

Safe Kids Inc.: H.E.R.O. Curriculum: Grades K-8

Efficacy Findings in:

Prominent Afterschool Program, Public School District, and Private School

Pilot Study Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Shootings are continuing to increase, both in schools and beyond (Homeland Security, 2018). Based on the increase in violent events that are threatening the children in our country, it is evident that there is a pressing need for a survivability program that could be taught in a non-threatening manner to children as young as 5. Two safety experts collaborated with an educational expert to address this need. The question they attempted to address was: Could children as young as kindergarten be taught safety strategies without triggering adverse effects? Their attempt to answer that question was the development of the H.E.R.O. program, a comprehensive program that consists of a curriculum employing best practices in educational methods as well as active shooter safety strategies. It was predicted that a curriculum teaching the most effective safe-thinking strategies in the safe environment of a classroom *prior* to engaging in *announced* drills would be more effective and less threatening than cold drills without training, preparation, and dialogue before and after.

Nothing like this had been conceived and developed. Consequently, there were important and valid questions, such as: Does the H.E.R.O. program work as designed? Are the targeted goals of teaching safe-thinking strategies achieved through this program? Would teachers feel more or less confident handling a violent event at school with students under their care after participating in this program? What resistance, if any, would be faced from teachers/staff, and parents? Could students this young actually learn how to take safe measures? Would students as young as kindergarten result in feeling more or less safe or no difference at all? Would students in middle school take such a program seriously?

In their attempt to answer these questions, the creators of H.E.R.O. conducted a three-phase pilot study comprised of three case studies in disparate contexts. The first case study took place in a prominent afterschool program with 2,300 students, representative of 3 districts. The second case study included all 15,633 students in grades K-8 in a public-school district. And finally, the third case study took place in a large private school (K-8). The entire three-phase pilot study took place over fall of 2017 through spring of 2018. A total of 19,433 students (K-8), 747 staff, 38 schools representing 4 districts and one private school participated in the pilot study (see Appendices A, C and F for demographic data for every school that participated).

In all three of the case studies, the methodology remained consistent. Uniformity of methodology was retained in all of the disparate contexts. The findings were surprisingly uniform across the complete study, despite the broad range of diversity represented in the participants of this pilot. There was very little variance in the findings, regardless of type of data: questionnaire, field notes, interviews, journals, and testimonials. In addition, all forms of artifact evidence (photos and videos, including student-featured video journals voluntarily submitted) demonstrated remarkably similar outcomes, regardless of context. In addition, the program was featured on local news channels following a lethal gang shooting adjacent to an elementary school that was in the process of teaching H.E.R.O. The school administrator, teachers, and students (as young as fourth grade) were interviewed by the local news channel. This artifact, filmed by a television crew and aired on television and made available online, underscored the findings of the total three-phase pilot study.

The findings for the entire study, incorporating data from all three case studies were as follows:

1. The efficacy of the program exceeded expectations. Students were able to successfully employ effective safety strategies even in a real-life scenario, while demonstrating less fear, rather than more.
2. After participating in the H.E.R.O. program, students, teachers, and administrators all reported (without exception) they felt safer at school as a result of H.E.R.O. Testimonials emerged without solicitation, such as, “Prior to H.E.R.O. my daughter was anxious and afraid to go to school. Now she is confident and no longer afraid. H.E.R.O. changed her life.”
3. Students as young as kindergarten demonstrated without exception and without hesitation an ability to hide, build barricades, escape, run and overcome quickly and quietly after being trained in H.E.R.O.
4. Although never desired, a real life lethal shooting occurred adjacent to a school that was participating in H.E.R.O. Half of the school had been trained in H.E.R.O. The half that had been trained responded safely. The half that had not did not respond safely. The principal reported her observations to the creators of this paper as well as the local news. One student who is known to be disruptive was included in the real-life lock-down scenario. The teacher reported that she was so quiet that after 45 minutes they had to search the room to find her. She did not demonstrate any adverse effects of the event. The inherent non-threatening aspect of the curriculum, employing empowerment strategies, is likely the reason that students with behavioral challenges, including those who fall on the spectrum, performed surprisingly well in the real-life lethal gang shooting scenario.

5. Students expressed they no longer feel safe at school. When asked why they don't feel safe at school, the students responded, "Shootings happen at school."
6. Teacher resistance was expected but not observed or reported in anonymous questionnaires. After the Parkland, Florida shooting, the teachers expressed how scared they were. The teachers demonstrated increased interest in the H.E.R.O. program after Parkland.
7. Parent resistance was likewise expected, but as with teachers, was also not experienced. Out of the nearly 20,000 students who participated, only one parent requested that their child be excluded from participating. There was not one negative comment from a parent in the entire pilot study. The only comment heard from parents was, "Thank you."
8. The results of a Pre-Test/Post-Test given to the teachers indicated a substantial increase of public school teacher confidence (at least doubling) after participating in the program. In the private school study, teacher confidentiality likewise moved from less than 50% feeling confident handling a violent situation to 100% of the teachers who fell on the confidence side of the continuum after teaching H.E.R.O.
9. The teachers participating in the pilot study were asked to critique the curriculum via a Survey Monkey questionnaire. In the public schools, 92.7% of the teachers in K-3, 100% in grades 4/5, and 100% of the teachers (grades K-8) in the private school reported that the curriculum was perceived as non-threatening by their students, students were able to learn the stated learning objectives, and the curriculum was easy to use. As one teacher wrote: "The lessons worked."

10. Multiple students with disabilities successfully participated in the program without an accessibility guide, including cognitively impaired, visually impaired, and students who fall on the spectrum. However, an accessibility guide has since been developed and is currently available.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Students are increasingly stating, “I don’t feel safe at school anymore.” Teachers are echoing the sentiment. Parents are demanding new measures for safe-guarding their children. Politicians, news commentators and educators have weighed in with a variety of suggested solutions, from arming teachers to metal detectors. Parkland students marched. “It must not happen again!” Yet, 2 months and 4 days later, it did happen again, this time in Santa Fe, Texas.

The Problem: Shootings Are Increasing According to the F.B.I.

It is no wonder students, teachers, and parents are afraid. The perception of increased violence in schools is not just media-induced, but can be substantiated through quantitative data. In addition to the 12 students and one teacher killed in Columbine, an additional 141 children, educators and other people have been killed in assaults, and another 287 have been injured (Cox, Rich, et al, 2018). This does not include the 215,000 children at 217 schools who have been subject to active shooter violence.

A Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) study found an average of 6.4 incidents occurred annually in the first seven years of the study. That average increased to 16.4 incidents annually the last seven years of the study (Blair, Pete, et al, 2014). From January through December of 2017, there were 17 deaths, and 21 injuries in school shootings (Homeland Security, 2018). An article published by CNN (online), reported that this year alone (January through May 2018), there has been on average at least one shooting per week where someone was killed or injured at a school. Although not all were students, the shootings at schools this year alone have resulted in the loss of 35 lives and 74 injuries (Ahmed and Walker, 2018). In addition to school shootings,

in 2016 and 2017, there were 50 incidents in 21 states, with 943 casualties, 221 killed and 722 wounded (United States Department of Justice, 2018).

Students, teachers, and parents are crying out to feel safe at school again. Is this a new normal, to feel fear even at school? More than one parent has made the following comment on a news report: “How can I ever feel safe dropping my child off in the morning, not wondering if they will return home alive at the end of the day?” And what about the survivors? In addition to suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), drops in enrollment and standardized tests can be expected (Ray, J. 2014; Beland, L., & Kim, D., 2016).

What Do Safety Experts Say About Staying Safe?

In an attempt to address this paramount question there are multiple suggestions and solutions being proposed. In the midst of all the myriad voices and competing solutions, it is important to weigh these solutions not against politics, or rhetoric, but against best practices in safety. Safety experts study events and know which measures, responses, and strategies have successfully saved lives and which ones resulted in more casualties. This is what they have learned:

On average, it takes 15 minutes for officers to get to a school. On average, 2-3 lives are taken every minute in an active shooting. If there is an armed resource officer on campus, the time taken can be shortened significantly, but there is still the likelihood that lives will be lost while waiting for him or her to make their way across the campus.

In the meantime, safety experts have determined that there are best practices that can be taken which can dramatically decrease loss of life in an active shooting at school. These same strategies work anywhere: school, movies, concerts, malls, you name it. Violence can erupt anywhere. Practicing the current best practices in safety strategies can make the difference

between life and death (Interagency Security Committee, 2015; US Department of Homeland Security, 2008; International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2009).

The four most effective survival skills according to safety experts are:

- *Find a safe place to hide.* This strategy has traditionally been taught as “lockdown”. But safety experts have learned that it is important to know when and how to hide appropriately. It depends on the situation. If the situation calls for a “lockdown” scenario, the single most effective way to keep intruders out is to lock the door, build a barricade, and hide quietly. Building a barricade is quick and easy to do, and children as young as kindergarten are able to effectively construct barricades with age-appropriate training.
- *Escape and evacuate.* It might be necessary to escape a room or building in certain scenarios, such as when the intruder has already gained access to an enclosed environment. Knowing evacuation routes beforehand is essential to being prepared. It is better to escape in various directions, and then run to a safe hiding spot, as far away as possible. Even if students are scattered and temporarily unaccounted for, they *will* be located eventually and reunited with families when the scene is rendered safe. Identifying doors and windows that are locked or blocked *prior* to a real event will save lives.
- *Run away in an unpredictable pattern.* This is the best strategy when in an open space, such as a playground or gymnasium. But running from danger is far different than running for fun or in a track meet. While running in a straight line may be the fastest way to get to a destination, it is also much more predictable and therefore

- easier to target. Instead of running in a straight line, running from danger in an unpredictable “zig zag” pattern to a safe hiding place is an effective safety strategy.
- *Overcome*. This is a last-resort strategy and is intended to be used when trapped in a room with no way to escape or run. Younger children should not be encouraged to “fight” (for obvious reasons), but it is important to teach children they can overcome an intruder by creating an environment of resistance, chaos, and disruption. Younger children can overcome by acting as a team to yell, scream, and throw objects at the intruder. Physically-capable adults and older students *should* attempt to fight back against the intruder by any means necessary. A fire extinguisher makes a great tool for overcoming an intruder (spraying the repellent and use of the metal tank as a striking instrument is very effective).

Although these survival skills have been and are continuing to be taught to adults, including college students, there has been no program to teach these skills to children K-8. Because some of the most horrific shootings have occurred in elementary schools (Sandy Hook and San Bernardino), two safety experts, with extensive experience and training in active shooter incidents, decided that there was a dire need for a program that could teach these skills to young children.

To address this need, these safety experts conceived and wrote the acronym H.E.R.O. to stand for the four above research-based survival skills: H – Hide, E – Escape, R – Run, and O – Overcome. They also wrote three age-appropriate fictional narratives centered around young super heroes who learn how to use these four survival skills in a futuristic setting.

The Question: Is It Possible to Teach Young Children These Skills Without Increasing Fear?

Having created an acronym and age-appropriate narratives, the question still remained: Could these survival skills be taught to children as young as kindergarten without triggering adverse effects? This question led the safety experts to seek out an educational expert who predicted that it *would be possible* to teach young children these safety skills through a curriculum taught in a classroom by trained teachers.

Consequently, a curriculum was written based on methodologies that have been identified in meta-analysis data to be the most effective: narrative, compare/contrast, setting objectives and providing feedback (Marzano 2001). In addition, the curriculum also incorporated multi-modalities: visual, dialogue, audio, and kinesthetic opportunities in each lesson. Also, both verbal and written processing aspects were intentionally included in the curriculum.

Additionally: Would teaching these skills to young children increase their fear, decrease it, or have no effect on their sense of safety? Although the literature applicable to this question was scant to say the least, and indeed, did not include any studies that were generalizable, some articles suggested that the answer might be yes, children could learn difficult, even normally frightening skills under certain conditions. In examining the literature for published articles on methodologies that would mitigate against inducing fear in children, three methodologies emerged that would not only mitigate against adverse effects, but might even result in beneficial affective outcomes. The three conditions that emerged and became an integral part of the program were:

1) *The benefit of a positive student-teacher relationship*

If students are provided a safe school environment where they can experience success and pride in themselves, they will feel more safe and less likely to think the world is out to get

them (Wright, T., 2013). So, it was predicted that it might be possible children would feel more safe, not less, *if* these safe-thinking strategies were taught in a safe classroom environment by their teacher whom they trust.

2) The benefit of a picture book

Picture books can be an effective tool for helping children grapple with difficult issues. Fictional books can be used with opportunities for discussion to teach children even frightening aspects (Pace, B. G., Lowery, R. M., & Lamme, L. L., 2004). Consequently, it was predicted it might be possible children would feel more safe, not less *if* these safe-thinking strategies were taught using a fictional picture book.

3) The benefit of increasing a sense of empowerment.

