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## An Evaluation of Social Emotional Learning Curricula and their Effect on 4th Grade Students' Emotional Regulation

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AN EVALUATION OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CURRICULA AND THEIR EFFECT ON 4TH  
GRADE STUDENTS' EMOTIONAL REGULATION

by

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A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the  
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AN EVALUATION OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CURRICULA AND THEIR EFFECT ON 4TH GRADE STUDENTS' EMOTIONAL REGULATION, a Doctoral research project prepared by JARED LARSON in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership.

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## ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the effectiveness of Sanford Harmony and Adventure Based Counseling (ABC) interventions on the emotional regulation of 4th-grade students. Students were not randomly selected in this study, and pre and postassessments were measured using an Emotion Regulation Questionnaire. Results indicated both interventions had a positive effect on participants' emotional regulation. Further, the Sanford Harmony and ABC intervention were found to be successful in improving emotional regulation. These improvements helped with regulating oneself, dealing with trauma, helping with relationships, and solving problems. Implications for counselors and educators include recommending both interventions as a means to improve students' emotional regulation. Both curricula have many resources to offer that help school counselors in delivering this curriculum for fostering inclusivity and building a positive school climate. Future research should seek to understand how Sanford Harmony and ABC skills can be used in traditional academic coursework that meet educational K-12 standards. Additionally, it would be useful to explore creating an evaluation plan that would keep track of goals which target emotional regulation skills for changes that were made over a given time. Understanding these connections could inform more comprehensive approaches to student support.

*Keywords:* social-emotional learning, emotional dysregulation, emotional regulation, empathy

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## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this curricula evaluation to my high school counselor, Aaron Fugere. After my own father's passing, he encouraged me to keep pressing on and helped me with my own emotional despair. He motivated me to pursue my dreams to be impactful in this world. His encouragement led me to be a school counselor and pushed me to continue inspiring future school counselors.

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## Chapter 1

### Purpose of Project

The purpose of this project was to evaluate and explore the impact of two different curricula, Sanford Harmony and Adventure Based Counseling, on students' emotional regulation. Both Sanford Harmony and Adventure Based Counseling contain classroom guidance lessons and activities educators can use to provide students with emotional support. These lessons and activities took place over 4 months to strengthen those skills.

The Sanford Harmony curriculum is an evidence-based program that helps students learn how to develop social and emotional skills such as communication, collaboration, self-regulation, respect, and empathy (Harmony, 2023). Harmony also supports and strengthens relationships between teachers, school staff, and students. This helps to create positive social norms in the classroom environment. This creation encourages positive emotions among peers by providing helpful tools for developing relationships with others. The curriculum helps reduce conflicts among students by encouraging problem solving strategies in the classroom setting. Additionally, the curriculum supports the development of critical thinking skills necessary for making good decisions in life. Most importantly, the curriculum promotes general well-being among children by helping them understand their own feelings and those around them.

One of the main reasons Sanford Harmony is an essential curriculum to use for emotional regulation is because of the content students learn. Harmony helps students engage in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) through imagination, interactive lessons, games, songs, stories, and role-play. Sanford Harmony focuses more on creating social stories, cooperative learning activities, and social-emotional problem-solving activities. Sanford Harmony provides a comprehensive SEL experience that can help promote understanding and constructive

relationships among students. It is also an important SEL tool for schools as it helps create an environment where social-emotional issues can be addressed, discussed, and resolved in a meaningful way.

In the same way, Adventure Based Counseling (ABC) is a highly effective way to help students learn crucial social–emotional skills. Through ABC, students gain a better understanding of themselves and their emotions. This method also helps them develop problem-solving strategies and encourages communication skills. ABC provides a unique environment for students to practice these skills in a fun and engaging way. The curriculum is designed to help students build interpersonal relationships and trust with each other while also learning more about themselves. Through creative activities such as icebreakers, team-building exercises, and outdoor challenges, ABC helps foster self-awareness and confidence. Additionally, the curriculum is flexible enough to be adapted to any group and can easily be tailored to the specific needs of each student. The activities are also designed to be engaging and motivating, helping students stay engaged and focused throughout the process (Ashby et al., 2008).

ABC takes the approach of using experiences, games, activities, and imagination to provide students with a therapeutic encounter. The goal of this curriculum is to get kids moving while engaging in activities that can get them talking and processing thoughts after the activity. Many SEL curricula involve students just sitting, listening, responding, and reflecting. ABC involves intentional movement and obstacles where they may have to come up with a solution to conflict or make a tough decision based on their activity. A conflict could be a word problem presented to the class or an obstacle that involves technical, physical and mental thinking. This process is different from merely discussing it. Students must work together to solve the conflict by adapting to physical changes through the adoption of strategies. For instance, in an activity

where students sit on the ground facing a partner, they have to try to stand up together while holding hands. Because this activity could be physically and mentally demanding for some students that have a difficult time getting up, these sorts of activities require collaboration and encouragement from both students involved. According to Ashby et al. (2008), students are more likely to develop self-efficacy as a result, which helps them develop better task management and impulse control, a leading characteristic of emotional dysregulation.

Hence, Sanford Harmony and ABC work in tandem—one on the theoretical and conceptual side and the other on the physical and kinesthetic side. Their complementary relationship arguably produces better outcomes than implementing one without the other. Without an SEL curriculum, schools are missing out on a vital opportunity to help their students grow and thrive. SEL helps foster positive relationships between teachers and students. Without it, teachers may not have the skills or knowledge to effectively communicate with and understand their students. SEL provides students with tools for managing difficult emotions (e.g., anger, fear, and sadness) that can help reduce behavioral issues in school.

#### Background to the Problem

Students returned to in-person school with significant behavioral and emotional decline after the COVID-19 global pandemic (Janiri et al., 2022). Janiri et al. discovered that out of 500 healthy children, 190 reported the COVID-19 global pandemic induced psychological stress for them. These kids had a difficult time expressing and regulating their emotions. A multitude of parents had an equally difficult time trying to work and meet their children's emotional needs. Bouillet and Danet (2022) found children's emotional dysregulation increased during the pandemic lockdown.

Parental stress also increased during the same timeframe. This increase hindered their ability to meet their children's emotional regulation needs. Because these needs weren't being met, children formed poor habits and parents became frustrated with their kids because they could not figure out what was causing this emotional dysregulation. They were also having a difficult time finding the resources to help their kids (Vogelbacher & Attig, 2021). The culmination of lack of resources and poor emotional regulation habits made it difficult for both parents and children to manage emotional dysregulation and coping strategies.

In addition, an increase in anxiety among children was also seen. Christian et al. (2017) researched what could be beneficial for treating this anxiety. They discussed the benefits of such treatment in terms of improved self-efficacy, more successful social interactions, and better overall functioning for those experiencing social anxiety. The authors also provided guidance on implementing appropriate interventions tailored to each individual's unique needs and context. They ultimately aimed to provide counselors with a better understanding of how to effectively work with clients suffering from social anxiety. They offered further insight into how to best support them.

For example, ABC could help alleviate students' social anxiety by using a combination of emotional regulation techniques while carefully considering each student's needs. By doing so, educators can ensure treatment is tailored to provide the best possible outcomes for their students. Additionally, Sacco (2022) said ABC is a form of experiential therapy that uses activities such as rock climbing, ropes courses, and group initiatives to facilitate therapeutic change. It suggested trained in this type of therapy will have a more holistic approach to helping their clients and creating meaningful interventions that can help make changes with their emotional state.

Trundle and Hutchinson (2021) presented a three-phased model of adventure therapy to help individuals with trauma. The first phase, trauma-focused, involves developing a safe and trusting therapeutic relationship in which the individual can process their traumatic experiences. This is followed by low arousal activities designed to bring the individual's arousal level to a point where they can work on more intense experiences. Finally, the positive behavioral support phase focuses on helping individuals develop skills and strategies for managing future traumas. The model brings together evidence-based therapies such as cognitive behavioral therapy, narrative therapy, and experiential activities to create an integrated approach tailored to the individual's needs. This model has been successfully used in clinical settings and offers a promising new approach for trauma-related treatment. It is an effective way to help those who have experienced trauma find strategies and skills to cope with the aftermath of the traumatic experience.

Oregon school districts are required to participate in the Student Success Act (SSA). This act focuses on providing mental and behavioral health support in schools (Oregon Department of Education, 2023). The act ensures the curriculum is standardized and fully integrates Common Core Standards. Common Core are the academic standards that students in the K–12 setting should know in each grade level. The Bend-La Pine School District gathers information about the SSA through the Youth Truth Survey. This survey asks questions about topics such as emotional and mental health, belonging and peer support, academic rigor, relationships, school culture, college and career readiness, and family engagement activities. Students, families, and educators fill out this survey to help provide information about what items the school is doing well and what they may need to improve. Through this survey, the district saw families were discussing higher social emotional needs for their children.

In 2021, the Bend-La Pine School District allocated money to hire elementary school counselors. Fortunately, I was one of them. At that time, the school district did not adopt an SEL curriculum. SEL covers knowledge that aids in emotional regulation and empathetic responses. It became apparent students needed to learn some of these skills, especially because of the COVID-19 global pandemic's effects due to lockdowns. Part of a school counselor's job is to deliver SEL lessons. With no comprehensive SEL curriculum, the district began to question what they were going to provide for students. The Oregon Department of Education (2023) stated, "In 2021, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2166, Section 4 requiring the development of social emotional standards and a framework for K–12 public school students in Oregon" (p. 1).

