

1998

A Case Study : A Short Term Art Therapy Intervention For A Child Victim To Bullying

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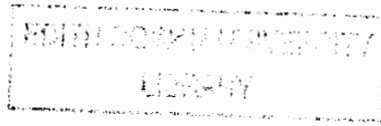
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**A CASE STUDY: A SHORT TERM ART THERAPY
INTERVENTION FOR A CHILD VICTIM TO
BULLYING**

by

Ffiona Matthews

BSocSci

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Award of**

Master of Arts (Art Therapy)

Academy of Performing Arts, School of Visual Arts,

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Perth, Western Australia.

Submission date: November 1998

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Abstract

This single case study of a child bullied at school investigates whether a short-term, individual Art therapy intervention, within a school that runs an anti-bullying program, will ease the effects of bullying in that child. The subject is a 10 year old girl referred as being school avoidant due to being bullied.

The intervention encouraged expression of emotions, fears and worries about the bullying, an understanding of the bullying and its effects, exploration of alternative responses to being bullied and therapeutic support to help empower, build self-esteem, lower depression, loneliness, stress, and unhappiness at school.

The intervention involved six one hour long, child focused, directive art therapy sessions and one follow-up session. In addition meetings between caregivers, school psychologist and researcher were held before and after the intervention.

The effectiveness of the program was evaluated by comparing pre and post results on the following; interviews with the caregivers before and after the intervention; The Children's Depression Inventory (CDI); self portraits of the child discussed with the child as projective material; "The Feelings Thermometer" of how the child feels about school, and the child's attendance at school.

Outcomes included a reduction in school avoidance, improved ability to identify affect, changes in the child's portrayal of herself, and improved family relationships. The child's mother, school psychologist, principal and the child herself reported benefits. The child was not found to be depressed in the CDI and this was unchanged at completion of the study.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signature

Date 3rd March 1999

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Amanda Hasenkam for supervising this thesis. Thank you to friends and colleagues who provided support, companionship and some light relief when required. I especially wish to thank art therapy students Grania Sexton, Joan Blevins, Mark Brown, Anna Petterson, Jo Brown, Leah Van Lieshout and Anna Robson for their perspectives on the images in this research. Additional thanks to Anna Robson for proof-reading and for all her help, valuable knowledge and contacts since my arrival in Australia. Thanks to my therapist George Trippe for his support and I wish him luck in completing his doctorate.

My gratitude to all my friends and family in New Zealand for their unfailing belief in me and for their understanding about the lack of letter writing. Special thanks and gratitude to my parents, Barry and Barbara Matthews whose support made this thesis possible, and in particular my mother who provided support, clinical advice, editing and encouragement from a far. Many thanks to Kevin Hannah for his computer, technical support, proof-reading, advice and for being there when things went wrong.

Finally thanks to the participants of this research, my client and her family and the school staff without whom there would be no thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Bullying is a significant, damaging, and common event in children's school and home life (Maxwell & Carroll-Lind, 1996; Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1993; Rigby, 1997; Slee, 1993). As a phenomenon, it began to be investigated in the 1970s when Professor Dan Olweus in 1978 surveyed schools in Scandinavia in response to several children suiciding reportedly as a result of being bullied (Farrington, 1993; Peters, McMahon, & Quinsey, 1992; Tattum, 1993; Rigby, 1996). Since then studies conducted in many countries have investigated the phenomena of school children's bullying including Spain, Portugal, Scotland, Holland, Ireland, Canada, USA, France, Japan, Australian and New Zealand (Farrington, 1993; Byrne, 1994).

Recent studies have shown that bullying directly effects 15% to 50% of school children around the world (Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1993; Clark & Kiselica, 1997). Australasian figures are among the highest with 10% of New Zealand school children being bullied a week (Maxwell & Carroll, 1996) and approximately one in every seven Australian children being bullied weekly (Rigby, 1997; Healey, 1995; Nott & Connor, 1990). Bullying behaviour occurs in all schools globally, regardless of the composition of students or type or location of school (Tattum, 1993).

Children's reactions to bullying differ depending on age, gender or the child's own coping skills - but the more frequent the bullying the more affected children are likely to be (Rigby, 1997). Studies clearly show that bullying effects can last into adulthood. Adults

who were bullied as children tend to display much lower self-esteem and higher levels of depression than adults who were not bullied (Olweus, 1993; Clark & Kiselica, 1997).

Until recently there was a widely held misconception that bullying was an inevitable, if unpleasant fact of growing up: unchanging and not particularly harmful (Mellor, 1994; Clark & Kiselica, 1997). However studies refute this belief - a study in New Zealand found school children when asked what "harms" them the most, reported bullying as second only to death of a parent, and more painful than parental divorce (Maxwell & Carroll-Lind, 1996).

The extent of the effects of bullying, especially long term effects, are hard to predict as adults, even parents, are largely unaware of the extent of victimisation and how badly their children feel about this problem (Mellor, 1994; Maxwell & Carroll-Lind, 1996). While it is hard to assess the full extent of the damage bullying creates to witnesses, bullies and victims, victims have been found to suffer from negative self worth, suicidal thoughts and actions, depression, truancy, and ill health (Rigby, 1997; Slee, 1994; Clark & Kiselica, 1997; Tattum, 1993). Children who are bullied are often isolated from their peers as children "couldn't be friends with a wimp" (Rigby, 1997, p. 30).

Significance of Study

This study may be the first documented art therapy intervention undertaken with a single client who has been bullied within the context of a school with an anti bullying program. It provides additional information on the effectiveness of art therapy in the treatment of the trauma of bullying and as a means of improving a client's ways of dealing with being bullied. It addresses the need for successful interventions to help with a social problem, which, despite its severity, has only recently been researched (Maxwell & Carroll-Lind, 1996; Rigby, 1997; Tattum & Herbert, 1993).

This research follows on from Art Therapist Carol Ross's (1996) case study of a successful art therapy intervention to help a group of children deal with the effects of being bullied. Recommendations by Ross to provide such art therapy interventions within the context of a school that has an anti-bullying program have been followed. This is to provide children with support and therapeutic intervention without inferring they are responsible for stopping the bullying. Protecting bullied children from further bullying, while counselling them, is seen as an ethical obligation for school counsellors (Clarke & Kiselica, 1997; Nesse, 1989). Research in the area of school bullying suggests that children victim to bullying require both personal support and a school-wide anti-bullying structure to combat this powerful and socially entrenched phenomena (Clarke & Kiselica, 1997; Tattum & Herbert, 1993; Rigby, 1996; Smith & Sharp, 1994).

Research Question

Can a six-week art therapy intervention with an individual who is being bullied help ease the negative effects of bullying, where this intervention occurs in conjunction with a school-wide program?

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

The literature review discusses; bullying; the developmental stage of preadolescent children relating this to art and bullying; effects bullying has upon children; bullying as trauma; bullying interventions prior to this study; recommendations for future interventions; and art therapy as an appropriate intervention with bullied children.

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is variously described in the literature as deliberate acts to hurt a less powerful person. International authority on bullying, Professor Dan Olweus (1993) described bullying as an exposure of a person, over time and repeatedly, to a person or persons inflicting negative actions upon him or her. These may include physical aggression, negative words or gestures or a combination of these. There must be an imbalance of power in some way although not necessarily physical. Olweus further differentiates between 'direct bullying' (obvious bullying) and 'indirect bullying' (subtler bullying tactics such as social isolation).

Psychologist Ken Rigby (1997) defined bullying as repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group. Although there may be disagreement, conflict or violence, bullying is distinct from these behaviours, as there is an imbalance of power (p. 22).

Professor of Psychological Criminology David Farrington (1993) defined bullying as an unprovoked physical, verbal or psychological attack of a person of lesser power than the attacker, over a period of time.

Reader in Education and acknowledged expert in the field of bullying Delwyn Tattum emphasises the planned, purposeful nature of bullying giving this definition: "Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt another and put him/her under stress" (p. 6). She endorses comments by Erling Roland, Norwegian Professor in Behavioural Research: "Bullying is longstanding violence, physical or psychological, conducted by an individual, or a group and directed against an individual who is not able to defend himself [sic] in the actual situation" (cited in Tattum & Herbert, 1993, p.6).

Educational Psychologist Valerie Besag (1989) adds to this; socially acceptable competitiveness in sports; the threat of future acts; name-calling; social isolation or targeting for malicious gossip.

Types of Bullying

Bullying may be understood in terms of categories – physical, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion bullying (Tattum, 1993). Physical bullying is the most obvious type of bullying and involves forms of physical aggression from pinching to assault. The most extreme cases of physical bullying have resulted in the victim's hospitalisation and, in rare occasions, death (Tattum, 1993).

Verbal bullying includes teasing, threats and verbal abuse and commonly involves sexual or racial slurs or the spreading of rumours. The effects of verbal bullying are often

underestimated as it is less visible and words are not supposed to hurt us. Children experience this form of bullying as emotionally damaging (Tattum, 1993). As verbal bullying is harder for adults to detect it may continue unnoticed for longer than other types of bullying. In the following case study, for example, the teacher remained unaware that my client was called names during class time.

Gesture bullying includes hand signals and signs. It is similarly hard to detect and also commonly involves threats, racial taunts and sexual innuendo. Verbal and gesture bullying may include threats of future brutality for the victim or may be used in isolation (Tattum, 1993).

Bullying by extortion occurs when bullies intimidate children into giving them money, food or belongings. Extortion bullying may involve physical violence (Tattum, 1993).

Exclusion bullying is more typically found among girls and involves excluding the victim from her school community. The victim's "friends" often carry out this bullying. In extreme cases, the victim may become totally isolated, emotionally damaged and suffer from very low self-esteem (Tattum, 1993). Interestingly this type is the most commonly reported bullying in the case study this research describes. The child's "friends" frequently excluded her and this appeared to negatively affect her self-perception. As Tattum (1993) suggests, this resulted in lowered self-esteem and a loss of confidence in herself.

Makeup of Bully/ Victim

Victim characteristics tend to include anxiousness, insecurity, seriousness, shyness, and introversion. They are more likely to cry when attacked, label themselves as dumb or

losers, have lower self-image and self-esteem than non-victimised children (Olweus, 1993; Byrne, 1994). Victims are more isolated, friendless and, if male, tend to be less physically strong than their non-bullied counterparts (Olweus, 1993; Clarke & Kiselica, 1997).

The reasons children become victims to bullying are complex. Many children report the wish to hurt other children. Advantages of being a bully can include popularity, a feeling of power, a release of aggressive drives and insurance one will not become a victim of bullying (Rigby, 1996; 1997). Children who have been bullied themselves can seek compensation by becoming a bully at a later time (Farrington, 1993). Children who come from a family with high levels of aggression and violence are likely to perceive other children as provoking a violent or aggressive response. These children tend to target children from democratic homes and who have little exposure to, and a reluctance to retaliate with, violence and aggression (Smith, 1991; Rigby, 1997). Children with an avoidant attachment history tend to bully children with an anxious attachment history (Smith, 1991; Perry, Kusel & Perry, 1988). Attachment history refers to a child's relationship and "felt security" with his or her mother in early childhood. An avoidant attachment history can lead to behaviour characterised by attention seeking, impulsiveness and tendency to become easily frustrated. Anxiety, passivity, insecurity and helplessness characterise an anxious attachment pattern (Bowlby, 1988; Dunn, 1993; Noonan, 1983).

In the following case study, all these factors are present. The child's parents discouraged violence and aggression and promoted such behaviours as walking away or waiting until the "friends" were nice again. The bullies were discovered to come from disrupted homes and they, and their siblings, used violence and aggression towards passive or timid

children. The classroom had a high percentage of children who had been bullied previously, some of who became bullies. The client of this case study was assessed as having an anxious attachment history and some of her “friends” displayed avoidant attachment characteristics and had a disrupted family life.

Children are not singled out because of physical differences as was once thought, but perceived differences can be used as ammunition for bullies. Such attributes as ethnic origins, perceived homosexual inclinations, or physical or mental disabilities may be used as rational for bullying (Tattum & Lane, 1989; Tattum, 1993; Byrne, 1994; Rigby & Slee, 1993). A small number of children provoke bullying as a means of gaining attention (Besag, 1989; Farrington, 1993). Apart from this group, bullying cannot be attributed to victim behaviour. Some children are bullied for being good-looking or highly academic (Tattum, 1993). The subject of the following case study is an attractive, talented girl who excels at sports and creative arts subjects.

The make up of the bully is not, as is commonly believed, one of a person with a tough exterior who inside is quite insecure. Bullies have average self-esteem, little anxiety or insecurity and a more positive attitude to aggression and violence (Olweus, 1993; Byrne, 1994; Farrington, 1993). Victim behaviour by the “passive or withdrawn victim” is characterised by “an anxious reaction pattern combined (in the case of boys) with physical weakness”. Bullying behaviour is “an aggressive pattern combined (in the case of boys) with physical strength” (Olweus cited in Peters, McMahon, & Quinsey, 1992, p. 104). The “provocative victim” has a combination of these patterns. There is a strong link between children developing criminal tendencies and being bullies at school (Olweus, 1993).

Effects of Bullying

Being victim to bullying has been shown to effect an individual's self-esteem, mood, feelings of self-worth, suicidality, truancy, social interaction, academic performance and health (Roberts & Coursol, 1996; Slee 1994; Rigby, 1997; Griffiths, 1995).

Children report feeling bad about themselves and feeling less worthwhile if they are bullied. They tend to believe the names they are called and that they deserve this treatment.

"I feel it is my fault I get bullied. ... My bullies find fault with everything I do.
... I can't win. Please help" - 14 year old Scottish boy (Mellor, 1994, p. 209).

Depression and feeling unhappy about school life are highly correlated with being a victim of bullying (Slee, 1994; Rigby, 1997; Besag, 1989; Hart, 1991). Slee (1994) found primary school children who were bullied for 6 months or longer had a "pervading sense of despair and helplessness" and had much higher scores on the Depression Self-rating Scale (DSRS) than non-bullied children (p. 401). Boys who bullied were also found to have depressive symptoms. He concluded depression and bullying go hand in hand and recommended counselling to address this depression, especially for the victims.

Bullying has been linked with suicidal threats and acts (Rigby, 1997; Mellor, 1994; Peters, McMahon, & Quinsey, 1992; Roberts & Coursol, 1996; Nott & Connor, 1990). In Japan, Norway, England and New Zealand there have been media reports of child suicides resulting from bullying (Rigby, 1997; Wilson, 1997; Healey, 1995; Lane, 1997). In surveys by Rigby and Slee in South Australia from 1993 to 1996, self-reporting of suicidal thoughts and attempts were significantly correlated with being victims of bullying, and also being a bully (Rigby, 1997). The risk of suicidal ideation and acts is much increased when children are subjected to severe bullying and are unsupported. This provides further

support for therapeutic intervention, as bullied children are usually, and often systematically, isolated from peer support leaving them dangerously vulnerable. “Severe bullying for some children can be devastating” (Rigby, 1997, p.32) as is exemplified in these quotes from bullied children.

“Getting very depressed, staying home, vomiting, attempting suicide”
 “I wish I was dead” (Rigby, 1997, p. 30)

Truancy has also been strongly linked with bullying (Roberts & Coursol, 1996). Rigby (1997) found half the children who self-reported being bullied thought about staying away from school, and one in five boys and one in four girls had done so as a result of bullying.

A survey of bullied children in 1996 showed the emotional distress of bullying led to physical and emotional unwellness (Rigby, 1997). The children surveyed said they felt the bullying contributed to them being unwell - rather than as unwell children they had therefore been picked on. They commented:

“I feel depressed and lonely and getting much more headaches”
 “Feeling sick every morning about going to school because of bullying”
 “I’ve felt dizzy like I was going to faint or something”
 “Just feel sick and worthless”
 “It has made me worry and get more headaches” (Rigby, 1997, p. 30).

Using a questionnaire called The General Health Questionnaire (GHO), Slee (1994) found that students who reported they were bullied had poorer health than those who identified with being more social or being bullies.

As could be expected from the above descriptions, being victim to bullying has been found to have a marked negative effect on children’s academic performance (Roberts & Coursol, 1996; Clarke & Kiselica, 1997).

Traumatic Effect of Bullying

Children feel abused by this victimisation and experience trauma. Bullied children can suffer characteristics of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This includes intrusive, distressing thoughts or dreams, avoidance of places or activities associated with the bullying, regression (acting at a younger age than is age appropriate), feelings of isolation and disassociation, depression about the future, hypervigilance and loss of concentration (Roberts & Coursol, 1996; Clarke & Kiselica, 1997; Buchanan, 1996).

After being traumatised, some children believe they will always be unhappy, fearful and have problematic lives. They may lose faith in their competence and view the world as an unsafe place. These children often feel helpless and are unlikely or unable to verbalise their problems (Brown, 1996; Kaufman & Wohl, 1992).

Counselling is recommended to help these children address intrusive thoughts, relearn cognitions, learn coping strategies and express affect about the trauma. The therapeutic relationship is of primary importance for this work but for these clients the development of such a relationship may be a long process. Art making, guided imagery and role-play with puppets or toys, within the safe space of the therapeutic relationship, are all recommended for children affected by trauma (Brown, 1996; Jones, 1997; Stronach-Buschel, 1990; Barnard, 1997). There is some evidence to suggest that unstructured therapy may prove less helpful for these clients (Stronach-Buschel, 1990; Malchiodi, 1990).

Developmental age as relates to bullying and art.

Developmental psychologist Erik Erikson describes children aged five to 12 years as being in the “Industry versus Inferiority” stage when they learn to be part of a culture and peer group (Sprinthall & Sprinthall, 1990). This stage is illustrated in children’s art, as they tend to draw more detailed work and often draw about their relationship with their peers (Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1975; Papaluca, 1996). They do not think abstractly and are egocentric - that is they see themselves as causing inexplicable events. Bullying at this age undermines the developmental task of being industrious and connecting to a peer group. It leads bullied children to presume they are inferior and have caused the abuse to which they are subjected (Miller, 1990). Artwork would appear to be an ideal method of exploring issues around peer conflict as children of this age instinctively draw about these relationships.

The psychosexual stage of “latency” (six to 12 years) relates to a similar age group and is characterised by an underdeveloped ego, little insight into anxieties or fears and a need to be controlled due to concern about revealing too much. Pioneer of child analysis, Melanie Klein (1932) recommends art rather than verbal therapy to access this subconscious and inner life. Children at this stage benefit from the symbolic nature and concreteness of art pieces. The art product is tangible, solid evidence for the child of the existence of his or her inner world (Landgarten, 1981; Klein, 1932). The visual metaphor is a way to express complex ideas children are too young to verbalise and to make visible these fears and anxieties. Once visible, it is possible to therapeutically work through tangible solutions to issues of distress (Dubowski, 1990).

Psychologist Jean Piaget describes the age group seven to 11 years as the “concrete operations stage” when children no longer have the magical, dream-like thinking of the previous “pre-operational stage”. At this stage children become more logical, fixed and literal in their way of seeing their world (Sprinthall & Sprinthall, 1990). Art provides an opportunity to explore the world of fantasy and dreams and to provide balance to this extreme literal thinking (Papalucas, 1996).

Interventions Prior to this Study

School-wide Interventions

Most successful bullying interventions in schools are systems based interventions developed from a program introduced in 42 schools throughout Norway by International authority on bullying Professor Dan Olweus (Peters, McMahon, & Quinsey, 1992; Rigby, 1997; Slee, 1994; Mellor, 1994; Hyndman & Thornbourne, 1994). The program sets out to alter the culture of the school by re-educating parents, teachers and students about bullying. Adults model and reinforce the maxim that bullying will not be tolerated. Student behaviour is modified in opposition to how bullying behaviour can be gained. Instead of negative care, lack of boundaries and use of aggression to change behaviour, adults are positively involved in imposing clear boundaries in non-physical and non-aggressive ways. Children's experience of bullying before and after intervention is monitored by questionnaires in which they self-report their involvement in bullying (Olweus 1993). This program has been found to successfully decrease bullying by up to 50%. Children report being much happier at school and bullying is not displaced to another area of their life - such as after school. The societal problem is changed by reforming the culture of the microcosm of the school society (Olweus, 1993).

Successful interventions, modelled on this research, have been implemented in many schools across different countries although most have not reduced bullying to the same extent. Similarities across such interventions include student surveys to assess bullying behaviour and monitor change, inservice training of teachers, stated school policies on bullying related discipline and grievance procedures, parental involvement and ongoing monitoring of the above (Mellor, 1994; Rigby, 1997; Tattum & Herbert, 1993).

Interventions Involving All Pupils

Other schools have employed interventions involving all pupils in trying to change bullying behaviour that are not based on the Olweus method. These appear to have strengths and benefits though are less researched and as such there is little empirical evidence to support the efficacy of these programs.

The “Quality Circle” method has been adapted from industry for primary schools. It involves groups of five or six pupils who work together to problem solve real issues in the school in a collaborative way. The groups are taught problem solving using techniques of collaboration, conflict resolution, effecting change, generating ideas and discouraging dominant or destructive behaviour in members. A number of solutions reached through the Quality Circle method have been described by Cowie and Sharp (1994). They include writing and performing a play about bullying, conducting a survey of the pupils about bullying and distributing a booklet about bullying.

The evidence suggests these groups do reduce bullying behaviour throughout the school. The students in the groups learn to solve problems logically and examine their own behaviour, feelings and reactions. The school promotes democracy and collaborative learning, and pupils feel invested in their community’s concerns. The usefulness of the team approach, using creative brainstorming is demonstrated. Awareness of bullying is raised and most Quality Circle members act to try and stop bullying occurring at school (Cowie & Sharp, 1994).

Successful application of this method involves full support from the school management including implementation of the pupil’s ideas and sharing power with the pupils. The

circles must be trained and supported in using non-violent, communicative problem solving skills (Cowie & Sharp, 1994). This method must be supported by a systematic approach throughout the school with clear policies about bullying and is more suitable for primary schools because it requires a more flexible curriculum (Cowie & Sharp, 1994).

A number of writers discuss the success of drama in addressing bullying behaviour as it provides the opportunity to role-play alternative responses to the situation of bullying and explore strong emotions and feelings. Students acting out dramatic events together can become more integrated as a group and more aware of each others' feelings. Young children use role-play, as a means to understand their world and it remains part of the way we learn. One theatre company performs a short play about bullying during which they freeze and talk about the feelings of their character. The audience then works together to come up with a solution, role-playing possible outcomes. This material has to be very carefully facilitated so children do not idealise the role of bully thus exacerbating the bullying situation, and children are not labelled by their role. It may be beyond the teacher's skills to carry out this kind of facilitation and may require a drama therapist or playback theatre group (Cowie & Sharp, 1994; Rigby, 1996; Tattum, 1993). This intervention would need to be additional to a systems based intervention (perhaps the Olweus approach or the "Peer Conflict" Mediation model) as the school ethos needs to be addressed at micro and macro levels to support this type of intervention.

The "Peacemaker" or "Peer Conflict Mediation" program is a systems based intervention. Like the Olweus intervention, it uses clear bullying policies and teacher involvement. This intervention involves training older students, often chosen by pupils, in conflict resolution,

to provide playground monitoring and an anti-bullying culture. This small group of students is more likely to notice bullying and bullying interactions and studies show peers intervene thrice as often as adults in bullying situations (Pepler, Craig, Zeigler & Charach, 1993). This method allows the many children who wish to help with bullying to be involved in stopping bullying and developing their school ethos (Rigby, 1997). Skills such as conflict resolution and leadership qualities are learnt. Often the rest of the school is trained in conflict resolution in order to support the Peer Mediation process. This method is dependent on a counsellor or specialist providing training and support for the mediators, and a very clear school policy supported at all school levels (Fyffe, 1994; Pepler et al, 1993; Rigby, 1996). Interventions such as these provide life skills to all pupils about resolving conflict in relationships. These skills provide advantages by extending to other areas of life.

Peer counselling has been used mainly in Canada and North America to support students with problems but is largely under researched in the area of bullying. In a high school described in the "Sheffield Bullying Project", students were inspired after watching the video Only Playing Miss (Neti Neti, 1990) to create a counselling service called "Bully Line". These pupils, many of whom had been bullied themselves, were trained in basic counselling skills and provided a safe space to talk about bullying (Sharp & Cowie, 1994). This appeared to be successful, although older children claimed to be concerned about confidentiality and preferred to talk to adults. All the pupils were proud of the service even if they had not received direct help from it. The peer counsellors felt they had gained many skills, provided a valuable service and perhaps dealt in some way with their own bullying issues. The training and supervision of the counsellors required a great deal of resources

and the teachers felt they would be unable to maintain the supervisory and backup role at that level for long (Sharp & Cowie, 1994). There remains some doubt whether students should be or can be responsible for a counselling role. Robert Myride, an American educational authority, suggests counselling is too complex for students (cited in Rigby, 1996). Pikas claims students have the technical capacity but care must be taken in creating this special task force who may be seen as the problem solvers. From the student's point of view the time commitment and responsibility is additional to study commitments (Rigby, 1996).

Bully courts are an old concept invented originally in the 1920's in residential schools and was pioneered by Robert Laslett, a teacher in a special needs school. They involve students and one or more teachers sitting in judgement on pupil behaviour in a court setting choosing punishments and passing sentences. Teachers and students have equal votes although some teachers may wield more influence (Rigby, 1996). Schools report that initially students chose very harsh punishments and then became more moderate (Tattum, 1993). Teachers appear much less enamoured with this intervention, uncomfortable with pupils punishing pupils and concerned that parents will become alarmed with such tactics. The Courts require a large amount of teacher time to set up. There are associated risks of this approach such as bullying being transported to outside the school and, therefore, the court's jurisdiction and victims being further traumatised by presenting evidence. This system is a more punitive approach and does not promote collaborative solutions. There is no attention to the damage sustained by bullied children and alternative behaviours for victim or bully are not modelled or taught (Smith, Cowie & Sharp, 1994; Tattum, 1993; Rigby, 1996).

The Bully Courts do appear to reduce bullying behaviour and teach children the process of the law and consequences of unacceptable behaviour. Students evaluated them much more highly than teachers (Smith, Cowie & Sharp, 1994; Tattum, 1993). Despite a great deal of media attention, bully courts do not appear to have been widely used and therefore their success is difficult to evaluate (Tattum, 1993).

