thinks before acts	1.65	2.18	1.50	2.29	(11)	(11)
Resolves problems with family & friends	1.31	2.00	1.77	2.35	(12)	(12)
Calms down when excited	2.10	2.47	1.84	2.53	4	6
Follows directions	2.02	2.82	2.07	2.76	(3)	(2)
Good at understanding others feelings	1.81	2.53	2.07	2.59	5	4
Controls temper	1.70	2.41	1.70	2.18	8	8
Shares things	2.22	2.76	2.27	2.82	(2)	(3)
Helpful to others	1.96	2.76	2.57	2.88	(1)	(1)
Listens to others point of view	1.72	2.47	2.08	2.53	6	7
Gives suggestions without being bossy	1.66	2.29	1.91	2.18	7	(10)

Note: Rank: 1=most developed perceived skill- 12=least developed perceived skill

The SCS-post-test item analysis- teacher (academic).

Post ESRBI test data on the SCS-Teacher indicated that the control and treatment groups are statistically similar when analyzing tabulated scores on the SCS-Teacher. The treatment group, or Classroom A, received an average academic score of 2.92 and the control group, or Classroom B, received an average score of 2.49. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the groups. The t-test yielded a value of 0.189, a value not considered statistically significant at the .05 level. Mean scores for Classroom A and B appear in Table 10:

Table 10

Mean Pre & Post-Test Social Competence Scale (SCS)-Item Analysis Teacher Academic

	Classroom A		Classroom B	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
SCS Items (n=7)				
Functions with distractions	1.44	2.57	1.88	1.13
Is a self-starter	1.67	2.43	2.38	2.88
Works/Plays without adult support	2.00	3.29	2.62	2.88
Stays on task	1.22	3.00	1.75	1.88
Works well in a group	2.00	3.00	2.25	2.88
Pays attention	1.67	3.00	2.00	2.50
Follows teacher's verbal directions	1.78	3.14	2.25	3.25

	M	M	t	p	M	M	t	p
Total	1.68	2.92	.0004	< .05	2.16	2.49	.313	>.05

Summary

      The results chapter of this work was designed to provide detailed information regarding the nature and scope of the data collected during the course of this study. The chapter was divided into two parts intentionally to make important points about the data in relation to the research questions associated with the work. The first section provided an overview of the pre-test analyses that were conducted and the second, analyses of the post-test data.

      The pre-test data that was analyzed revealed that the parent perceptions that were obtained from the administration of the SCS- Parent indicated that there were no significant differences between the treatment and control group with regard to the development of resilience based skills (t= .590, p > .05). In addition, the teacher perceptions that were obtained from the administration of the SCS- Teacher indicated that there were no significant differences between the treatment and control groups (t= .939, p > .05). Even when the researcher combined the teacher and parent perception data together, there was no statistically significant difference between the groups (t= .855, p > .05).

      The pre-test analyses also yielded data with regard to the specific items, or skills-based resilience building skills, associated with the SCS. The pre-test data indicated that the most developed parent and teacher perceived skills from both the treatment and

control group were; helpful to others, shares things, and follows directions. The least developed parent and teacher perceived skills from both the treatment and control group were; copes well with failure, thinks before acts, and resolves problems with family and friends.

The final item of pre-test analysis was looking at the data associated with a sub-test of the SCS-Teacher that focused on the teacher perceptions of the development of academic skills. Seven of the 12 items contained within the SCS-Teacher were designed to gauge teacher perceptions with regard to academic readiness and aptitude. Pre-test results indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the treatment group, Classroom A and the control group, Classroom B as far as teacher academic perceptions were concerned. According to the SCS pre-test teacher perception data, the preschool students in the control group had a significant advantage academically over the preschool students in the treatment group at the beginning of the study (t= .010, p < .05).

The post-test SCS analyses conducted by the researcher shifted the focus from the examination of similarities and differences between the treatment and control group to any fundamental changes to the groups themselves. The inquiry spanned from the SCS pre-test to the post-test administration as a result of the independent variable, in this case ESRBI.

The post-test data that was analyzed revealed that the parent perceptions that were obtained from the administration of the SCS-Parent for Classroom A, the treatment group, indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the group since the inception of the study and the introduction of ESRBI to the NJPTLS (t= .022, p < .05). Conversely, post-test data that was analyzed revealed that the parent perceptions that

were obtained for Classroom B, the control group, indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference in the group since the inception of the study using the NJPTLS alone (t= .075, p > .05).

The post-test data that was analyzed revealed that the teacher perceptions that were obtained from the administration of the SCS-Teacher for Classroom A, the treatment group, indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the group since the inception of the study and the introduction of ESRBI to the NJPTLS (t= .046, p < .05). Conversely, post-test data that was analyzed revealed that the teacher perceptions that were obtained for Classroom B, the control group, indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference in the group since the inception of the study using the NJPTLS alone (t= .160, p > .05).

The post-test data that was analyzed revealed that both parent and teacher perceptions combined that were obtained from the administration of the SCS-Parent and Teacher for Classroom A, the treatment group, indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the group since the inception of the study and the introduction of ESRBI to the NJPTLS (t= .016, p < .05). Conversely, post-test data that was analyzed revealed that the parent and teacher perceptions that were obtained for Classroom B, the control group, indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference in the group since the inception of the study using the NJPTLS alone (t= .075, p > .05).

The post-test analyses also yielded data with regard to the specific items, or skills-based resilience building skills, associated with the SCS. The post-test data indicated that the most developed parent and teacher perceived skills from both the treatment and control group were; helpful to others, follows directions, and shares things. The least

developed parent and teacher perceived skills from both the treatment and control group were; gives suggestions without being bossy, thinks before acts, and resolves problems with family and friends. As mentioned earlier the post-test SCS item analysis revealed only slight shifts in the ordinal rank of SCS items. More importantly, the post-SCS item analysis indicated that all 12 items that were selected for this study significantly developed during the study period. The means associated with all 12 items were statistically significant upon SCS post-test. The strongest development post ESRBI was Item #2- accepting things going ones way (t=. 005, p <. 05), while the weakest development occurred with Item #24- gives suggestions without being bossy (t=. 013, p <. 05). It should be noted that this should be considered a relative weakness, as the change is still considered significant.

