Temperament based services in the schools

Informed by temperament or focusing on temperament

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What qualifies as a temperament intervention?

- **Informed by temperament**- incorporates temperament research and concepts into other frameworks for addressing children's needs. (Equifinality)-temperament is part of the picture.

- **Focused on temperament**- the central activity is to assess specific temperament profiles in order to conduct interventions that are based on these profiles. (Multi-finality)-temperament as increasing vulnerability.

Tiers of intervention

- *Universal (tier 1)—the program can benefit **everyone***
- *Selected (Tier 2)-the program is designed to benefit selected individuals. In most cases, children/youth who present with some concerns **but are not eligible for special educational services.***
- *Identified (Tier 3)—children are **identified with a disability** and hence eligible for an individualized Educational Program (IEP). Involves a formal multi-disciplinary evaluation process and decisions by the team.*

Assessment in the Schools: infusing temperament

1. *Assessment referral by the Child Study Team--Formal evaluation* conducted to determine eligibility to receive Special Educational Services (Process by which a child is *Identifie*d).

2. *Selective Assessment*-Screening to identify children who may benefit from *selected* interventions and once selected, further assessment may inform the intervention.

3. *Universal Assessment*- Needs assessment for everyone in a grade/building/district

Types of interventions

- ***Psychoeducational*** - direct (didactic) teaching of information and skills to improve outcomes for children e.g., **g**roups that directly teach social skills and offer opportunities to discuss the material introduced as well as to practice and receive feedback. (*temperament focused*)

- ***Therapeutic***- engaging children in naturalistic interactions in groups that enable them to experience and reflect on their emotions, thoughts, and actions while engaged with group members. Active ingredients: power of peer group relationships and shared experiences to improve social emotional understanding and social effectiveness. (*temperament informed*)

STORIES ACRONYM

- **S**tructure-story form and group process
- **T**hemes--bully, victim, bystander; peer pressure
- **O**pen communication--inherent interest; overcomes defensiveness; reciprocal interactions
- **R**eflection--important ideas; character webs; relevance for self and others
- **Individuality—respecting differences among story characters and group members**
- **Experiential learning**-the process by which "lessons" are drawn from experience
- **S**ocial problem solving-- in the natural context of the peer group

Information Processing Problems

Difficulty with

- **inferring** thoughts/feelings from pictures
- **understanding** that behavior is triggered by external circumstances and internal processes
- **differentiating** between short- and long-term goals and imagining outcomes based on initial intentions and goals
- **evaluating** successful vs. unsuccessful outcomes based on previous actions
- **engaging** in "story matching"

Steps for Problem Solving: infusing temperament

- Something Happens
- Feelings
- Wants/Intentions
- Plans and Actions
- Outcome

PROCESSES IN STORIES GROUPS THAT PROMOTE CHANGE-Informed by Temperament

1. The exchanges provide "**corrective**" opportunities to disconfirm problematic assumptions and to change expectations about others' responses (Shirk & Russell, 1996).

2. As an "**alliance**" the participants engage in exchanges that provide a secure base to explore experiences to reappraise and revise schemas or "working models" of relationships (Bowlby, 1988).

3. Peers suggest different interpretations, thereby broadening perspectives.

4. Peer context is emotionally engaging thereby meeting a requisite for change.

Evaluation of STORIES program

- **Nuijens, Teglasi, Simcox, Kivlighan, Rothman, 2006, Development and Validation of Group Leader Intervention System, *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 10*, 116-135.**
- **Rahill S. & Teglasi, H. (2003). Processes and outcomes of story-based and skill-based social competency programs for children with emotional disabilities. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*, 413-429.**
- **Teglasi H. & Rothman, L. (2001). STORIES: A classroom based program to reduce aggressive behavior. *Journal of School Psychology, 39,* 71-94.**

Teglasi H. & Rothman, L. (2001)-Tier 1

- Participants were students in two fourth and fifth grade classes in two different elementary schools.
- Group composition: four to six children per group with one or two specifically identified as aggressive.
- A total of 59 children participated. All but two were African American.
- Half of the children were in a wait list control group and received the treatment later

