UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

A study of the Primary Assisted Learning (PAL) program: An initiative to address behaviour issues and enhance resilience for at risk Primary school children

A dissertation submitted by

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ABSTRACT

Children with challenging behaviours are a concern for parents, teachers, schools and the wider community. If such children deemed to be at risk are ignored, our society will pay one way or another. A need exists to intervene early in the lives of at risk children to reduce risk factors by increasing their protective factors to enhance their resilience.

This study focused on a local initiative that is an early intervention, preventive, school based multi-setting program targeting eight boys in Grades 3 and 4 who were at risk of being suspended from school. A one shot case study with a mixed method approach was used to explore the components of the Primary Assisted Learning (PAL) Program that included student support focusing on adventure based learning, parenting education using the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) and a teacher component that focused on individualised and differentiated teacher professional development.

The aim of the PAL Program was two fold, firstly to reduce the challenging behaviours of the at risk students by focusing on specific protective process factors and secondly, to enhance the students' resilience. Findings from this study indicate perceived improvements in the students' behaviours and enhanced resilience as reported by the students, parents and class teachers. Furthermore all reported high satisfaction levels with the PAL Program.

Outcomes from this study highlight the importance of providing interventions for at risk students that are not a single factor approach but rather are complex and operate across and between ecological systems of the student, parent and teacher.

Recommendations for further research are for the program to be empirically tested. Additionally, improvements could be made in gathering ongoing feedback from stakeholders and participants throughout the intervention and with more sophisticated measures within the program components that focus on the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data and by extending the length of the program.

CERTIFICATE OF DISSERTATION

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

_____ _____

Candidate   Date

ENDORSEMENT

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Supervisor   Date

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Final thanks go to my husband Barry who has proven that his bungee rope is well attached having bounced back in the face of adversity. Your resilience is truly inspirational. Heartfelt thanks for your endless love and support.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Barry Wayne Gordon

"If we think we are fragile and broken, we will live a fragile and broken life. If we believe we are strong and wise, we will live with enthusiasm and courage. The way we name ourselves colours the way we live… We must be careful how we name ourselves."
-Muller (1996), How, Then, Shall We Live?

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background and purpose of this research

Students with challenging behaviours in primary schools present a pervasive problem
and place a great deal of strain on schools, teachers, classes, peers and parents alike
(Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005). Teachers often
claim they lack the skills to deal with the many complex issues of students with such
behaviours (Male, 2003; Office for Standards in Education, 2005). As well as this
Stephenson, Linfoot and Martin (2000) reported that judgments about a particular
child might vary from teacher to teacher and across different contexts (p. 227).

The term challenging behaviours is problematic because no clear definition or
agreement exists in the field of education as to exactly what are "challenging behav-
iours". Oliver, McClintock, Hall, Smith, Dagnan and Stenfert-Kroese (2003) posit
the view that:

> The social construction of challenging behaviour implies that the identification of
> challenging behaviours will vary across settings, with some settings able to man-
> age more severe behaviours such that the behaviours are not perceived as chal-
> lenging. (p. 53)

Whether challenging behaviours are socially constructed or not, according to the
Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (2005), behaviours that
are especially challenging are unacceptable, whatever the circumstances. Challeng-
ing behaviours are described firstly as overtly aggressive behaviour: physical acts
such as biting and pinching, throwing furniture and assaulting people. Secondly they
are described as aggression that is mainly verbal, for example, streams of abuse,
temper tantrums, and invasion of personal space intended to be threatening. (p. 5)
Each of these challenging behaviours would be regarded as unacceptable behaviour
in a school setting.

Students with challenging behaviours are usually subject to a range of risk factors
evident within the school context. These factors include: scholastic failure, being part
of a deviant peer group, peer rejection, poor attachment to the school, inadequate be-

haviour management skills, risk factors significantly related to youth offending behaviours include drug and alcohol use, violent temperaments, gang membership, poor school performance, school mobility, dropping out of school, teen pregnancy and childbirth, criminal victimization, unemployment and the lack of job skills, family conflict, parental abuse and neglect, excessively strict family discipline, homelessness, abusive youth peer groups, poor student-teacher relationships. There is also ample evidence suggesting that their learning is impeded by emotional, behavioural and/or health problems (Bernat, 2009; Masten, Roisman, Long, Burt, Obradovic, Riley, Boelcke-Stennes and Tellegen, 2005).

Ongoing and increasing concern is held by schools, teachers, and parents regarding how to manage students with challenging behaviours. Recent data shows that the rate of students' suspensions continues to increase. More than 17,000 students were suspended for violence in Queensland state schools in 2007-2008, with almost 300 expelled (Chilcott, 2009, p. 10).

Against this background, Education Queensland provided Behaviour Support Services (BSS) to various school districts. The role of the BSS was to assist schools to manage students with challenging behaviours. The purpose of this response was due to the disruptive nature of students with challenging behaviours that can have an adverse impact on learning for the students involved and for those around them. Challenging behaviours can also create uncomfortable conditions for teaching and other school staff (Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005).

The setting for this research was Brisbane, Queensland, Australia in two Education Districts that formed part of Education Queensland Region (located north of the Brisbane River). Seventy (70) primary schools within these two districts accessed the services of the BSS. The BSS provided a range of services including professional development for teachers regarding behaviour management and support for students with challenging behaviours which included an alternative education programs for primary and high school students who had been suspended for between 6 to 20 days. An early intervention program was also available to parents of pre-school children with challenging behaviours.

Students in all schools within the two districts could be referred for support. Models of service delivery varied depending on the relevant needs. One option was a ten week intervention with a Behaviour Support Teacher (BST) working with students and teachers within the school setting whilst another option for the most at-risk secondary students was attending an alternative education program for a term.

The primary schools within these two districts provided extensive support for their students with challenging behaviours. However, when the school's resources were taxed or where their responses were ineffective they would refer students to the BSS where a BST intervened, firstly by working directly with the student in the classroom. A review of the range of BSS highlighted a gap in addressing the most at risk primary aged school children. These were students who had received extensive support yet were making little progress and were at risk of further suspensions or exclusion from school as a result of the seriousness of their challenging behaviours.

The suspension rates for primary aged children were steadily increasing. Students were often being re-suspended and although alternative education programs were in place, some students had a history of challenging behaviours and required even more intensive support. Typical misbehaviour included violence towards other children, repeated refusal to follow teacher directions and a lack of capacity to interact positively with peers and regular disciplinary referrals (with a behaviour focus) to the Administration team of the school. In response to this perceived gap in services the BSS developed the Primary Assisted Learning program (PAL) as a local initiative to respond to students in Years 3 and 4 with challenging behaviours who also had a history of behaviour intervention without success.

This study sets out to examine the PAL program, as an early intervention initiative aimed to increase the protective factors for eight targeted students by decreasing their challenging behaviours. Fealy and Story (2006) cite the World Health Organisation (WHO), stating that to intervene early, using a systematic set of processes will reduce known risk factors and enhance protective factors with problematic children (World Health Organization, 1998).

1.2 Challenging behaviours in schools

Failure to address challenging behaviours of students is very costly, financially and socially and individually for the student. According to Sanders and Markie-Dadds (1992), the nature and significance of children with disruptive behaviour disorders are the most common as well as the most costly of childhood adjustment problems. They describe these disorders as including: conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder and disruptive behaviour. They describe these behaviours as ranging from patterns of negativistic, defiant, disobedient, and hostile behaviour to a more severe pattern of behaviour involving the violation of societal norms and the basic rights of others.

It has been suggested that there are critical junctures to intervene existing at infancy, early toddler-hood, and the primary and secondary school periods (Bor, Najman, O'Callaghan, Williams, & Anstey, 2001). Early identification of at risk students makes the possibility of early intervention more feasible and more effective within the school context (Fealy & Story, 2006).

Behaviour management is a complex issue encompassing the school community, families, teachers and student capacities, and predispositions, geographical locations and a host of local and school peculiarities (Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005, p. 25). To address these issues a committee aimed at re-viewing behaviour and behaviour management issues was established in Queensland as per the request of the Minister for Education and the Arts. In 2005 The Smart Schools, Smart Behaviour Report by the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal [MACER] was completed.

This Report (2005) highlighted the serious matters associated with behaviour and behaviour management that schools systems worldwide had been able to identify. Specifically, behaviour problems have been associated with boys 8 and 9 years of age and 12 and 15 who have special education needs and are often from low-income households. The Report also stated that figures in the United States of America (USA) and Canada are similar to those in the United Kingdom.

Indeed In the United Kingdom, the Office for Standards in Education (Office for Standards in Education, 2005) highlighted that the behaviour of boys, remains a serious concern for many schools and settings. The impact of these behaviours, troubles others as well as affecting the climate of the learning community and disrupting their own progress and that of other students. Specifically the report observed that incidents of poor behaviour increased with age, rising steeply from the age of nine. However, 20% of poor behaviour in primary schools involved students aged 4 to 6 years. This group of children comes to school ill prepared socially and emotionally. In secondary schools, behaviour deteriorates for students between the ages of 11 to 14. For example in 2002/03 the percentage of lessons taught in which behaviour was unsatisfactory rose from less than 5% in Year 7 over 8% in Years 8 and 9 (p. 6).

The sentiments of the Queensland Teachers Union were highlighted in this report indicating that the challenges that teachers are faced with were due to the serious ongoing misdemeanours that impact on the ability of teacher to be able to do their job effectively (Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005).

While most students comply with expected behaviour standards, in all school systems there are some 5% to 15% who require support beyond that provided by a classroom teacher to comply with the expected level of behaviour. An even smaller number, up to 5%, are unable to meet behavioural expectations without very extensive support including alternative placement programs. International best practice in behaviour management makes use of named specialists who provide support for students with challenging behaviour in regular classes. These include teachers who provide support for learning difficulties, BSTs and auxiliary staff (Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005, p. 25).

The impact of challenging behaviours in a child's life can be pervasive. One area where the negative impact is most serious is the child's capacity to learn. Sanders and Markie-Dadds, (1992) suggest that children with disruptive behaviours display low self-esteem, low frustration and tolerance, poor social skills and poor interpersonal relationships. The impact of these problems can carry on into their adult lives resulting in work related problems and poor marital relationships. Disruptive behaviour not only has costs at a personal level but also at a community level.

Implications for students displaying challenging behaviours are far reaching. Research indicates that 50% of teachers from all levels have reported that they spend far too much time on behaviour issues that continue to impact negatively on their classroom instruction (Beaman, Wheldall, & Kemp, 2007). In a study undertaken regarding the behaviour concerns of teachers of students in the early years, teachers expressed confidence in their ability in the general classroom management, yet expressed a need for support with distractions and concerns about aggressive behaviour. Of the teachers surveyed those who were less experienced indicated higher levels of concern about managing aggression, distractibility, and disobedience and wanted more support for dealing with distractibility and disobedience (Stephenson, et al., 2000, p. 225).

1.3   Significance of the research

According to Father Chris Riley, (Riley, 2009) the children of Australia are in crisis and he calls for urgent action to address their alarming plight. He paints a bleak view for young people who are represented in the following statistics:

- One in three girls will be sexually assaulted. One in eight boys will be sexually assaulted;
- Over 263,000 children in Australia live with family violence, with about 181,200 children witnessing domestic violence;
- Almost 20,000 children are victims of physical or sexual assault each year;
- Over 412,000 Australian children are living below the most austere poverty line;
- Almost 65,000 children are homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- In Australia today, over 78,000 children live in a household where there is at least one daily cannabis user;
- In Australia today, over 27,000 children live in a household where an adult is using methamphetamines monthly; and
- On any given night, one in two young people are turned away from crisis accommodation. (p. 7)

Hooper-Briar and Lawson (1994) as cited in Withers and Russel (2001) frame prevention and intervention for at risk students in terms of cost effectiveness. They have drawn on the words of Charles Bruner and his concept of the "costs of failure". These costs are directly associated with school drop-outs, offending and imprison-

ment, teenage pregnancy, together with loses in tax revenue from young people unable to sustain employment. They conclude:

> Framed in this way, the costs of failure are incredibly expensive. Against this frame, front-end investments in children, youth and families are timely and cost effective. They save money at the same time they facilitate increasing life quality for children, youth and families (Hooper-Briar & Lawson, 1994, p. 35).

There are also, according to Withers and Russell (2001) the incorporated costs of failure that are direct and indirect. These include core costs as well as related costs. Direct costs are described as those costs incurred by the education systems in dealing with under-age school leaving and consists of funds diverted from mainstream provision, special programs for support and alternate education, such as the Commonwealth Students at Risk program; opportunities lost through diversion of funds from mainstream programs into such special programs and school attendance officers and community liaison officers (p. 36).

Withers and Russell (2001) in discussing the importance of prevention and intervention in terms of cost effectiveness cite Oberklaid (1996, p. 27) who wrote:

> Do you know the story of the cliff that lacks a fence on the top and has an ambulance down the bottom? When people fall off the cliff everyone puts up their hands and says: 'We want more ambulances'. There is no discussion in the health field about ambulances anymore; the only discussion is what colour the fence is going to be and what it's going to be made of. There is a big focus now on early detection, early intervention because we know that intervention in the early school years is far more cost effective than trying to put bandaids on when those problems are established in adolescence or adulthood (Withers & Russell, 2001, p. 35).

Barr and Parrett (2001) suggest a solution where government and community invest at all levels of schooling or be confronted with the escalating costs of dealing with the life long needs and problems of individuals through health, public assistance, police and prison intervention (p.4). Specific examples of these life long needs are unemployment, incarceration and low literacy levels and poor relationships (Bor, et al., 2001). These are referred to as the direct costs to society (Greenberg, Domitrovich, & Bumbarger, 2001).

The implicit and explicit costs experienced by the community are staggering. Alarmingly America is building more prisons than schools to cater for problematic individuals. In America there has been a shift in resource allocations from education,

funding health and welfare to corrections (Barr & Parrett, 2001). Clearly this is not a satisfactory solution for problematic individuals.

Challenging behaviours in children can emerge in the very early years of school (Bor, et al., 2001). One way to address students' challenging behaviours is to identify the students' risk factors and protective factors to provide an appropriate intervention. Research indicates that intervention early in children's lives is much more likely to be effective in preventing or ameliorating emotional and behavioural problems (Centre for Community Child Health, 2007).

Educational outcomes are often poor amongst children who display challenging behaviours, which is evidenced by antisocial behaviour, accompanied by difficulties in peer relationships, below average cognitive skills and poor academic achievement (Rutter, Giller, & Hagell, 1998).

The challenge for educators is to develop explicit strategies to promote children's resilience that consequently builds their capacity to ensure positive educational outcomes. What is known is that the outcomes for building capacity for at risk students through enhancing their resilience are developed through their social competence, problem-solving skills, critical consciousness, autonomy, and having a sense of purpose (B. Bernard, 1991). Students need these protective factors to enable them to thrive socially and academically.

However, educators are still learning how these protective factors are gained. Rather than concentrating on identifying protective factors alone, researchers are attempting to understand the underlying protective process focused strategies for enhancing resilience. Researchers have attempted to make meaning of factors that can contribute to positive outcomes for children (Luthar, Ciccetti, & Becker, 2000).

It is therefore important to ensure that educators focus on what will make a difference. Garmston and Wellman remind us of the "butterfly metaphor" (1995, p. 10):

> …. the wind generating from the wings of a butterfly affects tiny air currents around it and because tiny air inputs into dynamic systems create major changes, a

butterfly stirring the air in Peking can eventually influence a storm system over New York City.

Garmston and Wellman (1995) pose the question "Which butterfly wings should schools be blowing on?" Since everything influences or can potentially influence everything else, the wings to influence are those that are most generative and positive in their effects. (p. 10) To address the above concerns, the PAL Program was developed which focused on intervention that influenced student behaviours which could contribute to resilience.

1.4 The PAL Program

The PAL program is an intensive, flexible intervention for targeted at risk students implemented over one semester. The intervention provided an alternative education experience once a week by a behaviour support teacher, at an off campus site. Also intensive support for the targeted student was provided in their regular school setting.

The PAL intervention is not a commercially scripted program but rather a locally created early intervention initiative formed around key partnerships with the student, parent, school personal and the PAL teachers. Components of the PAL Program include creating goals for each student, collaborating with the child, parent and the class teacher. From this collaboration an intervention plan was designed to address the challenging behaviours of each targeted student.

The Program was operational in two Brisbane school districts as part of an intervention provided by the BSS for primary schools targeting students with the most challenging behaviours in Grades 3 and 4. The PAL team consisted of two Behaviour Teachers with experience in adventure-based learning, a teacher aid, a Guidance Counsellor and a visiting Art teacher. The researcher was the Guidance Counsellor and the PAL Team Leader.

The PAL Program addressed the need for a strategically focused multi dimensional approach to the very serious problem of rising levels of misbehaviour in primary children in the two Education Districts. This intervention was a grass roots approach enlisting resources linked closely to the student. Importantly these were professionals

that are found in most communities and included the class teacher, behaviour teachers and importantly, parents.

The components of the Program were informed and guided by literature on resilience. Historically in Brisbane schools, when working with students with challenging behaviours, interventions focused entirely on the student. The PAL Program moved away from a global approach and focused on a targeted intervention to address students' challenging behaviours that included the students themselves, parents and class teachers. This is supported by the work of Wasserman and Miller (1998) who stated that any intervention needs to consider the child, parent and teacher.

The PAL Program also sought to gain a greater understanding of the underlying mechanisms of issues for the at risk students. This was achieved by profiling their presenting problems from multiple perspectives using different measures, which included the child, parent and class teachers. The aims of the PAL Program were:

- To provide engaging learning experiences for students through curriculum framework developed based on the "I Have, I Am, I Can," resilience model (Grotberg, 1995) that includes adventure based learning, relationships, problem solving and group skills and explicit strategies to address their challenging behaviours;
- To provide the student's class teacher with professional development through the Teacher Support Component that included modelling, team teaching and coaching (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education, 2007) of behaviour management skills, making connections with the at risk student and providing an engaging curriculum in a supportive learning environment; and
- To provide a parenting skills program through the Parenting Component of the Positive Parenting Program Triple P (Sanders & Markie-Dadds, 1992) and ongoing support for parent/carers during the PAL intervention to increase their skill levels in dealing with their child who has challenging behaviours.

A unique feature of the PAL Program was the strategic focus on working with the students, parents and class teachers from a strengths based perspective rather than looking for deficits or blame. The PAL intervention team acknowledged the importance of the parents of the students acquiring skills that would aid them in addressing their child's misbehaviour. The parents participated in the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) (Sanders & Markie-Dadds, 1996) and were supported by the BSS throughout the intervention. According to the Centre for Community Child Health

(2007) helping parents promote positive social behaviours in their children is an effective preventive strategy.

The developers of the PAL program recognized teachers as a major resource and planned for intensive support to the class teacher by providing professional development, coaching and peer support consequently creating an opportunity for the teacher to increase their repertoire of skills in behaviour management.

Additionally, the effect that a child with challenging behaviours has on the class teacher and other students was acknowledged. The PAL Program was designed to forge a partnership with the class teacher and also provide professional development to the class teacher. The purpose of this was to increase the teacher's skills in behaviour management thereby offering an engaging and relevant curriculum and providing a supportive learning environment while making connections with the targeted student. The class teachers' received ongoing professional development through the Teacher Support Component of the PAL Program over the six months of the program. This included planning, modelling, coaching, team teaching and debriefing opportunities. There are many benefits for this model of teacher support with Fullan (2007) stating that teachers require on-the-job training enabling them to test out, refine, get feedback on improvements made, as well as having access to colleagues from whom they can learn.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the specific components of the PAL Program that could contribute to fostering resilience and building capacity for at risk children moving away from the concept of a "deficit model". It is vital that the research literature continues to expand in this field so that by the provision of early interventions for at risk children may contribute to changing the trajectory of their lives.

1.5   Research questions

This research project was directed at the efficacy of the PAL Program about which the following three research questions were posed.

What potential does the PAL Program have as a behaviour management strategy for at risk students in primary schools?

This question seeks to answer whether or not the PAL Program is a viable intervention to address behaviour management issues for the targeted students. This research question was addressed by identifying which specific strategies, of the PAL Program impact positively on reducing the students' challenging behaviours. Specific strategies such as the individual support to the students by the behaviour teachers, individualised teacher professional development and the parent education component.

What are the perceptions of stakeholders and participants of the design and practices of the PAL Program?

In order to answer the second research question it was important to evaluate the essential components of the PAL Program. Therefore this research question explored the design and structure of the PAL Program along with the program model and implementation. Additionally this included gaining insights from the participants and stakeholders about the strengths and weaknesses of the program. Specifically, the focus was on the components of the program and any contribution they made in improving an at risk student's behaviour.

What are the perceived outcomes of the students who participated in the PAL Program?

The question provided a lens to evaluate the impact of the PAL Program on student behaviours. The perceived student outcomes were measured drawing on input from stakeholders and participants who were the students, parents and class teachers who participated in the PAL intervention. As reflective practitioners, it is critical to consider how the PAL intervention impacted not only on students but also on parents and class teachers. This led to considering whether the PAL intervention warranted modification and improvement and finally whether this information could be used for future program implementation and further research.

1.6   Thesis overview

Chapter Two presents the context for the research, the significance of the study and the research questions. In this chapter is discussion highlighting why behaviour management is a pressing issue, why further research is warranted and the links between behaviour management issues and at risk students. The notion of resilience is presented as a framework for addressing behaviour management issues for at risk students. Of importance to society, schools, families and individuals are the costs associated with students who present with challenging behaviours. A brief outline of the PAL Program is presented.

Chapter Two is a review of the literature and addresses the concept of resilience; its definition, protective and risk factors and the importance of addressing resilience in relation to at risk students and their behaviour management issues. Theoretical foundations that informed the PAL Program are also discussed. A review of national and international prevention and intervention programs that impact on child resilience is undertaken. Theoretical links were identified that applied to the PAL Program model for component inclusion and rationale.

The PAL Program is described in detail in Chapter Three. Its design, structure and components, including the theoretical foundations of the intervention, the program model that was the curriculum framework and pedagogical approach. Descriptions of the three components of the PAL Program are provided.

The methodology of the research is set out and explained in Chapter Four and combines both quantitative and qualitative data. Chapter Four also details the research design of this one-shot case study. An overview of the methodology outlines the data collection and how the data would be analysed as well as presented.

In Chapter Five the data collected from the PAL program are analysed. Data were collected for the PAL program at the commencement and at the program's conclusion. The data were gathered for the participant screening process to gain information about the at risk students before the program delivery commenced. A range of measures were used to assess whether the referred students were the right target

group for the PAL intervention. Such measures included The Conner's Rating Scales (CRS) (Conners, 2000) and the Resilience Perceptions Checklists

Data were gathered at the conclusion of the PAL Program from students, parents and teachers and compared with the initial data to examine whether or not the PAL Program achieved its goals. The findings from the PAL data are described.

Chapter Six presents the findings and recommendations. The findings describe the efficacy of the PAL Program and highlight how this study will contribute to the theory of school-based prevention program and implementation implications.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is constructed around the literature that is significant to the research questions posed in this study.

In examining the literature in relation to the first research question 'What potential does the Primary Assisted Learning (PAL) intervention have as a behaviour management strategy for at risk students in primary schools?" is explored. The literature review focuses on the costs associated with problematic students exploring the impact on the individuals, families and the community. The term at risk is defined and an explanation of what it means for students to be deemed as at risk is presented. The issue of behaviour management is discussed providing a definition of challenging behaviours along with the statistics for behaviour issues both nationally and internationally. Student suspension is also discussed because many students with challenging behaviours are often suspended which can be detrimental for the students.

The second research question is 'What are the perceptions of stakeholders and participants of the design and structure of the PAL intervention?' The literature review focus for this research question was on specific theoretical foundations that informed the structure, content and implementation process of the PAL program. Components for school based prevention programs both national and international were explored (Bond, Thomas, Toumbourou, & Patton, 1998; Corboy & McDonald, 2007; Fuller, 1998, 2001b; Greenberg, Domitrovich, Graczyk, & Zins, 2004; Masten, 1999).

The theoretical foundations on which the PAL program was based were Ecological Systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), Resilience literature (B. Bernard, 1991; Garmezy & Rutter, 1983; Luthar, 2006; Masten, 1999), and Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1963). The PAL Program components for students were informed by the *Promoting Resilience Action Model* (Grotberg, 1995), *Productive Pedagogies* (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001) and Adventure Based Learning (Hattie, 1999; Neill, 2002).

The component for teachers was based on advancing teacher skills through Teacher Professional Development (Fullan, 1999, 2007; Richmond, 1996) and the parent component was parent education based on the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) (Sanders & Markie-Dadds, 1992).

The third research question posed is, "What are the perceived outcomes for the students who participated in the PAL intervention?" This was informed by the resilience literature that included the theoretical construct of resilience (Ferguson, 1999; Luthar, 2006; Rutter, 1984), definitions of resilience (Fuller, 1999; Fuller, McGraw, & Goodyear, 2000; Grotberg, 1995; Lascano, 2004; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Newman & Blackburn, 2002), the factors of resilience such as risk factors and protective factors (Durlack, 1998; Ferguson, 1999; Newman & Blackburn, 2002; Ralph, et al., 2003; Rutter, 1984) and strategies that schools can engage in for promoting resilience (B. Bernard, 1995; Fuller, 1999; Rutter, 1984).

The issues of behaviour management in schools today are both pervasive and relentless. Students with problematic behaviours continue to be a primary focal point of researchers (Slee, 2003). During the last two decades, an expanding body of literature in the field of behaviour and mental health issues has pointed to large numbers of students who struggle to cope in the regular school setting.

Students often demonstrate challenging behaviours at an early age. Disruptive behaviour creates stress for the student, parent/carer, peers, teacher, school community and also the wider community (August, Egan, Realmuto, & Hektner, 2003). These students also often display poor school performance and find they are alienated from the school system and can be involved in vandalism and crime (Christle, Nelson, & Jolivette, 2004). The alienation the child may experience can range from isolation within the class or school to suspension and exclusion (Forness & Kavale, 2001). Students who demonstrate challenging behaviours from an early age have extensive consequences that have been well documented:

- Difficulty in attending to academic work and falling behind and also often failing to establish effective relationships with teachers or peers (Forness & Kavale, 2001);

- Negative impacts on academic achievement with students functioning a year or more below grade levels across subject areas (Kauffman, 2005);
- Childhood behaviour problems predisposes adults to a range of psychiatric problems and more general life difficulties (Bor, et al., 2001);
- Poor employment prospects, academic failure, delinquency and leaving school prematurely (Mooney, Epstein, Reid, & Nelson, 2003); and
- School suspension has been linked to failure in school, leaving school prematurely, delinquency, and criminal behaviour (Christle, et al., 2004).

This evidence exemplifies the view that the education of students with challenging behaviours is often interrupted and can have large negative repercussions on their academic work. Often the students' classroom learning environment is diminished as a result of disciplinary consequences.

Students are often removed from class owing to their behaviour, which impacts on their performance and progress (Education Queensland, 2010). It is of no surprise that these students who are missing substantial amounts of education are going to fall behind. Simultaneously, these educational interruptions impact on the students' relationships with peers and teachers alike as the students' problematic behaviours shape how individuals are viewed. The magnitude of this problem is evident in the increasing numbers of at risk students presenting with challenging behaviours in schools, as evidenced by the increase in suspensions and exclusions from schools throughout Queensland (Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005).

2.2   Behaviour management

The media constantly draws attention to the plight of teachers and students regarding challenging behaviour in schools (Chilcott, 2009; Doneman, 2008; Heffernan & Pavey, 2008; Heger, 2009; O'Loan, 2008; Odgers, 2010). It was recently stated "Teachers are no longer given the opportunity to teach children as behaviour management has become the overriding priority in the classroom. Something needs to be done and quickly. As a teacher, I am tiring of being told to f--- off by six and seven-year-olds" (Heger, 2009).

There are many reasons why a student may act out in the school setting. These reasons can be linked to issues experienced by the student of an individual nature or

with the school, their family or wider community. Within the school context this can be due to a lack of learning strategies which can prevent the student performing at grade level, irrelevant curriculum, inadequate pedagogy, an inappropriate school organisation or too little connection with peers or teachers or the wider school community.

Successful teaching and learning requires a thorough understanding of how to implement a range of effective behaviour management approaches, strategies and philosophies. It is not only essential to be able to put these approaches into practice, but also to have an understanding of the reasoning behind the student's behaviour and the underlying theoretical perspectives required to maintain an effective working environment (Shelton & Brownhill, 2008). Many teachers lack the knowledge and skills required and are in need of professional development in order to cope with challenging students in their class (Office for Standards in Education, 2005).

One of the difficulties with understanding the notion of challenging behaviours is what the term challenging behaviours actually constitutes given the vast range of definitions and interpretations. A lack of agreed definition of "challenging behaviours" makes it difficult to gauge the full extent of the problem (Visser, 2005). Added to this is that perceptions of poor behaviours are conditioned both by context and the observer's expectations (Office for Standards in Education, 2005, p. 5).

To further confuse the issue, Education Queensland have a Code of School Behaviour, which sets out the expected standards of behaviour that are required in Queensland schools (Education Queensland, 2010). This code states "Student behaviour that does not comply with the expected standards is not acceptable" (Education Queensland, 2010, p. 3). One consequence of student's behaviour that does not comply with the expected standards is suspending the student from school. However, there is no guidance as to the types of behaviours that would lead to a suspension.

The Catholic Education Office in Western Sydney commissioned a research study of students with challenging behaviours. As part of this study Carter, Clayton and Stephenson (2006) created a functional approach definition and commentary of students with severe and challenging behaviours see Table 2.1.

Table 2.1:   Definition and commentary of challenging behaviour

Definition of what constitutes Students With Severe Challenging Behaviour	
Definition	**Commentary**
Students with severe challenging behaviour are defined as those currently enrolled in the school, or those that have been enrolled in the past 18 months, who exhibit severe behaviour disturbance that persists for a prolonged period despite extraordinary efforts. Such students should meet all of the following criteria:	
1. Presenting behaviour is more than a temporary expected response to stressful events in the environment and continues for more than 6 months.	The operational specification that the behaviour must persist for more than 6 months rules out temporary behaviour problems related to transient situational stress. As the survey was conducted in the second half-year, all students in the system could be detected with the exception of those that were enrolled less than 6 months.
2. The student has been referred outside the classroom for support in regard to challenging behaviour (e.g., to school executive, counsellor, special education support teacher, psychologist, behavioural support specialist).	Originally, this criterion was conceptualised as only including students receiving multiple referrals to support outside the school. However, it is possible with younger students that internal support structures (e.g., executive) may be accessed initially. That is, it was considered inappropriate to exclude students who have not been in the system sufficiently long to receive multiple or outside referral. Further, access to outside support may be more problematic in the primary school.
3. The presenting behaviour is unresponsive to competent general education classroom management.	It is important to distinguish between difficult students who would be responsive to the behaviour management of a competent classroom teacher and those who present with challenging behaviour that is not responsive to such general classroom management strategies.
4. The student has been withdrawn from class on multiple occasions because of presenting behaviour or is considered at high risk of being withdrawn on multiple occasions. 'Withdrawal' may include removal from class or removal from school.	This group may include students who have recently started school and, whilst demonstrating severe behaviour problems, may not have been in the school system for a sufficiently long period to 'have been withdrawn on multiple occasions'. In addition, particularly with younger students, school culture in relation to pastoral care responsibilities may be such that formal 'suspension' is not considered despite ongoing extreme challenging behaviour.
5. The behaviour exhibited severely adversely affects the student's educational performance and/or places the learning of other students at substantial risk.	This was included, as a specific criterion as behaviour that does not impact on either the student's learning, or the learning of others, could not reasonably be considered severe challenging behaviour.

Agreement as to what constitutes students with challenging behaviours rests on that there are two types of behaviours, which are deemed to be challenging. The first type of behaviour is described as overtly aggressive; for example, physical acts such as biting and pinching, throwing furniture and assaulting people. The second type of behaviour is described as aggression that is mainly verbal, which would include streams of abuse, temper tantrums and invasion of personal space intended to be

threatening and which also includes defying teacher authority and refusing to follow instructions (Visser, 2005).

Upon examining the population data of students affected by severe behavioural issues it has been found that incidents of poor student behaviour rise steadily for students from age nine and boys are more likely than girls to exhibit challenging behaviours such as being physically and verbally abusive. A common factor for these students is enrolling in the school after the commencement of the school year which impacts on the students' sense of belonging (Office for Standards in Education, 2005). Often students face difficulties with connecting to the school and making friends if they enrol in the school once the school year has commenced.

The most troubling issue for teachers universally is problematic student behaviour (Edwards, 1993). However these estimates of serious student behaviour are due to the lack of consensus around definitions of what is serious behaviour. However, as stated above, the prevalence of serious behavioural issues in Australia is estimated at being between 3% -15% (Carter, et al., 2006; Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005).

These percentages are much lower in the United States of America (USA) whereas in England they are much higher (Visser, 2005). A major flaw in reviewing these comparative data is a lack of common international criteria of definition allowing the comparison of the prevalence or severity of the behaviours of students with challenging behaviours. Table 2.2 lists the percentage estimates from other countries of students with challenging behaviours (Visser, 2005).

Table 2.2:   An overview of country estimates of prevalence of students with serious behaviour difficulties.

Country	Percentage estimates
USA	3%-6%
Canada	4%
Scandinavia	7%-11%
England	10%-20%

A common thread running throughout the international literature that focuses on students with challenging behaviours is the need for consistency and fairness in enforcing expected behaviour, that is, clear expectations are paramount. Furthermore, there needs to be consistency and a shared understanding of the consequences for non-compliance. This is vital so that students are well aware of the repercussions should they break the rules. A high level of respect is required in addition to strong cooperative working relationships with parents and students to improve social skills, anger management and personal interaction. In order for this to be effective there needs to be cooperative working relationships present amongst parents and students (Kauffman, 2005). In catering for students there needs to be curriculum flexibility as well as alternative program interventions for students who experience difficulty fitting in (Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005). Often students who don't fit in to the regular school setting present with challenging behaviours. These behaviours often lead to suspensions. The next section addresses suspensions and the impact these have on at risk students.

2.3   Suspensions

An emerging trend in recent years has been to remove challenging students from the learning environment for a number of days as a disciplinary strategy. Behaviours for which students can be suspended include: disobedience by the student, misconduct of the student, and other conduct of the student that is prejudicial to the good order and management of the school (Department of Education and Training, 2006). More specifically the behaviours for suspension can include possessing illegal drugs, being violent or threatening serious violence, possessing a prohibited weapon, being persistently disobedient, engaging in criminal behaviour related to the school as well as a culmination of misdemeanours including being non-responsive to teachers, rudeness, failing to hand in work and misbehaving in class (Dupper & Bosch, 1996).

Education Queensland's suspension data seem to highlight the seriousness of behaviour issues in schools. It was reported that in 2007-2008, 13,838 students in Years 1 to 12 were caught with "objects", including weapons on school grounds. Furthermore, a total of 801 primary and secondary school students were expelled for inappropriate behaviour including "physical misconduct involving objects". There is an

increase in physical misconduct with a total of 51,734 students suspended in a five-year period within the ten Queensland school regions (Doneman, 2008).

The Queensland Principals' Association president Norm Hart has said that schools were increasingly finding themselves left with no choice but to exclude violent students. He has said that, "In recent times, principals have reported more and more challenging behaviours in the youngest of our students, from Prep to Year 3". Mr Hart goes onto claim that "They are hitting and scratching and biting and kicking far more than they used to. They are wilful, disobedient and naughty" (Doneman, 2008). The Minister for Education said he was disturbed by the apparent increase in the level of violence at schools. He went on to say that parents and schools needed to intervene early to improve the social and emotional skills of students (Heffernan & Pavey, 2008).

The increase in the levels of violence in schools is supported by data from Education Queensland that indicated that there has been a 26% spike in students being suspended from Queensland schools over the past three years. What is particularly troubling about those data is that the Government allocated an additional $28.6 million as a step toward curbing the "wave of aggressive and disrespectful behaviour" from students but with little evidence of improvements. Despite the government investing money in behaviour management including the employment of additional Behaviour Support Teachers (BST) there has been a marked increase in the number of suspensions in Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast schools resulting in 31% more suspensions and 11% more expulsions in 2007-08 than in 2005-06. This upward trend is also present in other parts of the state with suspension rates rising by 25% in the Gold Coast and Ipswich region schools, and 22% in and around Townsville (O'Loan, 2008).

More recently the Minister for Education Mr Wilson expressed his concerns that a substantial number of school disciplinary absences that are the result of unacceptable behaviour comprising physical violence, verbal abuse and persistent disruptive behaviour. The level of violence seems to be on the increase, which is reflected in the increases in suspensions of students occurring in all 10 education regions (Chilcott, 2009).

There were also 131 assaults in primary schools which were reported to police in the last year, with 383 assaults in secondary high schools which was an increase of 42% and 111 high school girls were arrested, a rise of 158%. Recently a year 1 boy was suspended from school for bringing a knife to school and threatening to assault a fellow classmate after an altercation over a paper plane (Doneman, 2009).

Firstly, such an increase in school suspensions could be explained by schools taking a tougher than normal stance such as implementing a zero tolerance policy for school violence (Skiba, 2005) with the solution being to remove offending students from the school setting. Secondly it could be due to the schools' increased accountability measures imposed from a higher authority where official data are reported, recorded and published so it falsely appears that there are increases.

These two positions can have differing reactions from the community. On the one hand the community could think that the school is effective in the behaviour management of students because of the tough stance taken through suspensions and exclusions. Alternatively, schools that take a zero tolerance to violence approach and have high suspension and exclusion rates could be viewed as being over represented with challenging students and as such parents could adopt the view that the school does not have a supportive and safe environment for their children.

Despite claims that zero tolerance for violence sends an important deterrent message to students, there is no credible evidence that either out-of-school suspension or expulsion are effective methods for changing student behaviour (Bayle, 2004; Skiba, Rausch, & Ritter, 2004). Whilst suspension removes the student, it does not address the underlying issues for the student.

Although, these methods are used by schools worldwide to initially manage students with challenging behaviours, there are no procedures for reliably measuring the overall behaviour of students in schools. This has led to a reliance on levels of exclusion (the ultimate sanction for poor behaviour) to assess changes in behaviour (Hallam, et al., 2005, p. 1).

Whether students are suspended for a short or a long period of time, when they do eventually return to school they still need to be managed appropriately. Visser (2002) coins the phrase "external verities" which he describes as the "truths in the apparent web and weave of approaches" (p.74) when it comes to managing student behaviour. He emphasises the teacher characteristics that are needed to manage troubled students:

- Belief that behaviour can be changed;
- Attitude that intervening is second to preventing challenging behaviour;
- Reactions to challenging behaviours provide alternative behaviour for the pupil to follow;
- Communications are honest and transparent;
- Approaches are empathetic and are underpinned by a sense of equity;
- Pupils are set boundaries and are appropriately challenged about their behaviours; and
- A sense of humour is apparent which supports purposeful, lively exchanges. (p. 39).

There is an alternative approach to managing student misbehaviour other than through just suspending the student and hoping they change while they are away from the school. This begins with a supportive learning environment that includes a range of preventative and proactive measures. These include strategies for the individual, teacher strategies, assessment tools, school wide planning and the forming of partnerships with parents as well as the collection of data. Schools play a significant role in ensuring that children reach their maximum educational potential, which is significant for their ongoing resilience (Rutter, 1979).

Well-disciplined schools create a whole-school environment that is conducive to good discipline rather than reacting to particular incidents. Teachers in these schools view the school as a place where they and students work together for success. There is collaboration and co-operation at the whole school level, with the school being pupil oriented and focusing on the causes of indiscipline rather than just the symptoms. Prevention rather than punishment is the core of practice. Principals play a key role and develop policies alongside other key members of staff and teachers as a whole are committed to the students and their work (Hallam, et al., 2005).

Skiba (2005) suggests that to maximize school discipline and provide learning opportunities for students, schools need to maintain high academic and behavioural expec-

tations whilst at the same time willing to remove students for safety reasons. He highlights the importance of:

- Clarifying expectations regarding office referrals and the training of staff in classroom management strategies;
- Actively teaching appropriate behaviour through school philosophy and preventive programs;
- Communication and collaboration with parents;
- Reconnecting with alienated students through mentoring and anger management programs; and
- Developing creative options in the school and community to keep even those students who are suspended and expelled engaged in learning. (p.11)

Students who face suspension and or exclusion experience negative outcomes such as being denied the opportunity to learn in a regular school setting, disconnection from their peers, teachers and school community, being labelled as a challenging student with behaviour problems and general alienation from the school setting (Bayle, 2004). Skiba, Rausch, and Ritter (2004) further expand on the negative impact that suspensions have on students by stating that students who are removed from school are at increased risk for delinquency in the community and that being suspended provides the student with time and opportunity to link up with and learn from negative role models.

A wealth of information abounds that exemplifies the serious nature of challenging behaviours exhibited by students as well as the long-term impacts of their behaviour if it is not managed appropriately (Bor, et al., 2001). Whilst the practice of suspending students because of inappropriate behaviour is deemed acceptable by teachers and schools, it is problematic and often controversial. There is a body of evidence suggesting that a history of suspension from school accelerates a students' progress along a pathway to delinquency and life-long failure (Christle, et al., 2004).

The evidence is that left unattended, inappropriate behaviour at school leads to suspensions from school, which can lead to a sub-optimal future for many students. Educators and society therefore need to identify and intervene early to change the trajectory for these students. It is therefore vital to ascertain who these at-risk students are.

2.4   At risk students

A definition of an at risk young person relates to "describing or identifying young people who, beset by particular difficulties and disadvantages, are thought likely to fail to achieve the development in their adolescent years that would provide a sound basis for a satisfying and fulfilling life" (Batten & Russell, 1995, p. 1). There is a continuum of at risk factors affecting young people at different juncture points in their life. Many factors are associated with the development of negative outcomes for young people that include antecedents, predictors, influences, determinants or causes (Withers & Russell, 2001, p. x).

With students, when they have a number of risk factors evident whether they are in-dividual, family, school or community factors, these students are identified as being at risk. This has been described as a concept of vulnerability; specifically where a young person who is at risk is in danger of experiencing something that has unfa-vourable causes (Withers & Russell, 2001).

Risks to children can arise from a number of areas including child abuse, mental health issues, criminal behaviour, family relationships and the education system. Complicating the issues for students is an apparent rise in child abuse statistics. Lu-thar and Brown (2007) suggest that much remains to be done to maximize resilience in children. And they refer to American data to make their case. Since 2001 the rate and number of children who received an investigation for child abuse or neglect in the USA has increased. In 2004 the rate was 47.8 per thousand children, nationally 64.5% of child victims experienced neglect, 17.5% were physically abused, 9.7% sexually abused, and 7.0% emotionally or psychologically maltreated (Luthar & Brown, 2007; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Administration on Children Youth and Families, 2006).

The Australian data are just as disturbing. In 2004, one child was "substantiated" as being abused and/or neglected every 13 minutes (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2004). The reported rate at which children are abused has doubled in the last decade. The rate among Indigenous Australians is on average seven times that of the rest of the population. Also members of the Indigenous population are far more

likely to be the subjects of neglect reports, with 10% of these reports of abuse being of a sexual nature (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2004).

The *Kids First Foundation* reports that as much as 85% of sexual abuse occurs in the home. Child abuse is a secret crime, therefore it is understood that notification statistics profoundly under-estimate the size of the problem, with two thirds of sex crimes in Australia being against children. In Australia, an incident of child abuse is reported every two and a half minutes. It is estimated that the cost of child abuse to the Australian community is five billion dollars per year or equal to Australia's total annual meat export (Kids First Foundation, 2003) which is an unfortunate comparison.

In Australia in 2002-2003, 263,800 children were living as victims of domestic violence with 40,416 substantiated cases of child abuse. Available statistics for 2003-2004, found that in USA, UK and Australia, approximately 10% of all child protection notifications involved allegations of child sexual abuse (Kids First Foundation, 2003).

This then provides impetus to consider the mental health of children. According to research by Zubrick, Silburn, Garton, Burton, Dalby, Carlton, Shepherd, and Lawrence (1995) cited in Davis, Martin, Kosky and O'Hanlon (2000), 100,000 Australians between the ages of five and 25 develop serious emotional disorders each year. Moreover, a million or more young people are seriously affected by emotional and behavioural problems. Mental health issues therefore form an essential part of the overall health and wellbeing landscape of young people with almost 20% of all children and adolescents in Australia affected by mental illness, with half of these showing impaired schooling and social development. A survey by Sawyer (2000) revealed that 11-15% of Australian children (aged 13 years or younger) and 13-17% of young people (aged 14-18 years old) experience significant health problems, conduct problems, depression and anxiety.

Among young people with the most severe mental illness problems only 50% receive professional help. The majority of those young people receive help and attend services provided by health and education professionals who may only have limited training in the assessment and management of mental health problems (Davis, et al.,

2000). It has been identified that the barriers to attending mental health services, have been identified as including parents not knowing where to get help, long waiting lists, cost of attending services and the attitudes of others (Davis, et al., 2000).

The Commonwealth and State Governments of Australia have identified mental health as a significant social and public health priority, and have prepared national strategies to address the problem, including three National Mental Health Plans, the most recent being the National Mental Health Plan 2003-2008 (Australian Health Ministers, 2003).

Bor et al (2001) found overwhelming links between the presence of aggressive behaviours from childhood to adolescence. The authors declare, after reviewing criminology literature that delinquent adolescent acts can be traced back to childhood behaviour problems, which are commonly accepted as a developmental trajectory. Campbell (1995) as cited in (Bor, et al., 2001) states that if behaviour problems develop in students during their pre-school years then there is a consequential likelihood that a significant proportion (up to 50%), will continue to experience problems from middle childhood into adolescence resulting in students engaging in antisocial behaviour.

The impact of family relationships also influences child behaviour. If unhealthy relationships are present in a child's life, such consequences may include a disregard toward school and the wider community, which can potentially result in criminal behaviour and legal sanctions by late childhood and adolescence. These impacts tend to have adverse effects on employment prospects and the ability to maintain appropriate social and personal relationships (Ralph, et al., 2003).

Kauffman (2005) states that children at educational risk are defined as young people who display behavioural, social or emotional problems that deviate from age, culture or ethnic norms to such a degree that they have an adverse effect on learning, social and psychological functioning in the school setting. There is a great deal of debate around the notion of what constitutes at risk in terms of children. At risk children are described as having one or more risk factors in place.

It is clear that the community, educators, parents and carers alike need to be concerned for children who exhibit behavioural problems in school. Therefore, there is a need for innovative approaches that will promote children's protective factors in order to enhance their resilience. Early intervention targeted at reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors is significantly important in reducing academic failure, substance abuse and delinquency in later years (Reid, Webster-Stratton, & Hammond, 2003).

Howard and Dryden (1999) claim there are major problems focusing on risk factors in children. They suggest that students who are labelled as a result of not embracing the dominant culture of the school, specifically in the area of appearance, language and culture suggest that the concept of how some view risk factors could be constructed in a manner that is related to ideological factors of the school (Goodlad & Keating, 1990) in (Howard & Dryden, 1999). They make the point that difference does not constitute children being at risk.

Secondly Howard and Dryden (1999) suggest that antisocial behaviour is often a key at risk indicator whereas West and Farrington (Howard & Dryden, 1999; 1973) suggest that children who have experienced abuse and who are withdrawn and present no major behaviour problems can prove to be just as at risk. The final concern presented by Howard et al., (1999) is that the entire model of at risk is formed on a deficit model viewing children and parents as deficient in some way. Children are too often seen as problems that need to be fixed. Of major concern with this notion is that the early categorising of students can create a lowering of expectations by teachers' and that in turn can limit the students' potential.

Whilst it is important not to label students at any age because of the so called 'deficit model', label it is important to identify at risk students at an early age in order to utilise available resources and implement the required interventions accordingly. There is a difference in the early identification of students who display at risk indicators and the "labelling" of at risk students.

There is now enough documented research on at risk students and predicative data using a limited number of factors that can predict with 90% accuracy the dropout

rates for students by the end of grade 3. These factors include reading one year below grade level, having repeated a grade, coming from a low socioeconomic background and attending a school in a poor community that has limited resources. A student possessing all these characteristics would have a very limited chance of ever graduating from high school (Barr & Parrett, 2001).

Research has been undertaken that identifies crisis events and experiences that students face that contribute to them being deemed at risk. In particular is the impact that leaving school prematurely may have on the individuals' quality of life. Schorr and Schorr (1989) aptly sum up the primary characteristics of at risk students.