After noticing the lack of school counselors in elementary schools, no SEL curriculum, and dysregulation in students, I endeavored to find a curriculum that would be beneficial to help these students regulate themselves more effectively. In addition to hiring elementary school counselors due to student dysregulation presented, the district proposed they should hire someone to be in charge of the entire district's social–emotional wellness. This position would assist leaders in the school district to educate and advocate for mental health, seek out SEL curriculum, and supervise school counselors. The hired employee suggested elementary school counselors pilot Sanford Harmony as one of the curricula. Harmony (2023) indicated:

Harmony SEL is a social and emotional learning program for Pre-K-6 grade students, accessible online and at no cost. Harmony fosters knowledge, skills, and attitudes boys and girls need to develop healthy identities, create meaningful relationships, and engage productively by providing SEL learning resources, tools, and strategies. (p. 1)

The elementary school counselors were quick to start teaching this curriculum, but there were implementation fidelity concerns.



For the purpose of this study, I thought it would be beneficial to provide ABC in addition to Harmony. ABC and Harmony seemed to be the best option to provide students with collaborative problem-solving strategies to address their emotional dysregulation. These curricula could also educate them on the importance of different communication strategies when they were dealing with challenging emotional events. We've seen an increase in the need for these skills and strategies to better equip children for success in their daily and academic lives due to the global pandemic.

Prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic, Bend-La Pine school administration implemented a self-regulating space called "The Cabin." After the state of Oregon released information stating students could come back to school in-person, there was an increase of cabin requests by 25%. When students entered The Cabin, they described their emotions using the zones of regulation. The zones helped students identify which emotion they were feeling in a given moment. There were four different colored zones: green, red, blue, and yellow. Green indicated a student was happy, ready to learn, or generally in a good mood. Red indicated they were angry, frustrated, or upset. Blue indicated they were sad, sick, or tired. Lastly, yellow indicated they were scared, silly, or worried.

An educational assistant would check in with these students and ask them why they chose a zone to help them identify their emotions. Students were then instructed to practice deep breathing techniques through a book and methodology called, *The Zones of Regulation: A Curriculum Designed to Foster Self-regulation and Emotional Control*. After they practice taking deep breaths and choosing the zone they are in, they then get to choose between eight stations that were tactfully pleasing (Kuypers & Winner, 2011). Stations include a teepee and some camping related materials, a station where they can sift through kidney beans, and a station

with a rocking chair and material to draw with. Students can be signed up by their teacher, parent, or another staff member.

There have been perceived emotional regulation improvements when students check-in with their emotions, practice deep breathing, and choose a calming station. This process has helped students return to classrooms more regulated and ready to learn. Teachers have stated students have seen a huge improvement in behaviors such as shutting down or demonstrating anger and being unkind to others.

Emotional regulation is how someone responds to an emotional experience in their life. This process also involves using coping mechanisms in a given situation. Rolston and Lloyd-Richardson (n.d.) noted just a few examples of how to effectively boost one's emotional regulation, including: exercise, talking with friends, therapy, meditation, sleep, and noticing negative thoughts and turning them into positive strategies. Plynpow et al. (2020) wanted to measure emotional regulation and irritability in children and adolescents. They discovered that children who did not know how to regulate their emotions as effectively were more likely to be more irritable.

On the other hand, emotional dysregulation is caused by early psychological trauma. According to Keeshin and Gargaro (2021), traumatic stress, experiences, and reactions all play as factors in emotional dysregulation. Traumatic events could be related to abuse, neglect, or environment. When someone is emotionally dysregulated, they tend to have intense emotions compared to an emotionally regulated child who may experience that same situation. When someone is emotionally dysregulated, they may not be able to calm themselves and may be impulsive with their emotions. For example, if a person is angry, they may rip a whole bunch of

papers off the walls, or if they are sad, they may decide to self-harm. It may be harder for that person to focus on positive outcomes when these emotions occur.

In the same way, if someone is dysregulated, they may have trouble recognizing what sort of emotion they feel. They may not be able to recognize their emotions due to confusion or overstimulation. Thus, children in this state have a harder time focusing and making or keeping friends, are more defiant, and have other problems in communication with adult figures.

For example, a common characteristic of dysregulated individuals is their ability to mask their negative emotions in nontraditional ways of outward aggression. Sometimes people may hide this feeling with drinking, self-mutilation, or excessive uses of technology (Rolston & Lloyd-Richardson, n.d.). One such coping strategy is bottling emotions because of anxiety the individual experiencing dysregulation is feeling (Crum et al., 2021). As demonstrated by these studies, emotional regulation and dysregulation looks different among individuals. Although people may show certain characteristics of dysregulation, there is a possibility that all people won't outwardly show if they are dysregulated. This can make it challenging when working or knowing if someone is making growth or progress; thus, it is important to encourage the person to name their emotion in order to regulate it (Norris, 2003).

### **Significance of the Study**

Bend-La Pine School district has not adopted a widespread curriculum for SEL at the elementary level. This study could assist the district by making sure they fulfill House Bill 2166 that requires an SEL curriculum in the K–12 setting. There has not yet been a side-by-side curriculum evaluation in our school district that could help determine whether to use complementary sets of SEL curricula. My ability to aid in finding a solution to student dysregulation and improving school culture would also support the district in its long-term

whole-child developmental goals. Because the Bend-La Pine School district does not have a comprehensive elementary SEL curriculum, I could assist in providing research about the benefits of having a comprehensive curriculum. This process would include explaining the benefits of both curricula and the impact it could have on the elementary population.

Additionally, the state of Oregon has increased physical education minutes for each school and district. Classroom teachers are responsible for implementing these minutes with approved activities. Because ABC is more of a physical curriculum, implementing it would not only teach students social-emotional strategies, but would also allow them to potentially fulfill additional physical education minutes. This would also assist fourth grade teachers in fulfilling the required minutes.

In a Sanford Harmony and ABC lesson, one could observe people working together in teams and doing activities to help them learn how to communicate better. One might also see people talking about their feelings and learning to be more understanding of others. Activities could help people learn how to resolve conflicts in a healthy, respectful way. In addition, some activities could encourage people to develop self-esteem and confidence in themselves. If someone was specifically observing Sanford Harmony, they would see students engaged in reading stories, singing songs, and practicing communication skills such as active listening. ABC will often involve outdoor elements such as hiking or kayaking, which can be beneficial for developing trust and communication skills. Through all these activities, the goal is to create a safe and supportive environment for people to learn how to manage their lives and relationships.

Without a comprehensive social-emotional curriculum, students can struggle with social and emotional competence that is essential for success in social and academic settings. It is important for both curriculums to work to achieve SEL objectives. For example, students learn

how to repair relationships in Sanford Harmony and learn how to be empathetic towards others in ABC.

Using Sanford Harmony and ABC together provides numerous benefits for students. First, the combination facilitates deeper learning by providing multiple modalities for students to process and internalize social-emotional skills. Finally, Sanford Harmony and ABC create a safe and supportive environment for students to practice SEL skills and cultivate healthy relationships. Together, Sanford Harmony and ABC can be powerful tools for developing social-emotional learning in the classroom.

There are a few different ways both curricula aid with emotional regulation. First, both Sanford Harmony and ABC focus on repairing relationships (Morrison & Ross, 2019). One research study found Sanford Harmony saw improvement across the school with positive student relationships and school culture (Morrison et al., 2019). Students have to learn how to collaborate and work together to solve an issue. This sort of learning forces students to break down barriers that come with cliques and past disagreements that they may have had with other classmates. At this point, students are encouraged to repair torn relationships that may have occurred before, during, or after the activity. The instructor may give students time to do this if students make such requests. ABC uses activities that require students to work on socializing techniques and group problem solving (Ashby et al., 2008).

Both curricula make a difference. Sanford Harmony teaches students how to work together, be kind, and have healthy relationships with people. Students practice conflict resolution skills such as active listening and perspective taking. ABC focuses on engaging students with physical, mental, and emotional challenges while building their problem-solving skills. Such activities are designed to help students learn how to work together, have healthy

conversations, and challenge themselves to better manage emotions and cope with stress. ABC helps promote self-awareness, resilience, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and collaboration among peers. Counselors may also use adventure activities to illustrate concepts and reinforce life-long lessons. ABC offers a novel way of helping students develop social-emotional skills and build confidence in their abilities. Through this approach, students can learn how to create meaningful connections with others and better manage difficult emotions.

There are a couple mechanisms that make both curricula work together. Sanford Harmony and ABC create a unique and powerful combination of tools for helping children build positive relationships and manage emotions. Sanford Harmony's evidence-based SEL curriculum strengthens students' understanding of self, others, and how to effectively interact with one another to foster positive relationships. Meanwhile, ABC taps into the power of experiential activities to help children learn new skills and process emotions in a safe and supportive way. By combining these two approaches, educators are able to create an environment that allows students to practice healthy communication, conflict resolution, team building, problem solving, and emotional regulation strategies.

When considering an effective social emotional curriculum, teachers should look to programs that provide evidence-based social and emotional instruction. Many SEL curricula such as Sanford Harmony and ABC have been designed to systematically teach social and emotional competencies across age groups. Sanford Harmony provides social-emotional lessons for Grades PreK–6 whereas ABC has specific strategies for older students (4th–12th grade.) To ensure social and emotional development, teachers should consider a social-emotional curriculum that provides comprehensive instruction from preK–12th grade. Sanford Harmony

and ABC can provide the necessary tools needed for social–emotional success if both are used together in a balanced approach.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Some ethical considerations need to be addressed in this study. When developing the SEL curriculum, it is essential to think about the various social and cultural contexts from which students come. It is important educators consider the needs of each individual student as they create SEL activities inclusive of different social and cultural backgrounds. Additionally, it is important for educators to prioritize the student’s social–emotional needs first and take into account the social–emotional well-being of their peers and classmates.

