

Can we help children learn coping skills for life?

A study of the impact of the Bounce Back programme on resilience, connectedness and wellbeing of children and teachers in sixteen primary schools in Perth and Kinross, Scotland.



**PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL**

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Children's Services

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Introduction

Resilience and the Scottish Context

“The true measure of a nation’s standing is how well it attends to its children - their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialisation and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born”

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The health, wellbeing and resilience of young people in Scotland are a matter of concern to many at the current time. The 2007 OECD survey of children and young people’s wellbeing in economically developed nations showed young people in the UK at or near the bottom of the league table of 21 nations for many of the indicators measured including:

- ❑ *behaviours and risks (low incidence of healthy behaviour and high incidence of behaviour such as smoking, drinking, drug-taking, underage sex and experiencing violence);*
- ❑ *subjective wellbeing (self-ratings of health, school life and life satisfaction);*
- ❑ *relationships (stable families, eating together, good peer relationships).*

Scottish young people (and adults) are even more at risk than others in the UK, with lower self-reported wellbeing, higher suicide rates, higher drug and alcohol dependence and heavier smoking (Bell and Blanchflower, 2004).

A 2005 survey of a cross-section of 600 Scottish young people carried out by ‘Determined to Succeed’ and quoted in the book ‘Creating Confidence’ (Craig, 2007) suggested that 42% of S4 (aged 15-16) pupils were deficient in confidence and self-belief.

Within Perth and Kinross, a survey on developmental assets and risks in over 3,000 pupils aged between 12 and 18 years in six secondary schools was carried out by the YMCA in 2007-2008. They found that most young people were positive about their personal future, reported high levels of support and love from their families and helped out friends or neighbours regularly. However, only 20% thought their schools provided a caring, encouraging environment, and even fewer thought that they had opportunities to contribute to their community. Forty percent of the young people surveyed reported using alcohol three or more times in the last 30 days or getting drunk once or more in the last two weeks and 28% had engaged in three or more acts of violence such as fighting, hitting, carrying a weapon or threatening physical harm in the last 12 months (Search Institute for YMCA, 2008).

The causes of the poor health record, risky lifestyle choices and relatively low levels of subjective wellbeing and confidence in Scottish people are complex. Bell and Blanchflower (2004) argue that one cause may be that individuals’ choices are more dominated by short-term rather than long-term considerations, perhaps indicating a lack of hope. Carol Craig (2007) has argued that ingrained cultural habits of pessimism, fixed

mindsets (the belief that most personal characteristics are fixed by nature and hence not malleable) and a fear of standing out or ‘getting it wrong’ may also contribute to low levels of Scottish wellbeing.

Perhaps as a result of some of the concerns outlined above, many of the current priorities of the Scottish Government reflect its commitment to address these issues, as identified in the national outcomes:

“Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed”

“We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others”

Scottish Government National Outcomes

The Scottish Government has also taken a brave step in introducing the new Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence* which outlines the four purposes of education as being: the development of successful learners, effective contributors, responsible citizens and confident individuals. At the heart of this new curriculum, health and wellbeing are now seen as key responsibilities of all educators across the curriculum, along with literacy and numeracy. Resilience is mentioned many times in the new curriculum, but is also a key component of all four purposes of education mentioned above, as well as being strongly correlated with individual wellbeing. Resilience in this context refers to the capacity of a person to address challenges and cope with times of adversity and hardship, and then return to a state of wellbeing (McGrath & Noble, 2010).

The new curriculum gives much scope for educators to teach in new and exciting ways, forge links across the curriculum and fully involve pupils in their own learning. Where they are asked to focus on building pupils’ resilience and confidence, they will need access to sound research-based guidance and materials to do this successfully.

Resilience and Education

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a number of large-scale longitudinal studies were carried out which focused on young people who were known to live in environments which put them at risk of adverse life outcomes (eg poverty, parental mental illness, family conflict) or who had early disadvantage, identifying those factors which allowed some of these young people to survive and even thrive in these difficult circumstances.

Michael Rutter (1985) considered resilience not as a fixed attribute of an individual, but as the manifestation of individual variations in response to a risk factor. He suggested that resilience was not just a matter of constitutional strength or weakness, but arose from a belief in one’s own self-efficacy, the ability to deal with change, and a repertoire of social problem-solving skills.

In a 40-year-study Werner and Smith (2001) identified the protective factors for a group of ‘at risk’ children in Hawaii as *“the individual’s biological make-up, psychological dispositions (cognitive skills, temperament and self-efficacy), and the sources of emotional support he or she could rely upon at each stage of the life cycle.”*

During the past 20 years, there has been a huge increase in interest in resilience and the multitude of factors that influence it. Significant progress has been made in identifying the multiple processes that affect its development over time. There has also been a broadening in the understanding of the relevance of resilience, not just for those young

people who live in particularly risky environments, but for all young people. Being resilient helps young people to function well and develop their full potential and to minimise adolescents' involvement in behaviours such as substance and alcohol use, interpersonal and self-directed violence.

Resnick (2000) summarised one of the key protective factors as having a close relationship with at least one caring adult, within or outwith the family, who provides ongoing opportunities to develop personal competencies. The role of schools in providing key protective factors is outlined in the next section.

Connectedness

After families, schools have been identified as the most important environments for promoting resilience. School connectedness (the feeling of belonging to a school that accepts, protects and cares about you) is associated with many positive outcomes for young people including remaining at school longer, higher grades and classroom test scores, as well as decreased risk of substance use, school absenteeism and early sexual initiation (McNeely, 2003). It is particularly important for those children who are not connected to resilient families (Rutter, 1984; Werner and Smith, 1988). School connectedness can be fostered by encouraging shared values, especially those of co-operation, inclusion and effective resolution of conflict, developing a culture of safety and care where no student feels threatened, giving pupils opportunities to contribute and take initiative and placing a strong emphasis on the development of positive relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils (Whitlock, 2003).

Waters, Cross and Ryan (2009) conclude that schools can build pupils' sense of connectedness by paying attention to structural factors (size of classes, considering creating 'schools within schools' for large institutions) and the built environment, by ensuring clear and fair discipline policies, involving students in decision-making, having high academic expectations for all, and providing support for pupils in their learning and many formal and informal opportunities for students to connect with teaching staff and each other, including through extracurricular activities.

Teacher-Pupil Relationships

Individuals have fundamental needs for affiliation (close supportive relationships), competence and autonomy, in order to flourish. The key role of teachers in helping to meet these needs, and the key importance of ordinary everyday interactions between teachers and their pupils, has been demonstrated by many studies.

A longitudinal research project in South Australia by Howard and Johnson tracked 130 children over eight years and provides valuable detail, from the young peoples' perspective, about how everyday interactions with teachers helped them cope with adversities (both small and large). Johnson (2008) writes that the resilience-promoting teachers engage in the following practices:

- ❑ *they make themselves available and accessible to students;*
- ❑ *they engage students by actively listening to their concerns and worries;*
- ❑ *they take responsibility for actively teaching their students the basic reading, writing and numeracy skills needed for independent learning, even if their students have struggled in the past to master these skills;*

- ❑ *they have empathy with, and understanding of, their students' 'tough' circumstances yet provide them with positive strategies to deal with adversity;*
- ❑ *they advocate for their students by mobilising existing support provisions that are available for 'at risk' students;*
- ❑ *they actively use their power as adults and professionals to identify and oppose bullying and harassment at school; and finally,*
- ❑ *they remember the 'human touches' that promote pro-social bonding between teachers and students.*

"..as the students in this study testified, teachers are able to 'make a difference' to the lives of their students in quite profound and socially significant ways by actively focussing on 'the little things' within their sphere of influence"

(Johnson, 2008, p 395)

Peer Relationships

Children's relationships with their peers are also of key importance to the development of resilience in a school context. Supportive peer relationships, and in particular, having a close friend, are consistently related to higher levels of wellbeing and the ability to cope with difficult circumstances such as parental separation (Dunn, 2004). On the other hand, experiencing ongoing peer rejection and isolation at school has a negative impact on wellbeing, attendance and academic achievement and is a significant risk factor for pupils doing badly at school and in later life. McGrath and Noble (2010) have summarised some of the practical evidence-based strategies that schools can implement that may have a positive impact on the effective development of positive peer relationships. These include:

- ❑ *the intentional development of a safe, caring and inclusive school culture. Schools that do this are characterised by effective leadership, effective behaviour management, active planning of a 'relationships culture' and making pupil wellbeing a priority;*
- ❑ *peer support structures such as peer counselling, peer mediation and mentoring and the use of restorative practices;*
- ❑ *teaching pro-social values (eg those that focus on creating harmony and social inclusion);*
- ❑ *teacher attitudes and practices, including their use of co-operative learning and literature that reinforces values such as compassion and friendliness.*

Personal Resilience Skills

As well as the environmental protective practices schools can provide to foster pupil resilience, there are also the personal resilience skills that teachers can explicitly teach pupils. Reivich (2002) has argued that there are seven 'learnable skills' of resilience which include:

- ❑ *increasing our awareness of how our thoughts influence our emotions and behaviour and therefore how we can gain more control over them;*
- ❑ *avoiding 'thinking traps' such as always blaming yourself or others when things go wrong, or assuming a bad situation will be permanent;*
- ❑ *challenging deep beliefs that may be working against us such as 'I must never make mistakes' or 'adults should be perfect';*
- ❑ *putting things in perspective;*
- ❑ *learning to calm yourself down at times of stress.*

Seligman's work over two decades (Seligman, 1998) has focussed on the importance of developing an optimistic thinking style for an individual's wellbeing, mental and physical health and achievement. This thinking style is characterised by people being able to view positive events as permanent, pervasive and personal, and negative events as specific, temporary and having a variety of causes. It also involves being able to 'track positively' (ie to focus more on the positive aspects of situations and of their daily lives than negative ones).

Recent work by Barbara Frederickson (Frederickson 2008) has demonstrated the lasting benefits of experiencing positive emotions such as curiosity, interest, inspiration, amusement and hope. Her 'broaden and build' theory contends that these emotions are very important for learning since they expand awareness and increase the conceptual connections people make (allowing for more and better ideas and more flexibility of thought). Experiencing more positivity also helps build resources that allow people to be more resilient in hard times. Frederickson argues that it would be a serious mistake to try to cultivate positive emotions by trying to 'be happy' or to suppress negative emotions, since genuineness and sincerity are of key importance to wellbeing. However, there are sound ways of increasing positive emotions including:

- ❑ **Openness** - *being aware of our surroundings and mindful of the present moment.*
- ❑ **Appreciation** - *relishing and savouring the good things that happen and being grateful for what we have.*
- ❑ **Curiosity** - *getting out of your rut, doing things differently.*
- ❑ **Kindness** - *focusing on others rather than yourself.*

Brookes and Goldstein (2001) have emphasised the importance of children developing a sense of responsibility, compassion and helpfulness and of their becoming aware of and using their strengths, in order to build their resilience.

School Programmes and Resilience

A growing body of evidence demonstrates the important role that schools can play in the development of resilience in children and young people. This role includes the provision of a protective environment which can give young people a sense of belonging, connectedness and purpose, and the opportunity to develop close relationships with both adults and peers, but can also provide a context for teaching positive habits of thought and coping skills for facing life's challenges.

Two recent large scale meta-analyses of social and emotional learning programmes in both elementary and secondary schools (Durlack and Weissberg, 2008, mainly in the United States, and Diekstra, et al, 2008, worldwide) have concluded that systematic, programmed attention to the teaching of social and emotional skills promotes pupils' social and emotional skills, improves their attitudes about themselves, others and school, and prevents developmental problems such as aggression and depression.