> The seventeenth-century maritime insurers knew that the risk factors of a winter sailing presaged a more likely loss, just as today's life insurance companies know that a high cholesterol level and little exercise increases the risk of premature death. In the same way, we know that a child with school problems in the third grade is at risk of dropping out of high school and increased the likelihood of becoming a teenage parent. The experts may not be able to forecast which of seven youngsters is most likely to commit a heinous crime upon being released from detention and which will henceforth lead a life of virtue. Great strides have been made in identifying factors that place whole categories of children at risk of disastrous outcomes and in determining which of these factors are most amendable to intervention. We now have proof that disastrous outcomes are much more likely when several risk factors interact. (p. 24)

An important approach to addressing the impact of challenging behaviours in students is to identify distress at an early age and ensure there is an early and accurate diagnosis with the provision of effective intervention made available. An indicator of emotional disorders and at risk behaviours in students can be identified as the lack of resilience evident in their lives when they are confronted by difficult times with a high presence of risk factors and little evidence of protective factors in place (Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Stoolmiller, 2008).

The term **at risk** is commonly used to describe multiple risk factors (as mentioned above) that are evident in a student's life. Whatever the individual's circumstances, schools are responsible for the education of all students, which includes finding ways to connect and work with at risk students to ensure that they can continue formal schooling and develop a positive future pathway. Focusing on enhancing resilience

in children is a strategy to decrease risk factors and foster protective factors (Luthar & Brown, 2007; Werner & Smith, 2001).

2.5 Resilience

The concept of resilience to ameliorate the issues for students with challenging behaviours is significant. Research highlights that positive adaptation despite exposure to adversity involves a developmental progress with new vulnerabilities and or strengths often emerging with changing life circumstances (Luthar, et al., 2000). However, Luthar and Brown (2007) stated that there is a large gap in the use of relevant research for fostering resilience. Resilience can be explained as an interaction between children's genetic makeup and the kind of support they receive (Condly, 2006).

The research of Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker (2000) suggested that rather than simply studying which child, family and environmental factors are involved in resilience, researchers are seeking to understand how such factors may contribute to positive outcomes. In order to advance the theory and understanding of the notion of resilience they claim that it is essential to gain an understanding of the underlying mechanisms and in so doing design appropriate prevention and intervention strategies for individuals facing adversity.

According to Withers and Russell (2001) the concepts of resilience and protective processes offer a positive approach to the creation of programs and strategies that prevent children and young people from succumbing to marginalization, risk and adversity: they build on "existing strengths of young people and enhance their resilience by strengthening the environmental protective factors within the family, school and community" (p. 9).

Early resilience literature (Durlack, 1998; Garmezy, 1985; Masten, et al., 1990; Werner & Smith, 1988) identified risk and protective factors that impact on resilience. The impact of multiple risk factors contributes to adversity; likewise the presence of multiple protective factors contributes to enhanced resilience.

Werner and Smith (2001) state that resilience (studies) provide us with a corrective lens, an awareness of the self-righting tendencies that move children toward normal adult development under all but the most persistent adverse circumstances.

A child is deemed resilient if there is evidence of a number of protective factors operating within the range of contexts. In examining risk and protective factors much of the research identifies contexts in the following areas: child factors, family factors, school context, life events and community and cultural factors. On the other hand a child can be deemed at risk if there is evidence of a number of risk factors operating within these contexts.

2.5.1   Definition

In order to gain an understanding of the complexities of the construct of resilience various definitions of resilience will be explored. Werner and Smith (1988) framed resilience in terms of self-righting behaviour, competence, and confidence under adverse conditions. Bernard (1995) defines resilience as a set of qualities, or protective mechanisms that give rise to successful adaptation despite the presence of high risk factors during the course of development. McKay (2010, p. 5) quotes Howell's definition as the ability "to achieve positive outcomes in the face of risk" (2004, pp. 495-496). Success despite the risk (Randolph & Johnson, 2008).

Resilience is framed as the capacity that is closely linked to a child's overall development - psychological, emotional and social. A child who seems resilient at one age may not necessarily continue to be resilient at a later age. Resilience depends upon a child successfully negotiating the challenges of each stage of his or her development. Each stage of a child's development builds upon the last, with the result that the early developmental stages are particularly critical for the establishment of the foundations of resilient functioning. Many of the skills critical to the development of resilience are acquired before the age of 11 (Grotberg, 1995).

 Masten, Best and Garmezy (1990) suggested that resilience is the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation, despite challenging or threatening circumstances. Garmezy and Masten (1990) defined resilience for the individual in

terms of successful adaptation despite risk and adversity, the process, capacity, or outcome despite challenging or threatening circumstances. Masten, et al (1990) expanded on this and outlined three types of resilience: (i) overcoming the odds, (ii) capacity to cope in the face of adversity and (iii) having the ability to recover from trauma. Newman and Blackman (2002) stated, "Resilient children are better equipped to resist stress and adversity, cope with change and uncertainty, and to recover faster and more completely from traumatic events or episodes" (p.4).

The definition of resilience proposed by Masten, et al (1990) was echoed in the research undertaken by Rutter (1984) who suggests that:

> A surprisingly large number of children become normal, successful adults despite stressful, disadvantaged or even brutalized childhoods. Many more children could be helped to become similarly resilient. (p. 57)

Whilst Fuller (1999) states: resilience is the ability to rebound or spring back after adversity or times of hardship. He also suggests that it's "as if the person has an elasticised rope around their middle so that when they meet pitfalls in their lives they are able to bounce back out of them" (p. 1).

Lascano (2004) claims that resilience allows people to overcome adversities that ought to disrupt their development and even build positively on these adversities. Another view is that resilience is not so much about individual characteristics but more about the interaction between the individual and his or her environment in the face of adversity (Egeland, Carlson, & Scroufe, 1993).

An interview with Garmezy about resilience by Rolf and Glantz (1999) reported Garmezy as saying that "within a classroom context a child being competent in spite of life stressors suggests that competence is more a term for a variety of adaptive behaviours and resilience is manifest in competence despite exposure to significant stressors" (p. 7). Garmezy went on to say that it is impossible to talk about resilience in the absence of stress.

This view according to Newman and Blackman (2002) is a notable departure from a medical model looking at symptoms and labelling presenting problems as opposed to

focusing on positive outcomes and the protective factors in place to foster these within the context of life adversities. What is of extreme importance is that resilience is now seen to be a concept that can fluctuate over time rather than be fixed indefinitely.

This position is supported by Condly (2006):

> Resilience should not be considered a single dichotomous variable (you either are or are not resilient in any and all situations); rather, resilience is better perceived as a label that defines the interaction of a child with trauma or a toxic environment in which success, as judged by societal norms, is achieved by virtue of the child's abilities, motivations, and support systems. Additionally, it is more accurate to describe resilience in continuous rather than dichotomous terms. (p. 213)

The concept or construct of resilience is not fixed and it is significant that it includes making meaning of the changes within any of the risk and protective factors. Of greatest importance at any point in time is having meaningful relationships, which in themselves are protective factors that can contribute to getting us through the tough times. These meaningful relationships are the foundation of resilience.

Therefore resilience is fluid, and at any given point in time an individual could be experiencing multiple risk factors that deplete their protective factor reserves. The key to increasing capacity for resilience is to ensure that the where with all to tap into protective process skills and to access the necessary resources for developing protective factors to counter the presenting risk factors will be present throughout life.

2.5.2 Factors of resilience

It was the work of Rutter (1984) who illuminated the concept of resilience through a series of longitudinal studies in the 1970's of children and their families. As a result of this research he formulated a comprehensive list of risk factors and protective strategies that highlighted the consistent impact on a child's life across time. Factors that promote resilience in children have been identified as occurring across multiple life domains (individual, family, school, community and broader socio-cultural, economic environments). This view was supported by the longitudinal research conducted by Werner and Smith (1992) who stated:

> Our findings and those by other American and European investigators with a life-span perspective suggest that these buffers [protective factors] make a more profound impact on the life course of children who grow up under adverse conditions than do specific risk factors or stressful life events. They appear to transcend ethnic, social class, geographical, and historical boundaries. Most of all, they offer us a more optimistic outlook than the perspective that can be gleaned from the literature on the negative consequences of perinatal trauma, care giving deficits, and chronic poverty. They provide us with a corrective lens--an awareness of the self-righting tendencies that move children toward normal adult development under all but the most persistent adverse circumstances. (p.202)

Fergusson (1999) cites Rutter's (1985) review on risk and protective factors and points out the conventional approach that he used to distinguish between the two types of resilience processes. Protective factors are described as those, which act to mitigate exposure to risk factor but provide no other assets to the individual. He cites the example of why some children who have been exposed to physical abuse do not develop adjustment problems due to the presence of other compensatory features in the environment (e.g. social supports, resilient temperament) that mitigate the effects of physical abuse. The difference between protective and compensatory factors is that whilst protective factors only benefit those exposed to risk, compensatory factors are a benefit to all (p. 6).

According to Rutter (1993), adult adjustment is more about an effective balance rather than eliminating all negative consequences of early trauma, which is a trade-off of factors. Newman and Blackman (2002) state that resilient people may often retain the baggage of sadness and unhappiness, but will also have the capacity to cope with their emotional burdens. Our role as educators is to teach children the skills to cope with their emotional burdens.

Antonovsky (1987) developed the term 'salutogenesis' from his studies which refers to how people manage stress and stay well. Newman and Blackburn quote Lindstrom (2001):

> The salutogenic model in health care research has paralleled the development of resilience theory in the social sciences and has two key components: internal and external resources that comprise the arsenal of a person's emotional and material defences, and an ability to render the world understandable and hence manageable (p. 7)

They also quote Frydenberg (1997) who explained that resilience develops through the positive use of stress to improve competencies (Blackburn & Newmann, 2002). However it can be argued that resilience can only be developed through adversity when the application of protective factors are in play such as problem solving, self regulation of emotions, tapping into a support network and having connections with significant others. If too much intervention is offered to children facing adversity there could be consequences that insulate children from competency enhancing experiences associated with exposure to risk factors (Blackburn & Newmann, 2002). This view is supported by Luther and Cicchetti (2000, p. 858) who claim that resilience is a "dynamic process wherein individuals display positive adaptation despite experiences of significant adversity or trauma".

Masten, Herbers, Cutuli and Lafavor (2008) expanded this view of adaptation by suggesting that adaptations are made in a given context. These adaptations are made in families and communities where expectations for individual adaptation to the environment hopefully prepare the person for success in life. However, they go on to state development processes change as individuals mature and move into new contexts. These new contexts span life experiences from children reaching milestones and continue through life transitions.

Problems emerge if a child is not making the necessary progress in a context such as school with all its complexities such as academic progress, friendships and following rules. Therefore, they suggest that this is multidimensional and that the multiplicity of expectations requires adaptations from a developmental task perspective (Masten, et al., 2008).

Within the developmental systems theory is the dynamic relationship between internal and external adaptation for the child. Individual functions in one domain can have a 'ripple in the pond' effect and therefore, impact on other domains. For some people, problems just seem to 'snowball' from events such as being suspended from school. Over time the student feels alienated from the school community. Masten states that resilience research would be well placed in narrowing the focus to be studied to a single dimension at a time and provides the example of 'academic resilience' (Masten, et al., 2008). Masten claims that many studies of resilience have focused on

positive adaptation in terms of "no evidence of disorder" or "absence of problems."(p. 77).

2.5.2.1   *Risk factors*

On examining the social and policy debate Fergusson (1999) considers the focus is around the adverse effects of specific risk factor exposure. He suggests that the affects of these risk factors on risk are cumulative. He explains that the at risk child is not the presence of a single adverse factor but rather the accumulation of risk factors that may span social disadvantage; impaired parenting; family dysfunction; parental psychopathology; individual factors and affiliation with deviant peers (p. 2). This notion is supported by two comprehensive studies of children at risk. Werner and Smith (1988, 1990) and Garmezy and Rutter (1983) found that children demonstrate self-righting behaviours, specifically competence, confidence and caring in spite of difficult circumstances. Significant outcomes from these studies indicated that positive relationships as opposed to identified risk factors have a greater impact on the outcomes and direction of the individual's life. Their findings highlight that there is a hope and it is never too late to change life's path.

Whether children are identified as being resilient or at risk, they demonstrate behaviours that are outlined in a common framework developed by the leading researchers in the field such as Garmezy (1985), Rutter (1984), Masten (1999), Grotberg (1995) and Bernard (1991). Agreement amongst these researchers of a common framework for resilience has included child factors, family factors, school context, life events as well as community and cultural factors. The risk factors in a child's life, that contribute to a lack of resilience are outlined below in Table 2.3 adapted from Durlack and (1998) and the National Crime Prevention Association (1999).

Table 2.3:   Overview of risk factors

Risk factors				
Child factors	**Family factors**	**School context**	**Life events**	**Community and cultural factors**
Prematurely Low birth weight Disability Prenatal brain damage Birth injury Low intelligence Difficult temperament Poor problem solving Beliefs about aggression Attributions Poor social skills Low self esteem Lack of empathy Alienation Hyperactivity/ disruptive behaviour Impulsivity Rebelliousness Novelty seeking behaviour	*Parental characteristics:* Teenage mothers Single parents Psychiatric disorder, especially depression Antisocial models Criminality Substance abuse and where this interferes with family rituals *Family environment:* Family violence and disharmony Marital discord Negative interaction/social isolation Disorganised Large family size Father absence Long term parental unemployment *Parenting Style* Discipline style (harsh or inconsistent) Rejection of child Abuse Lack of warmth and affection Low involvement in child's activities including education Neglect	School failure Bullying Deviant peer group Normative beliefs about aggression Peer rejection Poor attachment to school Inadequate behaviour management	Divorce and family break-up War or natural disasters Death of a family member	Socio-economic disadvantage Social or cultural discrimination Urban area Neighbourhood violence and crime Lack of support services Availability of drugs Low neighbourhood attachment and community disorganisation Media portrayal of violence

Bernard (1999) suggested that much of the resilience research undertaken has provided a powerful reason for shying away from concerns with individuals deficits and needs to focus more on individual and community strengths. She says risk factor focused research often leads to identification, labelling and stigmatising individuals, families and their communities. She suggests that potential for prevention is more to do with increasing our knowledge and understanding of reasons why some children are not damaged by deprivation.

However, there is growing recognition that positive adjustment or development encompasses more than an absence of problems and, concomitantly, that effective interventions often focus on promoting competence and strengths in addition to, or instead of, focusing on the prevention or treatment of problems (Masten, 2001).

2.5.2.2 Protective factors

The focus of this study draws on what are viewed as protective factors or strengths that the at risk child has in place. Masten (2000) states that we all have a stake in the successful development of children and emphasises the importance of looking at the broader picture of a community in protecting its own resilience. This involves "addressing the burden of risk falling on their children and facilitating the development of human capital in the next generation" (2000, p. 1).

Davis, Martin, Kosky and O'Hanlon (2000) claim that protective factors refer to conditions that improve people's resistance of risk factors and disorders. According to Garmezy and Rutter (1983) and Garmezy (1985) three broad categories of protective variables that promote resilience in children have been identified - dispositional attributes, family milieu and extra familial family environment, that is, external support networks and resources.

Howard and Johnson (2000) suggest the basis for protective factors are that children need care and support across all the identified areas throughout their childhood and adolescence and that it is essential that children and adolescents possess protective mechanisms in their lives in order to be resilient. Luthar and Brown (2007) are even more specific about protective factors suggesting that the major environmental risk for children is ongoing neglect and abuse in contrast to children who experience committed loving relationships, which are pathways to protective factors.

The National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2004) cited in Luthar and Brown (2007) drew on expertise in the field of human attachment, economics, social policy neurobiological foundations in reporting that relationships are the key factor that impact on healthy human development. They also identified qualities that best promote competence and well-being. These qualities are individualized responsiveness, mutual action and interaction and an emotional connection to another human

being whether it is a parent, peer, grandparent, aunt, uncle, neighbour, teacher, coach or any other person who has a significant impact on the child's early development.

Table 2.4 outlines the protective factors required for a child to be resilient and fall into the categories of individual factors, family factors, school context, life events and community and cultural factors. This table, adapted from Durlack (1998), lists the identified qualities that need to be in place in order for a child to be resilient.

Table 2.4:   Overview of protective factors

Protective Factors				
Child factors	**Family factors**	**School context**	**Life events**	**Community and cultural factors**
Social competence Attachment to family Empathy Problem solving Optimism School achievement Easy temperament Good coping style	Supportive caring parents Family harmony Secure and stable family Supportive relationship with other adult Strong family norms and morality	Positive school climate Prosocial peer group Sense of belonging Opportunities for some success at school and recognition of achievement School norms re violence	Meeting significant person Moving to new area Opportunities at critical turning points or major life transitions	Access to support services Community networking Attachment to the community Participation in church or other community group Community/ cultural norms against violence A strong cultural identity and ethnic pride Stability and cooperation

According to Werner and Johnson (1999) protective factors refer to protective buffers and state that they make a more profound impact on the life course of children and youth who grow up under adverse conditions than do risk factors or stressful life events. There is also evidence that suggests these transcend geographical, historical and social class boundaries. Minimising the impact of risk factors, enhancing resilience and maximising the impact of protective factors are therefore important for all children and young people. Strategies and programs aiming to enhance their wellbeing need to take account of the range of individual, family, school and community factors which impact on a child's wellbeing (Hampshire & Borer, 2005).

The resilience literature is moving away from focusing on risk factors given that these have been well documented and is now more concerned with protective proc-

esses such as optimism and hope (Rutter, 1993). Whilst there is cumulative risk, it is important for children's outcomes that a 'point of no return' does not exist beyond which an intervention will never be effective. Services and interventions have the potential to be effective for all children even those with multiple risk factors (Centre for Parenting and Research, 2007).

Much has been written about resilience. Listed is a summary of the salient points for consideration:

- Evidence from longitudinal studies indicates that a large proportion of children recover from short-lived childhood adversities with little detectable impact in adult life;
- An excessive pre-occupation with the identification and elimination of risk factors may weaken the capacity of children to overcome adversities;
- Resilience may be weakened by unnecessary or harmful interventions;
- Where adversities are continuous and severe, and protective factors are absent, resilience in children is a rare phenomenon;
- Chronic problems will usually have more lasting effects than acute adversities;
- While self-esteem is a crucial factor in the promotion of resilience, it is more likely to grow and be sustained through developing valued skills in real life situations, than just through praise and positive affirmation;
- It is necessary to promote children's ability to resist adversities as well as moderating risk factors;
- Resilience can only develop through exposure to stressors. Resistance develops through gradual exposure to difficulties at a manageable level of intensity;
- A supportive family is the most powerful resilience-promoting factor;
- The acquisition of valued social roles, the ability to contribute to the general household, economy and educational success are resilience-promoting factors;
- Experiences that promote resilience may not always be pleasant or socially acceptable; and
- Poor early experiences do not necessarily "fix" a child's future trajectory. Compensatory interventions in later life can trigger resilient responses (Blackburn & Newmann, 2002, p. 10).

2.6   The role of schools in contributing to students' resilience

In examining the profile of students who display challenging behaviours it is clear there are commonalities with children at risk. At risk students often face disadvantage and disturbance in their family lives, many have poor language skills along with problems with reading and writing. These difficulties are evident early in their educa-

tion; continue into secondary school and impact on achievement in a range of subjects (Office for Standards in Education, 2005).

Schools provide an ideal setting for the delivery of programs promoting preventative intervention for children. Schools are viewed by parents and professionals alike as providing a key source of stability and predictability and a setting that promotes the development of a range of social, emotional, and cognitive skills and do make a difference to the lives of children (Rutter, 1984). The only system that touches every child is the education system (Skiba, et al., 2004). Stewart et al. report:

> The results of this study suggest that for primary school aged children, the development of student resilience, the sense of feeling connected to adults and teachers, having good peer relationships and having a strong sense of autonomy and self capacity, and parental recognition of a supportive school environment, are influenced by the degree to which schools support and apply a 'health promoting school' environment and approach (Stewart, Sun, Patterson, Lemerle, & Hardie, 2004, p. 31)

In most economically developed societies of the 21st century, schools play a central role in child development. Schools function as a vitally important context for child development, while at the same time a classroom or school also can be viewed as a system that may be threatened by adversities (Masten, et al., 2008).

School structures that contribute to the risk factors for young people according to the Human Rights Equal Opportunity Commission (1989) include: an irrelevant curricula, poor teacher/student relationships, inflexible and alienating institutional structures, rejection or neglect of under-achievers, suspension or exclusion of difficult students, rejection by peers and/or teachers and inadequate or inappropriate treatment of truancy. Further, the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal (2005) provided advice on ways to address behaviour issues by focusing on improving classroom practices and the provision of a quality education for all. The report described the conditions under which student success can flourish which included a supportive school ethos, constructive and respectful relationships between teachers and students and engagement in significant and relevant learning experiences that are in turn associated with the academic, social, economic and personal benefits of education (p. 2).

Participation in an engaging curriculum and effective pedagogy also encourages appropriate behaviour from students. Many schools struggle with providing an engaging curriculum and learning experiences for all students owing to a lack of teacher expertise. Of the sites visited in reviewing schools in the United Kingdom as identified by Ofsted (2005) a quarter had difficulty ensuring that the elements of an engaging curriculum and effective instruction were in place. The report recommended that the learning environment needed to be welcoming, stimulating and well maintained in order to foster good behaviour.

In order to address the challenging behaviours exhibited by some students Ofsted (2005) recommended that teachers in some settings require more training in managing and improving the behaviour of more difficult students. There is a need for teachers to receive on-going professional development and class room support in managing challenging behaviours because according to Male (2003) teachers find managing students with challenging behaviours to be stressful and can feel angry, frustrated and at a loss as to what to do.

Fullan (1999) states that the "moral purpose of education means making a difference in the life chances of all students" (p. 1). In order for a child to be resilient Bernard (1995) identifies particular requirements at the school level that contribute to social competence such as teachers being able to convey positive and high expectations in the classroom. It is critical to convey positive messages from school staff to students about their capacity to achieve.

As stated previously, it is widely recognised that school plays a critical role in the lives of children and adolescents, given the relationships they form with their peers and teachers, the teaching and learning experiences they have as well as the amount of time spent at school. When a school attempts to foster resilience in at risk students the school needs to be proactive with school personnel identifying such students and actively involving them in school-based support programs (Condly, 2006).

Rutter (1984) focuses on the factors that can help children triumph over adversity. He has identified qualities desirable for children to possess in order to be resilient.

These are described as a sense of self-esteem, feelings that you can deal with things and that the child can control what happens to you him/her. As well as this, there is the need for good relationships and security in those relationships. Children also need to become adaptable to learn to cope with changing circumstances and they need some experiences with social problem-solving and are able to think of alternative solutions.

In spite of the barriers that children face when attending school, Ofsted (2005) high-lighted that which does impact positively on student behaviour and concluded that student behaviour is significantly better in settings which have a strong sense of community and where the schools have formed strong partnerships with parents. Ofsted suggests that in these settings students feel safe and are confident that bullying is dealt with swiftly and fairly. Stewart and Sun et al. suggest that "the level of partnerships formed between school and family and school and community is determined by whether a school adopts a whole school approach" (Stewart, et al., 2004, p. 32).

A starting point for schools to enhance resilience according to Fuller (2001b) begins with providing young people with a sense of belonging and meaning in their lives because, he stresses, that this is the strongest antidote against suicide and that is the strongest force for happiness. He claims that we cannot just reduce risks for young people and expect that all will be well. In addition, that good things do not happen by removing bad things and that good things happen when we create them.

Fuller (2001a) also states that schools need to promote a supportive environment that creates and enhances connections between teachers and students. These connections are meaningful relationships, which in turn help create a supportive learning environment. He emphasizes the need to work effectively with students that create and shape relationships in order to promote a sense of belonging.

A whole school approach to enhancing resilience involves focusing more on the creation of healthy systems as opposed to attempting to 'fix' individuals. A shift from problem-based systems needs assessment and a belief in human potential for development, learning and wellbeing in addition to an acknowledgement that the 'health of the helper' is critical (B. Bernard, 1991). This is a move away from the

deficit model and focuses on building capacity, identifying strengths and equipping children with skills necessary to face adversity.

A supportive school environment according to Bernard (1991; Noddings, 1988) can lead to positive outcomes for young people:

> At a time when the traditional structures of caring have deteriorated, schools must become places where teachers and students live together, talk with each other, takes delight in each other's company. My guess is that what when schools focus on what really matters in life, the cognitive ends we now pursue so painfully will be achieved somewhat more naturally. It is obvious that children will work harder and so things – even odd things like adding fractions for people they love and trust. (p.32)

According to Glover, Bond, Butler and Patton (2002) developing resilience requires a whole school approach to address risk and protective factors in the school environment. They have identified these as being connectedness to family and school shown to be central to the emotional well-being of students as well as the demonstrated importance of student well-being within the school environment. Specifically, when students are being treated fairly, are feeling close and connected to others and feel part of the school, indicates that protective factors are evident in the students' environment. Fundamentally, to make a difference in the lives of at risk students begins with connectedness and meaningful relationships.

For schools to be regarded as resilient communities there are three ways this can be achieved. Firstly, it is necessary to create a better sense of community among teachers, students and parents by strengthening the internal school environment. Secondly, it is necessary is to build a democratic environment where teachers, parents and students have a voice in school operations. Finally, the forging of closer links between the school and local community using initiatives such as vocational programs, which create wider learning communities with other local communities and groups, is important (Bushnell, 2001).

The evidence is that while a whole school approach impacts positively on the school community it must be noted that there are still 3% to 15% of students who will require more intensive support than a universal school initiative to enhance resilience.

The most at risk students will fall through the cracks with a whole-school approach. This means that a single method approach is not effective given that every individual has different needs. It is important to note that targeted interventions for a particular population and a whole school approach are not mutually exclusive.

What are most important are the strands that have emerged in studies of relationships between social bonding and emotional well-being in young people. These provide a sense of security and trust in others, a sense of connectedness, effective communication and perceptions of adults caring and a sense of active engagement and valued participation (MindMatters, 2003).

2.7   Theoretical foundations

Resilience enhancing programs need to be guided by theoretical foundations. Viewing this research through the lens of Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1963) offers a framework to contextualize resilience within an ecological perspective and through practical applications.

Influences to be considered when working with at risk students include those from both an individual and social context. The social context of children's development is strongly influenced by the family, school, peers, neighbourhood and the community contexts, which is a framework for understanding resilience. By contextualizing this study within the Ecological Systems Theory and the Social Learning Theory, reinforces the importance of an intervention grounded in foundations of theory based on research and not just a quick fix. These theories illuminate the importance of providing appropriate supports at critical points in a child's development. To be able to provide an intervention that is not a single element approach requires the involvement of people who operate within the child's circle of influence to maximise the most meaningful and effective impact. This has become evident through examining the literature. The Ecological Systems Theory and the Social Learning Theory are suitably ideal bodies of knowledge in contextualising resilience because of the wraparound approach that considers the individual, family and school and that incorpo-

rates explicit strategies to provide opportunities for success for students, teachers and parents.

2.7.1 Ecological perspective on resilience

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (1979, 1989) specifies that wellbeing is affected substantially by the social contexts in which children are embedded. It is a function of the quality of relationships among individual, family and institutional systems. Factors, which reside within an individual, include a variety of coping skills, however external positive factors influencing the individual should also be considered.

These external protective factors include parental support, adult mentoring, or organizations that promote positive youth development. The term external emphasizes the social environmental influences on child health and development, helps place resilience in a more ecological context, and moves away from conceptualization of resilience as a static, individual trait (Sun & Stewart, 2007).

Essentially, children who have not developed their capacity for resilience display greater behavioural and emotional disorders (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2008). The historical basis for the concept of invulnerability from harmful influences are considered risk factors, which equate to a lack of resilience (Davis, et al., 2000). The conceptual framework in which risk factors and protective factors have been formulated is the foundation of the notion 'resilience'. In order for a child to be deemed to be resilient there has to be evidence of protective factors for the child in such areas as physical, cognitive, social-emotional and educational development that all impact on milestones and transitions through their life (B. Bernard, 1999).

Nothing occurs in isolation and when identifying the risk and protective factors of a child or young person, it is evident that different levels of their ecology come under consideration. Fraser (Davis, et al., 2000; 1997) has identified the context of resilience within the different levels of individual's ecosystems as presented in Table 2.5 (Fraser, 1997, p. 20).

Table 2.5:   Common risk and protective factors from serious childhood social problems: An ecological and multi-systems perspective

System level	Risk factors	Protective factors
Broad environmental conditions	Few opportunities for education and employment Racial discrimination and injustice	Many opportunities for education, employment, growth and achievement
Family, school and neighbourhood conditions	Poverty/low SES Child maltreatment Inter parental conflict Parental psychopathology Poor parenting	Social support Presence of caring/supportive adult Positive parent-child relationships Effective parenting
Individual psychosocial and biological characteristics	Gender Biomedical problems	'Easy' temperament as an infant Self-esteem and self-efficacy Competence in normative roles High intelligence

The ecological paradigm promoted by Bronfenbrenner (1979) highlights that humans are active and shape their environments, suggesting that there are several levels at which the individual and the environmental systems interact. These systems are complex and often impact on the multiple systems that coexist for the individual.

The first level of impact for the student is seen in the microsystem, the immediate patterns of activities, roles and relationships of the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), or more simply, relating to those who have direct connections with the student such as parents, peers and teachers. The next level of impact for the student is the mesosystems. These are settings outside of the individuals' direct contact yet impact on the individual and their interrelationships such as the school as a whole, the neighbourhood and community organisations. Macrosystems are the final level and do not impact on the individual directly but relate to systems such as social and cultural order, policies, laws, media and technology (Bronfenbrenner, 1989).

Rolf and Johnson (1999) cite Bronfenbrenner (1979) in explaining how young people develop in contexts such as school, peer, family and community environments through navigating developmental changes and skill acquisition.

2.7.2 Social learning theory

Social learning theorists regard observational learning as one of the most powerful mechanisms of socialisation, believing that a theory exclusively based on classical and instrumental conditioning cannot possibly do justice to the socialisation process (Gleitman, (1987). Social learning theory is further supplemented by the cognitive approach to socialisation. That is, imitation comes through understanding of what is happening, rather than just through the conceptualisation of action and re-action as suggested by the behaviourists. Secondly, there is desire within the individual in that motivation exists outside of reward (Gleitman, 1987).

Educational psychology "helps to co-create the social world we all come to live in" (Jacobsen, 1985). Rolf and Johnson (1999) emphasise the importance of theoretical applications to resilience promotion suggesting three principles for intervention protocol development. These are:

- Building knowledge will be insufficient for habit development without ample opportunities for socially reinforced practice (applying new knowledge into action role-plays, work projects etc);
- Building specific self efficacy beliefs (confidence in "I can do it" expectancies) will increase the chances that an intervention subject will actually apply a new protective behaviour in health risking situations; and
- Providing skill practicing opportunities across social contexts (in school, family, peer and adult settings) is necessary to generalize newly acquired skills into habitual life styles and in developing personality traits (1999, p. 236).

Fergusson (1999) states that in any developmental process in which it is possible to identify groups of individuals who are at risk of a given adverse outcome, there is a potential for early intervention. These interventions can be viewed as an attempt to increase the resilience of those exposed to risks by implementing approaches that protect individuals against risk factor exposure or those that compensate for risk factor exposure. During the school years, he suggests school/family-based programs to address behavioural problems. In the development of programs to enhance resilience,

schools can draw on a framework that builds on the positives or existing skill levels of children at risk. This is a departure from the deficit model, and expands on the notion of identifying what is already working for children rather than what is not working.

2.8 Program reviews

Costs associated with expenditure in public health, schools and the justice system for children are enormous. Thus, government and communities have an invested interest in identifying programs that are effective and take the pressure off their services. The Australian government is facing a crisis, as they cannot provide the clinical services through direct support to such a large number of children, because of the lack of trained clinicians (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2007). What are needed from the government and community are alternative approaches to the prevention of mental health problems (Sawyer, et al., 2000).

The implementation of evidence based programs that can be delivered by teachers and/or other professionals and focus on reducing risk factors and promoting protective factors to enhance resilience are significant for a number of reasons. Approximately 14% of all children aged 4–12 years (male and female) have been identified as having mental health problem (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2007). There are many evidence-based programs documented in the research literature specifically targeting psychological interventions for adults and children. Kazdin (2005) estimated that there were over 550 documented psychotherapy treatments for children and adolescents.

To cope with the wealth of information available, some boundaries were set in this program review. Specifically the target group were children up to 12 years of age, with interventions specifically focusing on strategies to increase their protective factors that also focused on parents and teachers and were school-based programs.

The following section examines programs and interventions that foster resilience in accordance with the set boundaries. The review examines the types of programs, their stated objectives; their target groups any key problems, the

place and location of the intervention and the intervention outcomes. The programs evaluated had multiple components exhibiting a strong research design that included adjusted measurement, low rates of participant attrition and statistically significant effects. Most of the programs reviewed were of short-term duration but showed proven effectiveness in longitudinal studies.

In order to gain an understanding of how resilience has been enhanced through varying interventions, Teo (2003) reviewed a number of programs for prevention-intervention that have been trialled and developed in America, Australia and the United Kingdom. The reviewed programs were developed by both government and community agencies which focused on issues pertaining to health, substance abuse, childhood aggression, conduct disorders and the Blueprint series (Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, 1996). The programs reviewed below are evaluations of interventions for young people with an emphasis on early intervention. Each program involved a research design that enabled justification for demonstrating its effect on enhancing resilience thus demonstrating their effectiveness.

2.8.1   Gatehouse project

Approaches to enhancing student resilience can include a whole-school approach. An example of this approach is the Gatehouse project (Bond, et al., 1998) in Victoria, Australia and reviewed Teo (2003). This whole-school intervention linked health and education within existing policy frameworks and built on the actions already in place within schools. This approach provided a framework and processes designed to meet the needs of individual school communities. The purpose of the project was to make changes in the social learning environments of the school as well as promoting changes at an individual level. The schools were provided with strategies aimed at increasing the connectedness of students to the school and increasing students' skills and knowledge for dealing with everyday life challenges through a curriculum initiative. The program targeted students in Grade 8 (Bond, et al., 1998).

This environmental-focused approach was a whole school initiative with a five-step evidence base. Existing policies, program and practices were reviewed to ensure they promoted student connectedness to school as well as identifying any barriers. The Gatehouse Project set out to promote protective factors such as adolescent emotional well-being and to prevent negative health risk factors involving the use of drugs and alcohol as well as depression and suicide amongst youths. Through a whole-school curriculum approach, the project was designed to make changes in the social and learning environment for students that would ultimately impact at an individual level (Bond, et al., 1998).

The project centred on increasing students' connectedness to school and increasing students' skills and knowledge for dealing with life challenges by way of experiential learning activities within the English, Health and Physical Education curricula. Different curriculum strategies were used that included various genres, each showing different problems and encouraging alternative possibilities through small group work, role play, classroom discussions and debates (Bond, et al., 1998).

The project was evaluated by randomized control trials with 26 schools involving 2,782 Year 8 students from 12 intervention and 14 control schools. The outcomes of this program saw a reduction in daily or occasional smoking in the original cohort of students and a reduction in reported cannabis use and under age drinking. However there were no identified reductions in depression systems or other emotional problems for students. The project was measured across three periods of follow-up, year 8, year 10 and 1-year post-secondary school. Focusing on the impact of the Gatehouse project on student smoking, there has consistently been a 3% to 5% risk difference between intervention and control groups for regular smoking and friends' tobacco use. The greatest reported effect saw a reduction in regular smoking by those in the intervention group, primarily among Year 8 students (Bond, et al., 2004).

A limitation of whole-school approach interventions is that they may not necessarily cater for the most at risk students who could fall between the cracks. It is a 'one size fits all' model, which has its limitations, as there is a need to differentiate for groups and settings (Masten, 1999).

2.8.2 Blueprints

The Violence Prevention Initiative, Blueprints, was introduced in the USA in 1996 in an effort to reduce drug use, violence and aggression in young people. The initiative aimed to provide communities with a set of empirically and scientifically proven programs based on stringent selection criteria. Blueprints for Violence Prevention recognised 11 programs across the USA that were effective in reducing adolescent violent crime, aggression, substance abuse and delinquency along with pre-adolescent aggression and conduct disorders. Blueprint programs were based on strong research that used evaluative designs, resulting in reasonable confidence in the findings, a large sample size, low attrition rates and the ability to substantiate the effectiveness of the program (Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, 1996).

Blueprints also required the programs to show a sustained effect such as a significant reduction in drug use, decreased childhood violence, and decreased levels of delinquency. The program had to show results at least one-year post treatment with no evidence of loss of effect. Becoming a model program also involved at least one replication with demonstrated effects.

In the case of violent behaviour there needed to be evidence of a change in risk and protective factors. Problems associated with projects such as Blueprints were that the improvements could be sustained without the ongoing costs associated with the interventions. As such, many programs are not sustainable because of the lack of funding. However, the following Blueprint programs have been identified as being highly effective: The Big Brothers and Sisters program (McGill, Mihalic, & Grotpeter, 2003), The Bullying Prevention Program (Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1999) and Multisystemic therapy (MST) (Huey, Henggeler, Brondino, & Pickrel, 2000).

2.8.3 Big Brothers and Sisters of America

The Big Brothers and Sisters program (McGill, et al., 2003) cited in Teo (2003) is best known for being a mentoring program that spans a network of more than 500 agencies across the USA. This program is founded on the notion of the importance of

adults making significant connections with young people in high-risk situations in order to mitigate adversity.

The mentoring program is founded on social control theory. The target group is 6 to 18 year olds from single parent families who face adverse situations. The intervention involved regular interaction with the young person in a one-on-one relationship. A volunteer is matched with a child, with staff monitoring the relationship.

There is a rigorous training program and high expectations of volunteers. An evaluation of the program occurred over a 17 month period involving 1,138 young people from eight agencies. The impact of the interventions was measured by multivariate techniques. The results indicated that after 18 months there was evidence of a decrease in antisocial behaviour. Youth in the specific treatment group were less likely than those in the control group to start using illegal drugs and alcohol. In the control group 45.8% started using drugs compared to 1.4% in the treatment group. There was also a decrease in violent incidences in the treatment group compared to the control group (McGill, et al., 2003).

The control group youth reported 6.4% compared to 4.2% of hitting incidences. Improvements were also seen in academic attitudes, behaviour and performance with the treatment youth reporting a GPA of 2.71 compared to the GPA of the control youth of 2.63. The treatment group skipped 52% fewer days from school and were 30% less likely to skip school in general. Treatment youth also reported greater confidence in their ability to complete schoolwork compared to the control group (McGill, et al., 2003).

Regarding family relationships, the treatment group scored 14% higher than the control group with increases of 27.62% in parent child relationships. With respect to self-concept and social and cultural enrichment, there was no difference between the treatment and control groups.

A limitation of this program was linking children to only one adult. Of greater impact especially for at risk students is to create opportunities for children to make connections with a number of adults in order to extend their support network. This is espe-

cially important in the school context for the class teacher to make those vital connections with the student at school to develop meaningful relationships (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2008).

2.8.4   Bullying prevention program

The Bullying Prevention Program (Olweus, et al., 1999) cited in Teo (2003) has been systematically evaluated involving 2,500 children in 42 schools in Norway between 1983 and 1985. The study has been replicated in the USA involving 6,388 elementary and middle school students from non-metropolitan communities in South Carolina. The program was also piloted in England and Germany.

The target groups were school staff and students in elementary, middle and junior high schools. The intervention included school-wide initiatives involving an anonymous questionnaire about the nature and prevalence of bullying, a conference and planning for when bullying occurred. The planning included specific interventions, formulation of a committee and increased supervision of students at "hot spots" for bullying. Within the classroom, the intervention involved creating and implementing class rules for bullying. Regular class meetings were held with students. There were also interventions with children identified as victims of bullies and discussions with parents of involved students. School-based mental health professionals and counsellors assisted the teachers.

The evaluation of this intervention involved programs in the USA, England, Germany, and Norway with over 3,200 students in 30 schools. Results from the first Norwegian quasi-experimental study showed there was at least a 50% reduction in the number of boys and girls who reported bullying and victimization. Using peer and teacher ratings in addressing the range and level of bully/victim problems saw the same outcomes. There was also a significant reduction of students' reports of other general anti social behaviour such as vandalism, fighting, theft and truancy (Olweus, et al., 1999).

There were also reports of improvements in the social climate of the class with improvements in the overall discipline at the school, better positive social relationships

and with more positive attitudes toward schoolwork and school. There was also a cumulative effect over time. This was evident for the program after eight months and more so after 20 months. There were overall reductions in bully/victim problems for those classes that had classroom rules in place against bullying and with holding regular classroom meetings as opposed to those classes that did not (Olweus, et al., 1999).

The strength of this program was that teachers, parents, students and health professionals were working together to address the issue of bullying. In addition, focusing on creating a supportive school environment added to the positive outcomes identified. Children had an opportunity to voice their concerns throughout this intervention at various levels, individually, within the class through classroom meetings and by using support from health professionals.

2.8.5 Multisystemic therapy (MST)

Multisystemic therapy (MST) (Huey, et al., 2000) cited in Teo (2003) is based on the notion that in dealing with serious juvenile offenders, consideration of the interplay of the individual, family, peer school and neighbourhood factors cannot be ignored. The aim of this intervention is to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors by building youth and family strengths that are comprehensive and highly individualised. This is achieved by empowering parents with the skills and resources required to address the difficulties in raising their teenagers. The youth themselves are assisted to cope with family, peer, school and neighbourhood problems. The target group are chronic, violent, or substance abusing juvenile offenders aged 12 to 17 years who are at high risk of out of home placement and the offenders' families (Huey, et al., 2000).

The MST is a family based model working at the family level to enhance relationships. The aim of the project is to decrease youth association with deviant peer groups whilst promoting pro-social peer groups and improving both school and vocational performance amongst youth. MST aims at removing barriers to service access and extending support networks for the family. This home-based model requires approximately 60 hours of contact over four months. The evaluation of the program

was with controlled studies that focused on violent and chronic offenders. Studies conducted throughout the USA showed that participation in MST had significant positive effects on behaviour problems, family relations and self-reported offences after treatment. Positive outcomes of MST were experienced by both males and females (Huey, et al., 2000). Overall, the evaluations found reductions of 25-70% in long-term rates of re-arrest along with reductions of 47-64% in out-of-home placements, extensive improvements in family functioning and decreased mental health problems for serious juvenile offenders (Huey, et al., 2000).

The strength of the MST program is that it focuses on targeting specific parental factors to enhance resilience for the at risk young person. The program also focuses on school and individual child factors to enhance resilience and reduce risk factors for the young people. A limitation of this program is the intensity of support that is required that is provided by an individual caseworker rather than being part of a team that provides the support. Questions arise as to the ongoing sustainability and costs associated with this type of intervention.

Of the Blueprint programs reviewed, each met the rigorous empirical and scientific requirements and demonstrated positive and lasting outcomes for each of their targeted populations for up to one-year post intervention. However none of the programs reviewed provided an ecological approach considering all factors that impact on the life of the at risk child. Further programs that show promise have also been reviewed.

2.8.6   Promoting alternative thinking strategies (PATH)

The Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATH) program (Greenberg, Kusché, & Mihalic, 1998) was developed to fill the gap for a comprehensive curriculum to promote social and emotional competence and to prevent or reduce behaviour and emotional problems. The target group involved elementary children. PATH was classroom based and provided information and activities that could include input from parents. The focus was on developmental skills in emotional literacy, social competence, and positive peer relations, problem-solving to reduce aggression and behavioural problems. The PATH program is flexible in that it spans five years with

131 lessons that are taught three times per week for 20-30 minutes per day. Teacher training consisted of a 2-3 day bi-weekly workshop. The three major units of the program were 'Readiness of Self-Control', 'Feelings and Relationship' and 'Interpersonal Cognitive Problem-Solving' (Greenberg, et al., 1998).

Embedded in all the units were the building of positive self-esteem and improving peer communications/relations. The evaluation of this program underwent four clinical trials conducted with two involving special needs and two involving regular education settings. Overall there was improved social problem-solving, lower teacher reported internalizing and externalizing symptoms and less teacher and self-reported conduct problems, depression and anxiety. Current research of a randomised trial over a 9 month period saw pre-school children in the "PATHS" classrooms was rated by their parents and teachers as being more socially competent than their peers (Domitrovich, Cortes, & Greenberg, 2007).

Two parenting programs, developed in Australian have been included in this review because they have evidence-based outcomes. These are Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) and the Parents Under Pressure program.

2.8.7   Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)

The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)(Sanders, 2003b) is a multi-levelled parenting and family strategy originated in Queensland in 1993 which is now used Australia wide as well and other parts of the world. The program is aimed at preventing severe behavioural, emotional and developmental problems in children by enhancing the knowledge skills and confidence of parents.

The Triple P approach is comprised of five levels. Level 1 is the collective Triple P approach, which provides parents with information through printed materials, electronic, radio interviews, current affairs programs and a telephone information line. Level 2, is the Selected Triple P aimed at parents with specific concerns about child development or behavioural issues. It uses tip sheets, which can involve face to face or telephone contact with a practitioner. Level 3 is the Primary Care Triple P, which is a brief program that combines advice, rehearsal and self-evaluation. It consists of

four 80 minute sessions that provide parental training, face-to-face or telephone contact. The fourth level is a standard, group or self-directed Triple P focusing on more severe behaviour in children and targets parents seeking intensive training in positive parenting skills. Group Triple P in level 4 involves 10-12 parents who attend four 2-hour group sessions and learn through observations, video scenarios, discussion, practice and feedback. Parents use a workbook throughout the sessions and are required to weekly homework.

Self directed Triple P in level 4 provides minimal support working through written material and optional telephone support. The fifth and final level involves the use of family intervention that is more intensive and that focuses on family adversity, relationship conflict and parental issues such as stress and depression.

Group Triple P was piloted in 25 Brisbane state schools. There was evidence of decreased levels of dysfunctional parenting practices and parental stress. There was also evidence of increased parental confidence and satisfaction with their parenting role. Additionally the research showed that Year 1 children whose parents participated in Triple P were significantly less likely to develop behavioural problems than children whose parents did not participate (Sanders, 2003b).

2.8.8 Parents Under Pressure Program (PUP)

The Parents Under Pressure (PUP) program (Dawe, Harnett, Rendalls, & Staiger, 2003) was developed in New South Wales, Australia and aimed at targeting high-risk families impacted by substance abuse in order to improve family functioning and child development. Specifically the family was received to manage stress and access support. The target groups consisted of families with children aged between 3 and 6 years. The program was developed for parents who were registered on a methadone program. The program was a structured non-sequential intervention, which involved working with a therapist to cover 12 units of content targeting the needs for each family.

The PUP program was evaluated in methadone clinics in New South Wales. With the standard group there was a high refusal rate, 28 families were deemed eligible to par-

ticipate in the evaluation however only 20 families completed the intensive program and were assessed post treatment. Of these, 17 families completed a 6-month follow-up evaluation. Of the 17 families, 14 were assessed at 3 months with only nine families being assessed at 6 months (Dawe, et al., 2003).

Results indicated that there were substantial reductions in abuse potential, parental stress and challenging child behaviour. These improvements were sustained with the majority of families at the at the 6 month follow-up evaluation. There is clear evidence from this program that targeted intervention support for at risk families focusing on reducing substance abuse enhanced resilience for both the parents and children by reducing risk factors.

2.8.9   The Incredible Years: Parent, teacher and child training series (IY)

The Incredible Years (IY) program (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001) targeted children with conduct disorders who also possessed multiple risk factors with a focus on working with the children and parents. The purpose of the program is to promote and strengthen parenting and teaching strategies in order to strengthen the young person's social competence, problem solving and reduce aggression at home and at school. The program included parenting skills with an emphasis on interpersonal skills such as anger management and communication and supportive relationships.

Parents attended a 12 to 14 week program. The program increased parental involvement in the child's education such as supporting reading and homework as well as building positive relationships with the teacher. For teachers, the program emphasised effective classroom management such as incentives, proactive teaching strategies, managing inappropriate behaviours, building positive relationships and teaching empathy, social skills and problem solving in the classroom setting. Teachers completed a 42 hour workshop over six days which involved group based training (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001).

The children participated in a withdrawal program using The *Dinosaur Curriculum*, which was a treatment program for small groups of children aged 2-8 years. The small groups consisting of 5-8 children participate in sessions offered twice a week

for and hour or once a week for 2 hours. The program trained children in emotional literacy, social skills, anger management, interpersonal problem solving and appropriate classroom behaviour. All three components of this intervention were evaluated using randomised control group studies that included home and school observations by impartial evaluators along with teacher and parent reports on standardised measures (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001).

The basic program was evaluated using six randomised studies from the past 20 years with 800 children rendering positive outcomes including significantly improved parental attitudes and parent-child interactions, a reduction in parents' use of violent forms of discipline and reduced child conduct problems. With the advance program, a randomised study showed positive outcomes for promoting parents' use of effective problem-solving and communication skills, reduced maternal depression and increased social and problem-solving skills amongst children (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001).

