



RESILIENT YOUTH IN A VIOLENT WORLD

*New Perspectives
and Practices*

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Preface and Acknowledgments

This monograph is a record of *Resilient Youth in a Violent World: New Perspectives and Practices*, a summer Institute that took place at the Harvard Graduate School of Education from July 7-12, 1994. The program, designed by the Collaborative for School Counseling and Support Services, was intended to serve school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, teachers, health educators, and administrators — the same kind of audience that attended the Collaborative's first summer program, *Coping With Violence in the Schools*, held in July 1993.

In designing plenary sessions, several workshops, and a large binder of articles and resource materials, Institute planners attempted to create a conceptual framework that could help practitioners think about resilience in their work with young people. The opening and closing interactive panels about resilience were led by adults and young people, respectively. Plenary sessions focused on a range of issues: strengthening children's social development skills, resilience in the context of trauma and loss, new efforts to break cycles of violence by changing habits of thinking that perpetuate aggressor and victim responses, the challenges and importance of multicultural understanding, and new models for school-community collaboration.

Participants in the Institute came from 13 different states, including Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. Many attended as members of small teams, with whom they could work together on program innovation and implementation when they returned to their schools. By the end of the Institute, many teams had drawn up action plans to guide them when they returned to address the challenge of violence in their school settings.

This monograph has been assembled quite simply, as a straightforward record of conference proceedings. Edited transcripts do not pretend to have the formal authority of research or academic scholarship. Contents include oral presentations by scholars, practitioners, and young people, along with a lengthy bibliography. It documents the Collaborative's effort to look at the issue of violence in children's lives through a different lens from the one used during the previous summer's conference. Like our previous report, however, this monograph was also supported by a generous grant from the Metropolitan Life Foundation —

which we earnestly commend for its strong commitment to a broad range of efforts aimed at understanding and preventing violence in our world. The Foundation has also helped to support follow-up of participating teams during the present academic year. Metropolitan Life has focused its last two national teacher surveys on the issue of violence. We are especially grateful to Virginia Millan of the Metropolitan Life Foundation for her interest, patience, support, and encouragement. All presenters were kind enough to review the transcripts. We are grateful to the Harvard Education Publishing Group for their assistance with planning and publishing this monograph. And, for their contribution to the production of this modest document, we thank Linda Chisom, William Eldredge, Kathleen Ivins, Karen Maloney, Brenda Mathis, Martha Ransohoff-Adler, Dody Riggs, Karen Ryder, Sheila Walsh, and Margot Welch.

The Collaborative for School Counseling and Support Services is a young effort, based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, to create interdisciplinary, professional development opportunities and resources for all who are providing school-based services in elementary and secondary, public and independent, urban, suburban, and rural schools. Both summer conferences have been supported in part by generous grants from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, which has applauded our Collaborative for serving "a special mission in the field of education."

Margot A. Welch

MARGOT A. WELCH

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Resilient Youth in a Violent World

Transcript of the Summer 1994 Conference
sponsored by the Collaborative for School Counseling
and Support Services

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Introduction

Margot A. Welch, Ed.D., *Harvard Graduate School of Education*

The public spotlight seems to shine most brightly on what is most difficult. We hear much that is of critical importance about problems and pathology. "Violence" is epidemic — and much of what is called "violence" is embedded in the intricately patterned fabric of our contemporary culture. Today it is increasingly acknowledged that widespread violence in our society is taxing the resources of children, families, communities, and all whose mission is to help young people grow into strong, healthy, trusting adults. A host of serious challenges — domestic violence, battering, drug and alcohol addictions, the spread of firearms, child neglect and abuse, racism, hidden and overt poverty, hunger, unemployment — are disrupting the wholesome growth and development of children in many kinds of communities. School practitioners are coping with the consequences of these problems every day.

It is also true that a number of children are demonstrating extraordinary strengths in managing the cruelest kinds of misfortune and adversity. Defying predictions of doom, many are growing into energetic young adults, attached to their communities and ready for what life may have in store for them:

I want to see the little kids on my block grow up in a good way, and not in a bad way. On the block today, the only chance you're gonna get is the bad way. But maybe I can get through college and come back and make the bad road better. That's my dream, anyway. ("Ricardo," quoted in Goodwillie, 1993, p. 215)

Researchers have begun to document a cluster of psychological and temperamental factors — including capacities for insight and attachment to others, healthy self-esteem, tolerance for uncertainty, open-mindedness, courage, integrity, a sense of humor, and a philosophy that gives life meaning — that predict successful adaptation to stress. New conceptual approaches to "pathology" and risk depart from deficit models for individual and community development to highlight strengths and protective factors that, when nurtured, foster vigorous, healthy social development. There is much to be learned from a consideration of individual and systemic resilience.

The identification of resilience and the capacity for effective coping is part of the essence of prevention. Its

usefulness lies not in a message for inaction, with the argument that the strong can preserve themselves. Rather, it calls for action to strengthen those features of effective coping in all children so as to lower the power of risk factors to achieve a reality of morbid outcome. (Chess, in Dugan and Coles, 1989, p. 181)

The increasing severity of our social problems has in many communities coincided with diminishing structural supports for responsive and effective services in schools. No resources have been put into long-term program evaluation that could document the effects, over time, of preventive programs on developing children. And indications of new resourcefulness and energy have gone largely undocumented. During the past few years a host of promising new efforts have been made — including peer mediation, leadership and mentoring programs; classroom-based conflict resolution, social skills, and violence prevention curricula; sexual harassment, gender identity, multicultural and substance abuse awareness programs; school- and system-wide crisis response plans; and new school-community collaborations. In problematic school systems, many educators and school-based service providers are finding new ways to mobilize and nourish strengths in the children with whom they are working.

"Resilience" is a wonderful word, deriving as it does from the Latin *resilire*, meaning "to jump or spring back." Given people's increasing willingness to think about, understand, and address the impact of violence on the lives of children, what can we learn about the capacity to bounce back that can help us bolster strengths in young people, families, schools, and communities? These are big questions, but we can find new ways of strengthening individual children and families by increasing our understanding of endurance, prevention, and adaptation. The stakes and satisfactions of the inquiry are great.

For several days last summer, school counselors, psychologists, social workers, teachers, health educators and administrators gathered to explore some aspects of the capacity for resilience, to enlarge their understanding of the impact of violence and trauma on children's development, and to share practical experiences with the implementation of violence prevention programs in varied kinds of school settings. Some presenters shared perspectives about the development of resilience in families, clinical work, our culture, and the school setting. Several described specific

interventions that attempt to foster the development of critical self-awareness and social skills and create new structures for collaborative problem-solving by schools and communities, working together in new ways. Participants received large resource binders with studies and journal articles about, for example, resilience, stress and coping, risk and protective factors, trauma, friendship, collaboration, successful preventive programs, interpersonal conflict, racism, hope, alcoholic families, and the epidemic of violence.

Resilience is a complicated and fascinating phenomenon. As we have said, it has many determinants — some constitutional, some environmental. How much is luck we may never know. And, unlike features like eye color or height, resilience is not static. It ebbs and flows in relation to the contexts in which children are growing, living, and learning. Thus families, schools, and neighborhoods can foster or neglect it. Research, practice, and young people themselves all confirm that the attention and concern of caring and careful individuals, at specific times, can mean the world, literally and figuratively, to children who are struggling to hold on to hope and to develop a sense of themselves as valued and valuable human beings.

Format and Limitations

The monograph consists of edited transcripts, presented approximately in the order in which they were delivered. Practitioner presentations about Jersey City, Worcester, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and Lawrence Township (Indianapolis) have been combined, so that readers interested in

specific questions of implementation can find this material together. Missing from the text is any record of a powerful plenary workshop on multiculturalism, presented by Althea Smith. To afford people safety in reflecting together about their own personal struggles with the -isms — race, class, sex, religion, age, etc. — this session was not taped. But the effort to understand our own biases and feelings about culture and race is absolutely central to the prevention of violence and the nurturing of resilience — in children and adults alike. Another format might have invited a less experiential, more dispassionate approach to the ways that multicultural awareness contributes to the safety and well-being of all.

It is unusual to produce such an evidently “unscholarly” document from a university conference. In letting their work go out in its present, rather unfinished, form, presenters are generously participating in our effort to encourage new kinds of conversations about issues of great importance to us all. When readers move beyond being surprised by the very colloquial tone of the pieces, it is hoped that they will find the reading engaging, easy, and thought-provoking. Violence is an enormous public health and public safety crisis that will touch us all. We must seek, accept, and devise new languages that welcome many disciplines and voices into our efforts to understand, intervene, and prevent. It is hoped that readers will accept the tone of the present monograph as a new kind of record-keeping, which may prove useful to those of us who want to hear everything we can, in every form possible, that can help us to help young people.

Resilience: A Brief Overview

Margot A. Welch, Ed.D., *Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Good morning! It's wonderful to see you all and I'm very happy to greet you. This is the second summer program sponsored by our Center for School Counseling Practitioners, a young effort here at Harvard to bring new resources and interdisciplinary training opportunities to school-based service providers in all kinds of school settings. This Institute builds on our first exhilarating conference, held last year, which was called *Coping With Violence in the Schools*. This year we have representatives from 14 states — Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Virginia.

Many of you have come in teams. We feel very strongly that teamwork is essential if we're going to make things better for kids, families, and schools. In your orientation packets, there are *action plans* to help you think about implementation while you're here. Even if you're here on your own, if you think of yourself as a team and fill out an implementation plan, you can create a larger team when get home.

Thankfully, the intensifying public concern about violence is finally focusing people's attention on the needs of children and families. I worry that we may become numb from the recitations of the horrifying vital statistics about the scope and impact of violence. When we think about needs — children's and family's — we can feel paralyzed by their scope. We know that resources are scarcest where needs are greatest. Our mental health tools often seem to be the least effective with the most intractable problems. And research, which has traditionally pointed to the problematic and been remote from practice, often doesn't encourage application.

We are also curious about how and why some kids, who grow up with troubles everywhere they turn, get on with their lives and become important examples of success. Some mothers, families, and schools are, without obvious resources, finding ways to support children well. So, some questions we ask are: Are some children born with certain strengths that enable them to compensate for the stresses that hit them? Or, are there some people for whom stress and anxiety actually nurture certain strengths?

There is joy in what we're doing this week: coming together to think, not about pathology, but about what works well, what is promising. Understanding strengths can

help us find new ways to break old cycles, solve old problems. I want to read a useful quote by Robert White:

One of the great advantages of research on *coping*, is that it brings back into the psychological and psychiatric literature the persistence, the will to live, the courage and, indeed, the heroism that are as much a part of human nature as the retreats, evasions, and petty impulse gratifications that bulk so large in our thinking about psycho-pathology. Let us be sure that the concept of *coping* does not shrink in its meaning so that we lose this great advance over our constricted past, and forget that strategies of adaptation lead not just to equilibrium, but to development.

In considering resilience, it is useful to remember a few key concepts: **risk and protective factors**; **stress, coping and adaptation**; and **prevention**. Studies of resilience focused originally on children's experiences with particular kinds of stresses: natural disasters, wars, concentration camps; divorce; living with a parent with a severe psychiatric disorder; severe adjustment difficulties that can manifest themselves in alternative engagement and disruption in schools; chronic illness; and maternal deprivation. The literature suggests that there are two different kinds of variables that contribute to resilience. One has to do with **individual dispositions** — the individual neurology, intelligence, and temperament with which we are born. The other category of variables reflects our **social environment** — the families into which we are born, and the social settings in which we live.

Some researchers have thought about resiliency in relation to infancy and early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence. From birth, it appears, resilient children are active, socially responsive, autonomous. They are naturally cuddly, affectionate babies — easy to deal with, exploratory, vigorous, gifted in communication and locomotion. They are energetic, independent, adaptable self-starters, easily involved in their play, and happy. While some of these appealing traits seem congenital, many believe that they are also related to the quality of the infant's early attachments. Even as babies, they have attributes that evoke positive responses from others, fostering engagement in interpersonal relationships from the earliest ages. The capacity for connection with and attachment to others is a

key feature of resilience.

In middle childhood, resilient kids demonstrate good problem-solving skills. They are good communicators, independent, able to concentrate on school work, and capable of enjoying mastery. Resilient children have flexible coping strategies, curiosity, compassion, a style more reflective than impulsive, and good impulse controls. In middle school, resilient children exhibit specific kinds of competencies. They tend to be well liked by both peers and adults, and may have, fundamentally, a positive self-concept, which helps them move confidently into adolescence. Innate intelligence and central nervous system integrity contribute to resilience.

Resilient youth have a strong sense of responsibility, and an orientation around achievement. They like structure in their lives, have internalized some positive values, and are more outgoing, mature, curious, and empathic than their less adaptable peers. Resilient youth demonstrate an ability to learn from experience. A strong internal locus of control gives them a sense of their own efficacy. They are willing to assume responsibility. They can also see that the troubles in their families are not their own fault.

Attributes of families that nurture resilient children include warmth, support, clear and consistent rules, a degree of orderliness, good role models, and clear communications about what is expected. The resilient child has had at least one important relationship with somebody who loves him/her unconditionally — a parent, parent substitute, or grandparent, for example. In resilient two-parent families, the adults share some of the same values. Some kind of religious beliefs often give resilient children a sense of rootedness and faith in the larger coherence of life.