Moreover, these results do not come at the expense of performance in core academic skills, but rather enhance academic achievement. The studies looked at programmes which focus on developing young people's personal, interpersonal and problem-solving skills by teaching them to recognise and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions and handle interpersonal situations effectively.

Durlack and Weissberg (2008) concluded that these programmes are most effective when taught by classroom teachers rather than visiting researchers or health professionals (and only when school staff conducted the intervention did academic performance improve), and that programme implementation (how well it was implemented) had a strong influence on outcomes. Success in implementation was increased where programmes offered a sequential and integrated curriculum, used active forms of learning and established explicit learning goals.

In addition, Diekstra et al (2008) demonstrated that the most effective programmes were theoretically consistent, used a variety of teaching methods, were implemented in small groups, covered both general and domain-specific skills, were of considerable duration (at least 6 months to a year) and took place within a supportive community. In the mid to long term some of the effects of these programmes decrease. However, there is an increasing effect on the reduction or prevention of mental disorders (as the pupils reach the ages where they are more at risk).

Many of the programmes studied have included elements which are likely to have an impact on pupils' resilience. However, there are far fewer programmes available which make the promotion of resilience a specific aim, and which are solidly founded on what is known about the individual, group and community attitudes and skills that enhance resilience. This is exactly why the Bounce Back wellbeing and resiliency programme (McGrath & Noble, 2003) stands apart from many other programmes.

The Bounce Back Programme

The Bounce Back Resiliency Programme is a whole school programme aimed at helping children and young people cope with life's challenges.

Bounce Back is an Australian programme which is widely used in Australian schools. It is based on sound psychological and educational theory and has been positively evaluated in Australia. It is a comprehensive programme that is designed to be carried out throughout primary school up to S2 with key concepts being revisited at different ages.

Bounce Back has been developed to support schools and teachers in their efforts to promote positive mental health and wellbeing in their students and, in particular, to enable them to act resiliently when faced with challenges and adversity. The program predominantly focuses on classroom strategies and activities that teach students those positive social and emotional skills that might best be described as 'life skills'. Bounce Back focuses on ways to develop the types of learning environments and teacher-student relationships which also foster resilience and wellbeing.

McGrath and Noble clearly summarised the underlying reasons for the programme's effectiveness clearly in their revised handbook for the Bounce Back programme (due to be published early 2011):

"The Bounce Back! program model is based on the research evidence of the factors that contribute to effective prevention programs and/or social emotional learning (SEL) programs. In summary, the available research evidence strongly suggests that the presence of the following features increases the effectiveness of prevention programs designed to foster student positive mental health and wellbeing:

- ☐ *the program is a whole-school program;*
- ☐ *the program is delivered by teachers and integrated with academic learning;*
- ☐ *the program is universal;*
- ☐ *the program is long-term and multi-year;*
- ☐ *the program uses a multi-strategic approach;*
- ☐ *the program is initially delivered to children early in their schooling;*
- ☐ *the program includes a significant component of skills derived from cognitive behaviour approaches (CBT)."*

The key aims of the programme are:

1. *to help create positive, pro-social and resilient classrooms and schools;*
2. *to provide resources to enable staff to help their pupils develop resilient attitudes and behaviour.*

The Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, as mentioned above, outlines four broad purposes for education. Underlying these four 'capacities' are a number of psychological qualities, including self-awareness, motivation and resilience. The recently published experiences and outcomes for Health and Wellbeing specifically mentions resilience as a quality that pupils' learning environments can help them develop, as well as emphasising

the importance of a range of personal, coping skills in fostering mental and emotional wellbeing.

The Bounce Back programme is ideally placed to help schools in their efforts to promote wellbeing and resilience. Due to its cross-curricular approach, it fully embraces the spirit of the new curriculum. Furthermore, improving health and wellbeing and developing active and responsible citizens are two of the key objectives of Perth & Kinross Council's Education & Children's Services. Through its Raising Achievement Strategy, the Council has supported the introduction of the Bounce Back programme into more than 60% of its primary schools and funded the current research into its impact.

This study set out to determine:

- 1. *whether Bounce Back had an impact on the sense of connectedness of pupils;***
- 2. *whether Bounce Back had an impact on the resilience of pupils;***
- 3. *whether Bounce Back had an impact on the resilience and wellbeing of staff in schools using the programme;***
- 4. *which factors influenced the successful implementation of Bounce Back as a whole school programme.***

Method

Context in Which the Data was Gathered

Perth & Kinross Council

Perth and Kinross has a population of around 142,100 people of which 25,000 are children aged 0-15 years. There was a 5.3% increase in population numbers between 2001 and 2007. Perth and Kinross covers a large geographical area of 5,286 km². It is the fifth largest council area in Scotland, yet with only 2.8% of Scotland's population, the overall population density is low at 27 people per km². Perth is the main centre of population where around 44,000 people live, there are five towns which have a population of between 3,000 and 9,000 and the remainder of the population is located within numerous villages and in the rural areas. Within Perth and Kinross there are 77 primary schools, two thirds of which have a pupil roll of less than 150 pupils.

Engagement of Schools

Introductory presentations were provided in May 2008 for all Headteachers and Depute Headteachers. Following this, all primary schools in Perth and Kinross who wished to take the programme forward as part of their school development plan and who were willing to participate in the research, were offered training and ongoing support with the Bounce Back programme.

Sixteen primary schools from across Perth and Kinross elected to be part of the research. Seven of these schools are situated in Perth City with the remainder in smaller towns or rural areas. School rolls in these schools ranged from 23 to 250 pupils. In addition, one pilot school that had already received training and started using the programme the previous year, took part in a mid-evaluation (January 2009).

Initial Training in the Research Schools September-November 2008

All teaching staff and many of the support staff in the participating schools received training before starting to use the programme (one half day or twilight session). The training included:

- ❑ *background information on resilience and its importance;*
- ❑ *the role of schools in enhancing children's resilience;*
- ❑ *an overview of the Bounce Back programme;*
- ❑ *opportunities to experience some of the co-operative learning activities used in Bounce Back;*
- ❑ *discussion regarding planning for individual school implementation of the programme.*

Ongoing Support to Schools

Link Psychologist

Each of the sixteen participating schools had a link with an Educational Psychologist during the 18 month period of the research (September 2008 - April 2010), who offered ongoing support in programme implementation to staff through termly link meetings, telephone and email contact.

Network Meetings

Two Bounce Back networks were established in the Perth and Blairgowrie areas. Nominated representatives from each of the Bounce Back schools had the opportunity to meet, share their schools' progress and share ideas and resources relating to the programme.

Further Training Opportunities

Some schools took up the offer of extra training on specific elements of the programme, such as optimistic thinking. All schools were also offered extra 'catch-up' training sessions for those teachers/school staff that had not been involved in the initial training and joined a Bounce Back school later.

Parent Evenings

Support was offered to schools to organise/co-deliver parents' evenings on Bounce Back and share some of the ideas on 'resilient messages' with parents and the wider community.

Data Collection

The data collection for this research was based on a mixed method design, as it was felt that this would offer a rich data base and a pragmatic approach as advocated by Robson (2002).

Some of the advantages of this mixed method design are:

- ❑ *the reduction of inappropriate certainty (a single method with a clear-cut result may give researchers limited certainty in only one area);*
- ❑ *the permission of triangulation (checking the results of a quantitative method with those of a qualitative method and vice versa);*
- ❑ *the opportunity to address multiple complementary questions within one study;*
- ❑ *the possibility of enhancing interpretability by using methods in complementary fashion.*

(Robson 2002, p 370-373)

Data collection was both quantitative (pre-post questionnaires for pupils and teaching staff), as well as qualitative (pre-post focus groups with pupils, ongoing data gathering during network meetings and communications with schools during the 18-month-period, and structured interviews with teaching staff post implementation).

A Pre-Post Evaluation (Questionnaires and Focus Groups)

Pupils

Connectedness Questionnaire

The first research question set out to determine whether Bounce Back had an impact on the sense of connectedness of pupils. Data for this question were derived from a connectedness questionnaire (see below), as well as from the ongoing observations from teaching staff and from comments during the structured interviews after implementation (see section B).

All pupils in Primary 3-6 in the participating schools were asked to complete the SPOCC (Student's Perceptions of Classroom Connectedness, McGrath and Noble, 2003) questionnaire before the implementation of the programme. Eighteen months later, the same pupils (now P4-7) again completed this questionnaire. The SPOCC is a self-report questionnaire which uses 15 statements to assess pupils' perceptions of the emotional and social climate of their classroom and their sense of classroom connectedness (see Appendix 1). Pupils' responses were rated on a 3 point scale from mostly true (score = 3) to not true (score = 1). The higher the score the more the pupils feel connected with their classmates and teacher (max score = 45). As the wording of some of the statements of this questionnaire were open to misinterpretation (for example, "people in this class hardly ever treat each other in a mean way"), four clear statements were specifically selected for analysis. This was to ensure that no misinterpretation could have occurred. The questions selected were:

"Students in this class are kind towards each other."

"No one feels left out and lonely in this class."

"This is a safe class to be in because no one tries to hurt you or your feelings."

"I feel like I belong and am accepted in this class."

An overall pre and post score for all the answers to the questionnaire and individual scores for each of these questions were considered per school.

Personal Resilience Questionnaire

The second research question set out to determine whether Bounce Back had an impact on the resilience of pupils. Data for this question were derived from a personal resilience questionnaire and three focus groups (see below), as well as from ongoing observations/comments made by the school staff and pupils during and after the implementation, including structured interviews with teaching staff (see section B).

Pupils in the Primary 5 classes of all the schools were asked to complete the PRASE questionnaire (Protective Resilient Attitudes and Skills Evaluation, McGrath and Noble, 2003) prior to implementation, and again eighteen months later when they were in Primary 6. The questionnaire contains 20 statements assessing the resilient attitudes held by pupils, their confidence about coping in certain situations and their perceptions of their coping skills (see Appendix 2). Statements were scored in a positive or negative direction - ranging from 2 to 0 or 0 to 2 for a 'true', 'unsure' or 'not true' response (max score = 40). In the course of the research it became apparent

that there were flaws in the design of the PRASE questionnaire, particularly in the complexity of the questions and the use of several double negatives which could have been misunderstood. Several teachers commented on these limitations after using the questionnaires with their classes.

As a result of these limitations, one statement in particular was considered separately for analysis as this was clearly and positively worded and therefore unlikely to be confusing. This related to the connection between thinking and feeling and a sense of personal agency: “Feelings just happen to you and there’s nothing you can do about them”. It was hypothesised that the scores on this particular question post-implementation would show a decrease in the ‘true’ answer and an increase in the ‘not true’ answer, as this would demonstrate that pupils would have started to report more personal agency and realise that they have more control over their feelings.

Focus Groups

Three focus groups were set up with 6-8 randomly selected pupils from three participating schools (every third pupil from the register). Each group of pupils participated in discussion around five questions relating to real life challenges (see Appendix 3 for questions). This process was repeated with the same groups of pupils pre and post implementation of the programme in order to identify any change in reported coping skills.

Participation in this research was voluntary and parents were given the option of withdrawing their child from the research if they wished (see Appendix 6 for sample letters).

Teaching Staff

The third research question set out to determine whether Bounce Back had an impact on the resilience and wellbeing of staff in schools using the programme. Data collected for this purpose was gathered using two questionnaires (resilience and wellbeing) for teaching staff in the sixteen Bounce Back schools, which were used pre and post implementation (participation was voluntary). Ongoing feedback was gathered during implementation, as well as comments/observations from structured interviews with ten teachers after implementation (see section B).

