



# **2007 - 2008 Research Brief**

## **Children's Outcomes and Program Quality at the Kidsbridge Museum**

### **The College of New Jersey**

This report was prepared by James A. Graham, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, The College of New Jersey, P.O. Box 7718, Ewing, NJ 08628; phone (609) 771 - 2638; email: [jgraham@tcnj.edu](mailto:jgraham@tcnj.edu).

Authors' Note: I would like to thank the child development laboratory research assistants of the Department of Psychology at The College of New Jersey. I am especially grateful to Lynne Azarchi for her support of this project.



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idsbridge, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the celebration of human diversity, encourages the students, families and educators of the greater Mercer County region to understand and appreciate the strengths and opportunities that are inherent in the diverse, mosaic cultures of our community and our world. Kidsbridge provides programs that create measurable improvements in character education and life skills. Our character education programs generate positive learning in civility, kindness, conflict resolution, mediation and anti-bullying. Our life skill programs are designed to prepare children to be successful in a global society, while instilling the time-honored values of cooperation, peaceful interaction, teamwork and leadership.

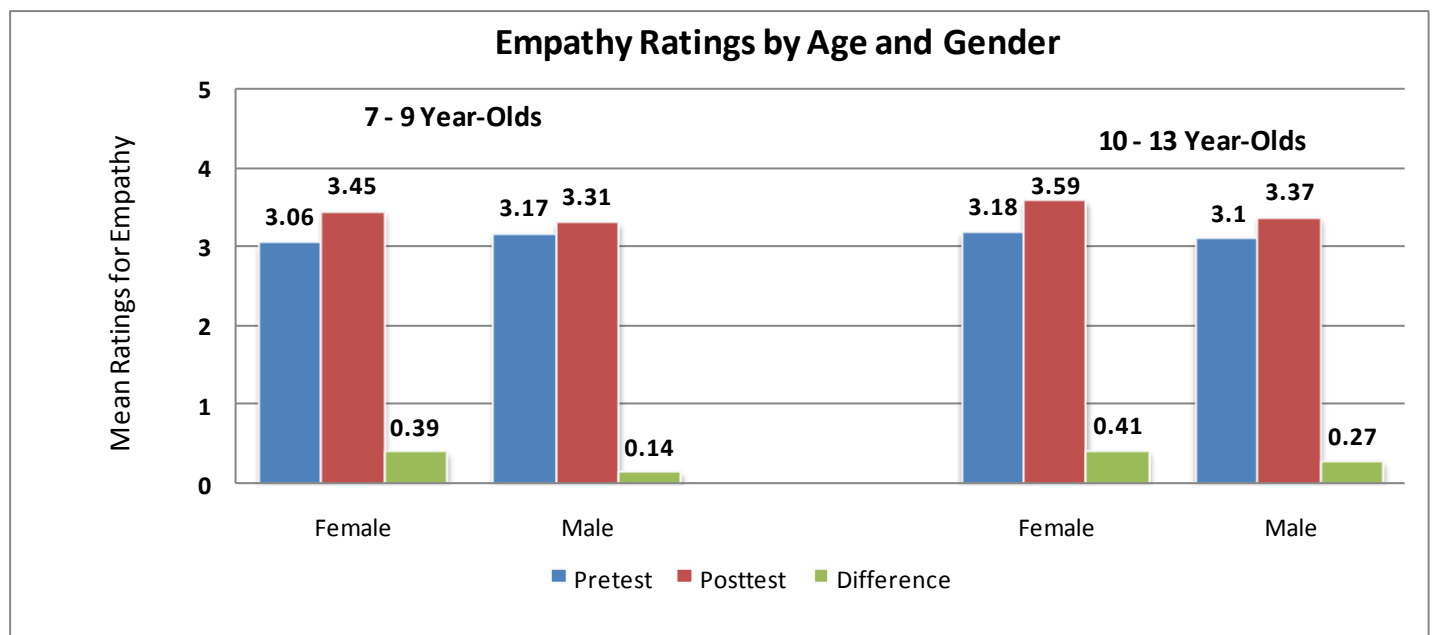
Data collection for the Kidsbridge cohort began in the fall of 2008. This cohort includes a sample of 275 third to sixth graders from a variety of public schools in Mercer county. The Kidsbridge data provide information for the Kidsbridge program on important aspects of outcomes, quality, and practices. This research brief summarizes key findings related to children’s outcomes and program quality from Kidsbridge 2008.