Empowerment can be enhanced through opportunities for decision making, problem-solving, and leadership (Cattaneo, L. B., & Chapman, A. R., 2010). It was predicated they would feel more safe, not less *if* these safe-thinking strategies were taught using methods that enhance a sense of empowerment, such as opportunities for decision making, problem-solving and leadership.

The Program: H.E.R.O.

The H.E.R.O. program was created by combining the best practices in safety with the best practices in education. The 5-lesson curriculum teaches an easy to remember acronym to the children. It was founded on the Empowerment Theory, specifically taking into account the aspect of utilizing trusted, safe environments such as a classroom with a positive student-teacher relationship. It also utilizes age-appropriate narratives, such as a fictional picture book for grades K-3, fictional narratives for grades 4-8, and providing ample opportunity for dialogue, decision making, problem-solving, and leadership. The narratives introduce the students to fictional

characters who demonstrate their innate ability to stay safe when danger arises. After engaging in the narrative, the teacher leads classroom discussions such as comparing/contrasting people who hurt with people who help and how to identify them. Each lesson includes actively practicing one of the four safety strategies through gamification, including concrete feedback based on a rubric or H.E.R.O. scoreboard. The lessons all conclude with a journal activity which provides written processing of the new skill while capturing affective feelings that might need attention. An essential aspect of the program was the decision to ensure that nowhere in the program would the following terms be used: bullets, guns, pistols, rifle, shotguns, magazine, clip, magazine, ammunition, reloading, bomb, explosive, knife, stabbing, death, killing, or shooting.

The Study: Methodology

Would the program work as designed, or did it require modifications? In an attempt to ascertain the efficacy of the H.E.R.O. program, a three-phase pilot study of three separate case studies was conducted in disparate contexts: a) one prominent afterschool program comprised of 2,300 students and 86 staff from three Junior High schools and 16 elementary schools located in three school districts, b) one public school district with 15,633 students and 606 teachers participating, and c) one private school comprised of 1,500 students and 55 faculty participants. The study also unexpectedly included a real-life litmus test that occurred while the program was being piloted in an elementary school in the public-school district. Half the school had been through the H.E.R.O. program; half had not.

The after-school program piloted the curriculum in the fall of 2017. The public-school district piloted the curriculum January through April of 2018. The private school piloted the program in May of 2018 (see Appendix B for a detailed data collection timetable). The sequence of sites studied was based solely on calendar constraints. The afterschool program was the first

studied because this was the first program which was able to work the pilot into their calendar. The public-school district was the second pilot study, followed by the private school. Modifications in the curriculum and overall program were implemented formatively throughout the three-phase pilot study based on observations and feedback gleaned throughout the process. Consequently, the curriculum and the professional development components studied in the three case studies were varied iterations of each other with minor revisions. Those revisions and how they impacted the various pilots are discussed throughout this report.

Multiple, cross-case study methodology was utilized throughout the pilot studies, enabling a close, detailed, holistic examination of a survivability program implemented in various contexts. The data collected were not IRB approved, but careful considerations for the protection of the participants were adhered to: identities protected, permission from all authorities (parents, districts, school boards, etc.) were obtained prior to entering the field and collecting the data.

Data were collected through participant-observer observations. Observations were made and recorded by the creators of the program while refraining from participating unless the staff or faculty requested clarification. Detailed field notes were captured on Apple MacBook or HP laptop. Data collected were comprised of observations made in the field, as well as conclusory focus groups comprised of administrators and teachers. Artifacts were gathered, including written and video testimonials. Questionnaire responses were collected through Survey Monkey (see Appendix E for the public-school district sample questionnaire and results, Appendix H for the private school results).

These data were collected, analyzed, and the findings and study limitations are included in this report. The findings for each of the three phases are presented case by case. Careful

considerations were taken to assure there was no slippage of data from one case into another. In addition to the data collected within the three cases, this report also includes the observations from five additional focus groups, in order of occurrence: one educator focus group, one school psychologist focus group, three parent information meetings, a school board meeting, and two staff debriefings at the conclusion of the program. Each of these events and their impact on the program are described in chronological order of their occurrence. Each of these events informed revisions formative iterations to the program. The conclusion of the report attempts to present an overview of the findings from all three studies as well as limitations and recommendations for further study in the future.

Educator Focus Group

The creators of the H.E.R.O. program gathered a focus group of educators in an attempt to glean feedback from them as to the initial concepts and concerns they might express that would need to be taken into account. Eight educators from a variety of areas of expertise were in attendance: One dean of education from an accredited university, one school psychologist, one school principal, one elementary school teacher, one middle school teacher, as well as other experts who have experience in training and coaching. An introductory power point was used to provide the initial concepts of the proposed program. The majority of the evening was dedicated to a discussion of the potential merits and challenges of a program like H.E.R.O.

The H.E.R.O. program was compared to other programs that have been in use for adults and high school for twenty years or more. One of the educators who was present had been a trainer for two years for one of the comparison programs. He could not remember what the acronym stood for in his program. Conversely, the principal in attendance of the private school

was able to recall the acronym for H.E.R.O. (Hide, Escape, Run, Overcome) without hesitation after a one hour meeting with the creators.

There was substantial discussion as to the choice of the word ‘Overcome’. There was one educator who expressed concern with it, but the vast majority of the group, especially the two educators whose specialty was in psychology, affirmed the strength of the term. The discussion was instrumental and informed the development of the curriculum, connecting the concept of overcoming to empowerment theory.

Empowerment theory had been identified as a basis for the program and the curriculum. The educators in attendance affirmed that the term “Overcome” was as attitude and action that would result from empowerment theory. The educators encouraged this aspect of the curriculum and expressed that it added tremendous value to the program. Various participants expressed their opinion that “Overcome” could also be interpreted and applied to the psychological aspect of moving past trauma and/or abusive situations including bullying.

As a result of the educator focus group, two strands emerged that became the foundation for the curriculum and are currently embedded in each lesson plan as well as the Scope and Sequence: *Safe Thinking Skills* and *Empowerment Strategies*. The educators encouraged the extension of safe thinking skills beyond the classroom, including the family and the community.

One concern that was raised during the focus group was the reluctance of teachers to break rules, damage property, jump from windows, or lose control of their students. Addressing this concern became an important and integral part of the professional development. Another concern was teacher modification of lesson plans. This concern was addressed in the writing of the curriculum and including a note instructing the teachers to feel free to make modifications with the *exception of the skills or body* of the lesson.

The need for an accessibility guide was also discussed. This challenge resulted in the first comprehensive accessibility guide, written by a team of school psychologists and special needs educators for teaching survival skills to students with disabilities.

School Psychologist Focus Group

An informational power point was presented to 18 licensed school psychologists from one public school district. The purpose of the meeting was to get feedback from the expertise of qualified professionals regarding the academic and affective aspects of the proposed program. The meeting lasted two hours. The focus group expressed strong support for the H.E.R.O. program. Specifically, they voiced perceived value in the narrative aspect of the curriculum, the inclusion of journals, as well as need for an accessibility guide. The need for an accessibility guide was acknowledged as an important part of the program that had yet to be developed. As a result of the feedback from this focus group, the creators have maintained a commitment to keeping the narrative, the journals, and assembled a team of experts to develop the accessibility guide. In addition, the importance of the narrative and the journals has been stressed at the professional development.

The psychologists wanted to know if the curriculum addressed fear. When they learned that it was based on Empowerment Theory they felt confident that this was an efficacious way to assuage fear. Also, the educational expert shared that the curriculum is based on teaching the students the definition of a HERO: “Someone who helps themselves so they can help others.” This explanation was deemed satisfactory.

Additional discussion regarding the journals was how they could be a valuable tool for identifying triggers of trauma, indicators of abuse or bullying, and any other frightening emotions that could bubble up. They encouraged the creators to emphasize in professional

development the importance of the journals and reading them and sharing them with parents and/or authorities as needed. Based on this recommendation, this has been included in the professional development.

Questions regarding preschool and high school arose. At the time of this focus group the creators were not considering a preschool component, but due to continued demand for high school, this challenge is in the process of being developed and is scheduled to be piloted in fall 2018.

Parent Information Meetings

Three parent information meetings were conducted at the public high school on different nights in three different parts of the city, as well as one for the private school. After explaining an overview of the program, the parents were given an opportunity to ask questions. The same questions arose in each of the parent meetings that were similar to those that arose in the psychologist focus group. In addition, the parents asked the following:

1. Is there a preschool program? A: No
2. Is there a high school program? A: No

The preschool question did not concern the parents nearly as much high school. In fact, the parents at the second information meeting stayed on this topic for the rest of the meeting with several suggestions as to how the challenge could be addressed. Additional questions that arose in the parent meetings (that did not arise in either of the previous focus groups) were:

1. Is this program something that repeats every year? A: Yes
2. What about first aid? “Do you teach teachers how to apply tourniquets, etc.? I heard most of the kids at Sandy Hook bled out.” A: No, this program has not been designed

by medical professionals, and teachers are all required to be CPR and First Aid Certified.

Parents repeatedly requested a parent reference guide that they could have so they would know what their children were learning so they could reinforce the skills and concepts at home.

The parents were apprised of the journals. They wanted to know when and how they would be able to access them. It was explained to them that all teachers handle journals differently depending on their classroom logistics, but it would be impressed on the teachers that the parents were expecting to see the journals either as the program was being implemented or shortly upon completion.

As a result of the parent meetings the creators are developing a high school component, a parent/community guide has been written, translated into Spanish and has been posted to the district website. Also, the teachers have been apprised in professional development as to the parents' strong desire to see the journals.

School Board Meeting

On February 13, Safe Kids Inc. was asked to make a presentation to the school board about the H.E.R.O. program that was being piloted in their district. Many parents were in attendance, as well as a reporter. Adam Coughran gave a 15-minute Power Point presentation providing an overview of what the students would be learning as well as the methodology and underlying empowerment theory.

Two of the school board members had previously attended a parent meeting and a teacher professional development. Both of them added comments at the conclusion of Adam Coughran's presentation. Both of the school board members shared their regret that such a program was necessary in today's day, but also felt it was the right and prudent step to take to train the

teachers and the students. One of the school board members also read from notes she had brought with her. She noted her appreciation that nowhere in the program were the following terms used: “bullets, guns, pistols, rifle, shotguns, magazine, clip, magazine, ammunition, reloading, bomb, explosive, knife, stabbing, death, killing, or shooting.”

CHAPTER 2

Case Study 1: The Afterschool Program

The first case study took place in the fall of 2017. It began in September and concluded in December of that year. A staff debriefing took place in early January 2018. Observations, Survey Monkey data and artifacts were completed by early January. The data were organized, analyzed and written up prior to the beginning of the second case study to prevent data slippage from case study to case study.

Context Demographics

The Teaching Staff.

The Program Director managed a team of 19 Directors (one for each school) who in turn managed a team of an average of 4-5 staff members who were the ones who implemented the curriculum. Although the Program Director related various methods she personally taught the staff, a site director reported high staff turn-over, resulting in an on-going need for preliminary training, with little opportunity for the staff to become proficient. Indeed, one staff member who had been observed in the pilot had left this afterschool program less than three months later. The minimal teacher experience and training is an important consideration when taking into account the results of this pilot study.

The Students.

A total of the 2,300 students (K-8) participated in the program, representative of three junior high schools, and 16 elementary schools from three different school districts. The demographics of the students in the three school districts, as well as one individual school are provided below (and in Appendix A). Three elementary schools were singled out by the

Program Director as having a “large gang, homeless, and refugee” population. Because field observations took place at one of these schools, the demographics for this particular school are also included in the body of this report (all three of these schools are found in Appendix A). To ensure the protection of the participants, the data for these districts as well as the one school are provided as “District 1”, “District 2”, “District 3” and “School A”. The context and findings from the junior high schools represented in the pilot study are also provided in this report as “Junior High A”, “Junior High B”, and “Junior High C”.

The Elementary School Districts.

Three elementary school districts were represented in the afterschool program that participated in the pilot study. Demographics for these districts are provided in text. A graph is also included for ease of side-by-side comparison (see Table 1). In addition, demographic data for School “A” is discussed and included in the side-by-side Table 1 in the body of this report. The other two schools are included in Appendix A.

District “1”.

This district was ranked 15 in terms of ethnic diversity. Of the 18,558 elementary students in District “1”, 16,499 (90.1%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, English learners, or foster youth. When this datum is disaggregated by individual categories, 15,557 (83.8%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, 10,807 (58.2%) were identified as being English learners, and 99 (5.33%) were foster youth (Ed-data.org, 2017).

District “2”.

District “2” was ranked 32 in terms of ethnic diversity. Of the 6,418 elementary students in District “2”, 5,574 (86.85%) were on free/reduced meals, 5,341 (85.1%) received free/reduced

meals, 3,236 (50.4%) were identified as English learners, 32 (5%) were foster youth (Ed-data.org, 2017).

District “3”.