Curriculum Based Interventions

Some schools have employed videos, plays, books and educational packs to promote an anti-bullying culture within schools. Classroom packages and videos such as Only Playing Miss (Neti Neti, 1990), Sticks and Stones (Nott & Connor, 1990) and Kia Kaha (*Stand Strong*) (NZ Police, 1992) have anecdotal evidence to suggest that they promote better classroom relations and decrease bullying (Tattum, 1993; New Zealand Police, 1992; Patterson, 1994; Bradbury, 1992; Tullock, 1994). Some pupils have been inspired to set up school programs themselves after such material has been used – for example Peer Counselling (Sharp & Cowie, 1994).

The introduction of books on bullying into the curriculum, for example Lord of the Flies by William Golding and The Heartstone Odyssey by Arvan Kumar, and incorporating this work into classroom discussions can help bullying situations if facilitated by a motivating teacher (Rigby, 1996; 1997; Tattum, 1993; Smith and Sharp, 1994).

Additional and related programs such as packages to increase self-esteem, conflict resolution or relationship skills may be helpful in encouraging alternative behaviours and teaching new skills in avoiding bullying behaviour (NZ Police, 1992; Rigby, 1996).

Curriculum based intervention provides a valuable support to anti-bullying programs if they are a regular, stated aspect of the curriculum. These materials will not be successful in preventing bullying if used in isolation and should therefore be part of a school-wide intervention (Rigby, 1996; Smith, Connie & Sharp, 1994).

Interventions with the Children Involved in Bullying

Several school based intervention strategies aimed at children involved in bullying are still being evaluated. Initial evidence suggests these appear to be successful. These strategies involve a non-punitive, non-aggressive approach.

The “No Blame Approach” was designed by Barbara Maines and George Robertson in England. A teacher or counsellor is trained to intervene in the bullying situation by encouraging an empathetic response which does not blame or punish the bullier, so he or she feels more open to feeling concern about the victim. The victim and bullying groups are interviewed and bullies are told how the bullied child feels and encouraged to think of ways of changing the situation and to take responsibility for changing their behaviour. This has been criticised for being too naïve and not as successful with older, more hardened pupils. Olweus has condemned this approach for the lack of involvement of parents and the reliance on developing the bullier’s empathy (cited in Tattum, 1993; Rigby, 1996; Smith & Sharp, 1994). However other researchers have noted it is empathy and shame about

bullying behaviour that inhibits children from participating in or endorsing bullying behaviour rather than fear of punishment (Rigby, 1997).

Another intervention is the “Method of Shared Concern”, which has a similar non-punitive approach, designed by Swedish Psychologist Anatol Pikas. Pikas believes that bullying is largely a pack mentality and, although individually the bullies feel guilt about, and empathy for, the victim, bullying behaviour is maintained by loyalty and allegiance to this group. In this intervention the bullies are interviewed individually and the teacher or counsellor encourages them to feel concern for their behaviour and the victim’s feelings. The victim is then interviewed and encouraged to examine his or her behaviour. After the splitting of the group, the bullies are reunited in meetings until finally there is a joint meeting of all the bullies and the victim where a peace agreement is developed. The strengths of this method are the interviewing of the victim after the bullies so the victim is not seen as an informant, the acceptance of responsibility by the bullies and the consideration of possible provocative victims. It can be used at the teacher’s first available opportunity or when the bullying has been ongoing (Roland, 1993; Sharp & Smith, 1993). The initial evidence suggests this intervention is about 75% effective in stopping the bullying behaviour of these interviewed children and in the event of this particular group bullying again it is usually with a different victim. This intervention again relies on the bullies being able to feel empathy, has no parental involvement and does not replace the whole school approach (Tattum, 1993; Rigby, 1996; Smith & Sharp, 1994). Even though the interviews are brief, this approach is time consuming and relies on the teacher being very skilled at conciliatory negotiation (Tattum, 1993).

Assertiveness training for bullied children, either individually or in a support group, also appears effective in teaching a range of coping strategies, practising alternative behaviours, and building self-esteem and self-confidence (Sharp & Smith, 1993). Arora (cited in Smith & Sharp, 1994) found that 12 hours of assertiveness training improved self-esteem, decreased bullying and increased assertive behaviour in the classroom. This change was maintained over time. The premise behind the assertiveness training is to learn to recognise and practice responding to unreasonable requests, and to stand up for one's own and others' human rights. These rights are; to be treated with respect, to be able to discuss personal feelings and opinions, to be listened to and be taken seriously, to be able to make mistakes, to say no without feeling guilty, to ask for what one wants and to choose to be or not be assertive (Rigby, 1996; Tattum, 1993). It is important this training allows for the affective content of the bullying – usually anger and fear, to be expressed. In support groups, children often developed support networks, which were sometimes maintained outside the training classes. Some children found when part of a group, the attention was not specific enough for their individual situations (Sharp & Cowie, 1994). These groups work best when conducted in the context of a whole school approach which supports the intervention by providing an anti-bullying ethos and appropriate and advertised avenues for children to report bullying behaviour (Sharp & Cowie, 1994).

Teaching children new skills is easier than trying to change aggressive and violent behaviours, although both are important. Taught skills (such as assertiveness or how to deal with aggression) are then transferable to other situations, including other schools, should the child move away from the area. These should include teaching protective behaviour in order that the child becomes less vulnerable (Tattum, 1993; Rigby, 1996).

One criticism of assertiveness training within schools is the fact that boys were far more likely to become group members even though equal numbers of boys and girls report being bullied. It is suggested this could be due to a belief that the role of passive bullied child is seen as more “normal” for girls or perhaps that bullying amongst girls is more subtle and harder to spot (Sharp & Cowie, 1994).

Conclusions

Most recent studies suggest a multi faceted approach, including a school-wide systematic intervention, is the most effective means to decreasing bullying behaviour in schools. However a small amount of bullying will always remain and be hidden within the peer culture of the school (Smith & Sharp, 1994). In Adelaide a year long program run by Sharp and Smith (1993) had the following results; 86% of children said they knew more about how bullying could be stopped; 19% of children said they had been bullied less, 3% bullied more; feeling unsafe at school fell from 26% to 8 % (Rigby, 1997; Slee, 1994). This is a successful intervention, however many children in this school remain at risk and vulnerable.

It is clear that no intervention or combination of interventions completely eliminates children being bullied as a social phenomenon in schools. Bullying behaviour in many ways is supported by society (which is replicated in the school society) and is resistant to change (Tattum, 1993). Bullying behaviour causes long-term damage to children and some bullying or effects from bullying will continue despite interventions that significantly decrease bullying behaviour. Many researchers have recognised their programs can not

mediate long term effects for children who have been or continue to be bullied (Slee, 1994; Rigby, 1997; Roberts & Coursol, 1996; Clark & Kiselica, 1997).

The child in most immediate need of resources is the victim who is the most damaged by the behaviour. It is essential to provide psychological support and counselling to bullied children to improve damaged self-esteem, provide a buffer for the child to help decrease stress and address any likelihood of posttraumatic stress. This support should include the expression of stories and the affective content of bullying experiences, healing of the trauma and treatment of possible ongoing depression (to mitigate against it continuing into adulthood) (Smith & Sharp, 1994; Clark & Kiselica, 1997; Roberts & Coursol, 1996; Slee, 1994; Rigby, 1996). Play therapy and art therapy have been shown to successfully provide this individual care in two English schools (Ross, 1996; Tattum & Herbert, 1993).

Why Art Therapy?

Art therapy is uniquely able to help children who have been traumatised or damaged by being bullied. Art Therapist Carol Ross (1996) describes an art therapy approach within a school as an effective means for a group of bullied children to express their pain and distress, raise their awareness of their right not to be bullied, and increase their self confidence. She notes these children, despite understanding and having insight as to why bullying occurs, had little idea of how to prevent themselves being bullied. Through the use of art therapy, six out of seven children successfully changed their behaviour to be more assertive, confident, and pro-social among their peers. The seventh child was identified through art therapy as being very severely abused (including bullying) and was able to be referred for more help. For all these children, art therapy provided emotional support, empowerment and space for expression of feelings that helped them find their own solutions to the situation of being bullied.

The therapeutic use of art therapy for bullied children is supported by literature on bullying, where children spontaneously use art to communicate their distress and attach pictures to bullying surveys. Art, rather than words, accurately expresses and acknowledges how being bullied feels and this has allowed researchers to see the abuse and damage these children are subjected to and to understand the power relations involved (Rigby & Slee, 1993; Slee, 1994; Rigby, 1997). Anna Freud (1965) states “traumatic events should not be taken at their face value but should be translated into their specific meaning for the given child” (p. 139). Art provides a wholeness of expression that children can use to be truly understood (McIntyre, 1990).

Literature identifies art as a spontaneous, natural medium and means of communication for children (McGregor, 1990; Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1975). Art, especially in the safe therapeutic space of art therapy, provides a catharsis - that is a release of anxieties and tensions by unburdening a traumatic event (Jones, 1997). Children who are traumatised are frequently unable to verbalise their problems and art making provides a means of communication for these clients (Brown, 1996; Kaufman & Wohl, 1992). In using art therapy to explore feelings about being bullied Ross (1996) was able to help a group of children lessen their distress and loss of self-worth and work towards a new way of behaving that included confident assertive behaviour.

Through the act of creating art in art therapy, bullied children are able to acknowledge and make visible their experiences of being bullied (Ross, 1996). This is recommended by Cohen, Barnes and Rankin (1995) who suggest words are not sufficient in the healing of trauma and who further suggest the use of creativity using symbol and metaphor are necessary for people to heal. Trauma literature recommends acknowledgement of traumatic events so the client can integrate this into a more healthy self (Matsakis, 1992; Herman, 1985; Brown, 1996). Art therapy offers a depth of intervention that verbal therapies do not. This can be important for people who are damaged and violated (Jones, 1997).

Art therapy is a way for children (or adults) to contain the pain of trauma and gain distance from deeply distressing, taboo subjects such as violence. This combination of distancing, containing, non-verbal expression and processing feelings and experiences in a concrete, creative way helps children to cope. It is a great relief for children to draw what they fear

or what has hurt them (Levick 1993; Webb, 1991; Butterworth & Fulmer, 1991). Psychological healing is a creative process and art therapy provides a modality for this healing (Cohen, Barnes & Rankin, 1995). Art Therapist Edith Kramer (1971) describes how the act of creating is in itself healing. The artwork is used to integrate the internal and external worlds making sense of chaos (Rubin, 1978; Ulman & Levy, 1980; Bush, 1997).

Ross (1996) found art therapy to be a creative and appropriate means to work with conflict and violence against children. Art Therapist Cathy Malchiodi (1990) supports this claiming that “art expression has been the key factor in successful intervention with many children from violent homes” and that art is antidotal to violence (p. 19). Art has traditionally been a way for people to express, process and make meaning of intensely painful events (as is bullying) to achieve a better psychological balance and health (Malchiodi, 1990; Warren, 1993; Barnard, 1997; Ross, G., 1996). Artist and Art Educator Edith Kramer (1971) also has found art can neutralise aggression and violence.

Inherent in bullying are the power relations of victim and bullier/s which art therapy concretises, making these tangible and visible to therapist and client. This creative externalising of power relationships provides psychological relief, identification and expression of fears, visual metaphors to resolve the conflict, and awareness of what is truly happening (Cohen, Barnes & Rankin, 1995; Webb, 1991; McIntyre, 1990). The art piece can be manipulated or changed to reframe the child’s experience. The client can use art to fantasise and visualise being powerful to create change in his or her life (Bettelheim, 1987; Webb, 1991; Rubin, 1978). In exploring through art the roles of bullier and bullied, Ross (1996) encouraged her clients to feel less “demolished” by the bullying by drawing possible

successful outcomes to a bullying situation (p. 142). This was reinforced through the visual exploration of body language and assertive statements. These children were able to use these new roles and apply them in their relationships with their peers.

Ross (1996) and other therapists use the art pieces as a bridge of communication, a projective tool and a visual representation to understand children's worlds (Webb, 1991). The bullying situation, coping mechanisms, unspoken humiliations, feelings and fears, can be truly seen through the artwork. The therapist can see in the artwork the defence mechanisms, unconscious material and transference of the client (Levick 1993). The child can see his or her gains and mastery throughout the art therapy as they process their issues, make changes and conquer the art materials (Landgarten, 1981; Rubin, 1978).

The act of creation and art making in a supportive relationship is a way of feeling empowered; of lessening powerlessness, impotence, and pain; of gaining a sense of control over one's world; and reaffirming the self, one's individuality and uniqueness (Warren, 1993; McIntyre, 1990; Barnard, 1997; Stronach-Buschel, 1990). These are particularly important aspects of therapy for children who have been traumatised as they often feel helpless, impotent and powerless (Barnard, 1997; Stronach-Buschel, 1990). Art therapy improves communication, socialisation and rehabilitation. As Ross (1996) showed, it can rebuild what bullying has damaged (Landgarten, 1981).

An Art Therapist can relate children's verbal to non-verbal communication and reinforce growing and learning in a supportive space (Bush, 1991). This leads, as can be seen in the art therapy intervention by Ross (1996), to children becoming more active and engaged in schooling life and consequently in improved academic and social pursuits. Other

researchers find art therapy to be effective in the school environment in improving students' self concepts, academic work and resolution of problems (Pleasant-Metcalf & Rosal, 1997; Tibbetts & Stone, 1990).

Conclusion

The case study by Ross (1996) is a successful art therapy intervention with children who are being bullied and as such gives impetus to this research. Literature about art therapy and art provides support for the use of art therapy with this age group in dealing with the problem of bullying. Art therapy has been shown to have special qualities to facilitate self expression, communication, healing of trauma, conceptualising and dealing with power relations, violence and conflict which can then reframe and change behaviour through concrete, creative solutions to bullying.

Theoretical Framework

“It is enough to drive one to despair that in practical psychology there are no universally valid recipes and rules. There are only individual cases with the most heterogeneous needs and demands – so heterogeneous that we can virtually never know in advance what course a case will take, for which reason it is better for the doctor to abandon all preconceived opinions. This does not mean he [sic] should throw them overboard but that in any given case he [sic] should use them merely as hypotheses for a possible explanation” (Jung cited in Furth, 1989, p. 106).

The theoretical framework of this study is a multi-modal or eclectic approach to art therapy. A feminist theoretical frame of reference is applied using psychodynamic, object relations, ego theory, Jungian, gestalt, humanist, behavioural, cognitive, biblio and narrative therapy theoretical knowledge bases as they fit the client’s concerns (Robbins, 1994). Director of the art therapy graduate program in Illinois, Harriet Wadeson (1987) supports this eclectic approach saying a synthesis of theories is a more individual, challenging therapeutic approach as it allows room for client and therapist to grow. While it may be comfortable for the therapist to rigidly apply theories so all behaviour is explained and explainable this does not allow for the originality of the client. As the client’s growth involves mystery, choices and unknowing so the therapist must join him or her in this unknowing while remaining open to possibilities of understanding. Head of Counselling at City University in London, Ellen Noonan says “Misunderstanding a client’s subjective experience is forgivable, but failing to try to understand his [sic] uniqueness by applying assumptions or textbook explanations glibly is not” (1983, p. 69). Wadeson (1987) suggests many theories are complementary and can be used in combination in relation to the needs of the client. “Feminist counselling is a process not one technique or theory” (Chaplin, 1988, p. 15).

Art Therapist Carol Ross (1996) noted bullying as a complex societal construction involving power relations and reflecting societal values and stated the personal issue of being bullied should be seen in the social and political arena that supports it. A feminist framework places the subject of bullying in the context of a patriarchal society, where rewarding aggression, dominance and insensitivity can be seen as a result of an imbalance of values (Capra, 1982; French, 1985). International scholar and feminist Riane Eisler (1987) calls this the “dominator” (as opposed to a “partnership”) model where male dominance and male values (including aggressive, macho, dominating behaviours) are promoted almost exclusively versus a partnership of masculine and feminine values. Aggression and macho behaviour in the playground can be seen as an attempt to fit into the larger societal values of being tough and becoming a man. Tattum supports this analysis, giving examples of brutal bullying incidents in army barracks where she claims macho behaviour and toughness are seen as desirable (Tattum & Lane, 1989). Feminist therapy is appropriate for bullying situations in its promotion of valuing “feminine” qualities and consideration of, and attempts to improve, the political and social context that we live in.

In opposition to a hierarchical model, a feminist therapist is not dominating or the one with the power (Chaplin, 1988). This proved particularly important for the client of this case study as her female bullies were already dominating her. I made a conscious and informed choice to allow this client her own strengths, weaknesses and her own way of stopping the bullying behaviour. In this way the client was empowered to introduce me to her strengths through story and myth. The client remained the expert about her own situation of being bullied and the more I affirmed these strengths the more she owned them.

The feminist way of working does not pathologise the behaviour of the client. It acknowledges it is difficult to be healthy in an unhealthy society (Chaplin, 1988). For the client of this study, responses to the traumatic and stressful situation of being bullied were valued. It was necessary to gently confront some beliefs or behaviours (such as the client accepting some bullying behaviour as okay) so as not to collude with her beliefs of being deserving of such actions. It was equally important not to remove her defences. The client's strength in coping with bullying was affirmed to her and to her mother.

As this client was passive, empathetic and caring, the feminist principal of valuing such qualities was important. Bullying was not seen as the client's fault and was looked at in an external way as befits the feminist, and also narrative, model. Internal and past issues were acknowledged and looked at, as contributing to the bullying and/or its impact, but responsibility for being bullied was not inferred.

The popular depiction of female victimhood and women not being angry or powerful was not colluded with (Chaplin, 1988). The acceptance of anger, increasing the valuing of oneself (increasing self-esteem) and seeing oneself as equal to others are often feminist agendas in therapy. Woman and girls frequently split off their anger and power and suppress it (Chaplin, 1988; Luepnitz, 1988). This appeared to be true for this client and she was encouraged to express and acknowledge this anger and power. "The deliberate legitimization of affect is an essential part of feminist therapy, for patients of both sexes" (Luepnitz, 1988, p. 262).

Assertive behaviour was taught and practised in the art therapy sessions. The client's mother was encouraged to continue this practice at home and to model assertiveness

herself. The client was encouraged to value herself rather than being defined by others – an important concept as her relationships at school were largely devaluing. These are common elements of therapy in a feminist framework (Chaplin, 1988; Luepnitz, 1988).

As is supported in feminist research the client's individuality and individual creations were respected and theories were not applied rigidly. Although the artwork was interpreted for this research, none of these interpretations were imposed on the client. She chose to make few interpretations of her artwork and this was honoured (Hogan, 1997).

My individuality as an Art Therapist with her own unique way of working was also honoured (Wadeson, 1987). Art Therapist Bruce Moon (1992) notes that each therapist brings different qualities into the practice of therapy. He suggests woman therapists may be less competitive, more nurturing, protective and more invested in relationships. "Feminist therapists seem to me less embarrassed by nurturance, proximity, care, service and other qualities..." (Luepnitz, 1988, p. 278). Children who are bullied will experience a sense of powerlessness which is likely to trigger memories of babyhood (Chaplin, 1988). In therapy, as the symbolic recreation of the mother child relationship, it is helpful for bullied children (male or female) to have access to these particular qualities. In this case study, my own assertiveness and personal power may have empowered the client but only with the feminist boundary of not imposing my strength over hers.

CHAPTER THREE

Method

Design of Study: A Single Case Study

An instrumental case study design was used to investigate one child's experience of bullying and to consider whether art therapy can be helpful in mediating the long-term effects of being bullied at school. This method allows a depth of understanding of one client and the opportunity to speculate how this person's story informs the broader issue of bullying (Olesen, 1995; Stake, 1995). "A case study is both the process of learning about the case and a product of our learning ... As a form of research a case study is defined in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used." (Stake, 1994, p. 237).

The case study method is consistent with feminist research in that it is qualitative, in-depth and expansive, rather than reductionist (Campbell, 1992). It can be used to detail and acknowledge the researcher's influence, subjectiveness and involvement in the process of therapy. Feminist researcher, Ann Oakely (1981), sees the researcher's involvement and connection as a necessary condition rather than being seen as a dangerous bias. The social, historical, political and personal context is acknowledged as affecting the behaviour of the client and no attempt is made to create a controlled experiment. Readers are free to reach their own opinions and conclusions and to relate information to their contexts, expanding their knowledge. The reader is responsible for generalising the information rather than the researcher (Burns, 1994; Olesen, 1994; Van Den Burgh, 1991). The feminist ideology of sharing knowledge means the researcher does not claim the expertise, nor does she limit knowledge to a small group of experts. For this reason in this case study the content of each session is described in some detail before my own interpretation is provided.

The reliability and construct validity of case study research is best supported by the use of multiple sources of evidence. In this study, validity is provided by the triangulation of data through the use of interviews, The Children's Depression Inventory (CDI), client observations and artwork analysis. The external validity is helped by a clear choice of population (in this research a child who is being bullied) although external validity is not an important factor in a case study (Burns, 1994).

The risks to this study's reliability are unreliable observations and unrecognised researcher bias. The likelihood of researcher bias has been mediated in this study by choosing a small focus (i.e. a single subject) to minimise the amount of data collected and by analysing the data as it was collected rather than at the end of the project (Burns, 1994). Subjectivity was mediated by supervision by the school psychologist and thesis supervisor, and by presenting the unidentified artwork for discussion to a group of my peers.

The present case study consisted of six one hour-long sessions for a period of six weeks and one follow-up session one month later. Interviews with the client's mother were conducted before and after the six-week intervention and after the follow-up session. The client's teacher was interviewed before the intervention and after the follow-up session. Additional information was gained throughout this period by phone calls and talks with the principal and school psychologist. All names are pseudonyms and the school has not been identified to ensure the protection of all those involved in this research.

Setting up the Study

This study was approved by the Higher Degrees Committee and Committee for the Conduct of Ethical Research of Edith Cowan University. The proposal was formally presented to external examiners, Art Therapy Department Staff, colleagues and students of Edith Cowan University on 15 June 1998.

The District Education Office recommended two schools who had received recognition for their anti-bullying policies by “The Australian Violence Prevention Awards”. An appointment was made with the principal of the first school and I met with him to discuss the outline of my proposal. Permission was granted with the proviso that the school’s visiting school psychologist was willing and able to take on the extra work of supervision and overseeing the research. The school psychologist agreed to supervise and oversee the project, after reading the proposal. She felt it was important that I had a background in psychology. Permission was granted by the Education Department after citing the Committee for the Conduct of Ethical Research’s approval letter and the list of conditions for the researcher and school psychologist to adhere to.

The school psychologist identified a possible subject and we met with the child’s mother and teacher in the school psychologist’s office. All participants agreed to participate in the research and the child’s mother took away literature on art therapy to consider. It was agreed to begin the program after the school holidays.

Materials

Art Materials used in the Art Therapy

Black and white paper, clay, coloured pencils, felt tip pens, oil pastels, glitter, sandtray, toys and found objects, charcoal, chalk pastels, paints, graphite pencil, lead pencils, and erasers.

Art materials used in Assessment Sessions

In the first, final and follow-up sessions the following art materials were displayed for use by the subject: graphite pencil, lead pencil, coloured pencils (pink, black, red, light and dark blue, green, light and dark yellow, brown, orange, white, aqua and purple), pencil sharpener, felt pens (black, grey, brown, purple, dark and light blue, dark and light green, yellow, pink, orange and red), oil pastels (dark and light green, brown, black, purple, light and dark blue, 'flesh', red, orange, yellow and cream), white paper 50 x 39cm and black paper 65 x 45cm. In the sixth and follow-up session an eraser was added. Felt tip pens and large paper are thought to encourage creativity despite not being standard for projective drawings (Gantt, 1990).

Other Materials

Interview questions for client's teacher (Appendix A).

Interview questions for client's mother (Appendix B).

Consent Forms (Appendices C and D).

Information sheet for participants (Appendix E).

Therapy Room

The art therapy sessions took place in a small, carpeted office in the administration block furnished with a large and small desk, a phone, a shredder, a stereo, and a noticeboard. Some of the furniture was moved out to make more room in some sessions and in two sessions cushions were added so we could sit on the floor. This room was curtained and could not be looked into from outside.

On one occasion this room was not free and the session was held in the sick room. This room featured a bed, a sink, lino floor, beanbags and pillows and stored papers and boxes.

Evaluation

Assessment Tools

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the art therapy was assessed using a variety of assessment tools and methods.

1. Children's Depression Inventory (by Maria Kovacs 1982, 1991, 1992).

The Children's Depression Inventory (CDI) scale, the most commonly used self-report scale to measure depression in children, is a 27-item scale designed for children between the ages of seven and 17 years of age. The items measure affective, cognitive and behavioural symptoms of child depression. It is not recommended as the sole measure in clinical assessment of children and does not replace direct clinical observations as children may misreport their symptoms. It has acceptable test-retest reliability and convergent validity, but has not been proven to have adequate discriminate validity (Kazdin, 1990; Stark et al, 1993).

The CDI was used in the present study because depression is common amongst bullied children and useful in research of outcomes of bullying interventions (Slee, 1994; Rigby, 1997; Besag, 1989; Clark & Kiselica, 1997). The CDI has items that ascertain depression in context, for example school, and therefore is appropriate for use in this study. The school psychologist administered the CDI as she knew this child and was familiar with psychological testing and qualified to administer it.

2. Caregivers Pre- and Post Intervention Questionnaire

The Caregivers Pre- and Post Intervention Questionnaires were devised for this study in order to; assess the subject's appropriateness for participation in the present study; gain

detailed information to greater inform the intervention; and to compare parent and teacher's perceptions of the bullying situation before and after the intervention to assess the effectiveness of the art therapy (Appendices A and B).

3. **The Feelings Thermometer (How do I feel about school this week?)**

The Feelings Thermometer was adapted from one used to assess pre-school children's feelings about asthma (Matthews, 1996) and is based on similar tools used to assess children of all ages. The client indicates how she is feeling by choosing a picture of a facial expression, which range from distressed/crying (Number '5') to very happy (Number '0'). The thermometer was used at each session to quickly assess how the client was feeling about school each week (Appendix F).

Melody was initially asked practice questions to ensure she understood the task. Melody chose '3' when asked how she would feel if she was told off by an adult, and '0' when asked how she would feel if she got a present she really wanted. She described '5' would be how she would feel if her rabbit died, explaining she had had this rabbit since she was six years old. This showed Melody was able to discriminate her feelings using this tool. For clarity throughout this research the "The Feeling Thermometer" numbers will be described as Melody named them during the intervention ('0' as "real, real happy"; '1' as "next to real, real happy"; '2' as "okay"; '3' as "sad". Faces '4' and '5' were not chosen).

