

Play Groups for Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in an Urban Elementary School

Norma Leben and Kerri Fisher

Author Notes

Norma Leben, LCSW-S, ACSW, RPT-S, CPT-Professor, Executive Director, Morning Glory Treatment Center for Children, Pflugerville, Texas

Kerri Fisher, LMSW, Field Director and Instructor, Social Work Department, Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas

Correspondence concerning this article may be addressed to Norma Leben, Morning Glory Treatment Center for Children, 1207 Pigeon Forge Road, Pflugerville, Texas 78660.
E-mail: norma@playtherapygames.com

Play Groups for Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in an Urban Elementary School

Norma Leben and Kerri Fisher

Abstract

The use of directive group games for improving Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills was evaluated with two play groups: kindergarten boys (n = 4) and second-grade boys and girls (n = 2, n = 2,) in a low-income, urban elementary public charter school. Thirty-minute group sessions for kindergarten boys were held once a week for 12 weeks. The second-graders group met once per week for 10 weeks for about 50 minutes per session. Student assessments using subjective ratings of target SEL skills and behaviors were made by their teachers and parents before and after the intervention program. Teacher ratings showed children improved most in three SEL skills “understand responsibility to complete assignments,” “showing empathy for others,” and “accept consequences.” Although the study design was insufficient to determine program effectiveness, the play group intervention provided school administration, teachers, and parents with another model of strengthening student SEL skills.

Introduction

While employed as a school social worker at an inner-city urban charter school, the second author was encouraged to evaluate play group methods. In 2009, this elementary school served a minority and low-income population of 260 kindergarten to 5th grade students composed of 74% Hispanic, 17% African-American, 8% Caucasian, and 1% Asian American students. Between 65 % and 69% of students were eligible for free or reduced lunches during the 2008-to-2010 school years.

The SEL initiative seeks to enhance traditional academic achievement models with the addition of specific instruction of social and emotional skills.

“... Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) promotes self-awareness and emotion detection that lead to a constructive self-concept and collaborative relationships with peers and others, by largely contributing to positive classroom and school climate, allowing for more learning to take place.”

Desirable social skills include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and problem solving capabilities (Zins & Elias, 2006). Numerous published studies cited on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) web site have indicated a positive correlation between teaching SEL and improved academic achievement, as well as declines in office referrals for student misbehavior.

Directive Group Play Methods

The group play activities were derived from Directive Group Play Therapy: 60 Structured Games for the Treatment of ADHD, Low-Self-Esteem, and Traumatized Children (Leben, 2009), which emphasizes fast-paced structured/semi-structured games for children, and the Feelings Wheel Game (Leben, 2001) a board game that encourages use of 64 feeling words. **Table 2** lists the games played with the children. Supplies used for the group games are easily found in most households and include recycled items, making them either free or low cost.

Table 1 lists identified target behaviors that the facilitator tried to reduce through play group interactions. Typical ADHD behavior includes inattention, distractibility, impulsivity, hyperactivity such as fidgeting, off task behavior, talking excessively, interrupting others, resistance to adult instructions, impatience with waiting, and poor skills making friends. **Table 3** lists the SEL objectives of the games. Group development was interpreted according to social group work stages from Pre-Affiliation to Termination (Bernstein, 1965).

Fun group play activities reduce student fear and frustration with learning and social relationships. Misbehavior was managed by the group facilitator with peer pressure, group rules, and token reinforcements. During the group’s play, the facilitator reinforced mutual respect, positive language, awareness of self and other students’ feelings, using words rather than fighting to resolve conflicts, group team work, and examples of the school’s SEL values.