This district was ranked 45 in terms of ethnic diversity. Of the 2,331 elementary students in District “2”, 1,737 (76.6%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, English learners, or foster youth. When this datum is disaggregated, 1,523 (65.3%) received free/reduced meals, 980 (42%) were identified as being English learners, and 17 (7.3%) were foster youth (Ed-data.org, 2017).

School “A”.

Located in District “2”, School “A” was one of those schools identified by the director of the afterschool program as “having a large refugee population, a large homeless population, and a large gang population.” It was also a site where field notes were gathered. In this school 576 of the children were identified as “free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth” 91.4%. This school ranked 25 in terms of ethnic diversity (Ed-data.org). Specifically, of the students who attended “School A”, 59.2% were English Learners, 87.1% were on free/reduced meals, 0 were identified as foster youth (Cde.ca). Demographics for the other two schools are included in Appendix A.

Table 1

Demographic Data for the Elementary School Districts and School A (2016-1017)

District/School	District 1	District 2	District 3	School A
Total enrollment	18,558	6,418	2,331	630
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	16,499 (90.1%)	5,574 (86.85%)	1,737 (76.6%)	576 (91.4%)
Free/reduced meals	15,557 (83.8%)	5,341 (85.1%)	1,523 (65.3%)	549 (87.1%)
English learners	10,807 (58.2%)	3,236 (50.4%)	980 (42%)	373 (59.2%)
Foster Youth	99 (5.33%)	32 (5%)	17 (7.3%)	0
Ethnic Diversity	15	32	45	25

The Junior High Schools.

Three junior high schools, referred to in this report as “Junior High A”, “Junior High B”, and “Junior High C” were represented in the afterschool program that participated in the pilot study. All of them were part of one unified high school district.

Junior High “A”.

This school was ranked 26 in terms of ethnic diversity. Of the 1,215 students in the junior high school, 1,074 (88.4%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, English learners, or foster youth. When this datum is disaggregated by individual categories, 1,047 (86.2%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, and 393 (32.3%) were identified as being English learners. The datum for foster youth was redacted (Ed-data.org, 2017).

Junior High “B”.

This school was ranked 22 in terms of ethnic diversity. Of the 1,037 students, 929 (89.6%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, English learners, or foster youth. When this datum is disaggregated by individual categories, 908 (87.6%) were identified as being on

free/reduced meals, and 284 (27.4%) were identified as being English learners/ The datum for foster youth was redacted (Ed-data.org, 2017).

Junior High “C”.

This school was ranked 11 in terms of ethnic diversity. Of the 1,527 students in the junior high school 1,331 (87.2%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, English learners, or foster youth. When this datum is disaggregated by individual categories, 1,291 (84.5%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, and 448 (29.3%) were identified as being English learners. The datum for foster youth was redacted (Ed-data.org, 2017).

Table 2

Demographic Data for Unified High School District and Three Junior High Schools (2016-1017)

District/School	Junior High A	Junior High B	Junior High C
Total enrollment	1,215	1,037	1,527
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	1,074 (88.4%)	929 (89.6%)	1,331 (87.2%)
Free/reduced meals	1,047 (86.2%)	908 (87.6%)	1,291 (84.5%)
English learners	393 (32.3%)	284 (27.4%)	448 (29.3%)
Foster Youth	Datum redacted	Datum redacted	Datum redacted
Ethnic Diversity	26	22	11

Homeless Population Represented in the Entire Afterschool Program.

In addition to the demographic data previously cited, the homeless liaison for the school districts provided additional detailed data on the homeless population represented in the afterschool program. The data were disaggregated according to temporary sheltered (66), hotel/motel (193), temporarily doubled up (3,722), and temporarily unsheltered (59). Based on

the definition of homeless in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, a total of 4,040 children were identified as homeless in both districts combined.

Findings in Case Study 1: Prominent Afterschool Program

Evidence of efficacy of the H.E.R.O. curriculum was observed in the afterschool program and also reported by the staff who implemented it. Despite the lack of expertise and minimal teacher preparation, not to mention the lack of technical support, the students demonstrated mastery of the program's goals and objectives, as well as an on-going situational awareness, safe-thinking skills, and empowerment strategies. No parents or staff reported any adverse effects. In fact, they reported the opposite, that students and staff felt more empowered and safer as a result of implementing and participating in the H.E.R.O. program. That said, modifications emerged that would likely increase the observed efficacy even more.

One of the most important findings in this phase of the pilot study was a need for a more interactive curriculum for an afterschool program (as opposed to in school curriculum). A second finding was the need to make the program less game-like. Whereas the creators had attempted to make the program non-threatening, it became clear early on that the children, even those in kindergarten in the fall, would benefit from a more serious approach. The students in K-3 were using words like shooting, and guns and bullets, even though it is nowhere in the curriculum. Consequently, the words "game" and "play" were replaced with "activities" and "practice" in all iterations of the curriculum including the subsequent case study versions.

Based on the feedback from the staff as well as observations in the field it was clear that children in an afterschool program needed a less structured, more concise, more active, less academic approach. Consequently, the curriculum has been modified specifically for afterschool programs accordingly.

Summary of Field Notes.

Two researchers observed the curriculum taught in 11 different classrooms over a four-week span, for a total of 16.5 hours. The findings for each level of the curriculum is summarized along with an excerpt from the field notes.

K-3 Findings.

- 1) The efficacy of the curriculum for K-3 met the expectations of the H.E.R.O. program for this age group.
- 2) Despite concerns for the affective as well as cognitive needs for this age group, the children demonstrated comprehension of the concepts with little to no adverse affective manifestations.
- 3) Although the children in kindergarten had only just begun their school year at the time of the study, and would not have yet learned their letters, they were able to recite with proficiency: “HIDE, ESCAPE, RUN, OVERCOME”.
- 4) Children as young as five contributed matter-of-factly and without hesitation to discussions, using terms, such as “shooter”, “bullet”, etc. despite the omission of these terms from the curriculum. Consider the following excerpt from field notes:

Teacher: *“If a shooter came in through that door (to the west),
which door would we use to escape?”*

They all point to the door on the east end of the classroom.

“Yes.”

*“If a shooter came in through that door (the one on the east),
which door would we use to escape?”*

This time they all point to the door on the west end of the classroom.

“Yes.”

“What if a shooter was coming through that door (the one on the west) and another one was coming in through the other door (the one on the east)? Then where would we run out and escape?”

They all point to the third door that connected their classroom to the adjacent room.

“Yes.”

After reviewing escape, the teacher began the new instruction on danger running.

She built on the narrative: “How did Maxemma run?”

(Maxemma is a fictional character in the picture book that was read to the children.)

“Fast.”

“Yes. How else?”

“Zig-zag”

“Yes.”

“How did running zig-zag help her?”

The responses the children gave were:

“Easier to get hit running in a straight line.”

“Running in a zig zag it is harder to get hurt because they can't hit you.”

“He doesn’t know which way to shoot.”

5) The efficacy of the program was observed despite wide disparities in the classroom situations. Some were small and situated in a classroom with a student-teacher ratio of 15:1. Other instructional situations were in large multi-purpose rooms with a student-teacher ratio of 41:1 (plus aide), with children tightly packed on lunch table benches (grades K-3). Regardless of the varied instructional settings and conditions, the children all demonstrated efficacy through appropriate and desired verbal responses, group attentiveness, and majority participation.

6) The empowerment aspect of the program was observed in the classroom discussions based on the picture book. Children as young as five contributed to decision-making, leadership and identifying personal strengths as evidenced in this excerpt from field notes recorded in a kindergarten class at School “A” (identified as having a large refugee, homeless, and gang population):

Teacher: *“Can you think of someone in the class who is fast?”*

The children volunteered many names.

“Can anyone think of someone in the class who is very strong?”

Some children named themselves as well as friends.

“Does anyone have something special you can do?”

“I can do flips.”

“I can run fast.”

“I can lift a piano.”

The teacher then asked: “Where can you hide” This question elicits more engagement.

When they suggested some places, she responded, “No, there’s a window there.”

“What can we put on the windows and the door so they don’t come inside?”

“We can cover the windows.”

“What can we do to keep the door from being opened?”

“Chairs.”

“Piano.”

“Table.”

“I am going to pick the following people because they’ve been listening and you are going to help me take the chairs and stack them by the door. The rest of you need to be very, very quiet.”

The children put the chairs in front first and then a table. She said,

“Do you think we should put the table first or the chairs?”

“The table!”

They all pulled the table out, then the chairs and then they put the table in and then the chairs. It only took three minutes for them to build both barricades.

4-6 Findings.

The most striking finding in the 4-6 study was that the 6th graders were too mature for the curriculum as written. It was evident that the first lesson was a weak start to the program and unnecessary. In addition, these students had been in class all day. The lessons were taught on Friday afternoon after a long week in school. As a result, the decision was made to restructure

grades 4-6 and move 6th grade to the middle school curriculum. It was also decided to revise the narrative and restructure the lesson plans, eliminating the first lesson altogether.

Even though the findings of the pilot study indicated a need for major revisions and redesign for afterschool programs for this age group, the students still:

- 1) Demonstrated achievement of the program's objective: to increase safe-thinking skills and improved self-empowerment in the midst of threatening situations.
- 2) Had no trouble remembering the H.E.R.O. acronym. They also remembered the finer points in how to hide effectively, remaining quiet and working as a team, even knowing they should not answer the door during a lockdown drill, as demonstrated in the following excerpt from field notes:

The teacher asked the students the difference between a Hideout and a Holdout. The students displayed interested in the difference.

The children didn't shy away from talking about an active shooter and referred to the shooter as "shooter" and not "Invader." None of the kids seemed worried or frightened by the topic in any way. If anything, they weren't taking it seriously, but they absolutely understand the concepts.

To conclude, the teacher asked the students to summarize the lesson from yesterday. Many students raised their hands and a couple different students provided good answers indicating they retained knowledge from the previous lesson. The teacher then asked, "What lesson did we learn today?" Many students raised

their hands and told the teacher they learned to hide “quickly” and “quietly”. Students remembered the difference between Hideout and Holdout.

Overall, it seemed the students were very engaged in the story and lesson plans. The majority of the students were able to recall each component of the H.E.R.O. acronym and definitely understood the topic and how it related to them.

Junior High Findings.

Similar to the 4-6 grade findings, the pilot study of the junior high indicated a need for a major revision for afterschool programs. The lack of the technology and the expertise and teacher training resulted in an inability to implement the curriculum as designed for a classroom. In addition, the students need a completely different approach for afterschool after being in school all day.

Even though the findings of the pilot study indicated a need for major revisions and redesign for afterschool programs for this age group, there was strong evidence of efficacy and that the students had learned the concepts and had increased safe-thinking skills and empowerment strategies as demonstrated in the following excerpt from field notes:

One student volunteered to explain HERO to the students who’d just joined the class: “It’s a pretty simple concept. We’re learning about HERO. It stands for Hide, Escape, Run, Overcome. Today, we’re learning to hide in case a school shooter comes in so he doesn’t kill all of us.”

The teacher asked the class, “What was the point of the story?”

“Shootings.”

“Self-defense.”

The teacher asked, “How many of you guys have been in a shooting?”

Fourteen hands went up.

In a subsequent discussion, the students were able to verbalize concepts taught in the curriculum such as the difference between a hide-out and a hold-out and provide examples: locker rooms, cafeteria, gym, closets, cars. They were able to identify the safest place on campus: the woodshop because it’s a room with no windows, wood for barricades, and potential weapons for personal defense, how to increase survivability by building a barricade, and overcoming when necessary.

The teacher asked, “So, if there’s a shooter here, should we all run out of this room and run to the woodshop?” Many students said yes; many said no, “Because shooter’s out there”. One student said, “You can never assume; you can always think there’s multiple ones just in case” (in reference to shooters).

The teacher asked, “What could we do in this room to Hide?”

“We could barricade! Build a wall!”

One student asked, “What if the shooter is already in the room? Like they’re here to pick up another student?”

The class was in agreement that they would all work as a team and fight that person. One student said that their door was very strong

and they'd better spend their energy barricading the window (weakest point of the room).

Parent Response.

During one of the observation days, a site director was asked, "What was the response of the parents when they were informed about the program?"

"We sent out a letter. Then I followed through with them individually. Their response was a look of shock. Then silence. Then "Thank you!"

Similarly, a parent was asked when she came to pick up her child, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Yes."

"I'm just wondering what your thoughts are about the safe kids program we are doing."

"I'm a teacher at a high school. Honestly, it's about time. Thank you!"

Summary of Staff Feedback in Post Debriefing.

On January 11, 2018, the co-creators of the H.E.R.O. curriculum met with the Program Director and the 19 Site Directors per the creators' request for feedback to the program. The afterschool staff feedback confirmed the findings of the co-creators. They also reported encouraging results in terms of efficacy beyond what was observed in the field. Written evaluations of the program were also voluntarily given to the creators at the conclusion of the meeting. Excerpts from these evaluations are included in this report.