4. **Drawing Assessments**

The first, sixth and follow-up sessions of the art therapy included three drawings as projective material – a free drawing of something Melody liked or wanted to draw, self-portrait, and a drawing of "myself at school".

Something you like drawing

The child was invited to draw something she liked or wanted to draw. I asked questions about the drawing after its completion such as “What could a title be of this picture?”. The aim of this was to elicit the client’s own interpretations of what she had drawn.

Self Portrait

The child was asked to draw a picture of herself. Questions such as “Where are you in this drawing?” “How are you feeling in this drawing?” were asked. The self-portrait assessment is a projection test that allows the researcher to gain insights into the child’s personality, emotional concerns, and feelings (Golomb, 1992; Mortensen, 1991). Originally analysing children’s figure drawings was used as an intelligence measure in a test “Draw A Man” [sic] (1926) devised by Florence Goodenough and was developed by later studies to include psychological assessment (Golomb, 1992; Levick, 1983). The aim of using this assessment in the present study was twofold: to assess the subject in terms of strength of ego, and to evaluate progressive changes by comparison with the first session, last and the follow-up session images. Pictures were assessed using assessment and diagnostic sources including Koppitz’s (1964) manual of emotional indicators and developmental age gauges based on the Goodenough study (1926) (cited in Mortensen, 1991).

Draw a Picture of Yourself at School

The child was asked to draw a picture of herself at school. Questions such as “Where are you in this drawing?”, “What are you doing?”, “Are there other pupils around you?”, “Is

this a happy day or a sad day?" were asked. The aim of this was to gain the child's interpretation of her picture to better inform my interpretation of the image.

Subject

Melody is a 10-year-old girl identified by the school psychologist as being bullied at school. She lives with her mother and father and her two younger siblings, a sister who is eight years old and a brother of five years old. The mother cares for the children full-time; her father is employed in a job that requires him to work long hours. He has three children from a previous marriage who live in another city with their mother.

Melody appears much taller and physically more mature than her classmates. Her strengths are her ability in music, drama, art, creative thought and sport. At home Melody scripts and directs her siblings in plays. Her mother described her acting skills as a refined art when feigning sickness to avoid school. Her progress at school is below average. Melody's mother has become very involved in Melody's school because of her concern with her children's education. Melody was observed to be non-assertive when requesting help from a teacher.

Relevant Background Information

This information was obtained from interviews with Melody's mother. Melody was a slightly early, normal birth. There were no concerns about her early developmental progress. However the family experienced several financial crises and consequently several moves in Melody's early childhood. When Melody was three years old the family moved to Singapore and lived in Chinatown in a Singaporean community with no expatriate community. At this time Melody's mother went to work full-time for a brief period, leaving her daughters with a Filipino maid who preferred her younger daughter Rebecca as she was blonde haired and blue eyed. Rebecca was carried around and shown off to all the

maid's friends while Melody was largely ignored. Her mother tried to influence the maid not to do this and came home at odd times to check up on the maid but the maid had continued to blatantly ignore Melody. Melody's mother felt both her daughters had been harmed by this experience, as Rebecca was now extremely shy and found it difficult to reply to people when greeted and Melody was hesitant and lacking in self confidence.

Melody attended a Singaporean pre-school where she was the only non-Singaporean child. The schooling was very strict and Melody could not understand the teachers or the other children. When the family returned to Australia, Melody's pre-primary teacher suggested the family needed to stop moving as Melody was very unsettled. After that the family moved once more to buy their own house and have stayed in this house until the present time - a period of five years.

History of the Bullying

This information was obtained from interviews with Melody's mother, principal and school psychologist. Melody's experience of being bullied was first reported when Melody was in year 4. This bullying had escalated in her present class of year 5. The principal had deliberately placed this group of children with a teacher with an old-fashioned teaching style as he felt they would benefit from the discipline. He described Melody's class as the worst class the school had ever had in terms of behavioural problems. Of her class of 34 children, 16 had moved from other schools because they were being bullied and some had subsequently become bullies themselves. One of these children had been described by Child and Family Services as "the saddest case they had ever seen". The combination of children from aggressive home backgrounds interacting with children raised in democratic

homes with little or no exposure to aggression or violence, is documented as producing bullying in schools (Tattum & Tattum, 1994; Olweus, 1993; Farrington, 1994)

The school had implemented a Peer Mediation Program in 1994. However, unbeknownst to me, the program did not run over the intervention period because there were too few senior students to run it. The school has a very clear and strict discipline policy. This is the reason many parents chose to move their children to this school.

Effects of the Bullying

The effects of being bullied for Melody, as reported by her mother and school psychologist, were a loss of self-confidence, possible effects upon school learning, days off sick, sadness, irritability at home and a feeling of isolation. These symptoms are consistent with research on bullying (Slee, 1994; Rigby, 1997; Roberts & Coursol, 1996; Griffiths, 1995).

Melody is frequently ill according to her mother. Many bullied children have more sick days than non-bullied children. This is thought to be avoidant behaviour or psychological stress increasing susceptibility to illness (Rigby, 1996; Clarke & Kiselica, 1997; Roberts & Coursol, 1996). In the 12 weeks previous to the art therapy intervention Melody had a total of 10 days off school, the equivalent of two weeks of schoolwork. On one of these days she had missed the first lesson of Italian and now was finding Italian very difficult. Some of the girls in her class now talked in Italian as a form of exclusion bullying. Melody's mother feared Melody might underachieve academically due to the stress of the bullying and missing important lessons.

Study Implementation

Pre-intervention Interviews

There were two pre-intervention interviews, the first with Melody's teacher and the second with her mother. The meeting with the class teacher was held in the staff room. The teacher was asked the pre-intervention questions (Appendix A) and his answers recorded in longhand. The teacher answered all the questions on the questionnaire and additional questions asked in response to the teacher's replies.

The suggestion was made to the teacher that the art therapy sessions could be presented to the class as extension art classes. Extension lessons are a common occurrence for very able students in this school and this student had not taken part in any extension classes, as she was not considered academically able. The school psychologist and I decided to present this time in a positive light to other students so the art therapy sessions did not amplify the bullying situation and as a means to increase the child's standing amongst her peers and therefore her self-esteem. The teacher agreed to this suggestion.

The following day I interviewed Melody's mother in the school psychologist's office. The mother was given the "Information Sheet for Participants" (Appendix E) and I read through and clarified the information paragraph by paragraph. The mother had no questions at this time. The formal interview questions (Appendix B) and additional questions that arose in relation to these answers were answered. The answers were recorded in longhand. The mother took home the "Consent Form for the Release of Artwork Produced and Information Given" (Appendices C and D) for the caregivers and child, and the "Information Sheet for Participants" (Appendix E) to further consider.

Initial Contact with Subject

The meeting was to take place in the school psychologist's office after school however the child was unwell and at home. Therefore it was decided to speak to Melody on the phone.

The phone conversation was used as an opportunity to build rapport (by asking about the school camp) and to explain the purpose of the sessions to help with the bullying at school. Melody was informed she was part of a research project in an appropriate way (i.e. the study would result in a book that would include information about what we had done together and photographs of her art work but her identity and family details would not be revealed except to the school psychologist and a supervisor). Melody was told sessions would be discussed with her mother and that her artwork would be returned to her after the research. It was suggested Melody tell other children we were doing extension art classes because she liked, and was good at, art. We agreed talking about feelings was a private thing between us.

Melody agreed to participate in the research and to meet every week for one hour in her art lesson time and then one month later for a follow up session. The child was made aware she could withdraw at anytime. She requested the researcher pick her up from her classroom at this time as she thought she might forget.

CHAPTER FOUR

Art Therapy Sessions

Session 1

Aims

The aims of this first session were to establish a therapeutic relationship between therapist and client and to carry out the initial assessment. This assessment included assessing the client's support outside the therapy, her feelings about herself and the bullying situation, discovering Melody's understanding and thoughts about doing art therapy and completing the drawing assessment.

Session Content

Melody presented as a friendly, personable, attractive girl who was able to complete all the assessment tasks without appearing particularly stressed or alarmed. She seemed hesitant in making decisions, and a little shy as could be expected in an initial session.

Melody was met in her classroom as arranged and we walked to the psychologist's office where the session was held. We discussed again the purpose of the art therapy sessions. Melody seemed content and conversant with the art therapy project signing the "Content Form for the Release of Artwork Produced and Information Given" (Appendix C). Melody commented that the final research would include a pseudonym and I suggested she might like to choose her "other name" at a later time. Using the "The Feeling Thermometer" she described her week at school as '1' ("next to real, real happy").

Towards developing a therapeutic relationship Melody and I spent some time discussing Melody's interests, strengths and the things she liked to do. A good rapport seemed to be established.

Melody was invited to make an image of something she liked or liked doing. She likes music and chose to draw a picture of a piano. I suggested a time of 10 minutes to complete the image (Figure1).



Figure 1

Melody chose white paper and lead pencil, drawing in some outlines before exclaiming she had made a mistake. I commented that Melody had drawn something a bit different to the picture she had in her head. There was no eraser available and Melody carried on with no further comment and without any obvious distress.

After drawing the outline of the piano in pencil, Melody began to colour in the musical notes she had drawn above the piano in felt tip pen. She commented it was important that the notes she had drawn be colourful and all different colours. Her favourite colours were aqua, blue and green. Melody coloured a few of the notes and then began to colour in the top part of the body of the piano. She said I needn't worry, she wasn't

going to colour in the whole of the piano with felt tip pens, although she might finish colouring it in with coloured pencils (Figure 1).

Melody needed another minute more than the assigned 10 minutes, and, in this time, finished colouring in the notes and the top part of the piano. She seemed contented with the unfinished picture saying she would finish that later. The child identified that this was an imaginary, wished for piano, that she played a keyboard at home and loved to play her music when happy or sad but often when sad because it made her happy again.

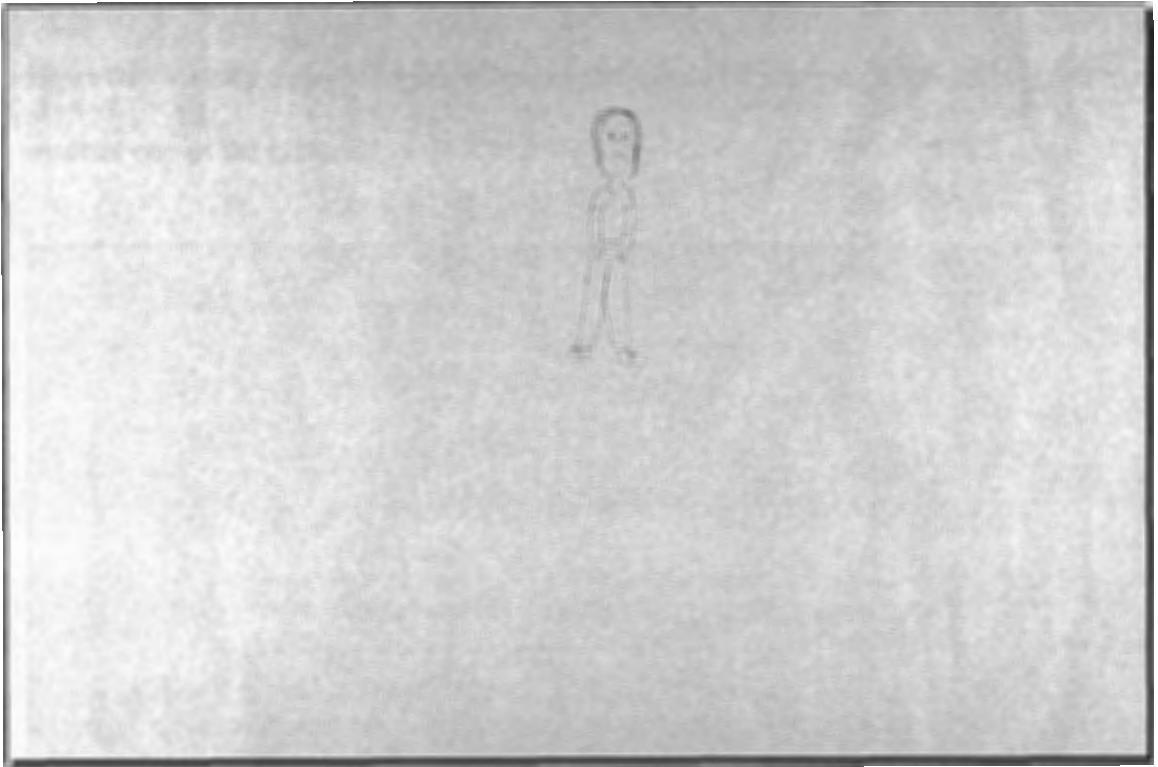


Figure 2

Melody was asked to draw a picture of herself, negotiating the time as a 10-minute period with a reminder at five and 10 minutes. The picture was completed in less than five minutes (Figure 2).

Melody drew a small picture in the centre of her page with lead pencil. While drawing she proclaimed since she had difficulty drawing hands she would draw them in her

pockets, which was affirmed as good thinking. Melody could not think of a title for her picture but felt it was her relaxed at home.

When invited to draw a picture of herself at school, Melody negotiated for 10 minutes, again completing the picture in less than five (Figure 3). The second figure drawing was smaller than the first and less central. The figure was again drawn in lead pencil only with no context, ground, other people or ears. Melody said this was a summer picture of her in netball uniform, happy because netball was fun. There are no school or team-mates in this picture, as she was probably walking from the car to school. However, Melody thought in this scenario she would be carrying a school bag, yet there was not one in the picture.

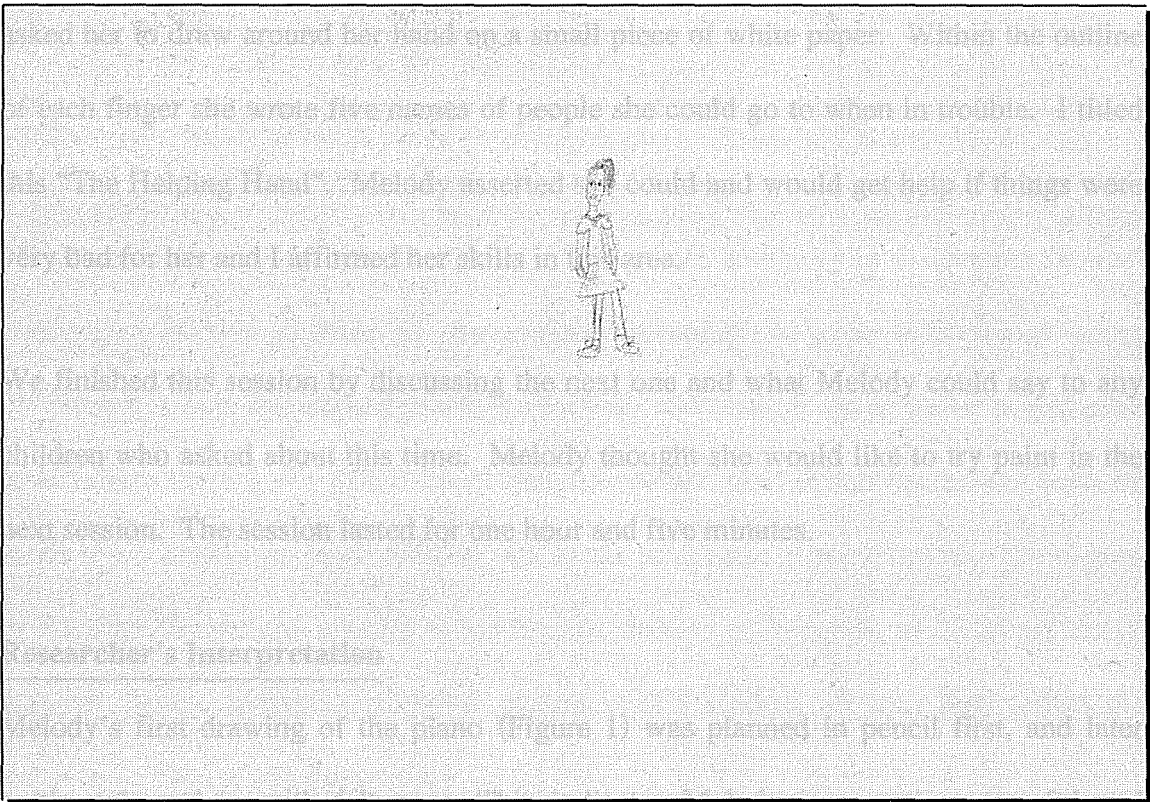


Figure 3

Melody was invited to draw a less happy day at school but could not remember one. We had a discussion about Melody's favourite and less favourite days. She remembered being attacked by another schoolgirl at camp because of a misunderstanding. This girl, and later another girl, had throttled her. Melody felt the situation had been resolved with a "happy ending" as she had hugged and made up with the schoolmate. Melody said she could not think of a drawing about this memory, even when closing her eyes to try to see an image in her head.

Melody identified six strategies to cope with the bullying, such as going to lie on her bed, and was affirmed for her coping skills.

Having ascertained that Melody did seek help from people if she was feeling very bad, I asked her to draw around her hand on a small piece of white paper. Within the outline of each finger she wrote five names of people she could go to when in trouble. I titled this "The Helping Hand". Melody asserted she could and would get help if things were very bad for her and I affirmed her skills in this area.

We finished this session by discussing the next one and what Melody could say to any children who asked about this time. Melody thought she would like to try paint in the next session. The session lasted for one hour and five minutes.

Researcher's Interpretation

Melody's first drawing of the piano (Figure 1) was planned in pencil first, and later partly coloured in with felt pens. This indicates Melody is sometimes careful and meticulous rather than spontaneous, or demonstrates her wish to please and impress as I had reinforced her artistic skills and nature. Melody reported she could be spontaneous and other times was more careful. Her ability to make a mistake and carry on drawing

(no eraser was available) infers she has an ego equipped to acknowledge being fallible. This was confirmed by her apparent ease in leaving the drawing unfinished, and her admission, later in the session, to being unable to successfully draw hands with no obvious discomfort.

The piano appears sketchy, as it is only partly coloured in, and the music notes are bright and colourful. This may be due to the piano being a fantasy one, whereas, music is a real part of Melody's life as she plays the keyboard at home. The colourful notes, which Melody described as having to be all different colours, may indicate her affinity for, and disclosed use of music to cheer herself up when sad.

It is possible to speculate about Melody's developmental progress and emotional well being from this image. This drawing demonstrates an understanding of spatial relationships. Developmentally this shows an ability to visualise abstractly and achieve complex, realistic composition which some children never achieve (Eng, 1966; Mortensen, 1991). Psychologically this may indicate an ability to understand abstract concepts. Melody seemed to demonstrate an ability to cope with things going differently to how she wished (making a mistake and running out of time); to postpone gratification (saying she would finish her picture later); and to self soothe and reassure (both in her behaviour while drawing and in her solutions for being upset). The picture of the piano may show a belief in her wishes, dreams or fantasies, as the piano image was her largest and most colourful picture in this session. It may also reflect the importance of music in her world.

In comparison to her first drawing of the piano, Melody's self-portraits (Figures 2 and 3) have less substance. They are drawn as outlines with soft, continuous lines but no

colour. This may be interpreted as the client feeling small and colourless. The contours of her body are faint but intact as barriers between person and environment, which may be an indicator of secure boundaries. The faintness of line may indicate a timid, self effacing, anxious, hesitant, uncertain personality with inner tensions (Machover, 1949; Gantt, 1990). The figures seem to float suggesting a feeling of insecurity, not feeling grounded or being truly in touch with one's world (Kaufman & Wolf, 1992; Machover, 1949). The left side of the body is slightly bigger than the right on both figures, which may indicate a largely feminine orientation (Furth, 1988).

The size of Melody's figures is small, particularly her drawing of herself at school. Figures smaller than 2 inches are considered an indicator for emotional disturbance on a page 8 ½ by 11 inches, in consideration with other indicators (Machover, 1949; Koppitz, 1968). Melody's figures are not this small but, as the paper is larger than this standard size, the smallness seems significant. Small figures are often drawn by shy or depressed children (Mortensen, 1991). Art Therapist Carol Ross (1997) commented that the group of bullied children in her art therapy programme all drew small figures that did not fill up the page. Cathy Malchodi (1990), an Art Therapist specialising in work with children in domestic violence situations, and Bobbie Kaufman, an Art Therapist working with sexually abused children, suggest small human figure drawings may signal feelings of low self worth, inadequacy and inferiority (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992).

In both her figures, Melody has hidden her hands, which can be seen as evasive. Evasiveness is considered a normal reaction for a preadolescent girl especially in an assessment situation. Children who acknowledge, without guilt or anxiety, they can not draw hands and draw their figures with hands in pockets or behind backs, as Melody

did, are thought to demonstrate good problem solving skills, intelligence and sophistication in overcoming this concern in a socially acceptable way (Koppitz, 1968). Alternatively, Greg Furth (1988), a Jungian therapist with a doctorate in investigating drawings, suggests when good drawing skills are displayed in all except in one area, there may be a deeper significance at an unconscious level. Melody drawing herself with ineffective hands may reflect an inability to make contact with the world; feelings of helplessness, powerlessness and ineffectiveness; and difficulties with interpersonal relationships (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992). Melody may feel, for example, she can not handle bullying and therefore omits hands.

The second portrait is more detailed than her first, as there are pleats indicated on the skirt and a collar or detail on the shirt neck (Figure 3). The figure is wearing a summer uniform that is out of context and unusual given that this drawing was done in winter. When a picture is in a non-contextual season it may indicate a harking back to that season or something that happened in that season (Furth, 1988). Melody said she associated summer with happier times.

Melody chose not to include school details or other pupils in her “at school picture” and acknowledged her explanation was contradicted by her absent school bag. Melody may be excluding schoolmates in her images in order to not disclose her school relationships, which she later stated are sometimes unhappy and seemed complex. Missing individuals in drawings are often a sign of conflict (Furth, 1988; Di Leo, 1971). Melody’s comment that she was between the car and school to explain why she has no friends with her could be seen from a psychoanalytic perspective as rationalisation – a defence employed to protect her from confronting her isolation. It may also show a

healthy and natural resistance not to reveal all to a new acquaintance or a lack of energy at the end of her first day back at school after being sick.

The self portrait at school is less central than the first and this may suggest feeling off balance or out of place. Melody said it was a happy picture although only the right side of the mouth is upturned. The lack of ears is more noticeable in this portrait as Melody has drawn herself with her hair tied up and her ears would be visible. Many children of this age (about 70%) do not draw ears on human figure drawings and so this may be seen as age appropriate rather than significant (Mortensen, 1991; Koppitz, 1968; Machover, 1949).

There are no emotional indicators (such as omission of essential body parts) apart from smallness in Melody's figure drawings suggesting she has no serious emotional disturbances. Her artwork is developmentally normal indicating she is not employing regression as a defence (Koppitz, 1968; Mortensen, 1991).

Melody's speed in completing the figure drawings was perhaps to prove she could work quickly, or of her attempting to be helpful and complete the tasks. Melody did appear a compliant child who wished to be helpful.

When asked to draw least favourite days at school, Melody chose not to do any pictures saying she could not think of a drawing about this. She told a story of being bullied but said she had no images about this story either. Melody's ability to resist requests to draw her schoolmates or upsetting times at school is a further indicator of strong boundaries and self-protection, but may suggest dissociation, avoidance, blocking or repression.

Melody demonstrates a stylised, logical, careful approach to her figure drawing which is age appropriate (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1975; Machover, 1949). At this preadolescent stage, conflict may occur with the more developed logical thinking inhibiting the creative intuitive mind (Mortensen, 1991). Melody's logical careful approaches may indicate an inhibition of spontaneity and imagination. Unlike many at this age, she has retained her interest in art.

In telling the story about bullying, Melody seemed unsure how the incident had started and was confused about her involvement. She was clear about the physical pain of being throttled but otherwise the story was not well constructed. Melody said this story had a happy ending as she and the instigator (perhaps) hugged and made up. Melody did not appear to see this resolution as incongruent with the reported violence. The opportunity was taken to reinforce Melody's demonstrated skills of negotiation and peacemaking in finding her own solution, as is consistent with the narrative therapy model (Freeman, Epston & Lobovits, 1997; White & Epston, 1989).

Summary

A therapeutic relationship was established and Melody completed all the assessment tasks without difficulty. Her drawings showed artistic aptitude but contained indicators of the following characteristics; lack of confidence, low self-esteem, sadness or depression, insecurity, anxiety, hesitancy, or timidity. Melody seemed disorientated or confused about the situations where she was bullied. Melody did not present as an emotionally disturbed child and appeared a good candidate for art therapy.

Session 2

Aims

The aims of the second session were to facilitate a better understanding, for both Melody and I, of how the bullying was happening, to learn about this child's understanding of bullying, and to discover what strategies Melody has employed that have proved helpful. A further aim was to encourage her to explore the bullying incidents in terms of her feelings and her understanding of bullies' motivation and feelings.

Session Content

Melody rated her week as good or great as there had been no arguments and everyone had got on. She had had no days off sick. Melody did not know why the week had been harmonious or what she had contributed to this but described a game of "chasey" at lunchtime and the fun she and her classmates had playing. She thought the game of "chasey" had been harmonious because they had made up rules and everyone had followed them. Melody reported no bullying incidents this week.

Paints were laid out ready for her use and she smiled upon seeing them. The colours available were red, blue, white, black, yellow, ochre, red oxide, green, and brown. Also available were a range of brushes, mostly large, jars of water, a tray for mixing paint and black and white paper.

Melody was invited to do a painting of her choice but preferred I pick a topic. I asked her to paint a picture about how she was feeling today. There was no time limit set.

Melody selected black paper and blue paint on a large brush. She expressed difficulty with the task, wanting to paint feeling both happy and sad and was unsure how to do

this. The blue colour represented “happy” but when asked which colour could be used to represent sadness she could not suggest one and said red represented anger. Melody declared she would do a picture about her lunchtime and playing “chasey” with her friends.

Melody painted a sun and then, changing to the smallest brush available, clouds and a green box. Melody asked if she could just use half the paper and the painting remained in the left half of the page. She painted white stick figures with red lips and blue or brown eyes. She painted with the same small brush, rinsing it between each colour and commented that “sometimes the colours get mixed up”. The painting took 15 minutes to complete (Figure 4).