Table 1: Identified Target Behaviors

Group 1: Kindergarteners Group	Group 2: Second-graders Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimal eye contact • does not follow adult instruction • frequently getting out of seat • talking excessively • short attention span • distractible • impulsive' • off task during class • speaking out of turn, blurting out answers • low frustration threshold. get physical/angry quickly • kicking and pushing • does not use words to resolve conflicts • feeling words limited to happy and sad • low self-esteem • low self-confidence • immature • indecisive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not follow verbal instruction • getting out of seat. • talking excessively • disrespectful • acting out to get negative attention' • short attention span • does not know how to stay focus • off task in doing class work • speaking out of turn • general anxiety on school performance • worry about subjects (math and science) • inability to express complete thoughts • use limited feeling words because not knowing what those words mean • low self-confidence • not knowing how to make friends • scared of bullies

Table 2: Structured Games Used in Play Groups (Leben, 2009)

Group 1: Kindergarteners Group	Group 2: Second-graders Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bigger, Smaller or the Same Game • Alphabet Association Game • Domino Game • Card Storytelling • The Talking Ball • The Joker Game • The Block Tower Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bigger, smaller or the Same Game • Alphabet Association Game • Domino Game • Card Storytelling • The Talking Ball • The Yarn Picture Game • The Snow Picture Game • Jenga • The Feelings Wheel Game • The Tissue Paper Game • "Mother May I 'Game • The Block Tower Game

Table 3: Objectives of Games

Group 1: Kindergarteners Group	Group 2: Second-graders Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase attention span • taking turns • curtail impulsiveness • enhance eye-hand coordination • develop a keen sense of observation • enhance creativity • promote empowerment • teach positive & negative feeling words • provide cognitive/academic skills training e.g. letters, numbers & sequencing • enhance communication skills • to understand and exercise choices • to build self-esteem • to develop and strengthen self-confidence • develop problem-solving skills • promote using words to resolve conflicts • appropriate touch • promote cooperation & team work • develop sportsmanship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase attention span • learn to listen by looking at the teacher • learn when to talk and when to listen • learn to ask questions to understanding • learn and practice getting positive attention • enhance creativity • practice using -ve and -ve feeling words for expression and making friends • understand self respect and practice respecting adults and others • to understand and exercise choices wisely • learn problem-solving skills • to build self-esteem, strengthen confidence • promote empowerment and teamwork • provide cognitive/academic skills training • discover personal strength • increase frustration tolerance • promote cooperation and team work • develop and practice sportsmanship

Method

The school social worker and the school psychologist used teacher and parent referrals to identify possible students for play group intervention who they thought could benefit from extra SEL skills support. A volunteer seasoned social worker with advanced play therapy credentials was recruited to be facilitator for two play groups during two school years and mentor the second author.

Group One: Kindergarten Boys

During the 2009 spring semester, a play group was formed with four boys (average age six) selected from two kindergarten classes.

Teachers from each of the two classes were asked to complete report cards on SEL skills and behavior assessment ratings for each selected student before and after the intervention occurred. The behaviors related to ADHD tendencies of inattention, impulsivity, and peer relationship skills and the descriptive scale was modified from an assessment published by Hodgson (2004). Ratings used a five-point scale of Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Always. Parents of the four kindergarten students were also asked to complete before and after behavior ratings.

The Group 1 play group met on 12 Thursdays in the first morning period for 30 minutes per session. Students came to the SEL center from their classrooms and sat on a carpeted floor on “Happy Dots” (large, square carpet samples or cushions) in a semi-circle facing the facilitator.

Group Two: Second Grade Students

The volunteer facilitator returned during the 2010 spring semester to co-facilitate a second play group together with the school social worker. Two boys and two girls (average age eight) from two second-grade classes were selected based on their teacher’s referral.

At the beginning of spring semester, teachers and parents met with the volunteer facilitator and school social worker to rate their students and discuss the directive group play methods. After the intervention, both teachers and parents again completed student behavior ratings and a SEL skills form created by the volunteer facilitator.

The group met 10 Fridays during first morning period for about 50 minutes per session. Once again, the group met in a play area in the SEL center, partitioned off by a tall, moveable, tri-fold Japanese-style partition, allowing a degree of group privacy. The second-graders group sat around a low, wooden, rectangular table on small colorful plastic chairs. The co-facilitators sat at the heads of the table. Five sessions were co-lead by the volunteer facilitator and five sessions were co-lead by the school social worker.