It is also important to be aware of how the SEL curriculum can be used to manipulate students’ social–emotional experiences. It is essential to use social–emotional learning activities with the intent of improving social–emotional skills not as a means to control or manipulate student behavior. Lastly, SEL should be sensitive to the student’s right to privacy and autonomy. Educators should ensure any data collected during SEL activities are kept secure and used with permission.

For this study, I sent a written consent form home to all fourth-grade parents, asking them if they would be willing to have their student participate in the curriculum evaluation. Students gave verbal consent before taking the pre- and post-assessment. I was the only person assessing the data from the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire confidential Google form given to students at the beginning and the end of the evaluation. When the data were obtained from the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire Google form, I gave students an alias to protect their names. After data collection, I put their notes in a locked Word document and will be destroying them after 5 years.

## Definition of Terms

*Social–emotional learning* “acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions” (CASEL, 2022, p. 1).

*Emotional regulation* is how someone feels inside, what their experience was with that emotion, and how someone shows their emotions. Rolston and Lloyd- Richardson (n.d.) stated, “A person’s ability to effectively manage and respond to an emotional experience” (p. 1).

*Emotional dysregulation* is the inability to know how to control or regulate one’s emotional responses when confronted with certain stimuli. Rolston and Lloyd-Richardson (n.d.) stated emotional dysregulation is, “An inability to regularly use healthy strategies to diffuse or moderate negative emotions” (p. 2).

*Empathy* is the ability to be able to understand or feel what another person is feeling based on their experiences. Harmony (2023) stated it is, “When you can feel and understand how someone else feels” (p. 1).

*Self-awareness* is a person’s “abilities to understand one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one’s strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose” (CASEL, 2022, p. 1).

*Self-management* is a person’s “abilities to manage one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation and agency to accomplish personal and collective goals” (CASEL, 2022, p. 1).



*Social awareness* is a person's "abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts. This includes the capacities to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports" (CASEL, 2022, p. 1).

## Chapter 2

### Design

A curriculum evaluation design study examines whether the curriculum is designed to meet certain standards, objectives, and goals. The goal was to evaluate whether the curriculum was effective in meeting those standards, objectives, and goals. This evaluation study ran for 90 days total. The instrument used for collecting data in this study was called the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, by Gross and John (2003; see Appendix A). This instrument was approved by the Stanford Department of Psychology, School of Humanities and Sciences.

The first curriculum evaluated was called Sanford Harmony (see Appendix B). This curriculum can be found online at <https://www.sanfordharmony.org/>. Sanford Harmony focuses on five main themes: (a) diversity and inclusion, (b) empathy and critical thinking, (c) communication, (d) problem solving, and (e) peer relationships. There are lessons in these themes that aid students learning these skills. Harmony's (2023) five themes correlate with CASEL's (2022) five frameworks—collaborative for academic, social, and emotional learning—which licensed school counselors follow. These frameworks focus on self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

The second curriculum that targets Adventure Based Counseling (ABC) skills is called, Active Interventions for Kids and Teens: Adding Adventures and Fun to Counseling (see Appendix B). This curriculum was written by Ashby et al. (2008). This curriculum has an emphasis on team building activities set on the foundation of outdoor education, experiential techniques, group counseling, and reflective thinking to help improve the mentioned skills. This curriculum was designed to help de-escalate children before their emotions became more

difficult to manage. These lessons included team building game activities that can be used effectively in addition to the Sanford Harmony curriculum.

These two curricula were used in tandem as Sanford Harmony focused on the definition and understanding behind each social emotional topic. ABC focused on group and teamwork building activities related to the specific Sanford Harmony topic of the day. For instance, a lesson about active listening taught students to learn the definition of active listening and understand why active listening was important. Then, they played the game of “share and tell” where the instructor started by asking students to share their name and two things to each other the other students may not know. After 2 minutes, students came to the front of the classroom and introduced their partner and their two interesting facts. Afterward, the whole class debriefed and shared what they thought was easy and hard about the activity in regard to active listening. Both curricula affected SEL on the same level. Sanford Harmony gave educational aspects, whereas ABC put those lessons into practice. Merging both curricula complemented each other’s strengths. The curricula were combined, as the goal was to see if the combination worked well together or if other research showed they should be done separately.

### **Detailed Description of Participants**

The subjects in this study were fourth grade, 10- and 11-year-old students at La Pine Elementary K–5 School in La Pine, Oregon. At the time of this research, there were currently three fourth-grade classrooms with class sizes ranging from 20–25 students. The following school demographics were based on the 2021–2022 school report card: 85% of students were White, 6% were multiracial, 8% were Hispanic/Latino, 1% were Black/African American, and less than 1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native. Fourteen percent of students had learning disabilities and 95% of students qualified for free and reduced lunch (ODE, 2023).

Students were chosen because of reports of poor regulation skills during the 2021–2022 school year. School staff had begun observing a decrease in emotional coping skills and poor school climate in the 2021–2022 school year when these students were third graders.

The emotional dysregulation caused many disruptions to not only their own learning but also the learning of others. Multiple third graders were placed into the Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition (BRYT) program at this school during the 2021–2022 school year. The district adopted this program during the 2021–2022 school year because of the number of existing behavioral concerns. BRYT is a general education program with various levels of student enrollment throughout any given day. It is designed to provide students with strategies for dealing with emotional dysregulation and eventually once students gain the skills they need, they can be promoted out of the program. The school district has not adopted a permanent social emotional curriculum. Performing an evaluation to determine if this curriculum is effective to regulate student's emotions will help the school and district.

Students were not randomly selected in this study. All fourth-grade students were given consent forms (see Appendix C) to have their parents sign and bring back to the school in order to participate or not participate in the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire. Of the 71 fourth grade students, 32 of them returned their signed consent form with permission to take the questionnaire. Twenty-six of them returned their forms stating they could not take the questionnaire. Thirteen of the students did not return the form at all and did not participate in the questionnaire. If a student was not in the initial meeting, the teacher handed them the consent form for them to fill out and bring back; as stated, many of those students did not bring the form back. However, all fourth-grade students participated in the guidance lessons regardless of whether the students' families agreed to partake in the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire as per

House Bill 2166, Section 4 requiring the development of social emotional standards in the K–12 Oregon framework. Therefore, the 32 students that returned the signed consent form participated in the exercises and the questionnaire.

### **Instrumentation**

Following IRB approval (see Appendix D) and prior to implementing the curriculum, students were asked to be a part of the curriculum evaluation by completing an Emotion Regulation Questionnaire. I sent home a consent form to have students' parents sign to students to participate. If students received permission, they completed the questionnaire before the 90-day curriculum evaluation was introduced to all fourth-grade classrooms. Whether students received consent or not, students still participated in the SEL curriculum evaluation because of House Bill 2166, Section 4 stating that all K–12 students must receive SEL curriculum. Students that did not receive consent did not participate in the pre postassessment.

The first part of the instrumentation was the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire. The original questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. To make the questionnaire more developmentally appropriate, I changed the formatting of the questions accessible on student iPads through a google form with the same original Emotion Regulation Questionnaire statements. This new electronic instrument was used for the first time as an evaluation tool in the Bend La-Pine School District. The electronic version of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix E. The fourth-grade students who agreed to participate monitored progression or regression in their ability to emotionally regulate themselves after being exposed to both curricula. This instrument was on a seven choice Likert scale. This number of choices may have been a concern for students due to their age and limited ability to decipher the appropriate response, but the students were given instructions at the beginning of the pre- and post-test on

how to properly fill out the survey. Students chose one of the responses in each of the 10 questions.

Referring to Appendix E, Questions 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10 show a person's cognitive appraisal criteria. This meant if they scored high in this area, they tended to respond to stress levels more negatively. Questions 2, 4, 6, and 9 showed someone's expressive suppression criteria. If a person scored low in this area, they tended to have better control of their emotions; therefore, they have the ability to better regulate their emotions more effectively. When analyzing the data, the cognitive appraisal score and the expressive suppression score were kept separately as they focus on two different outcomes.

Scoring was done by taking all the scores in each of the subscales (e.g., cognitive appraisal for Questions 1, 3, 5, 7, 8) and averaging them. A higher score showed the person used this sort of regulation strategy more often, and a lower score showed they used this strategy less often. After I presented students with the Sanford Harmony and ABC curricula, I gained insight to determine if students scored higher in cognitive appraisal or expressive suppression.

#### Administration and Procedures

The questionnaire was given at the start of the evaluation of the curriculum. This Emotion Regulation Questionnaire was given to students in the fourth grade whose parents consented in their respective classrooms. The questionnaire was given in the format of a Google Form (see Appendix E). Once the questionnaire was completed on September 12, all fourth-grade students were introduced to both Sanford Harmony and ABC curricula. On either a Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday, students were taught a social-emotional topic and participated in a teamwork activity. After the activity, the students and instructor debriefed. This process

continued each week until December 16th, when they took the postassessment in their classrooms. The data were then analyzed to see if there was an impact on emotional regulation.