## Section I: Empathy Skills of Children Who Visit Kidsbridge

**Children’s empathy ratings significantly increased from the pre-test to posttest assessments.** Whereas the mean empathy ratings for all children on the pretest was 3.13, and 3.44 on the post-test measure.

**Kidsbridge assessments showed significant gains in empathy for children across age groups and gender.** The mean difference (*MD*) in empathy ratings significant increased in both younger (ages 7-9 yrs) and older (ages 10-13 yrs); and females and males from pre- to posttest assessments (see figure 1).

Figure 1

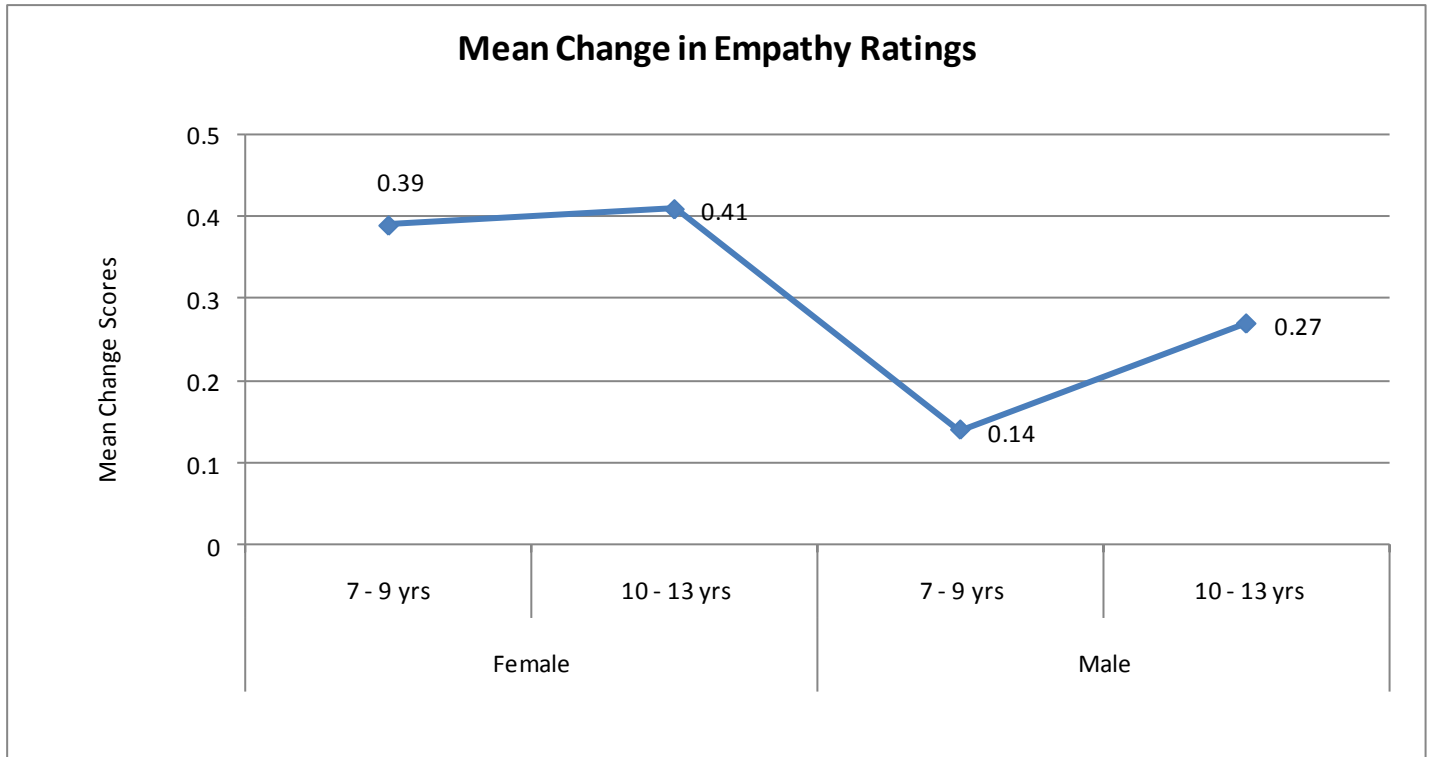


Both age groups (that is, 7-9 year olds, and 10-13 year-olds) showed gains in empathy ratings from the pre- to posttest. The mean differences in empathy ratings were slightly higher in 10-13 year-olds than 7-9 year olds, regardless of gender (see figure 2).

Both females and males showed gains in empathy ratings from the pre- to posttest. Older females' gains in empathy ratings ( $MD = .41$ ) were slightly higher than younger females ( $MD = .39$ ), the same was found for older and younger males.