Sessions

- 15 sessions (in order to rotate all participants through the program); 20-25 sessions optimal
- All children within each class received the program by the end of the school year
- One session per week
- Time slot: from 45 minutes to one hour

Materials

These books were selected based on previous "pilot study" work:

- Secret of the Peaceful Warrior

  Dan Millman (1991) H J Kramer, Inc.;

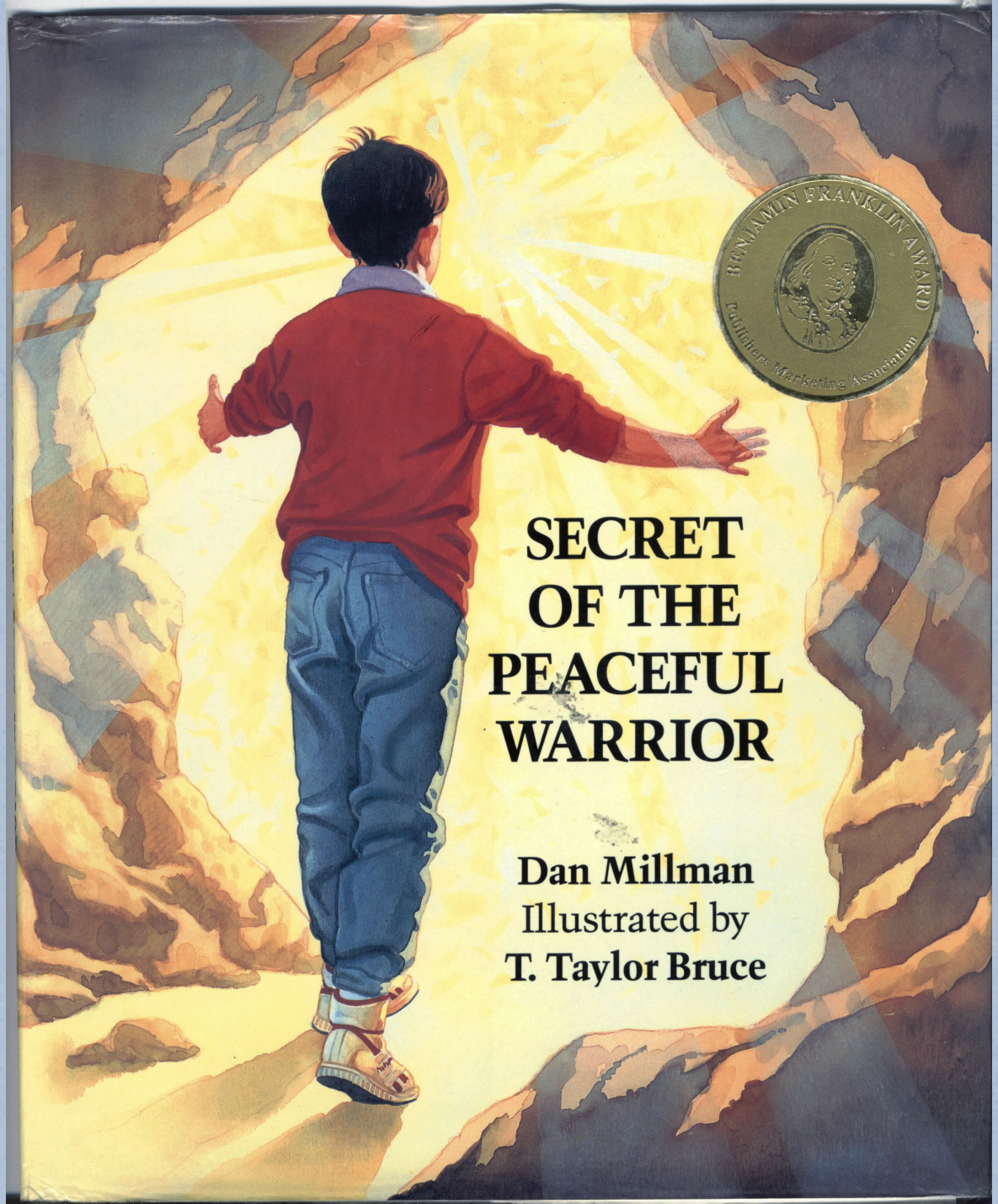
  Starseed Press; P.O. Box 1082;