Data were collected through a Google Form, which can be found in Appendix E. The fourth-grade students with parental consent were taken into the hallway wing with their own personal school iPads and the questionnaire was sent to them confidentially. The verbal statement was addressed (see Appendix F) and students took the questionnaire on their iPads.

### **Data Analysis Approaches**

An alias was used to protect the students' identity. Results from the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire were placed into a Google Sheet. Once the questionnaire was completed by the students, data analysis began. Data were analyzed by looking at individual student responses and focusing on Questions 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10 to see if there was any significance in cognitive appraisal criteria. In the same way, Questions 2, 4, 6, and 9 were examined to see how students scored in their expressive suppression criteria. The raw data were not included in the findings to ensure students' names were not included.

Individualized teacher interviews were also conducted to collect data. Three fourth-grade teachers were interviewed on the following topics: their students' ability to self-regulate; improvements and deterioration of student behavior; implementation of the curricula; student engagement; and whether they would recommend having both curricula taught by school counselors in other elementary schools. I also conducted interviews with students that received consent from their parents in the initial consent form I sent home. Students were asked questions about what skills and techniques they learned to self-regulate. They also reflected on their own behaviors and ways they have seen improvement in themselves. Additionally, students were asked if they would implement these curriculums in other elementary schools.

## Qualitative Findings

The main source of qualitative data was obtained through student and teacher interviews. These interviews were conducted after the last SEL lesson was presented to the class. All three fourth-grade teachers gave insight about how they thought implementing the two curricula directly impacted their classes to properly emotionally regulate when having a difficult time. One teacher, pseudonym Jones, said:

SEL has been beneficial. After the lessons, they continue to use the verbiage that Mr. Larson has given them. In older grades, it is important to explain how they are feeling and their vocabulary around that. This has been proven to be occurring with students after a lesson has been presented. After his SEL lessons, when conflicts arise I've heard students say, "Mr. Larson has told me this." They then will change their behavior based on what they've learned. It has helped in problem solving and connecting to personal or group conflicts. This specific group is difficult, but there are little pieces that are sticking with them. SEL is influencing how they think and how they are approaching situations.

Another teacher named King said:

SEL was nice for the learning objectives and points. They were very clear and concise. I enjoyed how students learned relaxation techniques. They have been helpful for students and made for a ready mindset. The kids have been engaged with activities. This SEL content has brought appropriate content that meets specific student needs of the school. I appreciate that students are given opportunities to speak and share with the classroom. One of the biggest things they have learned is how to speak to a problem that they are experiencing. They can now articulate what the emotion and situation is. I think that this is the best solution to solve problems.



The final teacher, Smith, had a few pieces to share, saying:

I loved the lessons. The consistency of the way the lessons were presented was good. I enjoyed how the kids practiced mindfulness. One of my favorite lessons was the honesty lesson where the kids had to step forward if they had done something or been impacted by something. This was huge because they had to share a bit of their personal lives and it made their own lives more real for their classmates. I also liked the lesson that involved teamwork. These kids need to learn teamwork. They not only learned how to work on themselves but how to work and understand others better.

Additionally, I asked a few students about their thoughts after completing their postassessment.

The first student, Linda said:

Sanford Harmony and Adventure Based Counseling helped my fourth grade class learn social emotional regulation skills in a fun and engaging way. We learned how to identify and express our emotions, how to resolve conflicts peacefully, practice self-care, and work together better with others in our class.

She also said, “at times it was hard because some students would get us distracted or wouldn’t take the lesson as seriously. It was nice when Mr. Larson got our class back on track.”

In another interview, a student named Luke had something to say specifically about Harmony.

Luke said, “Harmony taught me how to control my emotions better so I don’t get too upset when things don’t go my way.” On the other hand, another student named Dustin said, “Adventure Based Counseling showed me that it’s ok to take a break and calm down before I make decisions when I’m feeling overwhelmed or angry.” Lastly, another student by the pseudonym of Taylor discussed both curricula, stating, “The SEL curricula made it easier for me to talk about my feelings with others and ask for help when needed.”

One of the main memos I derived was time. While the students were working on group activities, I took notes on what I had observed. The points I focused on were time with activities, time for discussion, and time for student reflection. Students were in group activities anywhere between 20-30 minutes during the lesson frame. ABC's curriculum has many variations of activities. I incorporated those variations and about 70% of the time, we ended a variation of the activity early due to classes having to work on other academic materials. At the end of each lesson, I provided discussion and reflection time. I asked students what they had learned about one another and themselves. At the end of every lesson I conducted, at least one student would have their hand raised to say more, but unfortunately time was out. After the discussion, I ended the lesson with a reflection. This was a verbal reflection or a written reflection. The last 10 minutes of the lesson, students went around and said what they learned with a verbal reflection. This might have been a one-word theme that resonated with them or a couple sentences that stated what they took from the lesson. Other times, they wrote a simple sentence or two stating what they had learned. During those reflections, there were always two to three students that let me know they enjoyed the lesson but wished they had more classroom time to do activities with their classmates.

When taking notes, I discovered class time and attendance ended up being much more of a theme than I had thought. Sometimes, there was not enough time to do the entire lesson or there was not enough time to answer students' questions to the full extent. This time frame did not allow as much reflection time as I hoped. I noted this concern about 80% of the time I was in classrooms teaching lessons. The other part that I noted was in regard to students' attendance. For every lesson I taught, two to three students were not present for part of the pre- and post-assessment. Although they may have been there for most of the lessons, this still impacted their

ability to fully participate in each given SEL lesson targeting certain ways to find coping strategies to dysregulation.

The main source of segmentation I examined were attitudes of the teachers and students. From what I observed from teachers, I was able to see they were grateful for the lessons being taught. I also saw students and teachers were engaged with the lessons. Some vulnerable lessons broke down a lot of the students' barriers. One lesson that was particularly successful was from Harmony (2023), titled "I've Got Your Back". Students had to come up with a list of ways they would show each other they could provide support for one another. When their classroom teacher saw students providing one of those seven supports they developed, they received an "I've Got Your Back" ticket. These tickets went in a class jar and the class with the most tickets after a 2-week period received a prize. After these instructions were announced, students were excited to start brainstorming. One specific class focused on how they treated each other. A few students explained that they felt their classmates were not including them in games at recess or conversations at lunch. Students agreed as a class they would be better at including others in games. This made teachers pay close attention to what needs and concerns were addressed by their students. This was helpful because teachers knew which students were feeling left out and they could focus on connecting them with other students in their class. Another class said they would help the 1st graders in the cafeteria get their food if they needed extra support bringing their lunches to their table. They explained they were the older kids and they should be good role models to the younger grades. After this lesson, teachers continued to use this strategy as a way to improve positive relationships and classroom management.

Another segment was the mixed attitudes from students toward the SEL lessons. From my observations, about 80% enjoyed the group activity portions, learning coping strategies, and

learning how to work as a team. I figured this out by taking note of every student that was in attendance and who participated in activities with their classmates. About 20% had negative attitudes whenever they were asked to share or when we started lessons with deep-breathing techniques. Some students either verbally complained or didn't participate and would not follow instructions. They often would not participate in that part of the lesson or would distract other classmates.

A major theme that emerged from qualitative data in this study was the benefit of these curricula for students and teachers. Learning about our emotions and how to regulate them has shown both staff and students that school is not all about academics. School can involve learning more about oneself, about others, and about how to work together as a team throughout the rest of one's schooling career and beyond. Teachers now take extra time to let students express themselves and have early morning circle time where they share what has been going on in their lives.

In the same way, there were some codes I noted throughout the study. These codes were specific to seeing how students were growing in these areas from a qualitative point of view. These codes were (a) emotion management, (b) empathy and teamwork, (c) problem solving, (d) initiative, and (e) responsibility. I made notes throughout the lessons to see which students made improvements or struggled in some of these areas. I met with the students who were struggling to discuss areas I had observed and if they were interested in opening up to me about what else could be going on.

### **Quantitative Findings**

The main source of quantitative data was obtained through the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire. The preassessment was given to the consenting/assenting students before getting

introduced to the SEL curricula. The postassessment was given to those same consenting/assenting students after the final lesson in December, 2022. Wang et al. (2022) used the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire on Chinese adolescents and young adults having to migrate from rural to urban areas. They concluded that this questionnaire “had acceptable to excellent levels of internal consistency reliability” with a score of 0.73–0.82. Fleiss (1986) determined test-retest reliability between 0.4-0.75 represented good reliability and 0.75 and above demonstrated excellent reliability. Hence, this questionnaire was reliable.

When looking at quantitative data measures, there were a few changes in students’ answers from their preassessment to the postassessment. One of the questions which had the most change was Question 5. This question asked students, “When I want to feel less negative emotion (e.g., such as sadness or anger), I change what I’m thinking about.” After obtaining 25 of the 31 postassessments, the overall difference changed from neutral to slightly agree.

This assessment was given on a 7-point Likert scale. 1 on the scale was rated as someone who strongly disagreed and on the other end of the spectrum, someone with that selected a 7 meant that they strongly agreed with the statement. Another question that had a considerable change was Question 2. This question asked, “I keep my emotions to myself.” After introducing the students to these curricula, these numbers changed. The preassessment showed an average of 3.47 score on the Likert scale. This meant that students slightly disagreed with this question. After the postassessment on this question, these numbers decreased by .26 to an average of 3.21 score on the Likert scale. This meant that after being exposed to the curriculum more students were less inclined to keep their emotions to themselves. This was encouraging to see that students were more likely to express their emotions than they were before.

