The North Star Program

created by: Nancy Manke, Karla Matheny, & Patricia De Barbieri

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North Star: a program for school-age girls

Presenters:
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Southern Connecticut State University
About Us

- Dr. Patricia De Barbieri is a licensed professional counselor with thirty-eight years of experience in education. She began her career as a teacher in both pre-school and kindergarten settings, a high school vocational education teacher and a school guidance counselor. Dr. De Barbieri has experience in urban, sub-urban and rural environments working in public and private education, not for profit social service agencies, private practice and institutions of higher education.
Dr. De Barbieri has earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the State University of New York at Oneonta in Child Development and Family Relations and a Master of Science degree in Counselor Education from Southern Connecticut State University. Her Doctorate in Education is from Teachers College, Columbia University in the field of Adult Learning. Her dissertation research is on The Role of Learning in Recovery from Bulimia.
Erica Fancher has received a Masters degree in school psychology from Southern Connecticut State University and is now working toward a Sixth Year Certificate in school psychology. Her interests include encouraging positive emotional, social, mental, spiritual and physical development in children, building healthy relationships, and strengthening resiliency.
Erica has worked with infants, toddlers, and preschool age children for over three years. In addition to attending to the children's basic needs, she has organized activities that stimulate their physical, emotional, intellectual, and social growth. She has also helped these children explore their interests, develop their talents and independence, build self-esteem, and learn how to interact positively with others.
North Star

- A program for school-age girls designed to promote social and emotional learning, to enhance resiliency, improve self confidence and aid in the prevention of future problems such as eating disorders, drug abuse and poor academic performance.

- The program consists of 22 art sessions each linked with one of 7 components of self esteem and one or more quotes and questions to facilitate discussion.

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The Program emphasizes self-expression and self-care through art projects that foster self-exploration and supportive interaction.

The heart and soul of North Star is to provide a safe time and environment for critical self-reflection and bonding with peers.

The Native American theme of the program inspires a ritual that stimulates discussion and provides an atmosphere of respect, active listening, and group reinforcement.
Objectives of this Slide Presentation

To assist in understanding:

- the North Star program, and how it was developed,
- how North Star can be integrated into school-based, and school-linked settings and
- the results of a Pilot Study of the effectiveness of North Star in a school based setting.
MISSION

The primary goal of the North Star program is the enhancement of social and emotional development for pre-adolescent girls. Girls this age tend to lose confidence in themselves as individuals, and look to their environment and their peers for guidance and a sense of self worth. Through art and supportive conversation, North Star provides a safe atmosphere for pre-adolescent girls to connect with themselves and with each other, and to explore more about who they are and to learn self appreciation. It is through these connections that the girls explore difficult nuances of social interactions and discover how to treat others and allow themselves to be treated in effective, healthy relationships.

North Star provides an opportunity for young girls to express their feelings, realize that others share their concerns, and provide support for one another in a non-authoritative, safe environment. The program enhances self-esteem, develops communication skills, and fosters trust and empathetic understanding, all of which promotes their social and emotional development.

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Objectives of North Star

- To create a safe, supportive atmosphere that promotes self-expression through discourse and through art.
- To provide time and space for each individual in the group to express herself and to be heard.
- To promote the sense of security found in group interconnectedness and group support.
- To strengthen a personal sense of uniqueness and self worth.
- To provide interpersonal tools and skills to manage the emotional upheaval associated with pre-adolescence and adolescence.
- To promote a positive attitude in group discussions concerning the members of the group.

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Objectives – con’t

- To develop a real understanding of the seven components of self-esteem and to incorporate that understanding into each individual’s daily life.

- To provide an opportunity to feel competent and valuable, gradually assuming responsibility for all aspects of North Star, thus confirming their faith in their individual abilities in communication and decision-making skills.

- To provide a confidential, non-judgmental environment for self-expression and self-advocacy.

- To provide the materials and the instruction necessary to stimulate self-expression through the arts.