Families fostering resilience give their children responsibilities. There is some interesting research suggesting that resilient girls tend to come from homes where they're expected to take risks and be independent. Resilient boys tend to come from families that, in addition to providing them with structure and good role models, encourage them to be emotionally expressive. A healthy androgyny characterizes many resilient kids who tend not to feel limited by strongly gender-typed activities.

Outside the immediate family, what's important again is an external social support system of peers and adults. Children are strengthened by having friendships that last

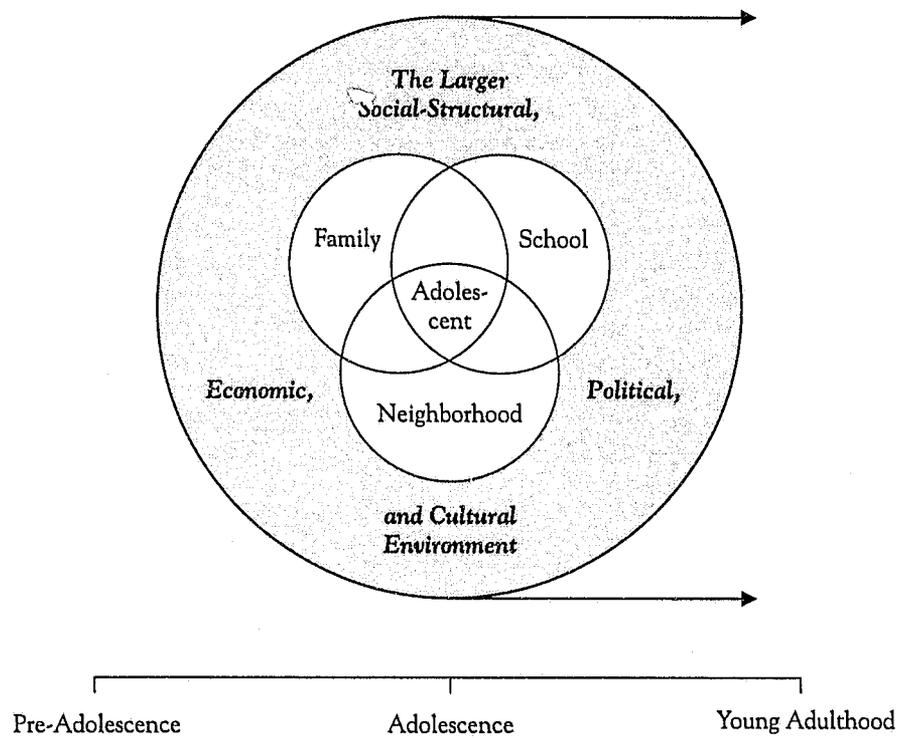
over time. Last month, several young men from Boston were telling us how they are turning their lives around. One of them is a boy of 20, with three young children. He has been in jail, like his father, several times. When I asked him what his gang really meant to him, he looked at me as if my question was very stupid. Didn't I know? "They've always been there!" he said. "They've known me since I was little. They're the only people that have known me since I was born." The importance of attachments to the development of social and moral strengths can not be overestimated.

In addition to this brief review of some of the research about individual and social variables, the other point I wish to make is about context. Resilience is not a controllable laboratory phenomenon. It is very complicated, fluid, dynamic. To understand and strengthen resilience, we must

always think about the many contexts that give experience meaning for the child. As we know, healthy development is profoundly affected by different kinds of unpredictable factors, including timing, innate constitution, and the nature of the fit between a child and his/her family. At each stage of development, the balance between a child's strengths and the kind of risks he/she is facing can shift.

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While much depends on what attributes a child comes into the world with, everything also happens to him/her in relation to his/her school, family, and neighborhood. There are always complications — for example, school may or may not be in the neighborhood where the child lives. A family may be homeless, a child may not be living with his/her biological family. Perhaps no one in the child's family is employed, or both parents are working two jobs. Maybe the child is not in school because of what's happening in the neighborhood or the family. It would be easy if we could foster resilience by focusing simply on the specific variables we've reviewed, but we must always remember that children experience whatever life has in store for them in relation to many contexts. Social, cultural, psychological, economic, and political factors influence whether, for example, a girl comes to school with or without breakfast, or shows how she feels about having or not having new shoes. Whether a girl smokes, is delinquent, pregnant, drops out of school, or goes to college is related to the complex external environments in which she lives, her innate traits and personality, and, as she develops, her changing perceptions of the world.



Context and Development Over Time We must always remember that children experience whatever life has in store for them in relation to many contexts, as suggested in the figure above.

Reflections on Individual, Family, and Cultural Factors Influencing Resilience

Thomas E. Brennan, S.D.B., Ed.D., *Archdiocese of Boston*

Timothy Dugan, M.D., *Cambridge Hospital*

Thomas J. Cottle, Ph.D., *Boston University*

MARGOT WELCH: This morning we're going to hear from three extremely gifted, experienced, and devoted people. Tom Brennan will begin by talking about young people in recovery from substance abuse, and address family and school relationships as contexts that nurture or confine resilience. Tim Dugan is going to focus in a more detailed way on how a significant relationship can nurture individual resilience. And Tom Cottle will paint the "big picture" that many of us lament, placing risk and resilience in our contemporary culture.

THOMAS BRENNAN: Margot has covered a lot of ground in a very short time. This morning I'd like to spend a bit of time looking at the fact that we're talking about "at-risk" children who come from families to our family, which is the school. We need to help them make that shift and find productive ways to feel at home in our own schools. Sometimes the homes from which they come do not provide them with the sort of nurturing warmth that they need. So, it can be up to us to replace those assets, or actually to become the source of those strengths for young people.

You've probably all heard the quip that 96 percent of families in our country are dysfunctional, and the other 4 percent are in denial. While I think that is something to consider, it also reflects the way we look at pathology very, very often. The context from which, I think, Tom, Tim, and I come is that we have to stop looking simply for pathologies, and start to look for wellness and strength within children and within organizations. If we can learn how to reframe our own attitudes towards children, and the way that we look at them, consider their health, and the ways to enhance it, then we'll be much more effective educators.

Various researchers have pointed out that, in discussing families, we've reduced the label "dysfunctional" to absurdity. Linda Braun and her husband, who founded *Families First*, suggest a 40 percent rule: if you can get along 40 percent of the time, you're from a healthy family. And all of us breathe a sigh of relief, thinking, "Yes, maybe 40

percent of the time I can get along with the people that live in the same house that I do!" So I think we can apply the same rule to schools. If we can get along with our students 40 percent of the time, we can have a very big impact on them. My own work is with people coming from "dysfunctional" homes, labeled "alcoholic" families. These are families in which addiction is the primary, motivating, central, organizing force. I believe that the perspective we use to be helpful to children in these homes can be applicable in other settings.

One of the things about alcoholic families is that there's a lot of chaos. There are not rules; boundaries change; roles about who is in charge of the family are unclear. It is common to hear children from such families described as "parentified". Young people often have to assume unusually adult responsibilities. This phenomenon is not limited to alcoholic families. And we learn from Emmy Werner's research on the resiliency of young children that the need for "required helpfulness" is important. Children may be asked to clean the house a little bit, make dinner on occasion, shop, care for younger siblings, or even, sometimes, a parent. We would label these chores "parentification," from the resiliency point of view. When these are tasks asked of young people coming from homes with physical or mental disabilities, these expectations are viewed in a very positive light. Unfortunately, when you find exactly those same kinds of behaviors expected of a child of an alcoholic or an addict, they are frequently considered pathologies. There's something wrong with the way we look at children of alcoholics. If we go in with a bias against families in which there are addictions, they will prejudice and taint the way that we're going to deal with these children. Can we look at children as simply children? See the boy, for example, who's sitting here before me, with pluses and minuses, and deal with him as an individual? We must think about the context from which he comes without assuming he is a victim. Can we deliberately look for his strengths?

I have found that children of alcoholics, and children from "dysfunctional" families, usually have a great deal of

strength. They are often able to perceive things very, very clearly. They can come into a room and know who gets along with whom right away. They can tell whether or not the teacher is in a good mood quickly. They can immediately sense not only what tasks need to be done, but also the relationships between people in the room. Now, isn't that a wonderful strength to have? It is a strength that they bring with them when they enter into relationships. A fair amount of research about children of alcoholics focuses on their problems with intimacy, the difficulty that they have bonding with each other. But the perceptivity of children of alcoholics can also help them to form good relationships. However, we are fascinated by the bizarre. We like Geraldo, and listen to talk shows about every kind of sickness. And we make popular heroes of people because they are weird. We don't congratulate people or interview them because they are healthy. The research doesn't seem interesting if it describes kids who know how to have good relationships. It is true that in this country we have 6.5 million children of alcoholics in our classrooms. And in every classroom of 25 students, four to six are children of alcoholics. But not all of these are sick. A good number are quite well, productive, captains of school teams, presidents of student councils, heads of student bodies. In many instances they are among the very successful members of our school communities. These young people are achieving because they have integrity, because they are good and capable people, not simply to overcompensate for their disabled families.

I want to suggest some specific ways that schools can contribute to resiliency. Research suggests that family rituals allow a young person to be able to stay whole, develop, and thrive. I think that the schools also give us a wonderful opportunity to create rituals for kids. Opportunities to gather together in assemblies or sports rallies to recognize achievement, academically or athletically, to chant and wear school emblems, allow young people to say things about their identity with school and to stay glued together. Schools are institutions that can provide the ceremonies that help keep people together.

Emmy Werner, who was able to do longitudinal research with alcoholic families, is one of the people who has made the point that an important person outside of the family can hold a young person together — a "surrogate

parent" if the parents aren't available. Some of the research shows that a significant adult in a caring relationship with the young person allows him/her to be more resilient. That person is often a teacher, or a trusted adult in the neighborhood, a relative, a clergy person, or someone else. If a child knows that a parent actually hates him or her, there is some question whether or not that child can be resilient. But children from dysfunctional families look for families of choice. Their efforts to recreate a family can take place within the schools.

Stephen and Sibyl Wolin came out with a book in 1993, *The Resilient Self*. They found that there were certain characteristics that were very important to develop within children of alcoholics and also kids coming from families with mental disorders that allowed the kids to thrive. They designed a mandala with eight parts; you'll find it in your binders, so I won't go into all the details here. But they explain that children who have the kind of insight and perceptivity that I spoke of earlier — the ability to see clearly what's going on in their families — are not the source of the problem. The problem is outside of them, and once they start to realize this, they are strengthened. By coming to school where people talk openly about some

dysfunctional families, about the disease of alcoholism, and the realities of mental illness, suicide, and things that challenge their lives, they acquire important insights and become much more resilient.

Often people living in families with pathologies become isolated. Their worlds are narrow, limited to the relationships that they have within their families. Children living in such circumstances need to encounter other families who are well, to

be able to come to know what it means to be "family." From there they begin to be able to move away from these people who are not very well to the independence and autonomy that Erikson would have spoken of as one of the challenges of adolescence. A sense of independence helps me to be sure of who I am as an individual, to move on and disengage from that family. The ability to have relationships with other people helps me find alternatives to the family that I am born into. If I can find a family down the street that will take me in, and feed me, and clothe me, and say "what a good job you did," then I will be able to be resilient.

A sense of industry is important too — coupled with

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the ability to go out there and do things and feel you can accomplish things. To have that important sense of success doesn't simply mean being the top of your class or the super star, but knowing that you've lived up to the best of your abilities, been as successful as you can be, and heard people congratulate you for doing it that way. Creativity, the ability to really start writing and doing art, is important too. And then humor. In English classes especially, you may often find that young people are able to write about their experiences. They're looking for a chance to give voice to what they're saying. How many English teachers who keep journals with their kids or ask them to just write spontaneously every day find the kids revealing incredible things in their classrooms? Creativity is one of the things I enjoy about running groups with kids. I use guided imagery and let the kid distance himself or herself from their experience. They talk almost in the language of dreams, are able to display what they're thinking about, what they're feeling, and then to discern what is happening in their own life, based on looking first at the fantasy they've been able to express.

The Wolins also refer to morality and the importance of giving people a sense of values and virtues. The people with a sense of morality and spirituality are the ones who will be resilient, because they learn that they don't have to only count on themselves; they can count on other people. And they can count on a spiritual being who really cares for them, and looks after them. Now this is a very complex level of psychological development that is difficult to achieve without experiencing earlier stages of attachment.

TIMOTHY DUGAN: Good morning. I think we're going to be taking the same deck of cards and reshuffling them in our own way, so if it sounds redundant, you can challenge us later to see whether we have any imaginative ideas of our own.

My job is to talk about the individual aspects of resiliency. In the introductory remarks about her research on "thrivers," Margot reminded us that we, as helpers, are drawn to the work for personal reasons. It is easier, I think, to distance oneself from the pathologies one sees. It is easier to look at someone else's maternal deprivation from drug addiction than it is to contemplate your own. There is a capacity to deny and distance oneself from someone else's pathology, but when you start talking about criteria for resiliency — how impulsive you are, how much locus of control you really have, and your verbal skills — these topics may make me more anxious. But it's useful to try to look at those things that are within us that serve to buoy us up. To the extent that you all are called upon to be helpful to kids in need, you all have to assume and feel that you

have something awesome to give. Not necessarily something fancy, but something solid. Once you begin to hear about this resiliency literature, you know you are dealing with youngsters who may have a number of things going on at home, early developmental variables that can predict serious failures. Kids are going to be walking in to see you with the difficulties broadcast; you'll know what they've been up against. And if you then, in the face of those difficulties, begin to represent yourself to the kids as having something fairly awesome to give, it can make a difference. Becoming a significant attachment to a kid communicates that you are not dissuaded by all the difficulties. In fact, in the middle of all this mess, and weeds, and devastation, you communicate that there in fact has got to be something solid, something good, about the kid. By your actions and words, you're saying, "I'm going to identify your strengths, and I'm going to somehow represent to you that I can be interested in you in spite of the chaos, in spite of all the stuff that you're bringing as your kind of main thing. I'm going to see something in addition to your troubles that makes me quite interested in you."