Lastly, Question 6 showed noteworthy change. When averaged, students rated this question with a *slightly disagree* to a *neutral* response. The postassessment revealed the students' answers were closer to *strongly disagree* than they were before (see Table 1). Table 1 breaks down criteria based on the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire and shows the average students' scores during the pre- and post-assessments in the cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression categories.

**Table 1***Cognitive Reappraisal and Expressive Suppression General Education Results*

Item content	Cognitive reappraisal (pre)	Cognitive reappraisal (post)	Expressive suppression (pre)	Expressive suppression (post)
When I want to feel more positive emotion (such as joy or amusement), I change what I'm thinking about.	3.56	5.1		
I keep emotions to myself.			3.47	3.21
When I want to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger), I change what I'm thinking about.	4	4		
When I am feeling positive emotions, I am careful not to express them.			3.91	3.67
When I'm faced with a stressful situation, I make myself think about it in a way that helps me stay calm.	3.42	4.3		
I control my emotions by not expressing them.			3.42	2.87
When I want to feel more positive emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation.	4.6	4.5		
I control my emotions by changing the way I think about the situation I'm in.	3.22	3.83		
When I am feeling negative emotions, I make sure not to express them.			3.89	3.33
When I want to feel less negative emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation.	3.5	3.73		

*Note.* Questions 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10 show a person's cognitive appraisal criteria. If they scored high in this area, they tended to respond to stress levels more negatively. Questions 2, 4, 6, and 9 showed someone's expressive suppression criteria. If a person scored low in this area, they

tended to have better control of their emotions; therefore, they had the ability to better regulate their emotions more effectively.

From a demographic perspective, boys were better than girls at expressing their feelings in each of these questions after they engaged in these curricula (see Table 2). Additionally, one of the classrooms only had five students in one of the fourth-grade teacher's classes who had received signed parental permission forms to be a part of the study.



**Table 2***Cognitive Reappraisal and Expressive Suppression General Education Results (Boys and Girls)*

Item content	Cognitive reappraisal (pre)		Cognitive reappraisal (post)		Expressive suppression (pre)		Expressive suppression (post)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
When I want to feel more positive emotion (such as joy or amusement), I change what I'm thinking about.	3.2	3.92	4.87	5.33				
I keep emotions to myself.					3.33	3.61	3.13	3.29
When I want to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger), I change what I'm thinking about.	3	5	4.5	4.5				
When I am feeling positive emotions, I am careful not to express them.					3.96	3.86	3.61	3.73
When I'm faced with a stressful situation, I make myself think about it in a way that helps me stay calm.	3.3	3.54	4.5	4.1				
I control my emotions by not expressing them.					3.5	3.34	2.9	2.84
When I want to feel more positive emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation.	3.7	5.5	4.2	4.8				
I control my emotions by changing the way	3.1	3.34	4.9	2.76				

Item content	Cognitive reappraisal (pre)		Cognitive reappraisal (post)		Expressive suppression (pre)		Expressive suppression (post)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
I think about the situation I'm in.								
When I am feeling negative emotions, I make sure not to express them.					3.92	3.86	3.30	3.36
When I want to feel less negative emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation.	3.27	3.73	3.96	3.5				

*Note.* Questions 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10 show a person's cognitive appraisal criteria. If they scored high in this area, they tended to respond to stress levels more negatively. Questions 2, 4, 6, and 9 showed someone's expressive suppression criteria. If a person scored low in this area, they tended to have better control of their emotions; therefore, they have the ability to better regulate their emotions more effectively.

### Cycles of Analysis and Implementation

During this process, there were a few improvements when using the curricula to help students regulate. The first improvement was discussing with the 4th teachers in their classrooms about what curricula they were using or focusing on and what they would be learning. There was no comprehensive curriculum before, so adding a comprehensive curriculum was massively beneficial for student's emotional well-being. This was important because the 4th grade teachers were the ones who would ultimately be using techniques after these lessons were done to remind students to use the techniques when students were feeling or teachers noticed them becoming dysregulated. Students were also asked reflection questions and what that worked for them at the

end of each lesson. This helped gauge what they felt was and was not meaningful to assist them with controlling their emotions.

The other main source of improving student outcomes was looking at the literature. Sanford Harmony and ABC have been researched extensively to discover areas in which these sources aided in student learning, behavior, and growth (Harmony, 2023). For instance, ABC has many different activities to help students with trust. The book addressed how certain activities focused on trust categories rather than empathy (Ashby et al., 2008). Teacher feedback was important in this area because they were able to decipher which topics were essential for students to learn during the given class time slot for SEL.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Discussion of Findings**

The key purpose of this research guiding this curriculum evaluation was to evaluate and explore the impact of two different curricula, Sanford Harmony and Adventure Based Counseling, on students' emotional regulation in three different 4th grade classrooms. In this study, students in these fourth-grade classrooms were introduced to the two different curricula to aid in reducing prevalent emotional dysregulation seen at this particular school's fourth grade level. People that experience emotional dysregulation tend to have a vicious emotional cycle, meaning the interpretation of an emotion gets the best of them causing them to have a negative thought or feeling and not being able to tolerate that emotion (Rolston & Lloyd-Richardson, n.d.).

Teachers and staff observed this experience during the 2021–2022 school year at La Pine Elementary. Implementing a curriculum to improve these emotional cycles was vital. Teachers were overwhelmed by the amounts of emotional dysregulation behaviors that they were seeing in their classrooms. Some of these behaviors were temper tantrums, random outbursts that involved screaming at the teacher or other students, throwing items in the classroom, and uncontrollable crying. Implementing a curriculum that could improve these behaviors would increase overall student success emotionally and academically.

Both Sanford Harmony and Adventure Based Counseling (ABC) have made significant contributions to these students' behaviors both inside and outside the classroom. Research has shown the impact of these curricula and the importance of helping students in (a) developing relationships, (b) dealing with trauma, (c) regulating oneself, and (d) solving problems. These

findings are similar to the findings from this curriculum evaluation at the Bend La-Pine School District with 4th grade students.

### ***Developing Relationships***

After observing students through these lessons at La Pine Elementary, I discovered Sanford Harmony and ABC helped students become more socially aware and connected with their peers. Through ABC, they learned how to build strong relationships with others by engaging in activities that improved communication, cooperation and collaboration skills. Through Sanford Harmony, the student developed a better understanding of and receptivity to different perspectives.

One lesson that improved students' listening to different perspectives was an active listening lesson students learned from Harmony. Students had to sit across from each other and answer questions given to them on the board. They had to focus on having proper eye contact, repeating what their partner had said, and having body language that showed they were engaged. They also learned how to work together in a group setting and became more confident in their ability to resolve conflicts. This helped them become a better leader and an active participant in their school community. For instance, some students in the fourth grade have since volunteered their time in the cafeteria because they understand the impact the kitchen staff has on the school. These two programs have been a great resource for the student and their peers, providing them with valuable insight into social emotional learning. For example, Smith (a teacher) stated:

My students are better aware of how they should be communicating with one another.

They know how to be calmer and listen more effectively to each other when conflict does arise. They also don't jump to conclusions as frequently which is a big problem that we were having. These lessons have ultimately made their relationships with each other

stronger because they get to practice these skills in person, face-to-face. This has made it easier for them to navigate when real conflict does happen and they don't have to use myself or other staff members as mediators as frequently.

Looking at the quantitative data, I saw a change in the way students controlled their emotions by thinking differently. On a 7-point Likert scale, the average students' response was 3.22 for the question, "I control my emotions by changing the way I think about the situation I'm in" (i.e., they slightly disagreed). Post curricula implementation, the students' average was a 3.83, which meant they learned how to control their negative emotions more by thinking differently about the situation. According to Lyubomirsky et al. (2005), "positive emotions predict higher quality relationships, improved physical health, and better work performance" (p. 2). Because students had positive emotions, they did not have as many friendship issues and were performing better in school. One teacher, Jones, stated, "When I'm not focusing on friendship problems at school, students are able to focus better academically in my classroom". Teachers were able to be more productive when students could control their negative emotions and turn them into positive thinking. Additionally, having positive emotions also helped them to develop better student-teacher relationships. For example, a student named Luke said, "I try to put myself in the other person's shoes because I may not know what the other student is going through. This helps me think about the situation a little differently."

### ***Dealing With Trauma***

During each of the lessons, at least one student brought up a difficult situation in their life during the reflection phase. These situations ranged from having sick pets to parents discussing getting a divorce. These situations were challenging for students and some of them advocated for an additional space to talk. For some students, these situations resulted in traumatic situations

where they needed to seek additional support. Several students deal with grieving over the loss of a loved one. Parents reached out to not only have counseling services at the school, but also outside support. They recognized the trauma that these events had on their kids. As a result, during lessons, I pointed out how students could seek additional support if something came up that was too difficult to discuss.

As a result, I noticed ABC took an experiential approach to working with these fourth graders when they were dealing with challenging or traumatic situations. ABC put an emphasis on self-reflection and emotional understanding which encouraged students to develop greater insight into their own behavior and become more mindful of the consequences of their actions. Our students were more impacted by some of these lessons and asked to meet with me individually afterward. These students were dealing with major home life issues and did not know how to quite express it until they were exposed to this idea of self-reflection. In addition to them opening up to their classmates, I encouraged them to journal so I gave these four students journals to express what they were feeling when these sorts of issues at home had boiled to the surface. We focused on what the issue was, when it was happening, who was causing it, how it made them feel, and what they did to help themselves in that moment. One student came back and told me just by writing this information down, they felt better about their home life situation and their anxiety that came with it because they were able to express how they were feeling. Thus, ABC opened the opportunity for students to have better knowledge of their own self.

