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AUTHOR NAME: TIMES 12PT, BOLD, ALL CAPS
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ABSTRACT: All titles 12pt bold, centered

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## INTRODUCTION

During middle school, students become increasingly aware of and focused upon social competence and peer acceptance. This has the potential to negatively impact cognitive, physical, and social development (Marotz, 2017). Middle school students in particular are challenged by accepting social differences due to an increased anxiety about their own ability to be accepted by others. This heightened concern with acceptance could lead to internal (self) or external (others) behaviors which may be considered negative and/or abusive (Arseneault, 2018). Living with a disability, as a child, is regarded by medical professionals as an adverse childhood experience. This increases the incidence of exclusion, bullying, neglect and/or abuse all of which have severely profound and negative long-term effects (Waldman, Schwartz, Perlman, & Larsen, 2020).

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Prevention of bullying is vital, particularly in populations who already face significant challenges like individuals with academic, social and/or physical disabilities. In a study completed

Figure 1: Figure titles in Times 12pt italics, centered
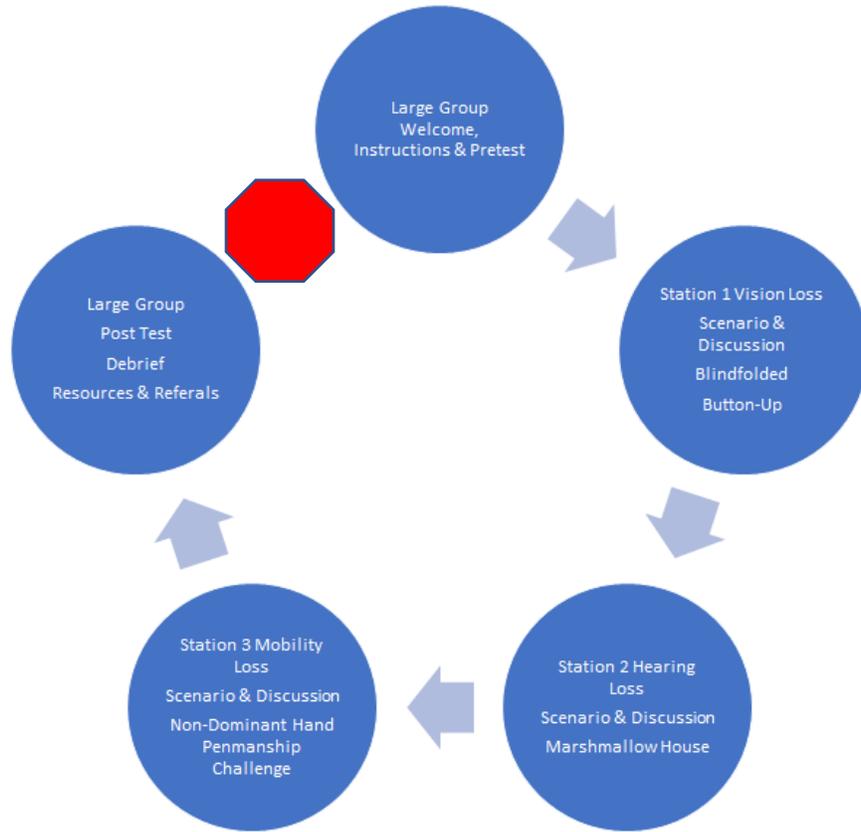
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