The benefits that emerged as reported by the participants were:

- 1) The curriculum as written was effective for grades K-3. "Younger kids really grabbed on to the H.E.R.O. acronym and remembered it several weeks after."

- 2) The program was very beneficial and that she and her students felt safer and more prepared.
- 3) Increased situational awareness was a theme that emerged from the staff debrief. Multiple Site Directors confirmed that they and their children were thinking and engaging in on-going discussions of how to be safe as a result of participating in the H.E.R.O. program. Another Site Director stated, “After the H.E.R.O. program, students are more aware and more confident.” She overheard students making a plan of ESCAPE on their own time. One of the students even assigned another student to call 911 because he had ‘the best cell phone’. She added, “Students have a general air of confidence. They understand it’s ok to save yourself and look out for yourself.”
- 4) As far as the parents were concerned, one Site Director said, “We had great parent feedback. Parents that teach in other school districts were asking for the H.E.R.O. program to be taught at their school.” Out of the 2,300 students enrolled in the program, four cousins did not participate in the program per the request of their parents. These were the only students who opted out. It was added that this family opts out of every option, such as music, art, etc.
- 5) The Program Director shared, “I feel much safer now that my teachers are more prepared to handle a violent situation.”

Specific recommendations for improvements also emerged. Some were incorporated in the following iterations for the subsequent pilot studies. Other recommendations were incorporated into a unique afterschool iteration of the H.E.R.O. program:

- 1) The Site Directors confirmed the finding that grade 6 needed to be moved to the middle school curriculum (incorporated into the subsequent iterations of the curriculum used in Case Study 2 and Case Study 3).
- 2) They also strongly voiced the opinion that the narrative should be deleted for grades 4-8 (The narratives were not deleted from the in-school curriculum, but were included in Case Study 2 and Case Study 3, but were omitted from the unique afterschool version of H.E.R.O.).

In addition, three documents were handed to the author. These were unrequested handwritten responses to their experience teaching the curriculum. An excerpt from these documents follows.

From a staff teacher of Kindergarten/1st Grade:

This program worked really well with my kids especially since the story was written in such a way they can comprehend the danger. It's a fun and easy way to understand a difficult topic. The children work (sic) well with the discussions and exercise (sic) especially they like to be active and are very opinionated. The only difficult part was the writing and reflection because the first graders already have some writing skills; however, the kindergarteners (sic) don't have those skills developed yet. I was able to just change is to discussions rather than written reflection so it still worked. Other than that, these lessons are very well structured and can be repeated as practice for them. Hopefully programs like this can be available everywhere.

CHAPTER 3

Case Study 2: The Public-School District

The second case study began in January after the conclusion of the first case study. It covered January through April of 2018. The data from the second case study were organized, analyzed and written before the beginning of the third case study in mid-April, 2018 to avoid slippage of data from case study to case study.

Context Demographics

Whereas Case 1 was comprised of 2,300 students (grades K-8) representing three school districts (referred to as District 1, District 2, and District 3 in this report), Case 2 included every student (15,633) and every teacher from grades K-8 from one public-school district, called “District 4” in this report (see Appendix I for a detailed side-by side comparison of the four districts that participated in Case Study 1 and Case Study 2, as well as the private school that participated in Case Study 3).

The superintendent of “District 4” was so concerned about the issue of safety in the schools that the implementation of the H.E.R.O. pilot program was mandated district-wide. This mandate meant that the program was implemented by every teacher and every student in every classroom, K-8, with the addition of high school planned in fall 2018.

“District 4”.

The public-school district (referred to in this report as District “4”) where the H.E.R.O. curriculum was piloted was comprised of five cities with a total of 15 elementary schools, two charter schools (K-8 and K-12), and five middle schools (see Table 3). This district was ranked 25 in terms of ethnic diversity. Of the 15,633 students in this district’s elementary, middle, and charter schools, 14,062 (90%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, and/or English

learners. When these data are disaggregated by individual categories, 13,639 (87.24%) were identified as being on free/reduced meals, and 6,399 (40.09%) were identified as being English learners. The average length of the teaching staff was 11 years.

Table 3

Demographic Data for the Public-School District (2016-1017)

	Elementary	Middle	Charter
Total enrollment	9,601	4,986	1,046
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	8,911 (92.8%)	4,362 (87.48%)	789 (75.43%)
Free/reduced meals	8,594 (89.5%)	4,295 (86.14%)	750 (71.7%)
English learners	4,719 (49.15%)	1,313 (26.33%)	367 (35.08%)
Ethnic Diversity	23	24	35

The Elementary School Demographics

Fifteen elementary schools were represented in the public-school district that participated in the pilot study. All of the elementary schools in this district were K-5. The average elementary class size in this district was 27.2. All of the teachers are certificated by the state. The total number of elementary teachers in this district is 478 (not including the two charter schools since these data were not disaggregated by grade level). Of those sixteen elementary schools, data from a questionnaire collected via Survey Monkey were collected from the teachers of the fifteen elementary schools (see Appendix E for sample questionnaire and results). The survey questions were generated in an attempt to ascertain whether or not the desired goals and aims of the program were achieved as perceived by the teachers. In addition, field observations and notes were taken in classrooms in 2 elementary schools as scheduling permitted (referred to as “School 4” and “School 14” as found in Appendix C). The findings are

presented and discussed later in the report. Demographics for these two schools follows and is discussed in text (see Appendix C for complete tables for all 15 elementary schools that participated in the pilot, listed alphabetically). Side by side comparisons of these schools is provided in Appendix A. Identities of the school and the district are protected by withholding names and locations.

“School 4”.

“School 4” was the first school that implemented the revised, second-iteration of the H.E.R.O. curriculum. In addition to data via Survey Monkey, field observations and notes also took place in School “4”. This school reported for the school year 2016-2017 a total enrollment of 727. Of these students, 704 of the children were identified as “free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth” (96.8%). This school ranked 28 in terms of ethnic diversity. Specifically, of the students who attended “School 4”, 37.6% were English Learners, 96.3% were on free/reduced meals, the number of students who were identified as foster youth was redacted (Ed-data.org, 2018).

“School 14”.

The second school that implemented the revised, second-iteration of the H.E.R.O. curriculum was School “14”. In addition to data via Survey Monkey, field observations and notes also took place in School “14”. For the school year 2016-2017, the school reported a total enrollment of 835. Of these students, 802 of the children were identified as 96%: “free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth” (aggregated). This school ranked 15 in terms of ethnic diversity. When the datum is disaggregated, the students who attended “School 14”, 58.2% were English Learners, 93.2% were on free/reduced meals, the number of students who were identified as foster youth was redacted (Ed-data.org, 2018).

The Middle School Demographics

All five middle schools of the district participated in the pilot program. All of the middle schools in the public-school district represented in the pilot were grades 6-8. The average class size for this district for middle schools was not available for the year of the pilot study, but previous years, the average was a little over 27 (27.1 to 27.7). Demographic data for each of the middle schools are included in Appendix C.

Findings in Case Study 2: The Public-School District

Teacher H.E.R.O. Pre-Test/Post-Test Findings.

A H.E.R.O. pre-test was distributed and collected from the teachers at each and every professional development. The purpose of the pre-tests and post-tests was to ascertain the confidence level of the teachers in handling a violent situation. The teachers were asked to select a number between 1 and 10 as to the following questions:

Question 1: How confident are you in handling a violent situation by yourself?

Question 2: How confident are you in handling a violent situation while protecting students?

Question 3: How empowered do you feel to make decisions in a critical incident?

The amount of responses in the pre-test was nearly 100% because the teachers took these tests in a mandatory professional development setting where administrators were present and they were required to sign-in. The amount of responses in the post test were significantly lower as they were optional and filled out digitally on Survey Monkey at the conclusion of teaching each lesson.

Pre-Test H.E.R.O. Responses.

When the pre-test responses from the teachers are juxtaposed against their responses after taking the training and teaching the curriculum to their students, their responses indicated a positive impact on teacher confidence in handling violent situations on their own and even while protecting students. The impact on teacher empowerment shifted from approximately half feeling empowered to nearly all feeling empowered after participating in the program.

Question 1: How confident are you in handling a violent situation by yourself?

The continuum provided was 1 to 10 from feeling not confident at all to feeling very confident in handling a violent situation by themselves. The percentage of teachers who placed themselves above a 5 (more confident than neutral) on the continuum was 37% on the pre-test and 77.78% on the post-test (see Appendix E for complete results). This shift in confidence in the teachers after participating in the H.E.R.O. program is convincing and is evidence that more study is warranted.

Question 2: How confident are you in handling a violent situation while protecting students?

The continuum provided was 1 to 10 from feeling not confident at all to feeling very confident. The percentage of teachers who placed themselves above a 5 (more confident than neutral) on the continuum was 40% on the pre-test and 84.20% on the post-test (see Appendix E for complete results). The number of teachers who felt confident in handling a violent situation while protecting their students more than doubled. This is a compelling finding.

Question 3: How empowered do you feel to make decisions in a critical incident?

The continuum provided was 1 to 10 from feeling not confident at all to feeling very confident. The percentage of teachers who placed themselves on 6 or above on the continuum

was 54% on the pre-test and 88.89% on the post-test. (see Appendix E for complete results). The results for this question indicate that about half of the teachers felt empowered to make decisions in a critical incident prior to the H.E.R.O. training, and nearly all of the teachers felt empowered to make decisions in a critical incident after participating in H.E.R.O.

Survey Monkey Results, Field Notes, Video Journals and Photos

In addition to the pre-test and post-tests taken by the teachers regarding their confidence level in terms of handling a violent event, an additional questionnaire was taken by the teachers at the conclusion of each of the lessons they taught. The purpose of these questionnaires was to obtain feedback from the teachers regarding their opinion of the efficacy of the H.E.R.O. curriculum, specifically the lesson plans (see Appendix E for a sample of the questionnaire and results).

All of the teachers were mandated to participate in the program; their participation was not voluntary. However, their responses to the Survey Monkey questionnaire for each lesson was not required; it was completely voluntary. As such, the Survey Monkey questionnaire was written in a simple format that would require little time for them to complete. A detailed discussion of the Survey Monkey results is provided below by grade levels and tables of their responses can be found in Appendix E.

In addition to the Survey Monkey Questionnaire, field notes were gathered through observations in the classrooms as schedule permitted. Three researchers observed the curriculum taught in 10 different classrooms for a total of 7.5 hours. The methodology employed in gathering the field notes can be found at the beginning of this document. Excerpts and salient observations were gleaned to provide evidence for efficacy as well as suggestions for needed improvement. Artifacts were also voluntarily submitted for this report, including student-created

video journals, photos of classrooms, and local televised news videos, including televised interviews with children, teachers, and administrators. A final discussion weighs the Survey Monkey findings against the field observations and the artifacts.

Grades K-3.

Survey Monkey Results.

The teachers were given an electronic link to Survey Monkey to be completed at the end of each lesson: Hide, Escape, Run, Overcome, Putting it Altogether. The questions and response options were the same for each lesson. The questionnaires that the teachers completed were not scientific surveys and are hence limited in generalizability. But their purpose was to identify strengths and areas of improvement needed per teachers. The teachers were given a choice of three responses. A likert scale was not chosen since this was not a scientific survey. The intent was ease of use for the teachers, not scientific rigor. Their choices were: Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, or Needs Improvement. For the question of length their choices were: Just Right, Too Long, Not long Enough.

All responses were anonymous and untraceable, so there would have been no reason for the teachers to be anything but totally honest and candid. The teachers were all mandated to participate in the program, so less than favorable responses were expected. Also, from a child development perspective, a curriculum like H.E.R.O. which deals with an innately frightening, even terrifying subject had never been attempted on children as young as five. Not only are children at this age more limited in their cognitive development, they are also more vulnerable to adverse affective effects of learning skills such as those taught in H.E.R.O. It is for these reasons that survivability strategies have never been attempted prior to H.E.R.O.

As such, the creators were cautiously optimistic about the findings after the feedback from the focus groups and the pilot study in the after-school program, but were still realistic in expecting less than favorable responses from the teachers. When teachers are mandated to teach a program, they may or may not be willing participants. Teachers are reluctant to take on more and more responsibilities for teaching non-academic skills. As such resistance was expected by the creators when they created the program and when H.E.R.O. was piloted in a public-school mandatory setting.

