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The effects of anger control training on African-American males

Katina Watts
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The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of Anger Control Training on African-American males, who exhibit aggressive behaviors in an elementary school setting. It was hypothesized that the students participating in anger management group training would decrease aggressive behaviors. The single system AB research design was used to examine the effectiveness of Anger Control Training as an intervention on each child. The results of the study indicated that for each child a different change took place. For two (2) boys there was a decrease in aggression, two (2) other boys aggression levels increased and one (1) remained the same. The study was conducted over a fourteen (14) week period in which the baseline, intervention and a follow up phase took place.
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THE EFFECTS OF ANGER CONTROL TRAINING
ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA
UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY
KATINA WATTS

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY 1996
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The physical environment in which children grow up in can effect them on several levels. All children go through a process of development that can be seen by everyone. In a child's life the dramatic cognitive, physical, and mental changes are rapidly developing. As African-American children make the "unique journey to master the normal developmental tasks and meet the environmental challenges of racism, discrimination, oppression, and poverty" they must also deal with the introduction of the world through the eyes of their parents and family members.¹ The socialization of a child will determine the outcome of how a child view certain issues.

According to Everett, Chipungu, and Leashore the attitudes, family beliefs, political views, and spiritual beliefs will all be given to a child through the eyes of their loved ones.² These attributes will be instilled in a child until they are old enough to make their own decisions and decide for themselves what is right and wrong. Children who see their parents, friends, and family members using aggressive behaviors may think that this type of behavior is normal and the only way to solve problems. Until a child learns new ways of displaying their anger towards others will they then be able to understand how not to harm others.


² Ibid., p. 159-160.
Even though children begin their socialization process within the home, the evidence of aggressive behavior is present in the educational arena. It is estimated that 5.5 percent of the children can be identified as having aggressive behaviors or disorderly behavioral problems within school. The most concern of education leaders today is the large numbers that steadily increase showing the aggressiveness that children are displaying.³

Although children fight, argue and verbally abuse one another on a daily basis, teachers have various ways of explaining the consequences of these acts when displayed by students. However, if a child only sees aggressiveness or violent behaviors in their environment on a daily basis then it is hard for them to express themselves in any other way. It takes a considerable amount of time, commitment, and energy to help a child not to use aggressive behavior on others. Therefore, this responsibility should be put upon the parents, teachers, communities, and society as a whole, not on the children.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Since slavery the African-American child has been denied a happy childhood.⁴ The journey African-American children make during their life span is very different from the one of a Hispanic, White or any other ethnic group. The challenges that children are faced with today are becoming more and more difficult on a daily basis. With the forces and influences of the past and present society, the African-American child has suffered the most.

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The outer and inner forces such as rape, murder, neglect, sexual and physical abuse, gangs, and family relationships have a great deal to do with a child's other social and emotional development. Other factors such as poverty, abuse, disintegrating home environments, the culture of violence, materialism, and pressures to achieve may all combine at one time or another to make children behave the way they do. However, the primary cause as to why children may be so aggressive is because of the extreme violent behaviors that they observe are portrayed within their homes and now within their school environment. Therefore if African-American children displays aggressive behavior, they should not be the one to blame, society should be, because it is responsible for showing them these types of behavior.

With these pressures put upon children, they often times have difficulty with their academic performances. According to Drake because of the outside influences they often times repeat grades or eventually drop out of school. He reported that African-American children have a lack of specific career goals because of the conditions forced upon them. With the high rate of children dropping out or repeating grades there seems to be a higher level of violence within the school environment.

School violence has left students dead or seriously wounded in 41% of big cities between the years of 1993-1994. The violence among children in schools is

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5 Ibid., 7.
6 Ibid., 8
8 Ibid., A6.
escalating throughout the country today. Many people believe that some children are innately bad and that is the root cause of the increasing level of violence in school. However, children's behavior should also be considered in view of the society they live in.