The teacher evaluation was a randomised trial with 133 children with results showing post-treatment classroom observations of teacher behaviour consistently highlighted improvements for teachers who had received the training. Trained teachers were also less critical and less harsh than control teachers. Trained teachers also used more praise, were more nurturing and less inconsistent in their reporting as well as being more confident than the control teachers. Children had also increased their academic performance within classrooms with trained teachers compared to control teachers (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001).

The Dinosaur Curriculum for IY was evaluated in two randomised trials with children ages 4-8 and reflected improvements in peer actions and evidence of more positive social skills and conflict management strategies compared to the untreated control groups (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001). This IY program highlights the merits of a multidimensional approach that focused on teachers, parents and students alike. Furthermore, this program implemented specific protective process focused strategies for all participants that delivered positive outcomes.

Further programs included in this review are the Friends / Friends for Life program (Barrett, et al., 2006) and Penn Resiliency Program (Gillham, et al., 2007). Each of these programs provided interventions for targeting individual and preventable conditions such as behaviour issues, depression and anxiety.

2.8.10 Friends and Friends for life program

Friends and Friends for Life (Barrett, 1998) was developed in Australia and is a prevention and treatment program using a cognitive-behavioural based approach for anxiety symptoms in children and adolescents (10 - 12 or 15 -16 years). The program operates in schools and is conducted by trained classroom teachers in a group format for one hour per week for 10 weeks with children and adolescence teaching strategies to deal with anxiety and challenging situations. Additionally, the program incorporates booster sessions and parent sessions conducted at the school.

The program provides workbooks, manuals, CDs and web based information for parents. The program aims to promote self-development, problem-solving, resilience, self-esteem, self-expression and positive relationships. In evaluating these outcomes of this intervention a study by Lowry-Webster, Barrett & Dadds (Lowry-Webster, Barrett, & Lock, 2003; 2001) randomised 594, 10 to 13 year olds on a class by class basis, across seven schools in Brisbane. The findings indicated that those in the Friends group reported fewer anxiety symptoms than the comparison group at post-test. At 12 months follow-up, 85% of children with anxiety symptoms identified before the program were symptom free. This is compared to 31% of the children in the control group.

Follow up measures were conducted with results indicating that the reported results of reductions in anxiety were maintained for students in Grade 6, with the intervention group reporting significantly lower ratings of anxiety at long-term follow-up. These findings generally held for the follow-ups at 24 and 36 months as well. However, results demonstrated a prevention effect with significantly fewer high-risk students at 36-month follow-up in the intervention condition than in the control condition (Barrett, Farrell, Ollendick, Thomas, & Dadds, 2006).

2.8.11   Penn Resiliency Program

The Penn Resiliency Program (PRP) (Positive Psychology Center, 2007) is a school-based program that uses cognitive behavioural therapy to target the prevention of depressive symptoms and the promotion of optimism for children and adolescents. It also teaches cognitive-behavioural strategies including social problem-solving skills. Students learn to detect inaccurate thoughts, to evaluate the accuracy of those thoughts, and to challenge negative beliefs by considering alternative interpretations. Students learn techniques for assertiveness, negotiation, decision-making, social problem-solving, and relaxation. Skills are taught through role-plays, short stories, or cartoons, after which students discuss the situations and undertake weekly homework assignments in applying the learned skills. The program takes the form of 12, 90-minute lessons or 18 to 24, 60-minute lessons. Group leaders require training that can take from 3-10 days and there is ongoing supervision. Currently the Penn Resiliency Program is being implemented at Geelong Grammar School in Victoria, Australia (Positive Psychology Center, 2007).

PRP has been evaluated in at least 13 controlled studies with more than 2,000 children and adolescents between the ages of 8 and 15. These studies have been conducted by Penn University as well as by other research teams (Positive Psychology Center, 2007). Most of the studies used randomized controlled designs. All of the studies assessed PRP's effects on depressive symptoms. Other studies have assessed PRP's effects on cognitive styles that are linked to depression, such as pessimistic explanatory style, and three studies examined PRP's effects on anxiety symptoms. One study examined PRP's effects on clinical diagnoses and found significant prevention of depression, anxiety and adjustment disorder diagnoses (combined) across a two-year follow-up period among children with high (but not low) levels of baseline symptoms (Gillham, Hamilton, Freres, Patton, & Gallup, 2006).

2.8.12   Summary of programs reviewed

Of the programs reviewed, it was found that most involved multiple components although all evaluations failed to establish the independent effects of each component. Furthermore, major protective and risk factors operate within a range of contexts, which are schools, communities, families, peer groups, and the individual. The pro-

gram evaluations indicated that although few attempted to develop community connectedness, there was evidence of the children showing improvements in the promotion of peer-connectedness such as in Friends, IY, and PATH. There was also evidence of improvements in conduct as well as increases in the social-competency of the children participants in general.

The programs involving families such as PUP and Triple P and IY showed improvements in parenting skills and family relationships and improved behaviours in the targeted children.

The majority of programs however adopted a broad-brush stroke approach rather than focusing on specific elements for targeting particular protective process factors to enhance resilience. These programs worked with a whole class with a curriculum program that was the focus for one issue such as anxiety, depression or promoting optimism or to promote social or emotional competence. Programs that provided an individualized focus were PUPS, Big Brothers and Sisters of America and MST. These programs dealt more with individual children and significant adults in the child's life such as parents and mentors or professionals to address risk factors.

It is clear from the research that resilience can be enhanced for targeted students using varying approaches that include whole class, small group withdrawal models, and a targeted one on one approach. Of the programs reviewed, no program used a single strategy approach but all involved two or more dimensions. Incorporated into the school-based programs was a component focussed on the professional development for the teacher. This included professional development for teachers in the content delivered as well as skill development in working with groups of students in order to deliver the specific intervention or whole class. The professional development provided within the programs reviewed was the same for all teacher participants. Programs that offered professional development for teachers were Friends, PATH, IY and Gatehouse.

What can be learned from the programs reviewed is that any approach used for addressing children with challenging behaviours and other related issues such as anxiety, depression, extending support networks, or other multiple risk factors needs to be multidimensional focusing to extend a number of protective factors in order to impact positively on the child. The more specific focus on targeted protective focus factors the better outcomes for the children. Essentially these factors as identified in most programs were fostering connections and developing positive relationships with the child, incorporating parenting education and supporting the student in the school context and providing professional development for teachers.

In reviewing the range of programs available for addressing risk factors in children, it is evident that there are limitations with all programs reviewed. Most of the programs reviewed did not focus on or explicitly state that the purpose of the intervention was to increase the resilience of the participants but rather identified risk factors and worked on skill enhancement. Shortcomings of many of the programs or interventions and implementation approaches were the lack of significant details provided or described as to the specific protective process factors utilised in the program that led to the reduction of risk factors (Luthar & Brown, 2007; Newman & Blackburn, 2002).

From the review of programs, it is clear that there are many and varied approaches in program design, structure and implementation that can enhance resilience in children. Masten (1999) cautions against program design highlighting the implications for interventions:

- Given the multiple influences and contexts of behaviours "magic bullet" solutions are unlikely for current behaviour problems;
- Single-factor focused interventions are not likely to affect more than a small part of the problem or a small proportion of children;
- The timing and nature of the intervention should be developmentally strategic for greatest efficacy and efficiency;
- Prevention and intervention programs should be multifaceted in design because of the complex multiple interacting systems of human development;
- Preventing or reducing risk exposure and potential for boosting assets, is about mobilizing or enhancing protective systems; and
- What 'works' for one group of children in one context may not work for the same or other groups of children in different contexts. (p. 253)

The review of these national and international programs was a useful lens in determining the appropriateness of the components of the PAL program in the light of the evidenced based research presented.

2.9   Theoretical foundations of the PAL program components

The developers of the PAL program drew on the above theories and programs. To that end the PAL team developed the following criteria for the PAL program. The intervention would:

- Target a particular group (students with challenging behaviours) (Multi-systemic therapy and Parents Under Pressure) and not one size fits all (Gatehouse project and Friends and Friends for life);
- Operate within budget allocations and allocated staff (Blueprints);
- Provide a mentoring model (Big Brothers and Sisters of America);
- Incorporate input from the students (Bullying Prevention Program);
- Collaborate with students, parents and the school (Multisystemic therapy and the Incredible Years);
- Involve students learning techniques for self-control, problem solving and address feelings and relationships (PATH and the Incredible Years) as well as negotiation and decision making (Penn Resiliency Program);
- Provide training and support for parents (Triple P and the Incredible Years);
- Target specific needs of the students (Friends and Friends for life); and
- Provide professional development for teachers (Friends and Friends for life and the Incredible Years).

The components of the PAL Program were based that evidence based on research identified in the literature. Specifically the PAL program was constructed around three major stakeholders: the student, the parent/s and the school by way of the class teacher. Students were targeted to enter the PAL program because of their challenging behaviours. Parents were involved with the program through providing information about their child along with having regular meetings with the PAL teachers and committing to the Triple P program. Teachers were supported in the classroom and provided with professional development.

2.9.1   Students

As identified above, it is important to involve students in learning techniques for self-control, problem solving, negotiation and decision making as wells as addressing

feelings and relationships. The PAL team decided that an adventure based learning approach could play an important part in the life of the student.

Adventure Based Learning (ABL) refers to activities which are perceived by the participants as being adventurous and includes rope courses, white water rafting, mountaineering, and rock climbing (Ford, 1986). For Nadler and Luckner (1992) the programs include both physically and psychologically demanding activities, which are used to promote interpersonal and intrapersonal growth.

Recent innovations in adventure education has included employing specialist adventure education teachers in schools, placing more emphasis on personal development through dramatic and creative challenges, as well as using expeditionary learning principles in the structuring of school curriculum. Evidence suggests that adventure education programs are comparable in educational outcomes with other forms of innovative classroom-based affective education and psychotherapeutic self-esteem outcomes. There is much potential for the creation of innovative, adventure-based education programs, which help guide adolescents into successful adulthoods (Neill, 2001).

Problem solving and challenging experiences are at the core of ABL. The individual learning occurs through the reflection of experiences gained in the natural environment. The concept of ABL is based on the view that providing learning experiences for students in the natural environment and exposing them to challenge can enhance resilience. Adventure programs whilst providing controlled exposure to challenging experiences also seek to create a warm and supportive group atmosphere. Neill and Dias (2001) quote Kurt Hahn the founder of Outward Bound:

> Joseph Conrad in Lord Jim tells us that it is necessary for a youth to experience events which 'reveal the inner worth of the man; the edge of his temper; the fibre of his stuff; the quality of his resistance; the secret truth of his pretences, not only to himself but others'. (p. 1)

Hattie, Marsh, Neill and Richards (1997) after conducting a Meta analysis of 96 studies found that, "Adventure programs can obtain notable outcomes and have particularly strong, lasting effects" (p. 77). Based on their analysis they stated that the ef-

fects of adventure education programs showed two vital components that were identified as 'support' and 'challenge'. Other factors that were also rated as important were the notion of "difficult goals" and "feedback". Druian, Owens and Owens (1980) cited in Nadler and Luckner (1992) have identified similar components. They have outlined a general overview of the essential elements in experiential programs that have been summarised such as:

- A purpose that is clearly articulated, and where the content reflects the needs of the learners and participants are in agreement with the purpose;
- A setting that has four essential factors: realism; challenge; an appropriate level of risk; and diversity;
- The characteristics of participants reflect a cross section of the population;
- Learning strategies are sequenced for the learning process: assessment and goal setting; negotiation and planning; engaging and experiencing; reflecting and evaluating; as wells as applying and generalising;
- Student roles, where learning from students with similar or different backgrounds from their own, the extent and conditions under which learners learn and the transferring of learning through responsibility for one's own actions;
- Instruction roles help students plan and carry out their activities while often serving as role models of active, involved learners. The monitoring of student progress; assessment and feedback, providing information to students, motivating and encouraging students, demonstrating skills in planning, empathy, communication and resource sharing; and
- Program outcomes in experiential learning experiences are the development of leadership, self-concept and academics. (p. 45)

Hattie (1999) states that adventure based learning is about focusing on challenging goals through activities such as abseiling. He also suggests that it is important how instructors create a structured environment, and provide informative feedback in order to remove barriers to maximising the student's success.

After five decades of modern day outdoor education, the empirical outcome research has been synthesized. On average, outdoor education programs appeared to have small to moderate effects on participants' self-perceptions of personal qualities and capabilities (Hattie, et al., 1997; Neill, 2002). These finding are similar to the average outcome for psychological training and other types of educational self-concept change programs. These results provide evidence to support outdoor education programs as a way to provide legitimate and effective educational training. It would seem that outdoor education methods have something to genuinely offer education,

training, and psychology. A particularly impressive strength is that outdoor education programs seem capable of triggering an ongoing cycle of positive change within participants (Neill, 2002). Luther and Brown (2007) suggest there is a gap in program interventions built around the notion of strong attachments to teachers. There are ongoing benefits for children to be attached and have meaningful relationships with supportive teachers. This aids the child's emotional and social well being in addition to their academic performance. The ABL experience can be an avenue where these strong attachments or connections with the teacher facilitator and student can be fostered given the nature of learning in this context calls for cooperation, trust and participation (Nadler & Luckner, 1992). As stated previously by Luther and Brown (2007) after reviewing the literature spanning over half a century, when it comes to resilience with children and adults, 'resilience rests fundamentally on relationships' (Luthar, 2006, p. 780).

2.9.2   Class Teachers

More than ever before, students with challenging behaviours require a curriculum and pedagogy that is engaging and relevant. In particular, the PAL program research included the promoting resilience and action model of "I Have, I Am, I Can" (Grotberg, 1995) that was essentially based on the findings of the *International Resilience Project* and the *Productive Pedagogies* research (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001). The *Promoting Resilience Action Model* is an assessment framework for young people that are used to identify their current strengths and deficits.

Being exposed to concepts that build on strengths provides students with the opportunity gain insight into their actions and the actions of others. This framework focuses on the protective elements that students need to have in place as a part of their resilience (Grotberg, 1995).

The *Promoting Resilience Action Model* framework encapsulates the qualities of what resilience should look like for children (Grotberg, 1995) who suggests that the more protective qualities evident in a child's life the less likely they are to engage in negative behaviours. This framework was used in the PAL intervention and was adapted for generating an instructional organiser when providing support to the stu-

dents. It also aimed to give the children a sense of who they are as individuals as well as becoming aware of their own capabilities. This moves PAL away from the deficit model. It is clear that the more protective process factors children possess the less likely they are to have behaviour problems. Grotberg's framework was also used as a lens to determine strengths and weaknesses in particular areas with regard to risk and protective factors.

Another component of PAL for teachers was the *Productive Pedagogies, which* were an outcome of the School Reform Longitudinal Study (SRLS) and part of Education Queensland's reforms through the Leading Schools Program. A major focus of this reform was the emphasis on classroom practices based on the research by Newmann and Associates (1996). The SRLS developed a multi-dimensional model of class-room practice. This model was named the *Productive Pedagogies* and identified four dimensions as: (1) intellectual quality; (2) relevance; (3) supportive classroom environment and (4) recognition of difference (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001).

The *Productive Pedagogies* describe a common framework under which teachers can choose and develop strategies in relation to what they teach taking into account the variable styles, approaches and backgrounds of their students. Teachers can use these to focus instruction and improve student outcomes.

When using *Productive Pedagogies,* teachers consider and understand the back-grounds and preferred learning styles of their students identify the repertoires of practice and operational fields to be targeted and evaluate their own array of teaching strategies as well as selecting and applying appropriate ones. A feature of this study was based on teachers being the key to any school intervention that then impacts on improved behaviours and social outcomes for students (Department of Education and Training, 2004).

Another component of the PAL Program was to provide professional development to the class teachers of the targeted students. This involved changes for class teachers in their behaviour management strategies. Fullan (1982) cautions change initiatives by stating, **"**change can either aggravate the teachers' problems or provide a glimmer of hope" (p. 112; Sikes, 1992, p. 48). Certainly, the intention of this component of the

intervention was for the PAL teacher to forge a positive working relationship with class teachers and work collaboratively with them to build their capacity in the management of the challenging students.

There is no doubt that the teachers of students with challenging behaviours experience a high degree of stress. According to Nelson, (2001) there are a number of measures that can be implemented in order to support teachers who have students with challenging behaviours. These measures are designed to be used by the Principal to involve the teacher in decision-making processes. They aim to enhance the quality of interactions between teachers, colleagues, administrators, parents and the teachers in order to help them believe that they are capable of working with students with challenging behaviours. These positive conditions are likely to lead to less teacher stress (Nelson, 2001). The goal of the PAL Program in providing professional development for the teachers was not to add to their stress but to be that 'glimmer of hope' within them.

Therefore, the PAL team developed a Teacher Support Program (TSP). This program was developed as an intervention when working with teachers. The TSP emphasised skill development for the teacher to ensure they have effective teaching and learning strategies, and provide a relevant and engaging curriculum and create flexibility for the student as well as having appropriate behaviour management strategies. Aspects of the TSP were based on adaptations of the work of Christine Richmond's (1996) *Micro Skills for Managing Behaviour*. This model was used when working with the teacher as part of their professional development to equip them to manage the behaviours of the at risk student.

According to Stallings (1989) cited in Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) the cornerstones of the teacher development model are:
- Learn by doing- try, evaluate, modify, try again;
- Link prior knowledge to new information;
- Learn by reflecting and solving problems; and
- Learn in a supportive environment – share problems and successes. (p. 4)

Additionally there was a focus on the teacher and student relationship as part of the TSP, as this was considered very important for learning to occur. Positive teacher/student relationships are critical and according to Kagan (1991), "the primary function of a teacher is to touch another human being's soul and, in doing so, to turn it irrevocably to the light'"(p. 83). This approach demands that the teachers consider their own philosophy of teaching. The teaching process needs to take on a new dimension. Redefining success in the classroom implies focusing on effort rather than outcomes and giving children choices and decision-making responsibility around tasks they undertake. To touch another human being's soul can be interpreted as the teacher having a connection with the student. This focus is coming from the view that meaningful relationships are the "roots of resilience". For many teachers this involves a change in mindset.

Cordingley (2009) explains that:

> The complexity of the knowledge demands of teaching and learning mean that (both existing and new) teacher knowledge, skills and understanding must be internalised or routinised if they are to be put to work to change responses to practical classroom challenges. Changing practice means changing knowledge and understanding (p. 8).

Sikes (1992) cited in Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) states that change is necessary if we are to move forward. Imposed change is also necessary if equality of opportunity and entitlement are valued. Accepting that there will always be those who are opposed to change, those in the position of implementing and imposing it should:

- Consult with practitioners and find out what change actually means for as many teachers as possible, taking different types and size of school into consideration;
- Be sensitive to the personal as well as the professional needs and interests of the teachers who will be required to carry out the change;
- Resource change at an adequate and appropriate level;
- Make adequate provision for in-service education and provide continuing support; and
- Treat teachers as autonomous and capable professionals and have trust in their ability. (Sikes, 1992, p. 50)

According to Lewis (1997) when there is little opportunity for students to feel recognised and respected, they may need to find ways of being noticed and inappropriate

forms of behaviour can be one strategy. Attention-seeking behaviour can result in teachers spending a large amount of time disciplining students. Consequently, there is even less opportunity in classrooms to make connections and develop meaningful relationships, and so the cycle continues (1997, p. 39). Due to the ongoing demands placed on teachers of students with challenging behaviours, it is imperative that professional development uses coaching with specialist one on one approach that is targeted and differentiated. Fullan and Hargraves (1992) state that:

> Teacher development then must actively listen to and sponsor the teacher's voice; establish opportunities for teachers to confront the assumptions and beliefs underlying their practices; avoid faddism and blanket implementation of favoured new instructional strategies; and create a community of teachers who discuss and develop their purposes together over time. (p.5)

Rather than professional development being a one off experience, it needs to be ongoing. Current research into the benefits of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education, 2007) echoed in the words of Fullan and includes the importance of:

- Peer support (in pairs or small groups) to encourage, extend and structure professional learning, dialogue and experimentation – in combination with;
- Specialist support, including modelling, workshops, observation, feedback, coaching – a menu of research-based strategies for enhancing learning;
- Planned meetings for structured discussion – including exploring evidence from the teachers' classrooms about their experiments with new approaches and of their beliefs about teaching, their subjects and their learners;
- Processes for sustaining the CPD over time to enable teachers to embed the practices in their own classroom settings – including informal day-to-day discussions and observations between teachers, and using work they would have to do anyway (such as lesson planning and designing schemes of work or curriculum development) as a springboard for learning in workshops;
- Recognition and analysis of teachers' individual starting points and building on what they know and can do already;
- Developing teachers' ownership of their learning by offering scope to identify or refine their own learning focus (within a menu set by the program or the school), and the opportunity to take on a degree of leadership in their CPD, and
- A focus on pupil learning and pupil outcomes, often as a way to analyse starting points, structure development discussions and evaluate progress, both formatively and summatively. (p. 2)

Teachers make all the difference in all aspects of pedagogy and curriculum but more importantly, it is the relationship that the teacher forges with the student that is most powerful. This is best summed up by Ginott (1972):

> I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess the tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, a child humanized or de-humanized. (p. 13)

2.9.3   Parents

The research of Webster-Stratton of the 'Incredible Years Program' (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001) indicated key beneficial ingredients from existing prevention programs. These include approaches founded on Social Learning theory (Bandura, 1963) and have a focus on training in order to enhance parenting skills. Knitzer and Cohen (2007; in Luthar & Brown, 2007) highlight the importance of parent factors in enhancing resilience.

Taking this further, Reid et al., (2003) claim that parent intervention programs are an effective way to reduce or eliminate behaviour problems before they 'ripple' and result in peer rejection, well-established negative reputations and school problems (p. 472). This research also informed the PAL intervention by emphasising the need to make connections with the parents with the aim to improve their parenting skills to better manage their children.

There is an image promoted in society of what a happy family should be secure and comfortable surroundings, in control of their lives and circumstances. In reality, this is not the case for many people. Poverty affects more and more people and contributes to an increased strain on family relationships. As well as these are the ever-increasing experiences of loss for both adults and children that include separation or divorce. Families under strain do not always function cohesively and effectively and when this is the case, the emotional and physical support for each family member becomes tenuous (Bayer, Hiscock, Morton-Allen, Ukoumunne, & Wake, 2007).

Circumstances at home will influence and impact on a students' physical and emotional well-being and therefore their capacity to engage successfully with schooling. Sanders (2003a) states that direct observation studies in the homes of aggressive children have shown that certain patterns of interaction between children and their parents feed anti-social behaviour. Prevention is the best approach to deal with problematic children and arguably; the most powerful intervention is parent training. He suggests that the best parenting programs provide parents with specific skills and strategies aimed at increasing positive interactions and decreasing negative interactions, which ultimately enable parents to discipline their children. These specific skills include consistency using fair, clear specific rules, incentives for cooperation and consistent back-up and consequences for continued misbehaviour.

Additionally, Sanders claimed that when parents learn to be more positive and consistent with their children, children become more cooperative, less aggressive, get on better with peers and are less disruptive at school (O'Rourke, 2003). Based on the review of literature the PAL Program included a group parenting training component, (Positive Parenting Program [Triple P]).

2.10   Summary

This literature review has identified the seriousness of the situation for students at risk and the long term devastating effects, their difficulties can have on their education, relationships, academic performance and future life chances. Drawing on the resilience framework, the literature reviewed has shown that students exist within dynamic systems that involve the individual, family, school and peers, as well as community links. When a child presents with behavioural problems it is clear that these problems could have originated from one or numerous sources within the child's context. To address challenging behaviours any intervention needs to target specific risk factors within the resilience framework. At the same time, specific protective factors need to be identified to counter the presenting risk factors. The emphasis is not on what to target but more on what processes are best applied to maximise positive outcomes for the at risk student.

This review has highlighted that for any intervention to be successful, at risk students need a distinctive and differentiated multidimensional approach. Kotchick and Forehand (2002) state that parenting skills have been reliably identified as vital elements in building resilience in students. Teachers seek out and look to the parents to make sense of the student misbehaviour in an attempt to understand the forces of competing parent time and energy. Parents may feel alienated from school because of negative interactions with school personnel and experiences from their own school history (Boustead & Louwrens, 2000). Students who present as being out of control to their parents, teachers and other adults have an amazing repertoire of challenging behaviours which frequently leads parents and teachers to seek interventions in managing these students. Traditionally students at risk who present challenging behaviours have been difficult to deal with.

Specific approaches in dealing with at risk students were illuminated through the literature review that identified the extensive support offered to students within their school and classroom context. One example was participation in adventure based learning revealed in the literature review as a positive learning experience especially for troubled students.

Another emerging theme in this literature review is the importance of forming positive relationships with parents when dealing with challenging students. Evidence based research was identified that has shown the impact that parenting programs can have on increasing parenting skills as well as impacting positively on children's' behaviour.

Most importantly, the literature pertaining to teacher support draws attention to the stress levels they experience when teaching challenging students and the difference they can make within the class. It also acknowledges that the professional support that is required to be able to deal with challenging students is considerable. Therefore, based on the literature reviewed, it is clear that the class teacher of challenging students requires assistance through professional development. Working with teachers can be a sensitive process (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992).

The literature reviewed has also drawn attention to how much of the professional development for teachers involved in school based prevention intervention programs has been a "one size fits all model". This review of literature has failed to find any school based programs that offered individualised professional development for teachers that considered the teacher's context such as the school and classroom environment, experience and the nature of the presenting problems of the challenging student, as well as the experience of the teacher.

Rolf and Johnson (1999) explain that the developmental challenge for the prevention research community is to design sustainable and testable developmentally relevant intervention programs that are comprehensive and produce a measurable range of effects in sub groups of youth according to the interplay of individual and contextual differences (p. 231). The literature reviewed failed to identify any programs that were specifically doing this.

Condly (2006) in his extensive review of the resilience literature has stated that interventions that work best take into consideration the personal developmental level of the child along with all aspects of the school. The curriculum should include development of the target skills; the training should be intensive and ongoing (i.e., it should last beyond a lesson or even a semester); and the school's adult staff should be convinced of the efficacy of the intervention and be devoted both to the students and to its proper implementation. It seems certain that, although no one single program or policy is likely to fit every situation or person, enough is known to allow for some degree of tailoring that can allow for the maximum probability of success (p.290).

The literature review has identified the necessary factors needed for an effective intervention for students with challenging behaviours. In Chapter 3 a detailed overview of the design, content, processes and implementation of the PAL Program will be presented.

CHAPTER 3:   PRIMARY ASSISTED LEARNING (PAL) PROGRAM

3.1   Introduction

The theoretical rationale for the Primary Assisted Learning (PAL) program was set out in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the key components of the PAL Program. The ideas and methods that lead to the creation of PAL are discussed in addition to a general overview of the intervention, which includes both the referral process and the PAL team. The design and content of the instructional framework is also described. An explanation of the pedagogical approach used in PAL is presented in detail. Furthermore, a description of the structure of PAL is provided which includes the scope and nature of support provided to students, parents and teachers.

The PAL intervention was a school-based program designed as a response to the escalating incidents of challenging behaviours among primary aged students in two education districts in Brisbane, Australia. The suspension rates among primary school students in these two education districts during 1999-2002, were rising at an alarming rate with a combined increase of 70% and in all cases, the students were suspended for violence (H. Murray, 2003). Boys aged between eight and 10 when suspended from school were sent to an alternative education site for up to 20 days. Research indicated that boys were reported as being more troublesome than girls (Beaman, et al., 2007). However, there was little evidence that students who attended an alternative education program during suspension showed any improvement in their behaviours upon their return to school. This was despite the intense support provided by the Behaviour Support Teachers (BST) at the suspension site.

Consequently, the local school Principals requested a program to address this issue. Of major concern was that students did not seem to be coping with the school system given their behaviour-related incidents. Many were struggling with literacy and poor peer relations, which were evident as these students were often marginalized from the rest of their class due to their inappropriate behaviours. This was sometimes due

to the discipline measure of the student being withdrawn from activities within the class such as group activities.

Students were also often withdrawn from the playground because of violence and/or a lack of social skills, which prevented them from playing appropriately with their peers. Consequently, such students were not forming significant connections with the class teacher and peers owing to their inappropriate behaviours. Parents also often felt isolated from the school setting because often the only regular interactions that they had with the classroom teacher and school administration were as a result of their child's poor behaviour. The education system surrounding a student who exhibited behaviours was inadequate leaving all stakeholders disconnected (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2008).

The PAL program was designed to address the needs of students with challenging behaviours that included a component of parent education and teacher professional development. Components of the PAL Program incorporated existing-evidence based programs such as the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) (Sanders & Markie-Dadds, 1996), Adventure Based Learning (ABL) (Neill & Dias, 2001) and Teacher Professional Development (TPD) (Fullan, 1982).

The PAL program endeavoured to create educational experiences for the students where they could learn to be problem solvers and form meaningful relationships with their peers, teachers and parents.

3.2   Theoretical construct of resilience

Fergusson (1999) suggests that most research into childhood psychopathology and related issues focused on the identification of risk factors. He states that in the past the central question addressed in resilience research was that of identifying the factors that distinguish those who fail to develop adverse outcomes when exposed to risk factors. He warned of what he considered to be significant technical problems in both defining resilience and identifying resilience factors. These problems were centred on the contrast of risk factor research which seeks to explain and predict why an outcome occurred and resilience research where the focus is upon explaining why an

expected outcome did not occur. He suggests that 'explaining why something did not occur proves harder than explaining why it did' (p. 5).

In more recent years, there has been a counter reaction to risk factor research with an increasing emphasis on not only the concept of resilience but also more importantly the processes to enhance resilience. This study is an attempt to take out the 'why' as stated by Fergusson and focus more on the 'how' which lays the foundation for targeting an intervention identifying the important components but more than this, the processes that need to be in place to render the most impact on enhancing resilience in at risk students.

Newman and Blackman (2002), suggest that children can appear to be resilient in one domain such as social or school factors and yet experience inner stress and anxiety at an individual level. It was therefore important to acknowledge that most children and adults alike do not display resilience across all domains at all times. Children can display protective factors in some areas and risk factors in others. Therefore, for this reason resilience needs to (Garmezy & Masten, 1986; Werner & Smith, 2001) be viewed as not being static but has a development progression with new vulnerabilities and strengths emerging with changing life circumstances (Garmezy & Masten, 1986; Werner & Smith, 2001).

3.3   PAL program overview

PAL is a school-based program intervention focused on addressing challenging behaviours for at risk students by focusing on protective factors. Highly experienced BSTs used adventure based learning, group processes, interactive and experiential learning, the importance of making connections, problem solving and goal setting when working with the students. These strategies were used to reduce the problematic behaviours of at risk students and build the students' resilience. The components of the program were determined by evidence based research regarding what needed to be incorporated in order to have a decisive impact on the students' challenging behaviours that would in turn enhance their resilience (Ferguson, 1999; A. Fuller, 2001; Masten, 1994).

The PAL intervention also operated across multiple settings. These settings included the alternative education setting that the student attended one day per week; adventure based learning sites and the student's regular school setting. In each setting, the PAL teacher created learning experiences that would aid the student in being a problem solver. The PAL teacher worked with the student encouraging them to make meaningful connections to other students and adults. The PAL Program operated from a strengths-based approach that focused on the students' strengths, actively setting out to build on the assets of all participants operating within guidelines determined by the Behaviour Support Services.

3.4   Program guidelines

The PAL Program operated within the scope of two education districts' Behaviour Support Services. A management committee comprised of the School Principal's Representatives across both districts determined the program, which included:

- The group size of participants was eight to ten students;
- The target group was boys in Grades 3 and 4;
- The length of the PAL Program was one semester;
- The allocation of staff was: two full-time BSTs, one part-time Guidance Counsellor and one Teacher aide;
- The Conner's Behaviour Rating Scales were already being used across the two districts for assessing students with problematic behaviours, therefore this was also administered in the PAL Program;
- The students attending an alternative education program at another school site one day per week;
- The parents needed to agree to participate in the Triple P training program before their child could be accepted into the PAL Program; and
- The class teachers needed to agree to participate in the individualised Professional Development component delivered by the PAL teachers.

3.5   Referrals

The students who were referred to PAL attended primary schools within the two education districts that were supported by the Behaviour Support Services (BSS). The students selected for the PAL Program were in grades three and four. The rationale for targeting this grade level was based on the population data of students affected by severe behavioural issues. The research indicates that the incidents of poor student behaviour rise steadily for students from age 9. In addition, as stated above,

boys are more likely than girls to exhibit challenging behaviours including being physically and verbally abusive (Office for Standards in Education, 2005).

Referrals for the PAL intervention far outweighed the places available. This was partly because the PAL program was recognised as an exemplar of best practice in managing challenging students and the recipient of an Education Queensland Excellence in Education Award. In order for a student to be referred to PAL, extensive data had to be collected from the referring school, the parent and the student. For example, the Guidance Officer provided background information about the child's history of challenging behaviours and previous interventions, the Support Teacher Learning Difficulties provided information related to problems, if any, of the student's academic history and the Class Teacher provided an overview of how the student behaved and related with their peers within the classroom and whole of school context.

If other agencies were involved, such as Child Youth and Mental Health Services, they were also contacted and requested to provide a report on the child. The parent/career was invited to provide detailed information on their child. Students attended an interview, and were provided with an overview of the PAL intervention and asked whether they were willing to commit to the intervention and follow the expectations outlined.

To meet the criteria to attend the PAL program, students were required to have had previous behaviour interventions with the BSS team. Students referred to PAL often presented a range of challenging behaviours but in order to meet the criteria to participate in the PAL Program the following indicators were apparent:

- Aggressive and/or inappropriate behaviour;
- Schools, classroom teachers, parent/caregivers needing /asking for support;
- Withdrawn or isolated students;
- Social skill deficits which effected the student's ability to function successfully in group situations;
- A history of previous behaviour support services, interventions and suspension;
- Absenteeism; and

- They were in families experiencing crisis such as unemployment, mobility, sole parenting, relationship breakdown and/or social and educational disadvantage.

Referrals were made before commencement of a new school term and submitted to the BSS referral committee. The decision to accept a student into the PAL Program was made by the BSS referral committee. The membership of the BSS referral committee included the Team Leader, Senior Guidance Counsellors and representatives from other BSS programs. Once the referral was accepted, the PAL teachers scheduled meetings to gather further information about the student through the following methods:

- Feed back from the Class Teacher, Principal, Guidance Counsellor and Support Teacher Learning Difficulties;
- Meetings with external agencies if relevant such as: Child Youth Mental Health Services;
- Classroom / playground observations;
- Data collection and assessments;
- Meetings with Parents and students;
- Contracts stating goals and focuses developed with Parents and students; and
- Individual Behaviour Management Plans (IBMP) negotiated with schools.

All the data from the various individuals and agencies was collected, collated and analysed by the PAL teachers to identify the specific needs of the child and an individualised behaviour management plan (IBMP) was designed to address those needs. Key strategies were implemented before the placement of a student in the PAL Program. These were:

- The intervention involved the input of all parents and class teachers to recognise the at-risk child as not only an individual but also a member of a family, class and school community. This information contributed to the understanding that each element of the resilience framework plays a role in the risk and protective factors for the child;
- A comprehensive, individualised assessment was conducted for each child when a child was accepted into the PAL intervention. Contributions were sought from the child's family and class teacher to identify the full range of presenting issues along with his individual and family needs;
- A coordinated intervention plan based on the individual identified needs was developed to ensure that all needs were addressed in a collaborative way that was best suited to meet the needs of the student, parent and class teacher; and

- A follow-up on service referrals was provided, to ensure that services were delivered in an appropriate manner and that the program coordination structures were functioning effectively.

3.6 PAL team

The PAL team consisted of two highly skilled BSTs with expertise in adventure based learning, a guidance counsellor and teacher aide. The PAL teachers were allocated four students each and worked with the students, their parents and their class teachers throughout the 6 month intervention. The Guidance Counsellor and PAL teacher presented the Triple P training sessions. The teacher aide attended all the adventure based learning activities to support the teachers and students. This ensured a high adult/student ratio.

Each of the PAL teachers was an accredited Triple P facilitator. A guidance officer and visiting artist also worked with the students. The guidance officer co-presented the Triple P and attended a number of adventure based learning activities. The visiting artist conducted a number of art related activities throughout the program to aid students in addressing issues of non-compliance, aggression, interpersonal difficulties, lack of conflict resolution skills, lack of friends, poor organisational skills and an inability to express their needs appropriately.

3.7 PAL model

The PAL Program as described in Table 3.1 provides the specific details for the intervention. This table incorporates the goals for participants and the components of the intervention used as protective process factors that impact positively on the at risk student to decrease their challenging behaviours and enhance their resilience.

Table 3.1:   PAL model

PAL MODEL		
Student Goals	**Parent Goals**	**Teacher Goals**
Reduce Challenging behaviours of the student. Outcome: Resilient enhancement by increasing specific protective factors and reducing specific risk factors	Improve parenting skills by increasing the parent's repertoire of management strategies. Outcome: Perceptions of child's improved behaviours	Build on the teacher's repertoire of managing students with challenging behaviours. Outcome: Perceptions of student's improved behaviours
Program Components: Promotion of Protective processes		
Scope of Intervention for Students	**Scope of Intervention for Parents**	**Scope of Intervention of Intervention for Teachers**
Alternative Education intervention focusing on: • Adventure based learning to promote problem solving • Implementation of curriculum framework for PAL that promotes 'I Have, I Am, I Can' • Group activities In school support: • *Individual Behaviour Management Plan* • Building relationships • Enhance resilience • One on One student support from PAL teacher	Attend Group Triple P training Relationship building by regular contact by phone and face to face contact with PAL teachers providing feedback on the child's progress throughout the intervention	Collaboratively developing an *Individual Behaviour Management Plan* for the at risk student Teacher Support Program that included: • Teacher professional development by PAL teacher modelling behaviour management strategies based on adaptations from Christine Richmond's Micro Skills (1996). • In class teacher support to aid in the management of the targeted student, coaching and debriefing

3.8   Instructional framework

An instructional framework was designed drawing on elements from the *Productive Pedagogies* SRLS (1999) along with the *Promoting Resilience Action Model* (Grotberg, 1995). A comprehensive curriculum organizer was created to document the instructional model implemented throughout the PAL intervention that included the alternative education component and in-school student support. The PAL teachers

focused on specific *Productive Pedagogies* in their instructional approach and applied the *Promoting Resilience Action Model* as the framework for involving a strengths based approach with the students. The in school support and adventure based learning components constantly required students to identify their strengths as a part of applying the *I Have, I Am and I Can* framework (Grotberg, 1995). This framework, (described in Chapter 2) identifies protective process factors that contribute to the children's' resilience. This framework assists students to identify their strengths and deficits and is beneficial in setting out the protective factors needed to be present for a student to be resilient. For this reason the elements of this framework were incorporated into the PAL Program. There is a wealth of knowledge of the protective factors that need to be in place to enhance a child's resilience (Bernard, 1991, 1995; Ferguson, 1999; A Fuller, 2002; Garmezy, 1985).

The *I Have, I Am and I Can* framework was aligned to the relevant *Productive Pedagogies* that supported the strengths or evidence of protective processes that the students would be demonstrating, as indicators of resilience. Specifically the *I Have, I Am and I Can* framework is based on protective factors from the individual, family, school and wider community factors. The concept of resilience along with risk and protective factors is detailed in Chapter Two.

The Consortium on School-Based Promotion of School Competence (1994) cited in Murray (2004) argues that the use of off-the-shelf programs in order to promote resilience has not proved to be successful, in part, because complex developmental systems that regulate competence and risk are not easy to manipulate. Therefore, the PAL Program was designed to cater for each student by differentiating the intervention to suit each student's presenting needs.

Table 3.2 is an outline of the PAL Instructional Framework which is a merger of elements of Productive *Pedagogies* SRLS (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001), and the Resilience Action Model of *I Have, I Am and I Can* (Grotberg, 1995).

Table 3.2:   PAL instructional framework

I Have	I Am					I Can
Being a Problem Solver						
Supportive Class Environment Social Support	**Recognition of difference**	**Intellectual Quality: Higher Order Thinking**	**Connectedness to the world**	**Academic Engagement**	**Self regulation**	**Connectedness**
Who am I? I have Self awareness I have strengths and I have weaknesses	Why am I special? *Trusting and loving relationships with others*: I know that there are people who love and care for me such as parents, siblings, teachers, and friends.	What can I think and do? *Proud of myself*: the I know I can achieve and keep on trying.	How can I do things? I know I can learn new skills and strategies and be a risk taker. I know how to work cooperatively with other students. I know I can draw on my prior experiences and knowledge.	What can I learn? *Loveable*: I know there are qualities tat I possesses, or develop, qualities that appeal to others.	Am I being understood? *Manage my feelings*: I can know and understand emotions, recognise the feelings of others, and control impulsive behaviour	Who can help me? *Solve problems*: I can work out ways to solve my problems and involve others where necessary, and not give up.
What do I want? *Access to health, education and social care*: I have consistent direct or indirect protection for physical and emotional health.	What are my strengths? I know what I am good at. I can say what my strengths are and feel good about myself.	How do I understand the views of others? I know how to put myself in the other person's shoes	How do I make choices? I know how to weigh up the best choice for my behaviour.	How do I find what I need? I know who is on my support network and who I can ask.	Do we hear each other? *Communicate*: I can express my feelings and thoughts, and listen to those of others.	What path will I take? *Hopeful and trustful*: I have faith in Schools, sports clubs and church and the adults who are there. I am optimistic about the future and I am more aware of what is right and wrong (a moral structure).

I Have		I Am		I Can		(continued)
Supportive Class Environment Social Support	**Recognition of difference**	**Intellectual Quality: Higher Order Thinking**	**Connectedness to the world**	**Academic Engagement**	**Self regulation**	**Connectedness**
Where am I going?	How can I reach my potential?	How do I establish my own values and beliefs?	What's possible?	How do I develop a network of support?	Do we understand each other?	How can I help myself?
Structure at home: I have clear rules and routines, and fair sanctions when I misbehave. I am praised when I follow the rules. At school there are clear expectations of how I need to behave in class and in the playground.	*Role models*: I have lots of good roles models such as my parent(s), other adults, peers and siblings, who model good behaviour.	*Responsible*: I can accept and is am given responsibilities, At home and school. My actions can make a difference. I understand my temperament: have insight into their personality and that of others.	*Loving*: I am able to express affection to others, and I am more sensitive to their needs. I know how to make positive comments to my peers.	I can identify where I can go for help at school and in my family.	I understand my temperament: more and I better read the moods of others.	*Seek out trusting relationships*: the I have the ability to find people - peers or adults – in whom they can confide and develop mutual trust.

3.9 Productive pedagogies

The instructional framework for the PAL intervention, as stated previously, was based on the *Promoting Resilience Action Model* (Grotberg, 1995). In addition, components of *Productive Pedagogies* that emerged from the School Reform Longitudinal Study (SRLS) (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001) in 1998-2000 in Queensland schools were incorporated. The SRLS was a large-scale study focused on determining which elements of student learning experiences in classrooms, and which organisational capacities of schools and systemic supports contribute to improved learning and social outcomes for students.

The dimensions of the *Productive Pedagogies* of Intellectual Quality, Connectedness, Supportive Classroom Environments and the Recognition of Difference were

identified to be the focus for the PAL program. These *Productive Pedagogies* are underpinned by several strategies and were chosen because they were a fit for this intervention. These instructional strategies are examples for effective teaching and learning practices. In designing the instructional framework for PAL, the team narrowed the focus for what they considered applicable to this intervention. The PAL intervention focused on the following four Productive Pedagogies, because these best supported the aims of the PAL program. These were:

- Intellectual Quality: Higher Order Thinking;
- Supportive Classroom Environment: Social Support and Self Regulation;
- Recognition Of Difference: Inclusivity, Narrative approach and Group dynamic; and
- Connectedness: Background knowledge, Connectedness to the world and Problem-based curriculum.

3.9.1 Intellectual quality – Higher order thinking

The PAL instructional framework included Intellectual Quality, specifically Higher Order Thinking as a critical element to teach the students to be problem solvers. Learning experiences were designed to cater for the PAL students by applying Bloom's (Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) higher order thinking skills. Bloom's Taxonomy identifies six levels of critical thinking skills to increase the complexity of thinking skills. They range from the lowest levels, of knowledge and comprehension, moving up to the more complex and abstract mental levels of analysis, application, synthesis and evaluation. The PAL teachers began with the lowest level; adventure based learning experiences to extend the students thinking skills to aid them in problem solving. With this knowledge level skill, students were required to remember different safety information as part of the adventure based learning experiences.

Students were also provided with opportunities for more complex skill level problem solving as part of the adventure based learning experiences, which included supporting one another in an abseiling activity, Students were also required to use their thinking skills and analyse their own behaviours, in considering what they do and the impact that their behaviour had on themselves and others.

Teachers provided learning experiences for students to apply their knowledge to consider creative thinking and problem solving strategies to formulate new behaviours and actions with their teachers, peers and families. Students were also provided, as part of the adventure based learning, the opportunity to be reflective, by "stepping back" and evaluating the role they played as part of the group dynamic process.

Through the PAL intervention, students were assisted in developing skills and knowledge from their own contexts and world experiences such as being able to play at recess in a socially appropriate way without any incidents. Through problem solving skills development, they were taught to weigh up information in order to make good decisions by taking into account, for example, the costs of using violence to solve a problem. Students practiced these skills in role-plays and by discussing scenarios. Evidence of students developing their problem solving skills was that they were able to work cooperatively in groups at the PAL site, in their class and with their siblings.

3.9.2   Supportive classroom environment

Critical to the learning of the targeted students was Productive Pedagogy element of a Supportive Learning Environment. A supportive classroom environment was created in the PAL intervention by promoting a strengths based approach for students with an emphasis on the students' strengths to aid in developing their problem solving skills to enhance resilience. This notion is based on the belief that all students have the potential to bounce back from adversity and expand their resilience (Fuller, 1998). The PAL intervention centred on assisting students to develop respectful attitudes towards themselves and others. The intervention encouraged the student to use problem solving strategies to make useful judgments and discriminating choices to enable them to develop healthy relationships with the aim to increase meaningful connections.

The PAL team members 'walked the talk' by modelling the behaviours in their own actions and interactions. Students were encouraged and empowered to take increasing responsibility for their learning processes and the activities in which they engaged. Although the PAL teachers recognised that students' development factors,

such as their capacity for self-determination/autonomy increased with age, maturity and their respective circumstances, they worked within a developmentally realistic set of expectations for the age group.

Depending on the relevant position of the student, a different range of options were offered. For example, a more limited range of options for a less mature student. The students were encouraged to seek challenges and provide opportunities to reflect on the outcomes of their behaviours. Importantly, the PAL intervention advocated for change to school environments to better service the students' abilities and particular needs. The PAL team organized and helped provide social support and, if needed, facilitated access to agencies that could address family needs. Learning best occurs when students feel safe and supported, when clear expectations are communicated where positive relationships exist with the teacher and peers and also where the student is encouraged to be a risk taker in their learning and the learning experiences (Richmond, 1996).

3.9.2.1 *Self regulation/social support*

Also included in the PAL intervention from the *Productive Pedagogies* were Self Regulation and Social Support. The PAL intervention taught the student the importance of monitoring their behaviours. The student was taught how to identify their feelings and how their feelings impacted on their subsequent behaviour. They were assisted in learning to recognise when they are getting upset or angry. Students were taught strategies aimed at dealing with their anger and how to self-regulate feelings in order to manage their behaviour. This was achieved by facilitating learning experiences for the students in meaningful engaging activities that assisted in their development of self-regulation.

The students were encouraged to consider likely consequences of their decisions, actions and behaviour in each of the learning experiences provided which included rock climbing, art, group work, camping and snorkelling. The PAL intervention worked towards developing the student's ability to work cooperatively with the adults and the other children in their lives by being respectful and supportive of each other. This was particularly important for students when working on self-regulation

of their anger management, turn taking, impulse control, communication, and conflict resolution skills.

The learning of these skills can contribute to more positive social support experiences for the students. For example, by being more accepted by their peers and being able to participate more in classroom group activities and PAL group activities. Learning opportunities were created for the students to develop the ability to stay on task, be attentive, complete set tasks, and contribute productively and harmoniously in group situations as well as problem solve when conflicts arose. The PAL intervention strongly and consistently encouraged students to monitor their behaviours. Especially when their behaviours worked against their connectedness to peers, class teachers, parents, siblings and the PAL teacher and importantly, to accept the consequences of their behaviour.

3.9.2.2   *Academic engagement*

Academic Engagement was also an element of the *Productive Pedagogies* that was incorporated into the PAL intervention. As part of the academic component the PAL teacher worked with the class teacher to provide meaningful pedagogies based on learning activities that would lead to student success. Collaboratively planning appropriate challenges for the students was an ongoing focus of the PAL intervention when working with the class teachers.