The responses were far more favorable than the creators expected, especially for this age group (tables for all the teacher responses can be found in Appendix E). When the responses for “Strongly Agree” and “Somewhat Agree” are collapsed at least 92.68% of the teachers responded they agreed lessons Hide, Escape, Run and Overcome were teacher-friendly, easy to use, the concepts were easily understood by the children, and were non-threatening. The responses from the teachers leaned even more toward agreeing for the lessons Escape, Run and Overcome, with at least 95% of the teachers agreeing with all of the previous aspects of the curriculum. The weakest area indicated was the length for Lesson 1: Hide. The majority of the teachers indicated that the length for this lesson was just right, but 43% of the teachers indicated the length of the lesson needed to be shortened. The lesson “Putting it Altogether” had the least percentage of teachers who agreed that the curriculum was fulfilling its objectives with 86.96% of the teachers who indicated the students were able to understand the concepts. This lower response is still strong, especially in light of the fact that this is a harder lesson, requiring application of the previous lessons to various scenarios. After reviewing the responses from the teachers to the Survey Monkey questionnaire, the creators were pleased with the very high

percentage of teachers who indicated they agreed the curriculum was effective, teacher-friendly, and non-threatening.

Open-ended comments throughout the questionnaire yielded few responses, but the ones elicited were concerns for help with students of special needs, requests for an animated video, one teacher expressed concern about anxiety in the students (this was forwarded to the School Psychologist who looked into it and reported back that it was “nothing to worry about”), lack of clarity about the question regarding digital access, and concerns about their facilities (plastic windows that can’t be broken, escape routes inaccessible – gates locked, etc.).

Field notes.

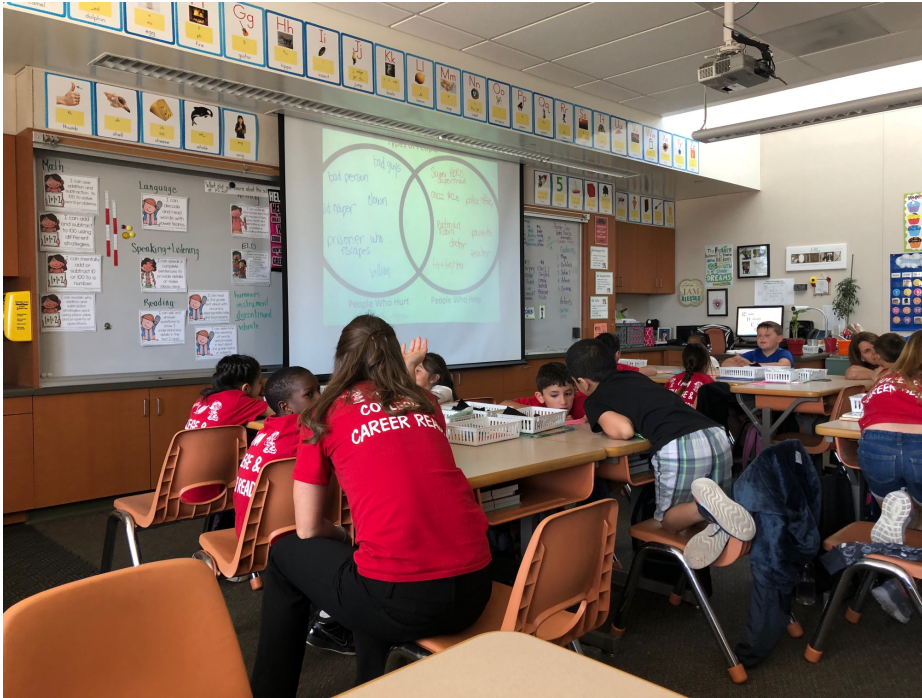
Field observations took place at two elementary schools as schedule permitted. One classroom that was observed was a special day class comprised of seven special education students (grades 3-5). The teacher read the story on an overhead projector. He used a clip-on microphone. The use of the microphone was helpful with these students who were described to the researcher as “cognitively impaired. They did not exhibit any adverse effects from participating in the H.E.R.O. curriculum. Everyone was engaged throughout the lesson and all participated in building and removing two barricades.

Teachers were observed to employ a wide variance when adhering to the curriculum. The teachers who took more liberties tended to extend the length by twice of those who followed it as scripted. Length was the only effect that seemed to be affected by these liberties, however. It was observed that all of the teachers, regardless of their varied methodologies still were successful in meeting the stated goals and objectives. When the students were assessed at the end of the lesson, it was clear that the students had understood it.

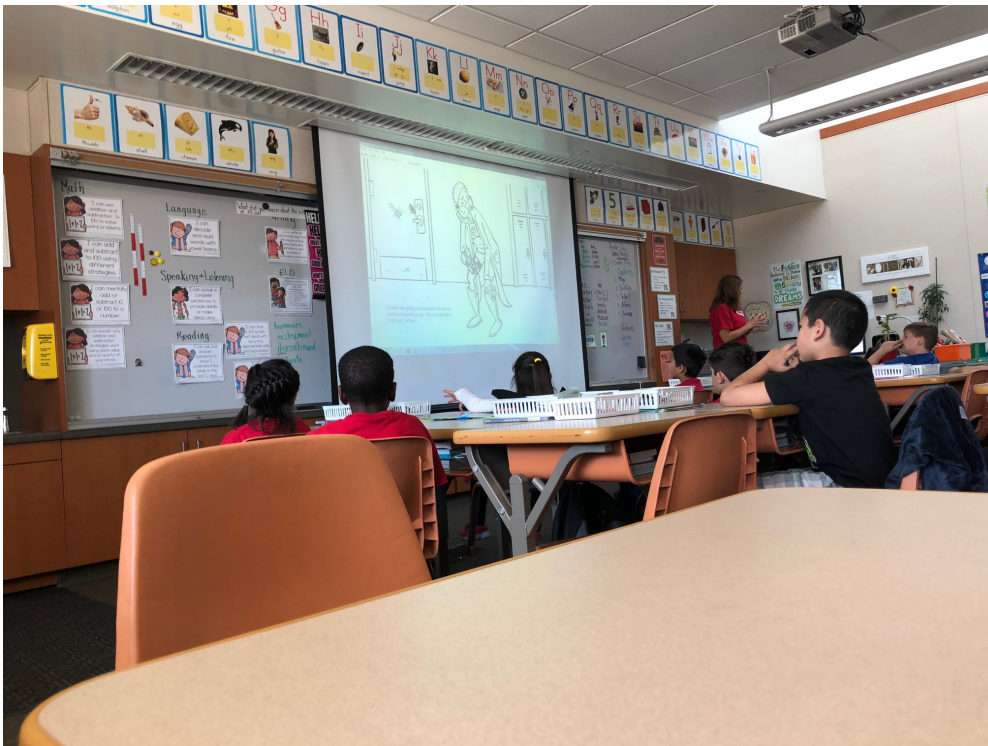
The narrative was well-received by the students. A first-grade classroom was observed where each student had a copy of the story as they read along, taking turns reading. This was their fourth time reading through the story. The lesson was O-OVERCOME. The children were very engaged in the story, and loved the activity where they were asked to identify items in the classroom they could use to overcome an invader, and tossing soft objects as teams on the target (a printed image of the invader was provided, mounted on a magnetic board attached to the classroom door). None of the students demonstrated any adverse effects of the lesson, though during the journal portion, a few of the students asked the teacher how to spell “nervous” to describe how they felt during the lesson.

Artifacts: Video Journals, Photos, and News Video Including Student Interviews.

- *Video Journals:* Although the program did not call for video journals, two teachers voluntarily sent the H.E.R.O. creators video journals that their children made detailing what they had learned. These video journals demonstrated confidence and competency in the H.E.R.O. strategies.
- *Photos:* Photos were obtained while students were engaged in classroom lessons, one where they filled out a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting “People Who Hurt”/”People Who Help”; another where the class engaged in reading the original narrative with visual aids. Photos were also obtained of barricades built by students as part of the lesson, one of a kindergarten barricade and one of a fifth-grade barricade.



Fifth grade classroom filling out Venn diagram: “People who Help/People Who Hurt”



Fifth grade classroom reading along with the narrative.



Kindergarten Barricade



Fifth Grade Barricade

- *News Video Including Student Interviews:* In addition, local television stations reported on the program, including statements from children, teachers, and administrators.

Grades 4/5.

Survey Monkey.

The responses from the teachers was overwhelmingly positive (see Appendix E for complete results). Without exception, *none* of the teachers (0%) reported “needs improvement” for *all* the lessons in regards to the lessons being teacher-friendly, easy to use, concepts easily understood by the children, and non-threatening. The only area they reported needs for

improvement was regarding the length of the first lesson (H-Hide). For all the other lessons, the length was not deemed to be too long by the vast majority of the teachers. Some of their suggestions were similar to the K-3 teachers: request for videos. Additional comments were:

“I was concerned at the beginning because when we started going over the content, some of my students were scared (there has been a shooting within the past 2 weeks). As the lesson continued, they did become more comfortable and enjoyed building the barricades and hiding.”

“I think it was great. For the first time, I feel a little more prepared if a shooting took place on our campus. My students do also.”

Middle School Findings.

Unfortunately, there was a lack of data able to be collected in the middle schools in the public-school district. This was due to schedule constraints on the part of the researchers. A brief discussion of the results that were able to be gleaned are described below, but the response rate, combined with an inability to observe any of the middle school classrooms means that data is too scant for analysis for junior high in the public-school case study.

Real Life Litmus Test of H.E.R.O. Efficacy

Although never desired, the real test of H.E.R.O.’s efficacy could only be determined in a real-life scenario. Fortunately, when such an event happened, there were no injuries and no adverse effects on the children. The first real life litmus test for H.E.R.O. occurred in an elementary school, the very age-group that has been under prepared prior to H.E.R.O. The principal of the school agreed to be interviewed and the following is a synopsis of her report as to how the school and students responded to gun shots on a property adjacent to their school.

On March 15, 2018 at 1:30 in the afternoon, a teacher reported to the office that she had heard multiple gunshots coming from the backyard of a residence bordering the school. Seconds

later, another teacher called to report hearing gunshots from the same area. Immediately, a frantic delivery driver also ran into the school office claiming he heard gunshots and saw a “bloody” person drive rapidly away from the area.

The principal immediately told the school secretary to call 911 while she announced a lockdown on the P.A. system. The principal reinforced the P.A. announcement with handheld radios carried by the majority of the staff. At the time of the lockdown, the outdoor lunch area was populated with fourth and fifth grade students. Half of the fourth-grade students at the school had completed the H.E.R.O. Program. Half had not. None of the fifth-graders had yet started the program. All of grades K-3 had completed H.E.R.O. Observing from her office window, the principal saw students “disappear” into classrooms. She said, “Students knew what to do and acted right away”.

The fourth and fifth grade students were led to the cafeteria to lockdown. The fourth-grade students who had been H.E.R.O. trained acted appropriately and took the matter seriously. They moved quickly and quietly and had “some anxiety”. The fifth-grade students who had not been H.E.R.O. trained were “rowdy” and “didn’t take it seriously”. The principal used the P.A. system to address the students in an effort to calm them down, but also informed them that “This is not a drill.” Despite this announcement, the fifth graders continued to act rambunctiously while the trained fourth graders stayed quiet and serious.

Police officers arrived in just over two minutes and began sweeping the campus. Officers were concerned that suspects involved in the shooting adjacent to the school may have fled into the school grounds and perhaps were hiding in the bathrooms. The campus was locked down for 45 minutes until the school received an all-clear advisement from the police. Fortunately, no one was found on the campus.

At the conclusion of the lockdown, the principal asked her staff to stay after school to attend a debriefing. Approximately half the staff stayed. The following are statements provided to the principal from her staff in reference to student behavior prior to and during the lockdown:

A third-grade teacher shared how she helped her students HIDE (a H.E.R.O. strategy) in an adjoining workroom. While most of the students hid, one third grader took it upon himself to begin searching through cupboards to find items with which he and the other students could OVERCOME (another H.E.R.O. strategy). This student took a leadership role and found appropriate items to hand out to other students so they wouldn't have to leave their hiding spots.

In another classroom, a second-grade student who has been identified for receiving special services, who was described as "loud and compulsive", found a hiding spot in a cabinet under a sink in a classroom. The teacher reported that this student remained completely silent for the entire 45-minute lockdown. Her teacher eventually had to search the classroom to find her. Other teachers were amazed by this atypical response to the lockdown incident by this student who is known to blurt loudly and frequently.

In a first-grade classroom, students barricaded their classroom (a H.E.R.O. strategy), and found hiding spots. Their teacher handed out stuffed animals to keep them calm, and the

majority of the class fell asleep while hiding. There were a few cases reported of students being scared during the lockdown, but they were quickly assuaged when the lockdown ended.

The principal said it was evident which students had received the training. H.E.R.O. students acted immediately, appropriately and took the situation “seriously”. H.E.R.O. students took action without being prompted, took on leadership roles and began preparing to repel an intruder (a H.E.R.O. strategy). H.E.R.O. students remained calm and quiet during the lockdown and reacted appropriately. According to this principal, there was no doubt that the H.E.R.O. program changed student behavior and taught them to react in a different and safer way than students who had not yet gone through the program. Approximately 700 students and 60 staff were present the day of the incident. To date, no students have reported any emotional trauma related to this incident.