  Tiburon, CA 94920

- Sticks and Stones, Bobbie Bones

  Brenda C. Roberts (1993); Scholastic, Inc.;

  ISBN 0-590-46518-X; APPLE Paperbacks; New York, NY

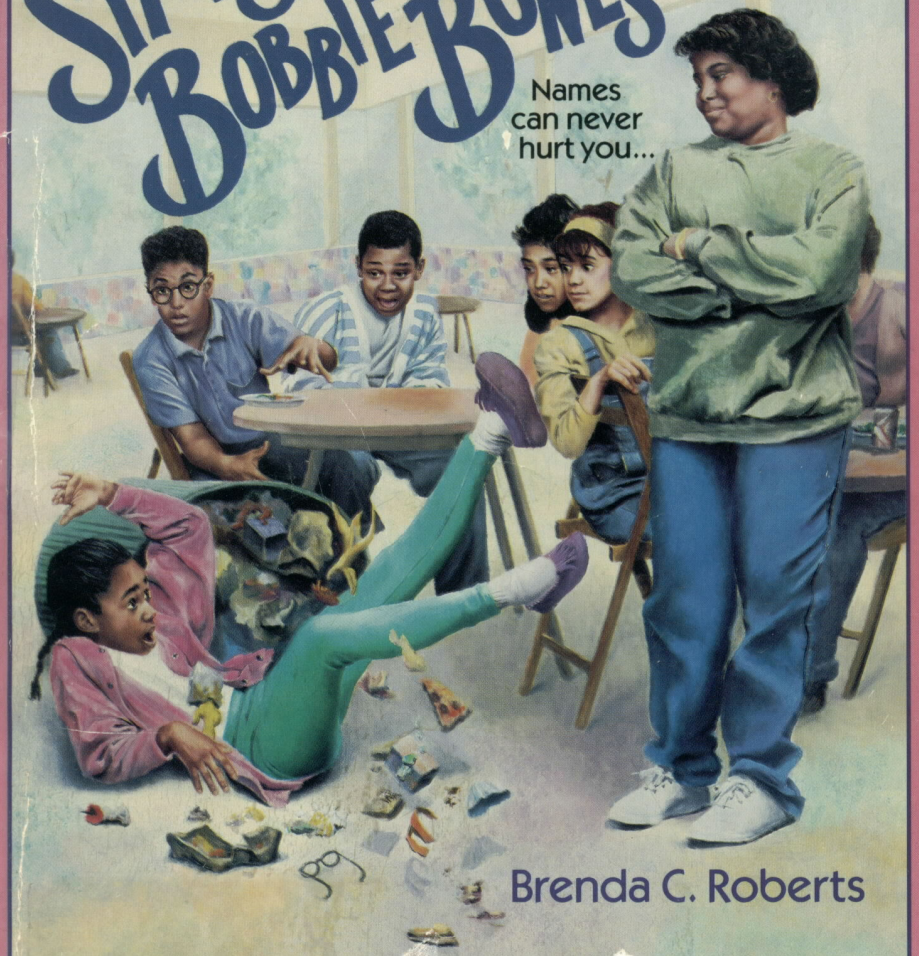

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Dan Millman
Illustrated by
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Sticks and Stones, Bobbie Bones

Names can never hurt you...



Brenda C. Roberts

SCHOLASTIC

Teglasi H. & Rothman, L. (2001)

Treatment Integrity—

- The same group leader led all groups with assistance from co-leaders.
- The sessions were planned ahead and protocol was carried out with all groups. (A subsequent study looked at group leader responses).