Challenging and engaging activities were designed to focus on skills the student needed to master. The instruction was sequenced and scaffolded. The concept of problem solving was continually made explicit for the student and was incorporated across all content areas both in the classroom and in the PAL setting.

The PAL and class teachers worked together to provide learning experiences that promoted an appropriate level of challenge for the at risk student to foster engagement in their learning experiences, a strategy aimed at addressing the student's challenging behaviours. For instance, this was achieved through flexibility in the delivery of the curriculum created around providing individualized learning experiences catering for the needs of the student.

3.9.3 Recognition of difference

Inclusivity, Narrative and Group dynamic were identified as being important elements within the *Productive Pedagogies* for the PAL intervention. The PAL intervention created learning opportunities for students where they explored difference. 'Difference' was a notion that the students were familiar with as students were frequently treated differently because of their misbehaviour. For some students, the regular school structure contributed to their sense of marginalization.

Students were taught the importance of valuing difference which included accepting, valuing and supporting each other regardless of ethnic, social, intellectual, cultural, physical stature, gender, personal and interpersonal skills, abilities, competency, and family of origin. To enhance student resilience, the PAL intervention promoted interactions between isolated students and their peers through group activities and the adventure based learning component.

Students were required to listen to and value the stories and experiences of other students in the PAL intervention as they participated in the various learning experiences. Accordingly, as part of the 'recognition of difference' the PAL intervention networked and linked the targeted students support systems to reduce alienation. This let the students know that peers and adults were available to assist them, which created protective process factors for students as they became aware that support systems were readily available. Having a support network is a specific link in the reduction of risk factors (Durlack, 1998).

3.9.3.1 *Narrative*

The element of Narrative from the *Productive Pedagogies* was included into the PAL intervention because of the importance of the students being able to tell their stories in a safe and supportive learning environment. Students who participated in the PAL intervention were catered for by using various learning styles. A strong and predominate focus for the PAL team was the use of narrative.

Students were engaged in a wide range of activities such as personal stories, biographies, historical recounts of experiences that were both positive and negative and re-telling their learning experiences at the end of each PAL day to the whole group. By providing students with a platform to tell their stories, opportunities were created to make connections between the storyteller and the listeners. Narrative was also a tool to help students' process their life experiences and improve their communication skills. This process provided students with a range of rich learning experiences from which to draw. This included the various weekly adventure based learning experiences, the hands on learning experiences in art, and the new relationships that were forged as a result of participating in the PAL intervention.

3.9.3.2 Group identity

Being part of group is a learning experience in itself (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001). The PAL intervention used the power of being part of a group as a strategic teaching strategy. Students were encouraged to value diversity within and between groups in order to build a sense of community and a sense of belonging. This allowed for and encouraged the formation of meaningful connections.

As set out above, students were also provided with learning experiences that were aimed at developing their problem solving skills through self-awareness and self-confidence. Skills were designed to help them relate to others through: negotiation, decision making, understanding rights and responsibilities, making choices, allocating and sharing tasks, and the resolution of conflicts. This skill development contributed to the learning experiences of the students and provided ways to improve their challenging behaviours.

Group process experiences were provided through a variety of learning experiences such as camps, team building games and adventure based learning activities. In these activities, students were provided with the opportunity to influence the type and nature of activities within which they engaged. The PAL intervention expected and encouraged students to extend themselves by taking risks and challenging themselves within a supportive and safe environment. This provided the students with learning experiences within the group and to value the power and support of the group. Stu-

dents were also encouraged and expected to engage in meaningful on-task behaviours that included: attentiveness, completion of tasks, contributing to the group, helping peers and sharing their learning experiences through narrative.

It was critical that students knew the explicit behavioural expectations required of them at an individual level and as part of a group. Students participated in learning experiences that strongly and consistently encouraged them to self-regulate their behaviours during group activities.

3.9.4   Connectedness: Problem-based curriculum

The concept of connectedness was approached from a position of ensuring that the learning experiences for the PAL students related to their real life experiences. This was evidenced by the students' perspectives and the perspectives of their family being valued. Learning experiences were constructed to assist students to form connections between new ideas and central concepts within the areas of social skills with links to contextually appropriate behaviours.

Meaningful connections were facilitated through the adventure based learning activities, most notably: the high ropes, abseiling and rock climbing. Throughout these activities, students were called upon to reflect on how they worked cooperatively with the PAL teacher and other students in high-risk situations. Explicit problem solving strategies were named and highlighted for the students in every interaction. The students were provided with ongoing feedback regarding their progress in using skills such as problem solving, cooperation, being a risk taker, being an effective communicator and a good listener.

Students' conflict resolution skills were enhanced as they engaged in problem solving which subsequently became an ongoing feature in the construction of their knowledge to address their challenging behaviours. This was done through continually linking problem-solving strategies that the student could use across different situations. Providing learning experiences that improved the students challenging behaviours also allowed for a potential enhancement of their resilience. Students were provided with regular opportunities to talk about their actions and thoughts.

Talk was encouraged as a process in being reflective and as a tool to facilitate connections with their PAL peers.

For students to be successful in managing their behaviours, learning opportunities were designed to teach students a vocabulary to enable them to be more effective verbal communicators rather than resorting to physical forms of communication such as violence. This occurred by providing learning experiences to assist students in developing their language. Using words such as sad, happy, angry, and disappointed, provided students with tools in communication aimed at developing deeper understandings of the impact of words and how they were linked to behaviours. Students participated in cooperative learning activities such as the adventure based learning experiences where they were given the opportunities to practice their vocabulary on each other in very structured activities.

3.9.4.1 Background knowledge

A large body of research (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001) identifies the importance of connectedness to the education process for students, through a curriculum that is relevant, engaging and meaningful. More importantly, is the forging of the student/teacher relationship in order to foster connectedness. There needs to be a high degree of connectedness at many levels for students to maximise their learning and feel part of a whole school community as well as their classroom community.

The PAL intervention aimed to achieve this connectedness by engaging with the student's own background knowledge of their learning experiences. Real situations were tailored to aid students in developing their problem-solving skills by using achievable, challenging and transferable strategies. Through group work and meetings, the PAL intervention provided new contexts for the students to come together to promote understanding, tolerance and healthy problem solving especially as conflicts arose with other members of the group. The PAL teachers' provided processes where student learning could be internalised and transferred with a focus on the real life experiences as part of the social learning curriculum, which was a process to enhance protective factors. The PAL teachers continually highlighted the behaviours of those students that provided appropriate role models and mentors for the other PAL

students within the group. Connections were also made by working collaboratively with the class teachers and parents to address the students challenging behaviours.

The following section outlines the three significant components of the PAL Program that are student support, teacher professional development and parent education. These factors are considered critical as factors that can contribute to the enhancement of resilience in children (Newman & Blackburn, 2002).

3.10   Student component

The PAL intervention was aimed at bringing about lasting change in students' behaviours and required a multifaceted and multi-dimensional approach. It was hoped that meaningful partnerships and improved relationships between home and school, student and teacher and parent and child would be developed and enhanced. The multifaceted approach separates the PAL model from other intervention models.

The PAL intervention required each of the eight targeted students to attend a program at an alternative education site one day per week for six months. The eight targeted students came from different schools across two education districts. The PAL teacher visited the student at their school at least once a week providing targeted support that could involve one on one social skills training, in class support, playground support, and/or small group support involving the targeted student and their peers. Students graduated from PAL at end of the semester with a ceremony that included the student telling their story of the PAL experience, displaying their art work, cooking for parents and teachers and the showing of a video of the adventure based learning experiences. Transition support commenced in week one of the following term and continued for four weeks for the targeted students.

The PAL intervention student component included a range of art activities, cooking, adventure based learning experiences and social skills training based on the *Promoting Resilience Action Model* (Grotberg, 1995) and the *Productive Pedagogies* (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001). Strategies designed to improve the student's behaviours and enhance their resilience included: working in teams, being part of a group dynamic

process and participating in learning experiences to develop their capacity for problem solving, communication and self control.

The students who participated in the PAL intervention had the opportunity to forge greater connections and develop problem solving strategies that would better equip them when dealing with school, their relationships with peers and their relationships with their families. They also were taught to recognise how their own behaviours impacted on themselves and those around them. To that end, the adventure based learning approach was a major focus of the PAL intervention. This approach was chosen to aid in the development of forming meaningful connections and to increase the student's repertoire of problem solving as a protective process to improve their behaviours and to build their resilience.

In all circumstances the PAL students were explicitly taught knowledge and skills required for success in all learning activities from snorkelling to camping. The PAL teacher gave the students practice time and coaching in the required skills. The learning activities that the students participated in at the alternative education site were purposely designed based around the *Promotion of Resilience Action Model* (Grotberg, 1995).

3.10.1   Adventure based learning

Adventure based learning has an outdoor education component which involves participating in a camp and incorporates activities such as swimming, snorkelling, rock sports, abseiling and games. Each activity utilised the critical elements of the PAL intervention. As stated previously, Hattie (1999) says that adventure based learning is about focusing on challenging goals through activities such as abseiling. He also suggests that it is just as important how instructors create a structured environment, how informative feedback is provided and barriers are removed in order to maximise student success.

The adventure based learning approach was chosen because of the heavy emphasis placed on problem solving strategies. By subjecting targeted students to learning experiences in problem solving, the goal was that the student would transfer their new

problem solving skills towards decreasing their challenging behaviours, which would subsequently increase their protective factors and enhance their resilience. This approach involved working with students based on meaningful and strategically constructed learning through engaging unique adventure based activities. Processes for learning included having to work with others and in groups and learning how to use adventure based equipment.

Adventure based learning is not just about adventure or risk taking. Adventure based learning provides an opportunity for teachers to provide students with an experience that has an unsure outcome. This is because of the students' unknown reactions to the adventure experiences. Significantly, the outcomes, in terms of how the student will manage the experience cannot be accurately predicted before the commencement of the adventure based learning activity. This does not necessarily mean that the adventure-based experience is not controlled; after all, safety requirements ensure that all activities are highly controlled. However, the learning focus within the adventure-based activity is paramount rather than the activity itself. Regardless of the activity, each student arrives with his or her own perception in relation to the physical risk of the activity along with the psychological risk.

The risk associated with controlled activities is highly subjective for each student. The likelihood of injury is minimal given the multiple safety systems in place. For example, when rock climbing, all climbers are equipped with a harness and helmet.

The PAL teachers focused on determining how safe the student felt, both physically and psychologically and constantly monitored each student to determine how they were coping. It was necessary to determine whether the students were actively engaged, whether they required additional support and coaching in order to participate and finally what personal issues the students were being confronted with as a result of the experience.

It was important to be aware that the adventure-based experiences could bring to the surface unexpected issues for a student that could not have been predicated. All issues needed to be dealt with and processed through a lengthy dialogue. At any time, the student had permission to call time-out and stop the event. At the conclusion of

each adventure based learning experience, the activity was evaluated to determine the impact on the students and to discuss specific behavioural change outcomes of each student.

The ongoing strategies employed in PAL with the adventure based learning activities were based on this process. The strategies were useful in increasing protective process factors using an adventure based learning model to specifically promote problem solving. As well as being part of a group, students participated through the adventure based learning elements of social skills training, managing emotions, coping skills, peer relationships and relationships with other adults. This aspect of student intervention also emphasised skills related to emotional literacy, having empathy with others or taking their perspective, making and keeping friends, managing anger and solving interpersonal problems.

Ultimately the measure of the PAL intervention, specifically the adventure based learning experience would be if there were transference of the learned skills because of the enhanced protective factors acquired and if this learning was transferred to other aspects of the student's life. At a school level, evidence of this would be the student being able to work more cooperatively with other children in a range of activities within the classroom setting and in the playground. Subsequently, the student would be more willing to take part in activities that they would have otherwise avoided, and also find themselves being a supportive class member and being more cooperative in group work.

3.11   Parent component

Healthy development of children depends on the quality and reliability of relationships with important people in their life, both within and outside the family (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2008). Children shape their social environment to which they respond, playing an active part in their own development. Parents and children shape each other's behaviours. It is extremely important for society to ensure that the conditions under which parents are caring for young children are supportive of parent's efforts in raising their children (Centre for Community Child Health, 2007). Effec-

tive parenting is a key protective process factor for children (Durlack, 1998; Masten, 2001).

To promote a meaningful partnership with both the school and the parents, the PAL teachers worked with the parents to educate them on the importance of being actively involved in their child's education. Too often, the only contact between the parent and school was the receiving only negative information on occasions when they were summoned to the school because of their child misbehaving. In an attempt to reverse this trend, the school was asked to communicate with the parent immediately their child was found to be displaying positive behaviour that could be related to class work or a decrease in the number of incidents regarding their misbehaviour. The purpose of this was focus on communication emphasizing the strengths and restory the view of the at risk student. The parent's role was to communicate with the school about matters that would aid in the understanding the child's situation.

Communication was a critical element in the PAL intervention and was effectively utilized in an attempt to improve the parent's connections with the school. A staff member at the school, who did not have a negative history with the parent, was the dedicated person identified to communicate with the parent. Meetings were scheduled between the PAL teacher, Class teacher and Parent to formulate the student's Behaviour Management Plan (BMP). The parent was able to provide information as to which parts of the program the student responded to best. This process acknowledged that the parent is the expert with their child and valued the contribution they provided in order to improve the child's behaviour in the school setting.

Additionally, by involving the parent in as many aspects of the intervention as possible there was greater a likelihood of the parent believing the PAL Program would be effective. The PAL teachers were mindful of not overloading the parent with too much information or responsibility regarding the program. This was because, too often, the parents themselves in crisis because of the difficulties of having a child with challenging behaviours being constantly in trouble at school.

3.11.1   Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)

Parenting can be an extremely stressful experience especially when a child demonstrates challenging behaviours. There is no doubt that the children's behaviour influences the quality of parenting they receive (Sanders, 2003b). To that end, parents who have children with challenging behaviours require additional support in order to build on the existing parenting skills and the opportunities to increase their repertoire of skills.

According to Masten, (2001) it is possible to target asset-risk variables in the child's life such as parenting skills. Providing skill development to parents enhances the ability for parents to increase their protective process factors and develops their parenting skills, which in turn impacts on their child. This process can either undermine or enhance the adaptation of a child depending on the success of the skill development of the parent.

The PAL intervention required PAL teachers to work with parents to assist them to gain an understanding of the risk and protective factors that contribute to resilience in children. The aim was for parents to be better equipped to deal with their child's behaviour, by providing the parents with skill development through the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) Group Parenting Program parenting program. Triple P is a program that teaches parents strategies to encourage their child's social and language skills, emotional regulation, independence, and problem-solving ability.

The parent-training component is a critical element of the PAL Program. Children were not accepted into the program if their parents are unable to commit to readily participating in Triple P. Parents attended a level four training program over five weeks for two hours per session. All the sessions allowed parents to discuss and share ideas about parenting and receive practical tips about parenting skills that they then incorporated into everyday interactions with their children. Two accredited facilitators provided the Triple P sessions.

Turner, et al., (1998) explains that Triple P aims to increase parental competence and confidence in raising children by:

- Increasing parents' competence in managing common behaviour problems and developmental issues;

- Reducing parents' use of coercive and punitive methods of disciplining children;
- Improving parents' communication about parenting issues; and
- Reducing parenting stress associated with raising children. (p. 4)

The content of the Triple P was structured around five Core Principles that were used in the Positive Parenting Program devised by Turner, et al., (1998):

- Ensuring a safe and engaging environment. Children need a safe play environment once they get mobile. Parents are more relaxed when the home environment is safe with the risk of accidents being minimal. As well as this, children need an environment that is interesting and stimulating to aid in developing their skills. This creates an environment that keeps children active and stimulates their intellectual development, which in turn reduces the possibilities of misbehaviour. Parents need to adequately supervise their children which involves knowing where a child is, who they are with and what they are doing at all times; (p. 8)
- Creating a positive learning environment. Parents need to provide children with care and attention where there are moments of uninterrupted attention to the children. This can involve having uninterrupted conversations with children about current interests, being a source of information and using the time and opportunities for incidental teaching. The emphasis is for the parent to focus on the positive aspects of children's behaviour. This can be achieved through using positive attention including praise, physical contact and reward charts to reinforce desired behaviours; (p. 8)
- Using assertive discipline. Parents are taught the skills of assertive discipline in order to teach children to take responsibility for their behaviours and at the same time being aware of the needs of others whilst developing self-control. The strategies taught are introducing specific rules for particular situations, using directed discussion and planned ignoring for minor problem behaviour, giving clear calm instructions and backing up instructions with logical consequences, using time out and quiet time. It is important for parents to plan ahead to prevent problems in high-risk situations when children's behaviour is more likely to be difficult to manage. The key to this approach is for parents to be consistent, respond quickly and decisively when children misbehave and teach children to behave in an acceptable way; (p. 8)
- Having realistic expectations. It is important that parents understand the developmental stages of children so they have realistic expectations and are aware of when they are ready to learn new skills. Children are individuals, develop at different rates, and are not perfect. Problems arise when parents expect too much too soon or expect perfection from themselves or their children; (p. 8) and
- Taking care of oneself as a parent. Parents are taught the skills of self-care and being able to deal with emotions such as anger, depression, and stress and having childfree time. Parents are also taught how to support each other and make time for their personal needs of intimacy, companionship, recreation and time alone. (p. 9)

Specific strategies addressed in the five session parenting program included:

- Monitoring problem behaviour;
- Providing brief contingent attention following appropriate behaviour;
- Arranging engaging activities in high risk parenting situations;
- Using directed discussion and planned ignoring for minor problem behaviour:
- Give clear, calm instructions; and
- Backing up instructions with logical consequences such as quiet time (non-exclusionary time-out) and time-out (Turner, et al., 1998).

Parents were taught to apply these skills both at home and in the community. These specific strategies were used to promote the generalization and maintenance of parenting skills across settings and over time. Triple P interventions combine the provision of information with active skills training and support. Parents participate in sessions that are active skills training methods that include modelling, rehearsal, feedback and homework tasks.

Parents were also formally supported through involvement in all aspects of the PAL intervention whether it was attending some of the adventure based learning activities, sharing a meal with their child at the end of a cooking class, being involved with the PAL intervention at the school as well as their participation in Triple P. Regular scheduled meetings were also held between parents and PAL teachers to provide formal feedback of the progress of their child and to discuss any of their own issues. In addition to this, the PAL teachers supported the parent informally by checking in with them at drop off times when the student attended the alternative education site. There was also regular phone contact involving the parent sharing positives about the child's learning experiences throughout the PAL intervention.

All the communication with the parents, in addition to discussing their child had another two fold purpose. Firstly, to develop meaningful connections with the parent and secondly, to model the importance of communication.

As well as the student and parent components being critical to the PAL Program as protective process factors directed toward enhancing resilience in the at risk students so was the teacher support component.

3.12   Teacher support

Teachers need a diverse repertoire of tools and strategies when catering for at risk students. Conventional methods of working with challenging students are often ineffective. The Teacher Support Program (TSP) was part of the PAL initiative, providing coaching and professional development for teachers who worked with the students presenting with challenging behaviours. The purpose of this aspect of the intervention was to assist the teacher with an emphasis on enhancing teaching and learning strategies, providing a relevant and engaging curriculum, creating flexibility for the student and behaviour management strategies. Aspects of the TSP were based on adaptations from Micro Skills for Managing Behaviour by Christine Richmond (1996).

The PAL teachers' experienced that many class teachers struggled with making significant connections with their at risk students. Significant connections by the class teacher with the at risk student are necessary in order to create the security and positive regard required for a meaningful relationship. Often the child's misbehaviour was the very barrier that prevented meaningful connections with the class teacher and peers alike. Unless a positive relationship with a student is established by the teacher, and more specifically by the teacher knowing a great deal about the student's world, there is little or no opportunity to make meaningful connections.

When children exhibit challenging behaviours in schools, it is the teachers who are often the first to recognize and recommend that the students receive support. Teachers are in a unique position to identify the students with challenging behaviours and play a significant role in being able to provide detailed observations and assessments. Teachers can also play a major role as part of the intervention plan devised for the student to improve their behaviours.

For the PAL intervention to be successful, it was critical for the teachers to be willing to be part of the PAL intervention. Teachers were required to incorporate specific behaviour management strategies, offer a curriculum that was supportive and engaging and agree to improve their connections with the referred student, if that was iden-

tified as an issue. The PAL teacher offered extensive professional development and coaching for the class teacher to improve the relevant skills in any areas where the teacher was deficient. The teacher support component focused on strengthening teachers' classroom management skills with the PAL teacher using aspects of the *Productive Pedagogies* (Lingard & Ladwig, 2001) in coaching the teacher in using effective instructional practices.

This approach focused on the teacher's strengths in the areas of classroom management, curriculum, supportive classroom environment, teacher language and the general rapport and connections with the student. The PAL teacher worked with the class teacher in developing a genuine sense of connectedness with the teacher and the at risk student. Together they reviewed the pedagogy and curriculum offered for the student through a lens of support. The teacher was asked to examine their behaviour management style and to reflect on how effective it was when working with the challenging student. For example, they were questioned about what they are most likely to do when the child is misbehaving which for example, could include strategies such as ignoring the child, giving the child extra work, isolating the child, withdrawing privileges, giving the child detention, sending the child out of the room and referring the child to the administrators.

Research indicates that teachers are significant adults in guiding the protective factors for children in the school environment. Research from the Gatehouse project (Bond, et al., 1998) identified three strategies that can facilitate this process: fostering relationships, a positive classroom climate that promotes security and communicating positive regard. These three concepts recognise that the environment itself and relationships within the environment either support or undermine emotional well-being.

The TSP specifically invited the teacher to reflect on and evaluate their skill level in order to determine their relevant assets and any support they needed. Professional development was provided by the PAL teacher for the class teacher. This included a range of classroom management strategies, motivation and enthusiasm to involve students, behaviour management micro skills and developing rapport by making connections to the students. There were specific elements within each category.

3.12.1   Classroom Management

The classroom management aspect was categorised into three areas. The first area was organisation with key aspects being identified as the physical environment, the importance of displaying the class timetable and work plan, evidence of lesson preparation, routines for student movement and transitions in lesson change.

The second area within classroom management was teacher language. For example, communication that is clear and appropriate, evidence of positive feedback given to the student and the teacher displaying encouraging body language. Finally, the teacher worked on their own motivation and enthusiasm in an attempt to involve students and was required to demonstrate evidence of this occurring. As part of the behaviour management micro skill strategies training, teachers were shown how to collaboratively generate rules and expectations that were suitable for capturing and sustaining the interest of the students thereby involving them in learning and thereby engendering a spirit of cooperation (Richmond, 1996).

3.12.2   Professional Development

A criteria for a student being accepted into PAL was that the class teacher engaged in one session of professional development per week The PAL teacher also provided skill development for the teacher in working with them through coaching, team teaching, mentoring, providing professional readings of articles and literature.

Opportunities for professional discussions with the PAL teacher regarding the range of practices that would enhance the teacher's connections with the students were also part of the intervention. Ongoing provision of skill development, to increase the teacher's own pedagogical repertoire in working with at risk students, was the priority for the teacher support component of the PAL intervention. The task of the PAL teacher in working with the class teacher of identified at risk student's peers was to create learning experiences where those necessary connections were forged.

Teachers were encouraged by an approach that was non-judgmental and was not about blame. The aim was for the class teacher to be reflective about their classroom

management skills, the relationship they have with the child, curriculum content and delivery of teaching and learning strategies. In addition, the teachers' language, classroom organisation, motivation and enthusiasm toward involving students and building a positive relationship with the student were key strategies that the teacher is encouraged to use. Teachers were invited to use reward and logical consequences as well as clarifying their expectations and classroom rules clearly to the child.

Clarke and Clarke (2003) conducted an extensive review of literature to determine what constitutes an effective long lasting professional development program for teachers. From this review, they generated a list of ten key principles likely to increase long-term growth for teachers:

- Address issues of concern and interest, largely (but not exclusively) identified by the teachers themselves, and involve a degree of choice for participants;
- Involve groups of teachers rather than individuals from a number of schools, and enlist the support of the school and district administration, students, parents and the broader school community;
- Recognise and address the many impediments to teachers' growth at the individual, school and district level;
- Using teachers as participants in classroom activities or students in real situations, model desired classroom approaches during in service sessions to project a clearer vision of the proposed changes;
- Solicit teachers' conscious commitment to participate actively in the professional development sessions and to undertake required readings and classroom tasks, appropriately adapted for their own classroom;
- Recognise that changes in teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning are derived largely from classroom practice; as a result, such changes will follow the opportunity to validate, through observing positive student learning, information supplied by professional development programs;
- Allow time and opportunities for planning, reflection, and feedback in order to report successes and failures to the group, to share "the wisdom of practice," and to discuss problems and solutions regarding individual students and new teaching approaches;
- Enable participating teachers to gain a substantial degree of ownership by their involvement in decision-making and by being regarded as true partners in the change process;
- Recognise that change is a gradual, difficult and often painful process, and afford opportunities for ongoing support from peers and critical friends; and
- Encourage teachers to set further goals for their professional growth. (p.3)

The effectiveness of any professional development offered to teachers is the importance of a "show, not tell" approach. The teacher must have a willingness to take on the role of a reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983) and a genuine interest in improving their teaching skills. This, however, can only occur within a supportive learning environment. The PAL teacher modelled and was explicit about the teaching strategies that worked with at risk students

Luke et al. (2000) cited in Boustead and Louwrens (2000) state that whilst setting up positive teaching/learning environments that are socially supportive in Queensland, in particular there was a pedagogy problem in teaching subjects rather than children, which brings with it a lack of substance/intellectual engagement. Research conducted by Lingard and Ladwig (2001) found that across many of the classes visited, there was little evidence of academic rigor during instruction and this resulted in poor student engagement. The teachers of the PAL intervention, in applying instructional strategies, identified protective processes such as problem solving by creating learning experiences that were building on students' strengths in order to enhance students' resilience in order to reduce their challenging behaviours.

It was important for the class teachers to work toward long term goals that included a well developed behaviour management plan aimed at improving student outcomes. In order to succeed with students who present with challenging behaviours the teachers needed to model and promote a positive attitude toward learning. Part of the role of the PAL teacher was to equip the Class teachers with the necessary skills with multiple ways of communicating the information to the targeted students along with classroom expectations.

Critical strategies implemented in an attempt to address the challenging issues that the class teachers were faced with included coaching the teacher to be more positive toward the student and attempt to catch the student "being good" whilst giving lots of positive reinforcement for the desired and appropriate behaviour. The class teachers' of the PAL students were encouraged to be flexible and take a problem solving approach with a view that this was a protective process factor that contributed to enhancing the students' resilience.

Furthermore the PAL teacher and Class teacher identified the targeted behaviours that needed to be addressed and communicated these to the student including the expected behaviour, as well as rewards and consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

The PAL intervention aimed to provide a quality educational learning experience that supported and advocated for students at educational risk in their social and educational environments. The purpose of this intervention was to build protective processes within the student by way of a resilience framework, selected productive pedagogies, as well as parent and teacher support.

Specifically, this was done by examining the student's curriculum at school in order to determine the appropriateness and relevance. Lewis (1997) suggests that in order for a student to thrive within the school context, opportunities for recognition and achievement need to be created. This is often a challenge for schools when the student is constantly in trouble because of their challenging behaviours. The school and class teacher were encouraged to reflect on the specific education program the student was involved in and whether there was scope for in class support or for a modified program at the school level to maximise opportunities for success for the at risk student.

At the school, level any intervention needed to be relevant engaging and flexible with positive relationships with significant adults. PAL teachers ensured that the school and teachers were promoting a positive school climate, and that the PAL student was part of this climate and mixing with a pro social peer group. This contributed to the at risk student having a sense of belonging and connectedness for the student at school. Those responsible for the at risk student were primarily the PAL teacher and class teacher in the school setting.

3.13   Summary

According to Raynor and Montague (2000), the importance of promoting resilience may be a key strategy in attempting to reverse the trend of problematic behaviours

for children by placing less emphasis on risk factors and more emphasis on factors that promote well-being.

Parent Education was a critical protective process in the Program as a strategy for enhancing resilience in the children participating in the PAL intervention. The PAL intervention was a multifaceted and multi dimensional approach that spaned multiple settings including the school and the alternative education site. The intervention promoted the view that children can change their lives through learning new skills. The value of the PAL intervention was measured in any real differences the intervention made to the children's behaviour. While one cannot alter what has happened to the child in the past, the PAL intervention aimed at providing tools to assist the child to improve his future prospects by increasing aspects of their resilience.

The PAL program held the view that schools can been shown that they have the capacity when managing children with challenging behaviours, if they are willing to move from a deficit view of the child to a strengths based view and are willing to invest in making connections and have meaningful relationships with their most at risk children. This view aligns with Rolf and Johnson (1999) who refer to the importance of finding low-cost low-profile ways to provide real cost benefits in advance of large scale program delivery.

Students' display challenging behaviours for a variety of reasons. The researcher investigated whether the PAL Program is effective for students through targeted protective processes to enhance their resilience. The Program specifically targeted problem solving to equip students to improve their behaviour that could in turn lead to improved perceptions of their resilience. Critical protective process components of this intervention involved a student focus, professional development of the teachers and parent education. A range of data sources and instruments were used as part of this case study. A detailed description of the methodology is presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4:   METHODOLOGY

4.1   Introduction

Examination of the literature in Chapter Two identified the theoretical and conceptual framework for the Primary Assisted Learning program (PAL). This school-based program was founded on Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1963). The PAL program was also conceptualised around the resilience framework, focusing on interventions with the identified challenging students, their parents and class teachers.

In this chapter, the research design is detailed and justified, and the methods, techniques and data collection process are explained. The ways in which the data were analysed will also be discussed. This Chapter also provides an explanation of the limitations of the study, which included the instruments, established protocols related to the PAL program and the type and scope of available data.

4.2   Role of the researcher

4.2.1   Background

Behaviour management has been a passion of mine for many years, originating in my own school experiences. As a student, I perceived many teachers as harsh, inflexible, and as projecting an image of dislike for children especially those children with challenging behaviours. There did not seem to be any attempt to make sense of what was happening for the children with challenging behaviours, many of who were migrants. Throughout my working life, I have often found myself in roles where I have been working at the margins with the marginalised. It is little wonder that my role as Team Leader in the Behaviour Support Services (BSS) in Education Queensland was again focused on another group that I consider to be marginalised - students with challenging behaviours.

4.2.2 Participatory researcher

Supervising the team that designed and delivered the PAL program allowed me to be part of the intervention through delivering the Triple P component. Being part of the research is referred to as participatory research that Hall (1997) describes as being an integral process of investigation, education and action. Douglas (2000) explains the beneficial links between personal involvement by researchers and good data. He claims that forming close relationships with subjects can enhance the breadth and depth of the study, provide contextual locations for subjects, and merge the subjects and the phenomena being studied, as well as merging passion and practice.

My personal involvement in this research saw me operate as a participatory researcher. Various researchers have differing perspectives on what it means to be a participatory researcher based on their own lived experiences. As a researcher, I am able to make connections with the perspectives of (Gaventa, 1988) who stated:

> Participatory research attempts to break down the distinction between the researchers and the researched, the subjects and objects, of knowledge production by the participation of people-for-themselves of the process of gaining and creating knowledge. In the process, research is seen not only as a process of creating knowledge, but simultaneously, as education and development of consciousness, and of mobilization for action. (1988, p. 19; in Hall, 1997)

Equally, Fals, Borda and Rahman (1991) highlighted for me, as a researcher, to be mindful of the importance of being a partner in the process, and include the voices of the people and their perspectives. They state:

> An immediate objective…is to return to the people the legitimacy of the knowledge they are capable of producing through their own verification systems, as fully scientific, and the right to use knowledge, but not to be dictated by it-as a guide in their own action (1991, p. 15; in Hall, 1997)

Conducting any type of research creates challenges for the researcher but particularly in the role of a participatory researcher. In this role, says Hall (1997) methods have often been vague and for this reason suggests important factors to be considered including:

- Origins of issues;
- The roles those concerned with the issues play in the process;
- The immersion of the process in the context of the moment;
- The potential for mobilizing and for collective learning;

- The links to action;
- The understanding of how power relationships work; and
- The potential for communication with others experiencing oppression, or violence. (p. 200)

These factors were considered in my role as a participatory researcher in the PAL intervention by being open and transparent about the reasons for the study. Of particular importance in the PAL intervention, was the focus on the process rather than the outcome and allowing those most affected by the intervention to have a voice and the opportunity for to provide feedback.

My involvement in behaviour management has taught me that I explicitly learn a great deal from the students, teachers and parents. My learning from them further builds on my knowledge base and understanding of a very complex issue.

4.2.3 Credibility

Sturman (1997) states that the credibility of the researcher needs to be established through the case study approach. He says, for example, that that the procedures for data collection need to be explained to participants. In establishing the credibility of this study, the researcher provided a written explanation of the research project to all participants including students, parents and class teachers as well as the Queensland Education Department.

A further factor in establishing credibility in research is with the method of data collected and how the data should be displayed and prepared for analysis as a form of accountability to those involved in the research process (Sturman, 1997). The researcher ensured that every step of the research project was open and transparent through both oral and written communication to all involved. This was achieved through the parents having regular face to face and phone contact with the Behaviour Support Teachers (BST) who informed them of all aspects of the PAL program regarding the parenting and student component. The class teachers worked collaboratively with the BST's and as active participants and were kept aware of what was happening throughout the program. The BST's met weekly with the Team Leader as part of their supervision.

The researcher chaired the committee for referrals to the PAL intervention, which ensured that the researcher was completely aware of any issues for each of the students referred to PAL. The researcher was also kept informed of the relevant parental and school attitudes toward the PAL intervention, as well as the respective commitment levels of all those who participated. The researcher was an accredited facilitator for Triple P (Sanders & Markie-Dadds, 1992) and operated as a co-facilitator of the Parenting Program

4.2.4 Bias

Being a part the intervention and being the researcher highlighted a potential for bias by the researcher. Sturman (1997) stated that any actual or perceived biases must be acknowledged. Sturman also highlighted the importance of negative instances being reported. With this one-shot case study, the researcher was encouraged to learn as much about what was unsuccessful as successful.

The possible bias of the researcher was addressed through regular conversations with other members of the PAL team by way of "reality checking." The researcher was mindful that the study had to be authentic. In order to overcome any biases as a participatory researcher preconceived views, judgements, and invested interests were divested and subjugated to the final analysis of the data. Cohen et al. (2007) state that being mindful of any misunderstandings on the part of the respondents can counter any tendencies toward researcher bias.

Being aware that bias can exist was a productive away to ensure measures were implemented to counter any concerns. The researcher was aware that learning and insight is gained equally by reporting what is successful and what is unsuccessful. Both positive and negative aspects of the PAL intervention were reported in the results.

Sturman (1997) calls for clear and open transparency when he stated that the relationship between assertion and evidence should be clarified, primary evidence should be distinguished from secondary evidence and description from interpretation. He also suggests that methods should be devised to check the quality of data.

4.3   Ethical considerations

By nature, education research is a sensitive matter and ethical considerations were addressed at the outset of the study. Ethical clearance to undertake this study was sought and granted in writing from the Office of Research and Higher Degrees (ORHD) from the University of Southern Queensland (USQ). All ethical considerations were addressed and implemented. Specifically, anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by data being coded. In addition, every stage of the study was transparent to all stakeholders and participants. Documents accessed for data purposes were secured in a locked filing cabinet to which only the researcher had access (Cohen, et al., 2007).

When children are a part of any research it is critical to ensure that they are not harmed in any way because of their participation (Cohen, et al., 2007). Permission for approval to conduct this research was granted by Education Queensland Central Office as well as the Principal at the State school where the off campus program was conducted in a letter dated 2 November 2001. As part of Education Queensland's risk management policy, detailed guidelines were adhered to throughout this research. Additionally, all risk management procedures were followed in the adventure based learning component of the PAL intervention as set out by Education Queensland.

Each participant met with the researcher who explained the study and how the data would be used as well as answering any questions. A written explanation in the form of a pamphlet was provided to all those involved in the PAL intervention outlining the purpose and processes of the study as well as explaining resilience and the components of the PAL intervention. Parents and teachers were asked individually for permission to use the data gathered for research purposes, with authority being provided by parents and teachers through a *Consent to Participate* letter. Parents and referring schools also completed permission documentation for all activities that warranted approval. The researcher also informed participants that they could withdraw at any time throughout the study and provided contacts details if further questions arose throughout the study.

4.4   Research design

The research design has drawn on the one-shot case study method of Campbell and Stanley (1963) as set out in Popham, (1993).

4.4.1   One-shot case study

With any study the design and research methods selected need to be responsive to the particular research problem or question. The one-shot case study is a pre-experimental design that does not employ randomization procedures as a means of controlling extraneous factors. In a one-shot case study, a single group of test units are exposed to a treatment X, followed by a single measurement on the independent variable being taken (0^1). (D. T. Campbell & Stanley, 1963)

Figure 4.1 is a visual representation of the one-shot case study approach. With this method, there is no random assignment of individuals. This research approach is more appropriate for exploratory rather than conclusive research.

$$X \qquad 0^1$$

Treatment   Observation
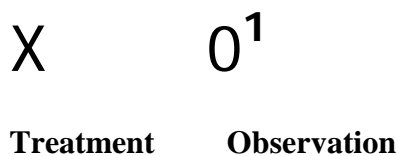
Figure 4.1:   One-shot case study approach

Guba and Lincoln (1989) explain:

> Both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any re-search paradigm. Questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigm, which we define as the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator (1989, p. 10).

With the PAL intervention the one-shot case study design of Campbell and Stanley (1963) as set out in Popham, (1993) was identified as the most appropriate design for describing the PAL program. This approach was useful as an exploratory measure for describing both the effectiveness and impact of the PAL intervention as a local initiative to address students with challenging behaviours. A useful aspect of this case

study approach is that it allowed for a narrow but detailed description of this small sample study.

Popham (1993) describes the one-shot case study as the administration of observation or measurement tools to a group of learners who have been the recipients of an educational intervention. This present research design takes the form of a case study that describes an intervention, the PAL Program. Popham, states that limitations to this type of evaluation are significant and are associated with issues around extraneous variables such as history, maturation, selection and mortality.

History refers to the specific events that occur at the same time but are not related to event or in this case the PAL program. Maturation refers to changes in the individuals themselves that occurs with the passage of time and cannot be attributed to the intervention. These factors are certainly relevant to the study of the PAL Program. For example the targeted students could have progressed developmentally over the six month period of the of the PAL Program regardless of the impact of the intervention. Being six months older could contribute to students' being more in control of their behaviours because of their increased maturity levels.

Selection in this context refers to participant bias when the provided treatment is inappropriate. Mortality rates of participants are an issue faced by researchers and refers to the drop out rates during the research. Whilst mortality rates could have been an issue for the participants in the PAL program, a high degree of communication and negotiation was established to counter this possibility and ensure needs were addressed throughout the intervention. Parents and class teachers were committed to the intervention at the outset. This is because both parents and teachers viewed the intervention as a proactive measure and supportive process for them and the students. Barriers were identified that could have influenced mortality rates and participation such as transportation to the alternative education site.

In spite of the limitations of the one-shot case study method Popham (1993) suggests that there are merits with this design if the early stages of the formative evaluation provide opportunities to get a sense of what happens to the participants. This evaluative design makes no claim for the possibility of generalising the program, because

of the limited sample size and research design. However, this research approach can provide insights gained by exploring what was effective with the PAL Program intervention and where improvements could be made.

According to Zach, (2006) the case study approach, founded in the theory of contemporary social construction, often recounts a rare or unusual condition or event. However, it may also be a description of a classic situation that can be used as a model or exemplar. Sturman (1997) suggests that case studies also provide a detailed description and understanding of a case where the researcher is open to new ideas that may challenge existing propositions. This can provide not only the means by which existing conjectures and theories can be tested, but that it can also lead to the development of new theoretical positions.

4.4.2 Research Approach

The one shot case study was chosen as the research design to explore the PAL program. The mixed method research approach was chosen because the combination of methods and ideas help to best frame, address and provide tentative answers to the research questions (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). Furthermore, it was best to use a mixture of research approaches that work best in a real world situation (Johnson, 2008).

Mixed Method research is a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques used in a single study. The mixed method research approach in this study allowed for an in-depth detailed view from a variety of data. Specifically this study was conducted in concurrent phases with the dominant status being quan→Qual meaning the overall study was primarily qualitative but at the same time included quantitative data (Johnson, 2008).

Johnson and Christensen (2007) suggested that by using a mixed method approach, narrative can be used to add meaning to numbers and likewise numbers can add precision to words, to generate and test a theory and therefore broader research questions can be answered. This approach can provide stronger evidence for conclusions and produce more complex knowledge to inform both theory and practice.

As with any model, there are also weaknesses with the mixed method approach. One weakness in particular, is that it is very time consuming. The researcher has the dilemma of how to effectively analyse the qualitative and quantitative data and how to interpret and make meaning of any conflicting results (Johnson, 2008). Regardless of the identified weaknesses of this research approach it was deemed to be the most appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to connect both the quantitative and qualitative data to the research questions, validate procedures of data collection and analysis and to arrive at meaningful conclusions and inferences with links made to theory. In spite of the limitations of the mixed method research approach, it is likely to provide superior research findings and outcomes (R. Johnson, et al., 2007, p. 129).

4.4.3   Program evaluation

It was important to capture and document the PAL intervention not only from a research perspective but also as an accountability tool as part of the BSS preventative initiative. There had been a lack of models to best examine the way to implement prevention programs in school settings or identifying factors that influence implementation within a school setting (Corboy & McDonald, 2007).

The purpose of any evaluation is to develop a better understanding for 'how' and in 'what ways' a program is effective or not (Greenberg, et al., 2004). Evaluation of the PAL program has led to a better understanding of the components of the program that can inform and guide current and future practitioners in school based prevention programs. More importantly, schools have become one of the most important settings in which preventative and wellness promotion interventions are conducted (Greenberg, et al., 2004).

Rogers (1969) stated, regarding the evaluation of programs, that it is important to understand what "it" is, before deciding whether "it" works and how do we get "it" to work next time. Chen (1990) states that based on theory-driven evaluations, the key foundation in designing an evaluation is to identify the critical assumptions of the program. Primarily, this is about how the program operates and why the program

is supposed to be effective, which are referred to as Causative Theory and Prescriptive Theory (Greenberg, et al., 2004).

Causative Theory involves planning an appropriate strategy to address the needs of the targeted population and at the same time using the available resources. Causative theory explains how a targeted problem develops, informs the selection of appropriate strategies and indicates how the program influences the targeted outcomes by identifying change as a function of the intervention (Greenberg, et al., 2004; Harachi, Abbott, Catalano, Haggerty, & Flemming, 1999). For this study the Causative theory was informed by the Resilience Framework (Durlack, 1998) drawing on risk factors and protective factors that the targeted at risk students already had in place.

Prescriptive Theory (Greenberg, et al., 2004) is an adaptation of Chen's prescriptive theory (Chen, 1998) that is described as the 'how to' of the program intervention. This incorporates the planning of the intervention, as well as the implementation processes of the intervention. The 'how to' of the PAL Program was detailed in Chapter 3 and included the content and process or implementation of the three distinct components which were student support, parent education and teacher professional development.

As part of the justification as to why program implementation should be studied Greenberg et al., (2004) identified seven different functional reasons:

- Effort Evaluation – To know what actually happened;
- Quality Improvement – To provide feedback for continuous quality improvement;
- Documentation – To document compliance with legal and ethical guidelines;
- Internal Validity – To strengthen the conclusions being made about program outcomes;
- Program Theory – To examine whether the change process occurred as expected;
- Diffusion – To advance knowledge regarding best practices for replicating, maintaining and diffusing the program; and
- Evaluation Quality – To strengthen the quality of program evaluations by reducing the error in the evaluation. (p. 6)

With any school-based program, consideration needs to be given to quality and suitability of materials, professional development, as well as structure, timing and the

content of the program. For program evaluations to be effective, it is extremely important to have multiple perspectives (Fetterman, 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Stake, 1975). Greenberg et al., (2004) stated that school based prevention practices will reach their full maturity only when known effective programs are implemented with integrity. To maintain the integrity of PAL the aspects of program implementation as proposed by Greenberg were considered in the implementation of the PAL Program.

4.4.4   Evaluation of the research design and approach

Because of the nature of education settings, there is a higher likelihood of issues with interventions not being standardized because the program or intervention is happening within a real life context. These concerns highlight the issues of trustworthiness of this particular research approach in terms of validity and reliability. In question is the reliability of data from a qualitative perspective because of the interpretive nature compared to accurate representation of a quantitative numerical approach.

Attempts to address issues of trustworthiness or credibility in this case study were made by putting steps into place to avoid invalidity. Cresswell and Tashakkori (2007) stated that countering issues of trustworthiness is possible by; strengthening answers to the research questions that connect both qualitative and quantitative components; distinctly presenting the qualitative and quantitative data that are analysed and presented, and making inferences and forming conclusions based on the results. Finally, integrating the qualitative and quantitative data into conclusions that are comprehensive and meaningful.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) cited in Cohen (2007) support the merits of the case study design in research because it is more concerned with a rich and vivid description of events. The case study design provides a chronological narrative of events relevant to the case and blends a description of events with the analysis of them. It also focuses on individual actors or groups of actors and seeks to understand their perceptions of the events. As well as highlighting specific events that are relevant to the case, attempts were made to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 253).

Using the one-shot case study provided a means to explore the content and implementation of methods of the PAL Program. Shepard and Carlson (2003) state that while there is a plethora of intervention programs being implemented in schools, evaluation of these programs are in the early stages. What is needed, they say, is for school staff to be able to identify which evidence based school programs are effective models for replication and implementation.

Addressing the behaviour issues for at risk students, required a multi dimensional approach and in this instance PAL involved the students, parents and teachers (Wasserman & Miller, 1998). Pianta and Walsh (1998) argue that the complex nature of a child's behaviour necessitates complex explanations. Therefore, to make sense of these complexities the combined research approach of mixed methodology was applied to provide explanations that made sense of the complex nature of this issue being studied.

In spite of the limitations of both the one-shot case study design (Popham, 1993) and the mixed method approach, this methodology proved to be a legitimate and effective way to explore and describe PAL, a school based intervention program. In particular, this method was valuable in identifying the components of the PAL program for exploring particular protective processes that contribute to reducing the students challenging behaviours.

4.4.5   Selection of participants

In recent times, interventions with students possessing challenging behaviours have focused on early identification of risk factors. This is because of the insurmountable evidence suggesting that at risk students who are left untreated until adolescence can prove be highly resistant to interventions (Corboy & McDonald, 2007). Early identification is therefore important in identifying students in their formative years, suitable for prevention intervention programs.

Participants in this research included eight students who were identified as at risk owing to their challenging behaviours. These students attended urban primary

schools in two education districts in Brisbane, Australia. The students were identified as having challenging behaviours and either had been suspended or were at risk of being both suspended and/or excluded from school.

For students to qualify for the PAL intervention they each needed to have received previous and intensive intervention from the PAL teacher with the BSS. All students referred to PAL had previously accessed the BSS and had received, at the very least, a ten week intervention with the PAL teacher working with them both individually and in their classroom.

The students who participated in the PAL intervention were aged between eight and nine from Grades 3 and 4. None of the children referred to PAL had any physical impairment or had been assessed as having neither an intellectual deficit nor a history of psychosis. The primary referral problems according to the information gathered from the schools via the classroom teacher, guidance officer, learning support teacher and parent were that each of the students had displayed misconduct, non-compliance, aggression and oppositional behaviours.

Of the eight students that attended the PAL intervention, six were from single parent families. All parents identified the children as displaying challenging behaviours in the home that included tantrums, arguments, swearing, physical assault, property damage, self-harm, avoiding chores and avoiding homework.

4.4.6   Limitations

A limitation influencing this study was that the PAL program was developed and implemented before there was an opportunity to gather any baseline data. In particular, the skills of parents or teachers in managing students with challenging behaviours.

Further limitations of this case study were that there were many 'givens' that had already been established. Examples include, that the PAL program operated within the guidelines determined by the School Principals' Representatives for the two education districts. Moreover, there were pre-existing program guidelines which included

the length of time of the intervention which was six months and the number of student participants were predetermined.

Other limitations of this case study were that the measures used in the PAL program were previously determined. The Conner's Rating Scales (CRS) Short Version (Conners, 2000) was the instrument already being used across the two districts to assess the behaviour issues for at risk students with challenging behaviours. This was supervised by a school psychologist. Consequently, this was the measure used in the PAL program for screening students to identify if the students were suitable to participate in the PAL program. The rationale for the use of the Conners instrument was the strength of the instrument for diagnosis and confirmation of students' behaviours, as well as consistency of data collection measures across the districts.