Physical fights are antecedents to many fatal and non-fatal injuries of children. A 1992 survey of adolescents had fought within the previous year and 26% had carried a weapon 1 month preceding the survey. Between 1979-1991 nearly 50,000 children were killed by firearms. About 1 in 5 eighth graders reported being threatened with a weapon in 1992, while almost one in ten reported carrying a weapon with them on to school grounds. More than 3 million crimes a year are committed in or near 85,000 US public schools. The terrifying thing is that the nature of school crimes has grown more violent and the perpetrators steadily younger.

The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Division of Violence Prevention reported that between the years of 1986-1992 the homicide rate for children ages 5-9 both male and female increased from 134 to 146 per 100,000. The rate for African-American males increased from 26 to 31 per 100,000. The numbers decreased for the African-American female rate from 34 to 24 per 100,000. With these numbers increasing at a fast rate the interest of a child's life should be top priority for everyone.


For African-American males the statistics are steadily increasing. Reports have shown that African-American males homicide rate is the highest thus far between the ages of 15-19 and occurs at a rate nine times that of young White men, within the same age group. Furthermore, boys are prone to display aggressive behaviors and violent behaviors more than girls. With crime rates as high as 300 per 100,000 the rate is higher among ethnic-minority youth living in disadvantage areas. Therefore more intervention programs should be established so that statistics can decrease.

With so many influences on the African-American male within and outside of the home it is easy for them to indulge in aggressive behaviors and then continue on to more violent types of behaviors. However, if they are taught to use other techniques in resolving conflicts, then maybe there would not be so many incidences in the school environment. This study hopes to shed light on a different aspect, in which if effective training is applied then the aggression within African-American boys can decrease.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of Anger Control Training on African-American males who exhibit aggressive behaviors in an elementary school setting.


CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aggressiveness in children have become a focused problem of parents, teachers, and society. According to Green and Donnerstein the sources of aggression are triggered by parental demonstration, the environment and the media. Children replicate what they see others doing and therefore carry these behaviors into the school setting.¹

Kingston and Prior suggested that its possible that the development of aggressiveness in children begins at the age of 7 or 8. A sample of 1,121 children ages 7-8 were used to study the development and correlation of aggressive behaviors. Data was collected from the parents on their child rearing practices when their children were 7 to 8 years old.

Kingston and Prior hypothesized that "children with a stable pattern of aggressive behavior across time would have the most difficult temperamental characteristics and that these, in combination with a poor mother-child relationship, high levels of hostility, and less optimal child rearing practices would discriminate them from nonaggressive children".² A Child Behavior Questionnaire was used in which the results showed that there was an excessive usage of aggression in boys than girls. The study concluded that a substantial proportion


of children's behavior persist into the school years and furthers into their lives.3

A lack of attention to gender in aggression has been overlooked by researchers. A study was conducted by Criek and Grotpeter regarding aggression in children because of the effects of conduct problems on children's development. According to them there is an alternative explanation for the forms of aggression assessed in past research. They indicated that prior research has shown that boys exhibit higher levels of aggression than girls.4

The definition of aggression has been varied over the years, however most authors define aggression as the intention to hurt or harm others. When children "inflict harm on their peers, children do so in ways that best thwart or damage the goals that are valued by their respective gender peer groups".5 Verbal aggression and physical aggression such as hitting or pushing others, or threatening to beat up others, are behaviors in which boys represent. In contrast girls are more likely to focus on relational issues during social interactions. This is described as establishing close, intimate connections with others.6

The results of the study showed that girls were more likely to harm their peers through relational aggression, which is harming others through purposeful manipulations and damaging peer relationships. On the other hand the results for

3 Ibid., 349.


5 Ibid., 711.

6 Ibid., 711.
the boys were different in which they harmed their peers through physical and verbal aggression such as hitting others and using profanity. The results also indicated that the nature of the relation between social psychological adjustment and relational aggression varies as a function of sex, and that both girls and boys are aggressive but tend to exhibit distinct forms of the behavior.\(^7\)