The data showed students were starting to open up more about their feelings rather than bottling them up. The students' average score for the statement, "I control my emotions by not expressing them " was a 3.42, meaning they slightly disagreed with this statement before curricula implementation. The postassessment showed the average was a 2.87, meaning they

disagreed with this statement even more. This shows the students expressed their emotions more openly after the curricula were implemented. Additionally, one student named Linda stated, “I feel like I can express myself more than I had before because I am much more confident and comfortable around my classmates.”

### ***Regulating Emotions***

Learning how to regulate one’s emotions is a challenging but important skill for 4th graders to learn. It is an essential part of growing up and can help young students handle the pressures of school, family life, and friendships more effectively. With the right guidance from parents and teachers, kids in fourth grade can begin to understand their feelings better and develop coping strategies that will serve them well as they move into middle school and beyond.

As such, ABC and Harmony curriculums also helped students with learning how to self-regulate. For example, there was a success story of a student (Stanley) whose parents asked me to observe them throughout the year. Stanley’s parents were very worried about his lack of emotional regulation at home. Additionally, we saw this behavior at school. His teachers and parents noticed he could become overwhelmed when presented with tasks, especially if he felt the task was difficult or too challenging. I let his family know we were implementing different SEL curriculums during the year that focused on helping students regulate their emotions.

Through Sanford Harmony and ABC, Stanley learned how to be an effective communicator. He learned how to identify what emotion he was feeling and how to manage that emotion with strategies such as deep breathing or by asking to take a break to do something that calmed his mind. He was able to identify his strengths and weaknesses, set goals, and develop strategies for achieving them. Through these activities Stanley learned how to manage his emotions more effectively in different situations. His parents have noticed a marked



improvement in his ability to manage his emotions and handle tasks with greater confidence. His parents are also amazed at the progress he has made and are grateful for the help he has received from these two programs. Stanley was able to regulate himself better and stay focused on tasks, allowing him to reach his full potential.

Additionally, the quantitative data also provided evidence that students learned how to regulate their emotions more effectively. When students were asked in the preassessment, “When I want to feel more positive emotion (such as joy or amusement) I change what I’m thinking about,” boys showed an average rating of 3.2 and girls showed an average rating of 3.92, which meant the average score for the boys and girls showed they slightly disagreed or felt neutral with this statement. After being exposed to the curricula, boys' scores changed to an average of 4.87 and girls' scores changed to an average of 5.33. This meant the average score for the boys and girls now showed they were either neutral about that statement or slightly agreed instead. When students started to become aware of their negative thoughts, they started changing their negative thoughts to positive thoughts. For example, students were encouraged in one of our lessons to take notes of what it felt like when they felt a certain emotion. For instance, some students felt their faces get hotter when they were feeling angry; additionally, their palms were sweaty, and they would clench their fists. Having this knowledge made them become more aware of their negative thoughts so they could change those thoughts into positive ones before they became more dysregulated. Having more positive thinking could then influence their relationships because they had more positive interactions with their peers.

### ***Solving Problems***

Part of growing up is learning how to resolve issues personally and with others. Learning how to solve problems is a learning process for any student. As such, teachers and staff at the

school said this skill would be beneficial for students to learn. Learning how to problem solve teaches children the skills they need to become self-reliant, independent thinkers who are able to think critically and problem-solve on their own. This ability will serve them well as they progress through school and into adulthood.

One way of learning how to problem solve is through Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS). CPS is a powerful tool for helping people regulate their emotions. Albon (2018), a leading researcher in the field of psychology and psychotherapy, found when people are able to work together to solve problems, they experience greater emotional regulation and resilience. The collaborative approach helps individuals take ownership over the process, encouraging them to be creative in their problem-solving and think outside the box. This can lead to a greater sense of control over the situation, which helps them better manage their emotions. Additionally, problem-solving collaboratively allows people to draw on each other's unique skills and resources to come up with more effective solutions for difficult situations. As a result, collaborative problem-solving helps to reduce stress and anxiety while also helping individuals develop better coping skills. Ultimately, working together to solve problems can be an invaluable tool in managing emotions and building resilience. Someone who has been trained in this practice, CPS was a valuable strategy to use when students had disagreements in the classroom. Students during the vulnerable activity where they had to stand in the middle were encouraged to take part in some of this CPS work when a student had confronted another student about a hurtful discussion they may have had. CPS aided in resolving these issues in a timely manner, which created less stress for the students dealing with the problem.

By learning how to identify a problem, determine its causes, brainstorm solutions, weigh options, and make decisions in the 4th grade, students can develop essential life skills that will

help them succeed in all areas of their lives. Not only do these abilities equip children with tools needed for future success academically but also give them greater confidence when facing any challenge or obstacle they may encounter throughout life.

In this study, ABC and Sanford Harmony contributed to student success in the area of problem solving. One fourth grade class made extreme improvements as a result of implementing these curriculums. They had a reputation of clashing personalities and arguing constantly in the 3rd grade. One of the first main goals for this class was teaching the students conflict resolution strategies, such as active listening, problem solving, and communication skills. The students were taught how to calm down during arguments, how to listen attentively to each other's points of view, and how to assess possible solutions together in a respectful manner. The students then participated in a series of activities to put their conflict resolution skills into practice. These activities included role-playing scenarios, group discussions, and activities such as telephone and acting out scenes of what they could do to solve a situation. For example, one situation showed someone getting made fun of because of what they were wearing. Students acted out what that would look like. They had to identify how that student felt and then come up with possible solutions on how they could assist the situation. Students decided it would be important for them to stand up to the student who was making fun of the other student and get the student help that was being targeted.

During these activities, the students were able to learn how to trust each other and develop new ways of thinking about problem solving. The class began to show an improved attitude toward problem solving and respect for others' opinions. The fourth graders soon became much better at handling conflicts without relying on the teacher to resolve them. They were now equipped with the skills to solve their own problems independently. This experience was a great

example of how social emotional learning can help improve a classroom and give students the tools to handle tough situations. By teaching important skills like problem solving, communication, and conflict resolution, these programs can have long-lasting positive effects on student behavior and attitudes. A student named Linda said, "I feel more comfortable talking with my classmates if I have a problem with them. It's not as scary as it used to be."

In the same way, the quantitative data reflected that students were less likely to keep their emotions to themselves as a result of the curriculum implementation. The students' preassessment average to the (list the scale here) question, "I keep emotions to myself" was 3.47, meaning they were between feeling neutral about this statement and slightly disagreeing with the statement. The postassessment results presented an average of 3.21, meaning there was growth in students not keeping their emotions to themselves.

When students learn to share their feelings, they can solve their own problems. Talking about what they feel with someone else can help them understand the problem better and figure out solutions. Expressing their feelings can help them get more clarity and perspective. It can also give them an opportunity to vent, which can help relieve some of the stress and anxiety caused by difficult situations. Having someone who is willing to listen and offer support is invaluable when it comes to dealing with tough times. Discussing their emotions can also bring a student a sense of comfort and connection in knowing that someone cares enough to be there for them. Finally, when students can open up, it can help them to build relationships with others. When people open up and share their experiences, it helps them feel connected to one another and strengthens their bonds.

The teachers at the school have also seen an increase in student engagement and a decrease in negative behaviors since implementing these two programs. They can see how much

more connected the students are with one another and this has resulted in their increased willingness to learn. The teachers have also found the students were more likely to talk about their feelings and experiences when they felt safe and accepted. The students have learned to recognize their own emotions, and the feelings and needs of others, and how to effectively express them in both verbal and nonverbal ways. Furthermore, classes have become more tolerant of different perspectives which is leading to a greater understanding of each other's points of view.

A study conducted by researchers at the University of Central Florida examined the impact of Sanford Harmony in elementary schools. After implementing the program, researchers found increased student engagement in classroom activities, improved teacher-student relationships, increased prosocial behaviors such as problem solving and critical thinking skills, and improved behavior management practices (Wills-Jackson & Hines, 2017). In another study, researchers examined the effects of Sanford Harmony in a school district in Oregon (Fawcett, 2022). They found that after implementing the program, students had increased social skills and improved attitudes toward others. In addition, teachers noted an increase in student self-regulation strategies and better cooperation among classmates (Childers et al., 2016). Overall, research has suggested Sanford Harmony is an effective way to promote social and emotional learning in the classroom (Fawcett, 2022).

This current study similarly found this to be true. Sanford Harmony can help create a more positive environment and provide Bend La-Pine students with the tools they need to succeed in school and beyond. Bend La-Pine students had shown they were more positive and gained effective self-regulation tactics through this curriculum; such as the manner in which they interacted with their classmates. In one lesson, students showed empathy by standing in a circle

and stepping forward if they had a statement that resonated with them. Afterwards, students would look around at who stepped forward and could comment afterwards on what they had learned from their classmates. It was discussed before that these comments must be kept positive and encouraging since they were about to be vulnerable enough to share what they had expressed by stepping forward in front of everyone. Students stated at the end of this activity that they appreciated hearing their classmates and understood more about their home lives and personal stories. One effective self-regulation tactic that students learned was how to calm themselves through breathing and positive mindfulness. Students would practice using calming breaths by following me in a series of breathing exercises that focus on relaxing the mind. They would also say affirming words or phrases that would boost their self-confidence. Students said they enjoyed participating in this part of the lesson as well because it was one of the only times they could focus on relaxing and had the opportunity to say kind words to themselves.