The final item of post-test analysis was looking at the data associated with a sub-test of the SCS-Teacher that focused on the teacher perceptions of the development of academic skills. Seven of the 12 items contained within the SCS-Teacher were designed to gauge teacher perceptions with regard to academic readiness and aptitude. Pre-test results indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the treatment group, Classroom A and the control group, Classroom B as far as teacher academic perceptions were concerned. According to the SCS pre-test teacher perception data, the preschool students in the control group had a significant advantage academically over the preschool students in the treatment group at the beginning of the study (t= .010, p < .05). Post-test results indicated, however, that there were no statistically significant differences between the treatment group, Classroom A and the control group, Classroom B as far as teacher academic perceptions were concerned. According to the SCS post-test teacher

perception data, the preschool students in the control group no longer had a significant

advantage academically over the preschool students in the treatment group at the end of

the study (t= .189, p > .05).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine teacher and parent perspectives of preschool student resilience using a prescribed course of explicit skills-based resilience building instruction (ESRBI) as measured by pre and post-test responses on a valid and reliable social competence measure- the SCS. The study was conducted over the course of twelve weeks starting in December of 2015 through March of 2016.

The study of resilience continues to be the subject of scholarly interest in the field of education, psychology, and psychiatry. In the field of education, there are active discussions about the impact of social-emotional learning (SEL) and resilience-based programs on the academic and social outcomes of students (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012; Whitington & Floyd, 2009). Educational settings are positioned uniquely in these formal and informal professional conversations since children spend so much time attending school. Schools must be in a position to provide supports far beyond the academic in order to maximize the potential of each individual learner. According to Souers and Hall (2016), "children with mental health issues are not required to obtain professional mental health services, but they are legally obligated to attend school. Thus, school is the one place where we are guaranteed access to our trauma-affected children. Our students need us to create a trauma-sensitive learning environment for them" (p. 24). These factors provided the basis for the research questions that guided this study:

➢ What impact might explicit, skills-based resilience building instruction have on preschool students' levels of resilience as indicated by both

teacher and parent perceptions on a valid measure of social competence? And,

➢ How might the results be organized, given levels of significance, to inform a hierarchical approach to learning these skills-based resilience building strategies?

Summary of the Study

This study was conducted in an effort to determine the impact ESBRI has on the preschool skills associated with resilience. To accomplish this task, eligible preschool students' teachers and parents provided perception data via the SCS after one preschool section received ESRBI and the other adhered to the NJPTLS. Teacher and parents' perceptions were analyzed regarding accepting things that don't go your way; coping with failure; thinking before acting; resolving problems with friends and family; calming down when excited or frustrated; following directions; understanding the feelings of others; controlling temper/strong emotions; sharing with others; helping others; listening to other points of view; and giving suggestions and opinions without being bossy. The study was presented in five chapters.

Chapter 1 presented an introduction to the study, providing a brief overview of the need for further examination into resilience based work in our schools as a result of several school-related mass traumatizing events such as the Sandy Hook, CT school shooting that occurred in 2012. The background of the study provided more specific information regarding the proposed benefits of ESRBI and the limitation of the NJPTLS. The chapter also included a comprehensive overview of the researcher's conceptual framework to help provide context to the research and position the study to be

meaningfully interpreted. The chapter concluded with a brief definition of terms and an overview of the assumptions and limitations to provide readers with concepts that are frequently taken for granted and to clearly delineate what the research was intended to examine.

Chapter 2 presented a literature review that began with a general overview of the development of resilience theory from its ecological and social science roots to its influence on contemporary neurobiology.   The chapter provided a continuum of the related resilience research that informed the study presented, how the research that came before could be categorized using Richardson's (2002) waves of resilience paradigm, an introduction to the levels associated with resilience, and the scientific research tools used to better understand the phenomena. The literature review concluded with a summarization of the research that is considered seminal works in the area of resilience and social-emotional learning (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012; Ginsberg, 2011).

Chapter 3 provided an explanation of the methodology that was utilized to conduct this study, as well as describing the positively consenting subjects. Comprehensive descriptions of the SCS teacher and parent perception data and how it was collected was provided here. Chapter 4 provided an overview of the data collection and a complete analysis of the findings based on the research questions that guided this study.

Chapter 5 presented a summary of the study, a summary of the study's findings and conclusions, and discussed recommendations for future research and practice. This chapter also discussed the potential implications that this research will have on preschool

curriculum development and instruction in Lacey Township schools. This chapter also provided the limitations of the study and the potential for researcher bias.

Discussion

This study was intended to examine the impact of ESRBI on teacher and parent perceptions of preschool functioning. It was important for this researcher to identify two similar preschool groups to participate in this quantitative, two-group experimental design. In order to draw meaningful conclusions, it was important to the study that baseline teacher and parent resilience perception data was not so different that a structured intervention like ESRBI could not be adequately assessed. The fact that the classrooms and students selected for this study were statistically similar with regard to their perceived resilience skills set, allowed for the discussion to focus on the independent variable associated with this work.

The pre-test analyses also yielded data with regard to the specific items, or skills-based resilience building skills, associated with the SCS. The pre-test data indicated that the most developed parent and teacher perceived skills from both the treatment and control group were; helpful to others, shares things, and follows directions. The least developed parent and teacher perceived skills from both the treatment and control group were; copes well with failure, thinks before acts, and resolves problems with family and friends.

Another pre-test phenomena that is worthy of mention here is that while the groups were similar at the beginning of the study with regard to resilience and social-emotional skills functioning, they were statistically dissimilar with regard to the SCS teachers' academic subtest. The control group, or Classroom B, had significantly more

developed skills in the preschool academic areas assessed according to teacher pre-test perception data. This was an interesting development during the course of the study as the pre-test data created another layer of analysis for the researcher to consider. In other words, if ESRBI did result in significant improvements to preschool resilience and social-emotional skills, would there be an impact on the academic subtest associated with the SCS teacher?