Resilience Questionnaire

Teaching staff were asked to complete questionnaires about their own resilience (Resilience - My profile, adapted from Morris and Casey, 2006, see Appendix 4). Teachers self-rated 11 statements on a four point scale (‘very true’ to ‘never true’). The statements are designed to reflect teachers’ self-ratings of their use of resilience skills such as reframing, persistence, putting things in perspective, using positive self-talk and keeping the big picture in mind.

Wellbeing Questionnaire

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) was also used, as recommended by the Scottish Government, to assess overall positive mental wellbeing in adults (see Appendix 5). Teachers were asked to rate each of the 14 positively worded statements on a five point scale from ‘none of the time’ (score = 1) to ‘all of the time’ (score = 5) (max score = 70).

WEMWBS is a scale of mental wellbeing covering subjective wellbeing and psychological functioning, in which all items are worded positively and address aspects of positive mental health. WEMWBS has been validated for use in the UK for those aged 16 and above.

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale was funded by the Scottish Government National Programme for Improving Mental Health and Wellbeing, commissioned by NHS Health Scotland, developed by the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh, and is jointly owned by NHS Health Scotland, the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh.

B Ongoing Qualitative Data Gathering During and After Implementation Process

As mentioned above, this research employed a mixed method design, which meant that a wealth of data was gathered during the 18-month implementation of the programme. The fourth research question set out to determine which factors influenced the successful implementation of Bounce Back as a whole school programme. Data collected from the practitioners described below provided a rich insight into the important considerations for schools starting this programme in their schools.

Meetings with Teachers

The researchers also collected ongoing verbal feedback about the impact and effectiveness of the programme through link meetings with staff and network meetings with Bounce Back representatives from school. A pro-forma record sheet was used during these link meetings in order to have a consistent method for data collation (see Appendix 7).

Midpoint Evaluation

The first school in Perth and Kinross to introduce Bounce Back was halfway through the programme by January 2009 and pupils and staff at this school participated in a midpoint evaluation of the programme. This involved the researchers talking to all the staff in a group about their experience of the programme, and to two focus groups of pupils from P2-P4 and P5-P7, with two pupils from each class being selected at random (for questions see Appendix 8). Qualitative feedback from participants was used to write a mid-evaluation report, which is available from the Council's website (see references).

Structured Interviews

At the end of the research period (March-May 2010), ten structured interviews took place with one headteacher and nine class teachers in schools that had been using the programme. All these interviews were conducted using five questions (see Appendix 9); the responses recorded and then collated (see Appendix 11).

Results

A Pre-Post Evaluation

Pupils

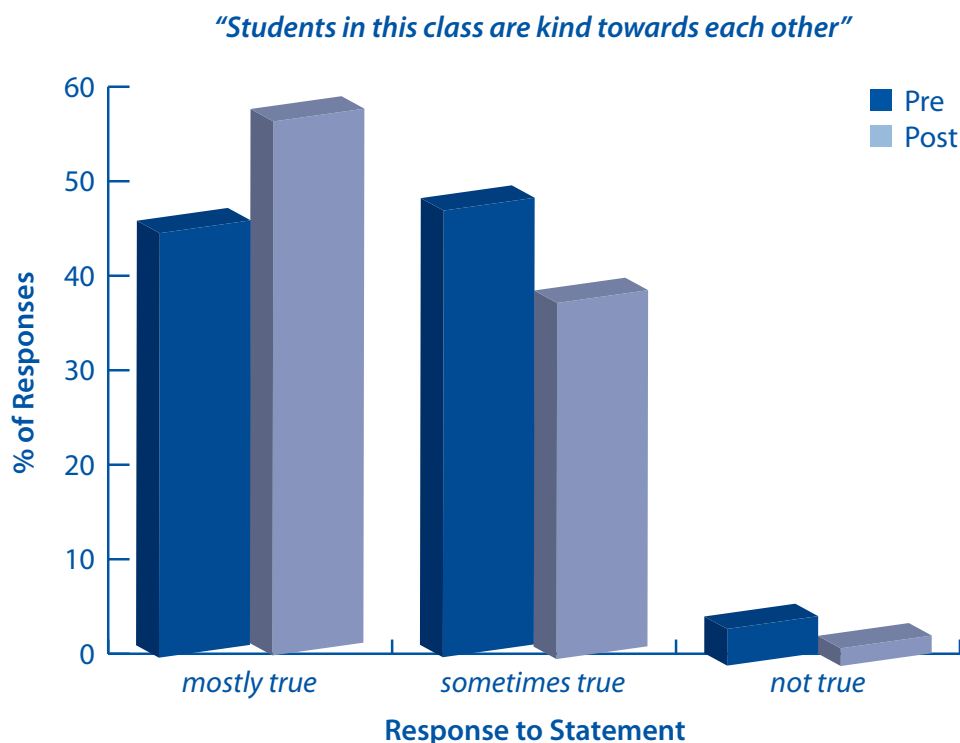
Twelve of the sixteen schools were able to provide valid data. Two schools had opted out of the programme due to their own changed circumstances, one school had incomplete and invalid data prior to implementation and one school did not manage to get the questionnaires to the researchers until after the analysis was complete.

Connectedness Questionnaire

Out of twelve schools, 884 pupils completed both pre and post SPOCC questionnaires. Nine schools showed an increase in the connectedness reported by the pupils, while 3 schools showed a decrease. Out of a maximum score of 45, the average score of all twelve schools increased from 37.25 to 38.26, a difference of 1.01, which is a 2.25% increase.

The average percentages of the responses pupils gave to four questions from the SPOCC before and after their schools had used the Bounce Back programme are shown below:

Graph 1: *Percentage of pupil responses pre and post evaluation for the statement "Students in this class are kind towards each other"*



Following implementation of Bounce Back, there was a 12.06% increase in pupils reporting that children in their class were kind towards each other.

Graph 2: *Percentage of pupil responses pre and post evaluation for the statement “No one feels left out and lonely in this class”*



Following implementation of Bounce Back, there was a 6.93% decrease in pupils reporting that children in their class felt left out and lonely.

Graph 3: *Percentage of pupil responses pre and post evaluation for the statement “This is a safe class to be in because no-one tries to hurt you or your feelings”*



Following implementation of Bounce Back, there was a 6.32% decrease in pupils reporting that children that their class was not a safe class to be in.

Graph 4: *Percentage of pupil responses pre and post evaluation for the statement “I feel like I belong and am accepted in this class”*



Following implementation of Bounce Back, there was a 4.93% increase in pupils reporting that they felt they belonged and were accepted in their class.

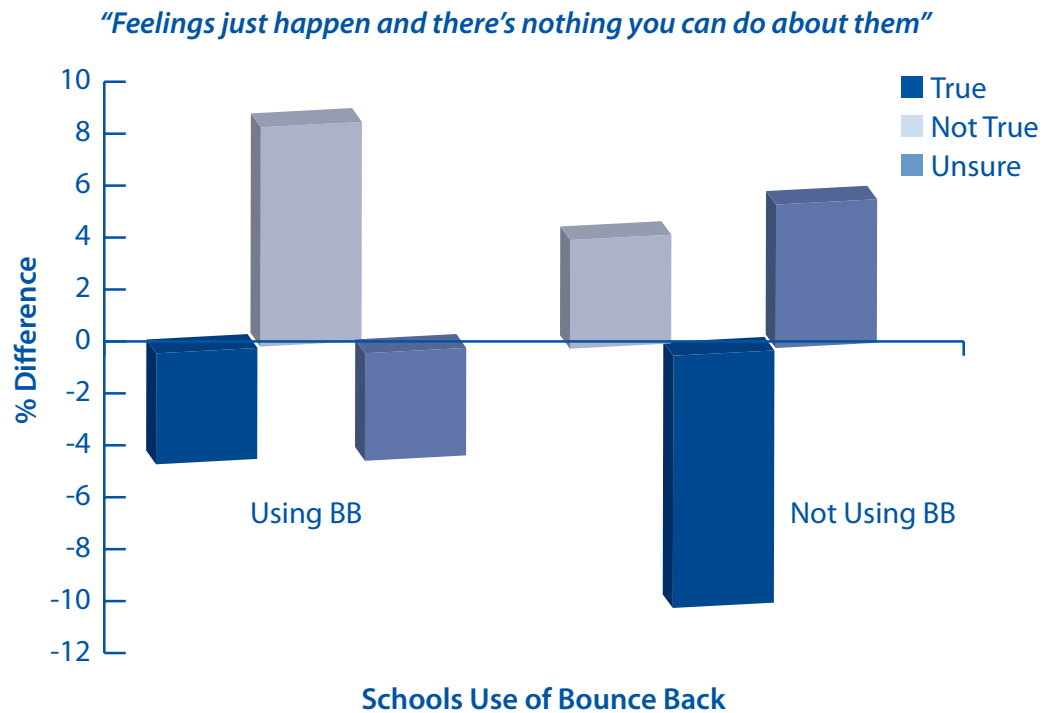
These results show changes in the average scores pupils gave in response to the above questions, which may indicate Bounce Back has had a positive impact on feelings of classroom connectedness. However, it should be noted that the questionnaires were administered at different times of the school year (September and May), and these timings might also have contributed to these results as the class would have been together longer in May.

Personal Resilience Questionnaire

197 pupils of 12 schools completed PRASE questionnaires both pre and post implementation. However, two schools reported that the Primary 6 pupils in their school had not yet started the Bounce Back programme, and the results from these classes were considered separately. Out of the 10 classes that had been taught Bounce Back, seven showed an increase in average resilience scores on the PRASE questionnaire, while 3 classes showed a decrease. The average score of all ten classes (out of a possible score of 40) increased from 24.85 to 25.60, (an increase of 0.80). The average score in the two classes which had not yet started using Bounce Back, decreased from 25.34 to 25.27 (a decrease of -0.07).

The average percentages for the pupils' responses to the statement that was considered separately, in the 10 classes that had and the two that had not been taught Bounce Back, are shown overleaf:

Graph 5: *Percentage of pupil responses pre and post evaluation for statement “Feelings just happen to you and there’s nothing you can do about them”*



These results indicate that pupils in classes which have been taught Bounce Back show a greater awareness that they have some control over their feelings (+8.79%). This was not evident in the schools which were not using Bounce Back.

Focus Groups

At the post-analysis stage, it became clear that two of the three focus groups were in schools where the Bounce Back programme had either hardly been used yet, or not been used in that particular class.