If you do this with the children you are serving, you will have to look at yourself. You will not be able to shake free of that. Whether you are just starting or continuing to search for and find those capacities for strength hidden in kids and, in a way, shine the spotlight of interest and care on them, the only way you're going to do that really well is to be honest. You'll have to say to yourself, "Well, who did this for me? Someone must have. Here I sit, and some of this kid's story sounds fairly familiar to me, similar in ways, if not identical; but who got me from there, got me over a kind of river, got me over the mountain, who got me here?" There was a pediatric neurologist in my background who had something to do with a member of my family. For you all, maybe there was a teacher or somebody who said to you, in the middle of your developmental constraints, or mess, "You know, I can see that people might mistake you for being really in trouble, really under the gun, really having not much to be concerned about, or cared for, but somehow I see it in you. You know, I see it in you." Someone did that for you, and you'll do that for someone else. I suspect that research will indicate that those of us who are most helpful to kids can actually say, "I was in trouble, maybe I was in fairly deep water, but there was a series of people, whom I can call up, who jumped in the deep water with me and told me they wanted me to get to shore. They were really caring and interested in me." Those of us who can be clear about what happened to us and how we got to where we are today will be much more able to sustain ourselves in encountering these kids on a day-in, day-out basis. We won't be so mystified about how to get from a disaster to success, with

the capacity to tolerate our own personal griefs, over time. When themes in kids' lives echo in us, we know that this is not a surprising echo, but a refrain we've come over the years to know, a story that is resonant with us, which is not going to overwhelm us.

What are these stories that you're resonant with? What about violence? Why are we so interested in violence? It's hard to really acknowledge what it comes from, how dramatic it was in the families we grew up in, and how it exists in our own fantasy life. I mean, just what is it about violence? The more you can get close to asking yourselves that, the more you can begin to do things that are resilience-making for these kids who come to you, kids from whom most of us would like to take ten steps back and say, "Nope, I never saw anything like that; I never had that impulse; I don't think that way; geez, aren't I lucky?" Well, you know, with that kind of middle-class comfort, you won't be able to get within a hundred yards of the kids who are walking into most of our offices, our emergency rooms, or our school buildings.

To the extent that you are aware that you have your own internal processes going on, you can come into closer contact with kids — many of whom, on the surface, look very different, may have a different skin color than most of us. They may have a very frightening story, but the more we know about ourselves and our fantasies — maybe just how angry I get if I feel thwarted — the more we can help. The closer you are to knowing that you are a potentially violent person or that you have violent fantasies, the closer you can get to the kid when they walk in, and the more likely it is that they'll tell you their story, you'll listen and say to yourselves, "Yep, I can see that one. Yep, that one isn't too far out of my range. I know that about myself and sometimes it frightens me about myself, but it doesn't frighten me away from you. And that doesn't make you a bad person. In fact, I will demonstrate over these next three months, or these next nine months, that I have faith in you if you can stand it. If you can stand to come in and let me, potentially, have an impact."

In the chapter from my book that's in your notebook, called "Action and Acting Out," I describe some of the variables that produce resiliency. And I write about a kid who is different from the ones you're going to be hearing about this week — kids who don't have impulse disorders,

who are reflective, who have good IQs, who are thoughtful, can be conversant, and can make contact with people. What I wanted to call attention to really, in that chapter, was that you will see a lot of passive, withdrawn, spaced-out kids who aren't making trouble for anybody, but who are in deep trouble. You know, just because they shut their mouths and don't say anything — particularly teenage girls and some constrained boys, too — doesn't mean they're OK. The resiliency literature might seem to be describing a group of very boring, compliant kids. But from my point of view, really anti-social kids are worth thinking about.

Go back and look at my chapter or think about Winnicott, a famous British psychoanalyst, whose view was that antisocial behavior in kids is actually a source of hope. Whether it's violent acting out in a frightening, interpersonal way or something more minor, like stealing, which

doesn't have such an obvious object of aggression, I think what I'd like to begin to think about is what on earth has evoked the need for a kid to go to this extent, to put him/herself in this kind of jeopardy? What makes children do this to themselves, to cause this kind of light to shine on them? What's this all about? And I think what you'll discover is that some of these kids have been through such hell that

you can make whatever appeals you want to make and they will still defy you. But it's good to try to give it a shot. A number of these kids are, in truth, trying to become a problem. They want to be worried about. They are not going to sit and be deprived for one more minute of their life. They're not going to be like nonentities any more. They're not going to be *not* seen, *not* worried about, *not* fed anymore. They're not going to be nothing any longer. A number of suicidal kids may feel it's probably better to be dead than not acknowledged as alive. It's better to *do* something, even if you have to die, to do it. It's better to be someone, a self-hating person, but a person, than just neutral, ignored. While you're trying to kind of tune in to what's violent about your fantasy life, your own history, and the components of your own resiliency, you ought to figure out who gave you the ticket to get here.

The kids who are coming in, who are doing the damndest things you've ever imagined to themselves and to other people, are, at the root of it, trying to be somebody, in somebody's mind. In your eyes, in the school's eyes, in somebody's eyes. The lights have got to go on and some-

*People with a sense of
morality and spirituality are
the ones who will be resilient,
because they learn that they
can count on other people.*

body's got to say, "I see you, I hear you, it isn't all nice, but I care about you." Doing that for a couple of kids a year is really all it takes for us to get going. If you can do this for five kids a year then you are really having an impact. So I think that that issue is something very important. Erikson and Stella Chess talk about the importance of an external other and of having a particular skill. Say you're just devastated in your life, but for some reason you begin to play a guitar, and in fact you get good at it — good enough for someone to notice that you can play guitar. You are getting noticed for something good, as opposed to something bad, and this mechanism of being noticed allows you to develop a sense that you're important in someone's eyes, in the eyes of the world, separate from the family within which you live, where certain people have been devastated or overwhelmed in their own way. The more you have these "distanced" experiences, as Erikson would say, the more you can stand aside from where you came, and figure, "Well now, how does that counselor at school happen to like me? What's this about, because I don't really feel this way too often?"

Now what may happen is that the kids will get sad about this and never show up again on your doorstep. You know, if you like them, they're going to get the message, unconsciously or otherwise, that they haven't been liked in other places. This can wreak havoc with a number of them, and you won't ever get a chance to get to the second, third, or fourth interviews. Someone else might, but you won't. But, on the other hand, if they are able to get the message, and somehow sit still with you, and you're able to be compassionate and tolerant, the way someone was for you, then it begins to give them one foot outside the door, one experience in which somebody can create new insights, sees something worthwhile in a child. "I haven't felt that way too often in my life. Now, was it my problem, is this counselor so crazy that he's blind to how evil I am or is it where I came from? Were they really so non-caring that they missed the whole point of who I am? Maybe that's the point. Maybe where I came from, those poor people were preoccupied with their own life, or inundated with their own problems, or the society that I had to live in was overwhelmed. Maybe that's it. Maybe I'm worth something myself, and maybe this person actually has a

clear view. They're not telling me that I'm the best kid on earth. They're not conning me. They know that I have plenty of troubles. But they somehow seem to like it when I come into the room. Somehow I feel valued in their presence."

If kids are smart, verbal, with a high IQ, and other resilience-making attributes, these kinds of connections with important other people happen more easily. These are the experiences that you want to be able to have with kids. The hope is that this experience gets rooted — not forever perhaps, but just long enough for the kids to see you smiling when you see them. You don't take ten steps back because they've told you about a violent incident or violent fantasy. You stay right with them, indicating a level of concern and

caring that gets inside them, so they can say to themselves, "I'm a good person and I can carry that as a belief inside me." I hope to provide that in my practice. And maybe my work just gets the kid to the next person, and then the next, but they begin to construct a kind of team. And they are more open to constructing a group of people who care for them as opposed to going from place to place without being cared for by others or caring for themselves. This sense of "internalized identification," as psy-

choanalytic theorists put it, gives people a lasting feeling of being cared for. It allows them to entertain and believe the next person down the tracks who may, in fact, just be a nice person and care about them. You won't have to have the big fight to determine whether they do or they don't. Those kinds of experiences accumulate over time and help make for the good, sustained, fairly functional life that most of us aspire to enjoy.

THOMAS COTTLE: Needless to say, following these three is going to be very difficult. So I greet you all, and I'm delighted that you're here in Boston with us. My wife, a teacher, is at a conference with colleagues trying to work out how they can make school better. So, I'm keenly aware of what you are going through and just want to say that I'm deeply grateful for the work that you do for children. We live in a world today where we realize that "representationalism" doesn't work. The word and the world no longer seem to match well. We're in a postmodern world

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where each local environment speaks for itself, and each child's words are sacred. We no longer live in a time where we can say, "This is what children are. This is what children need." Forgive my bias, but that was a world where we had a single, simple concept of what intelligence was. It was a verbal aptitude and a mathematical aptitude. A man at Yale said, "Well, I could add a third aptitude, which is practical." And a man here at Harvard Graduate School of Education, Howard Gardner, in an extraordinary advancement, said he could find seven frames of intelligences. It's not just a singular phenomenon. The skill that Tom Brennan was speaking about — recognizing who in this room is in trouble and who's getting along — is interpersonal intelligence, which is just as valuable, at times, as mathematical intelligence. I doubt that there's anybody in this room who would not say that, in his way, Michael Jordan is brilliant. He's absolutely a genius, but I wouldn't want him flying a plane or operating on me if he wasn't trained. In his realm he has brilliance. In this culture, certain of our children are never called "intelligent." Instead they are described as possessing "street smarts." Well, the kids that I work with — many of them, in various areas of this city, Afro-American kids, Hispanic kids, and white kids, all very, very poor — have something that goes far beyond "street smarts." Many of them are extremely intelligent kids. Let me not romanticize. Some of them aren't. Some of them are absolutely wonderful, creative, marvelous, thoughtful, insightful kids. And some of them aren't. I'm not romanticizing.

I want to read you something about going into a housing project; let me call it 616 Leigh Village. Within the past two years that I have been coming here, a 24-year-old man died of AIDS and a young woman of 22 expired giving birth to a premature baby. A nine-year-old boy witnessed a rape and slashing of his older sister in the lobby of the building where the mail boxes have been put into the wall. For some damn reason, they cannot fix the light. As I climb the stairs, I often hear shouts and all kinds of things. Ascending and reflecting on all the juvenile witnesses to life whom I know and talk to, I ask myself, "Doesn't viewing these sorts of events make these children victims of 'post-traumatic stress disorder'?" using the jargon of the day. What sort of life can it be to watch a sister die in childbirth? How does this even happen when a few miles from here stands one of Boston's preeminent hospitals? We rank very high in infant mortality — children dying as their mothers give birth to them, in America, in 1994. I don't understand how it happens. But it isn't happening in rich neighborhoods.

I walk along this first-floor cement quarter toward the stairs. The elevators leading up from the entrance hall haven't operated in all the years that I've been coming here. On the first landing I am met with the usual building noise

— sounds of motors droning, people yelling, dogs yapping, and always the children: some crying, others screaming, shouting, laughing. In this setting, in this darkness and raw coldness, their laughter seems incongruous. On the second floor landing, a group of 8-, 9-, and 10-year-olds have concocted a game one can only describe as joyous. The children are feeling joy, in the lugubrious hallway, lit only by slivers of light, coming in through a narrow landing that has been partially boarded up.

On the landing floor the children have placed two rotting mattresses, still emitting the scents of urine and vomit, the mattresses nonetheless provide the padding the game requires. On the wall opposite the stairs leans a third mattress, also decaying, but with its padding, too, more or less intact. Now suddenly, from the third floor, Deron Somerset, nine years old and wearing nothing but brand new blacktop sneakers and pink shorts — despite the cold — is about to take a running start and slide down the ten stairs on a metal cafeteria tray. Barely long enough to span the distance between the stairs, the tray actually provides him a surprisingly smooth ride to the bottom, where he flies off and plumps down on the mattress. Four children watch his perfect descent. Clatter, clatter, clatter, splatt, and the small audience explodes with laughter and cheering.

Derek Whittiers comes next. Although grinning, I notice that his face reveals apprehension. I tell him he doesn't have to follow: "You don't have to go after Deron. It's alright Derek, to say you just don't want to do it." "You crazy man, what do you mean, Derek doesn't have to go? You ain't riding, Derek?" the others ask. Derek looks first at me, then at them. The children's joy has turned into sternness, and with no other adults in the hall, the dilemma must be settled exclusively by the children. If Derek Whittier could suddenly announce, "I think I'd rather not, I'm scared," I'd nominate him for a Nobel Prize. But there's about as much chance of this happening as there is that this entry's elevators will be fixed by the end of the week. Derek pauses. His body rigid, he looks about at the other children, who barely breathe. The silence is broken with the announcement that he's going to ride. The children scream with excitement; joy returns.