The pre-test data secured during the course of the study set the baseline for the post-test data to be considered. The same analyses were conducted during the post-test phase of the study as were conducted during the pre-test phase, with the exception that any changes as a result of the independent variable were closely monitored. In other words, during the pre-test phase, the treatment and control groups were analyzed in relation to one another. During the post-test phase, the groups were primarily monitored independently to account for any change as a result of the intervention, or independent variable.

Post-test SCS data was notable in relation to the research questions posed in this study. The data indicated significant differences in teacher and parent perceptions, as a result of the independent variable, post ESRBI. More specifically, statistically significant differences existed between the treatment and control groups as a result of ESRBI. Prior to the study, the groups were statistically similar according to pre-test SCS parent and teacher perception data. At the end of the study, the treatment and control groups are dissimilar. The treatment group, Classroom A experienced a significant shift in the skills associated with resilience when post-test SCS parent data, post-test SCS teacher data, and post-test SCS teacher and parent combined data were analyzed. The control group,

Classroom B did not experience the significant growth that Classroom A experienced. In fact, none of the SCS post-test data was significant when combined or when isolated.

Additionally, the post-test analyses yielded data with regard to the specific items, or skills-based resilience building skills, associated with the SCS. The post-test data indicated that the most developed parent and teacher perceived skills from both the treatment and control group were; helpful to others, follows directions, and shares things. The least developed parent and teacher perceived skills from both the treatment and control group were; gives suggestions without being bossy, thinks before acts, and resolves problems with family and friends. As mentioned earlier the post-test SCS item analysis revealed only slight shifts in the ordinal rank of SCS items. More importantly, the post-SCS item analysis indicated that all 12 items that were selected for this study significantly developed during the study period. The means associated with all 12 items were statistically significant upon SCS post-test. The strongest development post ESRBI was Item #2- accepting things going ones way, while the weakest development occurred with Item #24- gives suggestions without being bossy.

Another significant post-test SCS finding was that while the control group was significantly more developed academically according the SCS teacher academic subtest at the beginning of the study, the treatment and control groups were statistically similar at the end of the study. Post-test SCS teacher data on the academic subtest revealed that only students in the treatment group experienced significant growth academically, post ESRBI. While the control group did experience relative growth on the SCS teacher academic subtest, it was not significant.

Implications

A total of fifteen, four year-old preschool students in two distinct sections of our preschool program participated in this study alongside their teachers and parents. The SCS- Teacher and Parent versions were distributed to and received from teachers and parents in the winter of 2015 and the spring of 2016 to determine the degree to which teacher and parent perceptions of skills associated with resilience changed as a result of ESRBI. The results of both administrations of the SCS and the surveys have been used to make recommendations to district decision makers for informed curriculum determinations on the continuation of ESRBI at the preschool level. There are several implications worthy of note as a result of this study. They range from recommendations for shifts in policy and curriculum in the preschool program in Jones Township to broader attempts to highlight the benefits of ESRBI to a local and regional audience.

Given the significant results noted in the results section of this work the researcher would recommend the immediate start of the exact ESRBI protocol that was used in the study to Classroom B. This would provide the control group with the intervention that was considered the independent variable in the study without delay, which was a condition of the study.

The researcher would also hold a parent, teacher, and other interested stakeholder night to review the results of the study and the implications and limitations of the work for their consideration. This will provide the researcher with an opportunity for feedback and comments to inform practice.

The scope and sequence of the study related ESRBI curricula will be examined and reorganized based on the results of the 12 item SCS analysis that was conducted and

the teacher academic SCS subtest. This process will be carefully reviewed with the study related teachers to be mindful of the actual teaching considerations that need to be illuminated in order to best position the instruction.

The researcher will consider a more robust ESBRI resilience building program to span beyond the study related twelve-week period. This will provide teachers with broad access to the full range of resilience building activities designed to promote resilience unearthed and discussed in the literature review section of the study. The proposed series of lessons will adhere to the thirty minute once per week time frame to supplement, not supplant core academic instruction. In addition, the researcher will consider a more comprehensive developmental sequence and scope to bring ESRBI to more of the primary grade levels.

Teacher training will be a primary consideration so that ESRBI efforts can be supported and maintained. The study was able to start the pedagogical conversation that explicit instruction may be useful than a standards based approach when it comes to resilience building efforts at the preschool level. This training will focus on the preschool teaching and learning standards (NJPTLS) and the social emotional goals that are part of that state prescribed curriculum. The training should focus on the "close teaching" that is the essence of ESRBI. These training events should also focus on the role of the school administrator in promoting more explicit, active resilience building teaching strategies.

The research will be disseminated to a group of local and regional directors of special services and curriculum, a professional group to which the researcher belongs. The researcher will request an audience with this group to share the results of

the work and the potential for the study to be replicated. In addition, the research hopes to start a subgroup with this professional organization focusing on developing students' capacity for resilience in 21st century schools.

Finally, while the results of the study indicated a significant relationship between ESRBI and teacher and parent perception scores on the SCS, the crosswalk for ESRBI being an antidote to school related trauma and bouncing back are in its infancy stages. The researcher hopes to codify an ESRBI curriculum that can be studied with rigor to begin to move the discussion from "Why should you explicitly teach resilience in the primary grades?" to "How you should explicitly teach resilience in the primary grades?"

Limitations

All of the limitations described in Chapter 3 of this study remain discussion points here at the conclusion of this study, more specifically issues with sampling procedures, sample size and generalizability, reliability of the research tool, and the researcher's relationship to the teachers in the research study. A more expansive account of the study's limitations is warranted and provided here.

The study involved the evaluation of teacher and parent perception data recorded on the SCS, and in particular ESRBI, a new curriculum arrangement introduced to the preschool in late 2015 through early 2016. No prior studies of this type have been completed; hence, there is no prior baseline data that can be used to compare and contrast differences that may have occurred over time.

The use of convenience sampling impacted the external validity, limiting the transferability of the findings. Because accessibility is the main goal of convenience

sampling, the researcher had little control over the subjects chosen to participate in this study. There is no evidence to suggest that the study participants were representative of the group being studied (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004).