The dilemma here was the needs of practice held sway over the needs for research. This ensured that a design more robust than a one-shot case study was not possible. Bernard (2000) says "Never use a design of less logical power when one of greater power is feasible. If pre-test data are available, use them. On the other hand a one-shot case study is often the best you can do."

4.5 Timelines

The PAL program was conducted during Semester 2, 2002, June-December, when the majority of the data were collected. Other data were collected in early June before the commencement of PAL, which was used to assess students' suitability for the PAL program and to develop the most appropriate intervention for each student. Data from *The Parent One Year Follow-up Survey* was collected in December 2003, after the conclusion of the intervention. Table 4.1 captures the timeline, focus and scope of data gathered for participant screening into the PAL program.

Table 4.1: Participant screening at entry into the PAL program

Participant Screening and Timeline	Research Question (RQ)	Focus	Instruments	Research Approach
June 2002	**RQ 1** What potential does the PAL intervention have as a behaviour management strategy for at risk students in primary schools?	Assessment of the students' presenting behaviours to determine suitability for the PAL intervention	*School Referral Form* *Student Profile* *Parent Initial Data Summary* *Behaviour Management Plans* *Conners Rating Scales* *Resilience Perceptions Checklists*	Researcher collects all data sources linked to participant screening for analysis both quantitative and qualitative.

Table 4.2 captures the timeline, focus, instruments, and collection method of data gathered at the completion of the Program.

Table 4.2: Completion of the PAL program

Completion of the Program and Timeline	Research Question (RQ)	Focus	Instruments	Research Approach
December 2002 Feelings and attitudes at completion of the PAL Program	**RQ 1** What potential does the PAL intervention have as a behaviour management strategy for at risk students in primary schools? **RQ2** What are the perceptions of stakeholders and participants of the design and structure of the PAL Program? **RQ3** What are the perceived outcomes of students who participated in the PAL Program?	Feelings and attitudes based on the data sources generated at the completion of the PAL Program identified stakeholder satisfaction levels of the program and perceptions of students behaviours and resilience	*Conners Rating Scales* *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience* *A PAL Day Student Snapshot* *Teacher Report on the PAL intervention* *End of program report on PAL student* *School feedback/evaluation of the PAL intervention* *Parent One Year Follow Up Survey.* (December 2003)	Researcher gathers data that includes both qualitative and quantitative data sources in the form of opened ended and semi structured questionnaires as well as Likert scales

4.6 Instruments

Student information was gathered before the commencement of the intervention from the school, class teacher, parent and student. A range of instruments were used to confirm the behaviours of the students before the commencement of the intervention. At the conclusion of the PAL program a range of instruments were also administered. List of instruments are:

- PAL intervention school referral form;
- PAL Referral Student Profile;
- PAL Parent Information Initial Data Collection;
- Individual Behaviour Management Plan;
- Conners' Rating Scales -
  - Teachers Rating Scale Short Version (CTRS-R: S) (Conners, 2000);
  - Conners' Parent Rating Scale Short Version (CPRS-R: S) (Conners, 2000);
  - Conners-Wells' Adolescent Self-Report Scale Short Version (CASS: S);
- Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience; (Grotberg, 1995)
- PAL Day Student Snapshot;
- Teacher Report on the PAL intervention
- End of program report on PAL student;
- School feedback/evaluation of the PAL intervention; and
- Parent One Year Follow Up Survey.

The following section provides a detailed description of the variety of instruments used. The various questionnaires designed by the PAL teachers were based on constructs by Cohen et al. (2007). The purposes of the questionnaires were to gather data that would provide information about the students in relation to their behaviours, as well as their perceptions and insights into the PAL Program. Cohen et al., (2007) state what is required in the construction of any questionnaire:

- It must be clear on its purpose;
- Is clear on what needs to be included or covered in order to meet the purpose;
- Is exhaustive in its coverage of the elements of inclusion;
- Asks the most appropriate kinds of question;
- Elicits the most appropriate kind of data to answer the research purposes and sub-questions; and
- Asks for empirical data. (p. 320)

The following sub-sections describe the instruments used to gather data in the PAL program.

4.6.1 *PAL intervention school referral form* (Appendix A)

The *PAL intervention school referral form,* was completed by the school staff in consultation with the class teacher, parent, guidance counsellor, administrators and other key staff who provided support to the targeted student. Information required, included the reasons for the school seeking the student's placement in the PAL Program.

Schools also documented what was currently occurring with the student in the classroom and playground, the current behaviour management strategies being used, and any other interventions they had implemented. The school was also required to identify the outcomes they were seeking for the student.

To assist the PAL teachers' understanding of the student's situation, the school provided the following information regarding the student:

- Their education history;
- Any safety concerns;
- Current stress level;
- Any special needs;
- The number of suspensions incurred or impending; and
- Any pertinent family information that would assist in assessing the referral.

The purpose of this referral form was for the school to provide as much information as possible to the PAL teachers to enable the PAL teachers to firstly assess the suitability of the student to enter the PAL Program. Secondly, if accepted, into the program, this same information was used to formulate an *Individual Behaviour Management Plan (IBMP)* for the student.

4.6.2 *PAL Referral Student Profile* (Appendix B)

A student profile was created for each of the referred students from information provided by the school regarding the student's:

- Academic performance;
- Capacity to work independently;

- Capacity to participate in group work;
- Self concept;
- Self awareness;
- Ability to make and keep friends;
- Level of self control;
- Ability to use appropriate social skills; and
- Ability to stay on task.

The strengths and abilities of the students were also documented along with their sporting abilities and any special interests. Information regarding the skills and attributes of the students were also provided by the school regarding the student's:

- Ability to follow instructions;
- Fear responses;
- Frustration and tolerance levels;
- Attention seeking behaviours;
- The use of manipulative behaviours; and
- The number, if any, of revenge acts observed.

4.6.3   *PAL student information initial data collection from parent*

Parents are obviously a critical element in the management of students with challenging behaviours (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2008). The PAL teachers scheduled individual interviews with each student's parent/s before the commencement of the intervention in order to continue gathering as much information as possible about the targeted students. Parents were invited to provide medical information, and information regarding any previous assessment and/or any prior behaviour intervention concerning their child. Information was sought regarding the student's birth/early childhood, pre school and their infant school years.

Parents were also asked to describe their child's behaviour at home and their ability with self-care skills. Information was sought as to any home responsibilities the child was required to fulfil and information regarding their child's friends. Details were also sought regarding the child's leisure interests, sporting skills, and the parent's perceptions of their child's behaviours at school.

4.6.4   *Individual Behaviour Management Plan* (**Appendix C**)

The importance of supporting the school, class teacher and the targeted student when working with students' with challenging behaviours was acknowledged by way of the IBMP. The plans were collaboratively created by the class teacher and PAL teacher, from all the data gathered on the targeted student. Specific goals were formulated for each student along with corresponding strategies to meet each goal. The IBMP was operationalised throughout the PAL intervention.

The IBMP was a very important strategy for dealing with students with challenging behaviours and was linked to the reasons for referral. A number of targeted goals were identified for each student along with specific strategies to meet each goal. The goals were broadly categorized into five main areas:

- Anger management;
- Dealing with conflict;
- Self esteem;
- Classroom support; and
- Social interactions.

The main strategies used in the implementation of the goals as set out in the IBMP were:

- Adventure based learning activities;
- Social skills lessons;
- Individual support; and
- Increasing the student's repertoire in anger management skills.

4.6.5   Conner's Rating Scales

The *Conner's Rating Scales (CRS)* (Conners, 2000) as stated above, was a measure already in use by the School Guidance Officers in the two education districts at the time of the research as a diagnostic tool for students with challenging behaviours. Therefore, there were explicit expectations for PAL to use this same instrument for consistency of practice.

This measure, administered under the supervision of a school psychologist, was used for screening the behaviours of the students (Conners, 2000). The CRS's (Conners, 2000) main use was initially as a scale for the assessment of ADHD and similar characteristics. However, it has a much broader scope that includes, but is not limited

to, the assessment of conduct, cognitive, family and anxiety problems. Essentially, it is a simplistic measure, according to Conners, to communicate a range of a child's problems (Conners, 2000).

The Rating Scale was revised in 1997 by Conners and his team and is used extensively in schools, clinics, inpatient clinics, residential treatment centres, juvenile detention centres and private practice offices to identify the many aspects of behaviour problems (Conners, 2000). The rating scales are a culmination of 30 years of research on childhood and adolescent psychopathology and problem behaviours. The scale is a set of measurements for the diagnosis and assessment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) characteristics and related problem behaviours such as Oppositional behaviours and Cognitive Problems/Inattention in children and adolescents (Conners, 2000). The CRS are aligned with and are directly related to the DSM-1V with updated norms and large representative normative samples.

The CRS has three types of rating scales – parent, teacher and an adolescent self-report. Conners (2000) states that the CRS are useful for gathering information from teachers and parents, defining behaviour problems, as well as shaping intervention plans and measuring intervention outcomes. He also states that conflicts in reporting can aid in identifying biased responses. However, he cautions that, as with any screening measures, there is a risk of false positives and false negatives and encourages that the measure is combined with other sources of information.

The short version of the CRS was used by the students, teachers and parents as it was deemed more suitable for this study. The short version of the CRS assesses Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) along with problems to do with conduct, cognition, family, emotional, anger and anxiety each of which was considered to be valuable and pertinent and could be linked to the challenging behaviours that the students were exhibiting.

4.6.5.1   Teacher scales

Relying solely on the parent/carers perspective would do a disservice to the child in providing a complete picture of a child's behaviours. For that reason, drawing on the teachers' insights and perspectives were crucial in assisting in an evaluation the child's behaviour.

Important focus areas include concentration, attention and the child's level of activity when assessing a child in the class context. Teachers' are able to compare the student with their age cohorts and to observe them in an atmosphere requiring sustained concentration. Teachers are also more likely than parents to notice any of the child's social and academic problems. Furthermore, teachers' ratings and evaluation within different situations at school are essential to assist in identifying whether the child's primary problem is behavioural, academic, medical or social.

The teacher scales provide the most economical and objective way to obtain relevant assessment information about students, while providing an ideal means for describing academic, social and emotional behaviours of the student in the classroom. The CTRS-R:S contains 28 items, and covers a subset of the subscales. The index of Oppositional scale includes five items, Cognitive Problems/Inattention index has five items, and Hyperactivity has seven items with the ADHD index having 12 items. This diagnostic tool allows teachers to have a consistent normative framework for assessing typical classroom behaviour (Conners, 2000).

4.6.5.2 Parent Scales

The CPRS-R:S complimented the CTRS-R:S. The Parent's ratings reveal their child's behaviour at home and in other environments where only the parent has the opportunity to observe the child. The Quick Score form for parents contains 27 items, and covers a subset of the subscales. The items are: Oppositional (six items), Cognitive Problems/Inattention (six items), Hyperactivity (6 items) and ADHD index (12 items). It is extremely important to gain insights from the parents/carers perspective regarding their child's behaviour in the home and community environments (Conners, 2000).

A strength of the CPRS-R:S assessment tool was that the parents were able to report on their children's behaviours from the family context. Similarly, the teachers were able to report on the school and classroom context as the lens for judging the typical classroom behaviour of the students (Conners, 2000).

4.6.5.3 Student Scales

For the Conners-Wells' Adolescent Self-Report Scale: Short Form (CASS:S) (1997) (Conners, 2000) 27 items are recommended for youth between the ages of 12 and 17. The subscales of the CASS:S are aligned to the parent and teacher short forms. The four subscales are Conduct problems, Cognitive Problems/Inattention and Hyperactivity each with six items and ADHD with 12 items. The CRS-S Scale was developed using a database that consisted of close to 11,000 responses, with approximately 8,000 responses being used for norms. This approach is supported by Achenbach (1995) who stressed the importance of self-report measures as a tool that contributes substantially to understanding the psychiatry and psychology of a child.

The self report measure also aides in formulating interventions based on the student's perspective. Conners (2000) recommend this form not be administered to children less than 12 years of age. In spite if this, the Senior Educational Psychologist working across both Education Districts supervised the use of these measures as stated above. To counter any issues arising as a result of the Scale being administered to younger children, all items were read to the children being assessed. The children's responses were then recorded. No adverse effects were evident or reported.

The Conners scales are a set of measurements for the assessment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) characteristics and related problem behaviours such as Oppositional behaviours and Cognitive Problems/Inattention in children and adolescents (Conners, 2000). This approach allowed an opportunity to evaluate the degree of pervasiveness of problematic behaviours.

According to Conners, (2000) scoring high on the ADHD scale identifies the student as being at risk of possessing ADHD tendencies. These tendencies include that the subject avoids, is reluctant or has difficulties engaging in tasks, has a lack of concen-

tration in class, fails to finish school work and chores, is inattentive and easily distracted, fidgets, has a short attention span, is messy or disorganized, is easily frustrated and has difficulty remaining in their seat in the classroom.

Students with high scores on the Oppositional scale indicate the likelihood that they will break rules, have problems with persons in authority and become more easily annoyed and angered than most individuals their own age. With high scores on the Hyperactivity, scale the student would have difficulty sitting still, feel more restless and impulsive than most individuals their age, and have the need to always be 'on the go'.

Scoring high on the Cognitive Problems/Inattention scale may indicate that the student is inattentive. The student may have more academic difficulties than most individuals their age, have problems organizing their work, have difficulty completing tasks or schoolwork, and appear to have trouble concentrating on tasks that require sustained mental effort.

4.6.5.4 Summary

Concerns about students with challenging behaviours can be reported from a variety of different sources. These can be the students themselves, parents, peers, teachers, other family members and community people. To that end, when collecting information about students who present with problematic behaviours, it is important to use multiple sources in order to gain a complete profile of the student.

The three scales as set out above, gathered information from different situations and environments and from multiple sources. According to Conners, the rating scales are extremely useful to elicit self-perceptions of the child/adolescent, as well as capturing how parents and teachers choose to describe a child. However, he cautions that limitations, biases and errors of judgement can occur and says that these can be offset by skill, professional judgements and the amassing of other data (Conners, 2000).

There could be limitations for using this instrument on children aged nine and ten. However, these concerns were addressed by the administrator of the questionnaire

reading the questions to the children and ensuring the child's comprehension for each item.

The PAL teachers converted the raw scores into standard scores with the scores graphed on the short version scoring forms. For data analysis purposes, the scores were then converted into pivot tables for comparative purposes.

4.6.6   *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Appendix D)

The *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Grotberg, 1995) was used to gather data about the participating student's perception of resilience. Students, parents, and class teachers were invited to complete the checklist. The PAL intervention drew on the protective factors of problem solving within the resilience framework as a strategy to target the students challenging behaviours. Therefore, it was important to gather data about perceptions of resilience of the students as a participant screening for the program. This checklist was administered to the targeted students at the completion of the program. For the students, the PAL teachers read the questions and recorded their responses.

This particular instrument was chosen for its simplicity, length and because it covered all the major factors within the resilience framework. The checklist has 15 items that require a response of Yes or No to a descriptive statement that indicates if the child has protective factors in place. This checklist covers child factors, family factors, school context, life events along with community and cultural factors.

The items for the checklist were developed in cooperation with the members of an Advisory Committee made up of international organizations formed with Civitan, UNESCO, Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) World Health Organisation (WHO) International Children's Center (ICC), ICCB and the VanLeer Foundation. The Checklist was field tested by students at the University of Maryland (Grotberg, 1995).

Students, teachers and parents were requested to answer *Yes* or *No* to questions concerning whether the child felt loved unconditionally, had an older person they could

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tell their problems to and share their feelings with and whether the child is praised when displaying positive behaviour.

Questions also included as to whether family members were reliable and if the child:
- Had someone with whom they could identify;
- Was optimistic;
- Was liked;
- Believed in a greater power;
- Tried new things;
- Strived to achieve;
- Feels they make a difference;
- Likes him/her self;
- Is able to focus and stay on task;
- Has a sense of humour; and
- Is well organised (Grotberg, 1995).

4.6.7   *PAL Day Student Snapshot* (Appendix E)

The PAL teachers requested students to complete a *PAL Day Student Snapshot* questionnaire that was based on questions about the student's experiences of their day's activities and identified a skill they had acquired.

The purpose of this open-ended questionnaire, designed by the PAL teachers, was to capture the students' PAL experiences at a specific point in time. Students completed the questionnaire about their experiences of a day in the PAL Program near the completion of the program. Students were asked to complete sentence stems about their day that specifically identified the student's experiences, skills acquired during the planned activities, what the student felt they still required assistance with, a description of their successes for the day as well as a self rating scale of their behavioural performance.

4.6.8   *Teacher Report on the PAL intervention*

The *Teacher Report on the PAL intervention* was also an open-ended questionnaire, designed by the PAL teachers, to gather information from the class teachers who received professional development as part of the teacher support component. The questionnaire was administered at the conclusion of the six month PAL intervention.

The questionnaire served dual purposes. The PAL teachers needed to know specifically whether perceived behavioural changes, if any, were evident in the targeted students and whether the teachers found the professional development component worthwhile.

To that end, questions were posed as to whether the PAL intervention assisted the targeted students and if there was evidence of perceived changes in their behaviour. For the teacher, the questions were concerned with how well the teacher felt they were supported throughout the PAL intervention.

Specific questions were also included about particular program components. For example, the different strategies used because of the PAL professional development support and the identification any specific any aspects of the PAL intervention that were most useful. The teacher was also asked to identify anything that was unhelpful during the professional development component and was encouraged to provide feedback in suggesting improvements and any recommendations for the future.

4.6.9   *End of program report on PAL student*

An *End of program report* was completed at the conclusion of the PAL Program by PAL and class teachers. One report for each student and a copy of each was sent to the Principal of each referring school. The report included a statement regarding the reasons for the initial referral, observations made during the PAL Program about the students' individual characteristics, relationships/social interactions with peers and also any individual difficulties and critical incidents witnessed throughout the intervention.

The PAL teachers reported on any successes or changes with the students' behaviours. A section was included containing anecdotal information gathered by the PAL teachers during the semester intervention that was gathered from the class teacher and administration team about aspects of the student's behaviour at school. The PAL teachers also made recommendations for on-going behaviour management strategies for the student.

4.6.10 *School feedback/evaluation of the PAL intervention* (Appendix F)

The PAL teachers developed a questionnaire for schools, to gain further feedback and evaluate the effectiveness of the PAL intervention. This was administered at the conclusion of the PAL Program. The questionnaire consisted of four forced choices questions using a Likert scale, two open ended questions and provided an opportunity for further comments.

The Likert scale questions related to whether the negotiated goals in the intervention plan were met by the BSS, whether the case manager/school was fully informed during the intervention by the BSS and if the outcomes in the intervention plan negotiated by BSS and the school were met. The open-ended questions were aimed at identifying any aspects of the program that the school found most useful and to discover any gaps in the service delivery. Schools were also provided with the opportunity to make any other comments and recommendations.

4.6.11 *Parent One Year Follow-up Survey*

One year after the PAL intervention concluded, parents of the targeted students were contacted and requested to complete the *Parent One Year Follow-up Survey* in December 2003. This survey was designed by the PAL team to gain information about the usefulness of the intervention with their child and the parents and to ascertain if there were any perceived changes in the child's behaviour.

The *Parent One Year Follow-up Survey* was designed by the PAL team to provide a voice to the student's parents regarding the various components of the PAL intervention and whether or not the intervention was effective. The survey was designed specifically around the elements of the PAL intervention. No other survey was available to capture the feedback sought from the parents' perspective, because the PAL intervention was designed locally in order to respond the needs of students with challenging behaviours and to provide a multi-dimension array of interventions.

The survey consisted of four sections. The first section required the parents to respond to questions about the usefulness of the PAL intervention. Parents were asked to rate the usefulness on a scale of one to four (four being the most useful to one being the least useful). In the following sections parents were surveyed about:

- The usefulness of the PAL teacher working at the school with their child;
- The usefulness of the PAL teacher discussing their child's progress with them on PAL days;
- If Triple P was still being used; and
- Specifically which Triple P skills were still being used?

Parents were also surveyed about their child's behaviour, as a result of the PAL intervention, regarding tantrums, arguments, swearing, physical threats, physical assaults, property damage, self-harm, avoiding chores and avoiding homework. The Parents were asked to indicate the frequency of these behaviours since the PAL intervention. The scale used to measure the frequency was: Less, Same, More and Not Applicable (N/A).

Furthermore, the Parents were asked to rate the social interactions of their child. That is, comparing the child's interactions before the PAL intervention and one year after the conclusion the PAL intervention. The scale used in this measure was Better, Same, Worse or Not Applicable. There were specific questions relating to their child's behaviour about talk/play with siblings, talk/play with parent(s), talk/play with relatives, talk/play with neighbourhood kids, participation in parties/sleepovers and participation in organized activities, for example, sport. A section of the *Parent One Year Follow-up Survey* also asked parents to make any additional comments about the PAL intervention.

Qualitative data analysis focuses on narrative and description (Cohen, et al., 2007). As a result, some of the questions were open-ended and process orientated in the *Parent One Year Follow-up Survey*, which allowed parents to explain how the PAL intervention had influenced on their child's behaviour from their perspective.

4.7   Data analysis

The large volume of data generated in this study were analysed in two stages. The first stage was at the PAL program entry and the second stage was at the conclusion of the program. The purpose of any data analysis is to explain the data, make sense of the data for the participants noting patterns, themes and categories. The process used to analyse the data followed a seven step process (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 184):

- Step 1 Establish units of analysis of the data indicating how these units are similar and different from each other;
- Step 2 Create a 'domain' analysis;
- Step 3 Establish relationships and linkages between domains;
- Step 4 Make speculative inferences;
- Step 5 Summarise;
- Step 6 Seek negative discrepant cases; and
- Step 7 Theory generation.

Applying each of these steps involved drawing on the mixed method, qualitative and quantitative data that were coded, grouped, collated and captured in tables. Data were analysed to identify the range of students' behaviours based on descriptions from respondents. Further analysis was undertaken to identify patterns, themes and verification of the severity of the students' behaviours amongst respondents. Once relationships were formed about the students' issues, the next step in this process was to make inferences about what impacted on student behaviours and resilience, for example, commitment to the intervention of the PAL, program support for students, parents and teachers, perceptions of enhanced student resilience and perceptions of improved student behaviour.

The qualitative data was captured by way of tables and spreadsheets. The quantitative data at PAL entry and program conclusion from Conners' Scales Short Versions (Conners, 2000) were entered using pivot tables and displayed in figures. For each data set, a summary of the main features was undertaken identifying key issues.

All data were included, specifically negative data. Reporting negative data is extremely important to ensure robustness in relation to the applicability of the theory (Cohen, et al., 2007) Importantly to ensure that the identities of respondents remained anonymous, alphabetical letters from A to H were assigned to each of the 8 targeted students participating in the PAL intervention. Quotes from respondents were included as part of the narrative. In Chapter Five, findings from this study were

linked to the theory from the literature review in Chapter Two. It was from these findings that the conclusions and recommendations were made in Chapter Six.

4.8   Summary

This chapter outlined the research design (one shot case study) and the research approach (mixed method) that provided a lens for the researcher to describe the data generated from this study. A description of the qualitative and quantitative data collected in the PAL program was included. Also included in this chapter was the process for data analysis, limitations of the research design and approach and ethical considerations were addressed. In Chapter Five, the data gathered from the PAL program will be analysed, findings indentified along with a conceptual critique of the themes that have emerged.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This one shot case study design outlined in Chapter Four, relied on a mixed method approach for data collection. The case study describes (Langbein & Felbinger, 2006, p. 107) the PAL Program for at risk students with challenging behaviours, as well as exploring the components of the PAL Program.

As explained in Chapter Three, data were first gathered about the targeted student to determine if the student was suitable to enter the intervention program. On selection into the program, this initial data were used to formulate an Individual Behaviour Management Plan (*IBMP)*. Data were also collected again at the conclusion of the program.

Initially the following data was presented and analysed:

- PAL intervention school referral form;
- PAL Referral Student Profile;
- PAL Parent Information Initial Data Collection;
- Conners'
  - Teachers Rating Scale Short Version (CTRS-R:S) (Conners, 2000);
  - Conners' Parent Rating Scale Short Version (CPRS-R:S) (Conners, 2000);
  - Conners-Wells' Adolescent Self-Report Scale Short Version (CASS:S) (Conners, 2000); and
- *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Grotberg, 1995).

The *PAL intervention school referral form,* was completed by the eight referring schools. This data source was analysed to capture emergent similarities, differences and themes for each of the referred students (Table 5.1). The *PAL Referral Student Profile* (Table 5.2) was also provided by the school and analysed to compare and contrast attributes and skills of the eight targeted at risk students.

Once the student was accepted into PAL, the PAL teachers convened a meeting with the Parent and collected information concerning their child and this formed the *PAL Parent Information Initial Data Collection* (Table 5.3). This information was ana-

lysed and the eight parent responses were used to identify similarities and differences between the eight targeted students as well as a comparison of the school's perspective of each student compared to that of the parent.

The purpose of the information gathered for participant screening was to identify the nature of the students' problematic behaviours. This data were used to design an appropriate intervention for the targeted students. The nature of problems that the students presented with ranged from having poor social skills, inability to make and keep friends, high frustration levels, to violence and other attention seeking behaviours.

To confirm the behaviours of the students referred to PAL the *Conners' Teacher and Parent Rating Scales* (Conners, 2000) and the *Conner and Wells' Self Report Scale* (Conners, 2000) were used as diagnostic tools. A summary of each of the four scales for parents, teachers and students are captured in Figures 5.1 to 5.8. Data were also gathered using the behaviour rating scale as a screening tool completed by the class teachers (8), students (8) and parents (8). Having a number of discrete respondents provided information about the students from various perspectives and strengthened the assessment process. This data were analysed to identify the areas that were most problematic for students using the indices of ADHD, Cognitive Problems, Conduct Problems and Hyperactivity.

The *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Grotberg, 1995) was used to measure perceptions of resilience in relation to the referred students, and was completed by the teachers (8), students (8) and parents (8), again to gather information from various perspectives. The data were analysed to identify the similarities and differences in perceptions of the perspectives given by the various respondents as to the perceived resilience of the at risk students.

A summary of the perceptions of the students in relation to resilience is summarised in Table 5.8, for teachers in Table 5.9 and parents in Table 5.10. Whilst the *Conners' Behaviour Rating Scales* do not measure the resilience of the student per se, implicit in this data source is that if a child scores indicate significant problematic behaviours with the ADHD index, Cognitive Problems index, Conduct Problems index and the

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Hyperactivity index then there are clearly risk factors present for the student This in turn highlight a lack of proactive factors present.

The analysis of the Conners Rating Scales (Conners, 2000) and Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience (Grotberg, 1995) will be discussed in the program conclusion section where comparisons are made of entry and conclusion data. As outlined in Chapter 4 the data were analysed (Cohen, et al., 2007) according to the following steps:

- Collation and analysis of all data generated from students, parents and teachers;
- Data displayed through tables and spreadsheets;
- Inferences drawn by identifying themes; and
- Findings reported.

5.2   Participant screening for the PAL program

5.2.1   *PAL intervention school referral form*

Table 5.1 is a collation of the written comments from the *PAL intervention school referral form*. It is a summary of data for each of the targeted students who attended the PAL intervention as well as the referral factors that were used to determine whether the student was deemed suitable for the PAL intervention. Contributors to the content of this form were the class teacher and could include the Principal or Deputy Principal, Guidance Officer and Learning Support Teacher. Following the table is a discussion of the comparative analysis of the data highlighting the similarities and differences of issues for each of the eight students.

Table 5.1: *PAL intervention school referral form*

Referral Factors	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Reasons for placement	Aggressive behaviour in the playground: -kicking, -punching -pushing -quick tempered -bursts into tears easily,	Disruptive and anti social behaviour Low self esteem Inability to form appropriate relationships Violent and dangerous play	Physical Aggression Temper tantrums Leaving the classroom	Lost his work ethic. Does very little work and does not appear to be able to stay on task for very long. Behaviour both in and out of the classroom has deteriorated quite dramatically this term. Involved: -in fighting -disobeying teacher instructions -teasing other children.	-Breaking things -calling out, silly comments -swinging on chair, -bullying other children -kicking punching, wrestling and related play very restless	Having difficulty functioning at all times in the classroom. Behaviours that lead him to be taken out of the classroom, either to another teacher or the office. Behaviour is also sometimes violent toward other children and adults	Extremely disruptive -repeatedly calling out and interrupts teacher and children, -destructive: cuts and rips papers, pencils, chair bag, and clothes. -Very changeable behaviours, -violent to other children	Aggressive, non-cooperative behaviour

Referral Factors	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Current Management Strategies	Counselling by Principal, and Deputy Principal. Reinforcement of school rules by class teacher	Positive reinforcement (usually unsuccessful) Removal Suggested development of an individual management plan.	Withdrawn from classroom: -Red cards -Detention -Sent to office	Behaviour management team involved whole class/group work. Working with Principal on behaviour management strategies	Positive reinforcement, praise works very well. Being kept in at lunchtime. Lines work well for inappropriate behaviour	Goes to another teacher who has outdoor interests to involve F. Building a relationship with Deputy Five step process based on PAL model	Behaviour management program involves verbal warnings (2) Time out – relocation to other classes Sent to office Positive feedback for good behaviour. Daily reporting in book for parents re behaviour	Behaviour Support Services School management classroom I.E.P. Playground restrictions Admin monitoring

Referral Factors	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
What's happening now? * **Classroom** * **Playground**	**Classroom**: -More compliant when rewards are offered -Takes comments/gestures very personally -If he feels others will report on him about a playground incident - will have a story prepared.	**Classroom**: -Disruptive behaviour, low self-esteem leads to poor attitude towards all work. -Will do anything to avoid work. -Is often grumpy.	**Classroom**: -Disruptive: -Physical assaults on other children when frustrated -Storms out of classroom -Hides under table.	**Classroom**: -Academic results on downward slide -Very distracted – off task 80% of time -Behaviour becoming more disruptive.	**Classroom**: Calling out, silly comments, swings on chair, very restless	**Classroom**: -Only occasionally follows instructions -Is violent to other people in classroom -Aggressive behaviours toward teacher and other helpers, parents and aide.	**Classroom**: -Begins day compliantly -Calls out -Makes rude noises -Wrecks pencils, sheets -Makes comments about others.	**Classroom**: -Listens only when chooses -Disruptive, attention seeking behaviours
	Playground: Aggressive behaviour	**Playground**: -"Hates" his 'best friend' but continues relationship. -Interactions usually lead to violent or dangerous behaviours. -Does not instigate problems, but reacts poorly to others.	**Playground** -Unsafe play -Physically aggressive -Fights with other children	**Playground**: -Easily led astray -Heading towards copying inappropriate behaviours of other students: (*not coming to class when bell rings *ignoring teachers *becoming cheeky *back chatting *involved in fighting)	**Playground**: Kicking, punching, wrestling related play	**Playground**: -Becomes violent when things are taken away from him or he cannot play with certain people or objects	**Playground**: -Plays quiet roughly at times, kicks others. -Often involved in disputes, -Often throwing things	**Playground**: -Aggressive; hits, kicks, --Anti social -Very competitive

Referral Factors	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
What do you want to happen?	Improved Anger management strategies. Has had previous anger management	For B to: -Have more confidence -Feel better about himself and his abilities -Make better choices -Have more self control --Accept responsibility for his own actions	Manage his anger appropriately. Improve relationships with peers	Acceptance into PAL Program to help him: -Regain and retain appropriate: *behaviours *language academic ability, -Make appropriate choices	Control his impulsivity	For F to recognise his inappropriate behaviour, To be able to: -discuss -conflicts make correct choices throughout the day	For G to be compliant and reasonably behaved	Less: -Aggressive -Attention seeking -Confrontational
Intervention to date:	BT support in 2001. Teacher has been using Skill streaming lessons	Behaviour Support Teacher (BST): -Rewarding good behaviour (doesn't happen often) -Removal from situation (has no lasting effect. Doesn't work independently, so removal becomes a holiday)	Behaviour Support Service (BSS) working on anger management Sessions with GO and Principal Little progress	Principal, Deputy Principal interventions: -Time out, Red card, Internal suspension	Kept in at lunch time, lines – for inappropriate behaviour Positive reinforcement	Meeting with Guidance Counsellor, Parents and BSS. He had made small changes like asking to leave the classroom	BSS BMP – involves: -Verbal warnings -Time out -Relocation to another class -Sent to office -Daily reporting in book to parents	-Verbal warnings -Positive reinforcements -Timeout -Relocation to the office -Given classroom jobs at times -Time on computer when tasks finished and is compliant

Referral Factors	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Student Education History	2 schools	2 different schools Repeated Grade one	one school	2 different schools Current school very concerned, is easily led	One school always had learning problems. He has been assessed and is getting learning support since Year 2	one school – behaviour problems evident from pre school	Attended other schools (?) one year at this school don't know history Quite intelligent, Quick to see things, Untidy Written work is rushed	one school
Safety	Always swinging on chair Explosive behaviours	Has run and threatened to run. Will lash out physically and verbally Throws things and attempts self harm (weakly, doesn't have much effect)	Leaves classroom without permission after an incident Lashes out physically	Displaying very reckless behaviour in and out of classroom Follows others	Can be impulsive	Runs away from confrontation, hits Kicks children when upset including friends. No witnessed self harm	Is reckless with his things and other people's Has self harmed by hurting himself with scissors, cut clothing and chair bag	Hurts various other students: -No apparent reason -Not remorseful
Stress	Cries allot	Family : -Mother is very concerned, gets no time off. -Teacher: *horrid in classroom *dynamic, *very needy	Dad very concerned Teacher very stressed because he upsets the entire class	High level of stress on family and teachers	Very restless	Teacher becoming extremely stressed as more time in class is devoted to him instead of on task with rest of class	The rest of the class is very disrupted by his behaviour. They try to ignore it but it frustrates him. Often talks back to teachers.	Quite a lot : -Very fearful at times of other children's safety, -Verbally aggressive at times to teacher -Uncooperative

Referral Factors	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Special Needs	Nil	ADHD, LD2 (should be 3)	Nil Struggles with reading	Nil -STLD support - Behaviour management support from district, -Admin support	Nil -Learning Difficulties in language and reading	Nil (poor in literacy)	Nil	Nil (But very poor reader)
Suspensions	one in school suspension for violence	Highly likely if current behaviour continues	three in school	four Suspensions: -Fighting -Disobeying teacher instructions -Teasing and fighting x 2	Not at this stage	one suspension	one suspension for throwing rocks causing injury	Reasonably likely
Pertinent Family Information	Parents very supportive and worried	Parent and school splitting the cost for placement Mum can only transport B on Tuesdays. Mum has done parenting courses 'to no avail'.	Parent supportive	Commitment by family: Single mum . Mother and Grandmother concerned behaviour will only continue to deteriorate	Supportive	Supportive	Parent finds it hard to deal with him.	Supportive

Each student's school was required to state why the student was being referred to PAL. There was a commonality across the schools with the referred students exhibiting aggressive behaviours. For example, students were described as being "aggressive," "violent to other children" and "destructive."

Regarding any behaviour management strategies in place to deal with the student's behaviours, schools reported interventions ranging from a least intrusive to a most intrusive approach. Some schools used preventative and proactive measures to address the student's challenging behaviours including: the use of positive reinforce-

ment (student B), daily reporting to parents (student G), positive feedback for good behaviour (student G) and verbal warnings by way of the "five step" process (students F, G).

More intrusive methods included: the use of time out and being "kept in", detention (students C, E), withdrawal from the classroom and being sent to the office or another class (students B, C, F, G). Of the eight students, A, C, D, F, G and H had been "dealt with" by the Principal or Deputy Principal. Overall, schools reported more intrusive interventions were being used than proactive interventions. This is not to say that the schools had not used proactive strategies, however, at the time of completion of the questionnaire the schools methods were mostly intrusive in responding to the students' challenging behaviours.

Schools were asked to describe the type of behaviours the students displayed in the classrooms and playgrounds. Consistent with the "reasons for referrals," challenging behaviours were occurring in the classrooms and playgrounds for all eight students. All the students were described as disruptive, with behaviours that included poor work attitudes (students A and B). All such behaviours made it difficult for the teacher to teach the class with students being off task, non-compliant, attention seeking and/or not following the teacher's instructions.

Similarly, in the playground, all schools reported the students' behaviours as being aggressive and violent, which included rough play with descriptions such as kicking and punching and fighting.

In response to the question about what the schools wanted to happen with the students as a result of the PAL intervention, all schools requested that the students' have some degree of self regulation for example; anger management strategies, taking responsibilities for behaviours and making better choices.

For schools to be eligible to refer a student to the PAL intervention there needed to have been prior support provided to the student through the Behaviour Support Service (BSS). All eight students had received prior support from BSS. However, of the eight referring schools only four indicated previous support being sought for the stu-

dent through the BSS. The other four schools detailed strategies that have been tried with other personnel. This raises concerns around whether the students were being supported at the school and whether there were issues around communication, i.e. between the BSS and the class teacher. Another possibility was that the person filling out the referral form might not have been aware of any BSS intervention, which also raises concerns regarding the documentation in the student's school file.

To gain an understanding of the transient nature of the targeted students, the referring schools were asked to provide the students' school history. Of the eight students accepted into PAL four had attended other schools previously and four had only attended their current school.

Schools were asked about safety issues as a result of the students' behaviours. The schools responses were similar, indicating a high degree of concern for the safety of other children and for the safety of the targeted students. Schools commented specifically on two of the students (B and F) who had run away and four students that were violent to others (B, C, F and H). Some students were reported as self harming (B, F and G), whilst student A was reported as having explosive behaviours with student D being reported as being reckless and student E as being impulsive.

A factor for consideration when dealing with students with challenging behaviours is that of stress. Schools were asked to comment on the student's stress levels and interestingly the question was interpreted differently by different schools. Two schools reported on the stress levels of the students. It was reported that student A cries a lot and student E was reported as being very restless. The six other schools reported on how the student's behaviours contributed to the stress of others. For example, the schools reported on the stress of the family (B, C, D) class and teacher (B, C, D, F and G) and safety of the other children (student H). Schools were also asked to indicate if there were any "Special Needs" required amongst the students. Student B was reported as having ADHD, students A, F, G and H were reported as not having any special needs. Students D and E were reported as having learning difficulties, and students C, E, F and H were reported as having poor reading skills.

Of the eight students, five had been suspended. For the other three students the schools describe one student as being "highly" likely to be suspended, one as being "reasonably" likely and one as "not at this stage".

Overwhelmingly, the schools reported under any "pertinent family information" that the parents supported the PAL referral. In particular, it was reported that parents were "worried," and "finds it hard to deal with him," as well as being "concerned behaviour will continue to deteriorate."

The "reasons for placement" in the PAL Program ultimately highlights the severity of the behaviours of the eight referred students. Schools consistently provided examples of the serious nature of violent and aggressive behaviours toward other students, the difficulties of the referred students' staying on task in their classrooms and their struggles with academic work and/or reading. In summary, a number of patterns and issues have emerged from the information gathered from the schools:

- All students were described as having severe behaviours;
- All students were violent and aggressive toward other students;
- Academic issues such as struggling with school work and staying on tasks; and
- All schools were concerned about the severity of the student violence.

5.2.2 *PAL Referral Student Profile*

As part of the referral process to the PAL intervention, schools were also asked to provide a profile of the referred students including an overview of their attributes and skills. Information collected included academic performance and work habits such as the student's capacity to work independently and in a group. Information was provided about the students' attributes such as self-concept, self-awareness, and self-control, using appropriate social skills and attention to a task.

Most importantly the schools provided details about the behaviours of the referred student that included: their ability to follow instructions, any fear responses, frustration/tolerance levels, any attention seeking or manipulative behaviour and whether or not the student took revenge. Information was also provided regarding the student's strengths and abilities, sporting abilities and interests and again any special needs.

Table 5.2 is a summary of the information provided by the class teachers regarding the attributes and skills of the eight students referred to PAL. Following the summary information collated in Table 5.2 is a comparative analysis of the data comparing the profiles of the eight students.

Table 5.2: *PAL Referral Student Profile* (attributes and skills) summary

Skills / Attributes	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Academic Performance	Average	Literacy: very poor Math: average/ good	Low to very low in Reading Maths: Average	Low to very low	Can do most Maths activities. Has great difficulties with literacy	High in Maths, art and sport, Low in literacy	Quite good average to high in most areas	Reading is improving but still is below average Is average in most areas and has improved
Independent Work	Easily distracted Seeks attention	Doesn't	OK with high interest tasks	Low achieving	Improving: staying on task	Can not work independently because of literacy of skills	Spasmodic- can work but often disruptive	Working with adult one on one is excellent. As soon as he has to share the adult his behaviour deteriorates
Group Work	Annoys other children	Distracts entire group (even those who usually can't be)	Impossible – children do not want to work with him	Low – finds it difficult	Can work well for awhile	Works fairly well if not tested by others	Spasmodic- can work but often disruptive	Poor-distracts others doesn't cooperate

Skills/ Attributes	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Self Concept	Victim	Extremely low: everyone is against him	'Tough guy' image	Fair: however he is finding it more difficult	Poor	Normal	Very changeable	Very tough on himself has self: - Imposed image to live up to -Very conscious of acting to the public (those watching)
Self Awareness	None	Nil	Very little	Oblivious to poor academic ability	Nil	Normal	Little	Nil

Skills/ Attributes	**Student A**	**Student B**	**Student C**	**Student D**	**Student E**	**Student F**	**Student G**	**Student H**
Making and keeping friends	Has no friends	Children avoid B so they don't get into trouble	Peers tend to reject him Poor choice of friends	Can do	Has some friends	Not good in this area	Moves in and out of friendships: no special friend	Moves in and out of friendships: - Children wary of him -Some fear him
Self Control	Explosive	None	Minimal	Fair: however he is finding it more difficult	Loves getting stickers which helps with his self control	Very low self control	Fights for control at times. Sometimes seems to be shaking with frustration	Not good when he is mad, frustrated: -cries -throws things
Using appropriate Social Skills	Limited	Improvising since BST support	Can if he chooses – Fair at times	Fair at times	Improving	Starting to see some	Improving	Is rude, answers back

Skills/Attributes	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Attention on Task	Poor	ADHD – 10-15 min attention span if he enjoys the task	Can do if he is interested playground (fine)	Very low in school	Improving but this depends on the set task	When in a good mood attention is great	Spasmodic often tires of task before completion, very untidy	Becoming slowly better, longer periods of time before going off task
Following Instructions	Rarely	When he chooses to	When it suits him: can outright refuses	Poor refuses to	Improving: can still be very off task	Not very good	Doesn't listen well to instructions. Often doesn't know what to do	Spasmodic: -Slow to start -Often asks for clarification
Fear responses	Nil	Nil	Nil	None known	Nil	Does not take risks: – leads to lashing out	Withdraws – quiet	Shows little fear
Frustration Tolerance	Runs away	Doesn't	Low	Low	High frustration level	Very low	'Low' – not openly violent to others but destructive of property	Poor: -often reduced to tears
Attention seeking	High attention seeker	Talking, joking	Hides under desk	At times but not constantly		Very high	Extremely attention seeking	'Very': -calls out -makes noises -hurts others
Manipulative behaviour	None seen	Is usually the one being manipulated	Not observed	None observed	None	Have not seen any this year to date	None	Cunning: 'If I do this then what's in it for me scenario'

Skills/ Attrib-utes	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Revenge	-Violent, Physical out-bursts -Hurts other children	Violence	Not ob-served	None observed	Can be espe-cially if he thinks the other person has done the wrong thing or if he doesn't like the person	He steals from others in class as	-Does not seem to seek this -Forgets leading up to suspen-sion – involved in re-venge with other child	Will bully and tease children
Strengt hs and abilities	High energy: -always on the go	Maths, colour-ing	Soccer	Polite/ happy gener-ally	Likes com-puters	Maths, Art and sport	Quite bright, good reader	Sport/qu ite crea-tive story writing, likes to perform before an audi-ence
Sport-ing abilities Inter-ests	Out-doors, anything physical	AFL, Rugby League	Loves all out-door activities	Foot-ball/Spo rts	Soccer	Football, Soccer and Cricket abilities average	Quiet adept at sports	Natu-rally capable in all sports
Special Inter-ests	Scouts	Play station Motor-bike Dog	All Sport	All Sports	Enjoys games and soc-cer. Enjoys books read to him	None that he can commu-nicate	Was doing Judo but has been asked to leave due to breaking of rules	Sports and creative arts

Regarding Academic Performance, two students were described as average (A and G) while the other six students were described as performing in the lower range, specifically in the area of literacy. Regarding the students' work capacity both independently and in groups, comments ranged from "doesn't" (B) to "working one on one with an adult is excellent" (H). Other comments regarding the students' independent work gained responses of "spasmodic" (G), "easily distracted" (A) and "unable to because of low literacy levels" (F).

Only two of the eight students were identified as being able to in groups: "works well for a while" (E) and "works fairly well if not teased" (F). Six of the eight students experienced little success when working in groups (A, B, C, D, G and H).

Further adding information to the profile of the referred students were their reported attributes. Regarding self-concept, for the majority of students were reported to be in the lower range. One student was reported as "normal" (F) the other seven students were reported as having difficulties. Students were described as being a "victim," "everyone is against him", "tough guy image," "fair but finding it more difficult", "very changeable" and "tough on himself". These reported student attributes would place them in the high range for being at risk (Garmezy, 1985).

In describing the students Self Awareness, Student F was rated as being "normal" however the seven other students were identified as having "little", "nil" or "none." Friendships were reported as being problematic for the referred students. When schools were asked to comment on the student's capacity for making and keeping friends, for five students their friendship situation was described as fluid, one student was described as having "no friends" and only two students were described as having friends.

A rich description of problematic behaviours was provided by the schools indicating that six of the eight students were lacking in Self Control (A, B, C, F, G and H). Student D was described as 'fair but finding it more difficult' and for student E "getting stickers helped with his self control." Of course, there are links between self-control and the capacity to behave appropriately. As might be expected, schools reported that 'using appropriate social skills' were described as "limited" to "improving." None of the eight students were described as having good social skills.

In a similar fashion, students were identified as struggling with "attention on task." Schools reported that for three students there was a link to 'interest of or enjoyment of task' (B, C, and E). Two students were rated as being "low" and "very low" (A and D). The other three students were described as "depending on the mood" (F), "spasmodic" (G) and "slowly improving" (H).

Schools provided information about the students' behaviours along with their skills and interests. Again, when it comes to following instructions, the eight students were described as "having difficulties" in this area. Comments ranged from "rarely," "refuses to," "spasmodic" and "improving." Overall, the students were not very compliant when it came to their interactions with their teacher. Interestingly, only four schools completed the question on "Fear responses," the other four schools left the section blank. One school reported that there was "none known" (D) while the other four students were described as "does not take risks, leads to lashing out" (F), "withdraws – quiet" (G) and "shows little fear" (H).

All schools reported that the eight students had great difficulties in with frustration/tolerance levels. Three students were described as "runs away" (A), "destroys property" (G) and "often reduced to tears" (H).

In the same context, attention-seeking behaviours was an attribute for all eight students. Examples of the students' attention seeking behaviours were reported as including "talking and joking" (B), "hides under desk" (C) and "calls out, makes noises and hurts others" (H).

With the notion of manipulative behaviours, the schools reported that they had seen no evidence of this for six of the students (A, C, D, E, F and G). One student (B) was described as "the one being manipulated" and only one student who was described as "cunning, with what's in it for me" (H).

Regarding the "revenge" item, schools indicated that there were only two students where this was not observed (C and D). Examples of vengeful behaviours were described in very serious terms such as "violence" (A and B), and "if he has been wronged or doesn't like a person" (E) "will bully and tease other children" (H) and "involved in revenge of other children as a result of his suspension" (G).

The schools were also asked to provide information about the student's strengths and abilities, sporting abilities and interests and any other special interests. Two students were described as "liking Maths," three students were identified as "liking sports,"

three students liked "creative activities" and one student liked "computers" with one student being described as "having a lot of energy." All eight students were described as having sporting interests that include "football," "soccer", "cricket," "all sports" and with two students liking any "outdoor activities." The students' special interests ranged from "scouts," "sports," "creative arts," "motorbikes," "reading" and "play station." One student was described as having "no special interest." Some students reported multiple interests.

In summary, consistent patterns and issues emerged from this referral information:

- Students were reported as having low literacy levels;
- All students' behaviours were described as being very challenging;
- The majority of the students were incapable of making or keeping friends, had poor social skills, were very frustrated with high attention seeking behaviours; and
- Both parents and teachers were concerned about the students challenging behaviours.