Sessions began with children checking-in with the group. During this time each child shared a major feeling since the last session and the incident associated with it. Unexpected issues were expressed indicating the increased trust level individual members had towards the group.

Based on Group 1 experiences, the volunteer facilitator created new behavior assessment rating form was meant to show a clearer connection with the directive play group methods.

The school social worker also gathered school attendance information. In addition, at every play group session students reported self-ratings before and after the group session using a simple form with five smiley faces scale indicating Happy, Mildly Happy, Neutral, Mildly Unhappy, and Unhappy.

While playing games listed in Table 2, the facilitators modeled and coached socialization

Play Groups for SEL in an Urban Elementary School

values, appropriate expression of feelings, interpersonal skills, and gave extra opportunities to practice basic academic skills in math and language. The games also provided opportunities to remedy student’s problem behaviors identified by their teachers. The games empowered the students, built self-esteem, and promoted self-confidence.

Results

Overall, the SEL skills rated by teachers as having demonstrated the most improvements (plus 3 points on the rating scale) included: “understand responsibility to complete assignments,” “showing empathy for others,” and “accept consequences.”

Parents agreed that “showing empathy for others” was a skill that improved greatly (plus 4 points on the rating scale) along with “paying attention and listening,” and “dealing with anger.” Three point improvements were recorded by parents in the areas of “follow adult oral direction,” “ability to make independent choices and simple decisions,” and “solving problems by talking (vs. pushing, hitting or kicking.)

Students expressed appreciation and enthusiasm about the group with phrases such as these:

"I like it here."

"I like the way you're giving us chips (plastic tokens.)"

"See, I'm holding my legs together with my arms, that stops me from running around in class."

"Maybe you should be one of my parents."

Similarly, parents and teachers expressed confidence that the group was instrumental in changes both at home and at school:

"My son is more independent now. He doesn't call out 'Mommy, Mommy' every two minutes. For school days, he even started the habit of putting his clothes out the night before."

"The group members are talking and relating much better among the three of them."

Group 1 results from SEL report card and behavior rating scales are in the following tables.

Table 4: Group 1 Student SEL Report Card Scores by Their Teachers

SEL Skills	Number of Students (n = 4)		
	Improved	Maintained	Declined
Respects Self and Others	1	2	1
Expresses Feelings and Ideas Clearly	1	2	1
Shows Self Control	1	3	0
Responsible for Actions	2	1	1
Demonstrates Self Confidence	0	4	0
Participates in Class Activities	1	2	1
Listens Attentively for a Reasonable Time	1	2	1
Demonstrates Best Efforts	2	2	0
Consistently Follows Directions	1	3	0
Successfully Works Independently	2	1	1
Successfully Works in Small Groups	2	1	1
Successfully Works in Large Groups	0	4	0
Responsible for Belongings/Property	0	4	0
Solves Social Challenges Verbally	0	4	0

Table 5: Group 1 Teacher Ratings of Student Behaviors After Intervention

Behavior	Number of Students (n = 4)		
	Improved	Maintained	Declined
Inattention	2	0	2
Impulsivity	3	0	1
Peer Relationships*	3	0	0

*Note: One student was not rated for Peer Relationship afterwards due to clerical error.

Group 2 Results

Out of 36 skills rated on a 7-point scale at pre and post intervention, the four students showed improvement in most of the 36 skill areas as shown below:

Table 6: Group 2 SEL Skills Report Card Ratings by Their Teacher

	# Skills with 5 point improvement	# Skills with 4 point improvement	# Skills with 3 point improvement	# Skills with 2 point improvement	# Skills with 1 point improvement	# Skills with no improvement
Student 1	0	3	3	19	10	0
Student 2	0	4	10	8	9	3
Student 3	0	0	2	1	7	8
Student 4	0	0	0	3	11	15