The limited sample size impacted the study's generalizability to a larger population. The study was intended to be a small, locally based research study to inform local practice and policy, statistically significant findings associated with the study should be interpreted with caution.

The ESRBI lessons codified and used in this study were drawn from two different research-based preschool curriculums. While the lesson sequence was coherent, logical, and aligned with both the parent and the teacher SCS; the combination of the preschool curriculums may have implications and impact the research-based worthiness of work.

Finally, while the SCS has proven to be a valid and reliable resilience research tool (Corrigan 2003, 2002; Howell et al., 2010; Jones et al., 2015), its predictability is limited to the resilience and social emotional skills highlighted and limited to twelve specific skills. It is evident from the research that the skills associated with the development of resilience are non-exhaustive therefore results from this study should be interpreted with caution as other valid and reliable measures of resilience may have drawn different results secondary to consideration of other skills.

Recommendations for Action

This quantitative study presented the perceptions of parents and teachers associated with 15 preschool students in Jones township schools in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. While the sample size was limited, their participation, responses, and the data collected and analyzed provided meaningful insight into the

development of resilience skills using an explicit approach to teaching. Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations for action follow.

1. Since the treatment group of the study was the only group that received the twelve-week ESRBI intervention and the results of the study were statistically significant, the control group should receive the ESRBI lessons without delay.

2. The researcher will fine tune and revise the ESRBI lessons as needed and interview the teachers about their experiences with the research to develop training for all preschool teachers during the summer of 2016 in order to implement the program, with BOE approval, in the fall of 2016.

3. The researcher will conduct a workshop for all study participants to review the significant findings of the study and any implications for practice. Feedback will be documented and kept with study related materials.

4. Present findings to all stakeholders in Jones including central office staff, administrators, elementary teachers, parents, child study team members via informational sessions to promote ESRBI programming.

5. Present findings to local preschool directors and preschool administrators in other public school districts to promote the use of a program to explicitly teach resilience.

Recommendations for Future Study

Based on the findings of this study, further research on resilience building efforts in the preschool aged population would provide a broader scope on the perceptions collected from teachers and parents as part of this study. In order to widen and deepen

the potential scope of this research topic, several recommendations for future study follow.

1. This study was limited to 15 preschool students' parents and teachers in mid-Atlantic. It would be meaningful to gain the perceptions and perspective of additional parents and teachers throughout our county and the state who have implemented resilience or SEL-based programs. A quantitative study with a large sample, for example, would allow a perspective researcher to collect more data from subjects to generalize significant findings (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004). It is also recommended that more advanced inferential statistical analyses be conducted on this large sample to showcase any significant findings (Trochim, 2006).

2. Further research with students before the age of four is also recommended to begin to establish the developmental threshold for the emergence of these associated resilience skills (Howell et al., 2010). There has been little research conducted before the preschool aged years (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012).

3. Due to regulatory restrictions, working directly with and observing children while conducting a research study is difficult. Studies that include direct observations of teaching and learning during the course of ESRBI are recommended to further advance specific standards for the development of the skills measured during the course of this study.

4. This study only collected quantitative teacher and parent perception data using only one measure, the SCS. The study did not require responses to open-ended questions, limiting the ability of teachers and parents to provide detailed

information about their experiences during the course of the study. Creswell (2013) reminded us that using "the epistemological assumption, conducting a qualitative study means the researchers try to get as close to possible to the participants being studied" (p. 20). It would be advantageous; given the results of this study, to conduct qualitative research in this area in order to gain a more thorough understanding of teacher and parents perceptions regarding the development of resilience based skills and whether ESRBI was a contributing factor. This would help advance the case for explicit resilience building instruction as opposed to the development of the skills being assigned to maturation.

5. The lessons codified by the researcher for use in this study have not been independently evaluated, nor has this study been replicated in any way known to the researcher. It is recommended that a similar study in scope and in size be conducted to gauge the study's internal and external reliability.

Conclusion

The ability of children to "bounce back" from adversity is an important aspect of 21st century teaching, learning, and development. The research suggests that students who are ready to learn are those who possess skills that are linked to resilience and advanced social-emotional skills. It is our responsibility as 21st century educators to be mindful that passive, standards-based approaches to the development of these skills are suspect, and that explicit teaching using ESRBI is both research-supported and recommended.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND
CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Project Title: *The Case for Explicit Skills-Based Resilience Building Instruction*

Principal Investigator(s):
Michael Maschi, MSW, MA- Doctoral Candidate- University of New England
Grania Holman, Ed.D.- Adjunct Professor- University of New England

Introduction:
General requirement language:
- Please read this form, you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to participate, document your decision.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether or not you want to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

- The purpose of this study is to determine if teaching preschool students the skills associated with resilience (coping with failure, thinking before acting, staying on task, etc.) directly and explicitly is better than teaching skills over time as part of set of preschool standards.
- Another purpose of this study is to try to determine the best order to teach these skills to preschool students.

Who will be in this study?

- You have been identified to participate in this study if you have a child/student in the Lacey school district's afternoon preschool program. Parents and teachers of these students will be encouraged to participate in this study.
- The study will be conducted in two of our four afternoon preschool programs affecting no more than 20 preschool students, 2 teachers, and up to 40-50 parents.

What will I be asked to do?

- You will be asked to fill out the Social Competence Scale (SCS) before and after twelve weeks of instruction delivered to your child/student. The purpose of this is to see if the instruction makes an instructional difference.
- There are two versions of the SCS, a teacher and a parent version. The teacher version has 25 questions and takes between 6-8 minutes to complete, and the parent version has 12 questions and takes between 4-6 minutes to complete.