Story Components

- Three types of interactive characters:

  bully, victim, and bystander
- Stories foster a sense of responsibility in all characters
- Subthemes: friendship, courage, problem solving, determination, and conscience

- Feelings: e.g., fear, anger, disappointment, and empathy

Group Formation

- Small groups of 4 to 6 children
- Each group included 1 or 2 identified (aggressive) students
- Identified students were not singled out
- Almost all other children were identified as "at risk" based on BASC (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992) ratings, externalizing scale

Teglasi H. & Rothman, L. (2001)

- Identified children had higher Externalizing scores pre and post intervention. Externalizing scores decreased overall from pre to post but interaction indicated that the scores of non-identified children decreased and those of identified children increased from pre to post.
- For the identified children (n=18) externalizing post test scores of treatment group was lower than externalizing pretest scores **of wait list** children.
- Differential outcomes for identified and non-identified children parallel treatment responses

Teglasi H. & Rothman, L. (2001)

Treatment responses.

Children identified as aggressive were more likely to be rated as responding poorly to treatment than expected by chance (43.9% vs. 9.3%).

Those who were not identified were more likely to have a good response to treatment (55.8%) than those who were (7%). Bivariate correlation between treatment response code and identification status was .46.

Pretest scores on externalizing were strong predictors of outcome. However, treatment response scores added significantly to the prediction of the outcome. Treatment response was significantly related to pretest (.32) and to the post-test (.71) Externalizing scores.

Rahill S. & Teglasi, H. (2003).

Participants were children with an Emotional Disability (ED) and served in one of four self contained Special Educational Centers. All students, everyone in grades two through six participated in one of three types of groups: Skillstreaming, STORIES and non-specific counseling.

- Seven STORIES groups,(n= 35; 31 males, 4 females); Five Skillstreaming groups, (n= 28; 24 males, 4 females).
- Participants per group for the STORIES and Skillstreaming respectively were 5.0 and 5.6. The mean age of the children was 10.09 (S.D. =1.16).

Pilot of STORIES for Internalizing Issues

- Pilot Study of a Tier 2 intervention
- Teacher identified shy/withdrawn students who were disengaged in class.
- 5th grade
  - Public School
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Methods

- Teachers recommended participants
- Parent Permission
- Record Review
- Achenbach forms filled out by classroom teachers
- Sessions followed STORIES format with modifications to fit this population
- Groups met during lunch and were led by UMD graduate students and supervised by licensed school psychologist

Measures and Data Collection

- Pre and Post Group Storytelling exercises were administered
  - Children told stories about pictures depicting tension/dilemmas
- Sessions were taped and transcribed
  - Coded for quality of responses—change over time
- Children were rated by group leaders on:
  - Cognition
  - Behavior
  - Communication Style

One group of 5 Shy Girls

- Eight sessions were conducted
  - In first session the girls named the group "The Reading Group for Shy People"
  - Self-Identified as shy
- Throughout the sessions we learned that the Shyness/withdrawal came about through different pathways
  - withdrawal due to disorganization
  - shy because of fear/anxiety, language barrier, new to school

Considerations in temperament assessment

1. Parents and teachers **do not agree as a rule**—but they correspond more on certain traits than others.

2. Parent rated temperament predicts parent rated social competence and teacher rated temperament predicts teacher rated social competence.

3. **Context pulls for certain temperamental dispositionsj. Shyness is elicited in unfamiliar situations but only in those who are disposed to be shy.**

4. Need to consider the pull of context– what are the elicitors of reactivity for a given child– both negative and positive.

What draws attention– what are the child's sensitivities? influence of informant and context (applies to commonly used measures as well).

Even though temperament is seen as cross situational

Temperament informed assessment

- Interviewing parents and teachers
- Early history
- What are elicitors of reactivity
- What are the conditions where the person is angry, fearful
- Temperament and context