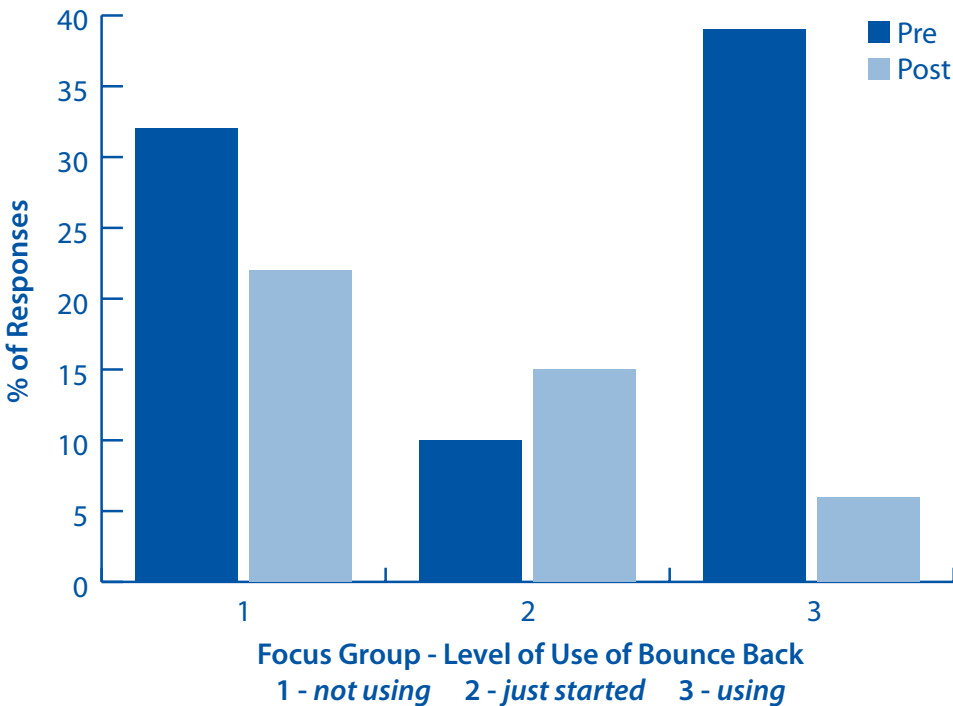
For the purposes of this report, focus group 1 refers to the pupils in the class that had not yet started the Bounce Back programme at the point of post-evaluation. Focus group 2 refers to the pupils that had only just started the programme at the point of post-evaluation, and focus group 3 refers to the pupils that belonged to a school that had been using the programme quite intensively for 4-5 months prior to the post-evaluation.

The focus groups’ responses in relation to each scenario were transcribed (eg moving school, disagreement with parent, being excluded from peer group, getting bad mark at test). These were then grouped according to negative or positive coping skills. The percentages of the responses for each of the focus groups were then put into one table.

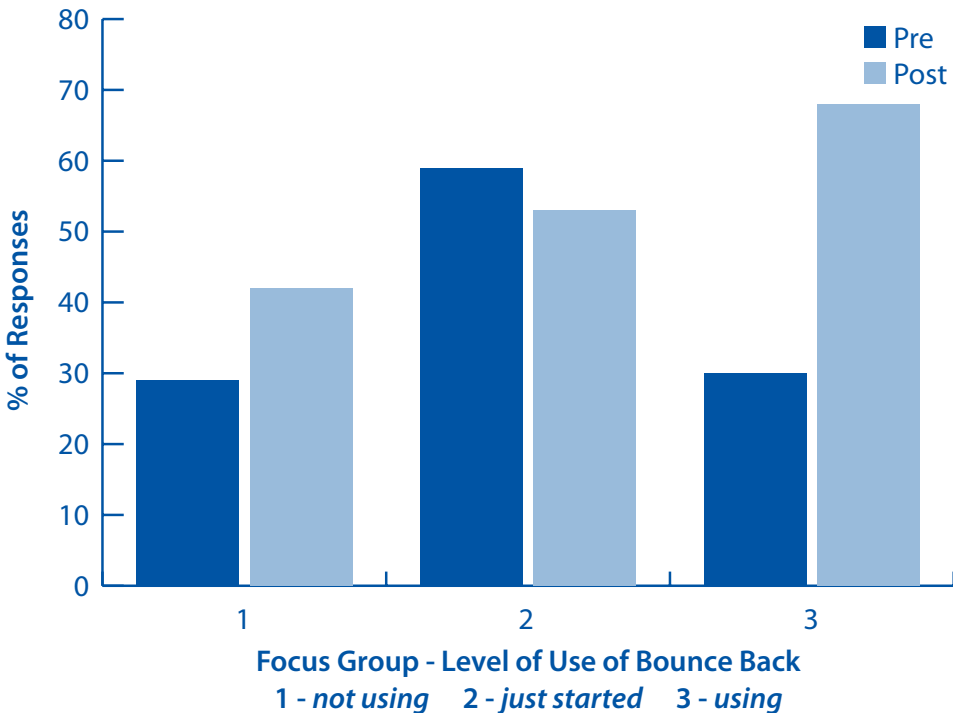
Each of the statements of the pupils were tallied and categorised and the percentages of each of the totals were then calculated for comparison.

The results of this analysis are shown in the following tables:

Graph 6a: *Percentage of negative coping skills responses reported by Primary 5 pupils pre and post evaluation*



Graph 6b: *Percentage of positive coping skills responses reported by Primary 5 pupils pre and post evaluation*



These results show a decrease in the statements referring to negative coping skills (-10% and -33%) and an increase in positive coping skills (+13% and +38%) for both focus groups 1 and 3. However, for focus group 3, who had been using the Bounce Back programme consistently, there was a markedly greater change.

Examples of negative coping skills were:

"I would stomp away downstairs and play on my own"

"I would scream until they let me do it"

"I would just hit him back"

Examples of positive coping skills were:

"I would talk to my parents and sort it out and say sorry"

"If people weren't talking to me, I would find somebody else and ask them if I could play with them"

"I would go to the teacher and ask why I got them wrong"

Although focus group 2 did not show an increase in positive coping skills, nor a decrease in negative coping skills, these pupils demonstrated relatively high levels of positive coping skills and low levels of negative coping skills at pre-evaluation.

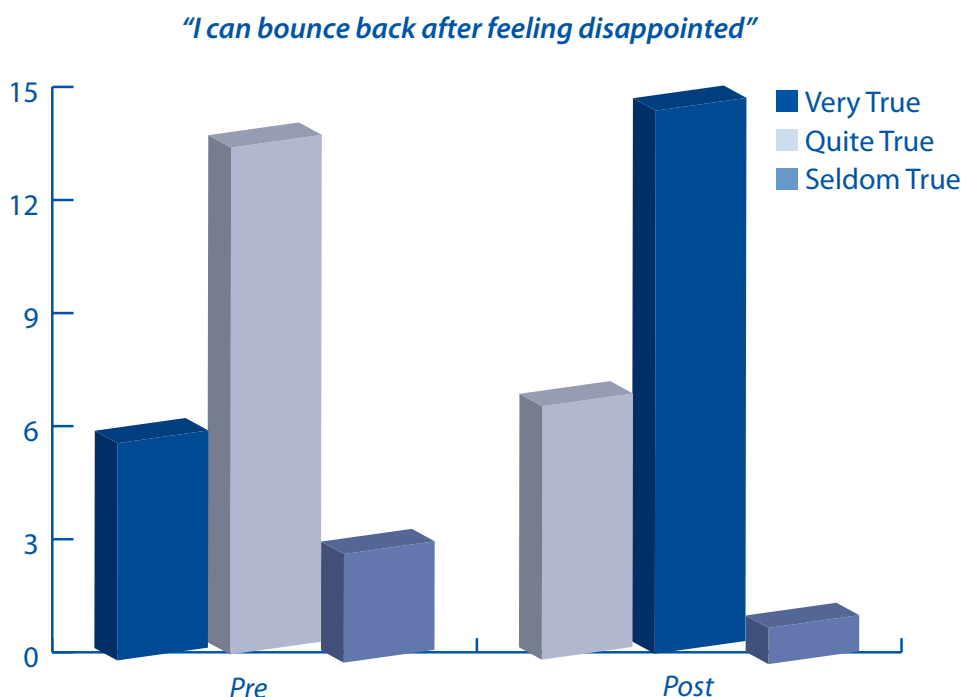
Teaching Staff

Resilience Questionnaire

Twenty three teachers completed questionnaires on their own use of resilience skills before and after several months of teaching Bounce Back. Comparison of the two questionnaires indicated that, of these, twenty had increased their use of resilience skills such as reframing, persistence, putting things in perspective, using positive self-talk and keeping the big picture in mind. Teachers self-rated 11 statements on a four point scale ('very true' to 'never true'). Two of the teachers had stayed the same, and one teacher showed a decrease (although this was because of one answer having shifted from 'very true' to 'true').

Graph 7 below shows there was a 44% increase in 'quite true' and 'very true' responses to the statement: *"I can bounce back after feeling disappointed"*.

Graph 7: Number of teacher responses to statement pre and post evaluation



Wellbeing Questionnaire

Twenty five teachers completed the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) before and after six to eighteen months teaching Bounce Back. There was an increase in the average WEMWBS scores of these teachers as shown below:

	Mean	Standard Deviation
September 2008	49.76	6.08
May 2009	53.16	6.91

This is a **statistically very significant result** with the probability of this increase occurring by chance equalling $p < 0.01$ ($t = 3.4229$).

One of the National Indicators of the Scottish Government is to increase in the average score of adults on the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale by 2011. The Scottish Government's literature states that an increase in the mean WEMWBS score that is greater than or equal to 0.7 points will indicate performance improving. Therefore, the mean 3.4 point increase in mental wellbeing reported by the teachers who had been teaching the Bounce Back programme strongly suggests a real impact of the Bounce Back programme on their mental wellbeing.

B Ongoing Qualitative Data Gathering During and After Implementation Process

Data Collection

During link meetings, visits to the schools, telephone conversations and email communications with the school staff, staff in the participating schools were encouraged to write down their thoughts and ask pupils for feedback on their thoughts about the Bounce Back programme.

The comments/thoughts/quotes from staff and pupils in the schools that were collected during link meetings, network meetings and other school visits and conversations with staff and pupils, were ordered into 3 categories:

- ❑ *what is working well;*
- ❑ *impact on peer relationships, personal resilience of teachers and pupils, and the effect on the school as a whole;*
- ❑ *challenges with logistics, leadership and school structures and the challenges of teaching resilience.*

A summary of these comments/quotes can be found in Appendix 10.

The main points that were reported for these 3 categories were:

❑ ***What is working well?***

❑ ***Materials/Resources/Adaptability/Flexibility***

Most staff commented that the resources are user friendly, high quality, with lots of practical activities, which can be used and easily adapted with a spread of abilities within the class. They reported that it is non-prescriptive and fun to do, with lots of visual materials. The teacher handbook was regarded by some as ‘a bible of good teaching and learning’. Teachers were reporting that the children were enjoying it and asking for more Bounce Back activities.

❑ ***Effect on Teaching and Learning***

Teaching staff commented on “the high level of contributions of the pupils, as well as on the high quality of discussions”. They felt “the activities generated a different kind of deeper questioning from the children which had not arisen before”. The cross-curricular use of the programme helped to give pupils a voice to their feelings. The Bounce Back acronym of ten coping statements encouraged an openness and level of discussion that teachers had not seen before, and they liked the fact that this programme is not a discrete entity, but feeds into class life once the pupils have understood the concepts.

“Bounce Back gives us a tool to converse with children about values” (teacher)

“I have explored topics that I would not have naturally” (teacher)

“There’s a strong message in Bounce Back that has not been taught before” (teacher)

❑ ***How the Bounce Back Programme Fits into Whole School Structures***

Many teachers commented on the clear links with co-operative learning and the Curriculum for Excellence.

“The programme provides a structure for the health and wellbeing programme in the school” (teacher)

One Headteacher stated that it had helped to review some policies in their school with the Bounce Back language of resilience in mind, and there was general agreement that a whole school approach, where the school develops a clear 'Bounce Back school' identity is the most effective way in bringing across the message to the school community.

❑ **Impact**

❑ **Peer Relationships**

Staff reported that pupils were using the coping skills in friendship difficulties and playground upsets, where pupils were more able to sort problems themselves, and it had helped to sort classroom disagreements in a more focused and structured way.

In some instances the programme had helped with bullying issues and with big changes in class make-up. Teachers reported seeing more pupils supporting each other and referring to optimistic thinking when faced with challenges. Pupils also reported that they were using the Bounce Back skills and values to improve their relationships.