Of greater concern was the students' capacity for aggression toward other children as well as acts of revenge. This data confirmed that the students who were referred warranted an intensive intervention to address their behaviours. The students' who were referred to PAL were a match for the intervention designed to address students with problematic behaviours.

5.2.3 *PAL parent initial data summary*

It was not only beneficial to collect data from schools and teachers about the targeted students' behaviours but also the parents. Of importance for the PAL teachers was to firstly use this data gathering activity as an exercise in creating important connections with the parents for the purpose of commencing a relationship, which would continue throughout the intervention. Secondly, to gain information regarding the parent's perspective of any issues concerning their child.

During the parent interview the PAL teacher asked questions and recorded the parent's responses about their child which included any medical information, assessments their child may have had, prior behaviour issues and information pertaining to birth/early childhood, preschool and infant school years. A section included in the

Parent interview covered behaviour at home, self-care skills, responsibilities at home, friendships, leisure interests, sporting skills and behaviours at school.

Table 5.3 is a summary of the information gathered during the PAL teacher and parent interview. The table attempts to reflect, as close as possible, the parent's responses to the questions posed. Following the table is an analysis of the data that compares the similarities and differences of each of the eight students.

Table 5.3:   PAL parent initial data collection

Data Items	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Medical Information	A.D.H.D No medication Vaccinated Phobia: - -Dark -Blood noses	A.D.H.D Food additives: Vitamin/ Mineral Occupational Therapy at CYMHS Vaccinated Minor respiratory problems, Food allergy Bedwetting every night Difficulties at birth	Vaccinated	Parent have thought about ADHD Vaccinated	Reading and writing difficulties Vaccinated Some food causes hyperactivity Phobias: dark Birth difficulties: -induced - breathing - difficulties - antibiotics	Vaccinated Allergies to some foods Phobia: -dark Birth difficulties : -foetal distress -cord around neck	Some ASD tendencies Vaccinated Allergies to grass Phobia: -dark - nightmares Sleep walker Bed wetter: -uses nasal spray	Vaccinated

Data Items	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Assessments	Sees Psychologist at CYMHS	Sees Psychologist at CYMHS	Parents attend CYMHS doing Triple P	Speech and language in Pre school	Developmentally normal	Nil	Occupational Therapy: -pencil grip -posture Double cross over vision: -needed glasses temporarily -headaches	Attends CYMH services for behaviour issues
Prior Behaviour Intervention Information:	2 Siblings: -one older -one younger, Story teller: -makes things up, Dad won't have any contact with A	Homework: -a disaster -causes lots of stress -'Can't do it' -parent has tried rewards.	Sulky when asked to do things	Not details provided	Not details provided	Not details provided	Not details provided	Not details provided
Birth/Early Childhood:	Always on the go	Emotional stress Difficult birth: distressed Happy toddler but tantrums, stood out as aggressive with others Diagnosed ADHD	No sleep difficulties	six weeks premature Good baby, very active	Can be quiet, can be active, Developmentally normal. Gentle	Possible oxygen deprived	Normal development, quiet baby, very content	No particular difficulties at birth, very active, walked at ten months, Teeth rotten: -capped at 2

Data Items	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Pre school	Had arm broken twice, Other children: -pushed him -wee on him	At-tended CYMHS at 5 Moder-ate to severe ADHD	No diffi-culties	Very little prob-lems	Moved from Sydney. Doesn't like to stand out: likes to be alone quite often	Same level of behav-iour	Nervous, he would shake	Biting Hitting Difficul-ties get-ting on with others
Infant school years	Calls from school re: behaviour difficulties	Most trouble in Grade one: -Didn't want to conform, -Lack of concen-tration. In your face type of child: -tactile -tantrums -throwing tables. Caught in net for read-ing and Math	Few little fights in Grade 2, Grade 3 and 4 Quite a few calls from school re behav-iour	Grade 2 prob-lems became notice-able: -pushed child off monkey bars -red card and sent home	Unaware of aca-demic prob-lems. Caught in net in Year 2, getting extra help	Same level of behav-iour	Grade one query for ADHD, not con-firmed. Grade 2 Disrup-tive in the af-ternoon. Under the in-fluence of older autistic half-brother	Re-peated: Grade one - taking others drinks and drawing on car-pet Grade 2 - at of-fice for hitting, fighting

Data Items	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Parent Catalogue: Behaviour at home	Can be good Closes up when frustrated Can explode: -hurts others -runs away (twice)	Worse, when he comes back from - Father: male role model. Frustrated wants to be with his Dad. Physically aggressive: -yells everyday at Mum	Smart comments to Dad and sister, Punches girls: -blames them for teasing him Snatching things 2 Siblings: -older brothers 2 step sisters Adapting to new family situation Can be smart Plays the victim: -Doesn't take responsibility for his actions	Very aggressive, particularly bad with Dad. Punched post in frustration	Normal little boy. Can be lazy. Gentle child afraid of others picking on him. Lack of self-esteem due to academic skills lacking Mischievous Good at sharing	Varies: -quiet -to door slamming -throws things -screams Sibling younger sister 4: -He hits her sometimes	Talking back Refusing to comply Whinge Wrestling with Kristy, hurting her	No difficulties whatsoever. Needs to be asked to do things
Self care skill	Can do	Quite good, can make hot chocolate	Can do this	Good to take showers, brush teeth	Can look after himself, shower, brush hair	Bed wetter (wears pull-ups)	Good – showers, brushes hair	Does what he is asked

Data Items	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Responsibilities at home	Feeds chickens	Feed dog Bins out Compost out. Doesn't like to make bed or tidy up toys	Makes bed Keeps room tidy Needs many reminders	Clean up room Helps in kitchen. Pocket money for jobs	Take out bin Keep room tidy – a bit of a chore	None provided	Tidy room Eventually: -empty bins -walking out bottles Gets newspaper and chips on Sunday	Keeps room tidy, Take out rubbish, Mows lawn
Friendships	None: keeps changing, Prefers girls	None around home Doesn't ask any home	Don't last: -Fights with brother -but seem to need each other for Nintendo	Makes friends easily	Has friends from school and soccer. Can be bit resistant to go over to other houses but goes for sleepovers	Invited to kids in street No school kids have invited him since Year one	Used to have friend across road A bit rough but ok with others	Friends from school have come over to house. Friend from down the road: no fights
Leisure interests	Scouts	Loves singing	Computer: Nintendo	Likes to cook	Soccer	Drawing (proud of his work)	Play station	None reported
Sporting skills	Nil	Nil	Football (Rugby)	Football goes with his Grandad	Soccer, wrestling	Football (Aspley Rugby)	Soccer, ALF	None reported

Data Items	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Behaviours at school	Tantrums Fights Got stabbed in the arm Loves attention: seeks this	Mum has not been called in this year Called in last year: -Told at end of each day how he is going. Mum knows there are difficulties.	Physically aggressive: -phone calls from school	Got worse as year has gone on	Physical reaction to: -teasing -being put down	Awareness of aggressive behaviour	Good and bad days Sometimes needs relocation out of classroom: -swearing -finger signs	Difficulties settling in at first. Better this semester: -Mum more involved with school. Mum sees behaviour as 'just boys stuff',

Beginning with "Medical Information," all parents indicated that the students had been vaccinated. Two parents did not report any medical issues for students C and H. Two students were reported as having A.D.H.D. (A and D), Student G was reported as having ADHD tendencies and Student D's parent considered the possibility. No students were on any form of medication. Four students were reported as having phobias of the dark (A, E, F and G).

Two students were reported as being bed-wetters' (B and G). Three students were reported as having had birth difficulties (B and E and F). Four students were reported as having food allergies (B, E, F and G). With regard to Assessments, two of the eight parents reported "nil" to assessments and "developmentally normal" (D and F), whereas the other six parents reported that "their child had been seen for assessments." Three of the children had seen a psychologist (A, B and H) one child for occupational therapy (G), one child for speech and language issues (D) and one parent indicated they were attending the Child Youth and Health Services (CYMHS) for parenting support (C).

In order for students to be accepted into the PAL Program, one criterion that needed to be satisfied was that the student had received previous support offered through the Behaviour Support Services (BSS). When parents were asked if there been "prior behaviour intervention" five of the eight parents did not provide any information. Three parents described the attributes of their children as being "sulky," "stressed from homework" and "a story teller, making things up."

The parents were asked to describe the behaviours of their children in the early years. Two parents stated that they were concerned and provided details about a "difficult birth," "possible oxygen deprivation," while four parents described their children as "active." One parent described her child as being "normal" and one stated that the child had "no sleep difficulties." For the Pre School question, two of the parents reported that there were "little" on "no difficulties." However, the other six parents reported more serious issues with one child having his "arm broken twice" (A), one child was diagnosed with "moderate to severe A.D.H.D." (B), one child was described as "wanting to be on his own" (E), one child was "showing the same level of behaviour" (F), one child was described as "being nervous and would shake" (G) and one child was described as "biting, hitting and having difficulties getting on with other children" (H).

According to the parents, problematic behaviours' of their children surfaced as early as the students' pre-school years and continued into their child's infant school years when calls from the school commenced (A, and C), academic issues emerged (B, and E) and aggressive behaviours were evident (B, C, D, F, G and H).

The parents were questioned about their child's behaviour at home with two parents indicating that there was "no evidence of violence or aggression" (E and H). However, six parents reported incidents of violence or aggression (A, B, C, D, F and G). When asked about the child's capacity for self care, seven of the eight parents reported that the child could do this and one parent referred to their child's bed wetting. Seven of the eight parents indicated that their child had responsibilities at home ranging from feeding animals, taking bins out and keeping their rooms tidy. No details were provided for Student F.

Five parents reported that their child had major problems maintaining friendships (A, B, C, F and G). Three parents reported that their child made friends easily (D), "has sleep-overs, has friends from school/soccer" (E) "friends from school and down the road come to the house" (H). When questioned about leisure interests there were "none" reported by one parent (H) and the other seven parents gave examples of "computers," "cooking", "singing," "scouts", "drawing" and "soccer". With sporting skills three parents reported "none" and five parents mentioned "football" and "soccer."

The eight parents acknowledged that the children were having difficulties at school due to their behaviour. One parent was dismissive of their child's behaviour referring to it as 'just boys stuff'.

A summary of the parents' data indicates consistent patterns of issues and concerns that were:

- All children were showing violent and or aggressive behaviours in their infant years;
- Half the children had difficulties with friendships;
- The majority of children had undergone some form of assessment;
- All parents were aware of the challenging behaviours of their child;
- The child's behaviour was just as troubling at home; and
- The child's behaviour was affecting their learning.

To address the student's behaviours an IBMP was developed. The following section is a summary of those plans.

5.2.4 Summary

The analysis of data describing the students' behaviours and issues highlighted commonalities. Parents and teachers reported the students as violent and aggressive toward their peers with an inability to stay on task in class, lacking academic achievement and specifically struggling with literacy. The eight schools indicated the students had poor social skills with and inability to make and keep friends. They had high frustration levels and with often employ attention seeking behaviours and turn to violence. School, teacher and parent reported that the targeted students' behaviour as being just as problematic at home as at school.

A summary of the data highlights the extent and scope of problems of the eight students and has been organised into three main themes that are behavioural, social/emotional and academic.

Academic
- Students had under gone some form of assessment in their early years;
- Low literacy levels; and
- Struggling academically.

Behaviours
- Students were described as having very serve challenging behaviours;
- Violent and aggressive toward other students; and
- Both parents and teachers concerned about the severity of the student violence.

Social/emotional
- Poor social skills; and
- Incapable of making and keeping friends.

A broad range of data both quantitative and qualitative was gathered before the commencement of the PAL Program to initially assess 'appropriateness' for the students to be included in the PAL program. The data highlighted the aptness of referral for each of the eight students. This initial information was then used to formulate an individual student profile that contributed to the student's IBMP, which set out appropriate strategies and interventions for each student.

The data presented on the scope and nature of the students challenging behaviours is echoed in the literature. There are many commonalities amongst students with challenging behaviours (Office for Standards in Education, 2005). It is clear that the students referred to PAL had a number of risk factors in their lives. To counter such risk factors it is important to provide programs for identified at risk students that build their protective factors to enhance their resilience (Withers & Russell, 2001). The children referred to PAL were regarded as having severe and challenging behaviours and this is supported by the definitions cited in Chapter 2 of literature review by Carter et al., (2006). Equally Visser's (2005) explanation of the nature of the challenging behaviours which are both physical and verbal were reported as being evident in the students referred to PAL. As highlighted in the literature review once students have been identified as having challenging behaviours and no intervention is

provided then there are can be serious long-term ramifications for the students (Bor, et al., 2001; Christle, et al., 2004).

5.3 *Individual Behaviour Management Plans*

As stated previously, when working with students with challenging behaviours, it is important to support the school and the class teacher as well as the targeted student (Fuller, 2001a). The PAL teacher, in collaboration with the class teacher, created the IBMP, a very important strategy when dealing with the challenging behaviours of students.

The IBMP was developed from all the previous information: the PAL *intervention school referral form*, the *PAL Referral Student Profile*, the *PAL Student Initial Data Collection from the Parents*, the CRS as well as the *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of resilience*.

The teachers also created targeted goals for each student and identified specific strategies to meet each goal. These were categorized into three main areas:

- Alternatives to aggression: dealing with anger, conflict situations, physical aggression, temper tantrum;
- Classroom support: following school rules, teacher instructions and staying on task; and
- Social interactions: positive interactions with peers in class and playground, as well as working cooperatively with others.

The main strategies used in the implementation of the goals of the IBMP's for the students were:

- Adventure based experiential learning;
- Social skills training;
- Individual coaching; and
- Increasing the student's repertoire in anger management skills.

Table 5.4 is a summary of the focus areas documented in the IBMP's for each of the eight students

Table 5.4:   Individual behaviour management plan summaries (IBMP)

Inter-vention Plan	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Goals	-Promote Self-esteem -Improve social interactions and A's handling of daily issues -Provide alternatives to aggression -Anger management strategies, that A can use to deal with conflict situations	-Support B in classroom environment -Support B in the playground -Provide confidence building/self-esteem opportunities in PAL intervention -Support B's mother -Support class teacher	-Assist C with strategies to deal with physical aggression: temper tantrums -Leaving the classroom with out permission	-Support D with behav at school -Provide Alternativ Program to Enhance Confidenc Self esteer -Develop Classroom Survival sl	-Follow classroom rules -Develop awareness of teachers instructions -Optimise learning opportunities -Enhance self esteem	-Enhance F's self-esteem -Improve F's social interactions with peers -Positive reinforcement schedule	-To develop G's awareness of the teacher's instructions, class and school rules -To increase his on task time -To help him to take responsibility for his actions with anger	-To develop H's capacity to deal with his aggressive and non co-operative behaviour,

Inter-vention Plan	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Strate-gies	-PAL withdrawal program each Tuesday following confidence and esteem building – experiential learning in art, outdoor education, camping, cooking, -Weekly 'skill streaming class lesson, topics from 'Talk Sense' and Behaviour Recovery' and 'Boys talk' in individual sessions -Triple P for A's mother including individual program focusing on anger management	-Behaviour recovery and 'Talk Sense to Yourself' programs -'Skill-streaming' lessons offered for whole class -Skilling B in areas of safe and appropriate games and interactions -Weekly discussions with Mum in management and strategies -Skill-streaming lessons for class	-PAL withdrawal program each Tuesday -Use skill streaming lessons that focus on -Following teacher directions -Provide strategies for anger management through 'Talk sense lessons' -One-on-One lessons to identify triggers for anger linked to temper tantrums -Generate a list of alternative strategies for C when he is feeling angry and frustrated	-PAL withdrawal program each Tuesday -Use skill streaming lessons that focus on listening and -Following teacher directions to aid in staying on task -Identify barriers that take D Off task -Develop list of safe play Choices -Provide strategies for anger management through 'Talk sense lessons'	-PAL withdrawal program -One-on-one with E Class sessions -Positive reinforcement -Class management plan	-Attend PAL off-campus day where the following can be taught: *Self-esteem Awareness of others *Asking for help *Social skills -Positive reinforcement schedule in classroom	-Attend PAL off-campus day -Through Skill-streaming lessons teach G to: *follow directions *listening and consequences of what happens if you do and what happens if you don't -One-on-One lessons to identify triggers for anger -Generate a list of alternative strategies when G is feeling angry and frustrated	-Attend PAL off-campus day Through Skill-streaming lessons teach H to: *follow directions *listening and consequences of what happens if you do and what happens if you don't -One-on-One lessons to identify triggers for anger -Generate a list of alternative strategies when H is feeling angry and frustrated

5.4   Completion of the PAL program

The PAL teachers also gathered a variety of data at the conclusion of the PAL intervention using questionnaires and surveys to gain feedback about the PAL Program from the various stakeholders as well as the perceived impact of the program on the students' challenging behaviours. The data sources were:

- PAL Day Student Snapshot;
- Teacher's Report After PAL;
- Conners' Rating Scales -
  - Teachers Rating Scale Short Version (CTRS-R:S) (Conners, 2000);
  - Conners Parent Rating Scale Short Version (CPRS-R:S) (Conners, 2000);
  - Conners-Wells' Adolescent Self-Report Scale Short Version (CASS:S);
- Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience; (Grotberg, 1995).
- End of semester PAL Program Report;
- School feedback/evaluation of the PAL intervention; and
- PAL: *Parent One Year Follow-up Survey.*

5.4.1   *PAL Day Student Snapshot*

The PAL teachers requested each student to complete a *PAL Day Student Snapshot* at the very end of the PAL intervention. The *PAL Day Student Snapshot* was used to evaluate the students' satisfaction levels and insights about their perceptions of their behaviour progress during the PAL intervention.

The questionnaire was designed by the PAL teachers' to explore the students' experiences of their day's activities and identified perceived skills they had acquired. Each student was asked to complete four (4) sentence stem questions to identify where they perceived they still needed help. They were also asked to state what they did well during the PAL day and finally rate their own behaviour throughout the day.

Table 5.5 is a summary of the students' responses to each question posed by the PAL teachers. Following the Table is an analysis and discussion of the students' responses.

Table 5.5: *PAL Day Student Snapshot*

The PAL Day	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
How was it for you?	*Good day, enjoyed games *Joined in and had fun. *Mini pizzas were good for lunch	*A good day. *Likes snorkelling and is good at it. *Getting on well with PAL kids. *Doesn't like having to eat different foods	*Sad at first because C was at PAL and missed his school swimming carnival. *The day got better especially snorkelling and lunch	*Good - D liked: -Lunch, -Doing the body outline -Talking to B and -Swimming	*Good in activities and making food *Not so good in the middle with E's behaviour with other kids. *Accepted time out for 4 mins	*Pretty good *Activities were fun	*Everybody did good work, especially with the feelings tree, *I liked making lunch and snorkelling	*Mostly good – activities were good *Got on well with D *Not so good was H pushing underwater
So Now I can…..	*Spend: -more time with the adults or D and E and -less with H and G	*Ignore bad behaviours	*Get on with things and you can get stuff (rewards and stickers) for good behaviour *(Dad gave C lollies after PAL for good behaviour)	*Stay with teachers and group going to the shop *Finished the biggest art Work ever done by D	*Accept consequences without complaining Swim 25 meters	*Ignoring bad behaviour *Say good things (body outlines) *Speak respectfully (mostly)	*Stay with the group *Do good ignoring *Help people	*Ignore, *Swim away *Walk away, *Ask for PAL teachers
I still need help with………	*Ignoring stuff not turning it into WW3	*Swearing *Speaking rudely *Staying out of trouble at lunch time	*Walking away *Not let things worry C so much	*Home work *Ignoring *Listening	*Not complain *Following directions	*Choosing behaviour at classroom – not working well *Speaking respectfully	*Following directions *I was swinging the cricket bat dangerously and did it again after I was told to stop	*Being nice to people *Speaking in a nice manner

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The PAL Day	**Student A**	**Student B**	**Student C**	**Student D**	**Student E**	**Student F**	**Student G**	**Student H**
What I did well today was………	*Played Games	*Snorkelling	*Excellent behaviour *Had fun too!!	Staying with the group	Accepted consequences	Ignored bad behaviours	*Snorkelling *Making Lunch	*Spoke well to adults *Stayed with group
Self rating 1 Terrible 10 Outstanding	9	10	10	9	8	9	10	10

All students responded that the PAL day was "good." An important activity in the PAL day was for the students to cook and prepare their lunch together. This purposeful activity created opportunities for students to work cooperatively, take turns, communicate and increase their cooking skills. Five of the eight students indicated that the lunch making activity was "good." Only one student stated he "didn't like eating different foods." All the students stated that they enjoyed the PAL activities that included games, snorkelling, swimming and drawing a "feeling" tree.

The skills six of the students' said they had acquired related to their behaviour and included, for example, ignoring bad behaviours (B, F, G and H). One student stated that "you can get good stuff - rewards and stickers for good behaviour" (C), whereas another said they now "accepted consequences" (E). Some students stated they still needed help with language and speaking respectfully (B, F and H). Being able to ignore others was still seen as a work in progress (A and D). Two students indicated that they needed more help in following directions (E and G), and over reacting was still an issue for two students (A and C).

Three students felt they did well in adventure based activities (A, B and G) whilst two were proud of their ability to follow directions by staying with the group (D and H). The other three students stated they did well with excellent behaviour (C), accepting consequences (E) and ignoring behaviours (F).

Every student identified an area they felt they had done well in whether it was an activity or a specific behaviour. These views were reflected in their self-rating scales

with all students rating themselves at eight or better. Four students rated their behaviour for the day as ten out of ten; three rated themselves as nine out of ten and one student said eight out of ten.

Overall skills that students indicated they had acquired from the PAL program were:

- Ignoring bad behaviours;
- Accepting consequences;
- Speaking respectfully;
- Following directions; and
- Spending positive time with adults.

This self-report by the students indicated that each student enjoyed the activities in the PAL Program for that particular day. Students were also able to state that there were areas in their behaviour where they perceived they were making progress and yet acknowledged that there were still areas where they were struggling and needed help.

5.4.2 *Teacher report after PAL*

Table 5.6 sets out the data generated from a Report designed by the PAL teachers and completed by the class teachers. Teachers responded to questions regarding the PAL Program and whether there were differences in students' behaviours.

The class teachers commented on the support provided to them during the PAL program and whether any different strategies were being used by them because of the professional development provided by the PAL teacher. The class teachers also responded to questions about the usefulness the PAL intervention how the program could be improved. They were provided the opportunity to make any other recommendations about the program.

Table 5.6: *Teacher report after PAL*

Program components	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
How has the PAL intervention assisted the student?	*Helped with his temper tantrum and expressing his feelings	*Helped B to think through possible outcomes before acting. *Reduced his inappropriate language	*Self-esteem. *He seems much calmer and is working in class	*Responding more to positive reinforcement *Seems happier *More focused in class	*Calmer, able to reason with him more. *Willing to Listen	*Fits into group better	*Responds more to positive reinforcement	*To make different choices *To stop and think to use more appropriate classroom behaviour
What differences are you seeing in his behaviour?	*He can now walk away (mostly)	*Less swearing, fighting, arguing *More thinking time (usually)	*Less outbursts *Happier most days	*Not as many red cards (detentions) *Choosing lunch time games and friends more carefully	*Having less conflict with his peers *More cooperative	*Following instructions more *Playing in groups much better	*Generally better but still 'loses it' when upset *Knows when he is likely to loose it	*More responsible, more willing to take his turn and listen
How did the PAL intervention support you as a teacher?	*Weekly conferencing and planning about management of the class *Feedback on teaching	*Gave support each week (discussions) *Modelling teaching techniques *Learned some ideas for managing difficult behaviours	*Someone to talk to each week *Class lessons helped all in 4J	*Weekly class lessons *Weekly discussion of class and PAL student management	*Working with the class *Creating an individual and class management plan *Weekly meetings with PAL teacher	*Someone to talk to about the challenges I face with this student	*Individual and group (peers) support was good PAL teacher kept reassuring me that things were ok	*Avoided suspension for student *I learnt how to discuss issues with him *I learnt behaviour strategies for him and the class

Program components	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
What different strategies are you now using since getting support from the PAL teacher?	*Trying to stay calm *Not to react to *Niggling from students	*Trying to stay calm *Trying to be positive with B	*Same rules etc. but children thought about them in detail	*Less disruptive behaviour	*Using the BM plans, going through each step. *Talking to E a the end of each day telling him the good things he is doing, using positive reinforcement	*Knowing that there are a variety of strategies I can now choose and use different strategies is one doesn't work on a particular day	*Same strategies (a different class) *More confidence	*Building on the positive reinforcement *More explicit teacher language and expectations *Using humour to de escalate confrontations
What is it about the PAL intervention that is most useful?	*Thursday support – the class is calmer *A looks forward to PAL and tries to stay calm	*Respite on a Thursday *Support for class teacher *Parenting classes for B's mother	*Weekly support for class teacher *A friend for C *Activities that he enjoys	*Others in the class benefit for lessons (a difficult class) *Lessons for parents	*Working with the PAL teacher getting help for the teacher and the student	*All the support	*Weekly withdrawal for 1 day Parenting classes from Mum and Step-father	*In class support Class lessons *Someone to talk to Modelling of BM strategies
What did you find unhelpful about PAL?	*None	*B's behaviour didn't get better *PAL teacher was not there (available) at critical times	*None	*D missed too much curriculum at the alternative program	*Nil	*Nil	*PAL teacher wasn't there when incident happened and he was suspended	*Need more teacher sessions

Pro-gram compo-nents	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
How could PAL im-prove?	*More visits each week to the PAL student and whole class	*None	*More support for fam-ily/other siblings and step sisters are also having troubles	*Shorter program D only needed one term	*Nil	*Need more time, he is so difficult	*More work with parents *The capacity to with-draw students for more than one day per week if needed	*six months is not long enough espe-cially when the student's behav-iours are so se-vere
What recom-menda-tions would you make about PAL?	*More places for stu-dents like A	*None	*More places for chil-dren who aren't perform-ing in the schools	*None	*None	*Visits to alter-native program to watch the PAL teacher for a day	*Keep up the good work	*Increas e teacher sessions *Have student for longer if needed

The eight class teachers reported improvements in students' behaviours. Examples given were in the area of communication such as "calmer, able to reason with him more," "less negative behaviours temper tantrums and language," responding more to "positive reinforcement" and "thinking" about behaviours.

The main differences described by the class teachers regarding the students' behaviours were the students' ability to control or self regulate their behaviours more, which included being able to "walk away". The students also were able to use more appropriate social skills such as being "willing to take turns" and "following instructions and more cooperative." Whilst the teachers described positive changes in students' behaviours there was still evidence of students' behaving inappropriately such as "swearing", "fighting", "arguing", and "losing it", however at a lesser rate. This feedback highlighted the need for ongoing-targeted support for some of the students, exemplifying that a six month intervention is hardly adequate.

When asked to comment about how the PAL intervention had supported them as a class teacher, the teachers overwhelmingly identified the weekly support provided to them by the PAL teachers and the corresponding visits by the PAL teacher to their class. The majority of teachers felt it was useful to have "someone to talk to" and identified the receiving of "feedback" and the "modelling" of specific strategies as being particularly helpful. They also referred to the usefulness of developing specific strategies to manage the student such as "discussing issues with him" and "creating an individual and class management plan."

Teachers also identified the different strategies that they had began to use as a result of the PAL teacher support with some teachers commenting on their own behavioural changes such as "staying calm", "using humour to de-escalate confrontations", "ignoring niggling behaviours" and "being more confident". Other specific behaviour strategies used by the teachers included "positive reinforcement," "explicit communication" as well as referring to a "general increase in a range of available strategies to draw upon."

A range of components from the PAL intervention were identified by the class teachers as being most useful. The majority of teachers stated that it was "the weekly support," three teachers mentioned the 'parenting component' and some teachers stated the "benefits for the students". Comments about how the PAL Program had benefited the students included that he "tries to stay calm" and "getting help for the student."

When asked what was unhelpful about the PAL intervention four teachers stated there were "none", whereas two teachers indicated that the PAL teacher was 'not available when there was a major incident at the school with the student'. One teacher stated that the student "missed too much curriculum work" and one teacher stated there was a "need for more teacher sessions."

When asked how the PAL intervention could improve, two teachers said "none," however, five teachers stated that "more support was needed." This additional support ranged from more visits each week to the classroom by the PAL teacher to more family support and extending the length of the program. Although one teacher stated the program needed to be "shorter as the student only needed one term."

Overall, the teacher satisfaction levels with the PAL Program were very high. Two distinct categories emerged from the data analysis that were:

1. Teacher Professional Development:

Support received

- Individual Support – Being supported in class on a weekly basis;
- Being able to debrief with someone;
- Receiving feedback about my practice; and
- Have someone model specific behaviour management strategies.

Skill development

- Developed specific strategies in communication, developing IBMP's;
- Staying calm;
- Ignoring behaviours;
- Being more confident;
- Providing positive reinforcement;
- Explicit communication; and
- Increase in a range of strategies to draw upon.

2. Student changes:

Behaviours

- Less temper tantrums, reductions in inappropriate language, makes better choices, thinks about consequences; and

Social/Emotional

- Expresses feelings, much calmer, happier and more positive, fits into peer group.

The experiences reported by the teachers of effectiveness of professional development are linked to what was identified in the literature review in Chapter 2. Specifically, the importance of communication and trying new strategies, receiving specialist support that included modelling, observation, feedback, coaching with a menu of research-based strategies, planning meetings and having structured feedback. Also treating teachers as individuals and recognising that they have different starting points was very important for their differentiated professional development (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education, 2007).

All teachers indicated that the professional development component impacted positively on their skills to manage challenging students. According to Cordingley, (2009) this required a change in teacher mindset. Likewise all teachers reported improvements in student behaviours. From the findings, it was clear that teachers' behaviours did change, they acquired new skills and were willing to try to do something different. The next section sets out an analysis of the results generated from the CRS. This data as stated above is a summary of program entry and exit

5.4.3 Conners' data analysis

The Conners' Rating Scales Short Form were completed by parents, the Conners' Parent Rating Scale-Revised: Short Form (CPRS-R:S); teachers, the Conners' Teachers Rating Scale-Revised: Short Form (CTRS-R:S); and students the Conners-Wells' Adolescent Self-Report Scale-Short Form (CASS:S) (Conners, 2000). The measures were used to complement the information provided by the schools, teachers and parents firstly as a diagnostic tool that assessed whether the targeted students met the criteria to participate in the intervention. This measure highlighted whether the students' behaviours were outside the average range of specific indexes given that this was a norm-referenced measure. Secondly, this measure provided information in formulating a profile of each student to aid in participant screening for identifying levels of behaviours such as deficiencies and problematic behaviours.

Scoring for the Conners' rating scales

The CRS were scored by plotting the raw scores, and were then converted to *T*-scores on the appropriate profile form. Typically, the higher the *T*-scores (and raw scores) are associated with a greater number and/or frequency of reported problems. *T*-scores of 65 and above are associated with significant problematic behaviours. Simply put, the higher the scores the greater or more severe the problems. Table 5.7 is an outline of the interpretive guidelines for the CRS *T*-Scores and Percentiles that were used in scoring.

Table 5.7:　Interpretive guidelines for Conners' rating scales t-Scores and percentiles

T-Scores	Percentile	Guideline
70 +	98 +	Markedly Atypical (Indicates Significant Problem)
66-70	95-98	Moderately Atypical (Indicates Significant Problem)
61-65	86-94	Mildly Atypical (Possible Significant Problem)
56-60	74-85	Slightly Atypical (Borderline: Should raise concerns)
45-55	27-73	Average (Typical Score: Should not raise concern)
40-44	16-26	Slightly Atypical (Low scores are good: Not a concern)
35-39	6-15	Mildly Atypical (Low scores are good: Not a concern)
30-34	2-5	Moderately Atypical (Low scores are good: Not a concern)
<30	<2	Markedly Atypical (Low scores are good: Not a concern)

(Conners, 2000, p. 44)

The following figures are a summary of the CRS collected for each of the students, their parents and their teachers. The indexes were: ADHD, Cognitive Problems, Conduct Problems and Hyperactivity. The summary sets out rating differences between participant screening and program completion. These differences are recorded as positive or negative percentages. Although this research document is a one shot case study, which describes the PAL program, it is still important to explore the results of a duly administered test by a trained operator although no wider conclusions will be drawn. Refer to Table 5:8: Interpretative guidelines for Connors" rating scales t-Scores and percentiles on page 176.

5.4.3.1　Student A

Program	ADHD index Behaviours			Cognitive Problems Behaviours			Conduct Problems Behaviours			Hyperactivity Behaviours		
	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference
Student	16 *(T 59)*	13 *(T 56)*	18.75%	13 (T 62)	6 *(T 52)*	53.85	5 *(T 57)*	6 *(T 60)*	-20.00	10 *(T 52)*	10 *(T 52)*	0%

Parent	16 (T 59)	15 (T 58)	6.25%	9 (T 62)	10 (T 64)	11.11	6 (T 57)	9 (T 65)	-50.00	4 (T 53)	8 (T 64)	-100.00%
Teacher	6 (T 47)	4 (T 45)	33.33%	3 (T 49)	3 (T 49)	0	8 (T 77)	4 (T 61)	50.00	5 (T 52)	3 (T 48)	40.00%

Figure 5.1:   Student A summaries of results

At program completion behaviours in the ADHD index as reported by parent, teacher and student all recorded positive percentage differences. The student recorded differences with self-ratings in screening and program completion in the Cognitive index. This moved from mildly atypical behaviour to being average and of no concern at program completion. However, with the parent and teacher, there were little differences regarding Cognitive Problems on completion.

On the Conduct Problems index, student and parent were consistent in scores by reporting higher scores at the completion of the program compared to behaviours at the participant screening. Whist the student's self rating still fell within average range, the parent score moved from average to mildly atypical with possible significant problems. An explanation for this discrepancy could be linked to the parent participating in the parenting program Triple P in which he/she could be more aware of problematic behaviours in their child rather than ignoring the situation.

Teacher scores were either average, or of no concern for each index apart from Conduct Problems. The teacher rated Student A's behaviours with Conduct Problems in the markedly atypical range which indicates significant problems. This rating could be because of the teacher being able to compare Student A's behaviour with that of the rest of the class and that Student A's behaviour was more inappropriate than other students. Student A was referred to the PAL intervention because of his severe behaviour so it would be expected that the teacher would rate the student as having major problems.

For the Hyperactivity index, the student recorded no differences at program completion with scores placing him within the average range. However, the parent scored their child's behaviour with a higher score, mildly atypical behaviour at program completion, whereas they initially rated the child in the average range compared. This inconsistency could be attributed to the parent taking more notice of the child's behaviour specifically with the child having too much energy, being restless and hav-

ing difficulty sitting still. Rather than the parent thinking that this behaviour was normal due to the parenting program, they may have become aware of the normal range of behaviours for a child with this age range Both student and parent had consistent scores in all four of the indexes.

Low scores on completion of the PAL Program indicated that further investigation needs to occur in regards to what contributed to any improvements in Conduct Problems as per the teacher ratings from participant screening to completion. In addition, a further investigation needs to be undertaken as to why the parent had rated the child so highly on the Hyperactivity index on program completion.

5.4.3.2 Student B

Program	ADHD index Behaviours			Cognitive Problems Behaviours			Conduct Problems Behaviours			Hyperactivity Behaviours		
	Screen-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ ence	Screen-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ-ence	Screen-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ ence	Screen-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ-ence
Student	12 (T 55)	8 (T48)	33.33 %	14 (T 74)	3 (T 46)	78.57 %	10 (T 72)	3 (T 51)	70.00 %	9 (T 56)	1 (T 38)	88.89 %
Parent	26 (T 70)	24 (T 63)	7.69%	16 (T 75)	12 (T 64)	25.00 %	11 (T 69)	11 (T 69)	0.00%	10 (T 58)	11 (T 60)	-10.00 %
Teacher	27 (T 71)	25 (T 75)	7.41%	10 (T 66)	12 (T 70)	-20.00 %	9 (T 76)	9 (T 76)	0.00%	12 (T63)	14 (T 67)	-16.67 %

Figure 5.2: Student B summaries of results

The results for Student B, as captured in Figure 5.2, highlight the positive differences at program completion from the parent, student and teacher in the ADHD index. However, the scores of Student B within the ADHD index according to the Parent and Teacher placed him in the markedly atypical range indicating significant problems. The student rated himself during the participant screening as being within the average range.

At program completion, the parent rated their child as being in mildly atypical range. Differences in the ADHD index could indicate that Student B was less restless, impulsive, not disturbing other children and is more sensitive towards others. However, the scores for the ADHD index by the teacher were even higher indicating that the student could be even more restless, less likely to remain in his seat in the classroom,

having a short attention span and were both impulsive and restless. The teacher score still placed the student in the significantly problematic range.

At commencement, the Cognitive Problem index, for the student and parent were consistent in scoring Student B as being in the markedly atypical range indicating significant problems. At completion, the parent and student scores were within the average to mild range, however the teacher scored the student higher on program completion with a change of rating from moderately atypical range to markedly atypical range indicating significant problems.

With the Conduct Problems index, Student B is scored in the markedly atypical range indicating significant problems by the student and teacher and moderately atypical range by the parent at commencement. Upon completion of the PAL Program, Student B was scored no differently from the parent and teacher whereas the student scored himself within the average range that indicates that the student perceived an improvement in the Conduct Problems index. This could indicate that the student showed more interest in his schoolwork or that he was able remember more about what he was learning.

For the Hyperactivity index, Student B scored as being slightly atypical during participant screening by the student and parent and mildly atypical by the teacher. On completion, Student B is scored as average by the student. However, the teacher scored Student B from the mildly atypical range during participant screening to the moderately atypical range on completion. The parent score differed on completion and remained in the slightly atypical range.

Consistencies in scoring were evident mostly with the teacher and the parent across the four indexes rating Student B in the moderate to markedly atypical range. There was minimal change across most of the indexes with higher scores in Hyperactivity as far as the teacher and parent were concerned and Cognitive Problems with the teacher. This indicates that the parent of Student B and the teacher perceived a slight increase in Hyperactivity behaviours such as more restlessness, impulsivity and difficulty and with waiting his turn.

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5.4.3.3 Student C

Program	ADHD index Behaviours			Cognitive Problems Behaviours			Conduct Problems Behaviours			Hyperactivity Behaviours		
	Screen-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ-ence	Scre-en-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ-ence	Screen-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ-ence	Screen-ing	Comple-tion	% Differ-ence
Student	16 (T 62)	14 (T 58)	12.50 %	11 (T 60)	11 (T 60)	0.00%	10 (T 72)	9 (T 69)	10.00	15 (T 69)	14 (T 67)	6.67%
Parent	28 (T 72)	13 (T 55)	53.57 %	14 (71)	7 (56)	50.00%	18 (T 89)	8 (T 61)	55.56	14 (T 85)	6 (T 61)	57.14 %
Teacher	15 (T 58)	15 (T 58)	0%	4 (T 51)	5 (T 54)	- 25.00%	12 (T 87)	7 (T 69)	41.67	8 (T 58)	8 (T 58)	0.00.%

Figure 5.3: Student C summaries of results

The data for Student C highlighted the majority of scoring across all indexes as positive changes. The scoring across all indexes reported by his parent placed Student C in the markedly atypical range indicating significant problems within the four indexes during participant screening into the PAL Program. At program completion, the parent scored perceived positive differences with scores falling from the markedly atypical range indicating significant problems to scores within the average range in the ADHD index and slightly atypical in Cognitive Problems. These perceived differences could indicate that the parent is managing their child more proactively due to the parenting program and that the child could be responding more positively to the parent. However more targeted measurements would need to be applied to conclusively determine these outcomes.

There was consistency in scores recorded by the teacher and parent placing Student C in the markedly atypical range indicating significant problems, and the student rated himself in this range during screening for his inclusion into the PAL Program. Both the teacher and student, when recording program completion scores, placed Student C in the moderately atypical range. Overall, the teacher recorded no differences in the ADHD and Hyperactivity index from participant screening to program completion. It was recorded that there was very slight negative change in Cognitive Problems; however, the student was still within the average range.

Student C rated himself with perceived positive differences in all three indexes apart from Cognitive Problems where he rated no change from participant screening to program completion. Significant perceived differences were recorded by the student in Conduct Problems from the markedly atypical range with program screening to the moderate range on program completion. This could suggest that Student C perceives himself as does his parent and teacher to be more settled within himself, less likely to break the rules and is more compliant.

5.4.3.4   Student D

Program	ADHD index Behaviours			Cognitive Problems Behaviours			Conduct Problems Behaviours			Hyperactivity Behaviours		
	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference
Student	16 (T 62)	19 (T 67)	-18.75%	10 (T 64)	9 (T 61)	10.00%	11 (T 75)	11 (T 75)	0.00%	11 (T 60)	8 (T 54)	27.27%
Parent	21 (T 64)	19 (T 62)	9.52%	11 \(T 65)	10 (T 63)	9.09%	9 (T 64)	9 (T 64)	0.00%	11 (T 76)	9 (T 62)	18.18%
Teacher	27 (T 70)	24 (T 67)	11.11%	11 (T 68)	9 (T 63)	18.18%	0 (T 45)	0 (T 45)	0.00%	5 (T 53)	5 (T 53)	0.00%

Figure 5.4:   Student D summaries of results

The data for Student D highlights mostly positive perceived differences across all indexes as reported by the three respondents from the participant screening to completion of the PAL Program. Specifically, Student D rated positive differences in Cognitive Problems and Hyperactivity, no differences in Conduct Problems, while scoring a negatively higher score in the ADHD index from participant screening to program completion. Student D rated himself in the markedly atypical range for Conduct Problems. This self-assessment did not change. Interestingly, the parent and teacher ratings were very different. The parent rated Student D in the mildly atypical range with the teacher recording this index as being of no concern at all for Conduct Problems.

However, the parent scored Student D in the markedly atypical range for Hyperactivity and the teacher scoring Student D in the markedly atypical range for ADHD. On program completion, the parent scored Student D positively; recording him in the mildly atypical range and the teacher changed her scoring to the moderate range for the ADHD index.

Student D's rating of the ADHD index could indicate that he was more aware of his frustration levels and reported on these, was easily distracted and less likely to follow instructions. Whilst Student D rated a worse outcome in this index, this would not have been the case with the parent and class teacher reports. In addition, Student D reported perceived improvements in the Hyper-activity index. In particular, Student D could perceive himself as being less restless, more able to concentrate and more organized. These perceived changes were also reported by the parent.

The class teacher reported Student D as showing a slight positive improvement within the
ADHD index, scoring within the moderately atypical range compared to markedly atypical range on program completion. This score still places Student D in a range that indicated significant problems where he could be still disturbing other children, still easily distracted and impulsive.

Clearly, Student D has been reported as showing some perceived changes across some of the indexes. Additional and ongoing support is still required. To ensure that targeted interventions are delivered to Student D, more qualitative data needs to be collected on what has made the most difference according to his perceptions that have impacted positively on his behaviours and how this was achieved.

5.4.3.5   Student E

Program	ADIID index Behaviours			Cognitive Problems Behaviours			Conduct Problems Behaviours			Hyperactivity Behaviours		
	Screen-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ-ence	Screen-ing	Com-pletion	% Differ ence	Screen-ing	Com-ple-tion	% Differ-ence	Screen-ing	Comple-tion	% Dif-ference
Student	16 (T 62)	9 (T 49)	43.75 %	13 (T 72)	9 (T 61)	30.77 %	12 (T 78)	1 (T 45)	91.67 %	9 (T 56)	6 (T 49)	33.33%
Parent	19 (T 62)	18 (T 61)	5.26%	10 (T 63)	7 (T 56)	30.00 %	5 (T 52)	7 (T 56)	-40.00 %	6 (T 58)	6 (T 58)	0.00%
Teacher	33 (T 77)	26 (T 69)	21.21 %	13 (T 73)	10 (T 66)	23.08 %	10 (T 80)	5 (T 62)	50.00 %	20 (T 81)	10 (T 62)	50.00%

Figure 5.5:   Student E summaries of results

The data collected on Student E during participant screening places him in the mark-edly atypical range for all four indexes with extreme ratings being recorded in Con-

duct Problems (*T* 80) and Hyperactivity (*T* 81). Of significance, at program completion he was scored by the teacher as being in the mild atypical range for Hyperactivity, Conduct Problems and the moderate atypical range for ADHD and Cognitive Problems. The reported perceived differences as reported by the teacher could be attributed to their capacity in managing the student better because of their professional development. However no data were collected to confirm this possibility, therefore additional and specific data needs to be collected, to generate information that can be analysed in order to better explore the impact on teachers professional development to student outcomes.

In contrast to the teacher data, the scores reported from the parent rated the student across all the indexes as being in the slightly to the mildly atypical range during participant screening. The parent reported Student E with a slight negative increase with Conduct Problems on program completion. This scoring changed from the average range during participant screening to slightly atypical range on completion of the PAL Program. This could be attributed to the parent being more aware of unacceptable behaviours because of their participation in the parent education program - Triple P.

Student E scored himself in the markedly atypical range with significant problems for Cognitive Problems and Conduct Problems during participant screening for PAL, however, at program completion he was recorded as being in the average range. For Cognitive Problems, at program completion scores were within the mildly atypical range for Student E. These scores indicated a significant difference in perceptions of Conduct and Cognitive Problems by Student E. This was consistent with the teacher's reports. Specifically, this could indicate that Student E was now able to retain what he had learnt to a greater degree, was able to concentrate more and follow through with things. For Conduct Problems, this could indicate that Student E could be more compliant, less likely to be aggressive or destroy property. Furthermore, he could be less restless.

With the ADHD and Hyperactivity indexes, Student E rated himself in the average and mildly atypical range. On program completion scores, Student E reported positive changes in both indexes and he placed himself in the lower end of the average

range. This could indicate that he felt that he was likely to have such ADHD characteristics as being easily annoyed, showing poor judgment, and his parents only seeing his bad behaviour.

Given that the data measurements were not specifically linked to student outcomes it would be inappropriate to assume that behavioural differences can be attributed to the PAL intervention. However, this highlights the importance of generating data that can measure specific student outcomes.

5.4.3.6 Student F

Program	ADHD index Behaviours			Cognitive Problems Behaviours			Conduct Problems Behaviours			Hyperactivity Behaviours		
	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference
Student	16 (T 62)	17 (T 63)	-6..25%	13 (T 72)	7 (T 56)	46.15 %	16 (T 90)	4 (T 54)	75.00%	15 (T 69)	10 (T 58)	33.33 %
Parent	35 (T 80)	22 (T 65)	37.14 %	18 (T 82)	12 (T 68)	33.33 %	14 (T 76)	8 (T 60)	42.86%	13 (T 82)	10 (T69)	23.08 %
Teacher	22 (T 65)	26 (T 69)	-18.18 %	8 (T 61)	10 (T 66)	-25.00 %	12 (T 87)	10 (T 80)	16.67%	16 (T 74)	15 (T 72)	6.25%

Figure 5.6: **Student F summaries of results**

The data for Student F highlights consistencies between parent, teacher and student on participant screening scores with the Conduct Problems index placing the student in the extreme range for markedly atypical significant problems. At program completion, scores reported by the student and parent place the student in the average (student) and slightly atypical (parent). This data indicated a significant perceived difference in the Conduct Problems index as reported by the student and parent. The teacher recorded a slight positive difference for Student F on the Conduct Problems index however, still rated the student in the markedly atypical range with significant problems.

Student F's parent rated him in the markedly atypical range with significant problems in all four indexes. Program completion scores in each of the indexes were recorded as indicating positive differences. With ADHD Student F was reported as being in the mildly atypical range, Cognitive Problems in the moderately atypical range and Hyperactivity in the moderately atypical range. Whilst these results indicated

possible improvements, further research would need to be undertaken to determine how these changes occurred and under what circumstances.

Further data from Student F indicated that he rated himself in the mildly atypical range for ADHD during participant screening and a slight rise on program completion but still within the same range. For Cognitive Problems, Conduct Problems and Hyperactivity, Student F scored himself in the markedly to moderate range during participant screening. At program completion, these scores changed to being within the average range for Conduct Problems and slightly atypical range for Cognitive Problems and Hyperactivity. Significantly, the student had perceived differences across three of the indexes.

This data could suggest that Student F was more likely to be organized with his schoolwork, able to concentrate increasingly likely to retain what he had learnt. Additionally, there was perceived improvements in Conduct Problems that could result in Student F being more likely to be cooperative and less likely to be angry in addition to being less likely to hurt other children. An improvement in Hyperactivity could indicate that Student F would be less likely to be restless. Overall, Student F was reported by the parent, teacher and the student himself as making significant progress across the majority of indexes. Consistencies were evident in the data with the teacher, student and parent specifically reporting improvements in the Conduct Problems index.