Final Discussion of Findings in the Public-School Context

The data gathered in the public-school district found the teachers felt nearly twice as confident in handling a violent situation than they did before participating in H.E.R.O. They also reported that the curriculum needed no improvement as it was, except for about a third of the teachers who thought the first lesson was too long. Teachers and students expressed that they felt safer after H.E.R.O., less afraid than before.

The real-life litmus test revealed that the H.E.R.O. strategies are able to be taught to children as young as kindergarten and they are able to utilize them even when they know their lives are in danger. Not only were they able to be safe, their behavior during the lock-down, demonstrated a calm response to a normally terrifying event. The artifacts, especially the interviews with the fourth-grade students for a televised broadcast, provide evidence that

elementary aged students can learn and iterate with confidence and without hesitation the steps they can take to be safe when confronted with danger.

CHAPTER 4

Case Study 3: The Private School (K-8)

The third case study took place in a large private school in May 2018. The data were gathered and organized and analyzed after the completion of the second case study to ensure no slippage of data within case studies.

Context Demographics

There were few demographics available for this school since it is private and is not included in the government data bases. The only demographic data that could be found is in Table 4 (Private School, 2018). It should be noted that due to the variance in data type, it is not possible to really compare this school to the public schools. However, the purpose of including a large private school was to ascertain any similarities and/or differences of H.E.R.O. efficacy in private schools compared to public schools.

Table 4

Demographic Data of Private School (Grades K-8)

Private School Demographics	
K-8	
Number of students	769
Percent of students of color (per website)	22%
Number of teachers	40
Student-teacher ratio	19:1

Findings in Case Study 3: Large Private School.

Pre-Test/Post-Test H.E.R.O. Private Teacher Responses.

As with the public-school teachers, all of the private school teachers also took the H.E.R.O. pre-test. It was distributed and collected from the teachers during the professional development. The pre-test and post-test was the same test for all the teachers: public and private. The teachers were asked to select a number between 1 and 10 from feeling not confident at all to feeling very confident as to the following questions:

- Question 1: How confident are you in handling a violent situation by yourself?

The percentage of teachers who placed themselves above a 5 (more confident than neutral) on the continuum was 38.64 % on the pre-test and 100% on the post-test (see Appendix G for complete results). The confidence level on this question more than doubled. This finding is convincing and provides evidence that more study is warranted.

- Question 2: How confident are you in handling a violent situation while protecting students?

The percentage of teachers who placed themselves above a 5 (more confident than neutral) on the continuum was 18.19% on the pre-test and 100% on the post-test (see Appendix G for complete results). The number of teachers who felt confident in handling a violent situation while protecting their students went from less than 20% to 100%. This is a compelling finding.

- Question 3: How empowered do you feel to make decisions in a critical incident?

The percentage of teachers who placed themselves on 6 or above on the continuum was 54.54% on the pre-test and 100% on the post-test. (see Appendix G for complete results). The results for this question indicated that a little more than half of the teachers felt empowered to make decisions in a critical incident prior to the H.E.R.O. training, and nearly all of the teachers

felt empowered to make decisions in a critical incident after participating in H.E.R.O. (nearly double).

In summary, the pre-test and the post-test responses indicated a convincingly positive impact on teacher confidence in handling violent situations on their own and even while protecting students. The impact on teacher empowerment shifted from approximately half feeling empowered to all feeling empowered after participating in the program.

Curriculum Efficacy Data.

In an attempt to ascertain if the curriculum was as efficacious as it hoped to be, various data were gathered from the teachers and classrooms. It was important to learn: Would the findings in the private school mirror the findings from the public school? Most of all, because the middle school curriculum was not able to be observed and the Monkey Survey responses were low from the middle school classrooms and teachers in the public-school case study, a primary purpose of the private school pilot study was to observe the curriculum in middle school classrooms, and interview middle school teachers and students. Additionally, the question remained: Would parents of private school students be more protective, more concerned with teaching H.E.R.O.? Or would they be as receptive as the parents represented in the first two pilot studies?

All of the private school data are presented and analyzed according to data: Survey Monkey, field observations, and artifacts and are presented in three groupings: K-3, 4/5, and middle school (6-8). A final discussion of the findings for the entire school concludes this chapter.

Survey Monkey Results, Field Notes, Artifacts.

Survey Monkey Results.

In addition to the pre-tests taken by the teachers regarding their confidence level in terms of handling a violent event, as with the public-school district, an additional questionnaire was taken by the teachers at the conclusion of each lesson. The purpose of these questionnaires was to obtain feedback from the teachers regarding their opinion of the efficacy of the H.E.R.O. program (see Appendix E for a sample of the questionnaire and Appendix H for private school results).

The responses from the teachers of all grades (K-8) was overwhelmingly positive (see Appendix H). Without exception, *none* of the teachers (0%) reported “needs improvement” for *all* the lessons in regards to the lessons being teacher-friendly, easy to use, concepts easily understood by the children, and non-threatening. The only area they reported as needs improvement was regarding the length of the first lesson (36.36% for H-Hide). For all the other lessons, the length was not deemed to be too long by the majority of the teachers.

Field Observations.

In addition to the Survey Monkey Questionnaire, field notes were gathered through observations in the classrooms as schedule permitted. Due to time constraints, the two researchers who were able to go into the field and observe the program chose to observe grades and lessons that had not previously been observed at all or as much as desired. The public-school district observations included several lessons taught in grades K-3, as well as one or two in fourth grade. None of the middle school lessons were able to be observed prior to the pilot in the private school. Hence, only a few lessons were observed in fourth and fifth or lower. The preponderance of observations occurred in middle school.

Two researchers observed the curriculum being taught in 6 different classrooms (grades 4-8) over a 2-week span, for a total of 9 hours. The methodology employed in gathering the field notes is described at the beginning of this document. Excerpts and salient observations were gleaned to provide evidence for efficacy as well as suggestions for needed improvement.

Grades K-3.

Field Notes.

Even though observations were not made in any classroom in these grades, a mother of a kindergarten student approached the observer-participant and voluntarily reported that her kindergarten child had come home from school and told her all about what they could do if they needed to be safe. Her daughter told her they had permission to throw pencils and other things if they needed to. They had learned to barricade. The parent reported that her child did not feel more afraid, but more safe. She was pleased that we had provided the HERO program to the school.

Grades 4/5.

Field Notes.

Although prior arrangements had not been made to observe the H.E.R.O. program in these grades, two fourth grade teachers invited the observer-participants into their classroom. The students gathered around the teacher while she read the chapter three of the story. When she ended the reading of the chapter, the children exclaimed, “Aw!” They didn’t want the story to end.

Another fourth-grade teacher introduced the observer-participant to her class. The students were eager and excited to share the lesson they had practiced earlier: ESCAPE. Their

hands went up all around the classroom when they were asked, “How will you get out the windows?” “Are they too high?” “Do they open far enough for you to get through?” They had a plan and they confidently and excitedly shared with the observer-participant where and how they would run safely once they escaped from the classroom.

Artifacts.

Photos were voluntarily provided by the principal demonstrating fourth grade students’ outcomes for the first lesson: HIDE. These photos are included in this report. The principal included a caption for the following two pictures: “No student's visible, but they are there! (This is 4th grade.)”





Middle School (grades 6-8)

Artifacts





Barricade in Seventh Grade Classroom

Field Observations

One of the first field observations was the first lesson: HIDE being taught in a sixth-grade classroom. There were 22 students. The following is an excerpt from the field notes:

The teacher projected the lesson's Personal Safety Continuum (Range: 0 – Not Safe at All to 10 – Super Safe!) on the board. The teacher gave each student two sticky notes – one marked “S” for school and one marked “C” for community. Students went up to the board in groups and put the sticky notes on the Safety Continuum.

The teacher used this activity to engage the students in a discussion of where they felt safest and why. The discussion was animated and included the following responses:

“My house because my dad is there and he’s strong and my dad has weapons, so that’s good.”

“I feel safest at my house because my dad has a weapon but I’m scared what if they get the weapon and we die.”

“At school, home and my aunt’s house. I feel safest at my aunt’s house because she has a really big house and there’s lots of places to hide.”

One student put a sticky note far below the “not safe” indicator on the continuum and the teacher asked why. “I’m always hearing about stuff on the news and school shootings and I don’t want that to happen at my school. This training is important because we’ll know how to protect ourselves and know what to do.”

Another student expressed: “I don’t feel safe anywhere.”

The teacher followed up this question, “Where do you feel most vulnerable?” The student responses were:

“Where there’s a lot of people. So, they can kill a lot of people.”

“At night... any time after 9.”

“At night if my mom will ask me to get something from the car...I feel like there’s always someone watching me – stalking me.”

“At events like concerts, Coachella, Las Vegas... I just feel like those are really scary because there are so many people and you don’t know what’s around.”

“There’s this dude by my neighbor’s house who sits on this bench and just reads the newspaper.”

“I feel really safe.” (two students said this)

“I don’t.” (two students said this)

“I feel safer at school because there are lots of people around, lots of places to hide and there’s a fire department and a police department right next door.”

“I feel safer in the community...no one is gonna attack you because there’s a bunch of people around.”

“I feel safer in school because people in the community don’t really pay attention.”

The students in the private school, grades 4-8 that were observed, actively engaged in the lessons, the discussions, the hiding, the barricading, etc. One teacher reported that his sixth-grade students did not take the first lesson seriously. The students in another sixth-grade classroom did take it seriously. Other than the one report from the teachers who reported his students didn’t take it seriously, all students were observed taking it seriously. Kids were observed practicing hiding. Builders were observed doing a good job of creating a barricade by the door. Some kids actually hid in the cabinets.

It was common for the middle school students to approach the observer-participant with questions or comments, both in the classroom and while walking through the halls. One seventh grade girl asked how many schools had studied the HERO program. She was smiling and excited about it. She said she feels safe knowing she has plans to be safe wherever she goes – home, parks, and also school.

While walking over to the field, the observer-participant asked one of sixth grade boys, “Are you enjoying HERO?”

“Yes. It’s fun. I like the dialogue.”

“Do you feel safer?”

“Yes.”

The office secretary reported that her 8th grade daughter had come home the night before and had told her about HERO. She was not scared. She also said it was “fun”.

Final Discussion of Findings in the Private School Context

The data gathered at the private school mirrored the data gathered at the public-school district and the afterschool program with rare exception. As in the other case studies, the teachers reported that they felt nearly twice as confident in handling a violent situation than they did before participating in H.E.R.O. They also reported that the curriculum needed no improvement as it was, except for about a third of the teachers who thought the first lesson was too long. Parents, administrators, teachers, and students expressed that they felt safer after H.E.R.O., less afraid than before. They attributed this to having a plan, and learning strategies that would help them be safe.

Post-Teacher Debriefing

Right after the completion of teaching the H.E.R.O. program in the private school, the school agreed to meet for a debriefing about the program. This afforded an opportunity to ask the teachers for clarification for two questions which arose during the entire three-phase pilot study. One was a disconnect between requests from administrations for digital access and lack of teachers using it. This disconnect was further complicated by contradictory findings in Survey Monkey in terms of use of technology. The Survey Monkey data found only 1 teacher reporting improvement needed in regards to ease of use for technology. However, few teachers were observed using it. Similar findings were found in the public-school pilot study (the afterschool

staff did not have access to technology). When asked about the disparity, the teachers expressed that their use of technology (or not) was based solely on their preferred methodology.

The second question that needed clarification concerned the length of the first: HIDE. The Survey Monkey data found that 63.64% reported the length of the first lesson was just fine, while 36.36% reporting the same lesson was too long. Similar findings were found in the public-school pilot study, except the split between teachers was closer to 50/50. Meanwhile, the observer-participants noticed a great deal of teacher modification of the lesson plans (as also observed in the other two phases of the pilot study – afterschool and public-school). While some teachers followed the lesson plans more closely, many took great liberties with them. It was noticed that the more liberties the teachers took, the longer the lesson went. The teachers who followed the lesson plan more closely were more likely to teach the lesson in the allotted time. That said, the only lesson for which time was a concern according to Survey Monkey results was the first lesson: HIDE. The teachers were specifically asked in the teacher debrief if the first lesson should be partitioned into two lessons. Without exception, the teachers said, “No. Keep it as is.”

CHAPTER 5

Summative Findings and Conclusions of the Three-Phase Pilot Study

The three-phase pilot study encompassed a total of 19,433 students (K-8), 747 staff, 38 schools representing 4 districts and one private school. The findings were consistent and uniform across the diverse school cultures, both public and private, regardless of level of training of staff, from afterschool (minimally trained) to public-school and private school (credentialed). The study question was: Could children as young as kindergarten learn survival skills even for an active shooter event without adverse effects? Additional questions asked throughout the study included: What would be the teacher assessment of the curriculum? Was it easy to use, teacher-friendly, perceived as non-threatening by their students, and were students able to learn the stated learning objectives? Would teachers feel more or less confident handling a violent event at school with students under their care after participating in this program? What resistance, if any, would be faced from teachers/staff, and parents? Would students in middle school take such a program seriously?