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The Conceptual Framework of the North Star Program are the 7 Components of Self Esteem

- I am unique
- I am connected
- I am comfortable in my body
- I am lovable
- I am worthwhile
- I assert my power
- I have models
Pubescent girls tend to lose confidence in themselves as individuals, and look to their environment and their peers for guidance and a sense of self worth.

High self-esteem can be advantageous for mental health and personal relationships.

High self-esteem can raise test scores and improve school discipline.
Research on Self-Esteem Indicates
Harvard Mental Health Letter. (Vol. 23, #12) 6/07

- Young adolescents with low self-esteem were at increased risk for poor mental and physical health, poverty, and criminal activity by their mid-20’s. (New Zealand)

- Girls with high self-esteem are less likely to develop bulimia.

- High self-esteem reduces the use of drugs and alcohol, and the risk of depression in children.
People with high self-esteem are:

- Happier and have lower stress hormone levels
- More likely to undertake difficult tasks and persist in the face of failure
- Able to recover more quickly from disasters and be quicker to recognize and abandon hopeless enterprises
- Healthier with a decreased risk for heart disease and a more competent immune system

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Program Format

- Setting up the room
- Clearing the mind
- Circle
- Session question
- Talking stick
- Quotation and discussion
- Closing ceremony
- Art project with discussion
- Clean up
- Closure
The “Talking Stick”

- A symbol of respect and commitment to the group.

- A custom borrowed from the Native American tradition that assures respect for the individual.

- Whoever holds the stick is the only person allowed to speak.

- Each girl gives her “signature” of confidentiality and support to the group symbolically by tying onto the stick a natural trinket (shell).

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Animal Cards

- Native American culture relates strongly to animals in the wild.

- Girls explore their own personalities and how they, as individuals, might relate to a particular animal.
Understands himself very well
Can easily accomplish his dreams and goals
Always seeks the truth
Quietly self assured

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- Willing to change if necessary
- Not stubborn
- Loves life
- Messenger, likes to spread joy
- Open and loving heart
A true leader

Others turn to the lion for guidance
● Loves to dream about the future

● Has a good imagination

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Pilot Study

- 5th Grade teachers referred 6 girls who would benefit from program.
- Permission from Teachers, Principal, and Parents were received.
- Sessions were held in multiple locations.
- 8 weeks; 1 hours sessions, once a week.
- During lunch, recess, and sustained silence reading.
- Start and End of group measures were used.

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Initial Meeting

☑ Rules

☑ Roles

☑ Purpose of North Star

☑ The talking stick

☑ Surveys

☑ Animal Cards

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5 Sample Art Activities
are included in the following slides
FRIENDSHIP JOURNAL

Objective
The facilitators will give each girl a journal with black pages. Each girl will design her own theme page which she will then share with each member of the group. This journal project would be a second journal for most of the girls as every girl who does North Star receives a personal journal in the first session. This project is more whimsical and the topics for discussion or journaling are generated from the girls this time, not the facilitators.

Materials
Included are a journal with black pages, gel roller pens or metallic pens.

Procedure
Each girl decorates the cover of her journal any way she chooses. Next she creates a theme page to be shared with each member of the group. To stimulate ideas for the theme, a short period of brainstorming is recommended. Encourage the girls to keep their page positive. Examples of theme pages are as follows: sign your name five different ways, list your favorite movies, draw your favorite outfit, illustrate your favorite meal (complete with dessert), or your favorite music. Copies of each page are made for each member and placed around a table for everyone to walk around and take one for their journals or the theme pages can be hung up on a board or line for each girl to copy them into her journal at leisure. At the end of this activity, each girl will have a page from each member.

Question
What was your favorite toy when you were a child?
What are your favorite foods?
What are your favorite things to do?

Quote
All dreams spin out from the same web.

Hopi
(Zona, 1994)

Component
I am unique.
I am connected.
LISA’S HEROINE PROJECT

Objective
By choosing a heroine, the girls are thinking about personal qualities they admire the most and would like to emulate as they grow.

Materials
Included are information, photographs, etc., about your heroine, one gallon Mod Podge, brushes, heavy stock notecards or heavy stock 8 1/2 x 11 paper.