Needless to say, no one in the hall utters a word about Feliciano Daniels, the eight-year-old who split his head open three weeks ago playing the same game. The cut required more than 30 stitches. The police had been called, and finding no adults at home, they asked Feliciano's older sister to accompany him to the hospital. Lucky for Feliciano that Bettina had skipped school, for there was no one else looking out for him that morning. When Feliciano's mother returned from work that evening and learned of her son's action, she spanked the boy and warned him there

would be hell to pay if he was ever caught playing "roller coaster" again. Feliciano is not one of the children in the hall this morning.

I step over the mattress and head up the stairs, two more flights, to Lynn and Jerred Swilling's apartment. Naturally I pause long enough to watch Derek, still frightened. He takes a diffident, walking start and lights upon the tray at the top of the landing. Within seconds he hits the mattress. He's made it. My own pulse rate had increased. I fear that some day a child is going to die from playing this game. I look down at Derek, prone on the mattress, secretly wishing he would return my look, but he is absolutely joyous, along with the other children who, recognizing that he has beaten his fear, jump all over him on the putrid smelling mattress.

Now it's interesting that I thought about telling this story, because "resilience" comes from the Latin word *resilire*, "to rejump." *Salire* means "to jump." And "jumping" is a way of coping, of responding to trauma and stress. One jumps over, but one also jumps back into it. My bias tells me that children in this country — not just the poor ones — are jumping every day into situations that I find horrendous, unconscionable, unforgivable. It is unforgivable in this world that children should live in the untenable places where so many of them live. It is unconscionable that 30 percent of America's children, according to Marian Wright Edelman, have never seen a physician. So many children have not gotten DPT inoculations. Edelman's research also indicates that 35 to 40 percent of these kids have never seen a dentist or had their teeth cleaned. In programs throughout this country oriented towards Hispanic children, it is common to find not a single Spanish-speaking staff member. "Cultural-diversity?" Very important. "Political correctness?" Very important. I find our culture in many ways ahistoric and lacking in compassion. Quite frankly, I'm tired of politicians who get up and say, "Children are our most important resource! Teachers are our most important people!" You hear my cynicism, but we have places in this culture where people are saying we're making progress because our class sizes are down to 22 or 25. There are children who are absolutely stunned, as Tim was saying, that faculty in their school know their names.

My bias partly reflects the fact that I went to a very small school in Chicago for 14 years. From pre-kindergarten through kindergarten, middle school and high school, every child knew every other child. The 14-year-old kids would say "Hello, Billy" to the six-year-old. "Jamal, what's

going on?" a senior might ask a five-year-old. And every faculty member knew every kid. When we entered that school in the morning, Eggert Meyer, a refugee from the Nazis, with his white coat, checked shirt, and solid knit tie, stood at the door greeting each of us like this: "Cottle, Negronida, how are you? Saw you strike out in the sixth inning. Next time maybe. Can't hit a curve ball, can you Cottle?" He knew something about everybody, and the 36 kids in my class couldn't wait to go to school the next day. We stayed as long as we could, and we loved being there. School was not only redemptive, it was not only life-saving; it made life triumphant. We were not clanging down stairs on metal cafeteria trays. Above the proscenium on our

stage, it said, "A school should be a model home, a complete community, and an embryonic democracy." I had no idea what these words meant, but I knew there was something important about them. One of the important things that Francis Parker and John

Dewey were trying to say in the schools that reflected their philosophies about education was that there are essential connections between and among the culture, society, neighborhood, community, tenement, neighbors, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, parents, and me, the child.

What are we doing with America's children? Read Jonathan Kozol's book, *Savage Inequalities*. I don't believe that great facilities make great schools. I have seen fine facilities where the schools are not so good, and I've seen sensational schools where the facilities are rather terrible. I went to an extraordinary school in Chicago. Bruno Bettleheim was our guidance counselor, because the school took in Jewish people escaping from the Nazi Holocaust. Did we have blacks in our school? I never even thought about it at the time, but of course, 10, 12, 15 percent of the school was African American. Of course we had Asian kids. Were we racist? You better believe it. Were we sexist? I think we were male chauvinist lambs. But I want to tell you something about that situation. It was a school where children were truly cared for, and in this incredible school, they couldn't afford a full-size gymnasium. They couldn't afford real locker rooms. There is a marvelous work by Uri Bronfenbrenner that describes how the psyche of one little girl — if you can imagine it — is connected through concentric rings to people in remote communities who make decisions about her life. Will there be a stop light in her neighborhood, for example, where nine people already have died in car crashes?

Children need adults who are madly in love with them.

For some thoughts about resilience, I go back to the work of Erich Fromm, who investigated the ways that people try to find some sense of meaning in their lives. Often when I ask a kid, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" I hear, "I want to be a star." "Do you have any idea what you want to be a star at?" "I'll get to that, but first, I just want to be a star." Kids have the desire to restore meaning and a feeling of belonging. How do we help them? Fromm says, for one, that we can become altruistic, love people, and love what we do. I believe that lots of schools, lots of institutions in this culture are set up to actually produce destructive kids. They're set up in ways that ask people to renounce their freedom and their integrity. It is often very difficult for two well-meaning people, or one well-meaning human being, just to raise a kid or simply to get through the day. People making \$26-, \$28-, \$30,000 cannot possibly make it in an enriching way. When all you teachers strike because you want about \$400 more, we go up in arms, asking "What is it that you do that's so important?" But we don't blink an eye when a ball player makes \$10,000 a day. In many ways I get furious about this. It is truly violent, like the tenement building in Leigh Village where I go, creating what Dr. Margaret Lawrence called a "noxious environment." Poverty causes violence. If I lived in the world of a lot of these kids, I would unquestionably be on drugs. I couldn't stand the pain. It's horrendous to be so abused, horrendous to know that you might get shot every five minutes, even though some people are desperately trying to help you. Don't forget, unemployment, too, is a killer.

According to Fromm, people do certain things to regain the security that they've lost. They become authoritar-

ian; they become destructive; they assume conformist behaviors. They place themselves in symbiotic relationships to try to become part of somebody else. This will not lead to resiliency. Other kids can go into withdrawn or destructive patterns, behaviors to which Tim and Tom alluded. They seem distanced and separate from others. Destructive parents make kids withdrawn. Withdrawn parents make kids destructive. Similarly, on a different scale, a society that withdraws from its children cannot be surprised by the enormous amount of violence and anger it provokes in them. This is an experiment — this lab called the United States of America. If so many children are unhappy and killing themselves, it is because they feel they are what the culture doesn't want: gay, black, Hispanic.

The other thing you can do to regain your sense of security is, as Tim was saying, to take an interest in and develop a love for somebody. In our narcissistic culture we never hear that you love yourself when others love you, we only hear how much you must learn to love yourself. And Berry Brazelton says something which I love — that children need people, adults, who are madly in love with them. They need what one of my old teachers, Anna Freud, once said is an average, expectable environment. "Good," Bruno Bettelheim wrote, "is good enough; it doesn't have to be perfect." What do the kids need psychologically? They need to gain some kind of security. Kids need, as Tom said, some kind of transcendent understanding that you can rise above an animal nature. They need rootedness and a sense of identity. They need a frame of orientation, some object of devotion, and a consistent, coherent view of the environment. And finally, kids need some kind of excitement, stimulation, or just plain fun!

Collaboration, Prevention, and the Nurturing of Social Skills

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MARGOT WELCH: Today's themes are social development, trauma, and collaboration. In this room there are many very smart, wise practitioners who have had lots of experience thinking about kids' psychological and social development. With guidance from Doctors Robert Selman and Catherine Ayoub, we will think this morning about how the capacities to anticipate consequences, empathize, and take the others' point of view influence one's ability to make and keep relationships, which is itself vulnerable to disruption by early trauma and violence. We have already discussed — and will continue discussing — the formative importance of our experiences in relationship. I want to suggest that there are corollaries to be considered between the individual and small group social skills that Bob and Cathy will discuss and the kinds of systems processes that we ponder when we think about collaboration.

Collaboration is on everybody's tongue, but it's easier said than done. When it comes to creating new structures, we get anxious. But when we begin to collaborate, we find new resources. In a useful publication, *Thinking Collaboratively*, published by the Education and Human Services Consortium, Charles Bruner defines collaboration succinctly, suggests when it can be useful, and makes seven key points:

1) that collaboration is not a quick fix; 2) that it's a means to an end, not an end in itself; 3) developing inter-agency collaboration is time consuming and process intensive; 4) inter-agency collaboration does not guarantee the development of a client-centered service system; 5) inter-agency collaboration does not guarantee the establishment of a trusting relationship between a particular at-risk child or family and a helping adult; 6) collaboration occurs among people, not institutions. Workers must be supported at each level of the organization in which collaboration is expected to take place. Creative problem-solving skills must be developed and nurtured in those who are expected to collaborate; and 7) we must always remember the context in which we are working, serving, thinking, helping, practicing.

New collaborations, when they succeed, are almost

always facilitated by people who understand the importance of relationships and have the social skills to help systems and people grow.

The more we understand about resilience, the more likely it is that we will be able to design programs that move well beyond "band-aid" remediation, solid preventive efforts that give children significant skills and supports. Knowing the traits that characterize resilient youth helps us build effective programs. Research about preventive programs has identified a group of critical features that make them good: 1) They are **comprehensive, continuous, and begin early**, with a focus on young kids. 2) Like families that nurture resilience, good preventive programs provide **warmth and acceptance** of kids, offering them the kind of **unconditional acceptance** that nourishes their resilience. 3) They have **clear structures and limits**. 4) They are **system-centered and values-based**. 5) Good programs pose **graduated challenges** that give kids continuing opportunities for mastery. They boost the **self-confidence** of children, while **teaching them independence and flexible problem-solving skills**. 6) Good preventive programs help **strengthen the ties between children, their "kinfolk," and their communities**. 7) They reflect an **assessment of strengths as well as weakness**, building on community and individual assets.

ROBERT SELMAN: Good morning. I'm going to put my assumptions out on the table immediately. This is one of them: "Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I will remember. Involve me and I will understand." I assume that if I just tell you stuff today, if I just lecture, you will forget it. So, I'm going to try to show you something. I have brought a 15-minute video of a school-based literacy and character development curriculum, as well as a substance abuse prevention project with which I am connected. We call it *Voices of Love and Freedom*.

I'm glad Margot invited me to speak to you. I looked at the roster of those who are here. It's an exciting group of people with a diverse set of interests, but with a common concern for children and their development. Today I want to try to cover a lot of territory, including: 1) what structural

developmental psychology has to contribute to our practice of helping prevent kids from experiencing negative life outcomes; 2) what kinds of intervention programs derive from this basic approach to research; and 3) what kinds of models of collaboration one can develop between the university and community-based service programs and schools.

I'm also glad Margot didn't take a lot of time to introduce me because I think it's important for me to introduce myself. It's very important for all of us to tell each other who we are, where we come from, and why we are here. It's particularly important for children to develop that capacity. Children are not born with the actual skills necessary to reflect back on their past, to understand their culture, their heritage, their biology, or their temperament. They are unable to put such knowledge into a context that helps them to look ahead or to understand how their past can help them deal with their present choices in order to have a healthy future. I define my role as a developmental psychologist who does research designed to help us understand how children develop these capacities. To achieve this goal,

I've led two usually separate careers that I have tried to run on parallel tracks. For 15 years, from 1975 to 1990, I ran a school for emotionally disturbed children. At the same time, as a developmental psychologist, I have studied children's capacity to relate to other people. My primary focus — the question I've asked for almost 30 years — in both roles is, "How do children develop the capacity to coordinate their own point of view with someone else's? If one is

not born with this ability, how does this develop?" The second question I have asked is this: "Once developed, can that capacity be put to good use as opposed to bad use?" That is, once children have the capacity, they may use it for good or for evil. These are the questions that, as a researcher and practitioner, have driven me for 30 years.

When most people think about the relationship between research and practice, they usually think there is a uni-directional relationship here, a move from research to practice only. That is often the way it is in the physical sciences: the physicist or chemist plays with matter or numbers because he's paid to have fun thinking. He puts things together, and bingo, teflon emerges. Somehow, some studies of molecules lead to the discovery of teflon or penicillin or the cause of illness, for example. There is a bias

in the physical sciences about the status of the relationship between research and practice, between the higher status of the basic scientist and the lower status of the practitioner.

I don't believe it works quite the same way in research and practice on the social development of children. I plan to show you some practice that we have been involved in for the past four or five years, and then work toward an understanding of the underlying psychological and sociological foundations of that practice. I believe it is a mistake to think that a laboratory psychologist can sit in an ivory tower studying social development in a vacuum and then say, "Eureka! I think I found something that's good for practice!" I believe, as a social scientist, we have to be out there in the real world of practice working with kids, working with institutions, and working with services. Through these interactions we can derive some basic principles of how social development occurs.

Before I show you a brief video that demonstrates the principle, let me give you a short history of how I became involved in the project it illustrates. As I said earlier, from

1975 to 1990 I was the director of a school for emotionally disturbed children in the city of Boston, a private school at the Judge Baker Children's Center called the Manville School. In that capacity I was interested in issues of treatment. The kids were already identified as troubled, as having diagnosable disorders from a psychiatric disciplinary perspective. From an educational perspective, they were "problem children" who could not be handled in public schools,

whether or not you gave them a diagnosis. These were kids who just couldn't make it; they were having a lot of trouble both in school and with their families.