"It stops fights in the playground" (pupil)

"It helps us to solve problems together" (pupil)

"Rather than asking a teacher, we now have the skills to solve problems ourselves" (pupil)

"It helped me bounce back when I fell out with my friend" (pupil)

"It helps me build and keep my friendships" (pupil)

❑ **Personal Resilience**

Pupils who were normally very quiet would now speak out, and some pupils were noticeably happier and more confident.

Some pupils took some of the ideas home (for example, asking for responsibilities at home!). Some of the statements from pupils are listed below:

"Pupils use Bounce Back when faced with challenges in class and after illness" (teacher)

"Pupils were applying resilience skills in their everyday lives" (teacher)

"It shows you what to do when you are down and feeling sad" (pupil)

"When something goes wrong, bounce back and look at the lighter side of things" (pupil)

"Bounce Back helps you feel happy again when you are sad" (pupil)

❑ **Effect on School**

Teachers reported positive impact on the whole school and many stressed the importance of using the language throughout the school day for this approach to be more effective.

"We are a Bounce Back school and it's made us a happier school." (pupil)

"It's made it a better school because everyone is being kinder" (pupil)

❑ Challenges

❑ Logistics

Time was seen as the biggest factor challenging the implementation of the programme. Both time to plan sessions and time to lead Bounce Back sessions, as well as creating a system of record keeping/book sharing/finding resources were issues in most schools.

❑ Leadership/School Structures

Quite a number of the initial schools had staff changes (headship and key teaching staff) after the initial training had taken place, which impacted on the ownership and leadership of Bounce Back in those schools. Involving parents and ongoing training are two other issues that were raised.

❑ Challenges of Teaching Resilience

Some of the values and topics were quite challenging to teach, and some of the children took longer to grasp some of the ideas, especially when the core values conflicted with those at home. It was clear that it took some of the children a long time to put the ideas into practice and some of the schools reported that they envisaged this taking years for some pupils.

Structured Interviews with Teaching Staff

Structured interviews were held with one headteacher and nine class teachers in schools that had been using the programme. The headteacher was from a school that had taken the programme on as a whole school and the class teachers had varying degrees of experience of teaching the programme.

A summary of their answers can be found below.

1. “How easy did you find the Bounce Back programme to teach?”

All teachers interviewed said they found the programme easy to teach. Most mentioned that the programme is straightforward and teacher-friendly, well laid out and easy to understand, with flexible and adaptable materials and accessible resources.

Some commented that it offers a clear link with their Health and Wellbeing agenda in the school and that it was easier doing it as a whole school.

“If difficult, what were the barriers and what do you suggest to reduce these?”

Most teachers commented on the practical implications of using two books (the handbook and the resource book), and the importance of having a system that allows easy access to the resources in the school (both handbooks/resource books and children’s books). The fact that some of the children’s literature mentioned in the resource books was now out of print or not available in the UK sometimes hampered progress, although teachers were clearly showing huge creativity in using their own resources and adapting some of the activities accordingly.

Lack of time was often mentioned as a hindrance, both in terms of planning for activities and time to implement the programme, although some teachers recognised that there was sometimes unnecessary overlap with other initiatives in the school and consideration of this possible duplication could help to start to address the time issue. Teachers suggested that schools starting Bounce Back should ensure a good stock of books in advance, with a reasonable budget for this and a well-organised accessible system in place.

2. “Have you noticed any changes in the pupils since you started teaching Bounce Back?”

Changes teachers reported were based on their observations of pupils’ behaviour and pupils’ comments. They said pupils were more appreciative of others helping them, had a greater range of coping strategies in dealing with problems and some pupils were more self-reliant. It helped one class to become more of a team, while it helped another class to be calmer in general. Pupils reported how it helped them cope with personal issues (such as parents’ separation). Most teachers noticed the pupils using ‘Bounce Back language’ in day-to-day interactions and some reported that the pupils were taking the messages home and were talking about them with other people outside the school community. Some teachers had observed pupils using parts of the programme spontaneously, both within the school, and in other situations such as sport. They had heard pupils using some of the Bounce Back language with each other in the playground and in challenging situations where some pupils had encouraged others to remember the coping skills from the acronym.

“The children this year have become so involved in it, they use the language and they’re really picking up on it and using it because I’ve been really positive and they’ve been really positive about learning it - it’s just become an everyday thing in their lives.”

“They were a very hyper class and it had a very positive response - it calmed the children down and got them thinking about what they were doing, they were using the values they had been taught and it was working in the playground.”

“They speak about issues they have to deal with at home and when they’re saying how they’ve managed to cope with it, their faces light up. One girl in particular spoke about how difficult it was when her parents split up - she didn’t know which home she was living in but she talked to us about how she managed to get through it.”

Some teachers reported that, although children were able to verbalise the coping strategies taught in the programme, they were not yet all able to consistently apply these in different contexts.

3. ***“Have you noticed a difference in the way you respond to pupils facing challenging times and, if so, can you give examples?”***

Nearly all staff commented on their changed responses to pupils facing challenging times after teaching Bounce Back. Most reported that they felt more prepared and equipped after teaching the acronym, that they have now got a ‘bank of statements’ they can refer to with the children to reinforce the messages.

Some commented that they now have greater awareness of their own thinking patterns and had observed more optimism in the staffroom. One commented that it had brought the staff team closer together. The implementation of Bounce Back was viewed by most staff as requiring a different approach with the children, through which they were able to help the children change their unhelpful thinking into helpful thinking and encourage a greater openness about feelings. One teacher commented on the usefulness of using pictures to show children displaying the positive values they were teaching (for example, pictures of pupils being supportive to others, etc).

“You find yourself referring to parts of Bounce Back, it crops up time and time again and the children know what you’re talking about - they know where you’re coming from”

“I am more aware of my own thinking, I try to find positives”

“We talk about things a lot more and are more open about feelings and helping others”

4. ***“Did any part of the programme stand out as being particularly useful or relevant?”***

The main units that stood out for the teachers as particularly useful were Unit 1 on values, Unit 3 where the Bounce Back acronym was taught, and Unit 5 on optimism/pessimism. One teacher had found Unit 4 on courage especially useful in helping to deal with fears of an individual pupil, as well as fears of transition for all the children in her class. The units on emotions and relationships were also mentioned by some teachers.

5. ***“Have you involved parents in any way? If so, how?”***

Most schools have limited the involvement of parents at this stage of the implementation to holding information evenings and sometimes giving ‘Bounce Back homework’ related to the unit they are working on. One school had developed a school-home communication system in which children reported on their responsibilities both at home and in school, which was fully supported by the parents.

6. "Any other comments?"

One teacher reported that she really liked the wide variety of activities within the programme (the fact that there are a wealth of activities for one topic), whilst another teacher stressed the importance of the messages taught in this programme. One teacher stressed the importance for a new school taking this on, not to see the Bounce Back programme as an add-on, but to use it as the main resource for the Curriculum for Excellence - Health and Wellbeing outcomes.

"I just think it is so important that we do teach this to children...if we can equip these children with skills for the future, then they're very fortunate to have this training."

Discussion and Implications

Impact on the Resilience and Connectedness of Pupils and the Resilience and Wellbeing of Staff

This study set out to determine:

- 1 *whether Bounce Back had an impact on the resilience of pupils;*
- 2 *whether Bounce Back had an impact on the sense of connectedness of pupils;*
- 3 *whether Bounce Back had an impact on the resilience and wellbeing of staff in schools using the programme.*

1 Did Bounce Back have an impact on the resilience of pupils?

The questionnaire and focus group data showed increases in pupils' personal resilience attitudes and skills in those schools where Bounce Back had been taught. In particular, there was a marked increase in pupils' awareness of control over their feelings in those schools. Pupils commented on the positive effect of Bounce Back on their own confidence and social skills. Staff were beginning to see positive effects of Bounce Back on pupils' personal resilience, although not yet in all children. However, this is to be expected as this programme is designed to be a long term and multi-year programme. Therefore, a follow up of these pupils into secondary school would be a possible avenue for future research, as it is hoped that their increased resilience will result in a lower incidence of depression, anxiety and risk-taking behaviour.

2 Did Bounce Back have an impact on the sense of connectedness of pupils?

The questionnaire data showed increases in the pupils' perceptions of classroom connectedness in those schools where Bounce Back had been taught. Staff observed positive effects of the programme on peer relationships, school ethos and teaching and learning. Pupils commented on the contribution of Bounce Back to their schools being kinder and happier places. In those schools where Bounce Back had been taught, pupils reported that fewer pupils felt left out and lonely in their class, more felt they belonged and were accepted and more were kinder towards each other.

3 Did Bounce Back have an impact on the resilience and wellbeing of staff in schools using the programme?

Teachers showed an increase in their use of resilience skills and a very significant increase in their mental wellbeing after teaching Bounce Back. Some teachers made specific comments on the positive effects of the programme on their own personal resilience, which helped them to feel more equipped to deal with challenging situations in and out of the classroom.

Factors Influencing the Successful Implementation of the Bounce Back Programme

This study also set out to determine:

- 4 *which factors influenced the successful implementation of Bounce Back as a whole school programme.*

The majority of the schools were highly motivated to implement this programme and engaged creatively with the materials. The Bounce Back materials were regarded by most teachers as high quality, easy to use and teacher-friendly, and pupils found the activities fun and engaging. Easy access to both the Bounce Back books and a well-organised bank of supporting resources was essential in the effective implementation of the programme.

The implementation of the Bounce Back programme as a whole school initiative was seen by many as key to its effectiveness. This included using 'Bounce Back language' across the school and ongoing discussions among the staff team regarding the process of becoming a Bounce Back school, as one of the underlying principles of the programme is the importance of modelling this approach to children on a day-to-day basis. However, as Elliot and Treuting (1991) suggest, implementation of interventions within schools is often weighted by its participants against the degree to which it places demands on their time (eg creation of new materials, training, and familiarity with materials) or the application of novel practices.

This view was certainly echoed by the school staff involved in the implementation of the Bounce Back programme, as they stressed the importance of having time to organise and get familiar with the resources and plan and prepare activities and materials, as well as the importance of dealing with staff changes and ensuring that other initiatives do not hinder the progress of the programme.

The majority of schools have continued to show high commitment to the programme, especially in those schools which have a 'goodness of fit', a commitment to the values underpinning the programme, as well as a stable and mutually supportive staff team. However, the importance of clear planning and consultation beforehand with all the staff involved and an ongoing commitment from a strong leader and supportive staff team was often stressed as key for future success in any school that would consider taking on this programme.

Undertaking the Bounce Back programme is a major, long term commitment for a school. Consideration of the readiness of the school and how well Bounce Back fits with other school initiatives are a prerequisite for its implementation.

Furthermore, key to the continuing successful implementation of Bounce Back across schools within Perth & Kinross Council will be ongoing commitment and support from the Local Authority.

Conclusion

It was clear from this research that the Bounce Back programme was particularly suited to the Scottish context as the underlying values on which it is based (in particular, co-operation, acceptance of difference, respect and mutual support) are meaningful in a society that has health, wellbeing and resilience at the heart of its educational aims.

This research has highlighted the importance of not regarding this programme as an 'outside' short-term input for a limited group of children with possible short-term gains, but rather as a whole school, long term, universal approach, delivered by teachers and embedded in the curriculum, which helps to invest in the future resilience and wellbeing of Scottish children and young people. However, it was also clear that this programme had a bigger impact in those schools that have strong leadership, a strong and supportive staff team and in those schools that took careful consideration to consider their school readiness and to plan time for training and ongoing support to the staff in implementing this programme in their schools.