Procedure
Ask each girl to choose a heroine or heroines, e.g., a family member, a teacher, an athlete, a musician, artist, etc. Emphasize that a personal heroine does not have to be a well-known figure. The girls should then think about four or five reasons why they chose this particular heroine, or several ways this person has influenced them. They should then gather images and symbols representing their heroine’s qualities. The girls can then collage the front of a notecard or a folded piece of paper with Mod Podge or glue, and the images, drawings, etc., they have collected. On the inside of the card, a note is written. The note is to thank the heroine for the positive influence she has had in the girl’s life.

Question
Who is/are your heroine/heroines and why?

Quote
Does a hero know she’s a hero if no one tells her?
Do you know a hero no one knows? A hero can be anyone who inspires you, anyone you look up to, anyone who cheers you on, makes you feel better than you were before — just as they made themselves better than they were before.
Do you know a hero?
Tell her. Then tell everyone.

Nike ... Just do it.
(Nike Advertisement 2002)

Component
I have role models.
KEEPING A PERSONAL JOURNAL

This is an excellent first session activity. The journal is given to each girl at the end of the ceremonial circle time. She can use the journal for the duration of North Star and long after as a place to record personal feelings, write down a favorite quote, song lyric, etc.

Objective
By recording their personal thoughts and ideas, young girls are encouraged to respect themselves. The personal journal can be thought of as an analogy to a person, i.e., decorated on the outside for the world to see, but the inside holds the true self, the inner private thoughts.

Materials
Included are blank journals in which a copy of the North Star quote by Mary Pipher (in a letter form addressed to the individual girl and signed by the facilitators) (see Appendix E) and a copy of the list of questions (to provoke interesting and thoughtful journal entries) (see Appendix D) have been pasted. Also included are old magazines, markers, and animal pictures.

Procedure
Give each girl her journal. The girls should sit around a table while the facilitator describes the animal cards. (see Appendix B) The girls will want to take notes about the various animal qualities that remind them of themselves. Ask each girl to choose one (or more) that she feels is most characteristic of her. The girls will then decorate the covers of their journals by drawing or using animal images in a collage or decoratively writing their names. They should be encouraged to embellish the covers in any way that is meaningful to them. The key to this activity is encouraging any personal approach so as to emphasize the uniqueness of each individual.

Question
How would you describe yourself?
Which animals did you choose and why?

Quote
You are in a boat that is being tossed around by the winds of the world. The voices of your parents, your teachers, your friends, and the media can blow you east, then west, then back again. To stay on course, you must follow your own North Star, your sense of who you truly are. True freedom has more to do with following your North Star than going whichever way the wind blows. Freedom is sailing towards your dreams.

(Pipher, 1994)

The North Star – Stella Polaris – is a fixed point that can always be used to figure out which way we are headed. Explorers and mariners can depend on Polaris when there are no other landmarks in sight. The same relationship exists between you and who you truly are. Stay focused on your own North Star and you will find true happiness.

(Beck, 2001)

Component
I am unique.
DESIGN AN ADVERTISEMENT

Objective
The girls will look at magazines and discuss how women are currently portrayed in the media. They will then view the ads from earlier years and discuss how advertising has changed especially in relation to body image, female interests and careers, etc. It is important to include positive image ads in addition to negative ads in this discussion to further emphasize the contrast between the past and the present. This discussion points out just how powerful the media is and its tremendous impact on young people.

Materials
Included are white paper, colored pencils.
Computer alternative: Photoshop or Claris Works software
Scan a magazine ad, eliminate parts and replace with your own message and imagery. Print on colored paper.