5.4.3.7 Student G

Program	ADHD index Behaviours			Cognitive Problems Behaviours			Conduct Problems Behaviours			Hyperactivity Behaviours		
	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference
Student	20 (T 68)	6 (T 44)	70.00%	11 (T 67)	1 (T 41)	90.91%	2 (T 48)	1 (T 45)	50.00%	16 (T 71)	9 (T 56)	43.75%
Parent	26 (T 70)	15 (T 58)	42.31%	13 (T 69)	6 (T 54)	53.85%	10 (T 67)	7 (T 59)	30.00%	13 (T 82)	5 (T 59)	61.54%
Teacher	26 (T 70)	27 (T 71)	-3.85%	5 (T 53)	5 (T 53)	0.00%	10 (T 80)	8 (T 73)	20.00%	22 (T 84)	16 (T 74)	27.27%

Figure 5.7:   Student G summaries of results

The data for Student G indicates mostly positive differences across the four indexes as reported by the student, parent and teacher. For the ADHD index the teacher and parent scored Student G in the markedly atypical range during participant screening while the student scored himself in the moderately atypical range. At program completion, the student scored himself in this area as not being a concern while the parent scored him in the slightly atypical range. The teacher however, scored the student slightly worse at completion of the PAL Program but still within the markedly atypical range with significant problems.

With the Cognitive Problems index, scores from the student and parent were within the same moderately atypical range indicating significant problems. At program completion, the scores from the student and parent were within the average range. The teacher rated Student G in the average range at participant screening and at program completion.

There was little consistency with the Conduct Problems index during participant screening. The student rated himself in the average range during participant screening and program completion. The parent scored the student in the moderately atypical range at commencement indicating significant problems whilst at program completion within the slightly atypical range. The teacher scored the student at a significantly high level at participant screening with a recorded difference that indicated improvements. However, this still placed the student in the markedly atypical range with significant problems.

The Hyperactivity index was scored at participant screening by the student, parent and teacher as being in the markedly atypical range with significant problems. At program completion, the student and parent scored Student G in the mildly atypical range. The teacher whilst reporting positive differences at program completion still rated the student in the markedly atypical range with significant problems.

Student G showed significant improvements across a number of indexes at program completion as reported by the student, parent and teacher. Overall, the scores reported at program completion could indicate that Student G would be less likely to have such ADHD characteristics as being easily annoyed and showing poor judg-

ment. Student G's reported improvements in Cognitive Problems could indicate that he would be able to retain what he had learnt to some degree, would be able to concentrate more and following through with things. With Conduct Problems the scores could indicate that Student G was more compliant, less likely to be aggressive or destroy property and less restless.

5.4.3.8   Student H

Program	ADHD index Behaviours			Cognitive Problems Behaviours			Conduct Problems Behaviours			Hyperactivity Behaviours		
	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference	Screening	Completion	% Difference
Student	26 (T 79)	18 (T 64)	30.77%	12 (T 69)	9 (T 61)	25.00%	5 (T 57)	2 (T 43)	60.00%	15 (T 69)	8 (T 54)	46.67%
Parent	21 (T 64)	14 (T 56)	33.33%	9 (T 61)	5 (T 52)	44.44%	9 (T 65)	6 (T 56)	33.33%	7 (T 61)	5 (T 59)	28.57%
Teacher	20 (T 63)	17 (T 59)	15.00%	9 (T 63)	7 (T 58)	22.22%	16 (T 90)	6 (T 66)	62.50%	15 (T 72)	6 (T 55)	60.00%

Figure 5.8:   Student H summaries of results

The data for Student H highlights across all four indexes that the student, parent and teacher all reported positive differences for the student at completion of the PAL Program. The student scored himself at participant screening as being at the moderately atypical range indicating significant problems for Cognitive and Conduct Problems and Hyperactivity. At the markedly atypical range with significant problems was scored for the ADHD index. At program completion, Student H rated himself in the mildly atypical range for ADHD and Cognitive Problems, in the average range for Hyperactivity and in the range of "no concern" for Conduct Problems. Most differences were reported in the Conduct Problems index.

Whilst self-report for Student H is at the slightly atypical lower end range at participant screening and of "no concern" after PAL with Conduct Problems this was not the case with the teacher. The teacher rated the student at the highest level of the markedly atypical range with significant problems. However, the teacher scored the student at the lower end of the moderately atypical range indicating significant problems after the PAL Program for Conduct Problems. Interestingly, this index attracted the highest levels of inconsistencies across all the indexes by respondents. There were consistencies with the teacher and student reports regarding the degree of positive differences at completion of the PAL Program. An explanation of differences

with this index could be because of teacher expectations, the student's lack of compliance in addition to the possible inflexibility in regards to behaviour management on the part of the teacher. The parent difference could be that the parent did not view their child's behaviour as being problematic given that the parent rated their child in the mildly atypical range, which indicated that there could be significant problems.

The teacher also scored Student H in the markedly atypical range with significant problems for Hyperactivity during participant screening and within the average range at program completion. For the ADHD and Cognitive index, the teacher scored the student in the mildly atypical range at participant screening and in the slightly atypical range at program completion. Reported results by the teacher indicated differences for both indexes.

The parent reported program participant screening scores were consistent across all four indexes scoring Student H in the mildly atypical range. At completion of the PAL Program, the parent reported positive differences that was within the average range for ADHD, Cognitive and Conduct Problems and slightly atypical for the Hyperactivity index.

Overall, the teacher reported significantly positive differences in the Conduct Problems and Hyperactivity index for Student H. The parent scores were fairly consistent at participant screening and at program completion across all indexes reporting positive differences in all. The student also reported positive differences in all the indexes but significant positive differences were reported for the Conduct Problems index.

Positive differences for Student H in the ADHD index could indicate that he would be more likely to be able to concentrate as well as be more organized and also be more willing to follow instructions. With Cognitive Problems, improvements could indicate that Student H was more likely to concentrate and complete his schoolwork. Additionally, in regards to Conduct Problems, the differences in scores could mean that Student H would be less likely to be angry and resentful and less likely to loose his temper. For the Hyperactivity index Student H would be less restless more cooperative and more willing to take turns.

5.4.3.9   Summary

A number of patterns arose from the overall responses from students, teachers and parents as seen in the above data:

- Students reported ADHD as being their major problematic area before the PAL program and at completion indicated this was the area where most improvements had been made;
- Teachers reported students in the markedly atypical range with significant issues with Conduct Problems and Hyperactivity prior to the PAL program and reported overall improvements in these areas at program completion; and
- Parents also reported ADHD as being the major problematic area before the PAL program and at completion indicating this was the area of most improvement.

The CRS verified the problematic behaviours of the students that were reported by the school, teachers and parents at program entry. Furthermore, the Conners Index can be aligned to the themes that have emerged from the data provided from the schools, teachers and parents. The ADHD index can be linked to theme of Social/emotional problems reported, specifically difficulties engaging in tasks, lack of concentration in class, is inattentive and easily distracted.

The Cognitive Problems/Inattention Index can be aligned to the theme of Academic issues where the student is inattentive, had more academic difficulties than most individuals their age, had difficulty completing tasks or schoolwork, and appeared to have trouble concentrating on tasks that required sustained mental effort.

The Oppositional scale can be aligned to the theme of behavioural issues indicating that there was a likelihood that these students would break rules, have problems with persons in authority and become more easily annoyed and angered than most individuals their own age and violent. The Hyperactivity scale can be aligned to the social/emotional theme where students would have difficulty sitting still, feel more restless and impulsive than most individuals their age, and have the need to always be "on the go."

The strengths of the CRS quantitative data were that it illuminated and confirmed the problematic areas for each of the eight students at program entry that was first raised

by way of qualitative data from the school, parents and teachers. Having multiple respondents completing mixed method measures strengthened the reliability and validity of the data. Of interest is that both quantitative and qualitative data found that parents, teachers and students all reported perceived positive changes in student behaviours at program completion.

5.4.4 *Resilience perceptions checklist*

The *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Grotberg, 1995) was completed by students, teachers and parents at program entry and conclusion. The 15 item Checklist required a Yes or No response to a descriptive statement that indicated the degree of the child's resilience. The checklist included individual factors, family factors, social factors and school/community factors.

5.4.4.1 Students

In Table 5.8 student responses were collated with the recorded percentage differences between participant screening into the PAL Program and at its completion. A summary and discussion of the student responses follow.

Table 5.8: **Student responses** *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience*

Resilience factors: Individual, family, social, school/community	Participant screening perceptions of resilience factors		Program completion Perceptions of resilience factors		Percentage differences
Questions	Yes	No	Yes	No	
1. The child has someone who loves him/her totally (unconditionally).	7	1	8	0	12.5%
2. The child has an older person outside the home she/he can tell about problems and feelings	6	2	6	2	0.0%
3. The child is praised for doing things on his/her own.	6	2	6	2	0.0%
4. The child can count on her/his family being there when needed.	6	2	8	0	25.0%
5. The child knows someone he/she wants to be like.	3	5	8	0	62.5%
6. The child believes things will turn out all right.	6	2	7	1	12.5%
7. The child does endearing things that make people like her/him.	4	4	8	0	50.0%
8. The child believes in a power greater than seen.	7	1	8	0	12.5%
9. The child is willing to try new things.	6	2	8	0	25.0%
10. The child likes to achieve in what he/she does.	7	1	8	0	12.5%
11. The child feels that what she/he does makes a difference in how things come out.	3	5	6	2	37.5%
12. The child likes himself/herself.	6	2	7	1	12.5%
13. The child can focus on a task and stay with it.	4	4	7	1	37.5%
14. The child has a sense of humour.	7	1	7	1	0.0%
15. The child makes plans to do things.	5	3	6	2	12.5%
Total	**83**	**37**	**108**	**12**	**20.8%**

Overwhelmingly, the students reported that their perceptions of their resilience was high when initially screened for suitability to enter the PAL Program with the total Yes responses being 83 as opposed to No responses totalling 37. However in question 5, only 3 answered *Yes* that they 'knew someone who they wanted to be like' whereas five students were unable to identify any person. In question 7, only four answered *Yes* to doing "endearing things that make people like them." The responses to question 13 indicated that only four students felt that they could "focus on a task and stay with it."

Following the conclusion of the PAL intervention, five of the eight students indicated a positive change in their responses about the perceptions of their resilience. These changes were mostly in the area of the "individual factors" identifying positive qualities about themselves.

There was a 20.8% difference in the *Yes* responses from program participant screening to program completion. The *Yes* responses increased from 83 to 108. Of the 15 questions, three questions recorded the same responses. These questions were about having an "older person available to talk to," "being praised for doing things on their own" and "having a sense of humour." Question 5 rendered the highest percentage differences which was 62.5%. This question was about the student identifying someone he "wanted to be like."

For the 12 other questions, the students had changed their answers from a *No* response to a *Yes*. The next highest increases from participant screening to program completion was a *Yes* response where students reported that they were "seeing that they now do endearing things to be liked." Initially only four students answered a *Yes* changing to eight students answering *Yes* to this question.

5.4.4.2   Teachers

The class teachers were invited to complete the checklist on how they viewed the student's perceptions of resilience at program entry and completion. Their responses are collated in Table 5.9. Overall, there was a 22.5% increase in *Yes* responses from participant screening to completion of the PAL Program. The major differences were in questions 7 and 8.

Table 5.9: **Class teacher responses** *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience*

Resilience factors: Individual, family, social, school/community	Participant screening perceptions of resilience factors		Program completion Perceptions of resilience factors		Percentage differences
Questions	Yes	No	Yes	No	
1. The child has someone who loves him/her totally (unconditionally).	8	0	8	0	0.0%
2. The child has an older person outside the home she/he can tell about problems and feelings	7	1	8	0	12.5%
3. The child is praised for doing things on his/her own.	6	2	7	1	12.5%
4. The child can count on her/his family being there when needed.	5	3	6	2	12.5%
5. The child knows someone he/she wants to be like.	4	4	6	2	25.0%
6. The child believes things will turn out all right.	4	4	7	1	37.5%
7. The child does endearing things that make people like her/him.	4	4	8	0	50.0%
8. The child believes in a power greater than seen.	4	4	8	0	50.0%
9. The child is willing to try new things.	7	1	8	0	12.5%
10. The child likes to achieve in what he/she does.	5	3	6	2	12.5%

Resilience factors: Individual, family, social, school/community	Participant screening perceptions of resilience factors		Program completion Perceptions of resilience factors		Percentage differences
11. The child feels that what she/he does makes a difference in how things come out.	4	4	7	1	37.5%
12. The child likes himself/herself.	4	4	7	1	37.5%
13. The child can focus on a task and stay with it.	6	2	7	1	12.5%
14. The child has a sense of humour.	6	2	8	0	25.0%
15. The child makes plans to do things.	5	3	5	3	0.0%
TOTAL	**79**	**41**	**106**	**14**	**22.5%**

Question 7 concerned the child doing "endearing things that make people like him" and question 8 was whether the child "believed in a greater power." Other noted positive percentage differences were in questions 6, 11 and 12. These questions were associated with the student's individual factors such as the child believing that "things would turn out all right" (6), "the child feeling that what he does makes a difference" (11) and the child "liking himself" (12).

In summary, the class teachers indicated the children possess protective factors. For example the teachers rated the children positively by answering *Yes* to the "child feeling loved", "having an adult who they can talk to", "achieving", "being a risk taker", "staying on task" and "having a sense of humour and planning". Overall, the teachers indicated that they felt that child's perceptions of their resilience had increased.

5.4.4.3 Parents

Parents were also invited to complete the Perceptions checklist regarding their child's perceived resilience at program entry and completion with all eight parents responding. Table 5.10 is a collation of the Parent responses.

Table 5.10: **Parent responses** *Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience*

Resilience factors: Individual, family, social, school/community	Participant screening perceptions of resilience factors		Program completion Perceptions of resilience factors		Percentage differences
Questions	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	
1. The child has someone who loves him/her totally (unconditionally).	8	0	8	0	0.0%
2. The child has an older person outside the home she/he can tell about problems and feelings	5	3	6	2	12.5%
3. The child is praised for doing things on his/her own.	8	0	8	0	0.0%
4. The child can count on her/his family being there when needed.	8	0	8	0	0.0%
5. The child knows someone he/she wants to be like.	7	1	7	1	0.0%
6. The child believes things will turn out all right.	4	4	8	0	50.0%
Resilience factors: Individual, family, social, school/community	**Participant screening perceptions of resilience factors**		**Program completion Perceptions of resilience factors**		**Percentage differences**
Questions	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	
7. The child does endearing things that make people like her/him.	4	4	8	0	50.0%
8. The child believes in a power greater than seen.	8	0	8	0	0.0%
9. The child is willing to try new things.	4	4	6	2	25.0%
10. The child likes to achieve in what he/she does.	7	1	8	0	12.5%
11. The child feels that what she/he does makes a difference in how things come out.	4	4	8	0	50.0%
12. The child likes himself/herself.	6	2	8	0	25.0%

Resilience factors: Individual, family, social, school/community	Participant screening perceptions of resilience factors		Program completion Perceptions of resilience factors		Percentage differences
Questions	Yes	No	Yes	No	
13. The child can focus on a task and stay with it.	2	6	6	2	50.0%
14. The child has a sense of humour.	8	0	6	2	-25.0%
15. The child makes plans to do things.	6	2	7	1	12.5%
TOTAL	89	31	110	10	17.5%

There was mostly agreement with nine of the 15 questions; however, responses changed for half the parents at program completion with questions 6, 7, 9, 11 and question 12. With questions 6, 7, 9 and 11, four answered *Yes* and four answered *No*. That their child:

- believed things will turn out alright;
- does endearing things that make people like him;
- willing to try new things; and
- felt that what he does makes a difference.

For question 12, six answered *Yes* and two *No*, that "The child likes himself". However for question 13, two answered *Yes* and six answered *No* that their child felt that "they could focus on a task and stay with it".

Generally, the parents' reported perceptions indicated that they felt their children had more protective factors in place than risk factors. All the parents answered *Yes* to their child feeling loved, being praised, being able to count on their family, believing in a greater power and having a sense of humour. Four out of the eight parents felt that their child was not optimistic, was not a risk taker and that what the child does, does not have an impact on outcomes. The majority of parents stated that the children could not focus or stay on task.

Of the 15 questions answered by parents at the conclusion of the program, there was no change to four of the questions yielding *Yes* responses, however there was a change from a *No* response to a *Yes* response with 11 of the questions. The parents

felt that their child was optimistic, more endearing because of their actions and that the child felt they had an impact on outcomes. Overall, the parents indicated that that there has been a significant improvement in the child's perceptions of their resilience.

5.4.4.4 Summary

There was a strong agreement from students, parents and teachers with questions about the child being aware that they are loved. Both parents and students reported positive percentage differences for question 13 about the child being able to focus and stay on task. The teacher scored this question as mostly *Yes* from participant screening to completion of the PAL Program. Essentially, teachers reported that the child perceived that they did not have a problem staying on task. The question that rendered the highest positive percentage change from students, teachers and parents was question 11 about the child taking responsibility for how things will turn out. The teachers' reports of positive percentage differences from participant screening to program completion were the highest out of the parents and students.

Overall, this data highlighted that even though students, parents and teachers rated the students as having high perceived resilience prior to the PAL program there were reported positive percentage changes from program entry to program completion. Notably overall for the students, there was a 20.8% improvement, for teachers it was 22.5% and for parents it was 17.5%. The perceived positive changes for students on the checklist are linked to protective factors within the resilience framework (Durlack, 1998) mainly individual factors where there was consensus with the students, parents and teachers. This data indicates that there had been perceived gains in students protective factors. These were:

Individual

- More likable;
- Tries new things;
- Takes responsibility;
- Able to stay on task; and
- More optimistic.

5.4.5   *End of semester PAL Program Report*

At the conclusion of the PAL intervention, the PAL teachers provided a report to each school. The report format was designed by the PAL teachers and required input from the PAL teachers based on their own experiences and observations of the student over the six month period, as well as gathering information from the respective schools. The PAL report included a statement connected to the reasons as to why the student was referred to the PAL intervention, and included observations made during the PAL intervention. The PAL teacher described the students' personal characteristics, relationships and social interactions, individual differences and any critical incidents during the PAL intervention along with successes and changes with the student.

The PAL teachers provided recommendations in managing the student's behaviours and any other relevant information based on their experiences with the student over the six month duration. Table 5.11 is a summary of information provided by the PAL teachers. Following the summary table is an analysis and discussion of the content presented.

Table 5.11:   End of semester PAL student report

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Reasons for Referral	*Aggressive behaviour in playground including kicking, punching, pushing. *Quick tempered. *Mother reported that A threatened to report her to Family Services is he made him clean his teeth, eat meals etc. *Bursts into tears easily	*Disruptive and anti social behaviour *Low self esteem *Inability to form appropriate relationships	*Physical aggression *Temper tantrums *Leaving classroom	*Disruptive behaviour in class *Regular red cards for misbehaviour in the playground *Belief that D together with his mother, class teacher and classmates would benefit by his involvement in PAL	*Breaking things *Calling out, silly comments *Swinging on chair *Bullying other children *Kicking, punching, wrestling related play *Very restless	*F is having difficulty functioning at all times in the classroom. *He has behaviours that lead him to be taken out of the classroom, either to another teacher or the office. *His behaviour is also sometimes violent toward other children and adults	*Extremely disruptive *Calling out, Interrupts teacher *Destructively cuts, rips papers, pencils, chair bag, clothes. *Very changeable behaviours	*Aggressive, non cooperative behaviour

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Ele-ments	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Obser-vations made during PAL Pro-gram: Indi-vidual charac-teristics	*Polite, coopera-tive, helpful, , thought-ful, quiet, shy, partici-pates well in all ac-tivities, *Tells lies to get at-tention *Sulks, temper tantrums	*Enthusi astic, athletic, leader-ship qualities, very competi-tive, *Physica lly and verbally assertive	*Helpful , friendly, co-opera-tive, polite, willing to try new activi-ties. *When frus-trated, C exhibits temper tan-trums, sulking, physical aggres-sion	*Happy, helpful, likes to please, adven-turous, athletic, easily led, talkative	*Cooper ative friendly, shy, polite, helpful *A bit lazy, reluctant to take initiative – waits for oth-ers to start and then follows on	*Friendl y and can par-ticipate in ap-propriate mature conver-sation. *He can play fairly well with peers and adults and ac-cepts losing. *He is willing to have a go at most activi-ties. *He has very low self-esteem and can show signs of self-pity. *He is regularly opposi-tional – displays behav-iour opposite to what the oc-casion requires.	*Quite smart can get work done quickly, very quick on picking up con-cepts *Likes to please and do jobs for people	*Gregari ous, sense of humour, witty, friendly, outgo-ing, chatty, boister-ous, *Deman ding of adult attention

Ele-ments	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Relation ships/ **Social Interac-tions**	*Relates better to adults than peers, remains aloof from other children *Talks of play-ing with sisters *Goes to cub scouts	*Plays aggres-sive and competi-tive games – chooses play-mates that rein-force his behav-iours. *Does not ap-pear to be able to main-tain real friend-ships. *Speaks inappro-priately to adults and children	*Has diffi-culty interact-ing suc-cessfully with peers. *Some friends at school. *Particip ates in teams. *Friends with-draw due to C's be-haviour.	*Popular with peers, enjoys group situa-tions, *Adults enjoyed his com-pany in PAL interven-tion	*Has friend-ships with his class, with his brother and within PAL group. *Good interac-tions with friends	*Enjoys interact-ing with his peers and has some friends. *He appears to relate better to peers than to adults.	*G is socially awk-ward needs a lot of support in social skills training, loves an audi-ence. *His relation-ships im-proved signifi-cantly with his PAL peers	*A leader, popular at times, wants his own way. *Positiv e rela-tionship with his mother. *Has a desire to please adults

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Individual Difficulties/ Critical Incidents	*Becomes moody, sulky, withdrawn, when he perceives an injustice against him. *Difficulty communicating his feelings and needs	*Speaks inappropriately – put downs of other students, *Leaving the group/hiding out of teachers sight *Kicking and bumping other students	*Occasionally withdrew for the group when things did not go as he wanted. *C was easily re-directed using non-aversive language, tone and strategies	*Very easily distracted, frequently off task especially in academic situations *Copies inappropriate behaviours, whistles, makes inappropriate noises	*Feeling sorry for himself, lacks confidence. *Instructions need to be repeated at times for E possibly auditory processing difficulties. *Provoking other children experiencing behaviour difficulties, tells unnecessary tales about others	*Has displayed oppositional behaviour frequently. *He has difficulty keeping his hands and feet to himself. *He provokes other children particularly when they are experiencing behaviour difficulties. *He withdraws when unwilling to participate in an activity – he evades direct participation e.g. moving slowly, putting his head down etc.	*Initially was not very popular but relationships improved and he became a valuable member of PAL. *Still 'looses it' at times but is more aware of when that will happen	*Pushes the boundaries, engages in unsafe behaviour, pushes hits others, can be physically intimidating. *Speaks disrespectfully to others including adults

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Success/ Changes	*Becoming less withdrawn and appears more positive and happy. *Has developed the ability to articulate what he should do when provoked – frequently can now do the right thing. *Participated well in play for graduation	*Improved ability to identify and articulate appropriate behaviour. *Support from mother and grandmother has been beneficial	*Less frequent outburst at school and PAL. *Improved confidence. *C's father appears more confident about C's ability to change his behaviour	*Behaviour much improved: -less disruptive to others -less inappropriate noises -more confident when attempting reading and writing	*More positive outlook, more confidence in has own abilities particularly in reading *More willing to try new things for himself. *Incidents of telling tales and provocation of others has decreased over the past six months	*Increasing levels of participation. Less frequent incidents provoking others or withdrawing. *Some evidence of improvement in self-esteem – e.g. making more positive comments about himself, his abilities and his life. *His mother acknowledgement of difficulties and her efforts to address them have been beneficial to F.	*More responsive to praise and positive reinforcement. *He more aware of his capabilities. *Is beginning to use strategies to stay calm but this is going to be a long journey and he will need ongoing support	*More frequent use of respectful language to others. *Much less physical intimidation, less fighting. *Showed leadership qualities

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Any other Comments	*A loved the PAL intervention, appreciates effort of adults with him. *Likes to make an effort to see justice, less of a chip on his shoulder, more confidence	*School is an advocate for paediatrician/ *Medication intervention. Year 4 placement will be with an experienced male teacher	*Home issues have a major impact on C's behaviour. *Non-aversive strategies and high standards of behaviour and schoolwork expected by class teacher have been a positive influence	*Family issues have had an impact on behaviour	*Both parents were extremely supportive of the PAL intervention, and this support made a major contribution to E's success. *They have shown an increase in their own confidence to deal with the difficulties that E presents. *Mum to follow up hearing check.	*Can't handle yelling, recommend therapeutic relationship – mentor for mum. *High level of support needed otherwise he regresses easily	*Will need close monitoring with his organizational ability in is academic work to experience success. *He just does not have it and is very untidy. *He is moving to the country at the end of the year and is very unhappy about this. *Talking about transitions will be beneficial for him	*Management strategies – thrives on praise and positive reinforcement. *Rappor t is important – behaviour is improved when he gets to like the adult. *Making up the PAL play and performing it was a major strength

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Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Anecdotal information noted during the semester: Class teacher	*Still finds injustice hard to deal with. Settles quicker when upset. *Can discuss incidents better. *Can at times control his reactions, less baiting of people. *Likes to be liked – makes more effort now. *Still touchy, family issues upsetting him but now he can discuss it	*Daily playground incidents have improved. *Ability doesn't match with effort. *Speaki ng disrespectfully, anxiety exhibited, fortnightly cycle. *Less incidents in the playground. *Sense of honour, acts like class clown as defence mechanism	*Classro om behaviour much improved. *Playgro und issues continue, but can calm down much better on re-entry to the classroom. *C seeks attention through being the baby. *He will discuss problems now but would not early in the year	*Wants to please, not disruptive in class, keen to put hand up and have a go	*More positive about self and work *Able to follow instructions better *Still needs reminder to stay on task. *STLD: changes from one parent to other is a bit difficult *Is a bit cranky. *Chip on shoulder is gone. *Often smiles, found a sense of humour. *Increas ed in tolerance for others in and lower frustration levels. *Needs ongoing academic support	*Works much better one-on-one. *3rd term was fantastic, beginning of 4th term – bad holidays *Went back to saying he couldn't do it. *Readin g and spelling improved. *He is brighter than he believes. *Change s the rules if he is not winning. *Nobod y would play with him early in the year now children include him.	*Not calling out as much. *Followi ng the teacher's directions more. *More, putting his hand up and not calling out as much	*Confro ntational behaviour has almost entirely disappeared. *Possess ive of teacher's attention before PAL; this has improved. *Much happier, has friends, nicer approach with peers. *Even days when he is not at his best; the behaviour is never severe enough for referral to the office. *More willing to have a go at academic work. *Early in the year refused to join a group for work, always comes now.

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Administration	*More settled, relaxed, focused in class. *Potential to complete 12 years of schooling. *Problems exist with bullying type behaviour. *Needs to be involved in challenging experiences (chess club)	*Patterns of behaviour may lead to suspension. *Anxiety related to expectations of self and weekend activities with Dad. *B gravitates towards easily influenced kids. *Peer group has changed. *Still hurtful teasing and fights	*Fewer referrals to admin for behaviour. *Teacher aides or playground report C has improved – will come and discuss an issue – before he would refuse to come to staff. *No red slips (referrals to admin for behaviour issues	*No incident in playground since May. *More happy and cheerful. *Far more focused in classroom. *Misbehaviour has been almost non-existent. *Mother has reported to Principal that D's behaviour is much improved. *Attracts positive behaviour around him due to his sunny temperament- not vicious or angry	*Use to be constantly at Admin for fighting. *Now finds other things to do. *Seems to be able to follow directions better. *He is able to deal with his frustration (e.g. counting to 10). *Has responded well to positive reinforcement at school and for his parents. *PAL has done a marvellous job with him	*PAL intervention has been a great benefit to F. *Term 3 massive transformation – would engage in intelligent conversation, lasted 2/3rds of this term. *When he knew he was moving school his attitude appeared to change. *Still able to have conversation with him. *Could calm down and be able to re-enter the classroom. *PAL has had an impact. *He could say what he should do. *Still tries to cover up his involvement – tries to avoid punishment – blame others. *Tolerance by other children even victims of his aggression	*More settled and well behaved at times. *Rudeness as decreased and is using manners more. *Less physical violence during playtime, the school is managing him better, we understand him more.	*Takes ownership of his behaviour. *Comments on how well behaved and polite H has become

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Recommendations for the future:	*Needs secure adult to discuss issues with – supportive, active listener. *Holds problems over to talk to PAL teacher. *Likes to be seen as brave (not a woose), has a soft, sensitive side – tries not to show it. *Looking at further developing his social skills, particularly how to approach other children and join in their games. (Did well in PAL play – could possibly act if encouraged)	*Non – aversive behaviour management strategies. *Maintain boundaries, expectations. *Endeavour to build on his strengths in sport, leadership with younger children. *Identify a positive male role model	*Non-aversive behaviour management – proactive strategies. *Safe haven designated adult buddy to go to during stressful periods. *Careful place of C in Grade 4. *Build up self-esteem. *Able in academics, sport, music. *Discuss new teacher what was successful with C – non – aversive strategies, offer openness for him to come and talk before a build up of stress	*Male role model Straight Year five class, Cohort of friends going with him. *Focus on positives – positive reinforcement/praise for good behaviour and encouragement	*Needs to be with a teacher who likes him, academics a real struggle. *Non-aversive behaviour management strategies. *Continued emphasis on building self esteem. *Maintain contact with parents working in partnership. *Visually/ auditory still difficult for him. *E likes to see evidence gains/ Improvements. Has been given a list of words he knows now. *Risk taking much improved.	*Firm guidelines, expectations firmly stated. *Non-aversive behaviour management strategies. *Continued emphasis on building his self-esteem. *Awareness of family situation	*G's behaviour usually deteriorates in the afternoons so to avoid a major incident it is recommended that he be given challenging high interest work. *He is very quick to pick up concepts. *He thrives on reading aloud; perhaps a role as a peer tutor in reading would be beneficial. *He is very articulate and his oral language is very good. *Create activities where he can write his own stories and read these to students in the lower grades. *He thrives on praise. *He responds to negotiating tasks and clear boundaries and expectations.	*Build on strengths – leadership qualities, performance abilities. *Placement for next year: a teacher he can build rapport with. *Non-aversive strategies – positive reinforcement, clear outline of boundaries. *Tap into artistic strengths, ability to speak out, drama.

Initially, all eight students were referred to the PAL intervention because of their challenging behaviours. All students had difficulty behaving appropriately in the playground and were described as being either "violent" or "physically aggressive." The students also had major problems with their classroom behaviour where they were described as being "disruptive" with the majority having difficulties with literacy, staying on task and following the teacher's directions.

After spending six months with the students which included a camping program, extensive adventure based learning experiences, social skills training, cooking, and group work, the PAL teachers were able to provide extensive insights into the student's behaviours. The PAL teachers saw the students at the PAL alternative education setting based at another primary school as well as in their regular school setting. In describing the students' individual characteristics, the PAL teacher's comments had a mixture of positive and affable traits along with evidence of their challenging behaviours.

The students were generally described as being "helpful," "cooperative" and "friendly." One student was reported as having "leadership abilities" with other students being reported as being "adventurous" and/or "athletic." Negative behaviours observed in the students were also included in the report such as "tells lies to get attention," "sulks" and "temper tantrums."

These comments highlighted that the PAL teachers saw evidence of the behaviours that resulted in the initial referral to PAL. At the same time, the PAL teachers were also able to see the positive qualities of the students that they also documented.

In the original referral, it was clear that the parents and teachers both reported that friendships were fragile for the majority of students. Of the eight students, the PAL teachers reported that four students were still finding friendships a challenge. Examples were given of students being "aggressive," "speaking inappropriately," and "socially awkward." However, comments made about four of the students at program completion included "being popular with peers", "having friendships with class, sibling and other PAL students," "relates well to peers" and "has some friends" and "a popular leader at times". Many of the students who participated in the PAL interven-

tion continued to have difficulties with relationships and social interactions although there was evidence that for some of the students, progress was made during the six months of the intervention

Overwhelmingly students were described as having difficulty keeping their hands and feet to themselves. It was also reported that a number of children still had difficulties speaking appropriately. Overall, some behaviour that caused the students to be referred to the PAL intervention was still evident after six months.

In spite of this, the PAL teachers reported that there was some evidence of both success and change in the students. The PAL teachers reported that all students had made progress with less evidence of frequency regarding the challenging behaviours that led them to being referred to PAL. Many students were showing less frequency of behaviours and more ability in articulating what the correct behaviours should be. Additionally, comments were made that described the students as "more confident," "more respectful," "more frequent use of respectful language," "improved behaviour," and "more positive about capabilities in reading and writing."

Table 5.11 also captures comments gathered by the PAL teachers from the schools regarding how family circumstances impact on some of the students. One school recommended medication intervention for a student and a hearing test for another, while another school indicated the importance of placing the student with an experienced male teacher for Grade 4. One student was moving out of the district, therefore recommendations were made for the student to address transition issues and another student required a high level of ongoing support otherwise it was considered that he would regress.

Positive comments made about the students included "thrives on positive reinforcement and the importance of developing rapport with the student." Also that "parents had gained more confidence in dealing with their child" and "attribute their child's success to the PAL intervention," one student was reported as having "less of a chip on his shoulder" and another student thrived on the "high expectations of the teacher with his schoolwork and behaviour".

The comments provided by the school were very valuable insights into the complexities of these students such as medical considerations, family issues and ongoing support and planning. In addition, the comments highlighted the need for ongoing interventions and support for at risk students with challenging behaviours.

Throughout the PAL intervention, the PAL teachers also collated comments made by the student's class teacher during the teacher support component that was included in the final PAL teacher report. These comments ranged from comments regarding an overall improvement in the child's behaviour to specific examples of how the student had actually improved. A very telling comment made by one teacher regarding a student was that "nobody would play with him earlier in the year, now children include him." All class teachers indicated that the students' behaviours had improved significantly. Examples were provided by the teachers included: "can discuss incidents better" and "settles quicker when upset."

Generally, teachers' reported less playground incidents whilst some teachers reported improvements regarding the students' in-class behaviour. Some teachers also mentioned ongoing behaviour issues with one student being described as "touchy", another described as "acting like the class clown" while yet another "seeks attention by acting like a baby" and "changes rules if not winning". These comments indicate rafts of behaviour issues that still needed to be addressed.

The PAL teachers met with school administrators throughout the intervention in order to communicate the progress the students were making or otherwise and to gather feedback regarding the administrators' perceptions of the students' progress. The feedback and comments were collated and indicated overwhelmingly that school administrators' reported significant improvements in the students' behaviours. Specifically, there had been fewer referrals to the office. One administrator stated that the student "now has the potential to complete twelve years of schooling." Another indicated that other staff made comments about how "polite and well behaved" the student had become. Interestingly, one administrator reported that "the school is managing him better, we understand him more." Whilst the comments are overwhelmingly positive by the majority of administrators', one administrator reported that one particular student was still involved in "hurtful teasing and fighting." These

positive comments indicate that future research needs to be undertaken to determine what specific influences could be attributed to the PAL intervention that has impacted positively on student behaviours in regards to their interaction with their schools administration.

A final section of the PAL teachers report included recommendations made by the PAL teachers for specific behaviour management strategies to aid the school in building on any progress made by the student. There were also specific behaviour strategies listed for the class teachers to use with the students and forward planning ideas designed to aid the school in managing the student.

General behaviour strategies to manage the students included ongoing social skills training, identifying an adult as a point person for the student, firm guidelines and boundaries. Lastly, as a forward planning initiative, teachers' were encouraged to provide learning experiences that tapped into the student's strengths that the PAL teachers had discovered throughout the PAL intervention.

The recommendations included some insightful descriptions of each of the students based on their time spent in PAL. Descriptors of the individual students included: "has a soft, sensitive side", "strengths in leadership and sport", "capable in music sports and academics", "greater risk taker now", "picks up concepts easily", "articulate with good oral language skills" and "artistic strengths". This information was extremely valuable for the class teachers to have another perspective of their respective students. This, in turn, could help the class teacher to use the strengths of the students as part of their behaviour management strategies.

Table 5.11 *End of Semester PAL Student Report* includes comments captured by the PAL teachers from Class Teachers and Administrators. Overall, a number of changes in student behaviours were identified. Class teachers referred to the behaviours of the students, commenting that students had more self-control and less behaviour issues, therefore the teachers had higher expectations for behaviours and schoolwork. The student could calm down quicker and was able to talk about their problems. The teachers also referred to an improvement in the student's classroom behaviour where

the student was able to work in groups, try new things and fitted in with their peer group.

School administrators said that the students' behaviours were less violent and the students were was able to take responsibility for their actions. On the social/emotional level, administrators reported the students as being more settled and able to talk through their issues. They were fitting into their group and much happier. Administrators also reported that the students had improved classroom skills and that school and home were working together.

5.4.6   *School feedback/evaluation of the PAL intervention*

As part of the accountability process for the PAL program, surveys were sent to the eight schools. The survey was designed by the BSS and consisted of four questions using a Likert Scale. Three questions used a scale of 1 to 6 with 1 being totally ineffective to 6 being highly effective and one question using a scale of 1 to 6 with 1 being not achieved to 6 being outstanding. The survey was concerned with, whether the goals stated in the intervention plan were met, the standard of communication between the school and PAL teacher, whether negotiated outcomes were achieved and the school's overall rating of the PAL service.

The survey also consisted of three written response questions about any areas of the intervention that were found to be most useful, services that were missing and further recommendations and comments. Table 5.12 is a summary of comments provided by the schools about the PAL Program. Following the summary is an analysis and discussion of the comments.

Table 5.12: School feedback/evaluation of the PAL intervention

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Q 1 Negotiated goals in the intervention plan were met by the BSS	Rated on a scale of 1 being totally ineffective to 6 being highly effective							
	6	5.5	6	6	5.5	6	5.5	6
Q2 the Case manager/school was fully informed during the intervention by the BSS	Rated on a scale of 1 being communication was totally ineffective to 6 being communication was highly effective							
	6	6	6	6	5.5	6	5.8	6
Q 3 Outcomes in the intervention plan negotiated by BSS and the school were:	Rated on a scale of 1 being not achieved to 6 outstanding							
	6	4.5	4	6	5.5	5	5	6
Q 4 Your overall rating of this intervention provided by the BSS is	Rated on a scale of 1 being totally ineffective to 6 being highly effective							
	6	5.5	6	6	5.5	5	5	6

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Q5 Please indicate any areas of service delivery that you have found most useful	*The teacher collected the worksheets so I could see how the children went. *PAL teacher A really expected certain behaviours from the class and was consistent with his expectations.	*PAL intervention is excellent. *Child is in a difficult class. *Visits by PAL staff to work with kids, teacher and info for the Principal. *In class/teacher support much appreciated. *Ideas and debriefing were very useful	*PAL teacher A's class lessons were most useful. *We were able to use his recommendations many times throughout the semester.	*The whole process was very clear and open. *Schools and parents can feel very supported	*Modelling of effective classroom strategies and ideas for positive reinforcement	*Being able to work directly on specific social areas	*Nil	*Weekly ongoing follow-up
Q6 Please indicate any areas of our service delivery that was missing	*It was really effective. *The children should at the end put their work in a folder	*Nil	*Nil	*More case managers to support schools with ever increasing BM needs	*Nil	*Felt that there was never enough time to discuss what was happening at PAL	*Nil	*Nil

Elements	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Q 7 Further comments/ Recommendations	*All classes should go through this. *It's even helped me to manage my challenging class – *Their behaviour has improved really well.	*I would like to thank the BM staff for their support, you have made my transition to the city easier with your support. *Thanks for trying. *I learnt a lot even if we weren't as successful with B as first hoped.		*I believe it is essential to maximize parental training and involvement in cases and it is pleasing to see this is being done	*I was very impressed with the outcomes achieved with E	*Nil	*Very informative - sequential	*Very supportive – good ideas

At the commencement of the PAL program, the PAL teacher collaborated with the class teachers in designing the IBMP for the student. In this survey, schools were asked to rate whether the goals of the plan had been met from 1 (being highly ineffective) to 6 (being highly effective). Respondents rated the goals being met as 5.5 or greater. Communication between the PAL teacher and school during the intervention was rated as highly effective, also with ratings of 5.5 or better. Outcomes were being met as per the negotiated intervention plan ranged was rated at four or better by all eight schools. The final question in this section was the overall rating of the effectiveness of the PAL intervention which schools rated as 5 or better.

Schools were also asked to describe areas of the service delivery that they found most useful. Seven of the eight schools completed this question. Respondents agreed that the hands-on support from the PAL teachers with the class teachers were most

useful. Examples were provided of modelling effective classroom strategies and the class teachers being able to apply the information provided by the PAL teacher.

When questioned about any areas of service delivery that was missing, five schools indicated 'Nil'. Of the three other schools, one stated that "time was an issues," another required "an increase in the service" and one just stated that PAL "was really effective".

Regarding any further comments or recommendations, two schools indicated "Nil," three reported that the support of the PAL teacher had "helped them professionally, one commented on the value of the "parent training" and another stated that "that all classes should go through this".

Several distinct features of the PAL intervention were reported as being highly effective:

- Regular and ongoing communication with the case manager;
- The IBMP goals negotiated with the school and outcomes achieved;
- The teacher support with the PAL teacher providing weekly in class support, modelling lessons, debriefing, and assisting the class teacher to implement strategies and recommendations; and
- The School, Principal and Parents all felt much supported.

The ratings and comments were very positive about the PAL intervention with high satisfaction levels in all areas. Consistent throughout the feedback from the schools was that the PAL teachers achieved what they had set out to achieve in the service they provided to the schools.

This feedback reinforces the importance of supporting class teachers in practical ways by providing professional development for teachers, specifically in the classroom. School based programs can easily fail if this component is not present (Fullan, 1999; Greenberg, et al., 2004). Furthermore, these findings are supported from the literature that claims schools are the ideal settings for program delivery and interventions for children as they provide a key sense of connections to adults and teachers (Stewart, et al., 2004).

5.4.7 PAL *Parent One Year Follow-up Survey*

Following the completion of the PAL intervention, the PAL parents were contacted after one year to complete a survey that was posted to them with a replied paid envelope. The survey was designed by the PAL teachers and consisted of three sections each using a Likert scale. The survey included questions about the usefulness of the PAL intervention, frequency of problematic behaviours by the child since the PAL intervention, compared to before PAL and questions that related to the child's social interactions since PAL compared to before PAL.

Parents were also asked if they were using any of the parenting strategies, they had learnt and if applicable to identify which ones they were using. Parents were also asked if they had maintained contact with the PAL teacher and asked to add any other comments they wanted to make. Table 5:13 are a summary of the parent comments and are followed by an analysis and discussion.

Table 5.13: **PAL parent's one year follow-up survey**

Question one: The usefulness of PAL

Parent responses of usefulness of PAL on a scale of 1 (of no use) – 4 (highly useful)								
	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
PAL Teacher working at school with your child	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4
PAL Teacher teaching your child's class	4 Because other kids learnt as well and understood	4	4	3	4	3	4	3

	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Parent responses of usefulness of PAL on a scale of 1 (of no use) – 4 (highly useful) (continued)								
PAL Teacher discuss teaching your child's class and discussing your child's progress with you on PAL days	4 Very understanding and clear to explain	4	4	4	4	2	4	4
If Triple P was being used Which one?	Yes Stop and Think, Time out, and using new strategies	Yes Grounding	Yes Praise, clear concise instructions, ignoring behaviour, time out, clear consist consequences	No answer	Yes Listening	No answer	Yes Behaviour system, Time out	No answer

Question two: The frequency of their child's behaviours at the end of the PAL program compared with commencement.

Indication of the frequency of behaviours at program completion compared to before PAL Scale: Less, Same More, N/A								
	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H
Tantrums	Less	Less	Same	Same	Less	Same	Less	Less
Arguments	Less, but very well thought out.	Same	Less	Same	Less	Same	Less G can now diffuse situations a lot quicker than he used to so arguments are a lot less severe	Less
Swearing	N/A	Same	Same	N/A	Less	N/A	Less	Less
Physical Threats	N/A	Less	Same	N/A	Less	N/A	Less	Less
Physical Assaults	N/A	Less	Less	N/A	Less	N/A	Less	Less
Property damage	N/A	N/A	Less	N/A	Less	N/A	N/A	Less
Self Harm	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Less
Avoiding chores	Always, but now trades off with other jobs	Less	Less	Same	Same	Same	Less	Less
Avoiding homework	Sometimes	Less	Less	More	Same	Same	Less	Less

Question three: Rating their child's social interactions at the end of the PAL program compared with commencement.

Rating of social interactions at program completion compared to before PAL Scale: Better, Same, Worse, N/A								
Student D	**Student A**	**Student B**	**Student C**	**Student D**	**Student E**	**Student F**	**Student G**	**Student H**
Talk/Play with siblings	Much better	N/A	Better	Same	Better	Same	Better	N/A
Talk/Play with parent (s)	Much better	Same	Better	Same	Better	Same	Better	Same
Talk/Play with relatives	Same	Better	Better	Same	Better	Same	Better	Same
Talk/Play with neighbour hood kids	Same	Better	Better	Same	Better	Same	Better	Same
Participation in parties/sleepovers	Better	Better	N/A	Better	Better	N/A	Better	Same
Participation in organized activity e.g. sport	Better	Better	Better	Better	Better	Same	Better	Same

Question four: Any additional comments the parent/s chose to make

Additional comments								
	Student A	**Student B**	**Student C**	**Student D**	**Student E**	**Student F**	**Student G**	**Student H**
Have you maintained contact with anyone from PAL	No	No	No	Did not answer	Yes	No	Yes	No

Additional comments (continued)								
Further comments	Extremely happy with A's behaviour, he has been accepted into the elite St Patrick's Private school for Grade 5. Only thanks to PAL and Peter, A and I have an understanding of how we get into situations. We work as a great team. He is excellent at school. He has a great hobby and loves scouts. Being promoted to a seconder and leader. We can never thank you enough. I have a happy little boy. When he was at your PAL groups he got to see other boys in worse situations. We tell each other we love often. He loves	I think Pal is very good for kids socially and at school. I'm a single parent home nothing can seem to help the fact of the father figure missing which is a major problem particularly with boys. Discipline from the father is a key factor with children. The program hasn't, or PPP hasn't changed much at home in the long term, short term there was a little improvement	Thank you for everything		I think it is a wonderful program and I hope it continues to so more children can access it		I have used most of the PAL and Triple P techniques with both sons'. Both son's are off behaviour contracts at school and are keeping up well at school. Thankyou all for help and support.	Thank you for your support this year

	affection. A is a total PAL success story, thank you for car- ing.							

Each of the eight parents returned the parent survey. In the first section, parents were asked to rate the usefulness of the PAL teacher working at the school with their child from 1 (of no use) to 4 (being very useful). Six of the eight parents stated that PAL was very useful and two parents indicated that they found it to be good. When asked about how useful they felt it was for the PAL teacher to be teaching their child's class, five parents indicated that it was very useful with one parent stating "because other kids learnt as well and understood". When asked how useful it was for the PAL teacher to discuss their child's progress within them on PAL days, seven of the eight parents stated it was "very useful" with one parent stating that the PAL teacher was "very understanding and clear to explain." One parent indicated that it was "ok" but did not provide any further comments.

Five of the eight parents reported that they were still using the Triple P techniques such as "stop and think", "time out" and using new strategies such as "grounding", "praise clear and concise instructions", "ignoring behaviour", "time out", "clear and consistent consequences", "listening" and a "behaviour system". Three of the parents left this section blank.

Questions relating to the child's frequency of behaviours were linked to the initial PAL referral information. Parents were asked to comment on a list of behaviours us- ing a less, same, more or not applicable rating scale about their child's behaviours since PAL comparing these behaviours to those prior to the PAL Program. Five par- ents reported that their child's tantrums were less frequent with three indicating it was the same. Five parents indicated that arguments were also less frequent with one parent stating that their child "can now diffuse situations a lot quicker than he used to so arguments are a lot less severe." Regarding swearing, three parents said it was "not applicable," three parents stated it was "less" and two parents stated it was "the

same." For physical threats three parents said it was "not applicable," five parents said it was "less."

Four parents stated that property damage was "not applicable" and four parents stated that this was "less." With self-harm, six parents stated "not applicable" and one parent said it was "less." When asked about avoiding chores, four of the parents reported that it was "less," three parents indicated that it was "the same" and one parent reported "always but now trades off with other jobs." Regarding the avoidance of homework, four parents reported it was "less," two stated it was "the same" and one indicated that it was "frequent."