For some African-American children the struggle to survive has become one of a daily routine. The increasing number of children bringing guns, knives, and other illegal weapons to school is a major concern of parents, teachers, churches, and political leaders. Furthermore, since some African-American male children are left to help raise their families there is no question as to why they have so much aggression.\(^8\) According to an article in NY Voice, Inc./Harlem USA it was reported that thirty years ago a child belonged to everyone in the community. No matter where the child lived he/she always had a parent or guardian watching them. However, today the welfare of children seem to be taken very lightly. Because there are exterior influences on adults, such as drugs, alcoholics, employment, and divorce, many children suffer because of the lack of attention they receive. The concern for the African-American children should be a concern for all African-American people.\(^9\)

Stressful events of economic disadvantages plays a major role among urban children who are aggressive. In a recent study by Guerra and a group of researchers showed that a child's early aggressive behavior is the best pre-requisite

\(^7\) Ibid., 721.

\(^8\) "Addressing the Issues Facing Today's Children" NY VOICE, Inc/Harlem USA V.XXXVI, N. 36, 4.

\(^9\) Ibid., 5.
for juvenile delinquency. The study examined three factors, economic disadvantage, stressful events, and individual beliefs. The variables were used to test whether stressful events and individual beliefs correlate with African-American children's economic disadvantage and aggression.10

The children who participated in the study were 1,935 African-American, Hispanic, and White elementary school boys and girls who came from low income neighborhoods. The children were assessed over a 2 year period in which data was collected on the influence of aggression of individual and community poverty. Stressful events such as negative life events and exposure to violence, and individual beliefs of hopelessness and beliefs approving of aggression. These factors were the variables used to examine whether these issues correlate with each other.11

The results of the study revealed that inner city elementary school children display relatively high average levels of aggressive behavior, compared to children who live in rural areas. The researchers found that the beginning of aggressive behaviors begin in the school environment and that it is promoted mostly towards boys. It also showed that African-Americans who have the greatest economic disadvantage can be associated with higher aggression scores in development. In conclusion the effects of an individual's economic status are largely explained by the effects of stressful events and beliefs about aggression.12


11 Ibid., 518.

12 Ibid., 519.
Children who live in poorer areas are involved in stressful events and neighborhood violence stressors. Also, they are more likely to adopt beliefs accepting of aggression—which also predicts early aggressive behaviors in them. Guerra and her researchers concluded that given the findings, antiviolence interventions should attempt to reduce the stressful events associated with poverty and facilitate the acquisition of adoptive coping strategies. It also showed that the economic status and ethnicity of a child are both related to aggression and that African-American children's stressors seem to be a more important mediator.13

With so many factors influencing aggressive behaviors of African-American children more programs and intervention programs should be established within the school systems. This is what two North Carolina schools did to decrease aggression and fighting within their schools. A survey of 744 students who attended two middle schools, in a low income African-American neighborhood was done. It examined the extent to which individuals and family's factors are associated with aggression and fighting behaviors. The information collected for the school records were examined as to a student's aggression levels, school fighting behavior, suspensions for fighting, attitudes toward violence, perceptions of their families attitude towards violence, weapon-carrying behavior and sociodemographics.14

Four hundred and forty-seven of these students were African-American who received parental consent to participate in the study, and filled out the questionnaire. Of the 477, 222 were males and 214 were females; however the

13 Ibid., 526-527.

results were only focused on 436 students. A self-administered questionnaire was given to the students during the school day. The questionnaire consisted of questions referring to a student's attitude on aggressiveness, fighting behavior, attitudes toward violence, weapon carrying behavior, gender and age, also the characteristics of the students' families on their view on violence.

The results of the study showed that 37% of the students had been involved in a physical fight, 26% were girls and 47% were boys. Of these, 77 had been suspended from school - 14% were girls and 21% were boys. Eighty-three students reported that they carried weapons to school - 16% were girls and 22% were boys. The results on the violence scale ranged from 15-55 with males being the highest. The results showed clearly that boys had higher scores in every category over girls.\(^{15}\)

The findings in this study indicated that African-American students in middle schools show a high rate of fighting behavior. It was suggested by the researchers that teachers and public health practitioners should work together in trying to decrease children's aggression and their views regarding violent behaviors.