Procedure
The girls are paired up. Facilitators should use creative ideas and/or activities to pair up the girls; pairing girls who do not know one another well is ideal. For example, one activity uses the works of Al Hirschfeld, who was a famous caricaturist for The New York Times. In all of his illustrations he camouflaged his daughter’s name “Nina” in the drawing. Do the same with the two girls’ names on a magazine ad. Then cut the ad in two “puzzle” pieces and have the girls first find their names and then match their piece with their partner’s piece. After the partners are established, ask the new teammates to interview one another in preparation for introducing each other to the group at circle time. It is especially helpful if they can sit together privately while they are conducting their interviews. Then all the paired partners are designated advertising agents and you, the facilitators will be hiring them to do a job based on the presentation of their plan. Give them the following assignment (each pair is given a copy of the assignment):

Our company makes clothing for girls ten to sixteen years of age. Our clothing is environmentally sensitive and it is made from 100% organic cotton. The line is very colorful, casual and comfortable. We want our ads to reflect a positive image of women, to make girls feel good about themselves no matter what their size or shape. We are currently introducing our spring line.
We would like you to create a name and slogan for our company; design our logo; and present some ideas for possible magazine, television and radio advertising. We look forward to the presentation of your proposal. Thank you.

Familiarize the girls with various logos and slogans. We have included some well known examples. Give each team the opportunity to present their ideas and drawings. Have them stand before the whole group as if they were really trying to convince the facilitators (clothing company owners) to hire them.

Question
How would you describe your physical appearance? Pretend someone must find you at an airport and they have never met you before.
What is your best physical asset? What animal moves like you?

Quote
You have to accept who you are - and that is beautiful.

Alicia Keys
(Weinstein, 2003)

Component
I am comfortable in my own body.
PERSONAL PILLOW

Objective
Each girl will make a design on paper that is reflective of her personality. She may choose her Native American animal symbols or other pictures to represent herself, quotes, music or descriptive words that are meaningful. This design will be transferred onto a piece of muslin and then colored with fabric markers. The fabric will be sewn and stuffed to make a pillow. This is a cuddly, functional art product that reminds us of who we are. It reinforces the idea that “you are lovable.”

Materials
Included are muslin pieces (15 in. x 30 in.), fabric markers, needle and thread, paper (15 in. x 15 in.), pencil, fine line Sharpie markers, sewing machine (optional), light box (optional) and polyester fiberfill.

Procedure
Using the 15 in. x 15 in. paper, lay a ruler from one corner to the opposite corner of the paper. Draw a line. Repeat with the other corners. By doing this, you have created four equal sections and have located the center of the square. This procedure enables you to create a symmetrical or radiating design. Each section can be drawn identically. Refer to the pages following this description for various ways to divide the square. Review the animal pictures so that the girls can refresh their memories regarding the animal characteristics. It is especially effective to include animal images into the design. Quotes or characteristics of the animal may be printed around the border or incorporated in the whole design. Once the design is planned on paper, it is transferred to the muslin. Cut or tear the muslin into 15 in x 30 in rectangles. Fold the fabric in half so that you have a 15 in x 15 in square. This forms the front and the back of the pillow. A light box works well for tracing the design onto the muslin. If a light box is not available, the paper design can be boldly drawn with black marker and it will show through on to the muslin for tracing. Once the design is on the muslin, it can be colored with fabric markers. To sew the fabric together, the muslin must be folded in half so the design is facing inward. Sew the three sides, leaving a two or three inch space for stuffing. Turn the fabric right side out and stuff with polyester fiberfill. The small hole can be sewn by hand. If desired, the pillow can be further decorated with sewn on beads, sequins or tassels.

Question
What are three things you do well?
When you feel down, what makes you feel better?

Quote
I am the only unique me that will ever be.
I have the power to make a difference in this world.
I look forward to taking on the grand adventure of life, living and always remembering to be myself....
I love being me.

Catrinka, The World According to Sark
(Femail Creations, 2003)

Component
I am lovable.
Data Collection
Demographic Survey

This survey is part of a study.....

Please keep in mind that all personal information will be kept strictly confidential.

Please complete this survey as accurately and completely as possible.

Please do not leave any question blank and write legibly.

Thank you very much for your time.