The clear impact shown in this research on the connectedness and resilience of pupils, as well as the resilience and wellbeing of teaching staff, has confirmed the potential of this programme for future generations in Scotland. If teachers-educators can help children learn coping skills for life by modelling an optimistic, resilient outlook on life and sharing a message of hope for the future, then their positive influence on children and young people can only strengthen the resilience of the adults of tomorrow.

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Websites

www.pkc.gov.uk

www.centreforconfidence.co.uk

www.scotland.gov.uk (*Scottish Government National Outcomes*)

Appendix 1: SPOCC

Bounce Back Students Perceptions of Classroom Connectedness

Name (please use block capitals) _____

Date of Birth _____

Please tick the school you attend:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please tick the class you are in:

P1 ☐ P2 ☐ P3 ☐ P4 ☐ P5 ☐ P6 ☐ P7 ☐

Most of the kids in this case like each other.

Mostly True ☐ Sometimes True ☐ Not True ☐

I like being in this class.

Mostly True ☐ Sometimes True ☐ Not True ☐

People in this class hardly ever treat each other in a mean way.

Mostly True ☐ Sometimes True ☐ Not True ☐

There are very few fights among kids in this class.

Mostly True ☐ Sometimes True ☐ Not True ☐

Students in this class are kind towards each other.

Mostly True ☐ Sometimes True ☐ Not True ☐

The kids and the teacher in this class know each other pretty well.

Mostly True ☐ Sometimes True ☐ Not True ☐

No-one feels left out and lonely in this class.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

This is a safe class to be in because no-one tries to hurt you or your feelings.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

I look forward to being with the other kids in this class.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

I feel like I belong and am accepted in this class.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

‘Put-downs’ rarely happen in this class.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

Our class gets on well with our teacher.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

Most people in this class think more about the good things that happen than the bad.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

Most kids in this class work with each other to solve problems that happen in the class.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

Most students in this class care about what happens to their classmates.

Mostly True ☐

Sometimes True ☐

Not True ☐

Appendix 2: PRASE

Bounce Back

Protective Resilient Attitude and Skills Evaluation (PRASE) Middle Version

Name (please use block capitals) _____

Date of Birth _____

Please tick the school you attend:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please tick the class you are in:

P1 ☐ P2 ☐ P3 ☐ P4 ☐ P5 ☐ P6 ☐ P7 ☐

If one thing goes wrong for me, then everything else always goes wrong too.

True ☐ Not True ☐ Unsure ☐

If you have a problem, you should talk to someone about it.

True ☐ Not True ☐ Unsure ☐

When things go wrong for me, it's always my fault.

True ☐ Not True ☐ Unsure ☐

When a bad thing happens to me, it's impossible to find anything funny or good about it.

True ☐ Not True ☐ Unsure ☐

It's ok not to get everything right all the time. Nobody's perfect and mistakes help you learn.

True ☐ Not True ☐ Unsure ☐

Even when I know something can't be changed, I still get really upset about it.

True ☐ Not True ☐ Unsure ☐

It's ok sometimes to have problems or worries. Everybody does.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

When something goes wrong in one part of my life, I think about the parts of my life that are still good.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

If you look hard you can find some funny parts and some good bits even in a bad situation.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

If something bad could happen I don't worry too much about it because it probably won't happen.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

When bad things happen to you they go on for ever.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

Making mistakes and getting things wrong means that you are dumb.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

People shouldn't have to ask other people to help them solve their problems.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

If you try, you can change your feelings, even if you're really upset.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

Some people never have any problems or worries.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

Sometimes bad things happen to me just because of bad luck.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

Sometimes you have to put up with something you don't like because you can't change it.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

Feelings just happen to you and there's nothing you can do about them.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

When something goes wrong in my life, I might feel unhappy for a while but then things get better quickly.

True ☐

Not True ☐

Unsure ☐

Appendix 3: Focus Group Questions

Thank you for meeting with us. We have asked your teacher to pick every third pupil on the register so we can talk to lots of different children. We're here because your school is going to be part of a new programme called Bounce Back. We're going to be asking you some questions because we'd like to find out what children of your age think and do when challenging things happen in their lives. After your school has been using the programme for some time, we'll come back and talk to you again to see if there have been any changes for you. We'll be recording and writing down what you say because we can't remember all you say but we will not show this to anyone and if we use any of the things that have been said we will not use your names. We expect this session to take about 45 minutes.

Ground Rules

- ☐ *Everyone should have the opportunity to speak.*
- ☐ *Everyone's ideas matter and should be respected.*
- ☐ *Confidentiality will be maintained and no-one's name will be mentioned in the report. Ask participants to 'keep whatever is said in the room private' but remind them that you cannot guarantee that all participants will do this.*

Interview Scenarios and Questions

- ☐ *You have a terrible fight with your parents and they are furious with you and send you to your room. They tell you that you can't go to the party on Saturday because of your behaviour.*
- ☐ *You went to a new school and no-one talked to you or played with you on the first day.*
- ☐ *Your best friend is going to move to another school next week.*
- ☐ *Your teacher has written in your jotter that you did not work hard enough on your last spelling test.*
- ☐ *A friend is having a birthday party and you have not been invited.*

What thoughts are going through your mind?

What would you do/what action would you take?

Appendix 4: Resilience – My Profile

Name (please use block capitals) _____

Please tick the school you attend:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I can bounce back after feeling disappointed.

Very True ☐ Quite True ☐ Seldom True ☐ Never ☐

I can accomplish what I need to if I put my mind to it.

Very True ☐ Quite True ☐ Seldom True ☐ Never ☐

Obstacles or problems in my life have resulted in unexpected changes for the better.

Very True ☐ Quite True ☐ Seldom True ☐ Never ☐

There is always more than one right answer.

Very True ☐ Quite True ☐ Seldom True ☐ Never ☐

I am not one to procrastinate.

Very True ☐ Quite True ☐ Seldom True ☐ Never ☐

I am afraid to try something again when I have failed at it before.

Very True ☐ Quite True ☐ Seldom True ☐ Never ☐

I decide certain problems are not worth worrying about.

Very True ☐ Quite True ☐ Seldom True ☐ Never ☐

I relax myself when tension builds up.

Very True ☐ Quite True ☐ Seldom True ☐ Never ☐

I can see the humorous side of situations.

Very True ☐

Quite True ☐

Seldom True ☐

Never ☐

I often put things aside for a while to get perspective on them.

Very True ☐

Quite True ☐

Seldom True ☐

Never ☐

When something is not working I try to come up with an alternative plan.

Very True ☐

Quite True ☐

Seldom True ☐

Never ☐

Appendix 5: The Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well–Being Scale (WEMWBS)

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts.

Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks

Statements	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future					
I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling relaxed					
I've been interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've had energy to spare					
I've been dealing with problems well	1	2	3	4	5
I've been thinking clearly					
I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling close to other people					
I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
I've been able to make up my own mind about things					
I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
I've been interested in new things					
I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)

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Appendix 6: Pro-Forma Letters for Parents and Teachers

Letter for Parents/Carers Prior to Starting Study

Dear Parent/Carers

Over the next two years, *(name of school)* Primary School is going to be part of an exciting initiative within Perth & Kinross Council, which aims to raise resilience in children and young people. Resilience has been shown to be a key quality that allows people to cope with life's challenges.

This programme will be evaluated by Perth & Kinross Council's Educational Psychology Service. Pupils in P3-P6 will be asked to complete a questionnaire about their class and P5 pupils will also be asked to complete a resilience questionnaire. A small number of pupils, parents and staff will be invited to participate in interviews.

If you do not wish your child to complete these questionnaires, please let *(name of contact person in the school)* know by *(date of administration of questionnaires)*.

If you have any further questions regarding this programme or the research, please contact:

Sarah Axford: SNAxford@pkc.gov.uk

Rita Schepens: RLLSchepens@pkc.gov.uk

Kirsty Blyth: KBlyth@pkc.gov.uk

Educational Psychology Service - Tel 01738 476280

Yours sincerely

Sarah Axford, Rita Schepens & Kirsty Blyth
Educational Psychologists

Headteacher
(name) Primary School

Letter for Teachers Prior to the Study

Dear Teacher

We are going to research the impact of the Bounce Back programme in all the schools that are participating in the programme. The main aim of the programme is to raise resilience in children, but it is also anticipated that there may be an impact on staff resilience and wellbeing.

In order to see whether this is the case, we are asking all staff involved in teaching Bounce Back to complete two questionnaires, both prior to and on completion of the last unit of the programme. Questionnaires will be placed in sealed envelopes to be returned by the end of September 2008. Only the researchers will have access to this confidential questionnaire information. No individual results will be made available to anyone at any time.

It would be very helpful for the validity of the study if you could be as honest as possible in answering these questions. Please return them by 26 September 2008. If you do not wish to complete the questionnaire, please return them uncompleted in the sealed envelope.

Your help in this is very much appreciated and we look forward to working with you on Bounce Back.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Axford, Rita Schepens and Kirsty Blyth
Educational Psychologists

Letter for Teachers Post Study

Dear Teacher

As you know, over the past 2 years, the Educational Psychology Service has been researching the impact of the Bounce Back programme in 17 schools including its possible impact on staff resilience and wellbeing.

We would now like to ask all staff who completed the questionnaires 18 months ago, to do the same again.

Only the researchers will have access to this confidential questionnaire information. No individual results will be made available to anyone at any time.

We are aware that schools vary in how far they have progressed with the programme and have included an extra question about this. It would be very helpful for the validity of the study, if you could be as honest as possible in answering the questions.

If you do not wish to complete the questionnaires, please return them uncompleted.

The deadline for the questionnaire return is 10 May.

Your help is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Axford, Rita Schepens and Kirsty Blyth
Educational Psychologists

Instructions for Teachers Post-Evaluation

Teaching Staff

Resilience - My Profile and Staff Questionnaire

- ☐ **All teaching staff** who completed pre-evaluation September 2008 (including Headteacher) complete again.

Pupils

Students Perceptions of Classroom Connectedness Questionnaire

- ☐ Primary 4 to 7 pupils inclusive complete.

Protective Resilient Attitudes and Skills Evaluation Questionnaire

- ☐ Primary 6 pupils only.

Protocol for Pupil Questionnaire Completion

- ☐ Class teacher to ask pupils to fill in questionnaire individually, without discussing it with each other.
- ☐ Explain to pupils that these forms will be collected once completed in a sealed envelope and not read by anyone in the school.
- ☐ Ask children to write their name, DOB, school and class on the form, where possible in capital letters.
- ☐ Ensure pupils have understood how to fill in the form.
- ☐ On completion, collect forms in a big envelope, labelled clearly with school and class and hand to Headteacher.

All questionnaires to be completed and returned by 10 May 2010

Appendix 7: Pro-Forma for Data Collection at Link Meetings

Date _____ Link EP _____

Name of School _____

Record of Bounce Back Meetings with Link Schools

Putting Bounce Back into Practice

What's going well?

Issues arising

Impact so far

Support

What would be helpful?

How can we make it happen?

Bounce Back Materials

Feedback

Sharing of original materials

Next steps

Appendix 8: Questions at Mid-Evaluation Focus Groups with Staff

Questions for Mid-Evaluation Teachers

- (1) What are your perceptions and observations about Bounce Back?
- (2) What benefits and positive aspects can you identify?
- (3) Have you noticed any changes in how pupils relate to each other and you?
- (4) Have you seen any examples of your pupils using skills or behaviours that they have learned in Bounce Back?
- (5) What improvements or additions do you think we need to make to the programme?
- (6) Has the programme made any difference to how you personally deal with things?

Appendix 9: Questions for Structured Interviews with Teachers in Bounce Back

- (1) How easy did you find the Bounce Back programme to teach? If difficult, what were the barriers?
- (2) Have you noticed any changes in the pupils since you started teaching Bounce Back?