Overall, research has suggested ABC can be an effective intervention for individuals with a variety of mental health issues. ABC can help to reduce symptoms of trauma, improve psychological functioning, and increase quality of life. It is important to note, however, the effectiveness of any specific therapeutic technique may vary based on individual circumstances. As shown in previous research studies, students learned several skills to help regulate their emotions but the skills may not have affected all students' psychological functioning.

### **Limitations**

There were a few limitations when conducting this study. One of the first limitations stated by all three teachers was the emotional immaturity of the students. King stated:

Some kids should be using these techniques and strategies but have failed to because of their immaturity levels. They are still learning what emotions are because they missed out

on what characteristics define an emotion since they were learning online. The Sanford Harmony curriculum helped them learn more about emotions that they needed and the ABC portion helped them work through those emotions in group activities, but sometimes the immaturity of expressing their emotions got in the way.

As King said, many important points needed to be addressed. One of the first items was that students were learning online. In March of 2020, Oregon's governor, Kate Brown, declared schools to be shut down due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Educators were instructed they would be teaching online school for the remainder of the year. Students were out of in-person school until the end of the following March of 2021. Researchers discovered that there were many limitations to online learning including the lack of social interaction that students receive through school (Larivière-Bastien et al., 2022). A limitation of online learning was that students and teachers could not fully hear or understand what others were saying because students did not have proper internet access, students did not turn their cameras or microphones on, and they felt uncomfortable socializing.

With little to no face-to-face interactions, students could not properly identify other people's emotions, which caused a stunt in their socialization growth (Larivière-Bastien et al., 2022). Additionally, elementary students in the Bend La-Pine school district did not receive any sort of social emotional learning curriculum during this time. These students missed a crucial amount of social interaction with their peers, adults, and society due to the shutdowns. This is what has caused some of the immaturity levels to which King was referring. The students did not know how to properly communicate with their peers because they were not able to identify some of those social cues that come with a social emotional learning curriculum and human interaction.

Another limitation was that students were away from in-person school during the 2020–2021 school year due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Researchers have found the COVID-19 global pandemic had a significant impact on elementary students' socialization. One study showed that if a parent presented more distress due to the pandemic, this was an indicator the student would have more behavioral problems. Some of these behaviors included anxious withdrawal tendencies (i.e., removing oneself from social situations, agitation, and irritability) and showing more fear in general (Singletary et al., 2022). The results of the study showed that children developed new strategies to cope with their changed environment, such as increased reliance on technology and increased activities in their family units.

One of the other limitations was that this research study was only conducted at one school. This one school had three fourth grade classrooms with a small sample size. Thus, this study's findings could not be generalized to the entire Bend-La Pine School District. These data were presented from one school instead of from the 19 elementary schools represented in the district. The school was also chosen as a convenience to me as the primary researcher. Hence, there can be no external validity whatsoever to the setting. It is very possible that students (and teachers) readily, or more affirmingly embraced the lessons because of the already-established relationships between myself and them.

In the same way, an additional limitation could be social-desirability bias and the Hawthorne effect. A social-desirability bias indicates someone is more likely to make themselves look better in the eyes of others, even though their response may not be valid or true (Latkin et al., 2017). Because students and staff had positive relationships with me, they were more likely to show good behavior during group activities and respond to the questionnaire based on answers they thought I may want to hear. This ultimately could have reflected the results of the



quantitative and qualitative data. This may have been also true with the teacher's reflection on the curriculum implementation in their classrooms. Additionally, the Hawthorne effect addresses how someone may change their behavior when they know they are being watched by an observer in the room (McCambridge et al., 2014). Thus, students may have changed their behavior when they saw me taking notes during their group classroom activities or reflection time. This may have affected the way they acted during those given moments resulting in not as accurate qualitative measurements.

An additional limitation that was seen was that of the 71 fourth grade students, three students' parents stated they were concerned about SEL. Some parents said they were worried SEL was part of the critical race theory public educators teach. Sawchuck (2023) stated, "The core idea is that race is a social construct, and that racism is not merely the product of individual bias or prejudice, but also something embedded in legal systems and policies," (p. 1). Thus, inferring this idea was taught in the public education system. From the point-of-view of parents, using critical race theory in the classroom would have indoctrinated their children by stating racism was a part of U.S. society.

The final limitation was the disruption of the COVID-19 global pandemic and the effects of distance learning. Uzunn and Ozdemir (2021) discovered teachers experienced a multitude of issues during distance learning that created problems in teaching their first-grade students. Some of these problems included managing students' ability to focus on their screens effectively, navigating internet difficulties (e.g., students who did not have access to the internet or had slow internet), absenteeism, challenging home lives, and negotiating with families who did not support their children's education. These sorts of behaviors were also seen in the Bend-La Pine schools.

## **Implications and Recommendations for Research and Practice**

Sanford Harmony and ABC can provide a tremendous amount of assistance to school counselors regarding curriculum adoption. Sanford Harmony provides an evidence-based, research-backed SEL curriculum designed to help students make better decisions, build healthy relationships, and foster positive mindsets. ABC, on the other hand, is a creative and experiential approach to counseling that uses activities such as problem-solving strategies and team challenges to help teach students essential life skills (Ashby et al., 2008; Harmony, 2023).

Both programs offer age-appropriate materials and can be easily integrated into classroom instruction. The Sanford Harmony curriculum also offers virtual resources, allowing school counselors to continue teaching even if they are unable to meet with students in person. In addition, both programs are extremely flexible and can be used in a variety of ways, including small group counseling or one-on-one support.

School counselors can also benefit from the resources Sanford Harmony and ABC offer for professional development. Both programs provide online training and resources to help counselors stay up to date on the latest evidence-based practices and gain additional skills. Overall, Sanford Harmony and ABC offer a wealth of resources that can help school counselors foster positive student relationships, create an environment of respect and inclusivity, and promote growth mindset thinking. With their flexibility, accessibility, high quality materials, and professional development opportunities, these programs can be invaluable tools for school counselors who are looking to adopt new curriculums.

To implement Sanford Harmony and ABC in a school counseling setting, school counselors should consider the following recommendations: (a) establish clear goals and expectations for the program; (b) determine what outcomes they hope to accomplish with

Sanford Harmony and ABC; and (c) create an action plan that outlines how these goals will be achieved.

Developing a comprehensive training plan is important to ensure knowledgeable trainers are experienced in both Sanford Harmony and ABC. The training should include strategies on how to lead the student groups, how to facilitate activities, and how to provide meaningful feedback. Educators should make sure all stakeholders (i.e., students, parents, teachers, administrators) are involved in the process. It is important to have everyone's input when it comes to setting up the program.

Developing an evaluation plan to monitor the progress of the programs ensures they are meeting the established goals. Evaluations should also be conducted on an ongoing basis to track any changes or improvements made over time. By implementing these recommendations, school counselors can effectively use Sanford Harmony and ABC to create a positive school environment that encourages social connectedness and emotional growth.

Teachers who participated in this study made future recommendations. One teacher recommended hosting small SEL group lessons for students struggling with learning how to self-regulate. The teacher said it would be nice if these groups could be done weekly or biweekly. This teacher also recommended trying to have students write letters about emotional issues, which would be a positive coping strategy.

Another teacher mentioned their time was stretched very thin; therefore, having more time in the classroom to teach these lessons would help increase more positive coping skills. When time in the classroom is limited, these skills are not developed and kids cannot practice as much. This was reflected in my qualitative analysis and findings around time as an indicator of implementation success or hindrance.

The last teacher said it would be helpful if the school had more than one school counselor. They explained that there were so many kids in this particular school that it was challenging for the counselor to meet all students' needs, including having more consistent SEL lessons. King said the students at this school had a lot of trauma, so they could not access their academics as easily if their emotional needs were not being met first.

In addition to examining the impact of trauma on elementary school students' socialization, researchers have also begun to address the psychological effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic on children and adolescents' wellbeing. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2020), the COVID-19 global pandemic has significantly increased stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues among young people. This is likely due to a combination of factors, including economic insecurity, disruptions in education, and reduced access to support systems on which young people traditionally rely due to social distancing.

To address this issue, experts have called for increased access to mental health services and support for children and adolescents throughout the pandemic. This included providing mental health resources to parents and teachers and increasing collaboration between schools, social service providers, and healthcare organizations to ensure young people received necessary care (Hamoda et al., 2021). Additionally, some experts suggested schools should invest in virtual art mental health programs to provide further support for students during the pandemic (Malboeuf-Hurtubise et al., 2021). By recognizing the psychological effects of COVID-19 on young people, it is possible to take steps toward providing the necessary resources and support they need during this difficult time.

Research has shown the COVID-19 global pandemic had a major impact on elementary school students' socialization and mental health (Hamoda et al., 2021). Although it is important to recognize the challenges these students face, it is also essential to ensure they have access to necessary resources to help them cope with the changes brought about by the pandemic. By doing this, educators can ensure all students can continue learning and engaging with their peers in meaningful ways, despite the current physical and mental health circumstances that were brought on by the global pandemic (Hamoda et al., 2021).