1. We would like some general information about YOU.

a. YOUR Age  __________________ years

b. Right now, which of the following best describes YOU?
   □ Single, never married
   □ Not married, but living with your partner
   □ Married
   □ Divorced
   □ Separated
   □ Widowed

c. Right now, which of the following applies to YOU?
   □ I work full-time, 35 or more hours every week
   □ I work part-time, 34 or fewer hours every week
   □ I am a full-time student
   □ I am a part-time student
   □ Right now I do not work for pay

d. What is the highest level of education YOU have completed?
   □ 8th grade or less
   □ Some high school, but did not graduate
   □ GED
   □ Regular high school graduation
   □ Vocational/Trade/Business school after high school
   □ Some college
   □ Earned an associates college degree
   □ Earned a bachelors college degree
   □ Earned a graduate or professional degree

e. At home, do you speak another language besides English?
   □ Yes  □ No
   If yes, what language? ________________________________

f. How many adults live in your house, including you? _________

   How many children live in your house? _________________

g. What is your relationship to the child for whom you are completing this survey?

   YOU ARE THIS CHILD'S
   □ Mother  □ Father
   □ Grandmother  □ Grandfather
   □ Stepmother  □ Stepfather
   □ Other    □ Other
Student Information Form

North Star Student Information Form

1. What grade are you in?

2. What is your age?

3. How many brothers do you have? _____ and how many sisters so you have? _____

4. How many step-brothers do you have _____ and how many step-sisters do you have? _____

5. Do you have a pet? Yes____ No____

6. What type of pet?

7. Write the number of the figure that most looks like you.

8. Write the number of the figure that you would most like to look like.

9. Do you like school? Yes____ No____

10. Do you do well in school? Yes____ No____

11. What did you learn in this group?
The Way I Feel About Myself
PIERS-HARRIS 2
AutoScore™ Form

by Ellen V. Piers, Ph.D., Dale B. Harris, Ph.D., & Saul K. Hershberg, Ph.D.

Published by
WESTERN PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
11931 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90025-1051

Directions

Here are some sentences that tell how some people feel about themselves. Read each sentence and decide whether it tells the way you feel about yourself. If it is true or mostly true for you, circle the word Yes next to the statement. If it is false or mostly false for you, circle the word No. Answer every question, even if some are hard to decide. Do not circle both Yes and No for the same sentence. If you want to change your answer, cross it out with an X and circle your new answer.

Remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Only you can tell us how you feel about yourself, so we hope you will mark each sentence the way you really feel inside.

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Engagement Survey

COORDINATOR SURVEY

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
These next section of questions are related to this child’s engagement within the program. When children are engaged in an after-school program activity they show a combination of interest, effort, and enjoyment that is appropriate to the activity setting.

Circle the number that shows how engaged this child is in the program. The rating scale ranges from 0 meaning the child is Not Engaged in the activity, to 4 meaning the child is Very Engaged in the activities offered.

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<th>List Student’s Names</th>
<th>Circle only one number on each line.</th>
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Pilot Study: Participant Information

- These six students were all in the fifth grade and between the ages of 10 (n=4) and 11 (n=2).
- Six students completed the eleven-item North Star Student Information Form.
- Collectively this group identified themselves as having ten sisters; seven brothers; one step-brother and one step-sister.
- Four of the six students had a pet, with the most popular pet being a dog, followed by cat and multiple pet owner.
- To the question, ‘Do you like school?’ four of the students responded ‘yes’ and two of the students responded ‘no’.

The majority of students in this group also felt that they did well in school: four students responded ‘yes’ to the question ‘Do you do well in school?’ while two students responded ‘no’.

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The Piers-Harris 2
Children’s Self-Concept Scale

Includes 6 sub-scales:

- Behavioral Adjustment (BEH)
- Intellectual and School Status (INT)
- Physical Appearance and Attributes (PHY)
- Freedom from Anxiety (FRE)
- Popularity (POP)
- Happiness and Satisfaction (HAP)

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# Frequency Findings

## TOTALRANGE a

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<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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a. time = start

## TOTALRANGE a

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a. time = end

Bars show percents

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The North Star Facilitators Manual is available for distribution, and school-based or school-linked research projects.

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Or
Nancy Manke
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