All of the studies showed told several reasons as to why African-American children, especially males, are so aggressive. With so many researchers doing research on aggression, there should be just as many designing programs to prevent aggressive behaviors among children, but especially among African-American boys.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 619 - 620.
OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Aggression in children has been studied by researchers, statistics have shown that violence steadily increases and schools are becoming a battleground more than a place of learning. So where does this behavior come from; is it learned or is it innate? According to behavioral theorists, the behaviors of people are learned.

According to Bandura, he believed that behavior can be understood best if the interaction, cognitive, and environmental influences are explored. Bandura used observational learning or modeling in experimenting with personality development. He believed that the majority of people's behavior is by copying what other people do. By simply observing others behaviors and the consequences, it can create a new behavior to be learned. The basic premise of behavior theory is the action of people and what they say. In addition Bandura believed that the use of self-reinforcing systems are acquired by the same learning principles that are involved in learning other types of behaviors. He believed that self-regulatory aspects are derived from ones' own behavior. This involves self-observation, self-judgment of one's own performance, self-evaluation, and self-


17 Ibid., 224.
Bandura used an example that if children see others using aggressive behaviors then they will begin to engage in them. Furthermore, by modeling others that children see on television, at the movies or within their homes can bring about the effects on the behavior of youths. The research of Bandura was used on a group of children watching television films which modeled the behaviors of verbal and physical aggression. There were three sets, the first group saw aggressive behavior being positively reinforced, another group saw the model's aggressive behavior being punished and the third group the model's aggressive behavior being neither reinforced nor punished. The outcome of the study revealed that the group who saw aggression being positively reinforced showed much more aggression than the group that saw it punished.

The behavioral approach is becoming more popular in group counseling. The objective of behavioral group therapy is to focus on the selected behaviors and specify how change will be taken place. The procedure of behavioral therapy is "the application of a diversity of techniques and procedures that are rooted in a variety of learning theories". The basic assumption of the behavioral perspective is that all problems are learned and can be modified by new learning. The use of external reinforcement can be maintained when trying to change behaviors. In addition to the reinforcement of the group leader it can also be provided by the members of the group. If reinforcement is used as a tool it can help to shape the desired behaviors and teach participants to reinforce themselves for their own

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18 Ibid., 225.
19 Ibid., 225-226.
However, within group therapy focusing on a behavioral perspective the interventions are derived from the social-learning theory which uses reinforcement, modeling, shaping, cognitive restructuring, desensitization, relaxation training, coaching, behavioral rehearsal, stimulus control and discrimination training. The important outcome of this theory is to present new behaviors to help them change maladaptive behaviors. The spelling out of treatment goals, conducting behavioral assessments, formulating specific treatment procedures to address the behavior and to objectively evaluate the outcome is the key concepts to behavior therapy.

Definitions of Terms:
Aggression is defined as temper outbursts, verbal or physical threats, bullying, fights, or hurting others by hitting, biting, or scratching.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

The methodology section is organized into six sections: (1) setting, (2) clients, (3) outcome measure, (4) treatment hypothesis, (5) intervention strategy, and (6) research design.

SETTING

Margaret Mitchell Elementary School is in the Atlanta Public School system. It is located in the Buckhead area of Atlanta. The school is set in a middle to upper class neighborhood, however, the majority of the students come from other parts of Atlanta. Margaret Mitchell was scheduled to close last year (1995) because of its lack of attendance and the expenses for keeping the building up, however, the Atlanta Board of Education voted to keep the school open. The students at Margaret Mitchell are a mixture of African-American, White, and Hispanic students. The school also has a program in which several of the community businesses and churches have invested their time and money to keep the school open. One investment a local church made was to contract a full time Social Worker to deal with the children's everyday problems in the school.

