

# Putting Undergraduate Research Into Practice

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## Abstract

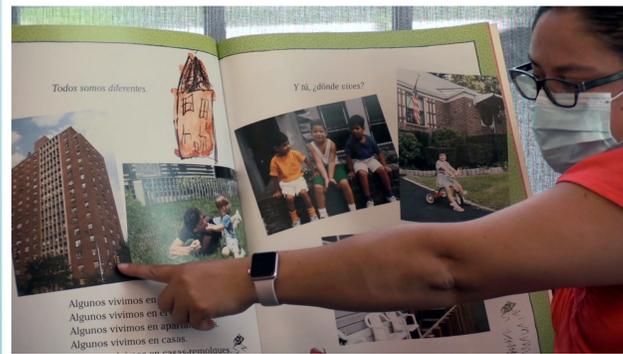
“Undergraduate student researchers are the wave of the future. Their research both confirms the findings of previous studies and branches out in new directions.” (Hinitz & Hewes, 2011, p. 32) The goal of this poster is to demonstrate the authenticity of this statement through a case study involving three “generations” of student researchers from The College of New Jersey (TCNJ).

The theoretical and philosophical bases of the examples provided on this poster include the work of Bronfenbrenner, Piaget, Kohlberg, Erikson, Vygotsky, Farver, Copple and Bredekamp. The harassment, intimidation, bullying and teasing [HIBT] research underpinnings include the work of Smith, Olweus, Monks, Elias, Gartrell, Honig, Froschl and Sprung. (Hinitz, Mentored research projects conducted by students, 2018, pp. 166-168).

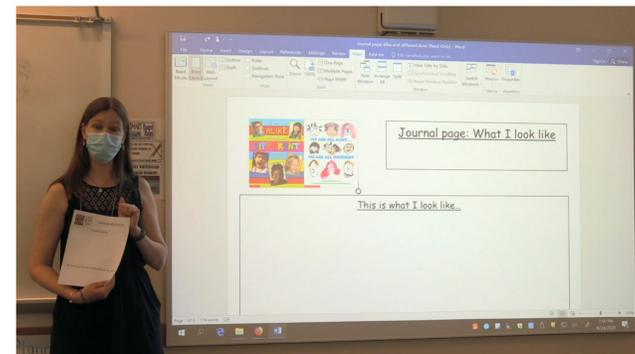


Ivannia Tovar, Teacher Assistant & Cynthia Holcombe

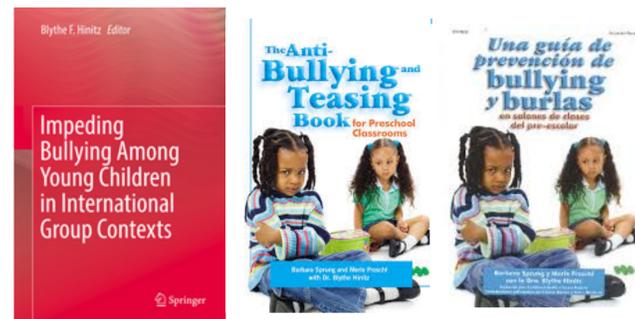
Harassment intimidation, bullying and teasing (HIBT) are common phenomena throughout the world. We believe that if children begin to practice empathy, welcoming behavior, anger management, respect, problem-solving, conflict resolution and collaboration in their earliest years the majority of HIBT can be stopped before it starts. This poster helps teachers of birth-to five-year-olds and teachers of teachers work together to make it happen.



- Lisa Cipriano-Rogalski, a 2003 graduate of the Bachelor's degree program in Early Childhood Education, initiated a workshop series leading to the development of a curriculum supporting pro-social behavior at family-owned Howley School.
- The associated research led to the publication of *The Anti-bullying and Teasing Book for Preschool Classrooms* [TABTB] in 2005. (Cipriano-Rogalski, Galen, Lins, & Harle, 2018).
- In 2015 Jennifer Liang researched and described the steps in developing a teacher's manual for making tolerance education applicable to young children's lives (Liang, May 20, 2015).
- Building on this strong foundation, Danielle Hutchinson produced a 75 page manual to assist teachers in the implementation of TABTB, in 2017.
- The research protocol included review of the second draft by practicing teachers who had graduated from either the undergraduate or graduate programs of TCNJ. Cynthia Holcombe, a reviewer, received her undergraduate degree from TCNJ.
- In addition to writing a review, Holcombe, a teacher at Stepping Stones, requested permission to pilot relevant activities in her classroom. During the next academic year, Holcombe did integrate several of the activities from the manual into the curriculum of her preschool classroom.
- The research and the findings of the HIBT studies discussed in the preceding paragraph are detailed in the 2018 volume entitled, *Impeding Bullying Among Young Children in International Group Contexts*. (Hinitz, *Impeding bullying among young children in international group contexts*, 2018). The research methodology included on-site and video observation, keeping detailed diaries and scripts of teaching episodes.



- In March 2020 Stepping Stones moved to online instruction along with all of the educational institutions in Trenton. Holcombe and her assistant produced several videos using children's literature from TABTB reference list.
- During the fall 2020 semester Holcombe is piloting online versions of several literature-related activities from the manual, in a bilingual virtual learning setting. Examples of adapted activities include lessons focusing on the manual's, "Community Theme", followed by adapted activities from the, "Feelings Theme." Virtual story readings of children's books are conducted in English and Spanish.
- Follow-up activities with teachers and families working together include: journaling, photos, images, student drawings in booklets, and videos and songs in English and Spanish.
- Holcombe is recording support activities, such as PowerPoint presentations and mindfulness techniques, as she did in the spring of 2020. She also plans virtual games and daily "feeling chart" activities.



The current COVID-19 pandemic has forced early education programs and the related teacher education programs in institutions of higher education [IHEs] to move to online platforms, for the safety of students and teachers. This study, built on a solid research foundation, provides IHEs with one model for moving early childhood HIBT instruction and activities to these online platforms.

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