+ Sub question: *Have you observed pupils using any part of the programme spontaneously?*
- (3) Have you noticed a difference in the way you respond to pupils facing challenging times and if so - can you give examples? (especially ask re language)
- (4) Did any part of the programme stand out for you as being particularly useful or relevant?
- (5) Have you involved parents in any way? If so, how?

Appendix 10: Data Collation of Link/Network Meetings and Other Comments/Quotes

What's Working Well? (teachers' comments)

- ☐ *Have seen high level of contributions, gets them talking, good for starting discussions.*
- ☐ *Generates different/deeper questions, great discussion, older ones picking up quickly.*
- ☐ *Many opportunities in BB to use language of resilience into curriculum (eg WWII), "more cross-curricular than we thought".*
- ☐ *Links to CfE very clear.*
- ☐ *Uses co-operative learning principles.*
- ☐ *Lots of examples of practical activities which make the ideas real (ie displays), games on optimistic/pessimistic thinking, songs for older kids, bookmarks, etc.*
- ☐ *Whole school Bounce Back identity.*
- ☐ *Fits with own values.*
- ☐ *Use with spread of abilities (also able children), adaptable to suit your class's needs.*
- ☐ *We targeted children and did extra activities with them to reinforce the messages.*
- ☐ *Gives tool to converse with children about values.*
- ☐ *Gives children a voice for their feelings.*
- ☐ *We used existing resources to complement Bounce Back.*
- ☐ *High quality materials, excellent resources, well pitched at children's levels, well set out with lots of ideas, teachers' notes great to dip into.*
- ☐ *Not prescriptive.*
- ☐ *More exciting than the PSD resources we have.*
- ☐ *It's fun to do, the children are enjoying it.*
- ☐ *Lots of interactive practical activities.*
- ☐ *Love it, book's brilliant, the activities capture the imagination.*
- ☐ *Unit 1 is great for P1-3.*
- ☐ *Practical activities easy to adapt, useful in nursery.*
- ☐ *Helped 2 composite classes merge.*
- ☐ *Explores values that are different than at home.*
- ☐ *Children are engaging with the literature suggested, the literature is very relevant.*

- ❑ *The teacher handbook is a 'bible' of good teaching and learning.*
- ❑ *I like the visual nature of the materials, the visual images to show the acronym are helpful.*
- ❑ *Children led the pace in discussions.*
- ❑ *Structured way of teaching values in PSD (less haphazard).*
- ❑ *Homework on Bounce Back home for parents (got families talking).*
- ❑ *Can permeate rest of school (ie dinner hall).*
- ❑ *Whole school works best, continuity, provides structure of health and wellbeing programme (discrete focus), reviewing policies with Bounce Back.*
- ❑ *Bounce Back can be used as main behaviour policy (more effective).*
- ❑ *User friendly.*
- ❑ *Good to be explicit about what you're teaching and why.*
- ❑ *I have explored topics that I wouldn't have naturally.*
- ❑ *Book list helpful.*
- ❑ *It's not rocket science, you open the book and it's there!*
- ❑ *Strong message in Bounce Back that hasn't been taught before, ie adding something new to curriculum, challenging in a different way.*
- ❑ *Not discrete entity, feeds into class life.*
- ❑ *Working together with other class/other teacher was really good, ie P1 + P2.*
- ❑ *Kids are requesting Bounce Back activities!*

Impact on Pupils' Resilience/Connectedness/Coping Skills (as observed and commented on by teachers)

- ❑ *Heard them talk about (un)helpful thinking, great to hear them use the messages and the acronym, the kids make reference to Bounce Back, they use the acronym and strategies in school and nursery.*
- ❑ *Children who are normally very quiet are now speaking out.*
- ❑ *Boosted one P7 pupil's self-esteem (his contributions were valued by other pupils), gives this pupil a voice, one child was noticeably happier.*
- ❑ *Kids are able to identify someone with integrity in their class, they are applying core values in real life.*
- ❑ *Pupils are using Bounce Back when faced with challenges in class and after illness.*
- ❑ *Use of Bounce Back in real life situations, unfair treatment by peers, acceptance of differences, exploration of feelings: the children link colour to feelings regularly!*
- ❑ *More instances of appropriate concern being shown by pupils.*
- ❑ *Can help with bullying (ex of bullied boy who received support from peers and mum very appreciative).*

- ❑ *Less 'telling tales' by younger children.*
- ❑ *Pupils now realising there's a choice in how they behave.*
- ❑ *Pupils using it in friendship difficulties.*
- ❑ *Bounce Back already part of language of children.*
- ❑ *Children showing they can sort playground upsets better for themselves.*
- ❑ *Pupils supporting peers by learning more optimistic thinking, kids using more optimistic language.*
- ❑ *Children went home and asked for responsibilities! Children sharing co-operative materials.*
- ❑ *Older pupils more supportive of younger ones and helping peers when they fall.*

Impact on Teachers' Own Resilience

- ❑ *Teacher more aware of catastrophising, pessimistic thinking (read Seligman), applying it more to own real life.*
- ❑ *Use acronym when I have worries too, acronym is on fridge at home!*
- ❑ *Helped me to think in slightly more positive way.*
- ❑ *Makes you think yourself!*

Impact on School/Class Level (as reported by teachers)

- ❑ *The acronym encouraged an openness and level of discussion not seen before, great way to get at issues for children.*
- ❑ *Useful in Additional Support meetings where Bounce Back messages can be made relevant to real life experiences.*
- ❑ *Helps to sort classroom disagreements in more focused and structured way.*
- ❑ *Positive impact on school through common targets at assemblies.*
- ❑ *Impact slow but positive.*
- ❑ *Big impact on class which had big problems/changes.*
- ❑ *Builds different relationship with class (starting with personal experience).*
- ❑ *Common language of benefit to the whole school.*

Issues (for teachers)

- ❑ *Time to organise activities in advance, time biggest issue, planning quite onerous.*
- ❑ *Takes time to actually do it, need to plan time, not only for lessons but also for issues arising from activities.*
- ❑ *Some P1-2 not getting it as quickly, so adapt resources, spend longer on Unit 1, sometimes heavy going with infants, acronym too challenging for infants (concepts introduced in circle time instead), P1-2 find concept of honesty very difficult.*

- ❑ *Changes with staffing/headship hindrance.*
- ❑ *How to involve, inform parents and training.*
- ❑ *Issue of training for staff changes/probationers (ie training for probationers in P&K).*
- ❑ *How to make Bounce Back a whole school philosophy.*
- ❑ *Sharing resources via GLOW, peer support network within and between schools.*
- ❑ *Record keeping (what activities done?).*
- ❑ *Children able to articulate what they should do, but sometimes difficulties putting into practice.*
- ❑ *Good to know which books are really good (too many books mentioned: choice?), knowing what to buy.*
- ❑ *Need to know how to find alternative books, materials, resources, time to look at resources.*
- ❑ *Some kids harder to shift their thinking.*
- ❑ *Too Australian, would be good to have more Scottish, local examples, resources.*
- ❑ *Composite classes.*
- ❑ *Core values different than the ones at home.*
- ❑ *Took longer than anticipated to get started and to implement, frustrating it's 2 books (also difficult to get books).*
- ❑ *Everyone using same language in school helped (essential), focused us as a school.*
- ❑ *Some of language difficult, but by using other phrases message can still get across (requires creativity, such as 'big deal, little deal').*
- ❑ *Important to have access to good range of resources, books, difficulties accessing books.*

Appendix 1 1: Collation of Comments From Structured Interviews with Teaching Staff

How easy did you find the Bounce Back programme to teach?

All the teachers interviewed said they found the programme easy to teach. Positive aspects mentioned were that the programme is straightforward and teacher-friendly, the resource books are accessible, well laid out and easy to understand and the lessons give lots of ideas and guidance. The materials are flexible allowing teachers to choose which activities would suit them and their class and there are a lot of follow-up activities, a high variety of teaching methods and a wide range of resources. Below are some verbatim comments from the teachers:

- ☐ *The ease of adapting the programme and adding your own ideas and stories.*
- ☐ *It was easy to teach because the children loved it.*
- ☐ *There should be something for everyone.*
- ☐ *Well I've got a personal interest in the whole resilience idea, being positive - allowing children to express their feelings - so I haven't found it difficult to teach in fact I've really enjoyed it and I think because of my enthusiasm that's also rubbed off on the children.*
- ☐ *It was easy to teach because we did it all together as a whole team and worked through the units at the same time.*
- ☐ *The programme brings a core element for Health and Wellbeing.*

If difficult, what were the barriers?

Although none of the teachers found the programme difficult to teach, most of them mentioned barriers that impeded its effectiveness:

- ☐ *Working from two different books (resource book and teaching handbook), which meant that if there weren't enough handbooks in the school, you might forget what a particular co-operative learning activity was or not have a resource that is needed for a particular lesson. There is a lot of to-ing and fro-ing from one book to the other.*
- ☐ *If the school hadn't acquired a good bank of story books to support the programme, or didn't have an organised system for accessing the books.*
- ☐ *Many of the recommended story books being unavailable as they were Australian or out of print. (The list of suggested books compiled by the educational psychologists was mentioned as having been helpful)*
- ☐ *The time factor - fitting it in with all the other things the school is doing, and perhaps there is an overlap with some other things they are learning (eg other health and wellbeing programmes, aspects of RME).*

- ❑ *Some older children were reported as not liking the words ‘bounce back’ and thinking them babyish.*
- ❑ *There wasn’t the push (leadership) needed to implement it across the whole school.*

Suggestions made for reducing some of these barriers were:

- ❑ *schools should make sure they have a good stock of books in advance, that there is a reasonable budget for acquiring these and that these are well organised and accessible to staff;*
- ❑ *there should be consideration of the authority holding a central stock of books, including the Australian ones, that schools could borrow from.*

Have you noticed any changes in the pupils since you started teaching Bounce Back?

Nine out of the ten staff interviewed had noticed changes in the pupils. The teacher who had not noticed any changes mentioned that it had only been used for a few months in their school and not in any great depth. The changes noted by the other staff included:

- ❑ *pupils are more appreciative of the times when someone else helps them and saying things like ‘so and so helped me to bounce back’;*
- ❑ *pupils having a greater range of ways of moving on from problems;*
- ❑ *the class as a whole are more of a team - they are quite a challenging class and we talk openly about issues - we’re very honest with each other and very positive;*
- ❑ *I asked them if they had noticed a difference in the way they were and a number of them gave me stories of things they’d done recently not just positive thinking for themselves but they discuss it with their parents or at home with their brother - the kids are now giving each other advice out with the school;*
- ❑ *the children this year have become so involved in it, they use the language and they’re really picking up on it and using it in their lives because I’ve been really positive and they’ve been really positive about learning it - it’s just become an everyday thing in their lives;*
- ❑ *they’re aware of the way they should be thinking and some of them make a conscious effort;*
- ❑ *shared language has enabled the interaction in the school community to become more solution-focussed;*
- ❑ *when children fall out they are trying to notice the positive things as they realise the negative things are less helpful;*
- ❑ *children in P1 used to be desperate not to lose golden time but now say ‘we are going to be able to bounce back’ (from it);*

- ❑ *they are able to use the language (eg showing respect) and explain the thinking;*
- ❑ *the P3's were a very hyper class and it had a very positive response - it calmed the children down and was getting them thinking about what they were doing, they were using the values they had been taught and it was working in the playground;*
- ❑ *they are beginning to refer to it more, not so much about themselves, but about other pupils in the class. For example, two girls in my class were having an argument, and they were both getting tearful with each other because of what they were saying, and there was a girl sitting in the middle of the two of them and she said 'just stop, remember bad times don't last' and they sorted it out and it was fine after that;*
- ❑ *elements of self-regulation have started to show in kids;*
- ❑ *they speak about issues they have to deal with at home and when they're able to say how they've managed to cope with it, their face lights up. One girl in particular spoke about how difficult it was when her parents split up - she didn't know what home she was living in but she talked to us about how she managed to get through it;*
- ❑ *now they can be more self-reliant - there's ways of doing that because they've explored it.*

Have you observed pupils using any part of the programme spontaneously?