CLIENTS

A major concern of the principal and the teachers of Margaret Mitchell was the high level of aggression that students displayed. The clients chosen to participate in the study were five African-American males. The students were chosen because each of them displayed aggressive behaviors i.e. temper outbursts, verbal and physical threats, bullying, fights, or hurting others by hitting, biting, or scratching. The students chosen were eight years old and for the purpose of
confidentiality the subjects will be referred to as Student 1, Student 2, Student 3, Student 4, and Student 5.

Student 1 was chosen because he displayed a tremendous amount of verbal threats and temper outbursts. He was an eight year old who was in the second grade. He resides in Atlanta with his mother and two siblings ages 14 and 7. His favorite subject is Math, and he likes to watch cartoons and work on computers. His recreational activities are playing ball and riding his bicycle.

Student 2 was in the second grade, and he was chosen because he displayed all of the aggressive behaviors described. He enjoyed playing Sega games and riding his bike with his friends. He lives with both of his parents and is an only child, however, he has one older brother and sister. His favorite subject is Physical Education and his dream is to be a part of the Olympics.

Student 3 lives in Atlanta with his adoptive parents. He was in the second grade and he enjoyed doing Science projects. He has three other siblings ages 12, 10, and 2. He likes to play football and basketball. He also enjoys feeding his dog and the family's four cats. This student was chosen because he displayed all of the aggressive behaviors described above.

Student 4 lives with his mother and his sister age 12. He was chosen to participate because of his verbal outbursts, bullying, fighting, and making threats to teachers and students. His parents are separated and on weekends he visits his father and his other siblings. His favorite subject is Science and he likes to go to his friends house to play with their toys. He also enjoys playing football and cleaning up his room.

Student 5 was in the first grade and resides in Atlanta with his parents.
He was chosen to participate in the study because he portrayed all of the types of aggressive behaviors within the classroom. He is the oldest of five children, two sisters ages 6 and 5 and twin brothers age 3. His favorite subject is Math and he enjoys playing Nintendo with his father. He also likes to play outside with his friends after school.

**OUTCOME MEASURES**

The measurement tool used in this study was a behavior collection data chart. The chart was designed by the researcher to determine the number of times the student portrayed the aggressive behaviors i.e. temper outbursts, verbal or physical threats, bullying, fights, or hurting others by hitting, biting, or scratching. The teachers were given the log and it was completed on a daily basis. Every day the teacher would count the number of frequencies their student portrayed each aggressive behavior. At the end of the week, the researcher collected the data sheet from the teacher.

**TREATMENT HYPOTHESIS**

It was hypothesized that the students participating in the anger management group training would decrease aggressive behaviors.

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

The A-B design was used in this research. According to Bloom and Fischer, the A-B single system design is designed to "assess case situations and monitor changes in people and events over time; to evaluate whether positive or negative changes have occurred in targeted events; to evaluate whether the practitioner's intervention was casually linked with these changes and to enable the
practitioners to compare effectiveness among interventions".1

The basic premise of the A-B design is the combining of a baseline observation period, A, and an intervention period, B. During weeks 1-4 the teachers were instructed to chart each of the aggressive behaviors that each child displayed. During the intervention and the follow-up period they continued to monitor the behaviors. This design can give a clear view of whether there has been a change in target events, providing both monitoring and evaluation information.2 This design also gives the researcher the insight as to whether a specific intervention is successful.

"The A-B design is the simplest logical structure permitting a planned comparison between the two key elements of the evaluation, the non intervention period and the intervention period".3 In addition to this, the design provides information to the researcher, clients, parents, the school system and society as a whole.

2 Ibid., 353.
3 Ibid., 359.
INTERVENTION STRATEGY

The intervention strategy used in this study was the Anger Control Training (ACT) which is one part of the Aggressive Replacement Training. The Anger Control Training was developed by Feindler and a research group at Adelphi University in 1984.4

The training was designed to teach aggressive youths new ways to display their anger, and to reduce their aggressive behaviors and to prevent "hassles" which are triggered by anger responses. ACT is a systematic approach to teaching awareness of the activators of anger.5