"The Kidsbridge Museum is really fun and exciting"  
9- year old museum visitor

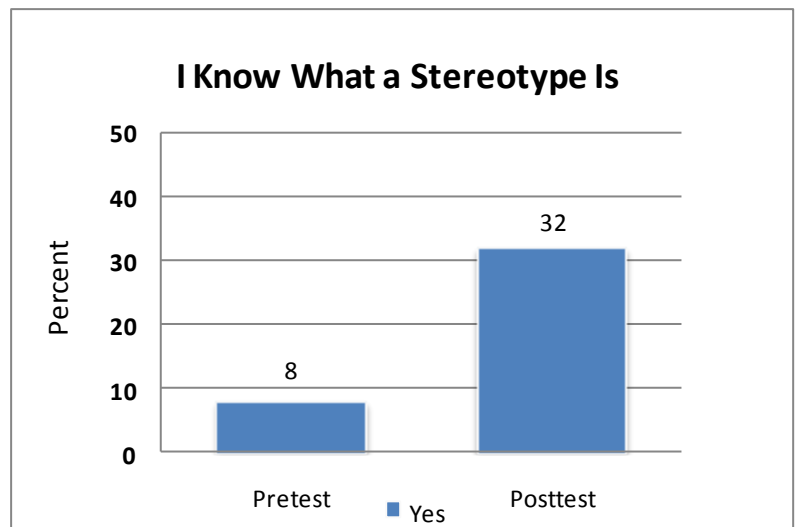
Figure 2



## Section II: Stereotype Knowledge of Kidsbridge Visitors

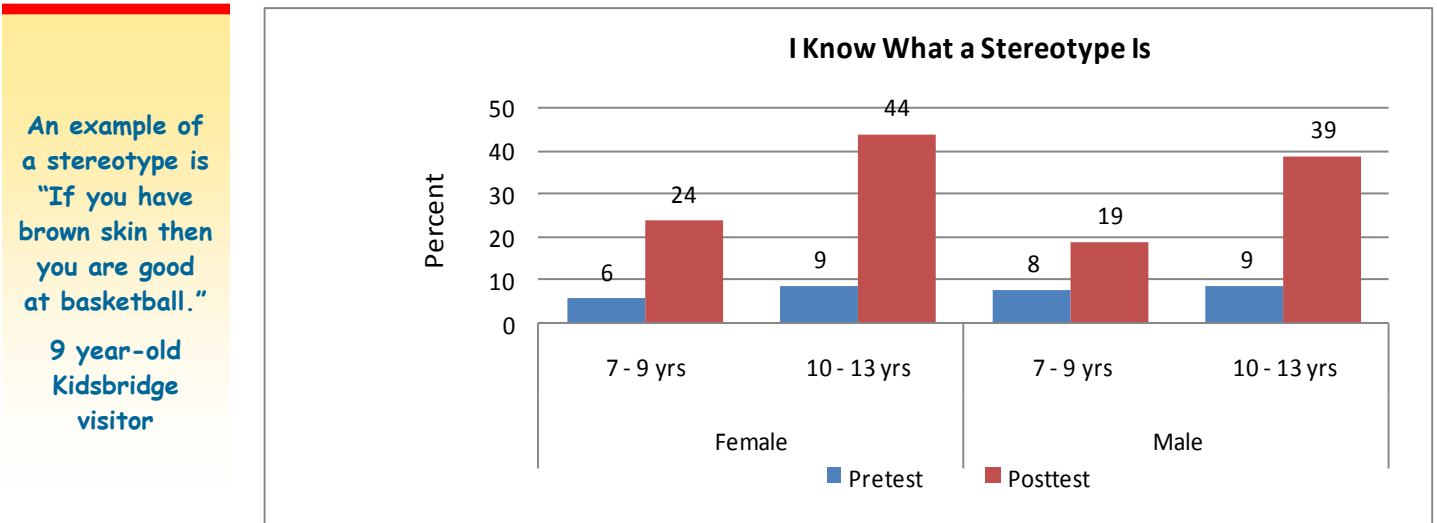
Children have a limited understanding of stereotypes. The majority of children who visit the museum report that they have no knowledge of what a stereotype is; however, after a tour of the museum, the understanding of stereotypes increases for about 1/3 of children (as shown in Figure 3).

