

AN APPROACH TO DEVELOPING A WHOLE
SCHOOL SELF-CONCEPT PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION:

Research studies have indicated that successful learning is closely correlated with high self-concept. Schools which succeed in raising the self-concept of their students, also succeed in raising academic performance. Here is one way that schools have addressed the issue in an attempt to raise the self-concept of students on a whole school basis.

Stage 1 : Determine Needs

Activity:

- A general needs assessment of staff, students and the community may lead to a consensus on self-concept as an area of focus.

Organisation:

- A committee to conduct a needs assessment.
- Analyse and present results back to the participants.

Stage 2 : Data Gathering

Activity:

- This activity seeks to validate the perception of a need.
- Administer self-concept and attitudinal inventories to a sample of students.
- Analyse and present results to Senior Staff in the form of a graph.
- Ask the Staff for their interpretations and conclusions.

Organisation:

- Establish a committee.
- Obtain inventories from Research Branch.
- Your P.E.P. or P.S.P. School Development people can help.

Stage 3 : Goal Setting

Activity:

- As a consequence of the analysis set realistic and achievable goals.
- Eg. (i) To increase the self-concept of 30% of the students with perceived low self-concept by 10% by December.
- (ii) To increase the positive attitudes towards the school by 20% by December.

Organisation:

- A small committee could present a report to Senior Staff for discussion.
- Disseminate goals to the entire staff.

Stage 4 : Setting the Theme

Activity:

- One theme is selected that engages the attention of the students, staff and community members.

Organisation:

- A committee may organise a conference for setting a theme or may propose a theme.
- Present information on themes used by other schools eg. Kids Helping Kids.
We can do it.

Stage 5 : Initiating a Programme

Activity:

- Develop specific objectives for the theme and state practical activities.
- Consider self-concept theory.
- Ways to improve student/teacher relationships.
- Self-concept programmes in other schools.

Organisation:

- Conference or workshop.

USE:

- guest speakers
- videos
- reading materials
- small group discussion

Stage 6 : Organisation

Activity:

Consider these questions:-

1. What activities could teachers integrate into their subject programmes to support the theme?
eg.
 - guest speakers
 - films
 - topics
 - excursions
2. What 'whole school' activity will be organised as a focal point for the programme?
 - Who would co-ordinate it?
 - Who would be involved?
 - What will be the management structure and process?
 - What resources are available? Costs?
 - When would the activity occur?
 - What timeline is envisaged?
3. How can the community be involved to support our programme?

Organisation:

Planned by small group discussions of:

- The whole staff
- House Masters
- Faculties
- Students
- Parents
- Elect a co-ordinator and management committee.
- Sub-committees with leaders may be elected if necessary.
- A theme newsletter providing on-going reports is useful.
- Media coverage should be arranged?

Stage 7 : Monitoring

Activity:

- Regular meetings of committees with reports to co-ordinator.
- Regular reports by the co-ordinator to the staff and the administration.

Organisation:

- Record minutes and decisions.
- Reports may be given at monthly staff meetings or during tea breaks on progress and activities.

Stage 8 : Evaluation

Upon conclusion of the culminating event:

- re-administer self-concept/attitudinal inventories.
- interview a random sample of a group that you thought had benefitted the most from the programme.
- analyse and present results back to the staff in the form of graphs/case descriptions.

FURTHER INFORMATION

● Pugh, D and Thompson, L Kids Helping Kids is a case study of a whole school self-concept project. The book is available from the authors on 09-384-9043.