The training took place within the school's library for one hour, twice a week. In each session the students had to actively participate in completing homework assignments. The researcher demonstrated or modeled the proper use of the anger reduction techniques, guided the students practice of the program's anger reducers and provided feedback about how successful the students were.6

A general overview of ACT is described below so that it may be understood exactly what took place within each session. In session one an introduction was made and the goals, rules, and procedures were explained. Folders were given out to be colored and the initial assessments of the A-B-C's of aggressive behavior were discussed. Session two consisted of describing cues and anger reducers 1,2,3, reviewing of the first session and introducing the Hassle Logs. The Anger

5 Ibid., 289.
6 Ibid., 78.
Reducers discussed were deep breathing, backward counting, and pleasant imagery. Role playing and the use of the anger reducers and cues were reviewed along with the hassle logs. In session three triggers were introduced to the students. A review of the second session was discussed and the understanding of what makes you angry (triggers). External and internal triggers, cues, and anger reducers were used in role playing.

Session four introduced reminders as being the anger reducer 4. The third session, and the use of reminders were discussed. Triggers, cues, reminders, and anger reducer 4 were used during role playing. Session five consisted of teaching the students how to do Self-Evaluations. An introduction of self-evaluation, self-rewarding and self-coaching were discussed. Triggers, cues, reminders, anger reducers, self-evaluations were role played. In session six the students were introduced to the concept of thinking ahead which was considered as anger reducer 5. The introduction of thinking ahead, short and long term consequences, most and least serious consequences, internal, external, and social consequences were discussed. During role-play the "If - The" thinking ahead was implemented along with triggers, cues, reminders, anger reducers, and self-evaluation. The Angry Behavior Cycle was introduces in session seven. A review of the session six, and the Angry Behavior Cycle was introduced. Identifying your own anger-provoking behavior, and changing your own anger-provoking behaviors were discussed. Role playing of the angry behavior cycle was added along with the other methods of reducing anger.

Session eight began a rehearsal of the full sequence. A review of the seventh session, and the Introduction of the new behaviors (skills) in place of
aggression were discussed. Role-playing consisted of triggers, cues, reminders, anger reducers, SL skill and self-evaluation. Sessions nine and ten were the final rehearsal of the full sequence. The hassle logs were also reviewed along with reinforcing the steady improvement and encouragement of continued success. At the end of each session the clients reviewed what they learned and then the session was ended on a positive quote which was implemented by the researcher.

7 Ibid., 81-82.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The data presented will be graphically displayed. The results of this study are presented in Figure 1 for Student 1, Figure 2 for Student 2, Figure 3 for Student 3, Figure 4 for Student 4, and Figure 5 for Student 5. Each student participated in ten sessions of intervention which was done over the course of five weeks.

Figure 1 presents the results for student 1. During the baseline phase the highest level of aggressive behavior was 6 times during the first week. During week two he decreased from 6 to 5 times per week. On week three he decreased even further by going down to 2 times, however, on week four he increased back up to 4 times per week. When the intervention phase began on week five his behaviors decreased to 0. On weeks six and seven the number of aggressive behaviors increased slightly to 1 time per day, and during the last two weeks the numbers decreased again to 0 and remained the same throughout the follow-up period. There was a break between each follow-up in which the behavior level remained at 0.

Figure 2 depicts the baseline, intervention, and follow-up phases for student 2. This student's behavior during the first week was high. On week one he had 7 occurrences. Furthermore, on weeks two, three, and four his behaviors increased to 9 times per day. When the intervention phase began on week five his behavior level dropped to 5 times per day and kept decreasing on weeks six, seven, eight, and nine. As shown he maintained a stable number of 1 occurrences during the follow-up period.
FIGURE 1

FREQUENCY OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR DURING BASELINE AND INTERVENTION PHASES AND FOLLOW-UP FOR STUDENT 1
FIGURE 2

FREQUENCY OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR DURING BASELINE AND INTERVENTION PHASES AND FOLLOW-UP FOR STUDENT 2

BASELINE INTERVENTION FOLLOW-UP

FREQUENCY OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

WEEKS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 11 13 15
In Figure 3 the aggression level of student 3 was very high during the baseline phase. It reached 11 times per day during the first week. During week two he decreased from 11 to 6 and then decreased even further to 3 times per day on week three. However, on week four the number of frequencies increased to 5 times per day. As depicted during the intervention phase he never moved from the 5 occurrences. It remained the same for the next five weeks during the intervention period. During the follow-up phase he remained on the same levels as in the intervention phase.