We did a great deal of research at the Manville School during that period. One of the things we did was to develop a treatment program called pair therapy, i.e., a way to work with two children in therapy. The treatment was based on our understanding from risk and prevention research that suggested that friendship is a powerful curative agent for kids who feel isolated, either because they are very aggressive or because they are very withdrawn.

About 1985, I began to want to do something that was less focused on treatment and more directed towards prevention. The reasons were pretty obvious. It was possible even then to see what was coming down the pike in terms

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of the kinds of societal problems that we were about to face, such as the number of kids whose parents have AIDS, the loss of jobs and income to poor families, and the increasing rate at which families were breaking up. It was clear to many of us that ultimately it was the kids who were going to get hurt by all of this. It didn't make a lot of sense to think about ways to deal with the risk factors solely in terms of the kinds of treatment the kids would receive after they had already gotten hurt. It seemed crucial to start thinking about both the research and practice that one could develop that was going to be preventive. So, I connected with some practitioners, the family, friends, and community groups, who wanted to do some school-based prevention in classrooms to help ameliorate the affects of these risk factors.

I am going to show you today a 15-minute clip of a teacher who has been trained in a classroom-based prevention program developed by this group, called *Voices of Love and Freedom* (VLF). The program is based in part on some of our research ideas about children's psychosocial development. VLF realizes that for children to develop healthily, one important component is for children themselves to develop their inner strength and competence. This does not mean we put the responsibility on the children to protect themselves, but it does acknowledge that this development must happen for protection to be maintained. The program is designed to foster two things: First, the capacity to coordinate points of view in a mature way, that is, to come out of the egocentric world view of the child and move into the sociocentric world view of the adult; and second, to develop the competence to know and articulate one's own perspective to other people, that is, to communicate where one stands. On the one hand, it is important that children be able to take another's perspective, to understand how to coordinate their perspective with someone else's. On the other hand, if children do not know and can't express their own perspective, it doesn't matter how perceptive or insightful they are. Children must develop the maturity to understand the world from their own and other people's point of view. And they must have the competence to express their own point of view as they understand its interaction with the point of view of others.

The video you're about to see is of a third-grade class discussing the story of a girl named Grace who wanted to be Peter Pan in the class play, but who was told by her classmates she could not try out for the part because she was a girl and because she was black. The video demonstrates how we use this story in a pedagogical approach designed to foster both the competence to coordinate "points of view" and the capacity to express one's own perception or voice to others to tell their own story and share one's own perspective.

Transcript from video of teacher discussing Amazing Grace with third graders

TEACHER (T): "Family." Tell me what you think of when you hear and see the word "family." What is family to you?

BOY (B): Loving.

T: Loving.

GIRL (G): Can I write this down?

T: Loving. What else? Domingo?

B: Caring.

T: Caring.

G: It's your mother, your father, your brothers.

T: . . . people right? Mother, father, it can include brother, sister, and many, many more, right? Now I have a question for you. And you're going to say, "yes" or "no." Listen carefully; first you have to listen. Is it a family if the members are mother, grandmother, and daughter?

CHILDREN (C): Yes.

T: Is it a family if it's just father and son?

C: Yes (some no's). Yes, yes.

T: Do father and son have a loving and caring relationship?

C: Yes.

T: Do they, could they, live together and take care of one another?

C: Yes.

T: That's a family. Listen to this story and maybe you can think of something that happened to you. When I was little, I was about five years old, I was playing with my cousin and along came a big dog, and he started to chase my cousin and she got hurt. When I saw that, I became very frightened of dogs and it took a few months for me to get over it. Every time I would see a dog I would feel very scared. One day my father said to me, he tried to explain, "Not all dogs are vicious, not all dogs are mean. What you have to do is be very careful, and respect that they are strong and can hurt you." And one day he came home with a little puppy. When I saw the little puppy I thought that puppy was so cute and cuddly. As years went on, the puppy started to grow and he was no longer a puppy. He was a big dog and I now am not afraid of dogs. I respect them, but I can still remember how I felt when my father helped me to overcome the fear of dogs. Now, what I'd like for you to do is answer this question. Think of someone in your family who has helped you to do something; just as I said before, my father helped me not to be afraid of dogs but to respect them, to know that they are strong animals but not to be afraid of them. What has someone in your family done to help you or show you?

B: I used to be afraid of animals when I went to the zoo. I used to be scared of tigers and lions, but now that my sister said that they're locked tight in a cage, that's why I'm not afraid of them any more, 'cause they can't get out. I used to see their teeth all the time and they tried to bite me, so I got really scared, and then she told me not to be scared.

G: My mom helped me when my cat had got hitten by a car and I was really sad, because my mom had called the shelter and they said that they had him and they had put him to sleep already, and then everybody started crying because the cat was really nice and he also was not even a year old. And it was really sad to hear that he had to be put to sleep. . . .

T: Did we enjoy this story?

C: Yes.

T: What part did you like the best? I'm waiting for Domingo and Kyle. What part did you enjoy the very best? Luis?

B: When the people said, "ah ___ you're fantastic!"

T: I thought that was a good part too, yes.

B: I liked the part when she was going to go in her tutu.

T: When she was practicing in her imaginary tutu. Was there a part you didn't like?

B: When Mary and Ray said that she couldn't be Peter Pan.

T: Why didn't you like that part? How do you think Grace felt when they said that to her?

B: Sad.

B: Real sad.

T: When she got home she was sad, and how did her family, her grandmother and her mother greet her? What did they say to her? How did they make her feel better?

G: They told her she can be anything she wants if she wants to.

T: What kind of a relationship does Grace have with her grandmother? How do you think they feel about each other?

G: They love each other.

T: How do you know that? What tells you that they love each other?

G: She was telling her she can be anything she wants to be if she really thinks about it.

T: How do you think that, in saying those words, the grandmother gave Grace courage, made her believe that she could do it?

G: Like she wouldn't have did it if she didn't love her. The only way her grandmother would do that is if she loved her.

T: So we know that the grandmother loved her, that if she didn't feel loved, she probably wouldn't feel that she could do it. Have you ever been afraid to do something?

G: When I was at one place I said that I would like to play baseball, and then one of the boys said that I couldn't play ball because I was a girl. And then I was always really afraid to tell people, I was always embarrassed to tell people that I liked to play baseball, but not any more.

T: Do you play baseball?

G: Ah ha.

T: Very good. Anna was told that she couldn't play baseball because she was a girl. Did you hear her story? And now she plays baseball, because sometimes people will make you believe and think that you can't do something because they haven't seen someone like you do it, but that doesn't mean that you can't do

it. You can do anything you put your mind to doing. Now what I want you to do is to answer these two questions, and we're going to do the same thing we did before, you're going to share with your partner. One, "I want to be a . . ." Let me write that down. "I want to be a" . . . "blank." Now if you can continue and answer this second part, please feel free to do so "because" — "blank."

G: I want to be a doctor because every time I watch a show and there's a doctor on it, it looks interesting . . . because I like it and . . .

G: To be an author and illustrator for kid's books because I really like to read and write and draw and because I like kids and I feel like reading, it makes you better, like if you just sit down read a good book you feel like you can really let your imagination run away with you and you really like what you're doing and it makes you feel better about yourself.

B: I want to be a mayor 'cause my uncle, he has a good job.

B: You can do anything if you put your mind to it.

T: Very good [Applause]. How about you? It's kind of tricky.

B: [Inaudible]. You can do anything if you put your mind to it.

T: Alright [Applause].

C: You can do anything you put your mind to.

[Tape advances to next class.]

T: For homework, I asked you to share with your parents the story "Amazing Grace" and think about what you would like to do or be when you grow up. I'd like to hear your responses. What do you want to be when you grow up? How is mom and/or dad going to help you be what you want to be? [Children read sample responses]

B: My dream is to be a vet because I like animals. "We will help him by encouraging him to do well in school so he will be prepared for animal school. When he grows up we will take him to see different animals and read to him about animals."

G: My dream is to be a doctor because we help people to get better. "I will help Jennifer . . ."

T: By helping her to get a college education. Great.

B: I would like to be a basketball player 'cause I like going into basketball courts to play basketball. My dad is going to help me with my basketball by helping me play basketball with my basketball hoop.

T: Practice makes perfect.

G: My dream is to be a waitress because I like taking and bringing orders. "I will help Elizabeth by practicing the part at home."

B: My dream is to be a policeman because I've always wanted to. "I will help my son by helping him to meet and talk with the police officers and by helping him to get ready for the police test. If anybody tells him he can't be one, he would help him by saying that he can if he tries hard."

G: My dream is to become a doctor because I help people. "I will

help Natasha by assisting her in every way possible."

B: My dream is to be a teacher because I can help people. Well I think my parents help because they teach me how to be good and read and help people.

[End of video]

I expect there are many interpretations of what we have just seen. The pedagogical framework asks the teacher to take children through the steps I've mentioned in their understanding of how this story relates to their own lives. These are: to connect, to discuss, to practice, and to discuss. In the time I have with you, I will focus on the first of these steps, to connect. The connection component reflects the assumption that preventive interventions that enhance social development are relatively meaningless unless they're encapsulated or framed in real relationships. To give you a quick example, most early school-based preventions in the 1970's that focused on any particular categorical risk behavior (e.g., prevention of drinking, smoking, violence) started with the idea that the best thing is to tell kids what's wrong, to fill their heads full of knowledge about the riskiness of their behavior. Research shows almost overwhelmingly that "to tell" someone about the danger of certain risky behaviors is very weak medicine, although knowledge about risk is definitely a crucial ingredient to prevention.

A second set of interventions, those initiated in the 1980's, are what I call social-skills based, or "to show" programs. Showing students how to look people in the eye, "Just say no," have a good handshake, etc., have been shown by evaluation research to have a little more impact.

But prevention can not truly be effective unless these adult approaches are made meaningful to kids, i.e., unless they touch the kids in their own lives. The idea of connection is that the first step in making a social developmental school-based intervention meaningful to kids is by having the teachers share issues from their own personal lives about life's risks with the kids in a way that the kids can easily understand.

The dramatized lesson on the video we just saw is about how one's family can help when you're faced with a tough situation, when other people are doing things that you feel unfairly limit your capacity to develop your own interests and competence "to be," such as holding racist or sexist views.

A second thing that was going on in the session that you just saw was that the kids were connected with each other. They have partners to whom they can express themselves. They pair up to take and share perspectives. You may remember that earlier I mentioned pairing was something we worked on as a *treatment* for very troubled kids. Partnering in classrooms is the prevention analogy to pair therapy as a form of treatment. When we allow kids to talk one-on-one with each other, we are allowing the children who do not have a strong voice to speak. They all talk with one other kid, though they may be unable to speak to a whole class. In both pairing and partnering, we learn from our research to match kids who are extroverted with kids who are shy. We help the quiet ones to speak up and the vocal ones to listen, for it takes as much courage to be quiet and listen as it does to stand up and talk. We need to foster the capacity for both in our children.

Coping With Traumatic Violence

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CATHERINE AYOUB: Since Bob Selman is one of my mentors, I will try to follow his example. A belief he ingrained in me is that we really need to spend some time talking to each other and knowing who we are, so I should probably start by telling you a little bit about myself. This is a little tough, because although I've been in several disciplines and although I've probably spent tons and tons of time in classrooms, I haven't done it on a long-term basis as a teacher, other than in a graduate classroom and with pre-school kids.

I am, by training, a nurse and a developmental and counseling psychologist. I spent the first ten years of my career developing and running a prevention intervention program for kids who are at high risk of maltreatment. This was a broad-based community program that involved schools, pre-schools, health agencies, mental health. We really did a little bit of everything for those particular kids. We tried to identify them when their mothers were pregnant. I was also a mental health consultant for a big hospital before I moved east and ended up going back to school, and I did some work at Judge Baker Children's Center.

Here at the Ed School I'm involved in early childhood work, and I also work at Massachusetts General Hospital in a program called *Children and the Law*. Through this program I really work with kids of all ages. I tend to see a lot of the kids that you can't get to come to school because I'm in a court clinic at the Boston Juvenile Court. So, I see all those truant kids who are so difficult for you to handle in your classrooms. I spend a lot of time consulting in early childhood settings — several hours a week watching teachers in classrooms and in pre-schools.

I'm going to move away from talking about interventions for a little while to give you a developmental framework for coping with traumatic violence. I hope this information can help put into context and really serve as a basis for some of the interventions that Bob talked about this morning and that other people will be talking about this afternoon.

Bob discussed the notion that knowledge alone is weak medicine and that social skills are helpful but really don't take you all the way. He noted that you really need to add values to interventions. One of the things that seems to happen with children who have experienced trauma is that often times, the trauma experience results in difficulty in all of those areas: knowledge, social skills, and values.

It seems likely that kids who have reacted to trauma are less likely to soak up the knowledge that you're trying to give them — whether it's about the consequences of risk-taking behavior, literature, or math. There are also kids who really have difficulty with social skills. And then finally, there tend to be kids who sometimes express conflicting or diverse values — sometimes even within the same sentence, thought, or action.

I think we're beginning to understand what happens to kids when they're exposed to trauma. These kids may be abused or neglected; they may experience violent trauma within their community, in the street. They may witness trauma in the form of serious discord at home or suffer any number of personal losses. They may experience the trauma of never living in the same place for more than two or three months. They may experience the trauma of the loss of a parent. They may experience the loss of a peer, either because that peer does something as simple as move to the next neighborhood, or that peer may be killed. There are kids who live in a home where they may not directly experience trauma but witness it in their larger community.