- You may be asked if you are a teacher to teach- 12 skills-based resilience lessons between December 2015 and March 2016.
- There is no financial reimbursement or monetary compensation for participating in this study.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- Student subjects that are exposed to ESRBI in addition to the standards-based approach may experience some curricular overstimulation or confusion with regard to the resilience associated skills being taught.
- Parent subjects could experience guilt about not wanting to participate or agreeing to participate but then failing to do so. Parents may also feel uncomfortable reporting their perceptions if these perceptions cause any embarrassment or shame.
- Finally, participating teachers may experience anxiety teaching ESRBI in addition to the standards-based curriculum and question if the study is having either a positive or negative impact on their students.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There potential benefits of participating in this study are limited to the explicit exposure to resilience building skill instruction for students, and the potential for the development of a resilience building skills-based curriculum for teachers and future preschool parents.

What will it cost me?

- There are no costs associated with participating in this study.

How will my privacy be protected?

- The rights of the parents and teachers who are also considered subjects of this study will be protected by anonymity and confidentiality. A
- All SCS-related scale materials will not include respondent's names or any other identifiable information when presented to study participants. Self-addressed, identical, postage paid envelopes will be provided with each SCS scale request for parents and teacher both pre and post-test for their consideration and return.
- Upon receipt, all SCS data will be entered into an Excel database and archived.
- At no time will the researcher be aware of which SCS is associated with a particular study subject.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed to be anonymous, this means that no one, can link the data you provide to you, or identify you as a participant.

o *NOTE: anonymous means that no one (including the researcher) can link data to an individual. Researchers should not promise complete anonymity, especially in the case of research conducted via the internet.*
- Research records will be kept in a locked file in the locked office of the Principal Investigator ;
- Individually identifiable data will be destroyed after the study is complete;
- No individually identifiable information will be collected.

General requirement language:
- Please note that state and local educational regulatory agencies, and the Institutional Review Board at the University of New England may review the research records.
- A copy of your signed consent form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least 3 years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The consent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- Research findings may be requested by study participants by contacting the Principal Investigator anytime after June 2016 at mmaschi@une.edu.

What are my rights as a research participant?
- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with Lacey Township Schools. Since this project involves students as participants your/their decision to participate will not impact their standing as students in any way. Since employees are involved, your decision to participate will not impact your relationship with their employer in any way.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate there is no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw from the research there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose not to participate or discontinue participation in the study at any time.

Whom may I contact with questions?

General requirement language:
- The researchers conducting this study are Michael Maschi and Grania Holman. For questions or more information concerning this research you may contact Michael Maschi at mmaschi@une.edu and Grania Holman at gholman@une.edu.

General requirement language:
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Michael Maschi at mmaschi@une.edu and Grania Holman at gholman@une.edu.

   NOTE: Student researchers are required to have the faculty advisor listed. The faculty advisor is expected to take an active role in students' research activities and provide supervision throughout the duration of their research study. The faculty advisor is legally responsible for all research activities.

General requirement language:

- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call Olgun Guvench, M.D. Ph.D., Chair of the UNE Institutional Review Board at (207) 221-4171 or irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?
General requirement language:

- You will be given a copy of this consent form.

Participant's Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I agree to take part in the research and do so voluntarily.

Participant's signature or
Legally authorized representative

Date

Printed name

Researcher's Statement

The participant named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

_____   _____
Researcher's signature   Date

_____
Printed name

Appendix B

University of New England- Institutional Review Board Approval

UNE UNIVERSITY OF
NEW ENGLAND

Institutional Review Board
Olgun Guvench, Chair

Biddeford Campus
11 Hills Beach Road
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Portland Campus
716 Stevens Avenue
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To: Michael Maschi

Cc: Grania Holman

From: Olgun Guvench, Ph.D.

Date: November 25, 2015

Project # & Title: 112015-011, The Case for Explicit Skills-Based Resilience Building Instruction (Initial)

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects has reviewed the above captioned project, and has determined that the proposed work is exempt from IRB review and oversight as defined by 45 CFR 46.101 (b)(1) & (b)(2).

Additional IRB review and approval is not required for this protocol as submitted. If you wish to change your protocol at any time, you must first submit the changes for review.

Please contact Olgun Guvench at (207) 221-4171 or oguvench@une.edu with any questions.

Sincerely,

Olgun Guvench, M.D., Ph.D.
IRB Chair

IRB#: 112015-011
Submission Date: 11/18/15
Status: Exempt, 45 CFR 46.101 (b)(1) & (b)(2)
Status Date: **11/25/15**

Appendix C

Social Competence Scale (SCS)- Teacher

Social Competence Scale — T

INSTRUCTIONS: Please rate each of the listed behaviors according to how well it describes this child.

Rating scale (columns): Not At All | A Little | Moderately Well | Well | Very Well

#	Behavior	Not At All	A Little	Moderately Well	Well	Very Well
1.	Functions well even with distractions	○	○	○	○	○
2.	Can accept things not going his/her way	○	○	○	○	○
3.	Copes well with failure	○	○	○	○	○
4.	Is a self-starter	○	○	○	○	○
5.	Work/plays well without adult support	○	○	○	○	○
6.	Accepts legitimate imposed limits	○	○	○	○	○
7.	Expresses needs and feelings appropriately	○	○	○	○	○
8.	Thinks before acting	○	○	○	○	○
9.	Resolves peer problems on his/her own	○	○	○	○	○
10.	Stays on task	○	○	○	○	○
11.	Can calm down when excited or all wound up	○	○	○	○	○
12.	Can wait in line patiently when necessary	○	○	○	○	○
13.	Very good at understanding other people's feelings	○	○	○	○	○
14.	Is aware of the effect of his/her behavior on others	○	○	○	○	○
15.	Works well in a group	○	○	○	○	○
16.	Plays by the rules of the game	○	○	○	○	○
17.	Pays attention	○	○	○	○	○
18.	Controls temper when there is a disagreement	○	○	○	○	○
19.	Shares materials with others	○	○	○	○	○
20.	Cooperates with peers without prompting (PRO/COM)	○	○	○	○	○
21.	Follows teacher's verbal directions	○	○	○	○	○
22.	Is helpful to others	○	○	○	○	○
23.	Listens to others' points of view	○	○	○	○	○
24.	Can give suggestions and opinions without being bossy	○	○	○	○	○
25.	Acts friendly toward others	○	○	○	○	○

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Appendix D

Social Competence Scale (SCS)- Parent

Social Competence (Parent Version)

I will read to you some statements that could describe your child.
Please tell me how well each of the statements actually does describe your child.