Table 7: Group 2 SEL Skills Report Card Ratings by their Parents

	# Skills with 5 point improvement	# Skills with 4 point improvement	# Skills with 3 point improvement	# Skills with 2 point improvement	# Skills with 1 point improvement	# Skills with 0 point improvement
Student 1	0	0	5	11	10	9
Student 2	0	3	6	6	4	10
Student 3	No Info	No info	No info	No info	No info	No info
Student 4	4	2	7	9	7	5

DISCUSSION

Time

There are many constraints in school settings for programs outside the class room. Time schedules proved to be among the most difficult. Teachers and administrators in schools are hesitant to release students from direct instruction. Social workers, also committed to educating the whole student, are reluctant to pull students from recess or art, P.E., music, and Spanish instruction. Lunch was considered an acceptable time for intervention; however, mealtime meetings can be full of delays and distractions like waiting in the lunch line and student hesitation to leave peers. The Group 2 play group was conducted during a Friday morning SEL time period which was subject to interruption by holidays, field trips, and special events. Additionally, the end of the week may have made it more difficult for students to concentrate and attend.

Family Emotional Stress

In both Group 1 and Group 2, students experienced a range of external difficulties from parental separation to family legal troubles to family household moves. For students at all developmental levels, the emotional burden of worries and anxiety of this nature would likely affect their learning and attentions span for group tasks. This study did not investigate student social history or family situations influences on program results.

Benefits

Cost & Usefulness of Directive Play Therapy Games

The games (Leben, 2009) were cost effective for school-based service delivery. Most of the materials used can be found or created with items that are easily accessible around homes and schools such as playing-cards, rocks, Popsicle sticks, and dominoes. This was helpful due to limited activity funds.

Flexibility

Although longer sessions are preferred, structured play games are easily adapted to fit the time allowed. Likewise, these games and techniques are easily used and modified for diverse student populations across age, race, and gender.

Link to Academic Goals

Directive play games are useful tools for modeling and practicing social-emotional skills, but also can be used to reinforce academic skills such as counting, addition, subtraction, reading, and language practice. Students increased their feeling word vocabulary, allowing for more productive conversations about behavior. This is a huge benefit in schools because teachers and administrators are looking for efficient interventions that build upon core instruction, rather than taking away from it.

Behavior Reinforcement

The students exercised their ability to delay gratification when the facilitator used tokens to reward preferred behaviors. Because tokens were able to be turned in at the end of each session for a small prize, students were able to see tangible connections between increased positive behavior and eventual rewards.

Recommendations for Future Studies

In the future, several accommodations might increase a play group program's impact.

School-Based Facilitator

Directive play therapy games might demonstrate increased effectiveness if the group facilitator was a school staff; a mental health provider from the school staff could more easily utilize agreed upon school-based language that is common through programs such as Social Emotional Learning and Positive Behavioral Supports. Similarly a school-based directive play group facilitator would be able to meet with teachers throughout the week in efforts to generalize the learning from group to classroom. Finally and simply, a school based service provider would of-

Play Groups for SEL in an Urban Elementary School

fer more flexibility to move, shorten or extend group sessions according to the dynamic, ever-changing schedule of an elementary school setting.

Increased Time

Although therapeutic games are simple, easily adaptable, and fast-paced, it is difficult to build rapport and group cohesion in one short 30 minute session per week. In future studies, it might be advantageous to measure behavior outcomes if a group could meet twice per week for 50-minute sessions.

Increased Numbers

Two groups with four students each was an accomplishment with little money. However, future SEL research will need to increase the number of students and schools in order to generalize perceived changes across various populations and school types.

Measurement Tools

Although the measurement tools used for the second group with second-graders were preferable to those used in the first group, it would still greatly benefit the study to use an assessment scale used in other published studies with known validity and reliability in order to compare results of program impact.

Likewise, better qualitative data from parent and teacher before/after interviews could be recorded on video or transcribed so that the researchers could reliably compare language descriptors with uniform rating scales.