Moreover, researchers could explore a variety of approaches to address student's physical and mental health concerns when using Sanford Harmony and ABC. For example, researchers could study the efficacy of outdoor activities as an integrative form of therapy for children inside and outside the classroom. This approach could include activities such as camping, hiking, rafting, and other forms of adventure-based learning like the Center for Experiential Leadership Development uses with the U.S. Naval Academy cadets (The U.S. Naval Academy, 2023). The U.S. Naval Academy takes students to Wyoming or Alaska for a month-long backpacking experience. They have to learn how to make quick decisions when faced with challenges such as where to sleep and how to respond when faced with an environmental factor such as a wild animal. Researchers could incorporate these activities when students attend an outdoor school field trip, for instance.

Additionally, researchers could examine how the use of Sanford Harmony skills and strategies can be used to create a more supportive environment in the classroom. This research could include examining how well teachers are able to incorporate these tools into their curricula while still meeting educational standards. For example, one lesson Sanford Harmony addresses is how to use proper eye contact, body language, and listening through partnered activities. A

teacher could ask their students to create an opinion paper and then justify their reasoning when speaking with a peer in their class. The teacher could emphasize using skills from Sanford Harmony (e.g., eye contact, body language, and listening) to get their opinion across in an effective manner. After students have stated their opinions, they could then reflect with their partner what skills they saw them using. This would meet educational standards while instilling social emotional communication strategies.

Finally, researchers could explore how the combination and separation of Sanford Harmony and ABC can be used to foster positive relationships among peers in school settings. By examining these topics, researchers could develop an understanding of how this type of singular or combined mental-and-physical intervention can improve outcomes for children's mental health and wellbeing.

Sanford Harmony and ABC are highly effective tools for helping children develop social and emotional skills. Further research is needed to better understand how these tools can be used in combination to create more supportive environments for children. By doing so, researchers will be able to build a stronger foundation of evidence-based practice that promotes positive mental health outcomes for kids.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Unfortunately, the convenience sampling and personal relationships may have had a much bigger impact on the results of this study than the interventions themselves. However, it is interesting to note that the programs nevertheless produced positive outcomes overall. This is very promising and warrants attention towards continued research in the area of SEL and emotional regulation through the use of the two programs: Sanford Harmony and ABC.

Sanford Harmony and ABC are two effective SEL curriculums that can be used to great effect in elementary schools. Sanford Harmony provides a comprehensive and research-based program for developing positive relationships between students. It empowers children to build relationships through mutual understanding, respect, collaboration, communication, and problem-solving. ABC is a more experiential learning approach that encourages students to explore different aspects of social and emotional development through storytelling, creative play, and physical activities.

Both curriculums are excellent methods for helping children learn strategies for managing their emotions, working cooperatively with others, developing appropriate behavior skills, and navigating through the complexities of everyday life. Both programs provide a safe and supportive environment for children to learn, grow, and develop important social skills that will help them throughout their lives.

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APPENDIX A

EMOTION REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE



APPENDIX B  
CURRICULA

Sanford Harmony: <https://www.sanfordharmony.org/>

Adventure Based Counseling (ABC), *Active Interventions for Kids and Teens: Adding Adventures and Fun to Counseling*. This is written by Ashby, Kottman, Donald, and DeGraaf (2008). The curriculum was ordered from the George Fox library website from the University of Washington. This curriculum can also be found here: <https://www.amazon.com/Active-Interventions-Kids-Teens-Adventures/dp/1556202563>.

APPENDIX C  
CONSENT FORM



Dear Parent/Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_,

The entire 4<sup>th</sup> grade of La Pine Elementary has been selected to participate in a curriculum evaluation that will help us better understand how to regulate our emotions better. These lessons will be given twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting September 12<sup>th</sup> and ending December 16<sup>th</sup>. These whole group lessons will provide your child with the opportunity to participate in group lessons revolving empathy and critical thinking, communication, problem solving, diversity and inclusion, and peer relationships. Additionally, they will take part in group bonding activities that target team building activities that are meant to build off of outdoor education, experiential techniques, group counseling, and reflective thinking. The goal is to help students how to develop coping strategies when they are feeling dysregulated by providing both sets of curricula into their weekly routines.

These curricula will help your student better understand how to have self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, better relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Both curricula focus on emotional lessons that could assist your student by understanding how to regulate themselves more effectively.

This curriculum review is part of a Doctoral Dissertation. Data will be collected to discover if this curriculum is having a positive impact on how children are emotionally regulating themselves. They will take a pre and post assessment of an “Emotion Regulation Questionnaire” that consists of ten questions. Once students take the survey, their information will be recorded, but under a pseudonym to protect their confidentiality. Once data is fully complete, after three years, all records of their responses will be destroyed.

If you understand what your child will be participating in, please complete the form below and return it to the office or, you may email it directly to Jared Larson and

[REDACTED]

Please let us know if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Jared Larson

School Counselor, La Pine Elementary

Doctoral Candidate; George Fox University

[If in agreement, please sign the written consent form on the next page]

#### WRITTEN CONSENT FORM

I have read the informed consent provided. I understand that my child/children's participation in the curriculum review is *voluntary*. I understand that data from this review will be shared for the purposes of a dissertation study; however, my child/children's name(s) will not be associated with their data, instead a pseudonym will be given so their name(s) remain confidential.

I agree to having my child/children listed below participate in a curriculum review and emotional regulation lessons. I understand that there is no penalty for my student(s) for not participating.

Please return this form with your child's name and your name signed below to the building's school office if you do not want your child to participate.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give permission for my child to participate in the curriculum evaluation and emotional regulation lessons.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, DO NOT give permission for my child to participate in the curriculum evaluation and emotional regulation lessons.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Parent/Guardian/Legally Responsible Adult

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPENDIX D  
IRB APPROVAL

2221014

6

**GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY HSRC INITIAL REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

Title: An Evaluation of "Sanford Harmony" and "Adventure Based Counseling (ABC)" Curriculum and Their Effect on 4th-Grade Students' Emotional Regulation.

Principal Researcher(s): Jared Larson

Date application completed: 7/24/2022

**(The researcher needs to complete the information above on this page.)**

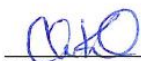
**COMMITTEE FINDING:**

✓ (1) The proposed research makes adequate provision for safeguarding the health and dignity of the subjects and is therefore approved.

\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Due to the assessment of risk being questionable or being subject to change, the research must be periodically reviewed by the **HSRC** on a \_\_\_\_\_ basis throughout the course of the research or until otherwise notified. This requires resubmission of this form, with updated information, for each periodic review.

\_\_\_\_\_ (3) The proposed research evidences some unnecessary risk to participants and therefore must be revised to remedy the following specific area(s) on non-compliance:

\_\_\_\_\_ (4) The proposed research contains serious and potentially damaging risks to subjects and is therefore not approved.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair or designated member



\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPENDIX E  
INSTRUMENT

## Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ)

Students,

Please read out loud and listen to the following instructions,

You have been invited to be a part of the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ; Gross, J.J., & John, O.P. (2003) to figure out if Sanford Harmony Curriculum partnered with Adventure Based Counseling (ABC) techniques can improve emotional regulation with students your age. Your participation in this study is voluntary, so if you do not want to participate, please let your classroom teacher or me know.

If you agree to continue helping with this study, please state: I understand and agree.

Please fill out the questionnaire below.

Name

Your answer

Emotional Regulation Scale

When filling out the survey please answer using this scale:

Emotional Regulation Scale

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>strongly disagree</b>			<b>neutral</b>			<b>strongly agree</b>

1. When I want to feel more positive emotion (such as joy or amusement), I change what I'm thinking about.

1 (strongly disagree)

2

3

4 (neutral)

- 5
- 6
- 7 (strongly agree)

2. I keep emotions to myself.

- 1 (strongly disagree)
- 2
- 3
- 4 (neutral)
- 5
- 6
- 7 (strongly agree)

3. When I want to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger), I change what I'm thinking about.

- 1 (strongly disagree)
- 2
- 3
- 4 (neutral)
- 5
- 6
- 7 (strongly agree)

4. When I am feeling positive emotions, I am careful not to express them.

- 1 (strongly disagree)
- 2
- 3
- 4 (neutral)
- 5
- 6
- 7 (strongly agree)

5. When I'm faced with a stressful situation, I make myself think about it in a way that helps me stay calm.

- 1 (strongly disagree)
- 2
- 3
- 4 (neutral)
- 5



6  
7 (strongly agree)

6. I control my emotions by not expressing them.

1 (strongly disagree)  
2  
3  
4 (neutral)  
5  
6  
7 (strongly agree)

7. When I want to feel more positive emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation.

1 (strongly disagree)  
2  
3  
4 (neutral)  
5  
6  
7 (strongly agree)

8. I control my emotions by changing the way I think about the situation I'm in.

1 (strongly disagree)  
2  
3  
4 (neutral)  
5  
6  
7 (strongly agree)

9. When I am feeling negative emotions, I make sure not to express them.

1 (strongly disagree)  
2  
3  
4 (neutral)  
5  
6  
7 (strongly agree)

10. When I want to feel less negative emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation.

1 (strongly disagree)

2

3

4 (neutral)

5

6

7 (strongly agree)

APPENDIX F  
VERBAL STATEMENT

This verbal statement will be read before the pre and post assessment. Student participants must acknowledge and agree that they would be willing to participate by saying, “I agree to this: or “I understand.” Documentation of each participant will be made.

Students,

Please read out loud and listen to the following instructions,

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If you agree to continue helping with this study, please state: I understand and agree.