	Not At All	A Little	Moderately Well	Well	Very Well
1. Your child can accept things not going his/her way.	⓪	①	②	③	④
2. Your child copes well with failure.	⓪	①	②	③	④
3. Your child thinks before acting.	⓪	①	②	③	④
4. Your child resolves problems with friends or brothers and sisters on his/her own.	⓪	①	②	③	④
5. Your child can calm down when excited or all wound up.	⓪	①	②	③	④
6. Your child does what he or she is told to do.	⓪	①	②	③	④

	Not At All	A Little	Moderately Well	Well	Very Well
7. Your child is very good at understanding other people's feelings.	⓪	①	②	③	④
8. Your child controls his/her temper when there is a disagreement.	⓪	①	②	③	④
9. Your child shares things with others.	⓪	①	②	③	④
10. Your child is helpful to others.	⓪	①	②	③	④
11. Your child listens to others' points of view.	⓪	①	②	③	④
12. Your child can give suggestions and opinions without being bossy.	⓪	①	②	③	④

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Appendix E

Explicit Skills-Based Resilience Building Instruction (ESRBI)

For the purposes of this work, ESRBI was a weekly, consecutive, series of twelve 30-minute explicit teacher modules in two key areas of preschool resilience building instruction, namely pro-social/communication skills and emotional regulation skills. The twelve modules covered the following skills-based, resilience building areas of preschool development:

- ➢ Accepting things that don't go your way

- ➢ Coping with failure

- ➢ Thinking before acting

- ➢ Resolving problems with friends and family

- ➢ Calming down when excited or frustrated

- ➢ Following directions

- ➢ Understanding the feelings of others

- ➢ Controlling temper/strong emotions

- ➢ Sharing with others

- ➢ Helping others

- ➢ Listening to other points of view

- ➢ Giving suggestions and opinions without being bossy

The twelve 30-minute explicit teacher modules came from two research-based preschool curriculums and were used with permission, as both are free for use.

- ➢ Peace First 4th Edition (2015). *The peace first preschool curriculum*. Digital

  Activity Center. Boston, MA. Preschool Lessons 2-8.

Curriculum Overview:

http://www.peacefirst.org/digitalactivitycenter/system/files/curriculum/files/pre-kindergarten_curriculum_overview_4.pdf

➢ Sesame Street Workshop (2015). *Little children, big challenges.* New York, NY. Problem Solving Lessons. Pages 50-127. Lessons 6-10.

Curriculum Overview:

http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/challenges

<u>The Twelve-Week Program</u>

Week 1-	Good Friends	Week 7-	Cooperating Feels Good
Week 2-	We All Take Turns	Week 8-	Breathe, Think, Do
Week 3-	Working Together	Week 9-	What's the Problem?
Week 4-	Grabbing and Sharing	Week 10-	Who Can Help?
Week 5-	Helping Each Other	Week 11-	Let's Try It
Week 6-	Feeling Angry	Week 12-	Try, Try Again

peacefirst | CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Our Vision

We envision a world where all young people learn and practice the concrete skills of peacemaking—conflict resolution, communication, cooperation, civic engagement, empathy—every day, just like reading, math and science. In teaching these critical social emotional learning skills and providing opportunities for young people to practice these skills, we nurture and unleash the inherent calling of young people to be natural and highly effective problem solvers. We call this work peacemaking. Peacemaking is the process of engaging with others to make positive and lasting change. The Peace First curriculum is part of a larger set of programs, all designed to teach, model, and value peacemaking skills of children and youth. Other programs include the Peace First Prize and the Peace First Fellowship.

Why Peacemaking? Why Peace First?

Mastering peacemaking is the key skill of our time. In an increasingly connected world, our ability to form healthy and productive relationships across lines of difference, to care for one another, and to work cooperatively to improve the lives of others has no parallel. Peacemaking starts with learning the essential social and emotional skills of personal awareness, relationship building, and addressing exclusion and bullying, and goes beyond these to engage young people in seeing themselves as agents of social change.

About the Curriculum Design

The Peace First curriculum is designed to build the knowledge, skills, relationships, and experiences that students need to become effective peacemakers at each developmental level, from Pre-K through 8th grade.

- **The Peacemaker Skills lessons** are the first ten curriculum lessons for each grade level. They focus on developing knowledge and awareness that build the peacemaking skills of communication, cooperation, conflict resolution, empathy, and civic engagement using a cooperative learning approach. Grade level themes include Taking a Stand, Friendship and Peer Groups, Communication and Cooperation. See page 3 for a detailed list of grade level themes.
- **The Peacemaker Project lessons** are the eight lessons comprising the second half of each grade level's curriculum. Students identify a community problem they wish to address and design a creative solution in the form of a Community Service Learning (CSL) project, or Peacemaker Project. Ranging from the very local (addressing school bullying) to the global (helping refugees), Peacemaker Projects enable students to collaborate and put their newly acquired peacemaking skills into action to effect change at an age-appropriate level.

Peace First Curriculum: Research Based, Practitioner Informed

The Peace First Curriculum was originally developed in 1992 in partnership with the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The curriculum is informed by the developmental education research of Dr. Robert Selman and grounded in the child development principles of Piaget and Kohlberg. Now in its 4th revision, the Peace First curriculum includes the experience and perspective of teachers and students at every stage of design, making it uniquely accessible, relevant, and easy to use. With 20 years of experience in schools, the Peace First curriculum has proven results.

- **Peace First students demonstrate increased knowledge and skills of peacemaking.** 90% of teachers observe positive changes in students' conflict resolution skills and 81% of students report that they can walk away from a fight without feeling like a coward.
- **Teachers are highly satisfied with Peace First, citing that the curriculum is easy to use, relevant, and helps build positive classroom climate.** Over 80% of teachers using the Peace First curriculum integrate Peace First concepts, vocabulary and rituals into their regular work with students.
- **The overwhelming majority of visitors to the Digital Activity Center are pleased with the content and structure of the curriculum.** Users of the site feel equipped to implement the curriculum with little to no training or assistance from Peace First.