A section in the survey asked about social interactions and parents were asked to comment on their child's behaviour since the PAL intervention compared to before PAL using a scale of better, same, worse or not applicable. For talk/play with siblings four parents reported it was better, two reported it was not applicable and two stated it was the same. Interactions with parents with talk/play were rated by four parents as "better or much better" and four stated it was "still the same."

With relatives and talk/play, four parents reported it was "better" one stated it was "ok" and three indicated it was "the same." Regarding neighbourhood children, four parents stated it was "better," one reported, it was "ok" and three found it to be "the same." In responding to their child's participation in parties/sleepovers, five parents indicated it was "better" two indicated that it was "not applicable" and one stated it was "the same". When it came to organized activity like sport for example, six parents reported it to be "better" and two parents said their child's social interactions were "the same."

Overall, the parent responses indicated that progress has been made in the way the targeted child interacted socially. The biggest gains were seen with siblings and organised activities. Maintaining contact with the PAL teachers occurred with only two of the eight parents, one parent left this question blank and five reported *'no contact'*.

When asked to make any further comments, two parents did not provide any further information. Six parents made additional comments which included: "extremely

happy with A's behaviour, he has been accepted into the elite Private School for Grade 5", "only thanks to PAL, A and I have an understanding of how we get into situations", and "we work as a great team, he is excellent at school". In addition, "he has a great hobby and loves scouts he was promoted to a leader." The parent stated that "we can never thank you enough. I have a happy little boy. When he was at your PAL groups, he got to see other boys in worse situations. We tell each other we love often. He loves affection. Student A is a total PAL success story, thank you for caring."

Another parent stated "I think PAL is very good for kids socially and at school. I'm a single parent home; nothing can seem to help the fact of the father figure is missing which is a major problem particularly with boys. Discipline from the father is a key factor with children. The program hasn't, or PPP hasn't changed much at home in the long term, short term there was a little improvement." Additionally a parent commented "Thank you for everything, I think it is a wonderful program and I hope it continues to, so more children can access it."

And, "I have used most of the PAL and Triple P techniques with both sons." In addition, "both sons are off behaviour contracts at school and are keeping up well at school," also "thankyou all for help and support," and "thank you for your support this year."

In summary, the main areas that all parents agreed on as being of value were:
- The PAL teacher supporting and teaching their child at school;
- Communication with the teachers in discussing their child's progress weekly; and
- Their overall perceived improvements in their child's behaviour.

Overall, the *Parent One Year Follow-up Survey* indicated that the children's behaviours had improved in some areas and the parents overwhelmingly found the PAL intervention to be useful. Specifically, more than half the parents found the parenting component to be very worthwhile, the range of supports that the PAL teacher offered were useful such as the in school component and the opportunities to discuss their child's progress. The importance of parental support and training in the light of hav-

ing a child with challenging behaviours (Reid, et al., 2003) is reflected in the literature.

5.5 Conclusion

An analysis of the data identified perceived positive changes in students' behaviours as reported by parents, teachers and the students' because of the PAL Program. The class teachers reported high satisfaction levels with the PAL Program design, its components and intervention processes. Communication and the teacher professional development component were also found to be positive aspects of this intervention. Students, parents and teachers overwhelmingly indicated that there were perceived changes in the perceptions of the students' resilience.

The parents of the students in the PAL Program reported ongoing improvements in their children's' behaviours as well as their social interactions after one year. Furthermore, the parents' reported satisfaction levels with the strategies used for addressing their children's' challenging behaviours.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

As quoted in Chapter 1, Garmston and Wellman (1995) posed the question "Which butterfly wings should schools be blowing on?" Since everything influences or can potentially influence everything else, the wings to influence are those that are most generative in their effects (p. 10). The findings from this one shot case study indicate that "positive effects" were gained in providing a behaviour management program that focused on the student, the parent and the class teacher. The student with adventure based learning, the parent Triple P and the teacher with individualised professional development.

This Chapter elaborates on the findings whilst explicitly answering the three research questions. The chapter also sets out how the findings of this research have contributed to theory and practice regarding school-based prevention programs.

The reasons why behaviour management is important and warrants research were identified in Chapter 1 and the behaviour management of at-risk students was discussed. Evidence was presented regarding the potential educational, emotional and financial costs to society, schools, families, individuals and at risk students themselves, if these matters are ignored. In Chapter 2 the literature was reviewed regarding:

- Current behaviour management strategies for students with challenging behaviours;
- Current suspension data which showed an increase in suspensions in managing the behaviour of students with challenging behaviours;
- Behaviour management issues and the link to at-risk students;
- The concept of resilience; how it is defined, isolating protective and risk factors, and the importance of addressing resilience in relation to at risk students and the management of their behaviour;
- The role of schools, teachers and parents as stakeholders in behaviour management issues and resilience enhancement;
- The theoretical foundations that inform school based intervention programs;

- Programs that have attempted to make a positive impact on the resilience of those at risk; and
- The theoretical foundations that that informed the PAL Program, which included ecological factors, social learning theory and causative and prescriptive program theories.

The design, structure and components of the PAL Program were set out in Chapter 3 including the theoretical foundations of the intervention, the program model that was the curriculum framework and pedagogical approach. A description of the student component was detailed incorporating the alternative education day with the adventure-based learning. The student component also contained strategies to deal with students' behaviour challenges and in-school support for students. An overview of the parenting training was explained using Triple P and the teacher professional development component was described which included extensive individualised professional development for the class teachers.

The one-shot case study design was explained in Chapter 4, along with the research approach of a mixed methodology, using both quantitative and qualitative data. Data were collected initially for the PAL program for participant screening and development of an intervention plan and again at the completion of the program to assess the program's effectiveness. An overview of the methodology, data collection instruments and how the data were analysed was presented.

In Chapter 5 the data from the PAL, intervention was collated and analysed. The One Shot case study design was used to describe the PAL Program. Data were analysed to show patterns, categorisation and there was discussion of emergent themes.

6.2   Research questions

The following sections will answer the research questions and include discussion of the issues raised.

6.2.1   Research Question 1

The first research question asked: "What potential does the PAL Program have as a behaviour management strategy for at risk students in primary schools?" This question sought to answer whether or not the PAL Program is a viable intervention to ad-

dress behaviour management issues for the targeted students. This research question also sought to identify specific strategies, of the PAL Program that impact positively on reducing the students' challenging behaviours.

The results reported in Chapter 5 found that participation in the PAL program were perceived to improve students' challenging behaviours and therefore was a viable intervention from the parents', teachers and students' perspective to address behaviour management issues for the targeted students. The literature identified strategies that are crucial to the perceptions that the PAL program impacted positively on reducing the students' challenging behaviours. These strategies included:

- Holistic approach;
- Multi-dimensional;
- Strengths based; and
- An open communication and transparent of process.

Each of these will be discussed in turn.

6.2.1.1 A holistic approach

A holistic approach to address behaviour management issues is founded in ecology systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), which can be linked to the resilience framework (Durlack, 1998). Many factors need to be taken into consideration in any early intervention initiative when addressing students with challenging behaviours (Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal, 2005).

The PAL program identified specific areas to target that would impact positively on the students' behaviours. The resilience framework was used throughout this intervention making this intervention a holistic approach in considering the perspectives of the individual (student), the home situation (the parent) and the school (the class teacher).

This holistic focus provided an understanding of the student but also brought together all the significant people to form a 'circle of impact' for the student. These were parents and, class teacher. All involved were clear about the goals set for the

student, strategies that were used to implement the goals, outcomes that were sought and how these would be achieved.

6.2.1.2 Multi dimensional

Another important behaviour management strategy implemented in the PAL program was in using a multi dimensional approach (Masten, et al., 2008). This included a curriculum designed for the PAL program adapted from the Resilience Action Model (Grotberg, 1995) that was expanded beyond the classroom. This multi dimensional approach to target the students was via the curriculum, an alternative education component, adventure based learning, and weekly in school support.

For each student the approach was differentiated and individualised rather than a 'one size fits all'. This strategy included problem solving, to equip students to with deal issues, provided one-on-one support at school, used adventure based learning as a tool to work in groups and also encouraged students to move out of their comfort zone. There was also the targeting of specific goals for the students to be able to work cooperatively, use respectful language and deal with anger management appropriately.

The PAL program's multi dimensional strategy focused on processes such as making connections with the targeted students and being collaborative with all stakeholders involved with the students At program entry information was gathered about the targeted students from a wide range so sources to formulate specific strategies that would lead to the students' improved behaviours and enhanced resilience.

6.2.1.3   A strengths based approach

Another unique strategy of the PAL program when addressing behaviour issues and classroom skills of the students, was to start from a strengths based approach that viewed the at risk student as presenting with strengths as opposed to deficits. The strengths perspective was linked to the notion of resilience and building on the presenting protective factors of children. It is imperative that students learn what they need to have in their toolbox for life in order to be able to bounce back when they

face adversity. What this looks like in practice is best summed up by Saleebey (1997) who states:

> To really practice from a strengths perspective demands a different way of seeing clients, their environments, and their current situation. Rather than focusing on problems, your eye turns toward possibility. In the thicket of trauma, pain, and trouble you can see blooms of hope and transformation....Clients come into view when you assume that they know something, have learned lessons from experience, have hopes, have interests, and can do some things masterfully. These may be obscured by the stresses of the moment, submerged under the weight of crisis, oppression, or illness, but, nonetheless, they abide. (pp. 3,12)

Focusing on a positive approach (Withers & Russell, 2001) and the positive qualities of the student rather than the negatives, changes how one interacts with the student, creates a culture of optimism and expectations for success and removes feelings of blame and judgments. This was the lens for the PAL program.

6.2.1.4   Communication and Transparency

A critical strategy of the PAL intervention was the focus on making meaningful connections and forging positive relationships with the students. Luther and Brown (2007) recommended further research for either validating or refuting the notion that relationships as being the "roots" of resilience. They suggest that risk factors threaten resilience whereas protective factors enhance resilience. In the findings, students identified a "positive" in the PAL program as being able to "spend positive time with adults." Certainly, the focus of the PAL intervention on making positive connections with the students was a worthy strategy valued by the students.

An explanation as to why the findings of the study indicated perceived enhanced student resilience could be due to the PAL program focusing on pathways to protective factors (Luthar & Brown, 2007) such as processes that enhanced student resilience specifically the importance of relationships. Further research by Stewart et al., (2004) that could explain the findings evident in the PAL program were the promotion of: the sense of feeling connected to adults and teachers, good peer relationships, having a strong sense of autonomy and self capacity and parental awareness of a supportive school environment.

Newman and Blackburn (2002) state that children and young people must have strong social support networks, the presence of at least one, unconditionally supportive parent or parents, a substitute, a committed mentor or another person from outside the family in order to overcome adversities. The child or young person also needs to have positive school experiences, a sense of mastery and a belief that one's own efforts can make a difference. The child also needs to experience a range of extra-curricular activities that promote the learning of competencies and emotional maturity.

Communication was identified as an explicit strategy on which to focus as part of the PAL intervention. Open and transparent communications were skills seized upon as 'beneficial' and 'different'. This is a cause for concern regarding what is 'normal' in schools. The communication strategies mentioned as helpful by the schools, teachers and students were part of the everyday professional skills and strategies used on a daily basis by PAL teachers in managing children with challenging behaviours.

Communication was a strength identified in the findings that could be linked to opportunities that the school staff had for having regular conversations with the PAL teacher and parents being updated on their student's progress. It also created an environment where concerns or issues could be raised. The findings clearly indicated that communication was a significant factor for parents, teachers, schools and students as a strategy used to address the behaviour issues for the challenging students. All participants were informed about what was required, who was doing what and the progress and issues that occurred along the way.

The role and value of communication cannot be under estimated, especially within this intervention. Parents, teachers and the schools equally reported the merits of communication between stakeholders during the PAL program. This was also found by both Visser (2002) and Skiba (2005) who emphasised the importance of communication for parents and schools when dealing with students with challenging behaviours.

The perceptions of stakeholders and participants of the design and structure of the PAL intervention were very positive. Particularly findings reported the value of open and transparent processes within the PAL intervention. This could be due to the collaborative approach toward participants being part of the planning and decision making steps for implementing specific strategies to addressing the student's needs such as the IBMP's, scope of classroom support and the individual student support.

Open communication was valued by the class teachers as reported in the findings with the teacher receiving feedback about their practice and having the opportunity to debrief with someone. The class teachers also indicated they had extended their behaviour management strategies by being able to communicate clear expectations and directions to students. Communication was also a factor for students, with teachers reporting changes in students' behaviours as students developed their capacity to talk about their problems and speak respectfully.

Schools reported the value of communication in the PAL intervention due to the regular and ongoing communication they had with the case manager. Parents also reported that communication was a valued feature of the PAL program as they had the opportunity to discuss their child's progress on a regular basis with the PAL teacher.

Being open and transparent puts people at ease. There are many intense feelings and often different agendas associated with students with challenging behaviours. Parents, teachers and schools often feel judged. It was the skill of the PAL teachers to assure everyone involved with the at risk student that they were all on the "same page" with a focus on working together to increase the student's capacity to behave. Class teachers felt supported and spoke highly of the professional development they received. Parents felt supported and spoke highly of the parent education they received. Students themselves felt supported, enjoyed their time in the program and were reported as showing improvements in their behaviour. Feedback was welcomed regarding strengths and weaknesses of specific components of the program along with suggestions of ways for improvements.

6.2.1.5   Conclusion

According to Masten, (1999) there are 'no magic bullet' solutions. The theoretical approach promoted by the PAL program was a holistic intervention that considered many factors that impact on the student including the school, teachers, parent/s, peers and the school curriculum. Children exist in dynamic systems of an ecological paradigm (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) that impact on each other. The literature supports the findings of this study that any intervention to be successful needs to be a differentiated and a multi-dimensional approach (Kotchick & Forehand, 2002).

The PAL Program had a perceived positive effect on students' behaviours as all participants reported decreases in challenging behaviours, such as violence and the acquisition of behaviour strategies, such as anger management and social skills. Therefore, the PAL Program has potential as a behaviour management strategy for at risk students in primary schools. The perceived outcomes of the Program can be attributed to the strategies built into the program which included a strength based, holistic, multi-dimensional approach with regular ongoing communication between all involved

6.2.2   Research Question 2

The second research question asked: "What are the perceptions of stakeholders and participants of the design and structure of the PAL intervention?" The question sought to answer which components of the program contributed in improving the at risk student's behaviour. This question was about gaining insights from the participants and stakeholders about the strengths and weaknesses of the program and explored the design, structure and implementation of the PAL program.

The design of the PAL program was based on support for the major stakeholders: the students themselves, their parents, and the class teacher. The structure included specific individualised components for supporting each of these major stakeholders:

- Individualised support for the student through the IBMP;
- Individualised support for the parent through the Triple P program; and
- Individualised support for the class teacher through Professional development.

These support systems were implemented as discrete components during the six months of the PAL program. As part of the reflective process, feedback was sought from the participants in order to gain insights about the strengths and weaknesses of specific components of the program including suggestions for improvements. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

6.2.2.1   Parent Support

Ofsted's *Managing Challenging Behaviour Report* (Office for Standards in Education, 2005) emphasised the importance of fostering links with parents by forming partnerships with parents as soon as concerns begin to develop about their children. Of equal importance is the concept of forming positive partnerships with parents of challenging children. The parent component of the PAL Program forged positive partnerships with the parents that impact on the students' behaviours as evidenced by feedback from the parents.

When a parent has a challenging child, they need to be taught, just like the class teacher, skills to manage the child appropriately and effectively in a supportive culture. Parents reported the usefulness of parent education in using the learnt skills to manage their child's behaviour and social interactions. Often parents are so stressed with having a child with challenging behaviours they are relieved when help is offered (Corboy & McDonald, 2007). Specifically this was achieved by acknowledging the stress associated with having a child with challenging behaviours (Sanders, 2003b) and building the program on a platform of "no blame" in delivering targeted parent education.

This set the scene for the PAL teacher to have regular and ongoing discussions with parents both formally and informally about the progress of their child and any challenges they were facing. This partnership included parents having regular conversations with the PAL teachers about their own progress in implementing the Triple P strategies that would impact on reducing the child's challenging behaviours and at the same time improving parental competence and confidence (Turner, et al., 1998).

Particular aspects of the parent education component of the PAL program were identified as being important features of the design, structure and implementation of this initiative. Parents reported the regular ongoing discussions about their child's progress to be highly valuable. Corboy and McDonald (2007) highlight the importance with any program implementation, is the ongoing collaboration between the school and family. Parents had regular weekly conversations with the PAL teachers, which provided them with opportunities to discuss which strategies were working and which were less successful. More than half the parents reported implementing the parenting strategies taught at Triple P. The parent education component was combined with coaching which provided a climate of success for the parents.

Shepard and Carlson (2003) claim that parent involvement is an effective treatment component in school-based interventions while Webster-Stratton (1998) found that children showed less conduct problems when parents participated in parent training. The parent education component was reported as having a positive impact on improving the students challenging behaviours along with reported perceptions of enhancing their resilience. The findings from this study indicated that parent training was a factor that contributed to the protective factors of children as parents developed appropriate parenting skills (Knitzer & Cohen, 2007). The majority of parents reported the parenting component as very valuable.

The parents' willingness to remain invested in the PAL program for six months could be because they saw positive changes in their child's behaviours. Additionally it could be because they had access to the PAL teacher by phone and face-to-face contact on a weekly basis, which allowed them to receive regular and ongoing feedback about their child's progress.

6.2.2.2   Teacher Support

The approach to professional development for the teachers, in this study separates it from other research as it was entirely individualised and differentiated depending on the needs of the teacher. From the outset there was a "no blame" approach building on strengths of the teacher whilst acknowledging the skills required and the stress involved with having a student with challenging behaviours in their class. It was also

important as part of this support strategy to normalise the teacher's feelings of being at "a loss" as to what to do given that they had tried varying strategies with little success.

The Social Learning theory (Bandura, 1963) was posited as the "show not tell" approach, which meant that the teacher was supported in their context (the classroom) working directly with the teacher, student and class. PAL teachers built on the strengths of teachers and supported them depending on their individual needs. By doing this, they were able to build on the existing skills and knowledge and work with them on improving their behaviour management strategies to manage the challenging students.

Teachers reported that this approach was highly effective and they overwhelmingly reported increases in their capacity to manage the student along with reported improvements in the student's behaviour. This individualised teacher professional development approach included collaborative conversations for identifying needs, observing the teacher's practice, modelling and coaching the teacher throughout the intervention and providing guided practice as well as offering feedback and debriefing.

The value of this individualised approach is echoed by Fullan (2007) who highlights the merits of on the job training, being able to try out, refine, receive feedback, make improvements and receive support from colleagues from whom they can learn. Likewise in the words of Cordingley (2009):

> Such realities shape the kinds and forms of knowledge that can be put to work. Learning for teachers (as for their students) has to build on and/or be related to what they know, can do, believe and care about already. Unless teacher learners have the opportunity to make such connections, new knowledge, ideas or skills are all too often quietly forgotten, discounted or simply remodelled and shoe-horned into pre-existing practices and beliefs. (p. 7)

However, he goes on to caution that:

> Teachers may be quick to talk the talk of new initiatives but the pull of internalised knowledge and strongly held beliefs about learning, act as brakes on translating this into walking the walk i.e. reviewing and reframing existing practices and embedding new ones. (p. 8)

"Walking the walk" can only be achieved by teachers when they are fully supported in implementing new initiatives such as behaviour management strategies. In this context, it was the professional development provided by the PAL teacher who was the guide by their side. This enabled the teacher to try new approaches, coaching the teacher and providing timely feedback. This approach is regarded as high implementation integrity (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2008) within a program.

The professional development provided through the teacher support component of PAL impacted positively on the classroom teachers. The teachers cited the benefits of the support they received in the feedback provided. That the class teachers were willing to collaboratively develop and implement behaviour management strategies with the PAL teacher, indicated they "bought into" (Shelton & Brownhill, 2008) the intervention, which can account for their high satisfaction levels. When actively debriefing with PAL teachers, Class teachers were open and honest about the challenges that they faced in working with at risk students. This willingness to embrace the professional development offered could be as a result of the desperate state teachers were in which included anger, frustration and often, at a loss as to what to do (Male, 2003).

Specifically, class teachers reported that what was most effective were the weekly planning meetings, team teaching; coaching and debriefing which included sharing ideas and any difficulties experienced in the management of the student. Additionally the teachers had an IBMP for each student. These approaches are echoed in the literature that reiterates that many teachers lack the knowledge and necessary skills to cope with challenging students (Office for Standards in Education, 2005). Connections can be made to Bandura's (1963) Social Learning theory for making meaning of these findings. For instance, the teachers were part of a process that included observational learning; individual motivation and they had an understanding of what was happening for them, the student and in their classroom.

6.2.2.3 Student Support

A crucial component of the PAL program was the IBMP. Without this plan, there could have been no intervention. However, in all the data regarding the program and

components of the program the IBMP, which was the individual support to the targeted students, received little comment. Admittedly, a weakness in the assessment of the program was not asking direct questions regarding this component. It would seem that IBMP was so integral it was taken for granted.

Fundamental to the PAL Program was that an effective behaviour management strategy required an individualised intervention targeting specific behaviours grounded in a strengths based approach. The basis of this approach was to collect as much information as possible about the student from many different perspectives for identifying strategies needed to impact on a student's behaviours.

Part of this differentiated individualised intervention behaviour management strategy required a process of, collaboratively identifying what a student's problems were, identifying the way forward to address the presenting problems and setting out the expected outcomes at the conclusion of the intervention. This process was captured and documented in the IBMP with input from schools, teachers, parents and the student. The document was different for each student and was based on the individualised needs of each student.

The strategy of using an IBMP served multiple purposes. Firstly it was used in monitoring and tracking the progress or otherwise, being made by the student and secondly was used as an accountability tool for assessing whether the goals set for each student were achieved. This process also became part of an official record documenting this aspect of the intervention that remains on the students' school files. Lastly, it can be used as part of a reflection document in determining refinements and improvements to the program.

The *School feedback/evaluation of the PAL Program* rated the comment that "the negotiated goals in the intervention plan were met by the Behaviour Support Service" (BSS) at an average of 5.8 with 6 being highly effective. "Outcomes in the intervention plan negotiated by BSS and the school" were rated as an average of 5.35 with 6 being highly effective.

The participants' positive responses of this component could be attributed to how the information gathered at program entry was used. The use of the IBMP was an organic document that could be revised with input from participants depending on the progress the student was making. Again involving parents and teachers by collaboration and communication is likely to explain the positive responses about the transparent approach of the PAL program.

The PAL intervention is a departure from the universal approach for addressing students with challenging behaviours focusing on a coordinated, individualised and differentiated approach that separates the PAL Program from other programs. Whilst the PAL intervention is costly and labour intensive, the literature clearly lays out the long term costs for individuals, schools, family and communities if these problems go untreated (Hooper-Briar & Lawson, 1994; Sanders & Markie-Dadds, 1992). Essentially the question for policy makers is 'do we pay now, or pay later?'

6.2.2.4 Conclusion

This study highlights that the quality of school based programs and their success can be distinguished by individualised interventions for students with challenging behaviours. For example, the PAL Program developed IBMP's for the students. Likewise it can be posited that, individualised professional development for teachers as reported in the findings indicated that this was a worthwhile and meaningful approach to authentically support teachers. Therefore any professional development offered needs to be targeted, hands on and within a context and location of the presenting problem. Furthermore the findings indicated that effective professional develop practices for teachers occur when they are support and interventions are differentiated and depart from the "one size fits all" model.

As much as there was a focus on the students' behaviours there was also a focus on the PAL teachers' and classroom teachers' behaviours in how they interacted with the students' and the connections they formed. This could also be a possibility as to why students' behaviours and classroom skills were reported to have improved. Visser (2002) coined the phase "external verities," which is the apparent web and weave of approaches of the teacher in managing challenging students. As such is the belief

in the web and weave of teacher approaches is that the student can change their behaviours. This can be achieved by providing alternative behaviours for the student to follow, the teacher being emphatic to the student, the teacher using communication that is open and transparent, the teacher setting boundaries that challenge the student's inappropriate behaviour and finally the teacher having a sense of humour. These approaches were certainly echoed in the PAL program.

Providing intensive support for parents is a critical strategy when working with at risk youngsters (Huey, et al., 2000). Therefore, the parenting component of the PAL program is a feature to be considered in for other school based programs when for students with challenging behaviours. Interestingly, the most positive comments regarding the components of the PAL program were based on the impact that the intervention had on the adults, the parents and teachers, and school staff. Little was said regarding the IBMP, yet without this plan the PAL program could not have been implemented. This leads to the question of "How effective is it to ever undertake a school based behaviour management intervention for students without including class teachers and parents?" This study has clearly highlighted the importance of the coordinated effort within the PAL program of focusing on a student in relation to their family, school and the relationships within those systems.

The perceptions of stakeholders and participants of the PAL Program is that the individual support components for students, parents and teachers made positive contributions in improving the at risk students' behaviours.

6.2.3   Research Question 3

The third research question asked: "What are the perceived outcomes of the students who participated in the PAL intervention?" The question sought to answer whether the PAL Program influenced the student's behaviour. It was also critical to see how the PAL intervention also impact on parents and class teachers. Does the PAL intervention warrant modification and improvement and can it be used for future program implementation and further research?

The major stakeholders of the PAL program were the students, their parents and the class teachers. Individuals from each of these groups indicated a perceived positive impact on the targeted students and referred to positive outcomes. Each of these will be discussed in turn

6.2.3.1   Student's Perceptions

The children chosen for the PAL program did not self refer. Each child was targeted by a school and referred to the BSS as possible candidates for PAL. At no stage did the students identify themselves as being at risk and in need of intervention. The data available from the students' perspective of perceived outcomes and the subsequent positive impact from the PAL intervention was from three sources. The *PAL Day Student Snapshot*, the Conners-Wells' Adolescent Self-Report (Conners, 2000) and the Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience (Grotberg, 1995).

This data indicates that the students demonstrated a degree of self awareness because they were able to perceive that during their time at PAL they were learning how to take responsibility for their actions and acknowledging that they still had areas in which they were struggling and still needed help. With regard to the outcomes for the students they indicated on the *PAL Day Student Snapshot* skills they had acquired at PAL included:

- Ignoring bad behaviour;
- Accepting consequences;
- Speaking respectfully;
- Following directions; and
- Spending positive time with adults.

Students also reported by way of the Conners-Wells' Adolescent Self-Report (Conners, 2000) that ADHD was their most problematic area and that this was where they saw the most improvements in their own lives during the PAL intervention. On the *Perceptions of Resilience Checklist,* (Grotberg, 1995) the majority of students indicated there were positive changes in perceptions of their resilience.

During the PAL Program students experienced success with their capacity to manage their behaviours to some degree and have positive interactions with

their peers. This was a major concern by all at program entry in terms of violent incidences and inability to maintain friendships, which influences their perceptions of improved social/ emotion qualities. The information provided by the students' shows their perception that the PAL intervention impacted positively on their behaviour and had positive outcomes.

6.2.3.2 Teachers' Perceptions

A range of factors support the findings of the teachers' reported improvements in the students' behaviours. Firstly, there is the documentation that was generated tracking the students' behaviours. The disruptive behaviour of the students referred to the PAL program was described in detail from data gathered from the school, teachers, parents and the students themselves. Given the reports of the nature and scope of the challenging behaviours, any perceived changes in the student's behaviours would be evident. Not only was there documentation that described and identified the students' behaviours there was also a process to document and target the identified behaviours by the using the IBMP. This document was formulated collaboratively by parents, teachers and schools, who were all in agreement as to the "what" and "how" of the student's presenting problems which needed to be addressed

Reports were also gathered on the perceived behaviour changes of the students from the schools, and teachers at the completion of the program. This process gave stakeholders and participants a voice to communicate their perceptions. At program completion teachers indicated that the students had improved their behaviours specifically in classroom skills, and were able to participate in group work and fitted in with the peer group.

This information was gained from the *Teacher's Report*, the Conners' Teachers' Rating Scale (Conners, 2000), the *Checklist for children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Grotberg, 1995), the *End of Program Report* and the *School feedback/evaluation.*

As stated above the eight classroom teachers reported improvements in the student's behaviours at the end of the PAL intervention. The main outcome was the student's ability to control or self regulate their behaviour. Other changes re-

ported were behavioural with less temper tantrums, reductions in inappropriate language, their ability to make better choices and thinking about consequences. Social/emotional changes included the students expressing feelings, being much calmer, happier and more positive and fitting into a group.

Through the Conners' Teachers' Rating Scale, (Conners, 2000) teachers reported improvements in Conduct Problems and Hyperactivity. The teachers reported a 22.5% increase in *Yes* responses on the *Checklist for children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Grotberg, 1995), indicating that teachers perceived that the children's perceptions of their resilience had increased. In the End of Program report, teachers generally agreed there was evidence of both success and change in students. Students' showed less frequency in the types of inappropriate behaviours for which they were initially referred. With reference to the *School feedback/evaluation,* it was reported that the outcomes for each student as set out in the IBMP were rated as 4 or better for each of the eight schools out of a possible 6. The data shows that the teachers perceived the PAL Program impacted positively on their students and there were positive outcomes for these students.

6.2.3.3   Parents' Perceptions

Reports were also gathered on the perceived behaviour changes of the students from the parents at the completion of the program. This process gave these stakeholders and participants a voice to communicate their perceptions. At program completion parents also indicated that the students had improved their behaviours. This information was gained from the Conners' Parent Rating Scale (Conners, 2000), *Checklist for children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Grotberg, 1995) and the *PAL: Parent One Year Follow-Up Survey*.

Parents as well as their children reported a marked improvement on the ADHD scale at program completion. Again with the *Checklist for children: Perceptions of Resilience* (Grotberg, 1995) parents indicated a significant improvement in their child's perceptions of their resilience. By way of the *PAL: Parent One Year Follow-Up Survey,* parents indicated that at the end of the PAL program progress had been made

regarding how their children interacted socially. Parents perceived improvements inn their child's behaviour after their time in the PAL program.

6.2.3.3   Conclusion

According to the findings, as indicated by reports from parents, teachers and the students themselves, there was a shift in the students' disposition. Certainly, the child's overall demeanour of being likable, responsible, willing to try new things and optimistic are considered protective factors. These were concrete indicators to support evidence of changes in the perceptions of enhanced resilience.

Research Question 3 has illuminated positive perceived outcomes for students that included positive changes in their behaviours, classroom skills and enhanced resilience. Features of the PAL program that have contributed to managing students with challenging behaviours and resilience that can contribute to the literature is the importance of processes that are founded on adults promoting positive relationships with the at risk students.

An explanation for these findings is that the teachers and parents increased their own strategies and skill levels in managing the challenging students. The literature in Chapter 2 indicated that to target students with challenging behaviour calls for extensive support in strengthening parenting skills and teaching strategies in order to address the students social competence, problem solving and to reduce aggression at home and school (Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001). This was part of the approach used in the PAL program to address student behaviour.

Although it cannot be assumed that the PAL intervention contributed to the children's perceptions of improved resilience, it is worth noting however, that the data recorded significant changes from program entry and at conclusion of PAL and it important to consider the views of those who have provided data of perceived positive changes in student resilience. The perceptions of the students, teachers and parents were that the PAL Program influenced students' behaviour positively.

6.3   Limitations of the PAL program

6.3.1   Data Measures

The PAL teachers designed measures to gather data that they required to best service the students, parents and teachers. At the time of the development of the measures, little thought was given to research needs as the PAL program was being developed. This program was a response by educators to address a presenting problem of students with challenging behaviours who required a service that was not in place. Much of the data was collected in such a way that lacked correlation between the data measures and the program aims. The data collected could not hold up to any generalisation of these findings.

Future data collection could include measuring more detailed and specific aspects of each component of the program. This could clearly identify how these strengthened the students' resilience. Each component of the program had many layers that could have been measured. The student component of the PAL program was based on adventure based learning and specifically problem solving (Grotberg, 1995) as a protective process strategy to decrease the students challenging behaviours and at the same time enhance resilience. Theses two critical aspects of the program were not explicitly measured.

Therefore, a major question is still left unanswered: "What impact did Adventure Based Learning have on the students' behaviour and resilience?" For example in examining the Adventure Based Learning component of group experiences, specific activities such as rock climbing, abseiling or the camp experience it would have been useful to identify if any of these processes contributed to enhanced student resilience.

A further example of the limitations of data measures was that data were not gathered regarding the impact of the curriculum framework that guided instruction. An important part of measuring the programs impact was lost by the lack of more fine-grained measures for determining what was most effective. In addition, there was a lack of data gathered to measure whether the PAL program had any impact on parental and teacher resilience.

There was no data collected during the PAL program on the reflection of parents, teachers and students. This was a missed opportunity not to have the participants reflect on the impact, current benefits, strengths or challenges of each section the program. For students, parents and teachers it would be extremely valuable to document their six month journey in the PAL intervention. This could be achieved by all stakeholders, including the PAL teachers recording their own experiences, describing their perceived progress or shortcomings and challenges in implementing strategies through journal exercises.

6.3.2   Role of the innovative practitioner/teacher researcher

A further limitation of the PAL program was the tension within teachers as innovative practitioners and teachers as researchers. The scope of the data collected for the PAL program was to service the very specific needs for the PAL program. To provide information that informed the most appropriate intervention for students, parents and teachers. Data were also collected as feedback regarding the satisfaction levels of the PAL program of stakeholders and opportunities for improvement.

Whilst the measures met the needs for PAL teachers to provide the data that they required, the measures developed fall short in the eyes of the research community because they lack efficacy merits (Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, 1996; Greenberg, et al., 2004). Cordingley (2009, p. 7) stated that "day-to-day teaching and learning experiences around classrooms is the context for interpreting, enacting or testing research findings and embedding change." However, it could be argued that this is only possible when teachers as innovative practitioners are supported to do this by researchers who guide, coach and mentor them in the field, in 'real life' contexts, in designing programs and measures that can address local problems and are considered defensible in the research community.

6.3.3   Duration of the program

Positive outcomes were identified for most students in the PAL program although some teachers reported that some students were still showing problematic behaviours

at the conclusion of the PAL program including violence, swearing, fighting, arguing and "losing it." Teachers considered the PAL program needed to be longer and the visits to the class by the PAL teacher needed to be extended as well as extending the program to include other family members. This highlights the need for ongoing targeted support for some students that extend beyond the six month intervention period of the PAL program. Therefore, a limitation of this program was that it had a finite finishing time. However, these types of issues need to be balanced with the financial costs and the schools' time constraints.

A further limitation of the PAL program was the potential of the Hawthorne Effect, (Cohen, et al., 2007). By students merely participating in an "intervention" can contribute to any reported perceived improvements in their behaviours. Even though limitations have emerged regarding a scientific analysis of the PAL Program, the evidence is that the strengths of the PAL Program certainly outweigh any weaknesses and could be addressed in the future.

6.4 Recommendations

The findings of this study, which include both strengths and limitations, inform a number of recommendations for future research in addressing challenging students' behaviours and enhancing resilience. Whilst there were reports of positive behaviour changes with the students, further investigations into the components of the program are required to identify in more detail how and why these actually contributed to perceived changes in students' behaviours and enhanced resilience.

It is important not to dismiss the responses from the students, parents and teachers as this valuable data indicated that they perceived that changes did occur in the behaviour of the students. However, further empirical study is warranted in order to validate the reported positive improvements in student behaviours. Therefore, future research should be undertaken that expands the data collection to identify the specific aspects of the PAL Program that contributed to perceived changes in student behaviours. Overall, the reported outcomes of perceived behaviour changes in students, lends support to the potential of the PAL Program as an intervention for improving the behaviours of the targeted at risk students.

Changes also need to occur in the participant assessments phase when collecting information about the students. These changes could include modifications to the *PAL intervention school referral Form*, *Student Profile* and *PAL Parent Initial Information* so that parents, teachers and students could include a section about the 'degree of seriousness' of the students' behaviours. Using a numerical scale would be beneficial for quantitative data purposes as well as gauging the seriousness of the student's behaviours. It would also be beneficial for comparative purposes with each participant at the commencement of the intervention and at the conclusion.

Furthermore a mid program survey could be administered to students, parents and teachers to gain a sense of how the intervention is progressing. This could include the quality of the intervention, the various components of the intervention that the participants have found useful or otherwise, the relationships between all the stakeholders involved in the intervention and impacts of the PAL intervention. A mixed methods approach would again be appropriate and this would be useful in informing the PAL teachers to make any mid way refinement that may be warranted based on the responses and to actually understand which components of the program are the most useful and why.

More explicit links and measurements need to be made throughout the delivery of the PAL intervention between the nature of the resilience enhancing processes, sources of resilience, strategies, learning experiences and ongoing evaluation to measure further impact and changes with the students. Whilst significant progress has been made in researching resilience generally, little progress has been made in exploring the protective processes that promote resilience. Specifically there is a lack of research in documenting school based programs as stated by Greenberg, et al., (2004) and Corboy and McDonald (2007). This study has added to the school based program literature.

Although there were positive findings in the quality of delivery of the PAL Program, there are a number of areas that warrant improvement. Recommendations for the improvement of the quality of the delivery are:

- Use measures that assess the impact of adventure based learning to address student behaviour, problem solving skills and resilience enhancement;
- Further build teacher and school capacity for implementation of intervention concepts used by PAL in the regular school setting; and
- Formally, monitor the quality of delivery of each component of the PAL Program throughout the intervention from students, schools, teachers and parents with a mixed methods approach throughout the program.

Another recommendation is to collect data from the teachers and parents at program entry and conclusion to measure their perceptions of their skill levels and their resilience. Journaling their experiences of the intervention would be a rich way to capture their journey. It would also be valuable for students to journal their experiences throughout the program. This would be beneficial given the students low literacy levels.

6.5   Conclusion

In summing up this study, findings resonate with the recommendations from Ofsted (2005) on best practice in working with students with challenging behaviours and were incorporated into the PAL Program. These included:

- Focusing on the engagement of students by improving the quality of pedagogy;
- A relevant and engaging curriculum;
- Addressing the issues of improving communication skills of the students with challenging behaviour;
- Improving systems by making better use of this information in order to assist students to manage their behaviour;
- Provide adequate systematic training for teachers in behaviour management;
- A review of the way schools form partnerships with parents; and
- Highlighting the need for consistency among the teachers in relation to expectations of behaviour and that these are ongoing and maintained. (p. 4)

This study has explored the potential of the PAL Program as a strategy for addressing the challenging behaviours of at risk students. The study identified the components of the PAL intervention along with its multi dimensional approach involving parents, students and teachers. Findings from the case study have identified high satisfaction levels from the parents and teachers with the PAL Program.

The PAL program was an innovative preventative intervention created as a solution to a local need. The PAL Program was designed to address the deficits in services for students with challenging behaviours. Support was provided to parents through the Triple P training as well as professional development for teachers through the Teacher Support component. With the number of serious behaviour incidents on the rise with students in primary schools, it was important to provide a service that attempted to increase the protective factors of students to enhance their resilience and school is an ideal setting to do this. In the words of Grotberg (1995) and then Condly (2006):

> Resilience is important because it is the human capacity to face, to overcome and be strengthened by or even transformed by the adversities of life. Everyone faces adversities; no one is exempt. With resilience, children can triumph over trauma; without it, trauma (adversity) triumphs. The crisis children face both from within their families and in their communities can overwhelm them. While outside help is essential in times of trouble, it is insufficient. Along with food and shelter, children need love and trust, hope and autonomy. Along with safe havens, they need safe relationships that can foster friendships and commitment. They need the loving support and confidence, the faith in themselves and their world, all of which builds resilience (Grotberg, 1995, p. 10).

There is no "magic bullet" when it comes to working in this field but what is important is in providing a safety net through effective programs, individualised and appropriate support as the best chance to counter any surprises:

> Finally, it should be realized that, ultimately, resilience is not a guaranteed outcome even with the most carefully designed and thoroughly researched programs. At best, research can inform the design of interventions; interventions can make attempts at changing human behaviour and thinking. But surprises are still likely to be found. Occasionally, children will still sink in the despair of the hostile environment, whereas other children, who perhaps have even fewer resources, might survive and ultimately thrive (Condly, 2006, p. 230).

Chapter 6 provided some answers to the research questions and contributed to the research literature and the general body of knowledge in school based interventions. The one shot case study design and mixed method approach provided the means for documenting the rich experiences, strengths, challenges and limitations of the PAL Program of the "what" and "how" of this preventative intervention.

The perceptions of all stakeholders, including students, teachers and parents were that the PAL Program positively influenced students' behaviours. During the program, the inappropriate behaviours of students decreased and behaviours that are more appropriate increased. These outcomes can be attributed to the strategies built into the program, which included a strengths based, holistic, multi-dimensional approach with regular ongoing communication. The individual support components for students, parents and teachers made positive contributions in improving the at risk students' behaviours. Teachers and parents also learnt how to better management children with challenging behaviours. The PAL Program is a viable option and shows potential as a behaviour management strategy for at risk students in primary schools.

Lessons learnt from this study will inform future research. Importantly, this study has ensured that voices have been heard from the multiple perspectives of the students, parents and teachers and these have been represented and documented (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Revisiting Garmston and Wellman's (1995) question "Which butterfly wings should schools be blowing on?" In this context, those that are the most "generative and positive in their effects" are programs like PAL, which was an intervention with students, parents and teachers to address the behaviour issues and to enhance resilience for at risk students.

A quote often attributed to Robert Louis Stevenson is "Life is not a matter of holding good cards, but of playing a poor hand well" (Dugan & Coles, 1989, p. 78). Educators play a significant role in providing support for all students, especially at risk students, when there is evidence of multiple risk factors, challenges and adversity. We know that throughout our lives we will all experience difficult times at some stage. The PAL program set out to provide some of the tools to counter difficult times for the students, parents and teachers who participated in this intervention.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: PAL intervention school referral form

PAL PROGRAM

INTENSIVE SUPPORT FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS

Fortitude Valley State School, 13 Brookes Street, Fortitude Valley 4006
Telephone 3854 1253   Facsimile 3854 1747

REFERRAL FORM

DATE FORWARDED……………………… DATE RECEIVED…………………………

Information

Student's name_____ **M/F   Year level_____**

D.O.B_____   **Aboriginal /Torres Strait Islander   Yes/No**

Student address_____

School Principal_____

School Address_____

Phone_____   Facsimile_____

Class Teacher_____ Guidance Officer _____

Father/Guardian_____

Address_____

Telephone: Home_____ Work_____ Mobile_____

Mother/ Guardian_____

Address_____

Telephone: Home_____ Work_____

Mobile_____

PAL REFERRAL FORM

Reasons for placement

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Current Management Strategies (please include copy of I.M.P or B.I.M.P)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Current concerns and needs:

What is happening now?

Classroom

*_____
*_____
*_____

Playground

*_____
*_____
*_____

What do you want to happen?

*_____
*_____
*_____

Intervention to date: (What have you tried so far and how successful has this been?)

*_____
*_____
*_____

PAL REFERRAL FORM

Student's Education History (Please complete and describe)

Year	Grade	School	Teacher	Comment

Please comment on the following aspects, which may impact on this referral.

1. **Safety.** (Referred student, peers and staff). Do reactions include "running", impulsivity, recklessness or self-harm?
_____
_____

2. **Stress.** How much impact does this student have upon family, teachers and administration's stress levels?
_____
_____

3. **Special Needs**. STLD? ATSI? Medical? At Risk? Itinerant?
_____
_____

4. **Suspension.** What is the likelihood of future suspension or exclusion?
_____
_____

Please list all previous suspensions, in or out of school and any exclusions.

Date	No. of days	Location	Outcomes for student

Comment on parent/carer commitment, availability, and involvement in entering into the PAL change process – i.e. Time, transport, financial contribution, Parenting Program and conferences.
_____
_____

Appendix B: PAL Referral Student Profile

<div align="center">

PAL REFERRAL FORM
</div>

STUDENT PROFILE

Academic Performance…………………………………………………………………………....

Independent work……………………………………………………………………………....

Group Work………………………………………………………………………………….....

Self Concept………………………………………………………………………………..…

Self-Awareness……………………………………………………………………………….

Making and keeping friends……………………………………………………….……..…...

Self Control…………………………………………………………………………..…………

Using appropriate Social Skills…………………………………………………………..……...

Attention to Task…………………………………………………………………..………………

Restlessness…………………………………………………………………………..…………….

Following Instructions………………………………………………………………..……………...

Fear Responses………………………………………………………………………………………..

Frustration tolerance……………………………………………………………………………………

Attention Seeking………………………………………………………………………….……..

Manipulative Behaviour…………………………………..……………………………………..…..

Revenge……………………………………………………………………………………..……..

Emotional Status……………………………………………………………………………………

Strengths and Abilities……………………………………………………………………….……..

Sporting Abilities and Interests…………………………………………………………..…..….…

Special Interests………………………………………………………………..………………..…….

Medical History (Including Other Agencies and Professionals involved)
………
………
………

Pertinent Family Information
………
………

Appendix C: Individual Behaviour Management Plan

STAFFORD/GEEBUNG DISTRICT BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT SERVICES

Name/Group:

Yr Level: **Gender:**   M / F

D.O.B.:

School:

Phone:

Fax:

Teacher/Case Manager:

Referral No.:

Presentation Date:

Assessment Date:

Review Date:

Closure Date:

B.M. Staff:

INTERVENTION PLAN

Case Level: **Time Allocation:**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	OUTCOMES

Signature Case Manager _____

Signature B. M. Staff _____

Appendix D: Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience

Checklist for Children: Perceptions of Resilience

The 15 item Checklist requires a response of Yes or No to a descriptive statement that indicates resilience in the child. Please read each question carefully and answer either Yes or No by circling your choice.

1. The child has someone who loves him/her totally (unconditionally)
   Yes/No

2. The child has an older person outside the home he/she can tell about problems and feelings.
   Yes/No

3. The child is praised for doing things on his/her own.
   Yes/No

4. The child can count on his/her family being there when needed
   Yes/No

5. The child knows someone she/he wants to be like.
   Yes/No

6. The child believes things will turn out all right
   Yes/No

7. The child does endearing things that make people like her/him
   Yes/No

8. The child believes in a power greater than seen.
   Yes/No

9. The child is willing to try new things.
   Yes/No

10. The child likes to achieve in what she/he does.
    Yes/No

11. The child feels that what he/she does makes a difference in how things come out.
    Yes/No

12. The child likes herself/himself.
    Yes/No

13. The child can focus on a task and stay with it.
    Yes/No

14. The child has a sense of humor.
    Yes/No

15. The child makes plans to do things.
      Yes/No

Grotberg, E. (1995). *The International Resilience Project: Promoting Resilience in Children* (ERIC Document ED 383 424). Birmingham: Alabama Universtiy Civitan International Research Centre. The 15 item Checklist requires a response of yes or no to a descriptive statement that indicates resilience in the child. The items for the Checklist were developed in consultation with members of the Advisory Committee made up of international organizations was formed with Civitan, UNESCO, Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) World Health Organisation (WHO) International Children's Centre (ICC), ICCB and the vanLeer Foundation. The Checklist was field tested by students at the University of Maryland.

Appendix E: PAL Day Student Snapshot

PAL Day Student Snapshot

How was the PAL Day for you?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

So now I can…………………….

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

I still need help with……………

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What I did well today was………

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Rate Your Behaviour: Terrible   *Outstanding*

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Appendix F: School feedback/evaluation of the PAL intervention

FEEDBACK/EVALUATION FORM

Individual/Group Supported: _____School: _____

Professional Development (Topic):
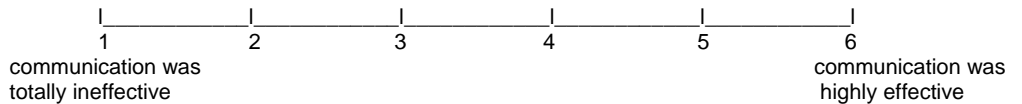_____

Consultancy (Issue): _____

Behaviour Support Teacher/s:
_____

1.   The negotiated goals in the intervention plan were met by the Behaviour Support Services.

   Mark with a cross your position on the scale.

   I_____I_____I_____I_____I_____I
   1   2   3   4   5   6
   totally ineffective   highly effective

2.   The case manager/school was fully informed during the intervention by Behaviour Support Services.

   I_____I_____I_____I_____I_____I
   1   2   3   4   5   6
   communication was   communication was
   totally ineffective   highly effective

3.   Outcomes in the intervention plan negotiated by Behaviour Support Services and the school were:

   I_____I_____I_____I_____I_____I
   1   2   3   4   5   6
    not achieved   outstanding

4.   Your overall rating of this intervention provided by the Behaviour Support Services is:

   I_____I_____I_____I_____I_____I
   1   2   3   4   5   6
   totally ineffective   highly effective

5.   Please indicate any areas of our service delivery that you found most useful.

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6.   Please indicate any areas of our service delivery that was missing.

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

7.   Further comments/recommendations: ___-

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____