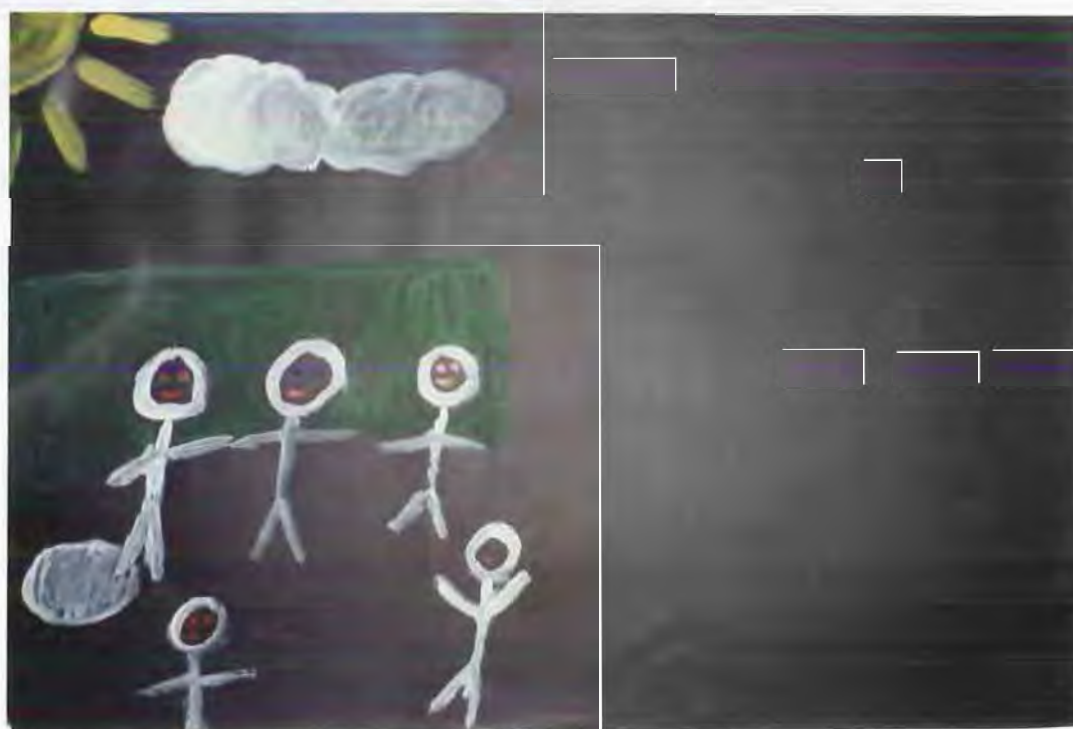


Figure 4

When invited to talk about the painting, Melody named her friends and explained about the game of “chasey”. Someone is “it” and tries to tag the other players who are safe when they are at “home” (a small circle in the netball courts) or are touching someone

who is at home. In this image, Melody is standing on “home” and her friends are linking up with her to be safe. Melody commented that if she let go of the person holding her arm, her friend Alex, the chain would break but she would be safe. Melody named this picture “Me and my friends”.

Melody was invited to paint a comic strip of the story of the previous week about Emily strangling her at camp. She expressed difficulty in starting the comic strip and so I painted the frames for her lightly in white paint. Melody used all six frames and in each frame painted two white stick figures with blue or brown eyes (Figure 5).



Figure 5

In frame one she began painting herself, then partially painted Emily saying “I will finish Emily’s arms later”. Melody named this image “me and Emily playing around”. The second frame she named “This is Emily watching Melody tying up her shoe laces”. The third frame, Melody named “Emily strangling me”, and the fourth “Sharon hurting me”. When beginning the fifth box, Melody loaded her brush with red paint and then

exclaimed “Oh – why did I grab the red?” and I reflected her question. Melody carried on painting using the red paint to paint the mouths of the figures first. Melody labelled this picture “Emily and me saying sorry”. In the sixth frame the blobs of blue paint merged and Sharon’s figure became one eyed. She named this frame “Me and Sharon saying sorry”.

It was suggested Melody tell the story using the comic strip. She appeared to find this difficult. I enacted the other roles in the story with Melody describing the possible emotions and thoughts of Emily and Sharon as the story unfolded. Melody chose to be herself. Melody described everyone as happy in frames one, five, and six. In the remaining frames she was upset and sad and could not imagine how Emily and Sharon were feeling. Melody seemed reluctant to dwell on frame three (in which she was being strangled by Emily) and agreed it was “a bit yucky” to think about.

When choosing the frame she would most like to change (if that change could influence the following frames) Melody chose the second one where Emily was looking at her tying her shoelaces. She would like to have apologised in this frame for perhaps playing a bit roughly in the beginning. She supposed Emily would like to change the first frame as Emily may have got hurt in this rough play. When asked if Emily would have liked to change the strangling picture, Melody agreed that was possible. We had a discussion about if it would be reasonable to strangle someone, and other ways of changing the story.

Melody rated school this week as the face ‘1’ (“next to real, real happy”) on the “Feeling Thermometer”. She thought she would like to work with oil pastels in the next session. The session lasted for one hour.

Researcher's Interpretation

Melody appeared relaxed and at ease in this session but her drawings appear somewhat repressed and guarded. Melody had demonstrated her ability, in the previous session, to draw people and yet in this session she drew only stick figures. The use of stick figures and lack of colour (Figure 5) can be interpreted from a psychoanalytical perspective as a sign of repression, which may be consistent with Melody's reluctance to draw her schoolmates in the last session. According to psychoanalytical theory, repression is the major defence mechanism of children in the latency period of seven to 11 years old (Levick, 1983). As an age appropriate defence it may not indicate regression to an earlier developmental drawing pattern. It may suggest that Melody has some deeper concerns that are troubling her but she is protecting herself from knowing these consciously. Cathy Malchiodi (1990), in her work with children traumatised by domestic violence, found the posttraumatic art of children tended to be simple, unelaborated, stereotyped or cartooned.

Melody said she had had a great/good week at school and that today was the best day of a very good week because her friend had returned to school and they had played together. Yet when asked to draw a picture of how she felt, she wished to draw feeling happy and sad and talked about red being a colour representing anger. Later, when depicting the scene of Emily and her making up, she chose red paint to start to paint with and said this surprised her. This suggests Melody was angry about making up with this girl who had strangled her without warning. Melody may have felt compelled to make up because she was vulnerable to further assault or due to an overdeveloped social conscience and need to be a peacemaker. This may be due to the social conditioning that girls should be nice, make peace and not be angry or aggressive.

Although Melody agreed with the researcher that it was never okay to strangle a person even if you are angry or mad, she has never expressed any anger or annoyance that this event took place. This may illustrate Art Therapist Carol Ross's (1996) comment, that children who are negotiating a difficult playground frequently become extremely passive. In bullying situations, victims who respond passively to avoid getting hurt, are often left with feelings of powerlessness and unresolved feelings (Tattum, 1993). Perhaps this is why Melody draws herself without hands.

In her image about playing chasey (Figure 4), Melody has painted herself on the home base which in this game represents safety. This suggests in a tenuous situation Melody has shown she knows how to be safe – which is to be “at home”. As she talked about her image, Melody said if the chain of friends broke she would be safe at home. This may be symbolic of Melody's staying at home and avoiding school when her friendships are under stress and withdrawing and isolating herself as a way of coping. Given the friend she is linked with is Alex – a girl who bullies her, the chain of friends may indeed break. Melody is also assuring herself of popularity in this picture by being “safe” and someone the girls can link with so they cannot be tagged.

Aspects of the “chasey” image suggest Melody may not be as happy as she indicated. The day of this session was remarkably hot and cloudless. Yet in this image Melody has drawn both sun and clouds, which perhaps indicates the feelings of happiness and sadness she wished to paint. This may represent an enjoyment of having friends contrasting her experience of how suddenly this can change to a bullying situation. Melody painted her mouth as a straightish line rather than an upturned smile. In reality Melody has a blinding smile when happy, something her mother and teacher had

commented on. This may further evidence Melody's deeper feelings of concern despite her report that playing "chasey" is a happy occasion.

The use of only half the paper may indicate feelings of hopelessness, common in children who are bullied (Slee, 1994; Rigby, 1997; Mellor, 1994; Brown, 1996). The left side of the paper is traditionally associated with the past (Furth, 1988). Possibly Melody is not looking to the future with any hope of changing her negative experiences with her schoolmates.

Concerned with Melody's reluctance to talk about the strangling event, I asked her to draw the event as a comic strip. This appeared to help Melody process the event, as she was more able to reconstruct the sequence of events than she was when verbalising the story (Figure 5). In the first session, she had no idea why the strangling had occurred and was unclear about why Sharon had become involved. However when depicting it in a comic strip, Melody thought the strangling had occurred because she had been too rough and that Sharon had become involved because Emily was scratched when Melody was trying to prevent the strangling.

It seemed Melody felt more able to express her feelings about Sharon using the comic strip. In the last frame of her comic strip, Melody painted the figure of Sharon with one eye. It is possible her decision not to correct this is a reflection of Melody's belief about Sharon's behaviour towards her, that she was "one eyed". Certainly in the telling of this incident, Melody said that Sharon had not listened to her side of the story and had only been concerned in defending Emily.

Of concern is that she was now understanding the events to be of her making. This may be an example of using rationalisation as a defence mechanism. This is consistent with

the response of children who are victims of domestic violence. They often believe their behaviour caused the violence (Herman, 1992; Butterworth & Fulmer, 1991; Elbow, 1982; Blanchard, Molloy, & Brown, 1992). When making meaning, a child may sacrifice her view of herself in order to believe the world is a place she can understand (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992). Melody may choose to blame herself to provide a reason for the violence, rather than live in a chaotic world where violence happens indiscriminately. In this belief system she increases her perceived control over the situation.

In the depiction of the strangling incident Melody has not drawn a very convincing picture of being strangled despite describing very clearly the feeling of being throttled. Neither of her aggressors, as stick figures, use both arms to strangle her. An observer, who had not heard the story, would not have realised the comic strip depicted a strangling. After a person has experienced trauma there can be a break down in reality testing and a rigidity of defences (such as denial, rationalisation) which may explain Melody's depiction of how the situation occurred (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992).

Summary

The session was informative in providing information about how the bullying was occurring. Melody was better able to reconstruct and explore a situation of being bullied using the art making. However she was not able to generate ideas for changing this situation. Rather than having particular strategies, Melody seemed to feel powerless in the situation of being bullied and to react with passivity. Melody appeared to lack confidence and initiative within the session. It appeared Melody disassociated from her emotions and repressed anger about being bullied.

Session 3

Aims

The aims of this session were to: facilitate Melody generating different strategies to deal with the bullying, to encourage her to express her feelings through the use of art making and movement and to introduce a fairy tale or hero figure that could facilitate working with the bullying stories in a less threatening way.

Session Content

Melody was invited to pretend she was a tree by standing with her eyes shut and arms raised while talked through a brief visualisation. I modelled the actions and remained in this position also. The therapeutic aim in using this visualisation was to encourage Melody's imagination and fantasy, use of body and playfulness into the session. The chairs and some furniture were cleared out of the room to make space for this process and to change the school like atmosphere of the room.

Melody was asked to draw the tree using her left (non-dominant) hand. This was intended to encourage Melody's creative thinking and free up her drawing by removing the pressure of "getting it right" (Edwards, 1993). It was hoped in making this session imaginative and creative, Melody would be more able to think of different solutions for her dilemmas, which thus far she had been hesitant to do.

Drawing a tree can be used as a projective test, and is part of the House/Tree/Person test. The drawing of the tree is said to be symbolic of the self and is interpreted in this way. It is less threatening to some children than drawing a human self-portrait (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992; Malchiodi, 1990; Furth, 1988). On completion of the drawing (Figure 6), Melody

was asked to talk about this image by describing herself as the tree and starting “I am a tree...”. She described herself as a largish, not so old tree but not a child, with lots of leaves waving in the wind, situated in the bush in the shelter of other trees, with a little bird in a nest living in her. Melody described herself as having roots, which had been suggested in the visualisation, but the image of the tree had no roots or ground.



Figure 6a

Melody was requested to draw one of the faces of the “Feelings Thermometer” to express about how she was feeling this week and drew the face “near real, real happy” (Figure 7). She chose to draw this with her right hand. When asked about her week, Melody described a really good week with no “yucky” bits as it had been sports week and a time where everyone got on with each other. At this point the session was interrupted by Melody being called away to go and compete in a class sporting event.

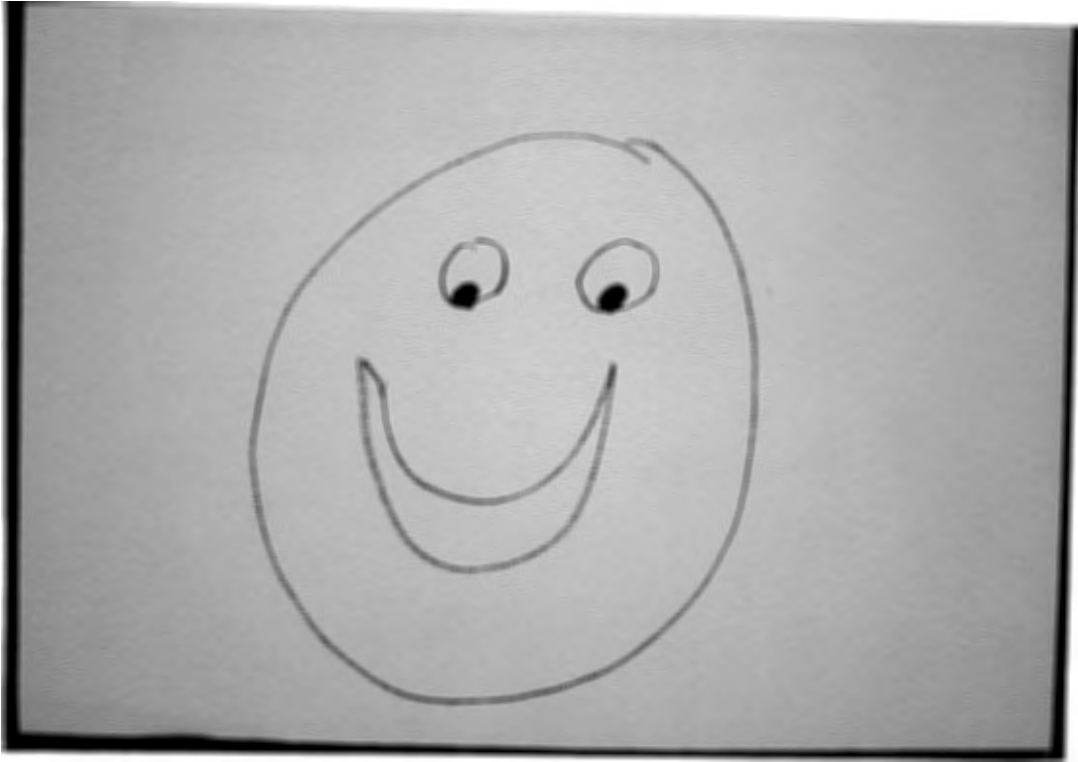


Figure 7

Melody asked that I accompany her to this event. The class competed two gender-based teams. Melody was noticeably taller than her classmates. Melody seemed friendly and involved with her classmates although not to the intensity of some girls who carried out congratulatory rituals around the jumping event. After the event, the teacher announced Melody had won first in the class in the girls' long jump.

When we returned to the school psychologist's office, Melody was invited to draw a face to demonstrate how she felt now and drew a very happy face (Figure 8). Melody was asked to draw the feeling of being happy with her left hand (Figure 9). Melody drew a wavy, orange line with her left hand and, with her right hand, some ochre dashes around the line. Melody explained this was a moving line and the yellow marks indicated the movement. Melody was invited to show "happiness" with her body. Melody jumped in the air swinging her arms saying "Yay" while I imitated this.

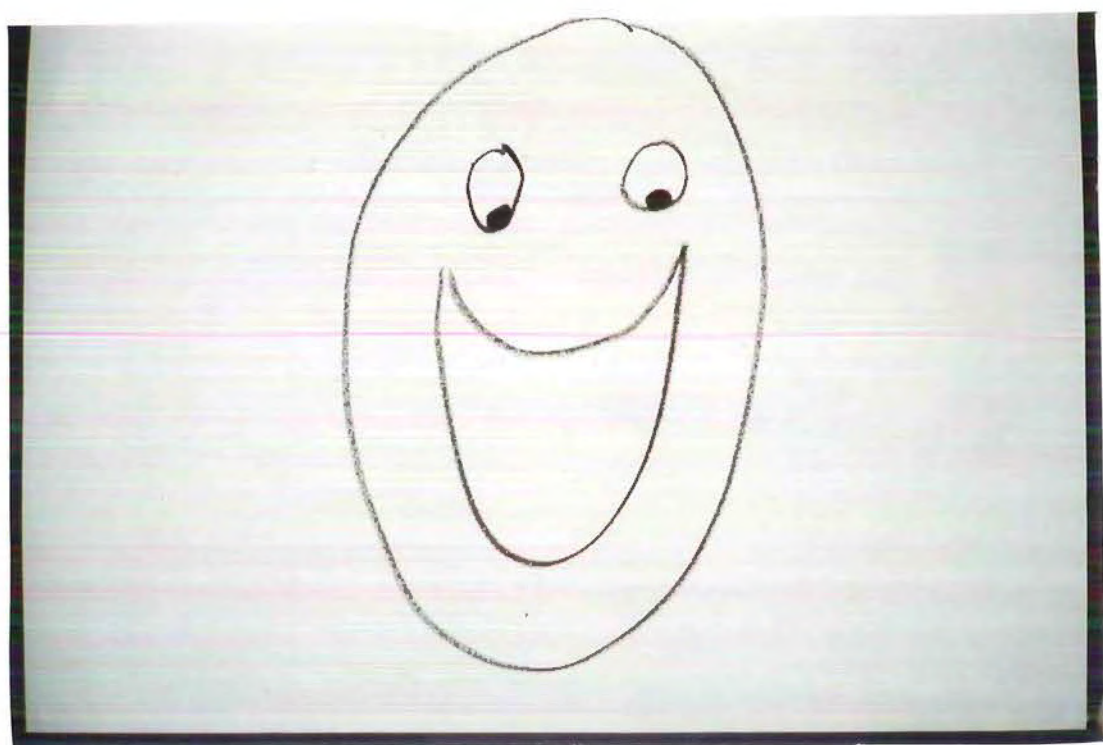


Figure 8

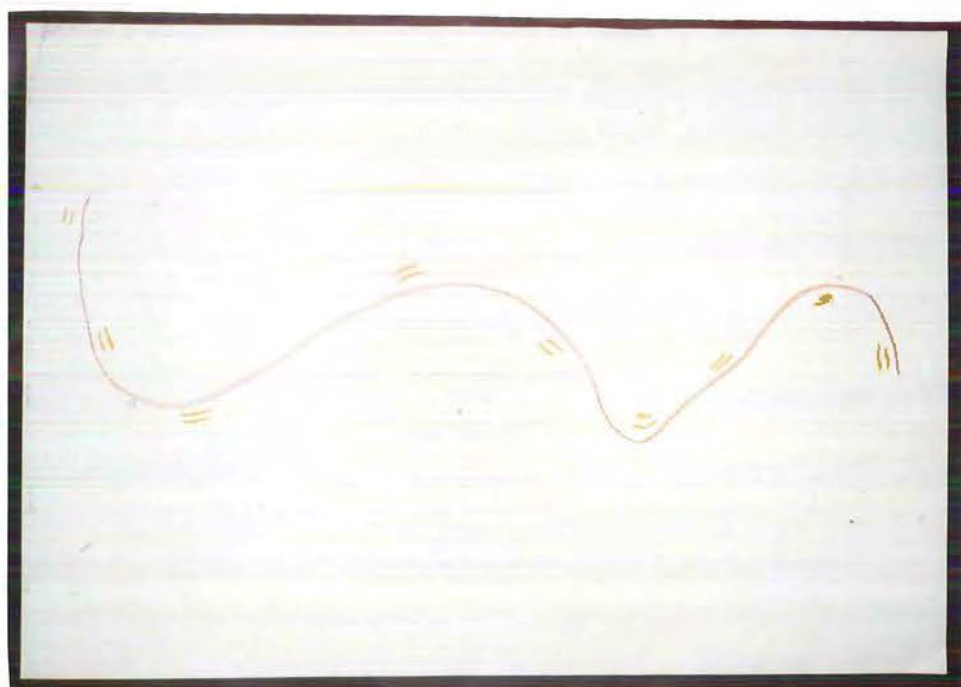


Figure 9

This process was repeated for the emotions sad and angry. For “sad” Melody drew a flat, straight green line with tiny black marks on the end explaining this was a line with very little movement (Figure 10). We then acted sad with Melody demonstrating the action, which was to drag her feet and look hunched. For the next emotion “anger”, Melody remembered a bullying incident when a girl had yelled at her and called her and two of her friends “cow” and “snob”. She drew a wavy red line saying this was difficult (Figure 11). I pinned a piece of paper to the notice board and, standing, Melody drew a jagged red line (Figure 12). In the physical demonstration of anger, Melody again hesitated and then swung her arms saying “Oh I’m so mad”. This depiction of anger seemed impotent and lacking in energy.



Figure 10

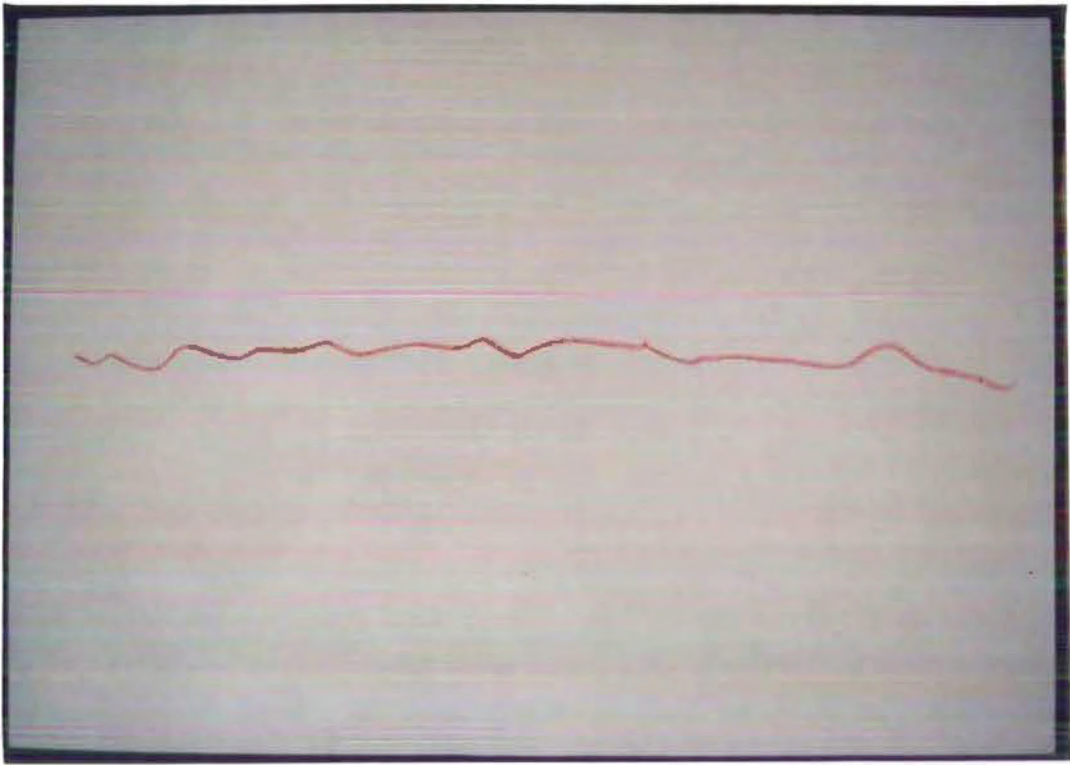


Figure 11

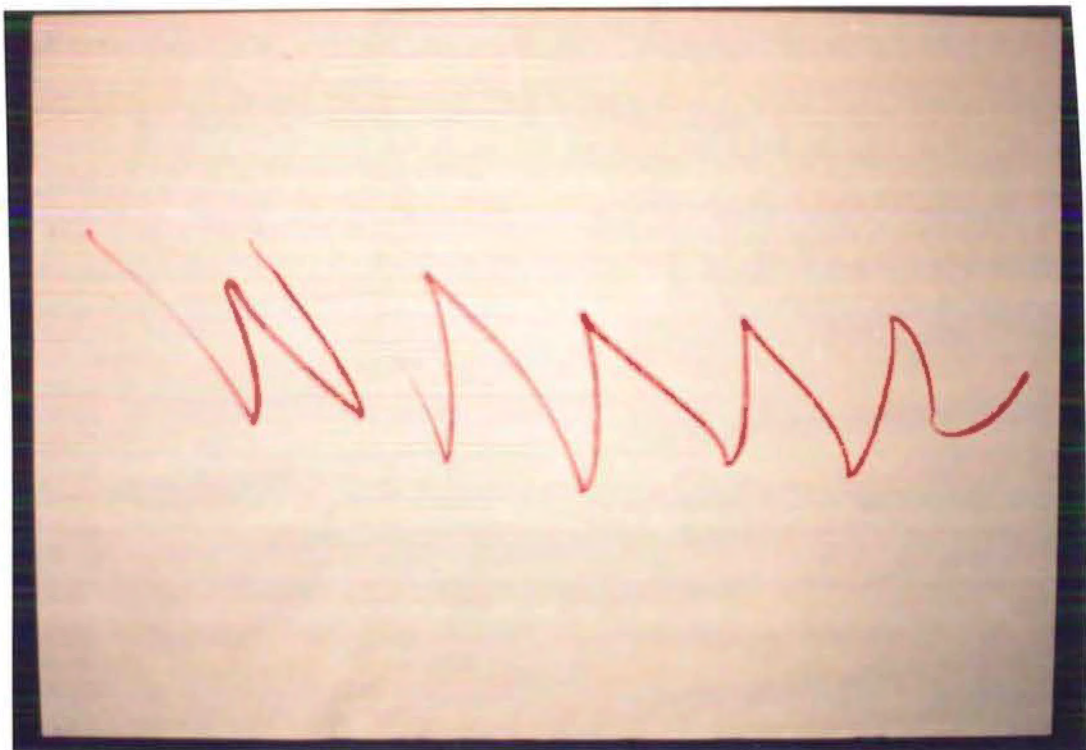


Figure 12

The therapeutic aim of encouraging these expressions of emotions was to encourage Melody to become in touch with her emotions, in particular anger, and to affirm her right to express these emotions. The full body and left hand approach was used to encourage integration and more intuitive, less logical responses.