- ❑ *If someone is coming in with a problem, making a big fuss about something, they'll say "oh come on now, we're bouncy" or "is it a big deal or a little deal?".*
- ❑ *They are definitely using some of the language, eg "so and so helped me to bounce back because they made me laugh out in the playground", "I was sad and they told me a funny story", "my family does this and it's a real help to me".*
- ❑ *I've seen them outside school at a rugby tournament, one of the boys in the class had got them together and said "come on, we really need to bounce back from this and this is what we're going to do" and he really started to encourage the team and it really worked - you could see it. Also at a recent rotary quiz where there were four of them and they were sort of losing the will to go on and at interval I heard them using the BB words and they're not just saying it to let me hear.*
- ❑ *Even a child making a wee mistake - we're all very quick to come out with something positive.*

Impact on staff (have you noticed a difference in the way you respond to pupils facing challenging times?)

Nine out of ten staff said they had changed the ways they responded to pupils facing challenging times, after teaching Bounce Back.

- ☐ *Yes, I've always been a positive person but previously I might not have spent quite so much time - I would have listened to the child but maybe not tried to make them see things from a different point of view or that there is light at the end of the tunnel (though it might take a long time), but now I would sit down and really go in depth with them, try to help them through the everyday problems and not just leave it at that one discussion but check up on them - all wee signals to help them through it.*
- ☐ *I feel more prepared and more equipped myself now, and it comes quite naturally now - if a child says something in the classroom - I find myself quickly changing it around - I don't really have to think about it, but more often than not the children beat me to it.*
- ☐ *It definitely has an effect on the teachers using it and that would be a great thing in our school due to all recent changes and the staff need to bounce back - will bring us even closer together.*
- ☐ *I've got a few pupils in my class who can be quite down on themselves, so I've referred quite a bit to 'unhelpful thinking' and they've started to respond.*
- ☐ *Lots of optimistic thinking in the staffroom!*
- ☐ *Yes I'm applying what I'm learning to children who present a challenge. I have been asking them to ask/talk to someone else before jumping in with solutions.*
- ☐ *I don't know cos with 30 years experience - having a lot of training in previous jobs - I've got a lot of background.*
- ☐ *Certainly I use it as a strategy when children are upset - I hear myself referring back to some of the BB sayings, the one about making things into a catastrophe we used recently - they like that word, the sound of it.*
- ☐ *You find yourself referring to parts of BB, it crops up time and time again and the children know what you're talking about - they know where you're coming from.*
- ☐ *I use words pessimism and optimism outside the BB lessons.*
- ☐ *Yes - a little boy was hit by a ball recently - I encouraged him to breathe deeply, keep calm. Remaining calm helped him cope with his emotions.*
- ☐ *I often refer to the BB wall, eg respectful, caring, responsible - I've found the wall very useful - we've photos of children being supportive to others etc.*
- ☐ *We talk about things a lot more and are more open about feelings and helping others.*
- ☐ *I am more aware of my own thinking, I try to find positives. Some members of my family have had difficult life events to cope with and I'm very aware of attempting to help them track any positive experiences which they have. Also encourage my class to track positive experiences.*

- ❑ *I've got now a bank of statements to draw on where the children know what you're asking them to do. I often come back to the acronym: what can we do about this/what sort of things do people do to cheer you up/what can you do to help other people when they're feeling bad or what can you do yourself?*
- ❑ *There's one particular boy who was having a really difficult time getting on with others in the playground: "it's not fair, I don't get this, don't get to do that, they did this to me, they did that to me" - every single day he would be in the huff I just said; "right - we're going right back to BB - what can you do to stop this?" So we talked about going to play with someone else, or going up and being very clear he hadn't understood what the game was about, and if that doesn't work - what can you do? Again it was back to the acronym - humour - he can be a really comical boy - he can use that for other people to cheer them up and he needs to use that for himself and that was really useful cos I was beginning to get quite frustrated with him, and I thought I'm just going right back - that had been quite difficult but because we had done the background he knew what I was talking about - it gave more of a focus (for discussion) rather than make him feel he was being blamed.*

Did any part of the programme stand out as being particularly useful or relevant?

- ❑ *I think the one I really enjoyed (and the children enjoyed) was the being optimistic or pessimistic and we looked at a lot of situations in the resource book with the little cartoons and how you can be extremely negative about something or you can be really positive and they found it quite useful because they could see they were doing that in their own lives and that was the time - teaching it this year when I remember clearly a child said: "well that's just so pessimistic - why don't you think of it like this?" and it was just one of these teacher's moments when you think - this is why I'm doing this...I just smiled. And also I think - people bouncing back - using people in the media, in sports for example - there was one player in particular who went through a difficult time in his life but he managed to bounce back with help. And also we've looked at people who maybe can't bounce back - and recently with the London marathon - how people are running for charity and the reason why they've chosen a particular charity is because they've lost a son or a daughter - it's personal experience yet look at them - they've put all this training in and now they're doing it for the good of other people. And just general day to day conversations - a child will come in the morning and say "oh - I heard last night that someone bounced back and they talk about what they've heard on the news".*
- ❑ *The bit where you go through the acronym and also the first one you go through with all the core values - I think it's really good because they're quite often talked about but not really fully explored - the children had a vague idea of what they are but now have much more involvement in them, proper understanding.*

- ❑ *We've moved on now - we're doing emotions and how to deal with them so we've now got - instead of saying "it's not fair" - they're actually saying something like "oh I felt the green eyed monster" - we made green eyed monsters and popped them - but I wasn't letting him or don't let the red man take over... So we're saying it's like a balloon taking over if we're getting angry and we're not going to turn all red. I'm coming up with silly little things that almost make them laugh when they start to feel angry. We're just starting the relationships unit - it seems quite good as well - there've been one or two that you said we didn't really have to do - that were a little bit less - I didn't feel the children were quite as involved - elasticity was good in that there was jobs you could do but some of the things in that were much more making things and there wasn't the hook of a poem or something to get them really involved in - this was probably the one I and they enjoyed the least... We did the looking on the bright side bit and they were good at that too and they do talk about positive tracking - they can identify that and try to do that and they do come up with that on their own: "I should be more of a positive tracker" "I positive tracked!"*
- ❑ *I think when they did the acronym - that explained what it was all about - we did a lot of work and we made bouncy things - and we talked about parts of the acronym and would refer to individuals and made book marks - we've been doing the one about fear and that was enlightening - we had some good discussions - I think its making them more aware of how they describe their feelings.*
- ❑ *I think the cross-curricular aspects - not to be frightened to bring it in to your literacy and your topic and integrate it, and within the Curriculum for Excellence there's freedom (to do this).*
- ❑ *All relevant. We're maybe taking a bit too long on the courage unit.*
- ❑ *The collaborative learning activities fit in well with what we are doing. Links in really well with Curriculum for Excellence. Had a whole school planning meeting to look at where Bounce Bank fits into Curriculum for Excellence.*
- ❑ *Unit 3 had more depth and more discussion. The kids understood and really liked this. Starting with physical bounce back and making the link to emotional bounce back. Unit 5 - kids liked the words and the opportunity to relate it to themselves... Really good discussions of optimism and pessimism.*
- ❑ *Definitely core values - we keep coming back to that, relationships, link to restorative aspect of relationships and Unit 3.*
- ❑ *Unit 4 at the moment about courage is particularly relevant, just because I have a situation with one of the children in my class who is absolutely terrified of anything that flies, anything that moves, and way back in August she really went into hysterics, there was a bee appeared in the classroom and it was really hard for her to calm down. So going through the Unit 4 and of course this is the time we're having wasps and everything starting to come around again, so it's been good to work through this unit with her and the class because of all kinds of little and big fears they have. Of course, at my stage, P3, they are starting to worry about going up into P4, which, because of the way our school is set up, is quite a big transition, because they are moving to a different part of the building, so it's brought up a lot of transition issues and things that we can talk through. So I would say Unit 4 is particularly relevant for the class I have at the moment.*

Have you involved parents in any way? If so, how?

Not many schools had gone very far with involving parents, apart for holding curriculum or information evenings, and giving 'Bounce Back' homework.

- ☐ *We haven't involved the parents as yet. We are going to have a Parents' Night as part of our health week and there will be a section on Bounce Back.*
- ☐ *Homework - we've made a special booklet. The best thing about mum, my pet, etc. Responsibility chart which parents had to list things children were responsible for at home. We have also developed individual golden booklets where teachers note down things, eg examples of the child supporting others, coping well etc. These go home for parents. The children themselves had to take away a chart they'd made up - a pie graph of all the things they did in the home but we made up a weekly holiday timetable and put a list of the things they wanted to do at home, and I was so overwhelmed that every single child did it and I told them it didn't matter if it didn't happen on some days cos it was still their holidays but it was great to sit back and analyse and obviously the parents fully supported it otherwise it wouldn't have been done and talking to them they could articulate why, when what they did, it wasn't forgotten it was still in their minds.*
- ☐ *I've done BB homework and shortly we're going to launch BB - my class are taking a part - we're all going to take particular core value as a school - in August parents are going to be involved in it - whether it be literature or we have an evening. At school - it's got to go into the home life as well - a lot of the children are using stuff they've learned at home with their family - there is scope for a lot of homework.*
- ☐ *Not yet apart from that one time - we did that curriculum evening where you came in but we wanted to have more of a Bounce Back evening so that'll be next year and we're also trying to train the playground staff and other support staff - I've prepared something but we've not managed to fit it in yet but we would like to get the parents more involved - I've actually prepared an info sheet for parents (but its not gone home yet) - the most particular thing I wanted to include was the acronym and said please talk to your child about this - they've done lots of things and I'm sure they'd like to tell you about it - it's fun taking each one, finding out what it meant - they've got a book and written down lots of things they can do - they really enjoyed that cos they thought it was really grown up.*
- ☐ *Not as far as I'm aware. It was mentioned at one of the information evenings for parents, but I don't think it was gone into at any great length.*

Any other comments?

- ☐ *I just think it's so important that we do teach this to children - obviously academic skills are important but children need social skills, they go hand in hand with academic skills and children have got to deal with so much more nowadays and need the skills, and I know depression is going to become a massive problem and if we can equip these children with the skills for the future, then they're very fortunate to have this training.*

- ❑ *Bounce Back is not an add-on and can be the core resource for Curriculum for Excellence - Health and Wellbeing.*
- ❑ *What I like about it is that it is not all just circle time activities, there's different practical activities you can do with them, there's a combination of different things to illustrate the same point, whereas before, if we had a focus like 'fear', you would be raking around trying to find stuff, thinking how can I put this in a different way, but just being able to use the stories and craft activities, and it all pulls it together, and it makes it more real for the children. I find it straightforward to use. At first it is a lot of information to take in, but once you've got to grips with it, it's great. You first get this great big book and you think my goodness how am I going to work my way through this, but remembering you don't have to do every single activity in each unit, choosing what's relevant for the children in your class and what they would find most interesting, whereas, you could fall into the trap of thinking you had to do every single activity and then it would get really boring.*

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