Conclusion

As with any school-based program evaluation, it is difficult to ascertain and adequately capture changes related to the intervention versus influences due to other circumstances. It is quite possible that student changes positively perceived by parents and teachers were due to concurrent teacher interventions and classroom “on the spot” SEL reward systems. In future research efforts, a stronger A-B-A-B study design and better understanding of student base-line characteristics might better determine the degree to which the Directive Group Play Therapy methods facilitated or did not facilitate SEL change. In addition, better structured pre and post parent and teacher interviews might elicit qualitative responses that better reflect student group participation.

References

- Benefits of SEL. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Retrieved February 22, 2012. <http://casel.org/why-it-matters/benefits-of-sel/>
- Bernstein, S. (Ed.). (1965). Explorations in Group Work. Boston: School of Social Work, Boston University.
- Chavez, M. M. (2011). UTES: Social emotional learning. Leaders of Learning. October. Texas ACSD. 3-7. Available at http://issuu.com/texas_ascd/docs/lof_10_11.
- Hodgson, N. (2004). ADHD assessment form. Retrieved February 22, 2012 at <http://www.superhealthy.com.au/uploads/u2/OutcomesADHD2.pdf>
- Leben, N. (2009) Directive Group Play Therapy: 60 Structured Games for the Treatment of ADHD, Low-Self-Esteem, and Traumatized Children. (3rd edition, 10th printing). Pflugerville: Morning Glory Treatment Center for Children. Available at playtherapygames.com.
- Leben, N. (2001). The Feelings Wheel Game (board game). (8th printing). Pflugerville: Morning Glory Treatment Center for Children. Available at playtherapygames.com.
- Zins, J. E., Elias, M. J. (2006). Social and emotional learning. National Assoc. of School Psychologists. Available at http://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/elias_zins.pdf

Appendix

Data Tables

Table 1: Group 1 Student SEL Report Card Scores by Their Teachers

SEL Skill	Number of Students		
	Improved	Maintained	Declined
Respects Self and Others	1	2	1
Expresses Feelings and Ideas Clearly	1	2	1
Shows Self Control	1	3	0
Responsible for Actions	2	1	1
Demonstrates Self Confidence	0	4	0
Participates in Class Activities	1	2	1
Listens Attentively for a Reasonable Time	1	2	1
Demonstrates Best Efforts	2	2	0
Consistently Follows Directions	1	3	0
Successfully Works Independently	2	1	1
Successfully Works in Small Groups	2	1	1
Successfully Works in Large Groups	0	4	0
Responsible for Belongings/Property	0	4	0
Solves Social Challenges Verbally	0	4	0

Table 2: Group 1 Student Behavior Assessment by Their Teachers

Behaviors	Number of Students (n = 4)		
	Improved	Maintained	Declined
Inattention	2	0	2
Impulsivity	3	0	1
Peer Relationships**	3	0	0

** 1 student was not rated in the Peer Relationship Post Test due to clerical error

Table 3: Parent (P) and Teacher (T) Ratings of Student 1 SEL Skills

Social Skills	Student 1			
	Before (P)	After (P)	Before (T)	After (T)
Eye contact when meeting others/peers	3	4	7	7
Appropriate greetings ("Good Morning", "Hello", "Goodbye")	4	5	7	7
Manners and using courtesy words ("Please", "Excuse me")	5	6	6	7
Sitting still	1	5	2	4
Respect adults	5	6	3	6
Paying attention and listening	1	5	2	4
Follow adult's oral direction (e.g. academic or clean-up)	2	5	3	4
Maintain eye contact when talking to others	3	5	6	7
Follow rules (e.g. while indoor walk- not run, and use inside voice)	3	5	3	5
Express good things about oneself (positive self-image,	4	5	5	7