A bullying situation was discussed and Melody asked to think of alternative responses to the bullier. Melody could not think what she would like to say to this girl and could not draw a picture of what she would like to make different.

Melody was invited to choose her favourite fairy tale or television character. A character, who a child identifies with, may be used therapeutically to help deal with, and grow through, difficult experiences. Stories about this character can promote expression of feelings, overcome resistance to talking and imaging bullying situations by making the situation once removed and identify other ways of dealing with these situations (Dunn-Snow, 1997).

Melody chose 'Tommy' from a children's television cartoon called Rug Rats (Klasky, Csupo & Germain, 1991) because he was a baby who was brave. I ascertained that Tommy's skills in dealing with bullying situations were bravery in facing up to his foe, leadership skills, reasoning and being adventurous. Melody was asked to imagine what Tommy would say to the girl who had called her and her friends' names. Melody could not think of anything and was asked to draw a picture of Tommy standing up to this girl for Melody.

Melody drew a picture of Tommy and the bully of the TV show, Angelica. She explained that Tommy was telling Angelica off saying things like “Why do you keep hurting people” and “We don’t want to be with you”. Melody named Angelica as a bully and thought she bullied because she was mean and hurting people made her happy (Figure 13).

The session ended with talking about Melody winning the long jump and the strangeness of an art therapy session that had included this. The session was 35 minutes long (not including the long jump).



Figure 13

Researcher's Interpretation

Melody's first image, of the tree, (Figure 6) appears sophisticated despite her concerns about using her left hand. Interestingly, this picture parallels her self-portraits in its lack of ground, context and floating quality.

There are no roots in the tree image. Rootless trees drawn by children may indicate trauma (Kaufman & Wolh, 1992). This may indicate Melody feels disconnected from what is happening, unable to draw nourishment and out of touch with her instincts as her attempts to be a friend have resulted in bullying and some isolation. The lack of ground in Melody's images of self, including the tree as self, may indicate a feeling of insecurity.

The rendering of the tree's branches going off the page is a sophisticated technique that is at odds with the lack of ground and roots. The crown of the tree may represent imagination and fantasy. Children of Melody's age are often less imaginative and less able to fantasise than younger children and Melody has seemed reluctant to use her imagination when asked, staying instead with a logical, intellectual approach. The tree looks very strong and would be sturdy if it had any ground or roots. Melody has not drawn any other trees to create the bush she discussed and, like her self-portraits, the tree is alone. However as a tree, she has a little bird in a nest for company, which may indicate her ability to provide company for herself when alone.

Melody's images of happiness (Figure 8 and 9) and sadness (Figure 10) were sophisticated and abstract but lacking in emotive qualities. Furth (1988) suggests that abstract pictures may be manifestations of avoidance, difficulty or something hard to understand. Traumatized children are often cut off from their emotions (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992). Melody had most difficulty portraying anger (Figure 11) with more success imaging anger when standing (Figure 12). Her bodily depiction of anger seemed more plaintive than angry. It seems Melody may have difficulty getting in touch with her anger or believe anger is not an emotion she should have or display. This may be due to socialisation that

girls should not express or feel anger. Certainly Melody's mother mentioned advising her daughter to walk away from bullying and wait until her schoolmates were friendly again.

Melody's inclusion of a "little bird" living with her in the tree image and her identification of a baby (Tommy) as a hero suggests Melody wishes to be a baby or babied. This, combined with the rootlessness of the tree image, may indicate a wish for more nurturing or to be protected, like a baby, from the bullying. As the oldest child in her family of origin, she is perhaps instructed to be responsible and grown up, and has missed out on some of the babying she longs for. As a tall, mature looking girl she may be encouraged to act more grown up than is age appropriate. Melody's attachment appeared to be interrupted by her experience with the maid and the pre-school experience. This could increase her need for nurturance and make her more likely to encounter adverse experiences such as bullying. This early childhood experience may partly explain her passivity or helplessness and switching off of emotions (Bowlby, 1988). Melody's passive tendencies may make it very difficult for her to reject the company of "friends" who bully her.

To help Melody think of creative solutions to being bullied, I introduced the idea of a hero to help her develop assertiveness and self-expression. Melody was able to identify in Tommy the characteristics of being successfully assertive even when the bully was bigger, more sophisticated and stronger but could not project these qualities onto her own situation. Melody's identification with this character indicates she has the qualities she identified Tommy as having – of being brave, adventurous and assertive.

Melody could not imagine what bullying provides for the bully. She did not seem to understand the concepts of power and dominance and seemed confused about the interplay of bullying dynamics. Her early childhood experience may have prevented her from processing a developmental stage that facilitates understanding information about social relationships. Literature on trauma suggests children lose their logic, problem solving skills and ability to interpret events (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992; Stronach-Buschel, 1990; Briere, 1992).

Summary

Melody was still unable to think of a way she could better respond to being bullied. She remained cut off from her emotions and instincts especially in relation to imagining or discussing bullying situations. She seemed more able to think about bullying when identifying with a hero who coped with bullies. Identifying with such a person suggests Melody has adventurous, brave and assertive qualities that could be accessed. Her reactions to bullying, helplessness and passivity, suggest a response to trauma. Melody appears to identify with babies. This may indicate she requires more nurturing and protection.

Session 4

Aims

The primary aim for this session was to engage Melody in role-play to develop coping strategies including specific strategies such as visualisation of a forcefield. These strategies would be practised during the session. The tree image from the previous session would be revisited to encourage her to identify and address the need to ground herself.

Session Content

Melody looked visibly upset when I picked her up from her classroom. She immediately told me that a girl had made her cry at lunchtime. The art therapy session was held in the sick room as the auditor was using the school psychologist's room. With encouragement, Melody sat in the beanbag and snuggled in while I sat on a pillow on the floor. The art materials - chalk pastels, charcoal and clay, were already set out on the floor.

Melody described how she had been playing with her friend Sue happily. An older girl Sharon (the same girl who had been involved in the strangling incident) had become very angry at Melody and Sue for not including another girl in their game calling them "selfish" and "idiots". All of the younger girls ended up in tears although Melody did not cry until leaving the scene. Melody could not think why Sharon behaved this way but thought it would continue to happen. Melody was unsure how to cope differently. We agreed to use art to generate ideas about changing the story.

Melody was invited to make a clay figure of Tommy that would represent her in the re-enactment of the story. Clay was suggested because of its tactile and kinesthetic properties, which invites the unblocking of emotions (Geldard & Geldard, 1997). Clay was also used

to encourage Melody to become more grounded and earthed given her floating images and therefore a gritty, earthy clay was provided. Melody was very engaged with the medium. She talked about how much she liked the clay and told a story about her family and clay and took some clay home.



Figure 14

Melody spent five minutes making a simple figure. The figure was well proportioned but could not stand up as the legs were slender and had no feet. The suggestion that this character might need to stand prompted Melody to make the legs much stronger and include feet. In a symbolic way using her clay figure, I was attempting to help Melody to feel stronger. When Melody had finished I asked about the arms which were very short and wondered if that is how she felt around bullies. Melody felt the figure did need longer arms but not hands and made the arms longer (Figure 14).

Melody chose white clay rather than the red gritty clay to make a figure of Sharon. The white clay was much softer and as a consequence “Sharon” was “wobbly”. When asked if Sharon was wobbly in real life, Melody said she was. As the clay figure of Sharon was not tall enough and needed to be higher than the Tommy figure, we placed the figure on an eyebath from the sickroom cabinet. Melody was encouraged to stand her (strengthened) figure on flattened clay that served as ground. In this way I was symbolically encouraging her to be grounded and in touch with reality. The other figure on the eye bath was less grounded and therefore less stable.

Melody wanted to use the Tommy figure to push the Sharon figure off its “pedestal” and did so a few times saying that it felt good. Melody thought Tommy would not actually do this but that he wished sometimes that “the baddest thing” would happen to Angelica who always picked on smaller children. Melody told a story from Rug Rats (Klasky, Csupo & Germain, 1991) about when Tommy thought the “baddest thing” had happened to Angelica because he had wished it. I suggested that it was okay to imagine “baddest things” happening to people who do nasty things as it can help you to feel better and gave examples of doing this.

While talking about using our imagination and mental images to feel stronger, I suggested Melody might like to employ a visual forcefield to deflect names and nasty looks. She imagined one more like a wall. Melody had some ideas about how she would practice this using her brother as a pretend bully.

Using the clay figures, we practised Melody’s suggestions including ignoring Sharon and pretending to be unaffected. Melody described and acted being attacked as “Oh no! What

am I going to do?” with an intake of air and curving her body inwards. We practiced assertive behaviour with the figures and our bodies like standing tall and looking strong. Melody said she knew when to stand strong and when to get out of the way because it was too dangerous.

Melody told me a story of “Baba Yaga” attacking a young girl who was very good to animals. The animals helped the girl to escape. The first time Baba Yaga tried to get the girl, she put a lake in her way but Baba Yaga just sipped it up. Next, a forest of closely knitted trees was placed in her path but Baba Yaga ate them. Finally the girl put a mountain in Baba Yaga’s way and this stopped her because it was “humungous”.

Melody was asked what kind of mountains could get in the way of bullies. She talked about mountains that reach to the sky. We discussed obstacles to bullying.

Melody told a story from Rug Rats (Klasky, Csupo & Germain, 1991) where the bully was allowed into the club so the littler kids weren’t excluding others. I talked about imagining a club called “The Being Melody’s Friend Club”. Melody’s rules for belonging to this club were that anyone might join until they are mean. Being mean was hurting, calling people names and talking behind people’s backs in a bad way.

Melody expressed a wish to teach people not to hurt others. We discussed how this was an adult’s job and her job was to use the techniques we had discussed to protect her.

Melody expressed another wish – that there was a school free of bullies – where bullies had to leave. She felt that girls who became 10 years old should leave and come back when

they were 12 years old because they were catty. She felt the bullying would only stop when she left school. To focus her on the strategies available to her we planned for Melody to practice her coping techniques at home and report back about their effectiveness next week.

To symbolically encourage Melody's sense of groundedness and access to nurturing, I gave Melody the tree drawing she had made the previous week and asked what this tree most needed. Melody said this was a "real healthy tree" with a strong trunk and needed to be strong against the wind and stand up. We discussed my concern that the tree had no roots or ground. Melody said the tree would not be able to drink up the rain with no roots and would be blown over with the wind that comes with the rain. In consideration of these factors, Melody drew in ground and roots. She chose to draw with her left hand as this was how the original was drawn (Figure 6h).

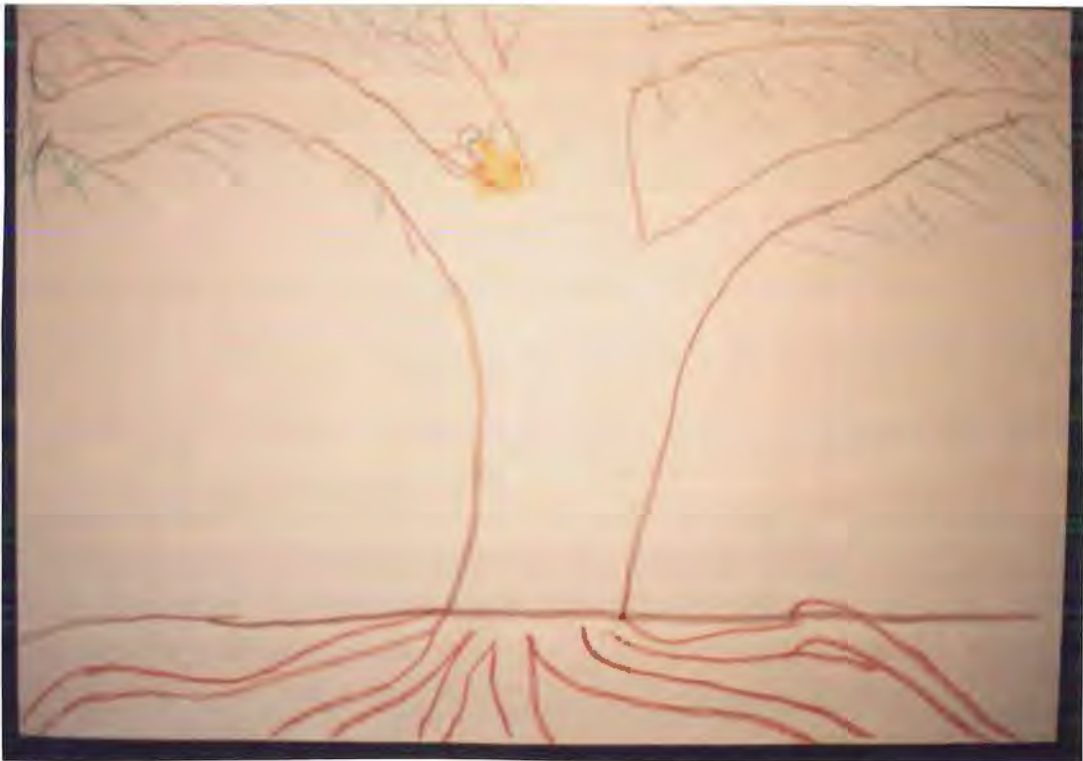


Figure 6b

Melody chose four different faces on "The Feeling Thermometer". Friday, a really good day as number '0' ("real, real happy"), Monday and Thursday as number '1' ("next to real, real happy"), Wednesday number '2' ("okay") and Tuesday mainly number '3' ("sad") due to a bullying incident but the sports day part of it was number '2' ("okay"). The session finished after one hour and five minutes.

Researcher's Interpretation

Throughout this session, Melody was increasingly more able to express her story and feelings indicating she had developed a therapeutic relationship and the trust to express herself. She immediately volunteered the information about the bullying she had experienced in that lunchtime. Melody was for the first time able to express anger about being bullied.

Until art materials were introduced Melody (acting as "Tommy") was unable to come up with concrete suggestions of how she could have responded differently or articulate being angry at the bully. However, once the clay figures were made, Melody was able to push the bully off her perch and to enjoy the bully's wobbly instability. The experience of having control over events or people in art empowers children (McIntyre, 1990; Ross, 1996; Warren, 1993). Further, the expression of emotion may be cathartic allowing the expression of feelings rather than repression (Silver, 1989; Landgarten, 1981; Rubin, 1978; Webb, 1991).

In encouraging Melody to admit to and act out her anger at bullying I hoped to give her permission to get in touch with those feelings and to believe she was entitled to be angry at the abuse she was suffering. Melody expressed her concern about having these feelings

through reference to a story about Rug Rats (Klasky, Csupo & Germain, 1991) where her identified hero “Tommy” had feared that the “baddest” thing had happened to his foe because he had wished it. Melody’s use of stories indicates she is moving from self-blame. I introduced stories of my being angry and assertive to encourage Melody to accept anger and assertion as belonging to women and to challenge cultural expectations that women and girls do not show aggression or anger. This lack of expression of anger is associated with the phenomena of bullying (Clarke & Kiselica, 1997).

In telling a story about Baba Yaga, Melody seems to be employing archetypes from the heroic myth – a journey of individualisation involving overcoming challenges. These myths are thought to embody emotional experiences and promote psychological healing (Pearson, 1986; Bettelheim, 1988; Moon, 1992; Storr, 1973; Brun, Pederson & Runberg, 1993). Baba Yaga is a Russian witch famous for her power, cruelty and penchant for eating humans. In Russian fables she lives in a hut built out of human bones and captures unlucky people who cross her path (Afanas’ev, 1943; Mayer, 1994). Thus Melody appears to be expressing confidence in her ability to triumph over evil and get through this difficult time by identifying with this girl who likes animals and emerges victorious. According to Bruno Bettelheim (1988), one of the world’s most famous contemporary psychoanalysts, children gain confidence in their abilities to survive struggles with the evils in their lives through the use of fairytales. He suggests it is helpful for a child feeling unprotected or in danger, to believe in superhuman powers and magic and that the use of helpful animals puts her in touch with instincts. As Melody may have lost her faith in her instincts (as suggested by her rootless tree) the use of this story suggests she is restoring this faith.

Clinical psychologists, Birgitte Brun and Marianne Runberg, suggest fairy tales are particularly appropriate for life issues that lie in preverbal memories (Brun, Pederson & Runberg, 1993). As the heroic myth can be seen psychologically as being about individuation and Melody's process of separating from her mother was disrupted, her spontaneous use of this story suggests she is attempting to heal this issue using a less confronting means (Pearson, 1986; Brun, Pederson & Runberg, 1993). The use of a fairy tale, especially one the client relates, can overcome blocks and/or intensify the therapeutic process (Brun, Pederson & Runberg, 1993).

The archetype of an evil witch expressed in a child's story is likely to stem from an early experience of (in the child's perception) being neglected or uncared for (Bettelheim, 1988; Jung, 1956; Storr, 1973). The fact that Melody has identified her foe as a witch may relate to the maid that cared for her in Singapore being emotionally abusive. While Melody may not consciously remember the experience of being cared for by a person who did not like her or meet her needs, it seems to play in her unconscious fears. It is possible Melody is particularly vulnerable to abuse from females and more affected if that female is Asian looking (her friend Alex is Indian). Melody has difficulties in rejecting her relationship with Alex despite her cruelty and this may relate to Melody's experiences with the maid and her Singaporean schoolmates. Disruption to early attachment relationships or harmful or unsatisfying early attachment can significantly effect the child's later relationships leading her to recreate non-nurturant relationships (Dunn, 1993; Kelly, 1998; Bowlby, 1988).

Melody's telling of the story about "Angelica" being let into "Tommy's" club seemed to be again an expression of concern about becoming a bully herself and not wanting to reject the bullies around her. From this we were able to establish a list of rules and unacceptable behaviours which Melody herself suggested and identify Melody's feelings of responsibility to stop people bullying which I discouraged. Melody seems to feel uneasy about rejecting her girlfriends no matter how badly they treat her. This may link with her earlier childhood experiences of rejection, feeling powerless, and familiarity with feeling confused and stressed.

In returning to the tree image of the previous week, Melody was able to see her tree in an objective way. I pointed out that the tree had no roots to provide an opportunity for Melody to symbolically ground herself— a similar action as making her clay figure very strong and grounded. Melody seemed to know her strengths in saying she was a healthy, strong tree, and her challenge was to stand up against the wind.

Summary

Melody responded well to making clay figures to role-play bullying situations. She was able to generate her own strategies and act assertively and angrily at the clay bully. Melody was able to identify the need for the tree image to be grounded and rooted. With the changes she made in this image and the play with the clay, Melody symbolically grounded herself.

This session seemed pivotal in the therapeutic process. Melody demonstrated an instinctive knowledge of what she most needed psychologically and how to heal these conflicts with relating her fairytale, her use of stories and in discussing her tree image. For the first time

in the art therapy, Melody acted out her anger about bullies and was active in suggesting alternative ways to respond to being bullied.

After the Session

While loading my car, two girls approached me asking did I like Melody's art. This was after school and there were no other children around. I agreed that was why I taught her and extricated myself. Concerned about speaking to these girls (one of these girls was Alex who bullies Melody), I wrote a letter, in a narrative therapy style reminding Melody of the good ideas she had had in our session and explaining I had kept to our agreed story when speaking to these girls (Appendix G). I entrusted this to the principal to give to her in a quiet moment the next day. As Melody remembered and treasured this letter, I wrote another letter after the sixth session and entrusted this to her mother (Appendix H).

Session 5

Aims

The first aim for this session was to encourage the integration of Melody's left and right brain, mind and body. The second was to continue the therapeutic use of stories (that Melody herself had introduced) relating these to the bullying situations and to introduce fantasy, magic and internal wisdom and strengths into the sessions.

Session Content

Melody and I met on the way to her classroom. As we walked together, Alex who had approached me after the previous session walked close enough to hear what we were saying whilst giggling. Once we arrived, Melody professed to be hot with tired legs because she had been doing a lot of sports. We did some stretching and opened a window.

I demonstrated three kinesiology/brain gym exercises, which we did together. The exercises, the cross crawl, gravity glide, and rocka are used to encourage an integration of left and right brain and body (Denison & Denison, 1989). We both took off our shoes and socks and sat on cushions on the floor.

Melody was talked through a visualisation during which she was asked to imagine being in a garden where she found a path. Walking along the path, she came to an obstacle, which she had to get past. The path led to a building in a forest in which she found a wise woman. This wise woman gave her two gifts to help and protect her and could answer one question (adapted from a visualisation from Ernst & Goodson, 1981, p. 170). The therapeutic aim of this visualisation was to extend Melody's use of archetypes and encourage her imagination. The introduction of magic objects and reintroduction of magical thinking (of the previous

developmental age) is thought to provide help and encouragement for a child experiencing difficulties. The use of a wise person as an archetype was intended to access internal wisdom and resources (Pearson, 1986; Storr, 1973).

During the visualisation, Melody appeared relaxed and to be concentrating. After it was finished, she was invited to draw one or both of the gifts with chalk pastels. Melody drew a black outline of a scallop shell shape on a white piece of paper and coloured in each section a different colour (Figure 15). She drew a black circle and coloured this with merging colours. As she coloured she described these gifts as a strange, beautifully coloured shell and a wishing stone. Melody had asked her question about the gifts and the wise woman had said, "you will see".



Figure 15

When questioned about what she had visualised, Melody wished she had been asked to use her gifts. She had imagined that the gate, (her obstacle), would change and she would have to use either the shell or the stone to get past it. I suggested it would be possible for the story to continue as a daydream. Melody knew about day dreaming and wanted to try this.

Melody was given the options of drawing the story or parts of it, making figures to tell the story or to use the sand tray and little toys to tell the story. Melody chose the later. A cloth was lifted to reveal toys and sandtray. It was suggested Melody use the toys to tell her story and, if there was not exactly what she wanted, to choose the nearest thing. Melody spent some time looking at the toys and chose a marble and ring to represent her two gifts, changing the ring for another marble. She asked if she should choose a figure to represent her, picking a tiny troll, with a shock of yellow hair saying "I'll be this little thing".

Melody put her figure in the sand and started to tell the story. As the story developed, she required more items and selected those. Melody told a story about her being faced with a lion "who hadn't eaten in a very long time". A black panther came to her aid and she jumped on its back and rode to safety. Then she was faced with the gate that had changed into a "humungous picket fence" and heard a ghostly voice telling her to use her wishing stone to open the gate. The troll was then faced with two alligators that she distracted by throwing her shell at them, which changed its colours to look like food. On the journey, Melody used a little pouch to hold the treasures and to keep the wishing stone and shell safe. Finally the troll entered a garden and restarted a fountain by placing one of her treasures in it. After this she rested and was joined in her rest by the black panther.

To continue and emphasise the therapeutic use of fairytale and heroic journeys, I encouraged Melody to retell the story of Baba Yaga. Using metaphors in art therapy and stories is a way of connecting with children, like Melody, who are hard to reach in a cognitive way (Dunn-Snow, 1997).

Melody told a story about Tommy becoming outraged at Angelica for not giving him a dime to buy lemonade from her lemonade stand. Tommy had organised the other children to protest and this effectively finished Angelica's business. Tommy and the other children made their own lemonade stand. Angelica was then allowed to join them. Tommy's knowledge of how to deal with Angelica, i.e. when to make a stand, to enable them to live together even though Angelica remained a bully, was highlighted.

Melody chose to tell another story and "play with the things again". She decided to tell a story with "heaps of cats in it" and that she would be a snow tiger. She described a snow tiger as different from other tigers with a white, rather than orange, coat.

Melody told a story about being a snow tiger with other cats as friends. The cats all found a sack, which the snow tiger kept, as it was unsuitable for the other cats. The snow tiger was faced with a very long fence and found a way around it, finding treasure as she travelled to put in the sack. She found a beautiful garden and in the garden a grizzly bear. The other cats heard her growling and they came to help her fight the bear. The cats won and the bear was taken away to be eaten but the snow tiger chose adventures over food as she was not hungry. She found further treasures including a beautiful ring and then became very hungry. The snow tiger found a liquid that gave her the strength to catch a giraffe to eat

and dragged the remains to her big cat friends who were still eating the bear. They ate the bear and giraffe all together.

We discussed the stories with their battles and victories, and the bad enemies emphasising Melody's resourcefulness and bravery while relating this to bullying. The "most scary" part was the "crocodiles" because Melody felt that although she was knowledgeable about cats, she was very unsure of what to do with the crocodiles (or alligators as she had named them earlier). Melody felt that the bullies were similar to the lion that became two alligators in her story of the adventuresome snow tiger and agreed she had figured out ways of battling these tricky enemies.

We talked about the things that helped her – the magic shell, wishing stone, and cats. Melody was invited to think of a protection symbol that would help keep her safe from the bullying. Melody chose the "powerful ring" that she had used in her story. She thought she would keep this ring near by – in her room when at home, or in her school bag at school or wearing it. Melody was offered the ring for a week to use as a symbol of her strength to keep in her pocket (to avoid being asked questions about the ring – as magic things are best not talked about). Melody liked this idea.

Melody described her week as good choosing number '1' ("next to real, real happy") on the "The Feeling Thermometer". Melody had been ignoring "the stuff that people have been saying" by walking away or, if near a friend, suggesting that the friend gets a drink with her. We agreed she had some good ideas about stopping bullying and seemed to be handling her adventures at school. She had practiced her forcefield at home in the mirror, but not with her brother, and had felt good doing this but had no opportunity to practice her

other skills. We practised the skills from last week including the standing strong and making assertive statements as Tommy would do.

Melody described adventures with her little brother in her back yard searching for treasure she had buried. I suggested Melody was very brave and adventurous in her stories and life. Melody agreed. Even when scared (like going on the tree top walk when she was very scared of heights) she did things. Melody agreed that I had been teaching her to be strong when in fact she was already, but said the art therapy sessions were making her “more brave”.

We discussed our final session next week. Melody chose to leave barefoot because she felt like leaving her shoes off. The session lasted for one hour and ten minutes.

Researcher's Interpretation

Melody seemed more engaged in this session and her pictures show colour and firmness of line and form that may indicate she was more present. Melody was able to make suggestions about what she wished to do and seemed less hesitant than previously. She seemed to express a greater confidence in herself and her decisions, by saying she was brave and a person who could figure things out, and later by choosing not to put on her shoes.