Core Principles

Several core principles have guided the development of content, themes, and structure of our curriculum. Feedback from practitioners affirms that these core design principles set us apart:

- **Developmentally Appropriate and Sequenced**— The curriculum is designed to challenge and support students in a developmentally appropriate progression. Grade-level themes and lesson activities are built on Dr. Robert Selman's research on the moral and social development of children—in particular, the evolution of children's understanding of others' feelings and perspective and the developmental sequence for friendship.

- **Experiential and Interactive**— Each lesson is grounded in games, whole class activities, and small-group activities that bring the concepts to life for the students, teachers and classroom. Our activities provide students with opportunities to learn, practice, and reflect on peacemaking through direct experiences (role playing, small-group work, cooperative games, and guided practice) and offer space for teachable moments.

- **Inclusive of All Learners**— With guidance from a team of inclusion specialists, Peace First lessons were designed with a range of options to allow all learners to engage with the content. As a highly constructivist and interactive curriculum, lessons include choices for small groups, kinesthetic and non-verbal activities, and supports for students to bring their unique skills and perspectives to the discussion and learning.

- **Accessible and Easy to Use**— Each lesson is self-contained, includes a reflection guide, and is part of a larger scope and sequence. Lessons are designed to minimize teacher preparation time through detailed guided language while still allowing for flexibility and creativity. Peace First lessons can be supplemented by over 100 fully scripted games and activities that are available in our searchable online library on the Digital Activity Center.

- **Action Oriented (Community Service Learning)**— Student leadership and civic engagement are built into the curriculum through Peacemaker Projects. Lessons help teachers empower students to work together on projects to improve their community. This section of the curriculum often gets the highest accolades from both students and teachers.

The curriculum, with a full scope and sequence, is free and accessible _here on the Digital Activity Center_. All you need to do to access over 200 activities, lessons and tipsheets is become a registered user. If you are interested in having your school adopt Peace First or engaging a broader group of educators or youth service professionals in utilizing the curriculum, Peace First's national staff offer a range of supports for getting started. Our staff is also available to discuss the benefits of our curriculum and whether it is a good match for your classroom or school needs.

Lesson 2: Peacemakers Are Good Friends

Lesson Overview

Purpose: To review Opening and Closing Rituals, and to introduce the idea that peacemakers are good friends; to introduce friendship and feelings vocabulary.

Timing: 30 min   This lesson is designed to take 30 minutes.

Objectives   By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Use words and phrases that connect peacemaking with friendship (e.g. take turns, keep a friend safe, share, be kind).
- Compliment at least one other student in the class.
- Do the opening and closing rituals.

Agenda

Opening	**10 min**
Welcome	
Stand Up, Sit Down	
Focus Activities	**15 min**
Compliment Relay	
Musical Hugs	
Reading *Will I Have a Friend?* (Optional)	
Closing	**5 min**
Evaluation/Reflection	
Pass the Pulse	

Supplies

- Suggested: Decorated stick or other object to pass during the compliment relay
- Book: *Will I Have a Friend?* by Miriam Cohen
- Fun, child-friendly music and music-playing device (iPod with speakers, computer with speakers, etc.)

Lesson 3: We All Take Turns

Lesson Overview

Purpose: To learn the vocabulary and skills involved in taking turns; to practice taking turns with a simple cooperative activity; to connect taking turns with peacemaking.

Timing: 30 min

This lesson is designed to take 30 minutes.

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Complete the Opening and Closing Rituals.
- Play a new game and evaluate it.
- Use words that connect peacemaking with taking turns (or cooperation), such as "Please," "Thank you," "May I go next?" "Will you help me?" "Please wait for me."

Agenda

Opening	**10 min**
Welcome	
Stand Up, Sit Down	
Focus Activities	**15 min**
We're Going On A Magic Trip!	
Group Puzzle	
Mother May I? (Optional)	
Closing	**5 min**
Pass the Pulse	

Supplies

- Puzzle pieces—enough for 2 groups (2 sets of 16 squares); including extra squares of colored construction paper
- Handout P-3A: Group Puzzle: Sixteen Questions

Lesson 4: Working Together

Lesson Overview

Purpose: To encourage participation in group activities as partners working together.

Timing: 30 min

This lesson is designed to take 30 minutes.

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Use vocabulary and skills that will help them work together peacefully.
- Participate in activities that allow them to work as a group to have fun, learn and create something together.
- Understand how working together makes the classroom more peaceful.

Agenda

Opening	5 min	
Welcome		
Stand Up, Sit Down		
Focus Activities	20 min	
Hula Hoop Pass		
Reading *Stone Soup*		
Rainstorm (Optional)		
Closing	5 min	
Pass the Pulse		

Supplies

- Lesson Plan (Agenda) on large chart paper
- Hula Hoop
- Book: *Stone Soup* by Marcia Brown

Key Words

Aa

- **Togetherness:** Including others, being with others, feeling part of a group.
- **Harmony:** Everyone agreeing and working together peacefully.
- **Group:** Two or more people together in one place.

Lesson 5: Grabbing and Sharing

Lesson Overview

Purpose: To understand that actions can contribute or detract from a peaceful classroom environment, and to "play act" scenarios where grabbing and sharing affect the classroom dynamic.

Timing: 30 min   This lesson is designed to take 30 minutes.

Objectives   By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:
- Actively participate in a puppet show that highlights the consequences of grabbing
- Connect the themes of the puppet show to a story
- Learn words that help them express that they want something without grabbing

Agenda

Opening	5 min	
Welcome		
Stand Up, Sit Down		
Focus Activities	20 min	
Puppet Show		
Reading *It's Mine!*		
Rainstorm (Optional)		
Closing	5 min	
Evaluation/Reflection		
Pass the Pulse		

Supplies
- Puppets
- Book: *It's Mine!* by Leo Lionni

Key Words
- **Sharing:** Using something together, allowing someone access to something.
- **Cooperation:** Working together for a common purpose.