When I'm talking about trauma, I'm talking about a number of kinds of experiences that can effect kids. In a moment, I'll define it for you and tell you how other people have defined it. Let me start by reading to you the introductory paragraph to Richard Rhode's autobiography, *A Hole in the World*, as an example of a trauma experience:

When I was thirteen months old my mother killed herself. So I eventually learned, as I learned her maiden name, Georgia Sefronia Collier. And where she was born; Sulphur Springs, Arkansas. And how old she was when she ended her life; 29. (And good Lord, writing these words now after all these years afterwards, for the first time in memory, my eyes have filled with tears of mourning for her. What impenetrable vessel preserved them?) I didn't know my mother, except as infants know. At the beginning of my life the world acquired a hole. That's what I knew, that there was a hole in the world. For me, there still is. It's a singularity. In and out of a hole like that, anything goes.

What I propose to you is that trauma, particularly recurrent trauma, in the lives of children and adolescents really functions as a hole. That hole in their world changes.

It may no longer look round. It may shrink, it may expand, but it is always there. Children and adults use the holes in their lives — the traumas — to develop vulnerabilities and/or to develop resilience; what we see most often is both.

For me this concept debunks the idea that there is such a thing as a resilient child, if we define a resilient child as one who somehow isn't bothered by bad things. My theory is that our lives are molded by difficult and traumatic experiences, just as they are molded by our positive experiences. A number of new researchers are now telling us that if we really have too many or too powerful traumatic experiences in our lives, and if we have them at certain periods in our lives, then it may be more difficult for us to go on living in the way we were before we were traumatized. These experiences may also impair our ability to use some of the capacities that Bob talked about — those capacities to gain knowledge, to learn social skills, and to understand values, and particularly the ability to connect with others.

Bob also talked about the development of autonomy and the development of intimacy. Richard Rhodes, in describing his hole in the world, starts to tell us about that. As we grow, we go through certain fairly ordered developmental transformations, both cognitively and in terms of trying to understand ourselves in relationship to others. What I am proposing is that violently traumatized children and adolescents continue to shape that hole in the world throughout their lives. Most importantly, they develop different patterns of development, different ways of adapting, and coping, and thinking. As they grow, they incorporate these patterns into their further development. This theory is radically different from what traditional psychodynamic psychology proposed, which was that once people experienced a trauma, they became stuck, or fixated. The notion was that after a trauma, development halted, people regressed and returned to earlier ways of coping.

What I'm proposing is that we aren't bound either to be fixated or to regress. While we may go back to earlier patterns of acting and working, when we experience trauma we actually head on a different pathway, particularly if we are new to the world. So that the younger the child, all other things being equal, the more likely it is that she may take on a whole different way of thinking and being. And it's that way of thinking and being that I want to talk to you about.

Let me start by defining trauma. First, I'll read a definition of trauma and then I'll discuss *Type 1* and *Type 2 Trauma*. People generally react very differently to each of these two types of trauma, and it's really important to be able to recognize kids who may be experiencing one or the other type of trauma because the interventions are quite different. Let me define childhood trauma: "The mental

result of one sudden external blow or a series of blows (a blow can be defined as anything serious — the loss of a parent, having a friend move away, witnessing your mother battered by your father) rendering the young person temporarily helpless and breaking past ordinary coping and defensive operations." In other words, the traumatic blow is so powerful that you don't go on doing what you usually do.

How many of you have ever been in an automobile accident? I remember one automobile accident, in which I was driving along, minding my own business, thinking about what I was going to do on the way to work. This man turned left in front of me, cut me off, and I hit him broadside. Now, I don't think of myself as an angry person or someone who gets up and yells and screams. My Hispanic background makes me wave my arms sometimes, but I think of myself as fairly even-tempered. Well, I jumped out of the car. I yelled and screamed at this guy. I didn't think about what I was doing. I screamed, "What did you do? Why did you turn left in front of me?" When I thought about it afterwards I was really embarrassed. I was also really shaky. I had an unusual physiological and psychological reaction. That's an example of feeling temporarily helpless and, as a result, breaking with ordinary coping patterns. I wouldn't usually have coped by first yelling at someone because that wasn't my style. One key thing to remember is that a response to a trauma is an accommodation, an adaptation, and an attempt to regain control. Whatever we do when we experience trauma, these are our tasks. We may merely release anxiety, which is what I think I probably did in order to help me regain control.

Well, I stood there at the accident and I regained control; we exchanged insurance information and I apologized for yelling and screaming. This regaining of control is always done within the individuals' developmental context. So that, for example, if my three-year-old had been in that same accident, he might have adapted through repetitive play. I might have seen him create cars having accidents. He might have reacted with a phobic response or an avoidance response, not wanting to get in the car. I actually didn't want to drive for a while. If I had chosen not to get back in the car and drive, that might have handicapped my functioning because I really needed to drive my car to get to work. On the other hand, when I got back in the car I learned something from the trauma experience, that I need to slow down and pay more attention, and watch for people turning left in front of me. So I actually may have learned something and really developed some resilience.

As I said, Lenore Terr talked about two types of trauma. Type 1 trauma is "a single traumatic event." You probably can all think back to a single traumatic event that you remember quite vividly. We also tend to have group trau-

matic experiences. One that a lot of people remember vividly, for example, is the Challenger explosion. How many of you actually watched that on television? Many of you can remember where you were, what you were doing. You may not remember all the details, but I bet you could even tell what particular kid you focused on if you were teaching in the classroom, whether you were glued to the television set, or whether it took some time for you to believe what was happening. But no doubt you recall a very visual image.

We believe that traumatic memory is laid down somewhat differently than what we call narrative memory. It seems to skip a processing step and we consequently get vivid visual flashes. Those of you who are old enough (I'm giving away my age) may also remember another traumatic group event. I can vividly remember the day that John F. Kennedy was shot. I was at my junior high school; we were outside playing. I grew up in Mexico City and I remember there had been riots; we'd had people throwing stones at our busses because I went to an American school during the Cuban Crisis and the Bay of Pigs. So everyone was kind of riled up anyway because we'd gotten used to being bussed home before we'd had rioters attack the school and that kind of thing. I remember standing there. I can see the microphone through which the announcement was made, where it was posted in the school, and when we heard that John F. Kennedy had been killed. And I remember what we did and I remember my teacher's face. She was ashen, she could barely talk. Our principal was in tears.

If you ask me what I had for dinner three days ago I can't tell you. I'll bet that when I'm done talking if I ask you what color my shoes or outfit are, you won't have a clue. That is an example of the difference between traumatic and non-traumatic memory.

Type 1 trauma is that single, vivid, memorable event. Kids remember trauma vividly. They usually respond to this type of trauma with sudden, intense surprise — with helplessness, fright, loss of control. They tend to have detailed memories, not memories of everything, but detailed memories. In recalling their trauma, young kids (under about age six) often play it out. You'll find kids engaging in the same repetitive play that doesn't seem to have any motive except to be repeated over and over. With older children you may see the repetitive play or you see kids changing specific

patterns of behavior. Some of this is very adaptive. I recently worked with a seven-year-old who, while walking home from school, saw someone shot. Now he doesn't walk home that way. He has decided that if he walks around that area, taking a four-block detour, that he's safe. The area in which he's walking is really no safer from the area in which he witnessed the murder. And it takes him longer to get home so his mother and his teacher are both really worried. But for this little boy, this is his adaptive logic.

Traumatized kids may seem to be distracted, preoccupied. They tend to worry and may focus on certain points over and over again. Sometimes a visual event — like the Challenger explosion — comes back, unsolicited, especially during an acute phase of trauma response. Some kids generalize from the trauma. A child that's in a car accident may not ever want to get into a car. He may generalize his fear to any kind of transportation and may not want to get on the school bus. Hyper-alertness is another typical response. This seven-year-old who is walking the long way home is very careful, and he

can tell me in detail what he does to be more careful. How he walks and swings his arms side to side in rhythm because if he keeps moving maybe he'll get away from the bullets.

Type 2 trauma is recurrent trauma. It may not be the same trauma. If a child, for example, is threatened and physically abused at home and then witnesses violence between adults in his own home and then witnesses violence in the community, those may be three distinct forms of trauma, but they are all traumatic events that build up. When these traumatic events accumulate, kids respond very differently. They are always trying to adapt, accommodate, and gain control. But the ways in which kids do this (and adults do the same) is really quite different. Instead of being able to bring back the memory and work through it, the memory gets fragmented. Often there tends to be denial, so that the child who has witnessed multiple incidents of violence may be the child who most forcefully tells you that he or she has never seen it. The logic is, "If I don't acknowledge it, it never happened and I won't feel helpless and afraid."

I work with adolescents and adults in the criminal justice system. I have a colleague who specializes, as I do to some extent, in working with violent offenders, and he's particularly interested in serial murderers. I've helped him interview some of the famous and not-so-famous serial

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murderers. Invariably, the initial history you get from these people is that of an ideal childhood. They are unable to say that there was any kind of trauma in their childhood unless you spend considerable time with them. You also need to talk to other people who can give a history. Once you learn about specific events, you go back and you ask these adults about them and, for example, they say, "Oh, yes. I do remember that my father was shot on the street when I was four and that my grandmother repeatedly locked me in my room." This is a numbing response, a self-amnesia. Kids who have been traumatized often really just don't experience their feelings. Young children who have suffered some bodily intrusion, such as physical or sexual abuse, often don't cry when they fall down. They don't expect anyone to notice their pain. We see variations of this in older kids, such as avoidance. Most kids will vacillate between avoiding talking about any kind of trauma that they've experienced, to talking about it non-stop. And it's very hard to know when this gets turned off or turned on; the change in coping may not be based on any external logic but on the child's anxiety and attempts to master this feeling.

Many children experience identification with the aggressor. One of the amazing things that seems to happen with kids who experience recurrent trauma is that they can be victim and victimizer simultaneously and sometimes sequentially. Their attachments may appear superficial and they can become aggressive toward themselves as well as others.

Kids can become involved in a lot of risk-taking behavior. I saw a little five-year-old the other day brought in by the Department of Social Services (DSS). DSS was very frightened because their workers couldn't control the child. This small, slender boy kept running out in front of cars whenever he got away from the DSS worker. He'd been removed from his home the day before and in addition to having been hit over the head with a frying pan (the left side of his head was covered with bruises), he also had been systematically, ritually abused. As a response to these traumas, this little boy was engaging in self-abusive behaviors. When an adult didn't concentrate on holding his attention or anytime he was left on his own, he would either reach out to you, hit you, bang his head, hit you some more, butt you with his head, or try to kick, scream, and run. On the other hand, he could spend ten or fifteen minutes playing with dolls in a doll house if an adult sat with him and in a soothing voice really talked him through the process. This kind of extremely variable behavior is characteristic of children with Type 2 trauma, which often produces constant hypervigilance. I was observing a classroom of preschoolers whose teacher said, "We want you to watch this one little girl because we can't get her to sit down for lunch.

She's hyperactive. She won't engage with the other kids." The teacher and I observed together that this little girl never moved away from the walls. We ended up calling her our "wall walker." She literally would not come out into the center of the room. If we tried to pull her out there or if she saw something she wanted and got so focused or excited on that that she went for it, she would grab it and then look around, look behind her, and move back. She didn't turn around and walk back to the wall; she walked backwards to the wall.

What we learned about this child was that her father was dying at home of cirrhosis of the liver. He had been quite physically abusive to her — severely enough to hospitalize her several times. Our sense was that with her wall-walking, she was trying to meet some basic safety needs, which tends to be the key issue with people dealing with Type 2 trauma. They are often unable to learn even basic information. They're not at a level where they can engage in social skills or develop self-esteem. They're really down at the safety/survival level. This is basic theory from Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs."

We didn't do anything elaborate with this child because often, with very young kids, if you can give them a physically safe place and a safe and consistent context, they'll improve. So what did we do? We moved the circle over to the wall and let her sit by the wall, next to a teacher. This seemed to make her feel comfortable. We moved the lunch tables over so that she could sit in a corner with her chair facing out from the corner. As she began to interact very slowly, she came out and began to trust, and finally we could work on some of the other issues.

We ended up doing pair play therapy with her for a couple of years. As Bob mentioned, we've modified his pairs work, and also taken some work that a couple of other people have done, and tried to use this to help very young children with social skills. This little girl eventually was able to move forward through this process and learn some social interaction skills. While she did improve in the larger group, I don't think she could have learned all these social skills there. She needed the smaller, safe context of pair therapy to do it. And she needed to do pair play within the context of her pre-school. In other words, if we had taken her to a mental health center I think she would have had trouble getting used to a new context. Arranging it so that she just needed to leave her classroom to go to the room next door to do pair play with another classmate from her room was very helpful for her in terms of social skills.

Another manifestation of Type 2 trauma is what I'll call "zoning out" or "spacing out." If you're tired or if you've just been sitting too long, or if you have a lot of things on your mind, you'll kind of zone out. With lots of adults, this

tends to happen right before lunch, right before dinner, and then right after dinner. What you find is that traumatized kids will often numb themselves to all emotion. They may smile all the time, do well academically, but they just don't seem to be there, or be connected. A lot of these kids will tend to zone out so completely that they are not learning. Other kids will do it selectively. Sometimes we can zone out emotion and focus on the physical task at hand as long as it's not emotionally laden. A lot of traumatized kids will do one or both of those things. Kids who are overwhelmed by trauma and its impact will simply push everything out of their minds. Or they will learn to focus on something, to play with something, or to sit in a certain way. Younger children sometimes rock or repeat certain behaviors. I worked with one little boy who used to rub his finger and thumb together as a self-comforting behavior; he did this until he was eight or nine. His teacher noticed him doing it at his desk and noted that he did it primarily when he zoned out. She knew that if she asked him a question while he was rubbing his fingers, he wouldn't respond.

