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**A Classroom Management and Interpersonal
Skills Programme for Teachers**

by

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ABSTRACT

Accountability has become a key issue in the delivery of human services, and counsellors have been challenged to demonstrate that what they do makes a difference and that what they do meets the needs of the system in which they work. Thus proponents of the consultancy model such as Dinkmeyer (1973) have urged counsellors to move from the crisis-oriented approach in which only a few benefit from counsellor services to a consultative role which involves the counsellor with the total system.

In 1979 the author was appointed to the Metropolitan West District of Sydney. This is an area with many social problems such as high unemployment, single parent families and families receiving social welfare benefits.

Many students attending school are adversely affected by their home environment. To compound the problem a difference in value systems exists between home and school, which is a source of frustration to both teachers and students. As a result many children were referred for counselling because they were behaviour problems in the classroom. It was not possible for the counsellor to see all the students referred so other strategies needed to be employed.

From discussions with teachers concerning the management of students who were behaviour problems it became apparent that teacher training had left them ill-equipped to deal with the student behaviours they were facing.

A Classroom Management and Interpersonal Skills programme was designed and presented to a group of Primary school teachers in one of the schools to which the author was appointed.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme was based on the statistical analysis of pretest and post-test measures of teachers and students of those teachers participating in the programme.

In addition to reporting on outcomes of the programme this study provides a theoretical rationale for its development.

The statistical evidence does not strongly support the effectiveness of the programme. However there are some trends, particularly in the teacher data, which suggest that the programme was effective in bringing about teacher attitude change towards students.

Teachers' written evaluations of the programme, together with informal feedback, indicate the programme was successful in providing some of the answers to behaviour problems which occur in the classroom.

A corollary to the presentation of the programme has been a reduction in the number of children referred to the author as "behaviour problems".

This has provided more time to work with infant children and parents, both counsellor functions which the administrative staff see as significant, and to continue in the role as a consultant to teachers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ABSTRACT	(i)
LIST OF TABLES	(vi)
LIST OF FIGURES	(vii)
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
Current Issues for Counsellors	1
Counselling Services in N.S.W. Departments of Education	3
Background to the Problem	4
The Identified Problem	7
Programme Objectives	8
Summary	10
CHAPTER 2 THE CONCEPT OF SELF AND SELF ESTEEM	11
Definitions of the Self	12
Development of the Concept of Self and Self Esteem	14
Self-Esteem and the Educational Process	15
Student Behaviour and Self Esteem	16
Teacher Behaviour and Student Self Esteem	17
Educational Implications	19
Summary	21
CHAPTER 3 DISCIPLINE	22
Discipline Defined	24
The Significance of Discipline	24
Disruptive Behaviour in Schools	25
Methods of Discipline	27
Authoritarian Permissive and Democratic Approaches	28
The Authoritarian Approach	29
The Permissive Approach	31
The Democratic Approach	32
Summary	33
Behaviour Modification	34
Diagnostic and Therapeutic Approaches	36
Determinants of the Managerial Success	38
Summary and Conclusion	39

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont'd)

	PAGE
CHAPTER 4 METHODS AND RESULTS	41
Research Method	41
Aims	41
The Programme	42
Selection of Material	42
Programme Description	43
Programme Presentation	44
Experimental Method	47
Hypotheses	47
Experimental Design	48
Method	49
Subjects	49
Instrumentation	51
Treatment	54
Data Collection	55
Results	56
Teacher Data	56
Teacher Attitude Inventory	63
Student Data	68
Attitude Towards School	68
Feelings About Me	71
 CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	 75
Discussion of Results - Experimental Method	75
The Teacher Stress Check List	75
Teacher Attitude Scale	79
Student Results	81
Methodological Issues	83
Teacher Instruments	84
Student Instruments	85
Reliability and Validity	86
Sample Size	86
Evaluation of the Programme	87
Conclusion	90
Implications for Further Research	96

BIBLIOGRAPHY	98
APPENDICES	109
Appendix I Classroom Management and Interpersonal Skills Programme for Teachers	109
Appendix II Teacher Stress Checklist	111
Appendix III Teacher Attitude Inventory	114
Appendix IV Instructions to Students	125
Appendix V Attitude towards School	127
Appendix VI Feelings about Me	128
Appendix VII A Classroom Management and Interpersonal Skills Programme for Teachers	129
Appendix VIII Teacher Responses to Structured Activities in Session I	196

LIST OF TABLES

	PAGE	
Table 1	Difference between Total Mean Scores for Experimental and Comparison Groups on the Teacher Stress Checklist	48
Table 2	Pretest Differences between Experimental and Comparison Groups - Teacher Stress Checklist	50
Table 3	Post-test Differences between Experimental and Comparison Groups - Teacher Stress Checklist	51
Table 4	Items on the Teacher Stress Checklist for which a significant difference between pretest as post-test scores for the Experimental Group were obtained	49
Table 5	Items Reported by Teachers as Contributing Most to Stress	52
Table 6	Post-test Items on the Teacher Attitude Inventory for which a significant difference between Experimental and Comparison Groups were recorded	54
Table 7	Items for which a significant difference between Pretest and Post-test Scores were recorded - Experimental Group	57
Table 8	T-tests for Total Mean Scores on the Pretest and Post-test for Experimental and Comparison Groups	59
Table 9	T-test for Total Mean Scores on the Pretest and Post-test for Experimental and Comparison Groups	61
Table 10	T-test for Pretest and Post-test Score on "Feelings about Me" for the Experimental Group	62
Table 11	Correlation Coefficients - Experimental Group	63
Table 12	Correlation Coefficients - Comparison Group	64

LIST OF FIGURES

	PAGE
Figure 1 Teacher Stress Total Mean Scores for Experimental and Comparison Groups on Pre and Post-testing	47
Figure 2 Difference between Experimental and Comparison Group Students on the Pretest and Post-test for Attitude Towards School	60
Figure 3 Difference between Experimental and Comparison Group Students on the Pretest and Post-test for Feelings about "Me"	60