Figure 3



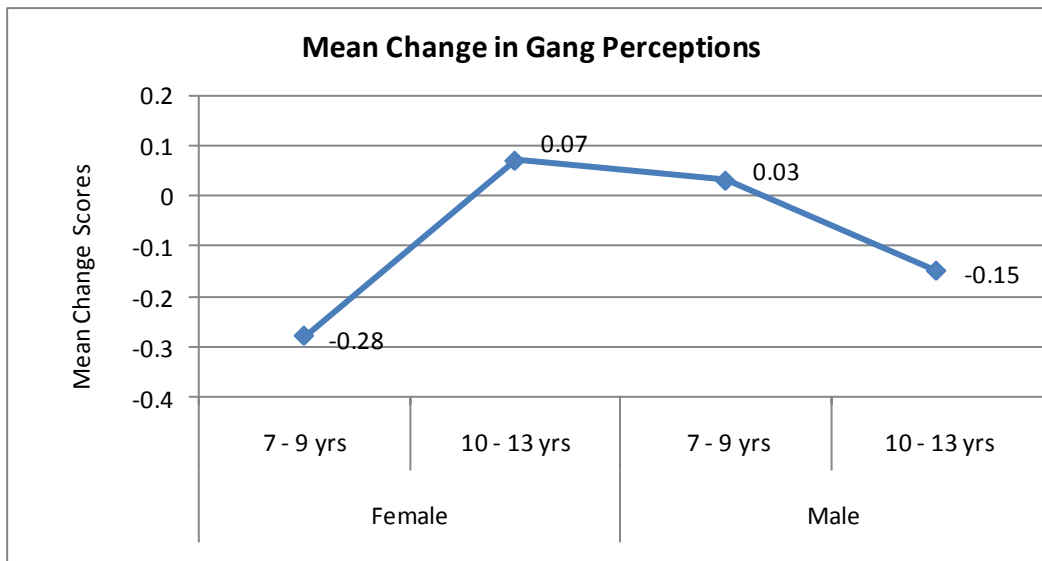
**Stereotype knowledge changed based on age and gender between the pre- and posttest administrations.** Specifically, understanding of stereotypes significantly increased among females (both age groups), and older males. The understanding of stereotypes did not significantly change among males, ages 7-9 years-old (refer to figure 4).