Finally, there's something called crossover trauma, which occurs when the traumatic event is so all encompassing that it forever changes the center of the child's life. An obvious example is the

death of a young child's parent. For me, John F. Kennedy's death was Type 1 trauma, but for Jackie Kennedy it was Type 2. In these situations children tend to react with Type 2 trauma responses.

Why is any of this important to those of you who are working to educate children? First of all, as we've seen in some of my earlier examples, trauma impairs learning. It also impairs the acquisition of social skills and the ability to integrate values. It interferes with the ability to incorporate and transfer skills from one area of interest or practice into another. There are two distinct processes that seem to occur with kids who experience recurrent trauma. Young kids tend to focus on negativity or negative behaviors; as they get older, this sometimes gets translated into taking a victimizing role, or sometimes identifying with the aggressor. Sometimes you see the victim/victimizer roles occurring within the same person. Once kids can really move through time, and can understand what tomorrow means, these traumatized kids tend to develop a sense of a foreshortened future. When you ask kids who have experienced recurrent trauma, "What are you going to do when you grow up?" you find that many of these children can't answer this question.

One of my hypotheses is that the child can't answer the question because she/he can't think about the future. Why? Because if bad things happen to you over and over again, you block them out, you don't want to think about them, and so you don't think about them, and so you don't think about the future. On the other hand if, when you start to think about the future you think bad things are going to continue to happen to you, particularly if you feel that they're life threatening, then why think about the future? It's not an adaptive response that helps regain mastery and reduce anxiety.

Another phenomenon we see is what we call "complex splitting." Kids will see things only as being just wonderful or absolutely terrible. A certain person seems to them very good, or very terrible. Those of you who are teachers know kids who either love you or hate you; you can't get them to see the in-between. These children can't understand that the same person can be both nice and mean. They can't

incorporate into their world the notion that good and evil exist together, along with different shades of grey. This is the group of kids who approach the world with extreme prejudice. They will see a group of people as bad, perhaps because of their race, their ethnic group, their language, or the clothes they

wear. We've learned a lot about gangs in the Boston area; in gangs what you wear is crucial. It's what you wear, how your hair is cut, what kind of hat you wear, what your jacket looks like, not just the gang colors, but how you wear them. All of this tells whether or not you're in or out of a group. It's not surprising that gangs develop these kinds of symbols, because community violence is deeply connected to sharply delineated definitions of good and bad. People are either all good or all bad. This guy is the other gang, so I can't show any loyalty to him even though he's my classmate. When you get seventh, eighth, and ninth graders and pair them in the classroom, and then you add these other kinds of relationships to that equation, it can lead to explosive situations.

We've been involved in three studies of young children that help us to understand their trauma responses and what might be good interventions. First, we studied a group of maltreated toddlers (18 months to 3 years old), all of whom had suffered emotional and physical abuse. When we looked at how they understood the terms "nice" and "mean," we also investigated how they thought about interacting with other people. We also videotaped the children

*Kids who have been
traumatized often just don't
experience their feelings.*

in pair play to try to further our understanding of their interactions.

What we found was that maltreated two- to three-year-olds have a much richer understanding of negative interactions than they do of positive ones. They describe themselves in negative terms. This was dramatically different from the descriptions of non-maltreated toddlers. Furthermore, the maltreated children tended to spontaneously enact negative social interchanges, even when they were offered a positive model.

Let me give you some examples. After demonstrating a "nice" interaction, we asked Patty (age 2½) to model a nice interaction between two dolls. One doll Patty had named for herself, and the other she had named for a friend. Patty brought the dolls together and said, "They kiss, they bite." She didn't take a breath, she didn't stop before she changed the nature of the contact between the dolls from kind to hurtful. When Donald was asked to model a nice interaction with the doll named after himself and another doll, he said, "Hey guy, you want to fight? I'll knock you down! He fights him, they fight, you want to fight, I'm going to fight you, fuck my butt, fuck it, fuck it, fuck it, I'm going to fight, you're going to fight, I'm going to fight." That was his nice interaction. Then he was supported by the examiner who urged him to tell a nice story. With social support he told this brief story, saying, "Have some play dough, guy. Please don't leave me, please don't leave me." Then he stopped, and put the dolls aside and said, "I don't want to play with the dolls anymore." This was not unusual; this was a typical pattern that we saw in two- to three-year-old maltreated children. They were very aggressive in describing interactions and spent a long time talking about negative interactions, and when they were asked to talk about nice interactions with a peer, they either started a nice interaction and switched to a horrible one or, with support from the adult, initiated a nice interaction that invariably ended with a theme of loss. We concluded that we are seeing two-year-olds who could not understand that people might be nice to them. This was, needless to say, a surprising discovery.

The good news is that the discovery led us to go back to the classroom and to implement interventions in which we did not try to get children to elaborate on their nice interactions, but made sure that we told them clearly, "That's a good job." "You look pretty today." "That was a nice thing you did when you gave that toy to Johnny." And we diminished our emphasis on the negative interactions. What had been happening with these kids was that because they were the aggressive ones, the teachers were repeatedly telling them, "Now say you're sorry. You shouldn't have hit Johnny." The child would refuse, and the interaction would drag on. Following up on these kids two years later, there

has been some improvement in this balance between positive and negative interactions. Most of them have remained in their homes and most of their homes remain high risk.

We did some of the same kind of work with sexually abused adolescent girls who were hospitalized and non-abused adolescent girls who were also hospitalized for depression. Our discoveries were dramatic. We found some tremendous differences between the ways that the sexually abused or repeatedly traumatized girls saw themselves and the self-image of those non-traumatized kids who were having enough significant emotional difficulty to be hospitalized. Rosemary Caverly, who did this first important study, was specifically interested in sexual abuse, but now we've looked at kids who have experienced different forms of trauma. And what we found was that the sexually abused girl, the traumatized girl, really put negative characteristics as central to the core self. We have kids tell us about their relationships with other important people in their lives by placing descriptions of those relationships on a form that looks like a bull's eye. These descriptions are placed according to how important they are in relation to the girl's core self. The traumatized girls essentially told us that they basically saw themselves as negative. Most of them said they didn't think that they would be alive in the next two or three years. They also did a good deal of something we call "polarized affective splitting." In early adolescence these girls were doing what the toddlers were doing with increased developmental sophistication — seeing "mean" and "nice" very absolutely. In relationships with these adolescents, you were either wonderful or terrible, and if you got to know them for very long, you often became terrible. They didn't seem to understand the nuances or subtleties of relationships that are so important in order to understand and conceptualize values of intimacy or autonomy.

The third study that I want to describe was of a group of delinquent boys in a citizens training group. All of them had committed violent crimes and were in our therapy group as part of their probation. We conducted detailed interviews with all of them. We were, at the same time, therapists in the groups. Thus these observations weren't gathered in a laboratory, but in settings where the boys were receiving treatment.

This boys' group was part of an alternative school program. During the course of the year, one of the boys in the group was killed on a Sunday afternoon when he was supposedly on his way to "do a job" for his gang. A second boy was arrested later in the year for the murder of a third boy who was the best friend of another boy in the group. We're talking about kids who are experiencing intense violence in their communities.

Anthony was one of the boys in this group. Fourteen years old, Anthony was repeatedly truant from school, and involved in violent gang activity including car theft and armed robbery. When we first started working with Anthony, he told us he liked rap music because the words are true. There's a rap song, "Even though I'm young, I'm still in front of the 12 gauge or the front page." When we asked Anthony what this meant, he said, "Well, I'm here today, but I might not be here tomorrow." This boy vividly remembers traumatic events that occurred five to seven years ago; he describes in detail how every night his father would come home and beat his mother in the head with a brass cross and repeatedly sexually abused her. Anthony told us, "That hurts a lot. It hurt my mother a lot." His father finally left, five years before our interview, and Anthony told us, "I'll never like my Pops because of what he did, and I won't like any other man. Because dads, there are a lot of them, but mothers, I only have one." While on the one hand, Anthony was very protective of his mother, on the other hand, his first offense (at age 11) was forcible rape of a 12-year-old young woman. Anthony can talk about these events in the same breath. He minimizes and distances what he did to the young woman, but becomes very poignant and emotional when he talks about what happened to his mother. Anthony dramatically embodied the victim/victimizer roles in the same person.

Interestingly, the delinquent boys who experienced violence in their homes looked a lot like the adolescent girls I described earlier. They presented with real hypervigilance: they had to be on guard, autonomous, they couldn't be connected or caring. The value of autonomy was important because they had to watch out for their own safety.

There are some guidelines that I can give you about working with traumatized kids and for developing programs for larger groups of kids in your school with some awareness of these traumatized kids. Some of you in this audience may feel like this is the only kind of child you see in your setting; others here may feel you see very few children like this. But I would urge you to watch out for them in either situation. Again, these are very simplistic, commonsense guidelines because I know most of you are experienced educators and

clinicians. So, to reiterate:

1) **Be clear and consistent about your role and purpose.** Traumatized kids only expect the unexpected. They may need to hear what your role and purpose is over and over and over again. They will challenge it, over and over and over again.

2) **Expect erratic and unpredictable responses, especially around issues of connection and attachment.** These may be the kids who are really in the fallout group when you use curricula like *The Voices of Love and Freedom* that Bob has just talked about. They may be the children that you actually are able to identify to some extent, through some preventive intervention programs like *Family, Friends, and Community*. They may be the ones who will not bring something back from their parents in writing, or maybe what they come back with will be derogatory. Or you may

learn that the home is fine, but they are witnessing violence of some sort in the community. They may have lost a parent to illness. In any case, you really may be able to identify the traumatized children.

3) **These children tend to be victimized** — frequently teased and ostracized by other kids. Sometimes we don't see them as victimizers; we see just the bad kid acting out against other kids.

4) **Do not ask for disclosures or information too soon.** Be prepared and available for the long term. It's absolutely crucial not to under-

estimate the power of a classroom teacher with these kids. We know that sexually abused school-age kids often will confide in a non-family member whom they see on a regular basis. They are more likely to identify the abuser to a teacher, counselor, or coach — someone outside the family to whom they have gotten close over time.

5) **When you're looking at risk-taking behaviors, examine the use of drugs and alcohol as a numbing agent, a protection against anxiety and the painfulness of recall.** We're getting better at doing this with adults, some of whom we tend to describe as having "dual diagnoses," people with significant characterological disorders and/or people who are using drugs and alcohol to self-medicate. We've seen even five- and six-year-olds who use drugs and alcohol to numb themselves to pain. I saw a five-year-old the other day whose parents both drank quite heavily; she

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had really suffered some pretty severe trauma. One day by accident she picked up a glass and drank some alcohol, and it made her feel better. Soon she was addicted. You can't be too young to become addicted. We also need to be on the lookout for risk-taking or self-abusive behavior, some of which functions to make older kids — adolescents — feel alive, gives them a sense of the present. If you really think that you're not going to live for the next five years, why should you worry about what you're doing now? Why is it important to finish school? Why is it important even to come to school? Sometimes not coming to school should be considered as one constructive option for kids who are failing in school and are involved in self-injurious and risk-taking behavior.

6) **We should not anticipate trust or long-term positive interactions with these kids.** Sometimes, we start to work with kids and we think, "If I'm just nice to this child, he'll respond." A lot of teacher burnout accompanies this expectation. These kids don't expect you to be nice from day to day, even if it's the last day of school and you've been nice every day all year. Be aware of emotional shutdown and the avoidance when you are "nice" and try to help.

7) **Physically abused children are intensely aware of the wrongfulness of abuse.** If you tell them of an abuse that's not their own, e.g., if you say, "this little boy was hit and beaten by his father because he made a mistake on his math test," they know that's wrong. But they will tell you at the same time that they're not being maltreated. They're not deliberately lying, but merely splitting, as we discussed earlier. It is too painful to think that somebody close to them is hurting them, to think that they are in that much danger. Similarly, you may find kids who can tell you all the reasons why not to drink, why not to take drugs, but they may be the very kids engaging in those behaviors. What impairs the development of a system of values is the inability to integrate the knowledge base with connections to our personal experience.

8) **We need to understand that a present orientation to the world is protection against current and possible future danger.** What this means is that working with these kids is like walking on eggshells. You want to show them that you care, but you don't want to push. You also don't want to make too many assumptions about their experiences, and you don't want to quiz them about their lives. So you take two steps forward and one step back, and try to provide some constancy. Building programs around these children, particularly group programs, is very difficult; they tend to be the fallout from your groups.

Let me just finish by telling you more about Richard Rhodes; I will leave it to you to decide whether he is

vulnerable, resilient, or both. If you want to know more about traumatized children and adolescents, I suggest reading his autobiography, *A Hole in the World*. How did Mr. Rhodes work around his hole in the world? As an adolescent, after being physically and emotionally abused by his step-mother, he was placed on a farm for boys. He described this experience as his escape, and as the beginning of his healing. His chosen job on the farm was to shovel out cow stalls. He had an opportunity to milk the cows — this was an honor he'd earned — but he chose not to, because to him, "milk is mothering. Milk is what our step-mother denied me to drink. Milk is the breast and nursing from which at 13 months I was probably torn away. Milk is closeness and warmth, and oceanic, unbounded beatitude. Milking I flew from. Shit I could face."