Figure 4 represents the results for Student 4 in which it shows various amounts of movement. During the baseline phase he decreased from 7 to 2 occurrences. However, when the intervention phase began in week five there were 8 occurrences. On week six the number of aggressive behaviors increased to 9 but then on week number seven it decreased to five. The movement then increased up to 7 on week eight and continued going up on week nine to 8 times per day. During the follow-up phase the number of aggressive behaviors increased to 7 times per day and then on weeks thirteen and fifteen it increased again to 8 times per day.

The last student's graph is depicted in Figure 5 and represents the results for student 5. It reveals a lot of movement throughout the baseline, intervention, and follow-up phases. During weeks one through four, the student's behavior began at 8 and increased to 10 by week four. However, on week five the numbers of aggressive behaviors began to decrease to 7 times, and then increased on week six to 8 times, and then decreased down to 6 times on week seven. However, on
FIGURE 3

FREQUENCY OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR DURING BASELINE AND INTERVENTION PHASES AND FOLLOW-UP FOR STUDENT 3

![Graph showing frequency of aggressive behavior over weeks during baseline, intervention, and follow-up phases for student 3. The graph indicates a decrease in frequency during the intervention phase and stabilization during follow-up.](image-url)
FIGURE 4

FREQUENCY OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR DURING BASELINE AND INTERVENTION PHASES AND FOLLOW-UP FOR STUDENT 4
FIGURE 5

FREQUENCY OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR DURING BASELINE AND INTERVENTION PHASES AND FOLLOW-UP FOR STUDENT 5

[Graph showing frequency of aggressive behavior over weeks with phases labeled Baseline, Intervention, and Follow-up.]
weeks eight and nine the frequencies increased to 8 times per day again. After the intervention phase the student's aggressive behaviors began to decrease to 7 times on week eleven but increased again on weeks thirteen and fifteen to 8 times per week.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this study the results indicated that the use of Anger Control Training program had a diverse impact on the aggressive behavior of young African-American males. The findings showed that two of the boy's aggressive behaviors decreased, one remained the same and the other two increased. Even though there were significant changes in the boys behavior, the results show that the use of a structured training program can be useful.

ACT could be an effective tool to help young African-American males find positive measures in displaying aggression. This study should serve as an example that the use ACT can be instrumental in trying to decrease the severity level of aggressive behavior. However, as seen in the results, additional training or prevention methods may be needed in order for the Anger Control Training to be maintained.

For student 1 the results indicate that the use of ACT helped to decrease his aggressive behavior. For student 2 it was evident that the ACT intervention program was very successful. For student 3 the effects of the training proved to be neutral by not showing an increase or decrease on the student's aggression level. In contrast to the other students' findings, it was evident that the ACT had no effect on student 4 and 5. The overall goal of this study was to decrease the aggressive behavior of an African-American male. The tasks were achieved through the usage of the ACT being implemented for a period of five weeks.

In conclusion the subjects demonstrated an overall improvement in their occurrences of aggressive behavior. The findings reported an overall change in
the behavior of the students. Reinforcement and implementation of the tasks of the ACT confirmed that retraining can and does have a positive impact on the aggression level of young African-American males.

Furthermore, if more prevention type programs are implemented in the school environment there may be a decrease in the high rate of violent crimes committed by youths. In addition the input of more parents and the community is needed in order for these programs to really be effective. If society is going to continue to display violent behaviors to children then how can it expect for children not to become aggressive or even become a violent person.