Summative Findings

The conclusion of this study was that the efficacy of the program exceeded expectations. Students were able to successfully employ effective safety strategies even in a real-life scenario, while demonstrating less fear, rather than more. After participating in the H.E.R.O. program, students, teachers, and administrators all reported (without exception) they felt safer at school. Students as young as kindergarten demonstrated without exception and without hesitation an ability to hide, build barricades, escape, run and overcome quickly and quietly after being trained in H.E.R.O. Neither teacher nor parent resistance was reported or observed or heard. Teacher

confidentiality in handling a violent situation rose to nearly 100% of all the teachers who fell on the confidence side of the continuum after teaching H.E.R.O.

The incidence of students who expressed or demonstrated adverse effects was less than 1%, and in those few, isolated cases, the school psychologist was alerted, the students were assessed and it was the opinion of the psychologist that the children's responses were not abnormal or cause for concern. A few students indicated that they felt nervous while partaking in the program. That said, field observations indicated that the students appeared to be surprisingly comfortable discussing the subject of violent events. Even kindergartners had no trouble iterating calmly why running zig-zag was the safest way to run, "A bullet doesn't zig-zag, so you are less likely to be hit by a bullet." This comment observed in a kindergarten classroom was unexpected because the terms bullets, guns, pistols, rifle, shotguns, magazine, clip, magazine, ammunition, reloading, bomb explosive, knife, stabbing, death, killing, or shooting" never occur in the curriculum. The non-threatening aspect of the curriculum was corroborated by the Survey Monkey data.

Another concern for the creators was that the curriculum would be teacher-friendly and easy to use. This concern was important because teachers are asked to do more and more. When asking teachers to take on yet another subject as well as a subject that is uncomfortable for them not to mention a lack of confidence in teaching this subject (see Appendix D for pre-test and post-test results of teacher's reporting of level of confidence in handling a violent situation), the aim of the curriculum was to make this task as easy as possible for them and requiring minimal preparation. When asking the teachers about the ease of use of the curriculum, most reported it was easy to use. They did provide suggestions to make it easier. The field observations and

interviews substantiated the Survey Monkey data which indicated a range of 100% (private) to 91.7% (public) teachers who indicated no need for improvement in ease of teacher use.

The Survey Monkey data for improvement in ease of use of technology indicated a range of 100% to 92.6% who expressed no need for improvements. Many classrooms had adequate access to technology, including many that were equipped with smartboards, microphones, etc. Yet even in these classrooms, there were teachers who were observed to use no technology whatsoever. The stories were frequently printed out rather than reading from the digital e-narrative provided. The most repeated request was for an animated video. The creators were confused by the dissonance between the Survey Monkey data which indicated no improvement needed in ease of use of technology with observations demonstrating little to no use of the provided technology. Consequently, in a follow-up focus group with the private school teachers (who all had smart boards in their classroom, but few were observed using technology to teach the program), the question was asked: “Why did they not use the technology more? Was it easier to teach it without or was it a teacher methodology preference?” Without hesitation, they all offered their opinion that the technology was easy to use (which is what the Survey Monkey data indicated) but many preferred a methodology that did not use technology (which was what was observed in the field).

The length of lessons was also important to the creators. It was the intention of the creators that if the curriculum was teacher-friendly and if the lessons didn't take up too much of their time, that the teachers would be more likely to teach the curriculum as thoroughly and with as little resistance as possible. The first lesson –H-HIDE was deemed “too long” for approximately half the teachers in every context and for every age level. The length of the lessons was deemed just right for the other four lessons. It was observed that the teachers who

followed the curriculum more closely, were able to complete the lessons in the allotted time, whereas those who took more liberties as much as doubled the length of a lesson. The creators asked the question in the same follow-up focus group with the private school teachers: “Was this lesson too long? Should it be divided into two lessons? Should it be modified?” Their response was that it should not be divided into two lessons. They differed in their opinion as to whether the stories should be told in its entirety or broken into segments. It should be noted that these options were provided in the lesson plans. Teachers apparently had not read the lesson plans as carefully as hoped.

The data from the Pre-Tests and Post-Tests taken by the teachers regarding their confidence in handling and teaching students about a violent scenario indicated a substantial increase in confidence after participating in the program (see Appendices D and G for tables of the data). Public school teacher confidence at least doubled after participating in the program. In the private school study, teacher confidence likewise moved from less than 50% feeling confident handling a violent situation to 100% of the teachers who felt confident after teaching H.E.R.O. These data were substantiated in teacher focus groups, spontaneous conversations with teachers during field observations, and voluntary written teacher testimonials (excerpts included).

Unexpected, and unrequested artifacts were voluntarily submitted while the program was being implemented and shortly upon its completion. These artifacts provided compelling evidence that the program was successful in teaching children in grades K-8 how to take safety measures when necessary. They indicated children were able to iterate these strategies without hesitation and without any indication of fear or nervousness, even in the stress of a television crew.

Recommended Modifications

At the conclusion of each phase of the pilot study, as modifications emerged that could increase efficacy of this program, they were incorporated for the subsequent phase. The afterschool program indicated a lack of access to technology for afterschool staff. Also, the limited training and experience of the staff combined with the culture of afterschool programs which are more activity based revealed a need to re-tool the afterschool program. Based on the findings of the first phase of the pilot study, a separate afterschool program was developed, modifying the classroom curriculum to be less academic, more activity focused, less dependent on technology and teacher expertise.

The curriculum in the second phase of the pilot included modifications based on the feedback from the first phase. The length of the first lesson was shortened. Visual aides were created and some minor edits in the teacher directions were made to provide clarification and smoother lesson transitions in the middle school curriculum. This revised curriculum was implemented in phase two in a public-school district. The findings of phase two indicated that the curriculum as modified was efficacious for the students and fulfilled the needs for the teachers.

The need for additional and improved visual aids emerged. As a result the narrative has been colorized and graphics have been created to enhance the 4-8 narratives, which were well received in Case Study 2 and Case Study 3.

Limitations of the Study

The size of the study in terms of participants was large, and the demographics of participant representation was diverse. Nevertheless, the generalizability of the study is limited by the lack of IRB approval, and lack of generalizable statistical data. There is also limited extant

literature for this topic. Very few articles, if any, were found on this subject. The majority of existing articles address the prevention of active shooter and bullying in high school and college. There were only three articles that were applicable for this paper for students younger than high school. There was only one article that could be found regarding teachers and their perceptions and concerns in light of the increase in violence in schools. Only one article included statistical data.

Recommendations for Future Research

The subject of school shootings would benefit from IRB approved, generalizable statistical studies suitable for peer-reviewed journals, or dissertations. Some of the studies that are needed are studies on the perceptions and concerns of teachers of all ages. The one study that could be found focused on teachers in training for early childhood education. This pilot study found active shootings are a concern for teachers. The incidence of violent events and continued extensive media coverage all suggest that a study focused on teachers and their concerns would be very beneficial for administrators.

Another need for further study emerged from this pilot study. The disparate responses from the middle school students regarding their personal feelings of safety at school and in the community, indicate a need to explore if there is causation or correlation between time spent on media, parental influence, and other variables on fear and anxiety in young people and even children. The dearth of existing literature is frequently an obstacle in selecting a study to pursue. It is hoped that with the increasing need, this prerequisite will not hamper needed research on this topic.

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Appendix A

Demographics of School “1” and “2”

District/School	School 1 (Cabot Yerxa)	School 2 (Two Bunch Palms)
Total enrollment	727	835
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	704 (96.8%)	802 (96.04%)
Free/reduced meals	700 (96.3 %)	778 (93.2 %)
English learners	273 (37.6 %)	486 (58.2 %)
Ethnic Diversity	28	15

Appendix B

Data Collection Timetable

Data Source	Data Collected	Time	Semester
Educator focus group	Field notes	2.5 hours	June 15, 2017
School psychologist focus group	Field notes	2.5 hours	August 8, 2017
4 Parent information meetings	Field notes	2 hours each	November 9, 2017
School board meeting	Field notes	2 hours	February 13, 2018
Case 1: Prominent afterschool program	Professional Development	1 Professional Development for Site Directors and Staff for a total time of 2 hours	October 9, 2017
	Field notes, interviews, discussions, and written documents	Three researchers observing the curriculum being taught in 11 different classrooms over a four-week span, for a total of 16.5 hours (includes pre-and post- lesson discussions with staff, parents and fellow researcher)	October 25 through Mid-December, 2017
	Meetings with Site Directors: pre-pilot and post-pilot	Two prior to the study, one post the study) with the Program Director and Site Directors for a total time of 5.5 hours	September 2017 and January 2018
Case 2: Public school	Professional development	Four individual Professional Development Trainings, each 1.5-1.75 hour in length	January 10 through February 14, 2018
	Field notes	Three researchers observing the	January 17 through March 8 2018

		curriculum being taught in 10 classrooms for a total of 7.5 hours	
	Survey Monkey responses	Total of 330 responses	January through April 2018
Case 3: Private school	Professional Development	One professional development training, 1.75 hour in length	February 2018
	1 parent meeting	2 hours	April 2018
	Field notes	9 hours	May 2018
	Survey Monkey Results		April through June 2018
	Teacher Debriefing	1 hour	June 2018

Appendix C

Public Elementary Schools Listed Alphabetically

District/School	School 1 (Agua Caliente)	School 2 (Bella Vista)	School 3 (Bubbling Wells)	School 4 (Cabot Yerxa)	School 5 (Cahuilla)
Total enrollment	567	782	763	727	538
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	558 (98.41%)	722 (92.33%)	722 (94.63%)	704 (96.84%)	475 (88.29%)
Free/reduced meals	546 (96.3%)	705 (90.2%)	691 (90.6%)	700 (96.3%)	460 (85.5%)
English learners	406 (71.6%)	222 (28.4%)	403 (52.8%)	273 (37.6%)	236 (43.9%)
Ethnic Diversity	3	36	14	28	32

Public Elementary Schools Listed Alphabetically (Continued)

District/School	School 6 (Cathedral City)	School 7 (Della S. Lindley)	School 8 (Julius Corsini)	School 9 (Katherine Finchy)	School 10 (Landau)
Total enrollment	715	645	484	648	752
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	697 (97.48%)	603 (93.49%)	458 (94.63%)	471 (72.69%)	675 (89.76%)
Free/reduced meals	680 (95.1%)	574 (89%)	449 (92.8%)	443 (68.4%)	643 (85.5%)
English learners	473 (66.2%)	335 (51.9%)	212 (43.8%)	214 (33%)	367 (48.8%)
Ethnic Diversity	8	11	30	47	16

Public Elementary Schools Listed Alphabetically (Continued)

District/School	School 11 (Rancho Mirage)	School 12 (Rio Vista)	School 13 (Sunny Sands)	School 14 (Two Bunch Palms)	School 15 (Vista Del Monte)
Total enrollment	446	720	768	835	491
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	366 (82.06%)	553 (76.8%)	643 (83.7%)	802 (96.04%)	462 (94.1%)
Free/reduced meals	353 (79.1%)	520 (72.2 %)	603 (78.5%)	778 (93.2 %)	449 (91.4%)
English learners	185 (41.5%)	269 (37.4 %)	382 (49.7%)	486 (58.2 %)	256 (51.9%)
Ethnic Diversity	34	27	21	15	22

Appendix C (Continued)

Public Middle Schools

District/School	School 1 (Desert Springs Middle)	School 2 (James Workman)	School 3 (Nellie M. Coffman)	School 4 (Painted Hills)	School 5 (Raymond Cree)
Total enrollment	945	1,331	1,038	803	869
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	899 (95.1%)	1,033 (77.6%)	952 (91.7%)	748 (93.15%)	731 (84.12%)
Free/reduced meals	875 (92.6 %)	1,019 (76.6 %)	944 (90.9%)	738 (91.9 %)	719 (82.7%)
English learners	364 (38.5 %)	216 (16.2 %)	328 (31.6%)	199 (24.8 %)	206 (23.7 %)
Ethnic Diversity	19	25	10	30	35

Appendix C (continued)

Charter Schools

District/School	School 17: K-8 (Cielo Vista)	School 18: K-12 (Desert Learning Academy)
Total enrollment	913	133
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	701 (79.0 %)	88 (66%)
Free/reduced meals	665 (72.8 %)	85 (63.9%)
English learners	349 (38.2 %)	18 (13.5%)
Ethnic Diversity	29	41

Appendix D

Public School District Teacher Pre-Test/Post-Test Results

Question 1: How confident are you in handling a violent situation by yourself?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pre-Test	3%	11%	8%	13%	3%	25%	11%	9%	7%	5%	5%
Post-Test	0	3.7%	0	0	0	18.52%	22.22%	22.22%	14.81%	7.41%	11.12%

Pre: 37% feel at least somewhat confident in handling a violent situation by themselves

Post: 77.78% feel at least somewhat confident in handling a violent situation by themselves

Question 2: How confident are you in handling a violent situation while protecting students?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pre-Test	3%	8%	4%	12%	10%	23%	9%	13%	10%	4%	4%
Post-Test	3.7%	3.7%	0	0	3.7%	3.7%	22.22%	22.22%	22.22%	3.70%	14.84

Pre: 40% feel at least somewhat confident in handling a violent situation while protecting students

Post: 84.20% feel at least somewhat confident in handling a violent situation while protecting students

Appendix D (continued)

Question 3: How empowered do you feel to make decisions in a critical incident?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pre-Test	2%	5%	1%	12%	11%	15%	17%	10%	17%	6%	4%
Post-Test	0	0	3.7%	0	3.7%	3.7%	18.52%	25.93%	18.52%	3.7%	22.22%

Pre: 54% feel empowered to make decisions in a critical incident

Post: 88.89% feel empowered to make decisions in a critical incident

Appendix E. School Survey Monkey Samples and Results

H.E.R.O. Curriculum Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the following questionnaire. Your feedback will help us ensure that this program is as effective as it can be to save kids. Just select your response to each of the following questions. We appreciate any and all suggestions in the space provided at the conclusion.