Play Groups for SEL in an Urban Elementary School

Social Skills	Student 1			
	Before (P)	After (P)	Before (T)	After (T)
self-esteem)				
Attending to task, staying "on task"	3	5	2	4
Raise hands before talking or asking questions	3	5	6	6
Understand responsibility to complete assignments (class work & HW)	3	5	2	5
Knowledge of feeling words	5	6	7	7
Ability to share feelings with others	5	7	7	7
Showing empathy for others		7	4	7
Aware and accept cultural differences	6	7	6	6
Getting along with others	5	7	3	5
Ability to support others (quietly, verbally, or physically)	5	6	7	7
Understand how to take turns	5	6	5	6
Ability to share supplies (or toys)	5	6	4	6
Ability to share adults' attention	4	6	6	5
Tattle only on Safety, Health, and School issues	4	6	5	6
Awareness of body space (personal boundaries)	4	6	3	5
Respect others' body space	4	6	4	5
Respect others' properties	4	6	2	5
Self control (e.g. keeping hands to oneself)	4	6	2	4
Self confidence	4	6	5	5
Ability to make independent choices and simple decisions	4	7	5	7
Accept change after reasonable explanation	5	7	5	6
Accept "no" as an answer	5	7	5	6
Accept consequences	5	7	2	5
Dealing with name calling	4	6	3	4
Dealing with conflicts	4	6	3	4
Solving problems by talking (vs. pushing, hitting, or kicking)	4	7	4	4
Dealing with anger	3	7	3	5
Absences	0	2		

Table 4: Parent (P) and Teacher (T) Ratings of Student 2 SEL Skills

Social Skills	Student 2			
	Before (P)	After (P)	Before (T)	After (T)
Eye contact when meeting others/peers	2	5	3	6
Appropriate greetings ("Good Morning", "Hello", "Goodbye")	3	5	4	6
Manners and using courtesy words ("Please", "Excuse me")	5	6	5	6
Sitting still	2	5	2	6
Respect adults	7	6	3	5
Paying attention and listening	2	5	2	6
Follow adult's oral direction (e.g. academic or clean-up)	2	5	3	6
Maintain eye contact when talking to others	2	5	3	6
Follow rules (e.g. while indoor walk- not run, and use inside voice)	3	4	3	5

Play Groups for SEL in an Urban Elementary School

	Student 2			
Express good things about oneself (positive self-image, self-esteem)	2	5	5	6
Attending to task, staying "on task"	2	4	2	4
Raise hands before talking or asking questions	2	6	6	5
Understand responsibility to complete assignments (class work & HW)	1	5	2	4
Knowledge of feeling words	3	4	5	5
Ability to share feelings with others	2	4	5	6
Showing empathy for others	2	6	6	5
Aware and accept cultural differences	7	6	7	7
Getting along with others	6	6	6	6
Ability to support others (quietly, verbally, or physically)	4	5	6	6
Understand how to take turns	6	6	5	5
Ability to share supplies (or toys)	5	6		6
Ability to share adults' attention	3	5	7	7
Tattle only on Safety, Health, and School issues		6	7	6
Awareness of body space (personal boundaries)	1	5	2	6
Respect others' body space	2	5	2	5
Respect others' properties	5	6	2	5
Self control (e.g. keeping hands to oneself)	4	5	3	5
Self confidence	2	5	5	6
Ability to make independent choices and simple decisions	2	3	5	5
Accept change after reasonable explanation	3	6	6	6
Accept "no" as an answer	2	4	7	6
Accept consequences	3	6	3	5
Dealing with name calling	3	5	6	6
Dealing with conflicts	3	5	6	6
Solving problems by talking (vs. pushing, hitting, or kicking)	6	6	6	5
Dealing with anger	3	5	6	5
Absences	3	0		

Table 5: Parent (P) and Teacher (T) Ratings of Student 3 SEL Skills

Social Skills	Student 3			
	Before (P)	After (P)	Before (T)	After (T)
Eye contact when meeting others/peers	4	7	3	
Appropriate greetings ("Good Morning", "Hello", "Goodbye")	4	5	3	
Manners and using courtesy words ("Please", "Excuse me")	7	6	4	
Sitting still	4	5	3	
Respect adults	7	7	4	
Paying attention and listening	4	5	3	
Follow adult's oral direction (e.g. academic or clean-up)	6	5	3	
Maintain eye contact when talking to others	3	6	3	
Follow rules (e.g. while indoor walk- not run, and use inside voice)	7	5	3	
Express good things about oneself (positive self-image, self-esteem)	6	6	2	