As African-Americans the responsibility of African-American children should be a concern of all. If African-Americans don't want to see their children go to jail at a young age, then the concern of these children should be of top priority. However, the only way to keep African-American children from falling into the category of being aggressive or violent, adults need to stop displaying this type of behavior. Consistent with Bandura's Social Learning Theory observational learning or modeling of behaviors can shape a person's behavior. Therefore, how can society expect children to behave in class and not be aggressive if all they see is aggressive behavior on a daily basis.

If the African-American can observe behaviors which doesn't consist of fighting, cursing, hitting, etc., then maybe he will displace his aggressiveness. However, parents, teachers, churches, family members, friends, and society as a whole must give him a new way to approach situations.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

There were several limitations to the research for this study. Some common threats to the internal validity of a single system design are the risk of drawing
conclusion about whether your intervention caused any observed changes.\textsuperscript{1} Furthermore, this design cannot prove causality. Since the research took place within a school setting, there were a lot of times when the students and the researcher could not meet. The library was very busy at times and because of meetings and programs, the training would have to be postponed to another time or even day. Some weaknesses of the study were that the students sometimes were unwilling to participate because of different programs that may have been going on during their session. Also, the teachers considered the training to be a time for them to "get rid of" their student for the hour. Furthermore, the students were sometimes unruly within the session and therefore the researcher had to take the time out to focus on the unruly behavior. Even though these limitations sometimes put the researcher behind, the study was completed successfully.

FUTURE DIRECTION OF RESEARCH

For future research the use of the Anger Control Training Intervention should be used during a longer period of time. There should also be a more secluded place for the researcher and the student to effectively engage in the training. There may also be a need to have one on one individual sessions instead of group sessions. A suggestion for further usage of ACT maybe to do the training after school or before school begins. In addition to this there is also a need to have the teachers implement the training within their classrooms. With these suggestions implemented the use of ACT may effectively help to decrease children's aggressive behavior.

CHAPTER SIX
IMPLICATION FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES

The Anger Control Training should be an intervention tool used by Social Workers, when working with aggressive children. However, the training needs to be structured to meet the subject’s needs. The study has shown that Anger Control Training can be used to decrease the African-American boys' aggressive behaviors. Since Anger Control Training concentrates on realistic and daily confronted situations, its impact can produce immediate results.

A suggestion for school Social Workers is to bring the parents and teachers in on two or three sessions so that they may understand what the children are doing. This will also help them to enforce the techniques within their classrooms and at home.

Anger Control Training can be a promising intervention tool for school Social Workers if structured to meet the school's needs. The structure will help the students and trainers to have a more focused program. Therefore, the use of this training with African-American boys or girls is needed in order to determine the effectiveness of the program. In conclusion the Social Worker who uses this training may want to also use it on an individual or a group. Either way it can be used successfully.

This study gave the researcher the opportunity to work with children within the school system. As school Social Workers continue to implement programs to help children in specific areas, there is a need to do it for each grade and age level. Each child has a different situation, so each program needs to be structured to fit the children's needs. Especially, when working with African-American children,
there is a need to structure these programs to fit them all.

The school system, parents and Social Workers need to work together, so that we all can begin to mold children and better prepare them. The focus of children needs to go beyond education, but should be focused on the environment in which children live in. There should be intervention programs designed to teach parents how to help deal with a child's aggressive behavior. Furthermore, if the parents and teachers work together there can be a unified effect on helping the child within the school system and the home environment. Even though teachers are in the schools to teach, there is a need for more different styles of teaching. Furthermore, the education of a child is very important, but the socialization of a child is just as or even more important.
Appendix

BEHAVIORS TO BE OBSERVED

NAME: ________________________________

TEACHER: ________________________________

GRADE: ________________________________

DATE: ________________________________

Please count the number of times your student displays the various types of behaviors on each given day, indicate by using the number of frequencies each day. Thank You!

DAYS OF THE WEEK

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<th>BEHAVIORS</th>
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<th>TUES.</th>
<th>WED.</th>
<th>THURS.</th>
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<td>DISOBEYING RULES</td>
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<td>(CALLING OUT, BREAKING CLASSROOM RULES, etc.)</td>
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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