



Dodgertown Elementary School

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Student Peer Mentorship Program

Research Results

Vision

Dodgertown Elementary is known for its quality education system which engages and prepares all students for success.

Mission

To make a difference by educating, inspiring, and serving all students with excellence.

Motto

Bring Your "A" Game

2.9 Research and implement a student to student peer mentorship program. for African American students.

PROGRAM 1: SANFORD HARMONY (Grades K-5)

Research – Sanford Harmony

*Two studies focused on fifth grade students participating in relationship-building activities and the other study evaluated the impact of the "Buddy Up" everyday activities on preschool peer relations. All three studies found the **Sanford Harmony** components to have **positive impact on children's peer relations** when compared to control groups.*

Goals:

Buddy Up is designed to:

- *Foster a classroom environment where all students feel connected, comfortable, and part of an inclusive community*
- *Provide opportunities for students to engage successfully with diverse peers*
- *Provide opportunities for students to connect with one another through meaningful activities and create shared experiences*
- *Promote consideration, caring, and responsibility toward others*
- *Provide opportunities for the cultivation of new friendships*
- *Support social, emotional, and cognitive growth*

Role of Teachers and Staff:

Teachers and staff play a key role in fostering an attitude of acceptance, inclusion, and caring within the classroom and school, so that all students feel welcome, comfortable, and connected. Teachers can establish Buddy Up as a natural part of students' school experience by weaving buddy activities seamlessly throughout each day. This underscores the idea that engaging with all peers is a valuable and expected occurrence, rather than a departure from "normal" activities. The more opportunities students have to spend time with their buddies, the more comfortable they will become with the routine and with one another. Teachers also set the tone for Buddy Up by bringing their own enthusiasm to the experience, and framing it as an opportunity rather than just another assignment or task. Rarely do students complain—and in fact, they generally have a great deal of excitement for having a new buddy or engaging in a buddy activity.

Implementation Steps:

1. In August 2019, Dodgertown collaborated with the SDIRC's Mental Health Services Coordinator to provide training to staff using the Sanford Harmony kits, including the "Buddy Up" component.
2. Teachers will introduce the Buddy Up idea to students and have a conversation about the reasons why they will be implementing Buddy Up.
 - a. **For example:** Our class is going to be starting something really exciting called Buddy Up next week! Every week, you'll have a new buddy, and we'll plan different activities for buddies to do together. Buddy Up is going to help us get to know one another a little better, and it will give everyone a chance to talk and work with everyone else in the class. Every Monday, you will be able to check the Buddy Board to see who your buddy will be for the week.
 - b. **Here are some questions to spark a discussion about buddies:** What are some of the things that you do here at school with your classmates? Why do you think it's important for people to learn how to get along and work with many different kinds of people? What is a buddy? What are some other names for a buddy?

3. Teachers will incorporate Buddy Up as a classroom practice using the following steps:
 - a. Assign weekly buddies.
 - b. Select and facilitate activities and routines appropriate for partners (four to five times per week) using your Quick Connection Cards.
 1. Buddy activities allow students to play and work together in positive ways.
 2. Pairing students with less frequent playmates can increase the diversity of their social experiences, and help them develop broader, more flexible social skills.
 3. Pairing students randomly ensures that they will eventually be buddies with each of their classmates.
 4. Use your Buddy Board (the one provided or one you have created) to assign buddy pairs.
 5. Use your Buddy Grid to keep track of who has already been paired.
 6. Display the Buddy Board in your classroom so students have a reminder of who their weekly buddy is.
 7. Displaying buddy pairings prominently in the classroom not only provides a visual reminder to students, but it also emphasizes the message that Buddy Up is an important part of the classroom experience.
 8. When posting buddy pairings, it is important not to organize the buddy board by gender or other social groupings. For example, do not simply put the boys on one side and the girls on the other side and rotate each column up or down.
 9. Some (or all) weeks may require a buddy triad in order to include all students, and that's okay.
 10. Never force students to be buddies if they feel extremely uncomfortable or unsafe with a particular peer.

Monitoring for Effectiveness:

Effectiveness of program implementation will be measured by the students' ability to make progress towards the "Buddy Up" learning objectives. Teachers will monitor students' progression towards the program learning objectives below:

"Buddy Up" Learning Objectives

Supported peer experiences during Buddy Up provide students with opportunities to develop their abilities to:

- Interact with peers who may have similar or different temperaments, interests, and skills
- Share information about themselves
- Listen to and show interest in others
- Communicate and collaborate successfully with diverse peers
- Recognize and empathize with others' perspectives and feelings
- Demonstrate self-control
- Express ideas and feelings with self-confidence and assertiveness
- Disagree respectfully
- Demonstrate caring and kindness toward others

PROGRAM 2: SNAP (PILOT A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM)

Research - SNAP®

SNAP®, which stands for STOP NOW AND PLAN, is an evidence-based, cognitive behavioral model powered by the minds at Child Development Institute (CDI).

SNAP® has a proven track record for changing lives. Research demonstrates positive treatment outcomes among children ages 6-11 with disruptive behavior problems.

The gender-sensitive SNAP® Boys and SNAP® Girls programs are designed for children ages 6-11 who are engaging in aggressive, anti-social behavior and/or have come into contact with authority figures at school or in the community.

Highly trained staff work with each family to develop goals that focus on preventing and reducing the chances of conflict with peers and authority figures.

Implementation Steps:

1. Collaborate with the Regional Executive Director of the Children's Home Society and the Director of the Community Partnership School to arrange staff professional development.
2. Send on parent consent letters. (March 4, 2020 and March 10, 2020)
3. Offer the 13-week program to selected students who have obtained parent consent to participate. (Starting March 12, each Thursday)
4. Implement the student-to-student peer mentorship program for students, including African American students.

Monitoring for Effectiveness:

Effectiveness of program implementation will be measured by the students' ability to make progress towards the SNAP learning objectives. Teachers will monitor students' progression towards the program learning objectives below:

SNAP Learning Objectives

SNAP® helps children learn how to effectively manage their emotions and 'keep problems small' and the program:

1. Focuses on positive reinforcement and effective problem-solving skills
 2. Increases pro social skills to improve academic functioning and
- Reduces disruptive classroom behaviors and truancy