Melody was very able to use her imagination to sustain the fantasy of the visualisation and could describe all aspects including a beautiful garden. She had created a smooth path and obstacle (a gate) that she could easily conquer. This seems to indicate that she has more belief in herself and her life path than she sometimes presents. Melody had a clear picture

of the gifts she received to protect and help her. It was interesting these were magical and mystical gifts, versatile and non-aggressive. Magical presents in stories often acknowledge and express the client's characteristics (Brun, Pedersen & Runberg, 1993). Melody again demonstrated faith in her own abilities when the message from the wise woman was for her to wait and see – rather than being told what to do. Melody was very prepared to take on challenges with these gifts and seemed to want an opportunity to test her strength.

Melody herself introduced the therapeutic language of stories into the art therapy sessions and I expanded this use by encouraging her to create fairy tales as play therapy. This is a combination of two different therapeutic uses of stories in therapy and facilitates coping with life crises and symbolically healing very early experiences (Brun, Pedersen & Runberg, 1993). In telling these stories Melody demonstrated her characteristics of being gentle, strong and adventurous and overcoming her enemies, so she could carry on her adventures

In the sand play, Melody chose a tiny Tommy like figure to represent her. In sand play sessions, other clients have represented babies with this toy. Melody described her troll as “this little thing”. The baby or toddler theme remains strong for Melody – the use of Tommy (a baby) as the hero in her stories, the little bird in her tree, and the little troll to represent herself. This may be a manifestation of the difficulties she experienced in her toddler years with the frequent moves, being left in the care of a maid, attending a pre-school where she was a minority and her family suffering financial stress.

In the second story Melody was a snow tiger – larger than the other big cats and different to the other tigers with its unusual coat. Melody seemed aware of her differences to the other

cats and was prepared to take a different path. While the other cats were prepared to just eat, Melody was hungry for more adventures. She identified a part of her (the lion) that “hadn’t eaten for a long, long time” and replenished her tiger self with liquid and food. In Jungian terms this may symbolise Melody’s hungry animus. Her acknowledgement of her more “male” qualities promotes her assertiveness, and entitlement to anger. In psychodynamic terms this hunger may represent her oral hunger due to some deprivation in the oral stage of childhood.

In choosing the snow tiger Melody seems to be acknowledging her unique and special qualities and also her bravery and strength. It may be she is, in fact, stronger and more resourced than her peers and these differences combined with her talents contributes to the bullying.

Summary

Melody responded well to the use of kinesiology exercises. She seemed more energised, creatively engaged, imaginative, confident, less compliant, showed more initiative and ability to fantasise in this session. This may have been due to the integration of her logical and creative mind, and her mind and body, or to the visualisation and further use of stories. Melody speaks and responds to the language of stories. She seemed to acknowledge in this session that she had inside her all the resources she required for coping with life’s challenges. Melody seems much connected with her imagination and fantasy life and more confident, less complaint displaying more initiative than previously.

Session 6

Aims

The aim of this session was to assess how Melody was feeling about herself and the bullying situation in comparison with the first art therapy session. The other important aim was to provide closure.

This session started one hour earlier than usual in an attempt to avoid the measles injections the whole school was receiving. This earlier time had been negotiated with the Italian teacher and, with difficulty, the classroom teacher who did not think Melody should miss an Italian lesson for an art therapy session.

Session Content

Melody was offered a xylophone to express how she was feeling as music seemed to be a natural language for her. Melody played the xylophone going up and down the scale. This instrument was new to her. She had had an opportunity to play this instrument before, but one of her “kind of friends” had claimed it and Melody’s turn had never eventuated. Melody enjoyed playing the xylophone and was encouraged to play on.

Melody was invited to draw whatever she liked with any materials from the first assessment session (black and white paper, coloured pencils, felt tip pens, pastels, a lead pencils, a graphite pencil, and in addition an eraser). After 10 minutes was up she could indicate if more time was required. Melody started to draw with the pencil, breaking the lead, but carrying on drawing. She began with drawing a large note in the middle of the page and adding lots of smaller notes around it (Figure 16).

The pencil was very broken by this stage and unable to find a pencil sharpener the graphite pencil was recommended. Melody found the graphite to be a “funny pencil” but enjoyed its softness. When the page was almost full of different types of notes, she coloured in the smaller notes with felt pens and the larger notes with coloured pencils.



Figure 16

Melody needed more time to finish and seemed engrossed despite talking while she drew. The picture (Figure 16) took 12 ½ minutes to complete. Melody was unsure what it would be titled but agreed it was of musical notes. Melody said she felt “excited, and feel all happy and kind of jumbly inside” about music. Melody chose to be the biggest note as it was the “colourfullest”. Perhaps this note would be ‘C’ because that was a nice happy note.

In starting the self-portrait Melody asked if it should be in her school uniform, but decided to draw what she usually wore when at home (Figure 17). Melody started by drawing the head and preferred not to draw hands because she could not. Melody commented that she liked being bare foot because “you feel more comfortable”. She especially liked the sensation of walking on sand or long grass. After completing the image she looked at me and said “Colours?”. Melody preferred to draw people without colour because she didn’t feel right colouring them in but she could if she had to do so. Although the same amount of time was allotted, this picture took only five minutes to complete.

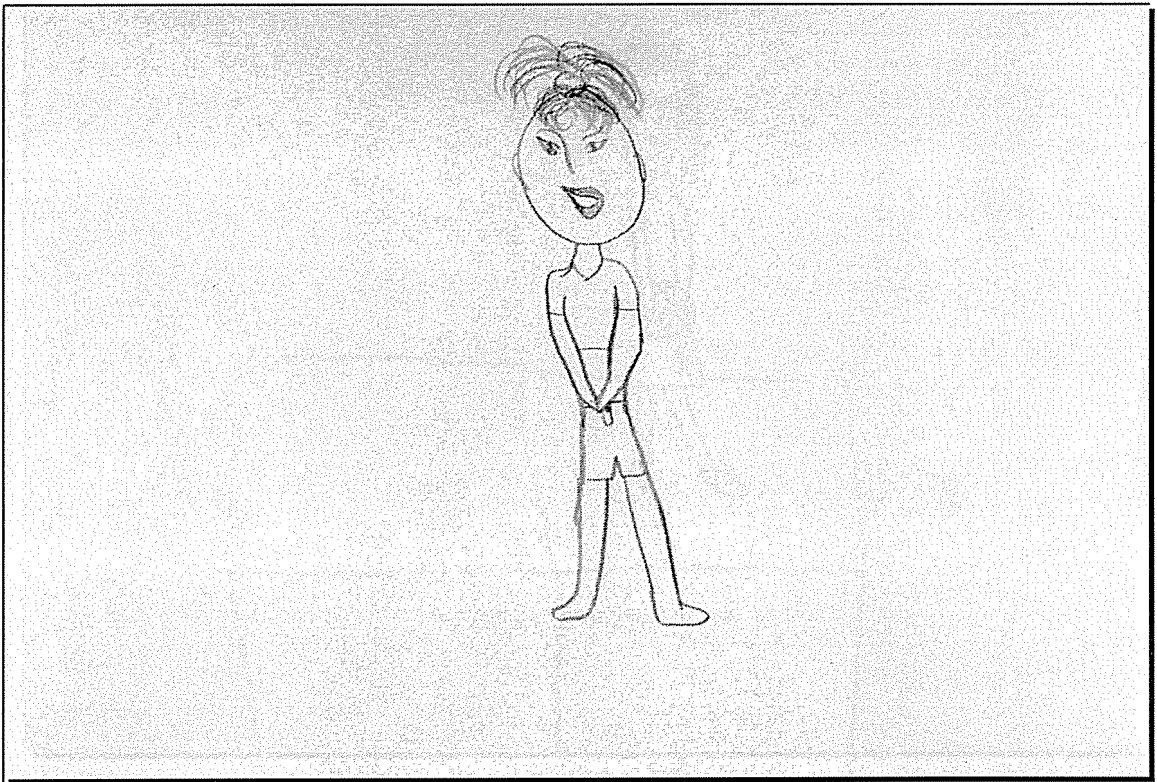


Figure 17

Melody described this image as being at home doing nothing in particular and feeling happy. In contrast Melody did not feel happy today because she was preoccupied with thoughts of her measles injection, planning how to relax and look away when being

injected. I agreed this was a good plan and noted Melody had lots of good ideas about how to deal with bad situations.

Melody chose the graphite pencil to draw a picture of herself at school and again began with the head commenting that she looked mad in this picture (Figure 18). This image was described as Melody playing Four-square at lunchtime. Her expression might be mad or perhaps a little bit like greedy. She supposed she could have just got someone “out” and was therefore winning. This image was also completed before the 10 minutes was up.

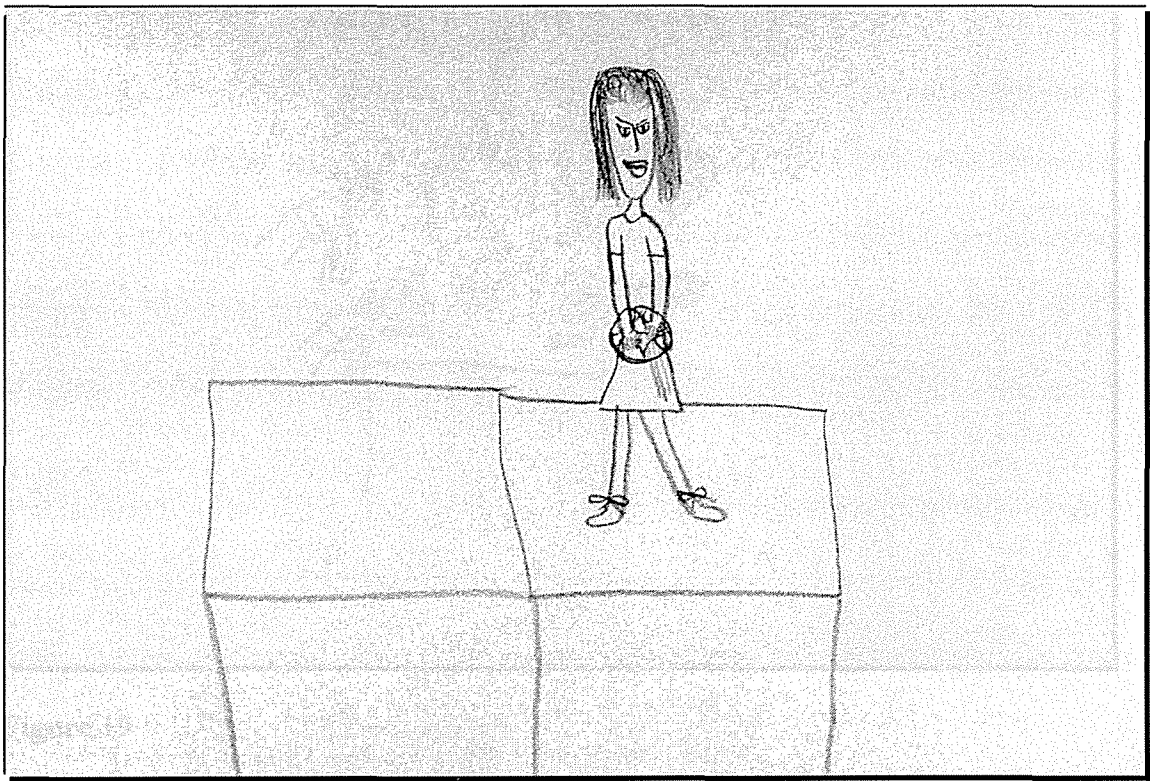


Figure 18

The final image was of Melody’s family at home and the instructions were to draw her family doing something - either a recent something or something remembered. This projective test is a “Kinetic Family Drawing” (KFD), a technique developed by Burns and

Kaufman and is used to discover family relationships and interactions (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992). The KFD can allow feelings of depression, anger, fear, trust or lack of trust, anxiety and difficulties in family relationships to surface (Landgarten, 1981; Kwiatkowska, 1978; Di Leo, 1971). This can be an intimidating task and is often more appropriate later in the therapeutic relationship (Silver, 1989; Furth, 1988; Kaufman & Wohl, 1992; Malchodi, 1990).

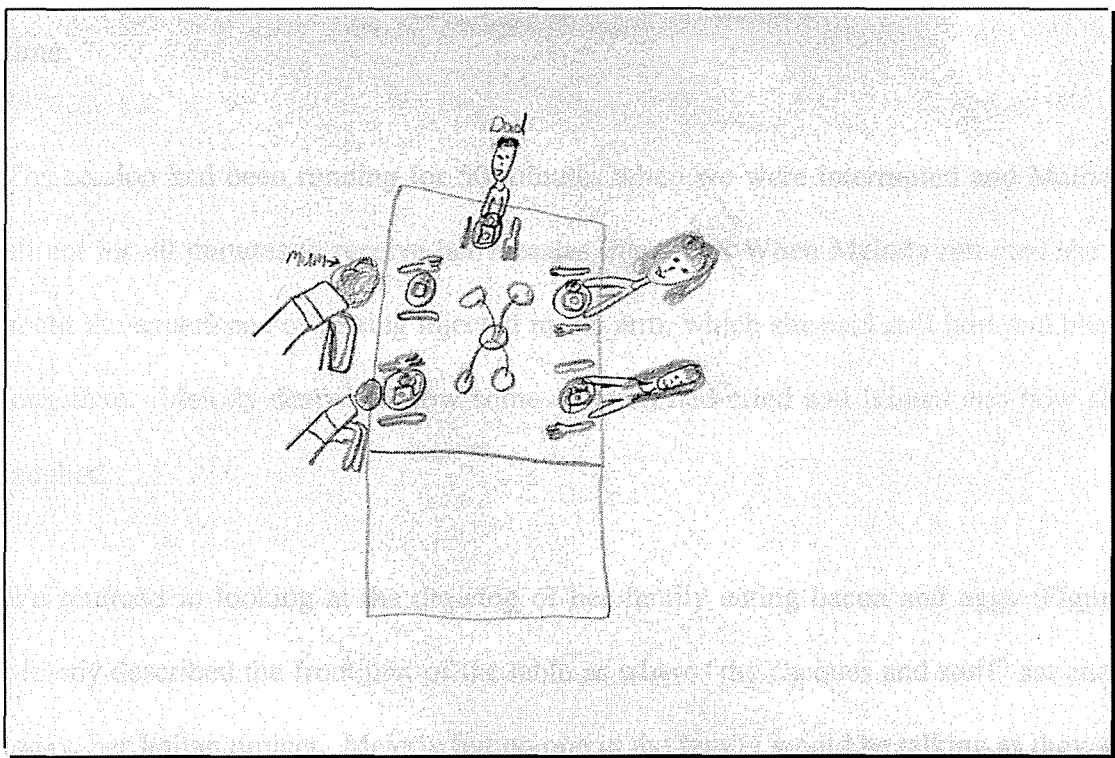


Figure 19

Melody immediately drew an oblong shape, asking if names could be written by the figures and decided that they would (Figure 19). Melody chose not to include the family pets because they were so numerous. The first figure drawn was Melody, and each figure was drawn a place at the table and named. The last person to be drawn was her younger brother and Melody exclaimed, “Oh whoops I forgot my brother” with a laugh.

This image was described as “me and my family eating bacon and eggs” although Melody in fact ate only the eggs and tomatoes, not liking to eat pork. Melody’s father was not with the family last Sunday because he was working so hard and she missed him. Melody’s sister, Rebecca, was in the spot Melody liked because in that seat you were able to watch television and it was nice and high. The two of them fought over this seat, pushing and shoving to get the other out of the way. On this occasion, Rebecca had won because Melody had tripped over a cord. The family otherwise tended to sit in different places each time.

The session had been running for 50 minutes when we were interrupted and Melody was absent for 40 minutes to receive her measles injection. When Melody returned she talked about the experience of getting injected in the arm, which she said still hurt and bled for a long time. Melody described how some children had cried and fainted and how she had laughed.

We returned to looking at the drawing of her family eating bacon and eggs (Figure 19). Melody described the front part of the table as where “the cheques and stuff” sat and, until today, her Italian project. Melody felt no one in the family would be talking as they usually listened to the radio.

Melody thought her week had gone well except Alex had said nasty things about another friend Toni while Toni was winning a race Alex usually won. Melody had solved this by slowing down her running speed so Alex ran ahead. Melody was aware that this was a jealousy issue. If Alex was mean to her in the same way she thought she could use her forcefield. Melody later revealed that Alex had been asking boys to date Melody. One of

the boys was a dwarf who Melody felt she was particularly unsuited to date because he was so short and she was so tall. Melody was aware this was hurtful and unkind to her and the boys. I reminded Melody of the “Being Melody’s Friend Club” and she recognised this behaviour of Alex’s broke the rules.

Melody expressed concern about the sessions ending saying she felt “not very good because I like you”. We discussed what Melody and I had learnt in the art therapy sessions and that inside Melody were all the things she needed like bravery, strength and trickery. Melody was unsure how she was tricky. I gave her examples of her falling back in the race so she would not have to listen to Alex’s nastiness, her solutions in her stories for fighting off enemies and her ideas about not being bullied like suggesting getting a drink to a friend. Melody recognised this quality and described her tactics in Four-square where she also felt she was pretty tricky.

Melody gave permission to tell her mother one of her stories to demonstrate her strengths and resilience in adventures. Melody was unsure of which story would be best but when I chose the snow tiger story she felt that would be good because “I like cats so much”. Melody agreed that the snow tiger showed her specialness as a tiger different from the rest, and her adventurous and brave nature.

Melody felt the ring had been helpful in reminding her of “stuff like the forcefield” and said “Well I think the ring is a little bit powerful”. She had forgotten to return the ring and laughed when I said perhaps she had still needed it. Melody had been questioned about the ring by Alex and had resolved this by telling her that I gave it to her and it was not something Alex needed to know about. Melody further stated to Alex that she did not have

to know everything because of their friendship. I affirmed Melody's protection of her special things and her right to have them. We discussed who it had been safe to tell about the art therapy.

Melody was aware jealousy was a problem in her relationship with Alex and that Alex could see some special qualities in Melody that made her jealous. Like with Sharon, she could see that these were Alex's problems and not Melody's fault.



Figure 20

Melody chose to end the session by decorating a shell to symbolise her magic shell and her other protective gifts, painting this shell with special paints and glitter (Figure 20). We agreed I would take home the shell and vanish it, returning it to her by giving it to her mother on Friday. Melody expressed some concern that she had not yet drawn the school psychologist a picture and thought the note drawing (Figure 16) might look nice on the

wall. I suggested Melody took home with her some art materials to draw the school psychologist a picture. Melody agreed and wished me to view it first so we negotiated that she bring it to her follow up session.

On the "The Feeling Thermometer" Melody chose number '0' ("real, real happy") for Friday because it had been a sports day, number '1' ("next to real, real happy") for Monday and Thursday, number '2' ("okay") for Tuesday because even though there had been some meanness there had also been sports, and between number '3' ("sad") and '2' ("okay") for Wednesday.

Melody felt the bullying situation was getting better but did not really think it would stop. She felt adults couldn't do much about bullying and if you played by the duty teacher you were safe but then you missed out on the opportunity to play with other children. The Peer Mediation programme had stopped a lot of bullying but that had not been available this term. Melody understood that even though we had talked about ways she could behave to decrease the effects of bullying, the bullying was not her fault and was not okay. I said the bullying made me angry and she had the right to play without being bullied. Melody said she could use the skills she had learnt but did not seem very confident. She wished there was a school where there was no bullying.

Researcher's Interpretation

Melody's pictures are markedly different from the first session's images even though the style, subject matter and media were the same. Melody's free drawing was again about music. This is not surprising given the inclusion of the xylophone. The picture of musical notes is vibrant, colourful and energised (Figure 16). The whole page is used and the

picture could be said to be full of music. Although the picture is again unfinished, the picture has a completeness that her first drawing of music did not.

Melody was able to identify herself as the largest note described as the “colourfullest”. When considered as a self-portrait, this picture seems vibrant, alive and far more expansive and strongly defined than her first free drawing.

This also appears true of the self-portraits. Melody’s self portrait (Figure 17) is at least twice the size of her first session’s (Figure 2) and has a much firmer line quality resulting in a darker drawing that seems more present. Melody broke her first pencil and then used a graphite pencil contributing to a darker line. As faintness of line is associated with timidity and uncertainty and firmer lines with stronger boundaries and more assertive behaviour, Melody may be better able to defend herself than she was six weeks earlier. As size of drawings and line quality are usually stable across time, the increase in size may indicate a significant shift in Melody’s self-perception (Machover, 1949).

In the second self-portrait at home (Figure 17), Melody has drawn herself with ears and a larger right side with larger right arm, shoulder and leg whereas in her original self-portrait (Figure 2) Melody drew slightly larger left sides. The right side is traditionally associated with the more masculine, directed, assertive traits and this may indicate Melody is developing these at this time.

Melody has drawn herself with bare feet, which she describes as more comfortable and this may show a greater comfort in the therapy situation and with life in general. Although Melody talked of enjoying the feeling of sand and grass between her toes she is still

without ground in this picture which may be interpreted as a continuation of feeling unstable or insecure (Kaufman & Wohl, 1992, Machover, 1949). This may relate to the bullying and/or many early childhood moves. Melody has again drawn herself with a very large head which may relate to fears of not being intellectually strong (Machover, 1949). Her younger sister demonstrates more scholastic ability than Melody.

In both portraits from this sixth session, Melody has drawn detail around her pelvic or genital area. In the picture at home, tiny hands point to the detail of a zipper in her pants (Figure 17). In the picture at school the positioning of the ball emphasises this area (Figure 18). This could be seen in psychodynamic terms as conflict about sexuality which is a feature of the latency period (Levick, 1983). This is not indicated in the earlier pictures from the first session and this may indicate she is more able to concentrate on age appropriate concerns. Melody's hands are ineffectual in this portrait. This may indicate continued lack of confidence in her social contact. In the portrait of being at school she has drawn hands for the first time in the sessions (Machover, 1949). Hands with fingers may indicate greater social adaptation and an ability to handle the world (Furth, 1988; Machover, 1949).

In this portrait of being at school (Figure 19), Melody has drawn herself in context and grounded which is also the first time in the art therapy sessions. Again her picture is firmly drawn and at least twice the size of her original 'at school' picture. Her expression, which Melody described as "mad" or "a little bit like greedy", looks very assertive and determined. Facial expressions are good indicators of the state of mind of the client (Machover, 1949). More convincing than that, Melody herself described this expression in

terms of winning the game and spoke of her tactics at Four-square. I see this as a very hopeful picture about school as she describes herself as "I'm winning. Yay!" She has the ball in her square (court), has drawn herself a position to stand in and has taken a firm stance. These seem to indicate greater assertiveness and confidence at school (Machover, 1949). This is a very different picture from her first picture at school, faintly drawn and floating, looking unsure, tiny and lost in the large white space of the page.

In the final drawing, Melody has drawn an activity (i.e. her family eating bacon and eggs) that she does not fully partake in because she chooses to not eat pork. Drawing herself first and as a large figure, Melody seems assured she is an important member of the family although she is not in the place she would like to be which is her sister's. This suggests some jealousy of her sister, which seems likely given her early childhood experience of Rebecca being favoured by the maid. Her father is very small and looks ineffectual in the picture. This may be because he is frequently absent, including on Sundays when these breakfasts take place. Her brother was almost forgotten and seems to have his head separated from his body. Perhaps the male aspect in this family is not strong and noticeable at this time and Melody feels this lack.

The mother is in the same unusual perspective as the brother, which Melody was unhappy with, saying she hadn't drawn this part well. Although Melody said her mother was looking at her plate it looks like she is looking behind her away from the family. This could indicate Melody feels her mother is distracted or not looking at something in the family. Melody has written, "MUM ➡" and the arrow points to this possibly turning face. The mother is the only one with an arrow and this may be significant. Melody's meal and

her mother's look the same although Melody did not mention that her mother does not eat bacon either. As Melody's mother has mentioned similarities between her and Melody's personalities, perhaps Melody feels they have similar lives or tastes or is identifying with the (developmental) female role model in her life.

The table provides a strong barrier between Melody and Rebecca and their mother. Her little brother is the only one without this barrier and this may indicate Melody sees her brother as having more access to her mother than she or Rebecca. This could be because her brother is younger and is sometimes at home with his mother while the girls are at school. Or it may be Melody feels the girls' early mother-child bonding was disrupted. Parent child attachment can be affected by the adverse conditions Melody experienced in early childhood and her brother may have had more optimum bonding conditions (Bowlby, 1988; Kelly, 1998; Noonan, 1989).

There are four flowers in the table arrangement. Numbers of things in drawings may be significant to the person drawing them (Furth, 1988). Melody may have had a significant event in her life at four years old – perhaps the experiences in Singapore. The flowers look like alien antennae or strange exotic flowers.

Melody seemed more confident in her skills and ideas in handling the bullying situations mentioning several situations that she had resolved or avoided. She had clear explanations about why the bullying had occurred and did not take responsibility for being bullied. She seemed to be more in touch with the dynamics of the relationships she was involved in. Melody had protected the art therapy sessions by refusing to talk further about the ring,

which she felt, had magical qualities and was “a little bit powerful”. Melody was able to establish her right not to tell about the art therapy and clear boundaries. Given the manipulative behaviour demonstrated by Melody’s friend Alex, including following us around to see what was going on, this showed very strong boundaries on Melody’s part.

The bullying had lessened but not stopped and was still of concern for Melody. Melody’s keeping the ring that lent her suggests she feels she needs more protection still and perhaps more from me.

Summary

Melody seemed to have made significant gains in the therapeutic period. These included improved self-confidence, self-esteem and increased skills in dealing with bullying situations. Her pictures were much larger, more vibrant, firmly drawn and expansive than in the first art therapy session. Melody did not seem confident about these gains and perhaps needed more time to consolidate these, or more therapeutic sessions. The bullying was still occurring and this would have contributed to Melody’s reluctance to finish having art therapy. The fact that Melody was not ready to finish the therapy and the interruption to the session made the planned closure more difficult.

Follow-up Session

Aims

The aim for this session was primarily to assess if the therapeutic gains of the intervention had been maintained one month after the end of the weekly sessions. Other aims were to assess Melody's need for further support and provide further closure by reiterating the strengths and coping she had displayed throughout the therapy.

Session Content

Melody brought to the session two drawings she had drawn for the school psychologist to show me and we hung these on the wall. Melody talked about how things had been for her in the month we had not seen each other. She reported Lena, "a friend who was no longer a friend" was bullying her in the classroom including kicking and name-calling. Melody used her forcefield to block out the name-calling.