Lesson 6: Helping Each Other

Lesson Overview

Purpose: To practice the actions of working together to accomplish a goal.

Timing: 30 min   This lesson is designed to take 30 minutes.

Objectives   By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:
- Help each other complete a task.
- Use helping words when they talk about the game.
- Successfully pass the squeeze around the circle.

Agenda

Opening	**5 min**
Welcome	
Stand Up, Sit Down	
Focus Activities	**20 min**
The Humming Game	
Reading *The Little Red Hen*	
Classroom Helper Signs (Optional)	
Closing	**5 min**
Evaluation/Reflection	
Pass the Pulse	

Supplies
- Book: *The Little Red Hen*
- Writing/drawing materials
- Large pieces of paper (one per student)

Key Words

Aa
- **Help:** To make something easier or better for someone else.
- **Sharing:** Using something together, allowing someone access to something.
- **Nice:** Being kind, polite or friendly.
- **Friend:** Someone who shows they care about you through their words

Lesson 7: Feeling Angry

Lesson Overview

Purpose: To acknowledge that anger can occur when others do not share or cooperate and to think through peaceful ways to express those feelings.

Timing: 30 min This lesson is designed to take 30 minutes.

Objectives By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Name some things that make them feel angry.
- Use words to talk about angry feelings.
- Connect their conversation with a book about feeling angry.

Agenda

Opening	**5 min**	
Welcome		
Stand Up, Sit Down		
Focus Activities	**20 min**	
Singing "If You're Peaceful and You Know It"		
Reading *When Emily Woke Up*		
Feelings Dance (Optional)		
Closing	**5 min**	
Evaluation/Reflection		
Pass the Pulse		

Supplies

- Book: *When Emily Woke Up* by Riana Duncan

Key Words

- **Happy:** Feeling pleased, glad, or comfortable.
- **Sad:** Unhappy or upset; feeling down.
- **Angry:** Feeling mad.
- **Calm:** Quiet, still.
- **Peaceful:** Quiet and calm; without fighting or war.

Lesson 8: Cooperating Feels Good

Lesson Overview

Purpose: To recognize the positive feelings associated with cooperation; to begin reviewing the previous lessons.

Timing: 30 min   This lesson is designed to take 30 minutes.

Objectives   By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:
- Understand why cooperating is something they like or want to do.
- Name ways in which cooperation helps make a peaceful classroom.
- Have fun cooperating with their classmates.

Agenda

Opening	5 min	
Welcome		
Stand Up, Sit Down		
Focus Activities	20 min	
Friend to Friend		
Handprint Rainbow		
Closing	5 min	
Evaluation/Reflection		
Pass the Pulse		

Supplies
- Washable paint (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple), and large paintbrushes
- Large piece of butcher paper (to serve as canvas for Handprint Rainbow mural)
- Access to soap and water
- Newspaper, old tablecloths, or something else to protect classroom furniture
- Markers in all colors of the rainbow (optional)

Welcome!

Welcome to the *Little Children, Big Challenges Educator Activity Guide*! Everyday challenges are a part of life and happen all the time. When you give children the tools to navigate the little and big obstacles that come their way, you help them to learn and to grow in school and in life.

You already play such an important role in developing strong children. Your caring and supportive learning environment helps children feel confident and build resilience. Resilience is the ability to cope with and overcome challenges. With your encouragement, children are better able to cope with difficult feelings and solve problems. As children practice understanding their feelings and develop skills to solve problems, they build important resilience skills that will help them each day.

Sesame Street has created this guide to help you further develop resilience skills in the children you teach.

Over the next 12 weeks, you will have the chance to help children build skills to overcome challenges both inside and outside of the classroom.

Children will learn to
- Label, express, and manage feelings;
- Understand the feelings of others;
- Calm down when they are frustrated or have a problem;
- Identify a problem and come up with ways to solve it;
- Ask for help from caring adults.

These activities are designed to build on what you are already doing in your classroom to teach feelings and problem solving.
All of the activities are easy to do with very little setup and materials, and each activity can be adapted for your students and to your specific setting or class size. Each activity takes 10 to 20 minutes to complete, and each section uses a repeating structure so that you and your children can practice the ideas and strategies being taught.

Week 6
Breathe, Think, Do

Problem Solving: This week children will learn how to stay calm when they have a problem.

Children will

- Learn the three steps to solving a problem with the **Breathe**, **Think**, **Do** strategy;
- Practice identifying feelings when a problem arises;
- Practice the first step in the problem solving process: **Breathe**.

Week 7
What's the Problem?
What's the Plan?

Problem Solving: This week, children will learn how to make a plan to solve a problem.

Children will

- Review the three steps for solving a problem: **Breathe**, **Think**, **Do**;
- Practice identifying feelings when a problem arises;
- Learn to ask the questions, "What's the problem? What's the plan?" as the **Think** component of the **Breathe**, **Think**, **Do** strategy;
- Review the words **frustrated** and **thrilled**.

Week 8
What's the Problem?
Who Can Help?

Problem Solving: This week children will learn who is in their circle of care.

Children will

- Review the three steps to solving a problem: **Breathe, Think, Do**;
- Practice identifying feelings when a problem arises;
- Review the **think** strategy: "What's the problem? What's the plan?";
- Identify people they can reach out to for help—people in their "circle of care";
- Review the words **disappointed**, **mad**, and **ecstatic**.

Week 9
Let's Try It

Problem Solving: This week children will practice the third step in the problem solving process: **Do**.

Children will

- Review the three steps to solving a problem: **Breathe, Think, Do**;
- Practice identifying feelings when a problem arises;
- Learn the **Do** component of the **Breathe, Think, Do** strategy;
- Review the words **furious**, **miserable**, and **ecstatic**.

Week 10
Try, Try Again

Problem Solving: This week, children will practice trying again when a solution doesn't work.

Children will

- Review the three steps to solving a problem: **Breathe**, **Think**, **Do**;
- Practice identifying feelings when a problem arises;
- Learn to try again when their solutions don't work;
- Review the words **frustrated**, **disappointed**, and **thrilled**.