Figure 4



### Section III: Children's Perceptions of Gangs

Figure 5



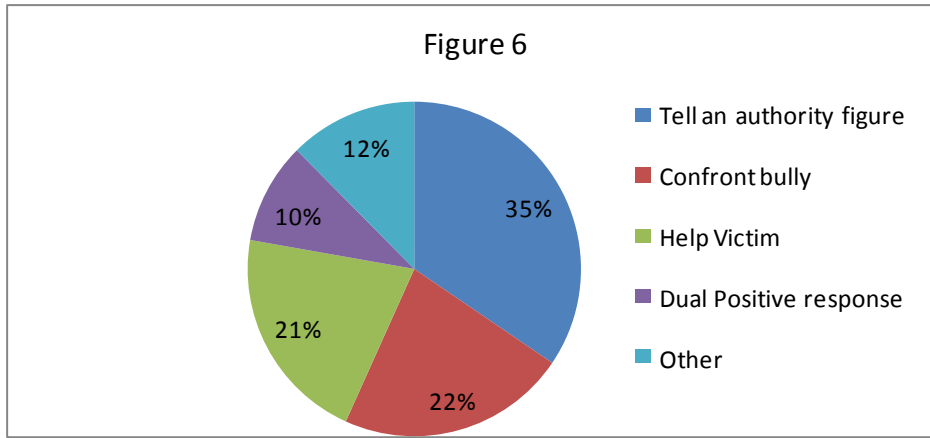
**In general, children viewed gangs negatively.** As shown in figure 5, the perception of gangs became more negative between the pretest and posttest for younger females. There were no statistically significant differences in perceptions of gangs among the other groups.

### Section IV: Future Aspirations

The pre- and posttest measures asked children to rate two questions regarding future aspirations. First, they rated the importance of finishing high school. Second, they indicated their beliefs about attending college someday. Results showed no statistically differences between the time of assessment and educational motivation regarding high school or college.

## Section V: Conflict Resolution Skills

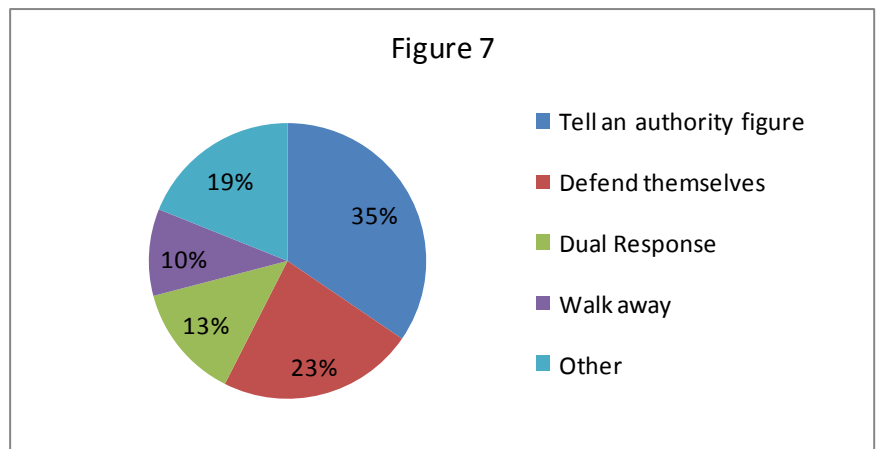
### What Would You Do If One of Your Classmates Is Being Picked On?



**Children were more likely to use prosocial responses to assist a classmate being picked on by a peer.** As shown in figure 6, the majority of children reported that they would tell a teacher as a means to support a classmate,  $n = 95$  (35%), followed by confronting the bully,  $n = 61$  (22%), or helping the victim,  $n = 58$  (21%).