Melody found it difficult to think of a subject for her first assessment drawing and eventually sketched a cat and a girl taking the assigned ten minutes to complete the drawing. An arm drawn in the wrong perspective warranted using an eraser although she normally preferred not to erase.

The cat and girl are sketched in faint lines (Figure 21). Melody explained she liked to sketch things and to leave them without colour. The cat, viewed from the back, is her cat at home. It is looking away either to a pond she had thought about drawing or a door like her cat does at home sometimes. The girl is not Melody, but a girl playing dress up in her mother's clothes, which are too big for her. Melody drew my attention to the shoes, which are emphasised, saying she had difficulty drawing "too big" shoes.

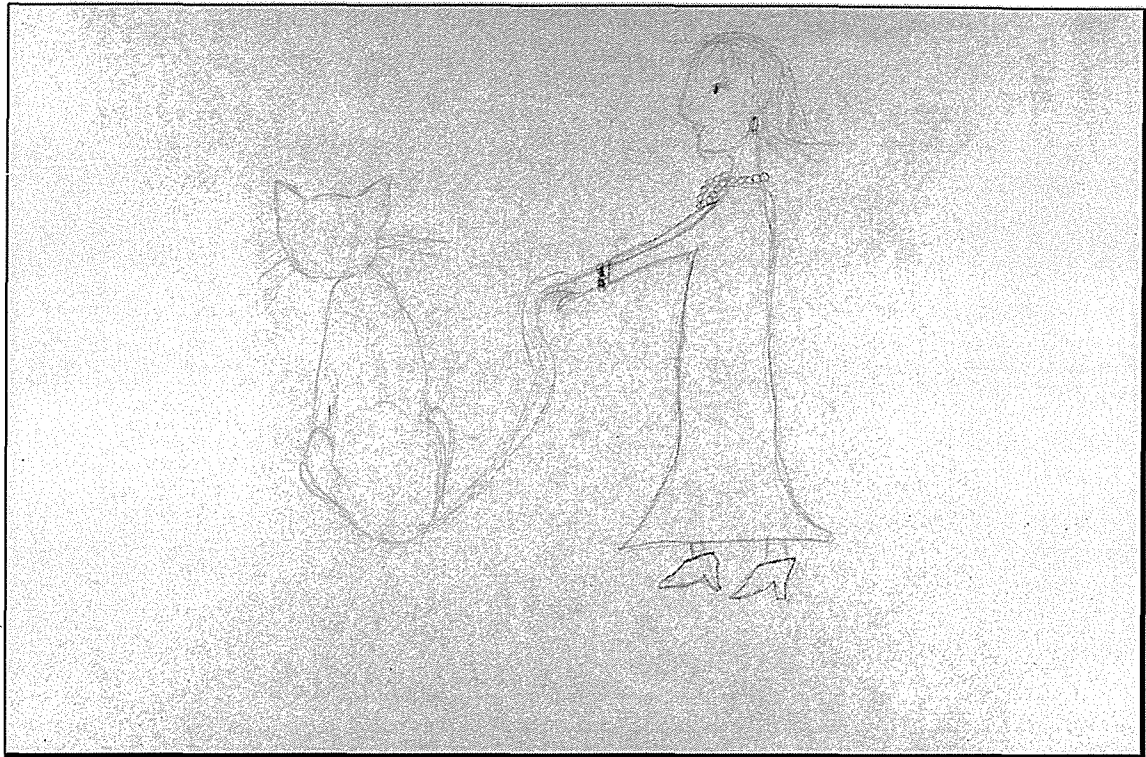


Figure 21

The hands of the figure are drawn in lightly and the picture is faint. The girl’s face is unusually shaped with a soft line that continues down the face past the chin almost like a little beard. The figure has no context or ground and is reaching out to stroke the cat.

Melody drew her next picture, a self-portrait at home, for five minutes (Figure 17). As she stated a preference for drawing animals rather than people, I suggested portraying herself as an animal. She drew a small human figure in a central position with no ground or context saying this figure was too small and she liked pictures that filled up the page. This figure is a similar size to her very first at home picture (Figure 2) and again the figure looks relaxed. The figure has firm lines and a stance of wide legs, with shoes that have additional parts that “aren’t supposed to be there”. Melody agreed these shoes were too big in this and the previous drawing. The arms join where hands would be and no hands are indicated.

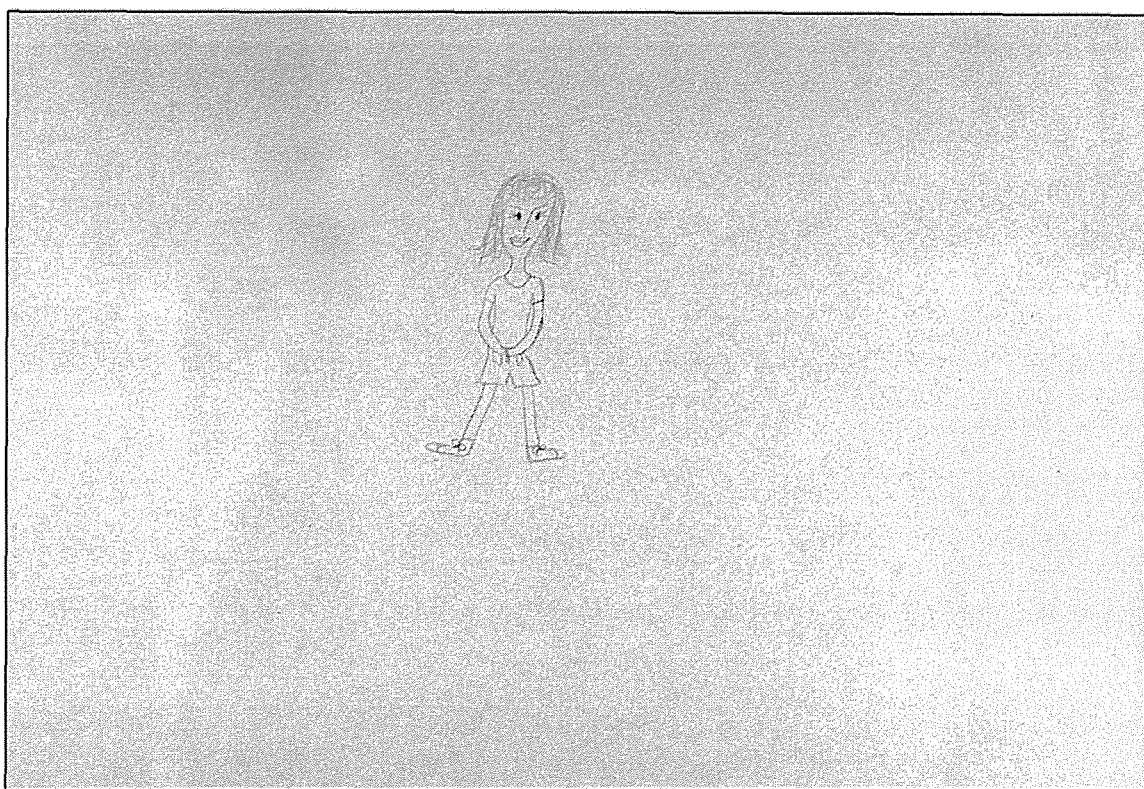


Figure 22

At this point Melody seemed to lose interest in drawing herself. This decreased motivation with repeated assessments is common (Gantt, 1990). Melody drew the last picture of herself at school in the 10 minutes but spent much of this time talking to me and not looking at her drawing (Figure 23). She again commented the drawing was too small but at this point was able to attribute this to feeling small because of the way the girls at school treated her. As she drew Melody talked about how friends are supposed to be – that is to stick with you. Melody felt she was a good and loyal friend as long as people treated her well but not such a good sister. Melody attributed this to being a bit jealous of her sister because sometimes Rebecca got more than her and was good at maths and spelling (subjects Melody finds hard) as well as art.

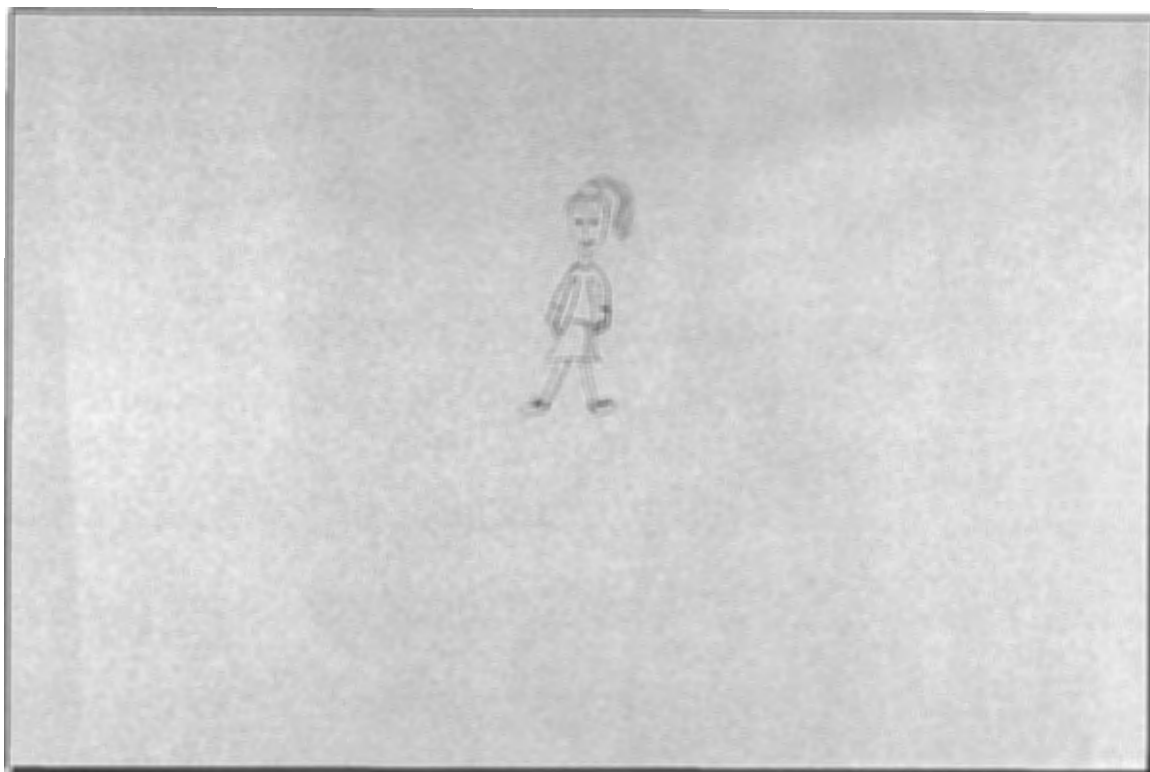


Figure 23

The figure is smaller than her previous self-portrait at school playing Four-square (Figure 18) and slightly bigger than her very first (Figure 3). The figure again has a spread legged stance and firm lines and no ground, context or other people.

Melody described this image as a smiling snapshot but that her insides were quite different. Deep down inside she really, truly felt “sad, depressed and a bit angry” like when Lena had been kicking her and calling her names. When asked to describe the size, colour and shape of her sadness, Melody said it was a large (twice the width of my shoulders) brown ball with a black face. Her depression was the same. Melody drew this sadness in this way (Figure 24) with brown and black pastels on white paper.



Figure 24

Melody felt this sadness/depression lived in her stomach and, when disturbed by her feeling sad and angry, came up to her brain. When this happened, Melody tried to forget about it and do something joyful. She wasn't sure when or how it had entered her life but it was familiar to her.

Melody agreed to hold the image while I dialogued with her depression. Melody, speaking as depression, said it changed size depending on how sad Melody was. When in the brain, this sadness made it hard for Melody to think, saying "when I am in her brain all she can think about are the bad things". This happened when people were mean. Depression said for it to leave, people would have to be nice to Melody, otherwise it did not know how it would get out of Melody's life. It provided no positive benefits to Melody but was stuck in her body like being in jail. This sadness felt it had

been in Melody's body for a very long time and if it was not there Melody would have more room in her brain to think and things would be better.

After the dialoguing, Melody was asked what she would like to do with this image of her sadness/depression. Although she wished to throw it away, she seemed unable to do this, saying that if she lost all her depression she would be different to everyone else. Melody felt that her parents and friends had depression and her sister had a little bit. Melody decided that she needed half her sadness to be like other people and cut her image in half. She screwed up the right hand half and entrusted the remainder to me insisting I look after it.

The session had gone slightly over time and we talked about how she had felt about the art therapy and if more support was needed to help with the bullying. Melody reported the art therapy had been helpful and she would be all right as she had my letters and would remember what we had talked about. I showed her all her assessment pictures and her only comment was that the images from session one were also small.

As a closing ritual, Melody was given a National Geographic magazine featuring colour photos of baby wild animals playing, including wild cats, and a scrapbook for her to decorate with these pictures. This scrapbook was intended as a kind of journal for her letters and anything important or special. Encouraging journals is especially valuable for adolescents (Greenspoon Linesh, 1988). Melody seemed very pleased with the magazine and took it all home with some glue.

Melody agreed her mother should be told about her sadness. We arranged to meet once more to return her images.

Researcher's Interpretation

Melody's continued use of the forcefield seems to help her cope and not hear the name calling. Melody described her forcefield as a brick wall with a minefield inside that that would blow up Lena and "then she can't talk to me" (See Gerald (1994) for the use of a forcefield to prevent bullying). Melody is demonstrating the use of visualisation to protect herself. She is also acting out in her mind unwanted thoughts and has given herself permission to think bad thoughts about those that hurt her. This is a big change from having to be given permission to push her bully over and discover how good that felt.

The first image (Figure 21) seems very sophisticated with the advanced technique of drawing a figure in profile and the cat from behind. It has a charming quality with its sketchiness and faint, colourless lines. As is common in Melody's images there is a floatiness with a lack of ground and context that encourages the surreal quality of this picture.

Although Melody says she is not the girl in this picture, it is her cat and the figure looks similar to her. The cat seems a strong symbol for Melody. The cat is traditionally a symbol of magic, witchcraft and independence of spirit. Cats are thought the most cunning creatures in fairytales, even more than the fox (de Vries, 1974; Walker, 1988; Barth, 1972). Melody seems to use animals as a soothing support, yet the cat is turned away and is looking somewhere else. Perhaps this indicates a feeling of not being acknowledged or having her usual support available to her. This may relate to the art therapy sessions ending as Melody has commented she finds them supportive. Melody may feel that I am turning away from her as she reaches out for help.

Melody's "at home" drawing (Figure 22) has similarities with her very first (Figure 2) in size, lack of context suggesting much the same state of feeling. Melody's stance seems more firm and the lines more bold but the size suggests continuing sadness or feeling small. Melody consistently neglects to portray herself with hands in her art work and this may infer feeling incapable. If the first drawing of a girl dressed up in her mother's clothes is viewed as another self-portrait, she may feel more capable in a mothering or adult role, as hands are included.

The "too big" shoes in both these images further supports earlier indications that Melody feels she is given the role of being older than she is (as does the tree image of a "not so old, but not a child" tree). This figure is much smaller and less firmly drawn than her previous at home portrait. It may be Melody has missed the support of the therapy sessions and feels less strong and confident than the previous session.

Melody's small, ungrounded (but strongly stanced) figure is again an indication that without the support of the therapy she feels smaller and less secure. Although it is not a return to the very first image of herself at school which looked very shy and off balance and even smaller, it is a long way from the picture of Melody playing four-square where she was big, grounded and "winning! Yay".

Melody showed an understanding that bullying affects her self-image by commenting on the size of her drawings. As I had never commented on the size of her figures, this displays understanding of the significance of her drawings. The information she gave about her friendships suggests she has put some limits on their behaviour, which was not the case at the start of the art therapy. The comment she made about not being a very good friend to her sister and her feelings of jealousy further supports the indicators

in her KFD (Figure 19) of wishing to have her sister's place in the family. It seems likely that this is related to her early childhood experience of the maid showering attention on Rebecca while Melody watched feeling neglected.

Melody was able to say the portrait at school did not reflect her underlying sadness, depression and anger. It fits my experience of this child that her presenting "picture" to the world is very positive despite her distress and anger. Ellen Noonan (1983), head of Counselling at City University in London, suggests the presentation to the world of a "false self" relates to disruption of the "depression phrase". Melanie Klein, a famous child psychoanalyst, believed this stage to be about becoming individualised (cited in Noonan, 1983). If a child feels her mother is unavailable during this time, vulnerability for depression may manifest. This may lead to loss of initiative, low self-esteem, compliance and learned helplessness, all of which Melody exhibits (Noonan, 1983; Haynal, 1985; Arieti & Bemporad, 1980; Trad, 1994; Benjamin, 1990). "Early object loss or learned helplessness in childhood may act as a developmental precursor and predisposer to depression" (Cantwell, 1990, p. 301). The self-portraits indicated that all was not well with Melody despite her consistent choice of smiling faces on the "The Feeling Thermometer" and saying she was fine. The image of depression/sadness could be viewed as one of the sad faces on the "The Feeling Thermometer".

Although Melody said she had depression, she did not differentiate this from sadness. Melody does not meet the criteria for clinical depression and did not rate as depressed on the CDI. Moreover, Melody experiences her sadness as a result of an external event (being bullied) rather than an inappropriate sadness unrelated to circumstances which is typical of depression (Ariti & Bemporad, 1980; Volkan, 1985; Kazdin, 1990).

It is significant Melody introduced these emotions in the final session. A common phenomenon in counselling is the “doorknob” communication where the client raises an important and distressing issue, as they are about to leave. This leaves the therapist with the anxiety and ensures there is little or no time to address the issue. Usually this happens when a client feels the information is important but scary. It is also one way a client can express anger at the therapist leaving (Nonnan, 1983). It seems likely Melody’s doorknob communication is her expression of anger at my leaving and/or her way of showing she still needs me. Melody had, in the previous session, expressed her sadness about the art therapy sessions ending but would find it very hard to express anger.

Melody’s claim to need no further help is consistent with her continued positive presentation and low expectations but inconsistent with her expressed sadness and depression. I felt this was too much sadness for a 10 year old to manage and that she required more support from adults.

Summary

The assessment pictures suggest Melody is feeling more insecure and anxious than the sixth session but not as much as the first session assessment. Melody was able to state her true feelings, which were depression, sadness and anger, which appeared to be a doorknob communication. In this way she put aside the positive front she had maintained and was able to express the affect of the bullying. The bullying had not stopped and therefore Melody had found it hard to maintain the gains she had achieved in therapy. She seemed reluctant to end the sessions and lose the support of the art therapy whilst she was still being bullied.

Interviews

Melody's Mother

Melody's mother reported before the art therapy, Melody had missed a great deal of school due to sickness or feigned sickness. During the six weeks of the intervention she did not miss a day of school. In the follow-up month Melody had missed a day of school due to feeling sick following bullying. This suggests the art therapy sessions provided support for Melody so she was better able to cope with the bullying at school.

Melody had not had any nightmares in the intervention or follow-up period whereas she had one just before the previous interview. Melody wished to stay up later at night instead of going to bed at the same time as younger siblings which showed appropriate maturing and assertion.

Melody's mother reported an improvement in Melody's relationship between her and her sister. Melody was no longer picking on her sister and consequently family relationships were much improved. She felt she no longer had to discipline her daughter "all the time".

Her mother reported Melody had been standing up for herself more and that the principal had reported she had been defending herself also. She felt the art therapy sessions had been helpful, very enjoyable and that Melody had developed more confidence. Melody told her about the sessions and particularly enjoyed using the clay figures and knocking the bully off its perch. Melody had said, "I felt really good mum".

Melody's mother felt the art therapy had "definitely helped" the bullying situation. Her daughter now spontaneously used her forcefield and she could see positive changes in her. She had questioned Melody about the art therapy sessions and Melody had also

said they had definitely helped her. The bullying had lessened but not stopped. Melody's mother felt the lack of the Peer Mediation Program this term had left the children vulnerable and afraid. She had approached the headmaster when older boys became involved in bullying Melody and this had helped matters.

Melody's mother agreed having the art therapy sessions at school had increased Melody's risk of being bullied as her "friend" Alex had been jealous. Alex had told Melody that she was better than her at art and why should Melody have the lessons. Regardless of this, she felt the art therapy sessions had provided Melody with support at school, had helped her and that Melody was sad they were ending.

Through our interviews and talks, it seems likely Melody's mother better understood the effects of childhood stress, rejection by the maid and the pre-school experience on Melody's perception of herself, expectations of how people should treat her and her vulnerability to bullying. This improvement in family relationships may be testimony to the changes in Melody but also to her mother's increased understanding. Recommendations made by me (such as her mother reading fairytales to Melody and demonstrating assertiveness such as approaching the school about bullying) may have improved their relationship also.

Teacher

Melody's teacher, Mr Lamb, defined his management of bullying in the first interview as seating the children sociometrically so they would be sitting next to children they liked. He felt bullying was hard to define as "one minute they are whinging they are being picked on and the next minute they are playing with those kids they complained about". He had observed no bullying in the class and did not believe Melody was being bullied. He had noticed her crying alone on the steps a few times due to being excluded from a game her girlfriends were playing.

Mr Lamb felt Melody was a very pleasant child, introverted and hard to read. He noted she had a happy smile and looked very sad in repose but judged this to be a physical feature.

In the second interview Mr Lamb described his classroom management policy as "bullies get jumped on" saying bullying was not tolerated. He maintained there was no bullying in his classroom. He felt Melody was not bullied but thin skinned. Mr Lamb had not noticed Melody sitting alone or crying since the art therapy intervention.

Mr Lamb was clearly unhappy at having any lesson time, other than art, interfered with and this may suggest he gave art therapy and art a low priority.

School Psychologist and the CDI

Melody was tested twice with the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI) after the first session and follow-up session. Both times Melody rated herself as not depressed (Score 5). This indicates no childhood depression. This type of self reporting test may not have been the most appropriate for Melody as one of her defence mechanisms was to present as very positive. The school psychologist, Brenda, also noted the possibility that Melody may have given her answers thinking they were the correct ones.

The initial results may have been affected by the CDI being given after the first art therapy session. Ratings of depression two to five days after assessment are typically lower than one to three days before assessments (Tantam, 1995).

The school psychologist, Brenda, felt Melody was a very positive and co-operative child with good self-esteem. She noted "she says she feels alone at times" but also enjoyed her own company.

After the follow-up, Brenda noted "As a result of interacting with Ffyona, Melody is more prepared to be open about any concerns. She reported that if someone says something hurtful to her, she now talks to them and attempts to make them understand how she feels".

Brenda noted she and the principal felt Melody was happier now. She felt Melody had enjoyed the art therapy, the one-to-one attention and the opportunity for support.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

A six week art therapy intervention was offered to a 10 year old girl, Melody, who was being bullied at school. The bullying started when she was 9 years old and worsened this year. Melody's mother reported several effects of bullying on her daughter, including lowered self-esteem, learned helplessness, depressed mood, difficulties in problem solving, diminished ability to think, somatic complaints and disrupted peer and family relationships. These are considered depressive symptoms (Arieli & Bermporad, 1980; Kazdin, 1990). Melody was having days off school to avoid the bullying. The aim of the intervention was to help ease the negative effects of being bullied using art therapy.

Role of Art Therapy in Bullying

The therapeutic relationship is a partnership within which a client can work through her issues and concerns to create change and growth. In art therapy the use of art materials facilitates this relationship and provides a means for personal statement, expression, development, evaluation and growth. The transference that is present in the therapist client relationship is extended to the artwork providing even greater communication (Case & Dalley, 1992). Melody was well able to develop a therapeutic relationship and invest in art making. She gradually revealed her considerable creativity, strength, bravery and resourcefulness to myself, the therapist, as our relationship developed and deepened. Melody became more likely to tell me about the bullying incidents and, if particularly upset, the information would spill out before we reached the room.

Melody was a client particularly suited to the creative arts therapies with her affiliation with music, drama and art. The art therapy provided an opportunity for her to extend

her art making experience, for example with the use of clay. Music seemed to be the language she was most comfortable with as demonstrated by her two free drawings (Figures 1 and 16) and her comments about her music. Initially, Melody did not present verbally as a confident child but always in her art and music she showed more confidence, self-acceptance and mastery.

Art therapy proved very appropriate to help Melody overcome the considerable difficulties she had talking about her experience of being bullied and her distress. Like many preadolescent girls, Melody was guarded in her verbal responses and maintained a very positive front. This can be seen in her ratings on "The Feeling Thermometer" and CDI in which she rated herself as happy and unconcerned. Art therapy provided Melody with alternatives to the "false self" she was presenting so her distress could be heard and seen and therapeutic intervention made possible.

Art therapy allowed Melody to express her feelings by providing her with the space, encouragement and creative expression to feel entitled to anger and resentment about being bullied. For instance, after describing a situation where she had felt confused, attacked and afraid, Melody was able to take control in a symbolic way by knocking over the clay replica of the bully. In this way Melody had her feelings, and her right to have these feelings, validated. She was able to express her fears about doing this and experience being in control of the bullying situation. Melody particularly enjoyed the empowering feeling this gave her and told her mother and school psychologist how good that felt. The therapeutic relationship, use of art with a variety of media and the symbolic nature of art therapy allowed Melody to act out unwanted feelings, which appeared to be cathartic, freeing and empowering. In her drawings about being at

school she was able to portray sadness and aloneness that she could not acknowledge verbally.

The artwork allowed Melody to visually represent the bullying situations revealing her defences, coping mechanisms and a more coherent “picture” than her verbal reports of bullying. Melody did not enjoy drawing bullying situations but in doing so honoured her experience. The drawings helped me, as the therapist, attain and retain some sense of what was happening, who was involved and what Melody named as “bullying”. In her comic strip of the strangling incident (Figure 5), Melody drew figures that did not look as if they were really strangling her and this allowed me to speculate (privately) on the possibilities of re-traumatising or breakdown of reality testing. In this way drawings may reveal aspects of the psyche that are hidden in language.

Initially, Melody was unable to think of solutions to her bullying even when she had identified a favourite television character that successfully dealt with a bully. By creating an image or figures that could self protect, be strong and assertive, Melody could own these qualities. The art provided Melody with practical opportunities in which to make decisions, become more able to state her preferences and wishes, develop strategies and imagine using them. The visualisation of a forcefield was one strategy Melody frequently employed at school to protect herself from name calling. The symbolic nature of art and play allowed Melody to affirm her personal qualities, to develop coping strategies, to increasingly be able to problem solve, feel more confident and stand up for herself as she did when Alex needed to know about her “powerful” ring and the art therapy sessions. Melody was also empowered and validated as a special individual by the act of making her own creative marks (Warren, 1993).

