

IMPROVING STUDENT SOCIAL BEHAVIOR The Effectiveness of a Storytelling-Based Character Education Program

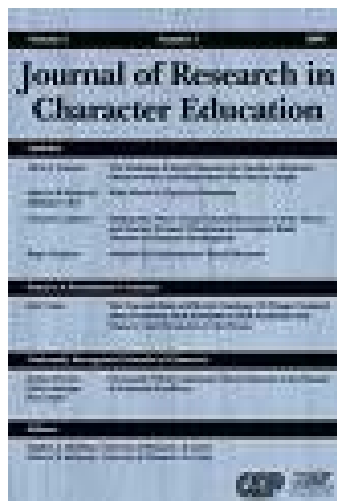
Melissa E. DeRosier

*3-C Institute for Social Development and
FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Sterett H. Mercer

3-C Institute for Social Development

The LifeStories for Kids series is a school-based, storytelling intervention for elementary school students designed to increase life skills and character education. To assess the effectiveness of the program for improving children's social behavior, 1,975 students in 4 elementary schools in central North Carolina participated in a program evaluation. Using a quasi-experimental design with covariate adjustment for initial differences, schools were randomly assigned either to the intervention or control groups. In the intervention group, all regular education teachers implemented parallel versions of the program (for Grades K-2 and 3-5) as part of the school curriculum. Students participating in the intervention experienced statistically significant improvements in social behavior (K-2 program: improved prosocial skills and decreased direct aggression; 3-5 program: decreased direct aggression and immature-impulsive behavior) as compared to students in the control group. Discussion focuses on the effectiveness of LifeStories for Kids as a preventive, school-based character education program.



Journal of Research in Character Education
5(2) 2007, pp. 131-148