Play Groups for SEL in an Urban Elementary School

	Student 3			
Attending to task, staying "on task"	3	5	2	
Raise hands before talking or asking questions		5	3	
Understand responsibility to complete assignments (class work & HW)	3	5	3	
Knowledge of feeling words	4	5	2	
Ability to share feelings with others	4	5	2	
Showing empathy for others	5	5	2	
Aware and accept cultural differences	7	5	2	
Getting along with others	6	5	3	
Ability to support others (quietly, verbally, or physically)	5	5	2	
Understand how to take turns	7	5	3	
Ability to share supplies (or toys)	7	7	3	
Ability to share adults' attention	6	7	3	
Tattle only on Safety, Health, and School issues	6	7	4	
Awareness of body space (personal boundaries)	6	6	3	
Respect others' body space	6	6	4	
Respect others' properties	7	6	4	
Self control (e.g. keeping hands to oneself)	7	5	3	
Self confidence	4	4	2	
Ability to make independent choices and simple decisions	4	4	3	
Accept change after reasonable explanation	7	3	3	
Accept "no" as an answer	7	3	3	
Accept consequences	7	4	4	
Dealing with name calling	7	5	2	
Dealing with conflicts	4	6	3	
Solving problems by talking (vs. pushing, hitting, or kicking)	7	5	1	
Dealing with anger	7	5	3	
Absences	3	0		

Table 6: Parent (P) and Teacher (T) Ratings of Student 4 SEL Skills

	Student 4			
Social Skills	Before (P)	After (P)	Before (T)	After (T)
Eye contact when meeting others/peers	4	6	7	6
Appropriate greetings ("Good Morning", "Hello", "Goodbye")	6	7	6	6
Manners and using courtesy words ("Please", "Excuse me")	6	7	4	6
Sitting still	4	6	4	7
Respect adults	6	6	2	7
Paying attention and listening	6	6	3	6
Follow adult's oral direction (e.g. academic or clean-up)	6	7	2	7
Maintain eye contact when talking to others	6	6	6	7
Follow rules (e.g. while indoor walk- not run, and use inside voice)	6	6	3	7
Express good things about oneself (positive self-image, self-esteem)	7	6	5	7
Attending to task, staying "on task"	6	6	4	7
Raise hands before talking or asking questions	6	7	5	7

Play Groups for SEL in an Urban Elementary School

	Student 4			
Understand responsibility to complete assignments (class work & HW)	6	7	5	7
Knowledge of feeling words	6	6	5	7
Ability to share feelings with others	6	6	6	7
Showing empathy for others	5	7	5	7
Aware and accept cultural differences	5	5	3	6
Getting along with others	6	7	2	6
Ability to support others (quietly, verbally, or physically)	7	6	6	6
Understand how to take turns	6	6	5	6
Ability to share supplies (or toys)	6	6	5	6
Ability to share adults' attention	6	6	6	7
Tattle only on Safety, Health, and School issues	6	7	6	7
Awareness of body space (personal boundaries)	6	6	5	6
Respect others' body space		6	4	6
Respect others' properties	7	6	4	7
Self control (e.g. keeping hands to oneself)	7	7	4	7
Self confidence	6	7	5	7
Ability to make independent choices and simple decisions	6	7	7	7
Accept change after reasonable explanation	6	7	7	7
Accept "no" as an answer	6	6	6	6
Accept consequences	7	7	1	6
Dealing with name calling	7	6	2	4
Dealing with conflicts	7	7	2	5
Solving problems by talking (vs. pushing, hitting, or kicking)	7	7	2	7
Dealing with anger	7	6	2	5
Absences	0	5		