The concrete nature of art therapy also provided visual reminders of the sessions and, in some cases, objects she could take away as symbols of the work Melody was doing (such as the magical shell she visualised and created, and the ring she borrowed). Art therapy was well supported by two letters from me affirming her ideas, strengths and learning. These were written in keeping with the ideology of narrative therapy as a bridge between the sessions and a way of reminding the client of their therapeutic advances in a concrete way (White & Epston, 1989; Freeman, Epston, Lobovits, 1997; Grossman Dean, 1998). For a child coping with an abusive school life this seemed important to help her retain her faith in herself between sessions, which may have seemed a very long time.

The therapeutic intervention allowed Melody to reframe her experiences so they became a journey and battle between good and evil in which the hero eventually won (as always happens in the language of fairy tales) (Bettelheim, 1988). Using the symbolic language of stories Melody was able to claim a heroic myth creating enemies and challenges she must overcome. As a “snow tiger” or a girl who defeated a witch with her love of animals, she became a person with power, special qualities and assets for protection. This contrasted with her victim status when Melody was very passive, helpless and prey to the children in her school who used bullying as an outlet for their own struggles.

Identification of Factors Underlying Vulnerability to Bullying

The art therapy intervention was planned to support Melody and help her cope with bullying. However it also provided the opportunity to use art therapy for ongoing assessment. Although it was beyond the scope of this study to address these issues further, it seemed the art therapy allowed Melody to access her subconscious and present, in a symbolic way, aspects of her early experience. The symbols she displayed were babies, the tree that could not be nurtured because it had no base, figures that floated and a witch who tried to destroy her. This suggested that the early history reported by her mother has had an ongoing impact on her development and may underlie her vulnerability to bullying. It is probable that being left with a rejecting caregiver disrupted her developing attachment. Attachment history is linked to bullying with psychosomatic symptoms, learned helplessness and estrangement from emotions and true self (creating an overly compliant “false self”) which in turn contributes to the bullying pattern (Noonan, 1983; Haynal, 1985; Smith, 1991). “(It is suggested) some children with a prior insecure attachment radiate an anxious vulnerability (acquired through interaction with an inconsistent, insensitive or rejecting carer) that marks them as suitable prey” (Perry, Kusel & Perry, 1988, p. 807). Melody’s parents’ stress and worry during the time of her process of individualisation may have led Melody to believe there was something wrong with her (Dunn, 1993; Noonan, 1983; Haynal, 1985). Her early experience that people are stressed and unsupportive may have made stress and rejection a familiar experience and underlie Melody’s maintenance of abusive, non-nurturing friendships (Cantwell, 1990; Perry, Kusel & Perry, 1988).

Outcomes of the Six- week Intervention to Help with Bullying

Melody made considerable gains due to the intervention. Evidence for these changes were in her comments, the reports of others and in Melody's drawings.

Melody had no days off school during the art therapy intervention. This was in contrast to the 10 days she had off school in the 12 weeks prior to the intervention. The anticipation of art therapy, the support she gained and the coping strategies she learnt appear to have helped Melody's attendance at school. Her mother reported Melody's relationships with her and Melody's sister were much improved and Melody was significantly less irritable at home. Melody and her mother both felt the art therapy sessions had helped Melody mediate the effects of bullying and to gain in confidence and self-esteem. Melody said the art therapy sessions were making her stronger and her mother noticed she had more skills to deal with the bullying (such as the forcefield). Melody and her mother reported she was being bullied less than before the art therapy intervention.

The self-portraits Melody drew of herself at home and at school changed dramatically throughout the six sessions. Her pictures changed from being faint, small and ungrounded (Figure 2 and 3) to being firmly drawn, large, with larger right side emphasis and to having strong stances and expressions (Figure 17 and 18). In terms of personal changes this suggested Melody had become more confident, assertive, and self determined. It is also possible these changes included a more developed male aspect or "animus". In the second self-portrait at school (Figure 18), Melody drew ground and hands on a figure standing firmly in a space of her own, looking aggressive and strong. Melody suggested the expression on her face was "mad" or a "little bit greedy" because she was winning. This indicated a great change in how Melody perceived her position

at school and her ability to cope with what was happening there. These changes were also evident in the free drawings of the assessment sessions. The free drawing (Figure 16) of the sixth session was bigger, brighter, had more movement and implied energy than the earlier free drawings (Figures 1 and 4). This suggests Melody was feeling more expansive and vibrant.

One aspect of the intervention was to assess whether Melody's level of depression, including ratings on the CDI (at the time of the first, sixth and follow-up sessions), changed during the intervention period. Before attending art therapy, Melody appeared to meet the criteria for a diagnosis of Dysthymia i.e. she was irritable at home and school, had poor self-esteem and felt hopeless about the bullying stopping. She denied any sadness but was reported to cry frequently, especially at home.

In the initial CDI, while Melody's isolation and lack of hope in the future was identified, she did not rate as being depressed. This may be because the level of sadness/depression was not at a clinically significant level. However it is possible Melody's tendency to maintain a very positive slant in her evaluations and her reluctance to express any emotion that could be construed as negative had distorted the results attained. Melody would be particularly vulnerable to these coping strategies given she had not yet had the opportunity to develop a therapeutic relationship. Some of the depressive symptoms identified appeared to have been mediated by the intervention. She was less irritable, more confident and her self-esteem had reportedly increased. Melody was more able to express her feelings of sadness at the follow-up session. It may be that the decrease in bullying reported by Melody was in part due to the lessening of depressive symptoms (Hart, 1991).

An unanticipated outcome of this intervention was changes in Melody's mother. It appeared that the identification of the factors underlying and maintaining Melody's response to bullying had increased her understanding and appreciation of Melody's strengths and her commitment to intervene appropriately on her daughter's behalf.

Unfortunately the follow-up session indicated that the changes Melody had made as a result of the intervention had not all been maintained after the intervention ceased. Her drawings indicated she was less confident, secure, assertive and self-determined than in the sixth session. She reported a considerable increase in sadness once she stopped attending weekly sessions. There appear to be several possible reasons for this which can be summarised as aspects of the subject, aspects of the program and aspects of the school environment.

There were advantages in the sessions being held at school. This provided the opportunity for the therapist to view interactions in the school playground, and to see Melody with some classmates and teachers which gave me some insights to her relationships. In being exposed to the girl bullies' surprise tactics, which I experienced as being very audacious and manipulative, I had a better understanding of what Melody was up against in her schooling life. My feeling about this incident alerted me to the shadow-like (in Jungian terms) quality bullying has for children who are not versed in aggression and manipulation tactics and the social structure that supports bullying.

Limitations of the Outcomes

Melody was not hopeful or confident of change in the level of bullying she was experiencing at school and expressed a lack of confidence in the adults at her school being able to stop the bullying. This does not seem unrealistic given the level of abuse and the lapsing of the school intervention.

It is possible that Melody's early history made her particularly vulnerable to bullying and that this experience had necessitated the development of defence mechanisms such as being positive, compliant and avoidant. Even on her worst days, when she was reduced to tears, Melody never chose the very sad faces to rate how she felt and consistently chose faces that indicated she was happy. This is consistent with Malchodi's (1990) findings that girls, particularly girls encouraged to take an adult role, mask sadness by being helpful, compliant and reporting being fine. Using defence mechanisms as coping strategies helped Melody to survive in the school environment but may have made it harder for her to maintain the gains from the art therapy without the ongoing support of the therapist and the opportunity for self-expression.

The short length of the intervention may have limited its ongoing benefits to Melody. The art therapy was only six sessions long and two of those sessions were largely devoted to assessment. This number of sessions may not have been enough given the impact of bullying on children's emotional well being and Melody's issues resulting from early childhood experiences. Indicators that six sessions were not long enough included Melody's sadness that the sessions were ending, her portrayal of herself (Figures 22 and 23) and her disclosure of the depth of sadness in her life at the follow-up session.

The explanation of the art therapy sessions as art extension may have increased Melody's vulnerability to bullying. Perhaps other children saw her getting something different and special because she was "good at art", which may have increased their animosity towards her. Melody and her mother reported bullying incidents that appeared to be a result of her peers' jealousy of this special attention. Her peers made overt attempts to undermine and manipulate the therapist client relationship and to disempower my client, in particular in approaching me after Session 4. Moreover, it is possible Melody's gains as indicated by the drawings in Session 6 and as reported in the interviews after Session 6, were not stabilised and therefore she could not maintain these once the support of therapy was no longer available.

There were problems using art therapy at this school, including interruptions and the difficulty providing appropriate therapeutic space. A class sporting event and measles injection interrupted the third and sixth sessions. Another session had to be held in the sick room because priority for use of the psychologist's room was given to the auditor. There were inevitable interruptions so the needs of sick children could be attended to. The counselling relationship mimics the primary mother child relationship and it is crucial the external world does not intrude into this space so the therapeutic process can take place (Noonan, 1983; Cohen, 1975; Case & Dalley, 1992).

Melody may have been assisted in retaining her gains from the art therapy by more active support from her classroom teacher. "Pupils who were offered opportunities to talk with a teacher ... about bullying experiences ... retained more positive effects over time" (Cowie & Sharp, 1994, p. 107). The literature on bullying does not provide support for the principal's belief that "old fashioned discipline" is more appropriate for a class demonstrating antisocial behaviour. In fact aggressive responses by teachers to

bullying are likely to promote bullying behaviour as children imitate this mode of behaving (Cowie & Sharp, 1994). Rather Ross (1996), recommended the classroom teacher's reinforcement of the ideas of rights and mutual respect. Besag (1989) and Tattum and Herbert (1993) suggest modules on friendship, bullying, personal relationships, rights, empathy, self-esteem and conflict facilitated by a teacher who has developed good rapport with students is most likely to stop children bullying. In addition, interracial bullying is decreased by the teacher's attitude (Carter, DeTine-Cater & Benson, 1980). "This (bullying) ethos can be most effectively changed in classes where values of co-operation are promoted through the curriculum" (Sharp & Thompson, 1994) and where children are encouraged by a teacher to become empathic (Tattum, 1993).

It had never been anticipated that the art therapy intervention would replace a school-wide anti-bullying program, rather that the intervention would support Melody to change her response to being bullied while other measures in the school reduced the incidents of bullying. However the school did not maintain their intervention while the art therapy was taking place. A whole school approach, including classroom interventions, is recommended for bullying interventions to be most successful (Hyndmann & Thornbourne, 1994; Olweus, 1993; Tattum, 1993). A lapsed intervention leaves the playground a very likely place for bullying (Sharp & Thompson, 1994). Counselling Melody to cope with bullying while adults were doing so little to protect her may have reinforced for her that adults are unable to help.

A closer working relationship with the school may have increased understanding of art therapy as a practice. The psychologist's request to display one of the art pieces revealed this lack of understanding of the artwork as case notes. Increased

understanding of the importance of the art therapy sessions may have lessened the interruptions to the therapy sessions.

Study design

The case study design proved to be particularly appropriate for this client as it allowed for therapy and ongoing assessment at the same time. The pre and post interviews were valuable in providing client history and outcomes of the intervention, and had the unexpected outcome of providing Melody's mother with some insights and greater knowledge of her daughter, which positively impacted on their relationship.

Limitations of the Design

The measures "The Feeling Thermometer" and CDI used in this design did not seem effective for this client as these measures rely on self-reporting. Melody was invested in appearing positive as this was one of her defence mechanisms. The choice of answers Melody made in "The Feeling Thermometer" and CDI were not a reflection of how she felt but may have been how she wished her life to be. Assessment by drawing appeared to be the most useful for this client and included identification of early childhood issues. Malchiodi (1990) also noted that underlying depression was often more successfully identified in art expression because of children's defence mechanism of masking or denying the depression.

As a single subject design the results of this case study are not intended to generalise to the larger population of children being bullied, across gender. It has, however, provided the researcher with some recommendations of how the present intervention may be altered for future art therapy interventions for children being bullied. These could include studies of longer art therapy interventions and interventions with groups of

children who have been bullied. The findings of this research provide further support that the success of such interventions is maximised where the school is fully involved with the development of the program and where the anti-bullying prevention takes place throughout the school including the classroom. Replication of similar studies may offer more information on whether this type of intervention could be helpful to other children in a similar situation (Stake, 1995; Anderson, 1990).

The lack of a school-wide anti bully program changed the nature of the proposed intervention. The proposal anticipated that while the child was being provided with the opportunities to deal with bullying the school would be working in a consistent, systematic way to prevent bullying. This did not occur and the child was left at the end of the sessions with more skills to deal with the bullying but also more awareness of her feelings and less defences in place. While there were clear benefits from the art therapy, the circumstances in which it was provided tended to increase her vulnerability to further bullying.

Recommendations

- That Melody and her mother be offered an opportunity to look at the effects of the early disruption to attachment.
- That Melody be provided further support to help her cope with the stress of being bullied and to help her attendance at school.

Recommendations in Relation to Melody's school

- That the school-wide intervention be maintained to protect children in counselling for bullying. A signed contract between the therapist and the school outlining what they would provide in terms of anti bullying program could formalise this assurance.
- That the school psychologist facilitate classroom sessions in Melody's class to develop skills in conflict resolution, friendship, empathy, anti-bullying behaviour, and rights to provide these children with alternatives to their antisocial behaviour. Literature on bullying suggests there is a strong link between bullying and later criminal behaviour and that bullies too require help to change (Olweus, 1993; Farrington, 1993; Rigby, 1996).
- That Alex, the child who displayed bullying behaviour that included an adult in her manipulations, be referred to the school psychologist to see if she has issues that are not being addressed.

Recommendations for future Art Therapy for Bullied Children

- That schoolteachers, principals and psychologists be provided with more information on art therapy and how its benefits can be maximised.
- That therapy sessions be held after school so there is less interruption and visibility to bullies.
- That the class teacher be involved in the intervention in a supportive way. This is likely to increase the long-term improvements for the client and decrease bullying in the classroom (as occurred in the art therapy intervention by Carol Ross (1986)).
- The therapist could observe the classroom situation and class dynamics before the sessions begin (as occurred in the art therapy intervention by Carol Ross (1986)).
- That art therapy sessions run for a longer period of time than six weeks, especially if the bullying is long term or if attachment issues are present.
- Group sessions with other children, who are also being victimised could be included to provide ongoing group support and process.
- The role of women and girls in reproducing patriarchy could be studied in relation to girls bullying girls (as occurred in the reported case study).
- That quantitative art therapy research on bullying be undertaken to further inform this area.
- Research on the use of art therapy to promote awareness of bullying and its effects in the school setting could be undertaken.
- Similar art therapy interventions that work with a more systems approach involving the teacher, client, client's parents, and principal are recommended. Limitations of this approach would include the time restraints on all involved and the difficulty of getting all participants to work collectively.

- Art therapy assessment tools to assess bullying susceptibility and susceptibility to carrying out bullying behaviour could be developed and used as part of school screening processes to help with early identification of at risk children.
- Research on the type of imagery produced by children who have a tendency to bully could be studied. This information could be used to help schools screen for likely bullies.
- Further art therapy interventions with children who bully to help them change bullying behaviours and address their needs are recommended.

Summary

This art therapy intervention provided Melody with a means of support and validation to help her cope with bullying experiences. It enabled Melody to develop a therapeutic relationship, to increasingly talk about and deal with the bullying and her feelings about it, to reframe her experience and acknowledge her personal strengths and attributes and to develop coping strategies other than defence mechanisms. The intervention was successful in decreasing the client's school avoidance, irritability and stress and increasing her coping strategies, assertiveness and self-esteem. Melody enjoyed the sessions and felt they had made her stronger. Her mother, school psychologist and principal all commented on the positive changes they had noticed in relation to her responses to her peer experiences. The intervention also provided the opportunity for assessment of the ongoing effects of some negative early childhood experiences.

The length of the intervention, an apparent lack of understanding of art therapy as an intervention by school staff and the lack of a school wide anti-bullying intervention over this period were in opposition to the design and principle of this intervention and lessened the effectiveness of the art therapy.

Recommendations are made for ongoing support for Melody, changes in the school environment and suggestions for change for any future provision of art therapy session for children who are being bullied.

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Appendix A

Questions to ask the child’s teacher

Tell me about the bullying prevention program in place in this school?

What is your classroom management program as relates to bullying?

What have you observed about bullying in this class?

What bullying have you observed relating to this child?

What changes (if any) have you recently noticed in the behaviour of this child?

What were you hoping for when you referred this child to me? (if applicable).

Appendix B

Questions to ask the child's parents

Has the child had any changes in behaviour - for example
changes in eating patterns? _____

changes in sleeping - taking a long time to go to sleep? _____

difficulty getting up in the morning? _____

waking during the night? _____

experiencing nightmares? _____

going to sleep at odd hours? _____

sleeping more than she used to? _____

How are your child's moods? Are they angry? Sad? Irritable? _____

Has s/he been ill recently? Had any sore stomachs or complained of feeling sick?

Has she had any days off school recently? _____

Does she talk about school friends to you? _____

Has she talked to you about being bullied? _____

What did you do (if anything)? _____

What did you suggest to the child that she should do (if anything)?

What do you know about the involvement of the teacher in this bullying situation?

Has there been any recent stressors in your child’s life? (suggest examples such as loss of loved person, move of house, change of living arrangements....).

What were you hoping would happen when you agreed your child could participate in this research? _____

Other comments? _____

(Second and third interviews only)

Do you feel being involved in this research has helped your child deal with bullying?

Have there been any other negative or positive outcomes to her participation in this research? _____

Appendix C

Content Form for the Release of Art Work Produced and Information Given

Title of Research: A Case Study: A Short Term Art Therapy Intervention for a Child Victim to Bullying

Researcher: Ffyona Matthews **Supervisor:** Amanda Hasenkam

I _____ (client’s name), have heard and understand about doing Art Therapy with Ffyona and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I know the art therapy will involve making art as well as talking about how I feel about myself and the bullying I have experienced. I know my artwork and some of the things I will talk about in the art therapy will be in this research but no one will know it is me. I agree to be involved in the art therapy sessions for six weeks and then for a follow up session later. I understand that I may choose to stop at any time if I want to.

Participant’s name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix D

Consent Form for the Release of Art Work Produced and Information Given

Title of Research: A Case Study: A Short Term Art Therapy Intervention for a Child Victim to Bullying

Parent/ Guardian

I have heard and understand an explanation of this research project my child has been invited to take part in. I have been given and read, a written explanation of this research and understand what is asked of me and my child. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and these questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand my child can withdraw from this research at any time. I consent for my child to take part as a subject in this research.

I give permission for the information, art work (and in the form of photographs or slides) and case notes produced in this art therapy research, that I and my child have taken part in, to be used for educational purposes in conjunction with the M.A. Art Therapy course at Edith Cowan University.

I understand my child's and my own anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved. I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided my child and myself are not identifiable.

Parent's name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E

Information Sheet for Participants

Title of Research: A Case Study: A Short Term Art Therapy Intervention for a Child Victim to Bullying

Researcher: Ffiona Matthews

Supervisor: Amanda Hasenkam

This research project is a thesis to be conducted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Art Therapy) at Edith Cowan University.

Purpose:

This research will apply and test the effectiveness of an art therapy invention designed to help a child deal with some of the negative effects of being bullied.

The participants will include a preadolescent girl (who will be the client) and the caregivers (the client's parent, school psychologist, and teacher)

Procedures:

The client will be actively involved in art therapy sessions designed to help with the problems associated with being bullied. The researcher will use standard projective drawing techniques and procedures and a Children's Depression Scale (CDI) (administered by the school psychologist) as part of the art therapy sessions. Other therapy techniques will be used responding to the needs of the client.

The client's teacher, parent and school psychologist will be involved in meeting the researcher at the beginning and end of the art therapy sessions to discuss their perceptions of the client's strengths; the areas that they think the client needs to develop; and to comment on areas in which they have observed improvements made by the client.

The client will also be met before the commencement of the art therapy sessions and informed of the research activities and purpose of the research.

Rights of Participants:

Involvement in the research is voluntary and participants may choose to withdraw at any time.

Confidentiality:

All art works and written notes will be treated with confidentiality and will be stored securely.

Every effort will be made to ensure the participants' anonymity and confidentiality by the use of pseudonyms in the final report.

Content of the therapeutic sessions will be discussed by the researcher with only the school psychologist and the thesis supervisor. The caregivers may be given information from these sessions if this is considered important for the client's welfare and the client will be informed of this. This is consistent with common practice in counselling minors. The client is at liberty to discuss the content of the sessions. Some therapeutic content will be reported in the final report and the artwork will be reproduced.

Time Commitment:

Participation in the research project for the school psychologist will involve supervision of the researcher, approximately two hours over a period of approximately six weeks, administration of the CDI, and two meetings with the client's caregivers. The school psychologist's availability to provide additional counselling support to the client, the client's teacher and the client's parents/ guardians if any unexpected problems arise during the course of the study is considered an essential prerequisite for conducting this study.

Participation in the research project for the client's teacher and parent will involve attending a meeting/ interview and answering some questions before the commencement of therapy and also at the follow up session approximately one month after the completion of the therapy. Each meeting will be approximately half an hour long.

Participation in the research for the client will involve six hour long sessions and a follow up session one month later for approximately one hour or longer. The sessions will occur in school time in the school psychologist's office.

Benefits to Participants:

Participants can expect to benefit from involvement in this study through experiencing the benefits of an invention that addresses the problems and distress caused by being bullied.

Participants may also gain an understanding and knowledge of how art can promote different strategies of dealing with a stressful situation such as bullying, an increased sense of empowerment and self worth.

A summary of the research results will be made available to participants on request.

If you have any questions concerning this research entitled:

A Case Study: A Short-Term Art Therapy Intervention for a Child Victim to Bullying.

you can contact me Ffyona Matthews on Phone _____

my supervisor Amanda Hasenkam Phone _____

Appendix F

"The Feeling Thermometer"

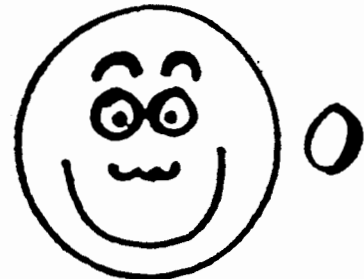
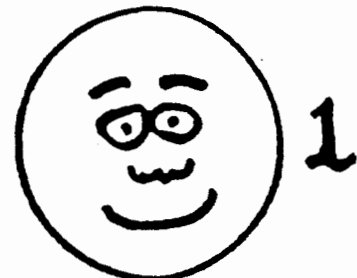
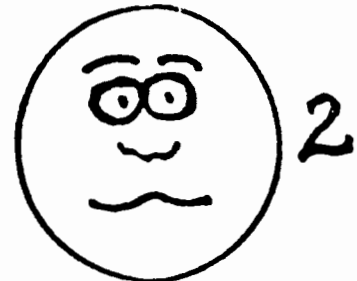
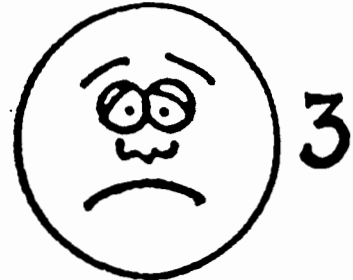
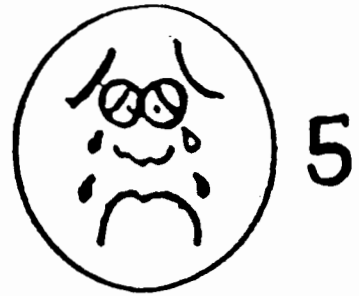
The client is asked to indicate on "The Feeling Thermometer" how she feels about school. Some practice questions are asked to insure the child understands the concept and what the faces represent.

Instructions to Client

These faces on the "The Feeling Thermometer" are about feelings.

Number '0' is the happiest and Number '5' is the saddest. Can you tell me how this face is feeling? (point to '1' or '4'). Can you tell me which of these is the saddest? ('2' or '3').

1. Show me how you feel about getting a present you really wanted.
2. Show me how you feel when an adult tells you off.
3. Show me how you feel about school this week.



Appendix G

Dear Melody,

Hi there! I imagine you are surprised I have written you a letter. I hope that is the way you like having your name spelt. If not you can tell me on Wednesday when we meet.

I wonder how you are finding practising feeling strong and powerful like "Tommy the Brave Kid" who is also "Melody the brave".

I remember your good idea about practising being strong and having a forcefield in front of a mirror. And getting your brother to throw you a few nasty names to practise deflecting them with your wall. With great ideas like that I bet your forcefield/ wall will be very strong by the time I next see you.

I wonder if you have had to kick some bullies out of your club? (The "Being Melody's Friend Club"). I liked your rules about not being mean to you, not hurting you and not talking behind your back. This will be a good club to belong to.

I wanted to tell you that some girls from your class talked to me after school just so you would know. They were a bit curious about me teaching you art (and I think a bit jealous!). I said your artwork was very good, that's why I was teaching you. So I stuck to our agreement - that we tell the truth about the art stuff and just don't mention that we also talk about feelings and bullying. I thought we did well to think of that answer. Anyway I wanted you to know I am sticking to my promise about not talking about our art therapy time.

Well Melody - good luck with investigating being powerful and standing strong. I will be very interested in your "investigative report"!

Hope you are enjoying the clay! See you Wednesday.

Appendix H

25th September 1998

Dear Melody,

This is a letter to wish you well for your school holidays and for Sunday night's performance.

I am returning to you your magic shell. I think this shell will remind you of your forcefield, standing strong, the "Being Melody's Friend Club" rules and the other things we talked about. Plus all the things you already knew but might have got even stronger.

I wonder will you put this shell into your bag of "tricks" with your other powerful things. I know you have a bag full of ideas and tricky solutions for when you need it. I wonder if your secrets go in there too?!

Thank you for our time together in Art Therapy. I appreciated very much your stories and your artwork. I can see you now as an adventuresome snow tiger - a special tiger with a white coat, not yellow like the others, who is gentle and strong. Thank you for telling me about your hard times at school and also for letting me how strong and brave and tricky you are.

I hope your holidays are lots of fun and relaxing Melody. I look forward to seeing you again next term.

Take Care,