1. The amount of time the lesson took was:
 - a. Too long
 - b. Just right
 - c. Not long enough

2. The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Needs improvement

3. Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Needs improvement

4. Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Needs improvement

5. The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Needs improvement.

6. The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Needs improvement

7. Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:

Thank you! Your feedback is sincerely appreciated as we strive to keep kids safe!

Appendix E. (continued)

Questionnaire Results K-3

Lesson 1 (K-3): HIDE!

84 (26.4%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	57.14%	41.67%	1.19%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	58.33%	36.90%	4.76%
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	65.48%	27.38%	7.14%
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	59.52%	36.90%	3.57%
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	60.71%	35.71%	3.57%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	39.29%	53.57%	7.14%
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	Suggestions (beyond what the creators had already planned or were already in process) included: A worksheet (rather than journal) for K/1. The “all-clear” signal was unclear. The story was too long. Some of the children were afraid and even cried.		

Lesson 2 (K-3): ESCAPE!

65 (13.5%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	89.23%	9.23%	1.54%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	64.62%	32.31%	3.08%
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	67.69%	30.77%	1.54%
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	61.54%	36.92%	1.54%
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	55.38%	41.54%	3.08%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	52.31%	47.69%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	Availability in Spanish would be helpful Parents should also be trained in this Some teachers expressed concern with how to escape in their situation Request for ideas for students with disabilities		

Lesson 3 (K-3): RUN!

47 (14.77%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	89.36%	10.64%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	72.34%	27.66%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	68.09%	29.79%	2.13%
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	63.83%	34.04%	2.13%
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	61.7%	36.17%	2.13%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	53.19%	46.81%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	The children had difficulty running in a zig-zag and not in a pack.		

Lesson 4 (K-3): OVERCOME!

40 (12.57%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	87.5%	10.00%	2.5%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	65.0%	32.50%	2.5%
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	65.0%	30.0%	5.0%
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	57.50%	37.50%	5.0%
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	52.50%	42.50%	5.0%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	60.0%	35.0%	5.0%
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:			

Lesson 5 (K-3): PUTTING IT ALTOGETHER!

23 (7.23%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	82.61%	17.39%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	43.48%	47.83%	8.70%
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	72.26%	17.39%	4.35%
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	34.78%	52.17%	13.04%
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	39.13%	56.52%	4.35%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	26.09%	65.22%	8.70%
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	Animated video was requested		

Questionnaire Results 4/5.

Lesson 1 (4/5): HIDE!

22 (13.8%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	40.91%	59.09%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	40.91%	59.09%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	68.18%	27.27%	4.55% (1 teacher)
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	72.73%	27.27%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	50%	50%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	54.55%	40.91%	4.55% (1 teacher)
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	<p>Teachers felt the lesson was too long and should be divided into 2 lessons. Others said the length was fine. It should be noted that the majority of them chose “too long” (see above). One teacher reported some 4th graders crying at the end because the barricading made them nervous.</p> <p>“I was concerned at the beginning because when we started going over the content, some of my students were scared (there has been a shooting within the past 2 weeks). As the lesson continued, they did become more comfortable and enjoyed building the barricades and hiding.”</p> <p>“I think it was great. For the first time, I feel a little more prepared if a shooting took place on our campus. My students do also.”</p>		

Lesson 2 (4/5): ESCAPE!

17 (10.69%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	94.12%	5.88%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	76.47%	23.53%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	82.35%	17.65%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	94.12%	5.88%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	70.59%	29.41%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	64.71%	35.29%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	Need more examples of hide-outs and hold-outs.		

Lesson 3 (4/5): RUN!

9 (5.66%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	100%	0	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	66.67%	33.33%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	88.89%	11.11%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	77.78%	22.22%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	66.67%	33.33%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	55.56%	44.44%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	Request for videos showing them how to run. Suggestion to have them reinforce this in P.E.		

Lesson 4 (4/5): OVERCOME!

7 (4.4%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	71.43%	28.57%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	85.71%	14.29%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	85.71%	14.29%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	71.43%	28.57%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	85.71%	14.29%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	71.43%	28.57%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:			

Lesson 5 (4/5): Putting It Altogether!

7 (4.4%) responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	85.71%	14.29%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	85.71%	14.29%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	85.71%	14.29%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	71.43%	28.57%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	71.43%	28.57%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	71.43%	28.57%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	Request for video.		

Questionnaire Results: Middle School.

Lesson 1(MS): HIDE!

3 responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	66.67%	33.33%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	66.67%	33.33%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	66.67%	0	33.33%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	66.67%	33.33%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	The lesson sequence was very confusing and needs to include prompts for when teacher is supposed to go to the reading.		

Lesson 2 (MS): ECAPE!

3 responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	66.67%	0	33.33%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	66.67%	0	33.33%
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	100%	0	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	66.67%	33.33%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	<p>“Students were still frightened about what could happen. Book would be easier if you could swipe the pages to turn them and if it had an audio part attached to the story. Excellent story, by the way!”</p> <p>1 teacher thought the lesson was way too short.</p>		

Lesson 3 (MS): RUN!

1 response

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	0	0	100%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	0	0	100%
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	100%	0	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	0	0	100%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	100%	0	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	“Very hard for handicapped teachers to take students outside for this. Lesson sequence was confusing - no prompts for when to move to different parts of the curriculum.”		

Lesson 4 (MS): OVERCOME!

0 responses

Lesson 5 (MS): Putting It Altogether!

2 responses

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	100%	0	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	0	100%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	50%	50%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	0	100%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	50%	50%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	50%	50%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:			

Appendix F.

Private School Demographics

Private School Demographics	
K-8	
Number of students	769
Percent of students of color (per website)	22%
Number of teachers	40
Student-teacher ratio	19:1

Appendix G: Private School Teacher Pre-Test/Post-Test Results

Question 1: How confident are you in handling a violent situation by yourself?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pre-Test	2.27%	2.27%	9.09%	15.91%	2.27%	29.55%	18.18%	13.64%	6.82%	0	0
Post-Test	0	0	0	0	0	0	17%	17%	50%	17%	0

Pre: 38.64% feel at least somewhat confident in handling a violent situation by themselves

Post: 100% feel at least somewhat confident in handling a violent situation by themselves

Question 2: How confident are you in handling a violent situation while protecting students?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pre-Test	0	4.55%	6.82%	13.64%	18.18%	25%	13.64%	4.55%	0	0	0
Post-Test	0	0	0	0	0	0	17%	17%	50%	17%	0

Pre: 18.19% feel at least somewhat confident they could protect students

Post: 100% feel at least somewhat confident they could protect students

Question 3: How empowered do you feel to make decisions in a critical incident?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pre-Test	0	0	9.09%	9.09%	6.82%	20.45%	11.36%	25%	13.64%	2.27%	2.27%
Post-Test	0	0	0	0	0	0	34%	34%	66%	0	0

Pre: 54.54% feel empowered to make decisions in a critical incident

Post: 100% feel empowered to make decisions in a critical incident

Appendix H: Private School Survey Monkey Samples and Results

Grades K-3.

K-3 Lesson 1: HIDE

11 Responses (100%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	63.64%	36.36%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	54.55%	45.45%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	81.82%	18.18%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	81.82%	18.18%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	54.55%	45.45%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	18.18%	81.82%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	“The material was not presented in a threatening way, it's just that this topic is scary!”		

K-3 Lesson 2: Escape

7 Responses (63.63%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	71.43%	28.57%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	71.43%	28.57%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	85.71%	14.29%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	85.71%	14.29%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	57.14%	42.86%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	<p>“The kids have so many questions and comments, it is hard to do everything in a 30-min. time period. They are very engaged, but I have not had time to do the journal prompts.”</p> <p>“The journal was the best part. Normally, I have trouble getting my students to write in a journal, but they were eager to write in them for this project. I was also able to read them and see how they were reacting to the program.”</p>		

K-3 Lesson 3: RUN

6 Responses (54.54%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	100%	0	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	83.33%	16.67%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	83.33%	0	16.67%
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	100%	0	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	100%	0	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	83.33%	16.67%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	Especially good drill when outside		

K-3 Lesson 4: OVERCOME

5 Responses (45.45%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	100%	0	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	80%	20%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	80%	20%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	80%	20%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	100%	0	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	80%	20%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	“Worked well!”		

K-3 Lesson 5: Putting it Altogether

4 Responses (36.36%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	75%	25%	0%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	75%	25%	0%
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	75%	25%	0%
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	50%	50%	0%
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	50%	50%	0%
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	50%	50%	0%
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	<p>Nothing. I appreciate this program.</p> <p>Practice scenarios might make more sense with diagrams. Ex: maps that show exits and location of invader. If building has hiding places or not.</p>		

Grades 4/5.

4/5 Lesson 1: HIDE

7 Responses (100%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	71.43%	28.57%	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	71.43%	28.57%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	85.71%	14.29%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	85.71%	14.29%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	42.86%	57.14%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	71.43%	28.57%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:			

4/5 Lesson 2: ESCAPE

4 Responses (66.66%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	75%	0	25%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	75%	25%	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	75%	25%	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	100%	0	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	50%	50%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	75%	25%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	<p>“I was amazed at how quickly my students were able to find hold-outs and hide-outs. Thank you for this curriculum!”</p> <p>“The lessons are good”</p>		

4/5 Lesson 3: RUN

4 Responses (66.66%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	75%	0	25%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	100%	0	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	50%	50%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	100%	0	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	75%	25%	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:			

4/5 Lesson 5: OVERCOME

3 Responses (50%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	100%	0	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	100%	0	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	100%	0	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	66.67%	33.33%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	100%	0	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	“good lesson”		

4/5 Lesson 5: Putting it Altogether

2 Responses (33.33%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	100%	0	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	100%	0	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	50%	50%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	100%	0	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	100%	0	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:			

Middle School

Middle School Lesson 1: HIDE

0 Responses

Middle School Lesson 2: ESCAPE

1 Response (11%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	100%	0	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	100%	0	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	0	100%	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	100%	0	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	100%	0	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:	“I feel it is really important that the curriculum shows students where to go. Meaning the teachers should look at this as a walk-through lesson, taking students through escape routes actively.”		

Middle School Lesson 3: RUN

1 Response (11%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	100%	0	0
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	100%	0	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	100%	0	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	0	100%	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	100%	0	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:			

Middle School Lesson 4: OVERCOME

0 Responses

Lesson 5: Putting It Altogether

1 Response (11%)

Question	Just Right/Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree/Too Long	Not Long Enough/Needs Improvement
The amount of time the lesson took was:	0	0	100%
The curriculum was teacher-friendly and easy to use:	100%	0	0
Digital access to the curriculum was easy to use:	100%	0	0
Students were able to easily understand the concepts presented in the lesson:	100%	0	0
The students were able to attain the objectives listed at the top of the lesson and in the scope and sequence:	100%	0	0
The lesson was perceived as non-threatening by the students:	100%	0	0
Please provide any questions/concerns/suggestions about the lesson in the space provided:			

Appendix I: Side-by-Side Demographics for All Three Case Studies

District/School	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	Private School
Total enrollment	18,558	6,418	2,331	23,087	769
Free/reduced meals, English learners, foster youth (non-duplicated)	16,499 (90.1%)	5,574 (86.85%)	1,737 (76.6%)	19,135 (87.2%)	NA
Free/reduced meals	15,557 (83.8%)	5,341 (85.1%)	1,523 (65.3%)	19,252 (83.4%)	NA
English learners	10,807 (58.2%)	3,236 (50.4%)	980 (42%)	7,684 (33.3%)	NA
Ethnic Diversity	8	32	45	25	33