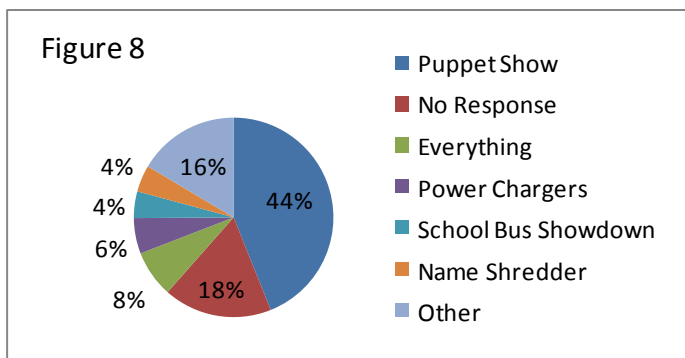
### What Would You Do If You Were Being Picked On?

**Children reported that they would use a mixture of prosocial and aggressive responses to an aggressive provocation with a peer.** As shown in figure 7, the majority of children reported that they would tell a teacher as a means to support a classmate,  $n = 95$  (35%), followed by defending themselves,  $n = 63$  (23%), dual response,  $n = 37$  (23%), or walking away from the confrontation,  $n = 28$  (10%).

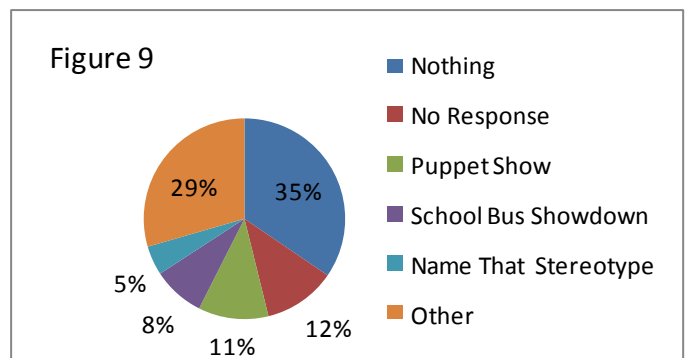


## Section VI: Program Quality of Kidsbridge Museum

### What Was Your Favorite Part?



### What Was Your Least Favorite Part?



# APPENDIX

## Data collection instruments

The pretest included 21 items (18 fixed-answer and three open-ended). The posttest included 24 items (19 fixed and 5 open-ended). Brief descriptions of the pretest and posttest data collection instruments reported in this Research Brief are listed below.

- **The Empathy Index** includes a shortened 11 item version of The Bryant Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents. Mean scores were obtained using a Likert five-response format. Higher mean scores reflect greater empathy.
- **Stereotype Knowledge** was measured by a partially open-ended question “I know what a stereotype is.” The second part of the item asked respondent to provide an example of a stereotype.
- **Perceptions of Gangs** asked children to rate their feelings about gangs and whether they would consider being a part of one.
- **Future Aspirations** included 2 closed-ended questions using a 5 point Likert scale regarding finishing high school and attending college.
- **Conflict Resolution Skills** were assessed through two open-ended items which asked the child to reflect on their actions for direct and indirect provocations.
- **Perceptions of the Museum** included two questions regarding children’s like and dislikes about the Kidsbridge Museum.

# Demographic Information Report for this Research Brief

## Age of Participant (mean age = 9.54 yrs)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent		
YEARS	7.00	11	4.0		
	8.00	41	14.9		
	9.00	76	27.6		
	10.00	92	33.5		
	11.00	46	16.7		
	12.00	6	2.2		
	13.00	3	1.1		
	Total	275	100.0	16.7	

## Age Group (1 =7 to 9 yrs, 2 = 10 to 13 yrs)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
YOUNG	1.00	128	46.5	46.5	
OLD	2.00	147	53.5	53.5	
	Total	275	100.0	100.0	

## Sex of Participant

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Sex	male	133	48.4	48.4	
	female	142	51.6	51.6	
	Total	275	100.0	100.0	

# Demographic Information Report for this Research Brief

## Race/Ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaska Native	10	3.6	3.9	
	Asian	7	2.5	2.7	
	Black or African-American	102	37.1	39.7	
	Latino or Hispanic	74	26.9	28.8	
	White	57	20.7	22.2	
	Other	7	2.5	2.7	
	Total	257	93.5	100.0	
Missing		18	6.5		
Total	275	100.0			