Sometimes it's surprising to those of us who haven't suffered severe trauma to see those who have felt such severe pain. And yet, we can't predict its effects. What happened to Mr. Rhodes? He won a scholarship to Yale, graduated *magna cum laude*, became a Pulitzer Prize winning author. He was also a divorced parent. He admits to wife battering. He is an alcoholic, and on three occasions has been hospitalized for severe depression; he considers himself a chronic mental patient. Is Mr. Rhodes resilient, or is he vulnerable? Here is his insight. He says of his writing: "Each of my books felt different to write, each is set in a different milieu, tells a different story, in a different voice, in a different prose style. Yet I see that they're all repetitions, they all repeat the same story. Each focuses on one or several men of character who confront violence, resist it or endure it. And discover that beyond its inhumanity there is a narrow margin of hope."

Mr. Rhodes has talked about the impact of trauma far more eloquently than I ever could. The issue for us is to hear the child's story. You don't need to have all the details about specific trauma, but you need to understand their underlying themes. Children's behaviors and themes teach us about vulnerability and and strength and resistance so that we really can foster some resilience. If you're in schools or especially in the classroom, you are probably in one of the best places to be able to do that. The real issue is to hear what the children will tell us, both by word and by deed, and then to serve as an alternative safe haven for them. You know, children who aren't safe in the community, and may not be safe at home, if they don't feel safe in their school, have serious problems. Often times these are the very children who make it unsafe for other children to be in the school. They're very tough to be with. Beyond the family, you are the most important sources of constancy in children's lives.

Violence: Its Prevalence and Some Responses

Ronald G. Slaby, Ph.D., *Education Development Center*

MARGOT WELCH: It's a pleasure to introduce Ron Slaby, a very wise and experienced psychologist. Ron, thank you very much for being with us.

RONALD SLABY: My name is Ron Slaby and I'm going to talk about violence prevention. I know that this is a topic that has been at the periphery of your considerations so far, but I want to focus on it head on: violence prevention is a topic that is very rapidly becoming a national priority. In order to talk about educational strategies for violence prevention, I'm going to set the scene by talking first about a national agenda for violence prevention and how educators can fit in. Second, I'd like to talk about a particular educational strategy that can work to help prevent violence. Finally, I'd like to describe some programs that work to prevent violence.

National Agenda

In 1992, I testified before Senator John Glenn's committee, presenting a national agenda that our panel for the Centers for Disease Control had spent two years developing. This agenda emphasizes solutions to the violence problem, rather than simply defining the problem. And yet afterwards, we heard one of the senate staffers summarize the day's hearings by saying, "Well, I guess the war on drugs is over, the war on violence has begun." What's wrong with this definition of the problem? This is an oxymoron. It is defining the problem in an unsolvable way. Moreover, the war on drugs, such as it has been, is not over; it has also contributed directly to the violence problem. If you let others define the problem in this unsolvable way, then you are doomed to spend years working on this issue, only to come up with a single solution: just say no to violence. Educators need to take charge of this issue to ensure that it is defined in a way that is solvable, and then they need to take effective steps to build a lasting solution.

Now, what is the problem that we're facing? With the Centers for Disease Control panel, we calculated our lifetime odds of dying by interpersonal violence. The data are broken down into four categories: male, female, black, white. Of the four categories, white females are at lowest

risk of death by interpersonal violence. The second group is white males, the third group is black females, and the fourth group with the highest risk of being killed is black males. For each of these groups, the violence — excluding suicide and death by law enforcement or military service — is 1 in 496 for white females, and 1 in 205 for white males. One in 117 black females will die violently, and this is their leading cause of death. At current rates, 1 in 27 black males will be killed by interpersonal violence, and this is also their leading cause of death. One point about the data on dying by interpersonal violence is that by dividing it into white and black, male and female, it seems as though these categories are related to the causal factors, which isn't true at all. If you were to break data down in socioeconomic terms, you would probably see a relationship between socioeconomic inequality and violence. This is not poverty, mind you; poverty alone does not produce violence. This is poverty, racism, sexism, and other kinds of discrimination. Instead, it is the gaps engendered that create volatile situations that produce violence.

I visited the moving Vietnam Memorial wall when it was on tour at Holy Cross College in Worcester. The original wall in Washington was built to remember the 58,000 people who died over a 13-year period in the longest war in our history. What I was struck by — viewing the wall — is the fact that we're filling up a whole new wall every $2\frac{1}{3}$ years, not 13 years. Today we have a war at home, but the way to win the war is *not* to have a war on violence. Violence produces a hole in every family that lasts for generations. That is the problem we face in America.

At the hearings before Senator Glenn's committee, the principal of the Jefferson High School in Brooklyn testified about the violence in her school. After eight or nine children — innocent bystanders — had been shot in one week in New York City, Mayor Dinkins decided to publicly demonstrate that NYC was safe. He brought Bill Cosby to join him in a visit to Jefferson High School. Unfortunately, that very morning two more students killed each other and a third one committed suicide. The principal reported to Senator Glenn that there were two other students who died that same week who did not capture national media coverage, and that it's not uncommon to lose ten students in a

year. She added that most of the time, she is the only one attending the funerals. "You can't expect," she explained, "students to attend ten funerals of their classmates each year. When you're in wartime, you divorce yourself from it in any way that you can to separate yourself from experiencing the grief of that kind of violence."

So you see that we indeed have a problem in our cities. The data show that there are 2.7 times as many violent homicides in cities as in suburbs. But those of you who work in suburban schools know that the problem is heading your way if it's not already there. If there's fire in the cities, there's smoke in the suburbs and rural towns.

Our goal in our work towards violence prevention is to build a bridge between our two most important types of knowledge: the evidence of researchers and the wisdom of practitioners. In proposing a national agenda, we used an interdisciplinary team of practitioners from the behavioral sciences, public health, education, and criminal justice. Our objective was to create a new discipline that will cut across and integrate each of those four disciplines while emphasizing prevention.

A year after our report was published, Janet Reno (Attorney General), Donna Shalala (Secretary of Health and Human Services), Richard Riley (Secretary of Education), and Lee Brown (Drug Czar) were all talking about creating a new discipline as the only way to solve the violence problem. However, while the heads of the major departments of our federal government advocate prevention, as does our report, 94 percent of federal funds for violence are spent responding to violence after it happens. Of the 6 percent of our federal funds that are spent on prevention, half of that goes toward preventing the formation of gangs.

Instead of spending our money to house a criminal at a rate that exceeds sending them to Harvard or Yale for a year, we need to move the money forward in the system toward prevention with programs that work and are accountable. Many such programs already exist. The Government Accounting Office reported that six to eight dollars can be saved for every one dollar spent for moderately effective programs that already exist. That's the cost savings if you invest in prevention with accountability. Furthermore, if the effectiveness of current prevention programs were improved through sound research, the cost savings could be even greater.

Prevention means connecting with others ahead of and behind you in the system, and taking a giant step upstream from wherever you stand on the developmental river toward violence. Secondary schools must connect with middle schools, middle schools must connect with primary, and primary must connect with pre-schools and Head Start programs. One thing we've learned is that violence does not occur mysteriously and full-blown in the adolescent. Those who are involved in violence in the pre-teen or teen years have shown multiple signs from early on. The fastest growing sector of homicides is among juveniles. There's been an enormous change in this area. The homicide rates for younger children, ages 12 to 16, are increasing faster than rates for 16- to 20-year-olds. For this reason, it's essential to think of prevention and to develop a strategy.

Here is what our national agenda included. First, we need to build an infrastructure for the prevention of violence. That means, as I've mentioned, connecting disciplines, thinking about prevention, having better research, better surveillance data, greater accountability. Then we need to address firearm violence. Firearm violence is part of the major reason why violence is increasing at such a rapid rate, particularly among youth. Half of the deaths among kids are at the hands of someone holding a Raven handgun, yet the Raven Company says that they don't market to kids. These guns are manufactured at the cheap end of the scale; they have no manufacturing standards to speak of and they don't even pass the drop test — drop them and they fire.

Let's compare the way we treat motor vehicle death and injury — and the prevention of it — with firearm death and injury. Right now we have 44,000 deaths per year by motor vehicle injury, but that's coming down. Why? Because there are manufacturing standards for automobiles: air bags, seat belts, mandatory seat belt use, child seats, better education. We have a minimum age and performance requirements you must pass before you can get a driver's license.

How does that compare to our youth's access to guns? There are more federally licensed gun dealers than there are gasoline stations in the United States, yet there aren't that many gun stores. Dealers pay just a small fee for a license and then buy legally and distribute illegally. Covert gun

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sales is one loophole that makes it easy for guns to get into the hands of kids. Cash and carry is another loophole. There are many states where you can walk into a gun shop or send a young boy with cash, and he will walk out with a gun. We need to plug these major loopholes and move beyond debating about access to assault weapons. Eighty percent of deaths by firearms occur with handguns.

I said there were 44,000 deaths by motor vehicle injury each year; there are now 38,000 deaths by firearms each year. *Thirty-eight thousand*. Motor vehicle injury is decreasing. Firearm injury is increasing. By the year 2003, it's estimated that there will be more deaths by firearms in America than by motor vehicle injury. So are guns more dangerous than cars? I always thought they were. Put them in the hands of untrained youth with no safety standards, with no gun-safety education, and you have a formula for death by interpersonal violence. Add to that alcohol and other drugs. Notice the way we phrase this — "alcohol and other drugs." The major drug connected to violence is alcohol. Sixty percent of deaths involve the use of alcohol by the perpetrator, the victim, or both. Other drugs come into play also in terms of illegal drug trafficking combined with socioeconomic inequality. If you're a drug dealer facing a war on drugs by the government, you need to arm yourself well to protect your territory and maintain your business. That's how other drugs come into play primarily. In addition, of course, there are addictions that play a role in muggings; people will do just about anything to feed their addictions.

The next point in our national agenda is **early intervention to prevent violence**. Violence is learned, so by intervening early — whether you're a parent or an educator, or a health official — you can provide children with experiences that will prevent violence. Last summer, our American Psychological Association Commission published a report entitled "Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response." It proved to be a valuable resource for identifying the importance of early intervention to prevent youth violence. For more information about obtaining a copy, you can contact the American Psychological Association in Washington, D.C. Volume 2 of the report, entitled "Reason to Hope: A Psychological Perspective on Violence and Youth," is scheduled to be released early in 1995.

Strategy

I've talked about the national agenda. Now I want to talk about a strategy for preventing violence, before talking about intervention programs. What experiences influence a child's behavior? From a public health point of view, there are broad social experiences that contribute to violence. These are not just experiences that we hypothesize are

connected; we know these are connected to violence. We also know that these factors do not inevitably lead to violence. So if certain experiences are the toxins to violence, we know that some people will succumb to the toxins and others will not — at least not immediately. This raises the question: who and under what circumstances will an individual succumb to these toxins? Let's look first at what those social experiences — or toxins for violence — are in our society.

Experiencing violence through child abuse, bullying, or battering elevates the risk that someone will become involved in violence as a repeat victim and/or as a perpetrator. The successful bully and batterer coerces the victim into patterns of thought that are as destructive as the physical harm that they endure. The victim often comes to believe that there are only two alternatives to violence: to do nothing to stop the violence for fear of further abuse and accede to the coercive control of the aggressor, or to respond to the threat of violence with one's own violence. So victims stand the risk of being repeatedly victimized and/or becoming perpetrators of violence unless they can find a way to defend their lives nonviolently. That's what kids need to learn — not to buy into the way in which an aggressor will construct the problem. In every difficult situation there are hundreds of other nonviolent options that can solve the problem.

Besides experiencing violence directly, children are also at risk when they witness violence. We now have data that shows that children who witness violence in the home or in the community are at a far higher risk of becoming a perpetrator or a victim of violence. In developing our latest curriculum, I talked to groups of six children in a middle school in a high-risk area of Boston. With each group, I asked, "How many of you have with your own eyes seen somebody shot, stabbed, or killed?" Usually four raised their hands. The exposure to violence in some places is enormous.

If a child witnesses violence in the home, she or he is more likely to become involved in violence — either as a victim or as a perpetrator. We need to pay attention to the habits of thinking that shape victims as well as aggressors. We also need to consider the influence of bystanders, those children who will cheer on, instigate, or passively accept violence; they contribute to violence as well. In every classroom you will have children who are more likely to be aggressors and other children who are more likely to be victims. Every student knows who those children are. You'll also have students in that classroom who are bystanders who support violence, and they often play a pivotal role in instigating or preventing violence. There are also many different effects of media violence that contribute to the

violence problem. Although I will not have the time to discuss media effects on real life violence now, I have discussed these effects in an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* in January 1994.

Thus, there are a number of social experiences that contribute to violence, including experiencing violence, witnessing violence, viewing media violence, involvement with alcohol and other drugs, involvement with firearms, experiencing socioeconomic inequality, experiencing verbal abuse, prejudice, or coercion, which we now designate as hate crimes. But of all of these toxins for violence, none of them inevitably lead to violence. It's somewhat like the relationship between smoking and cancer. Some who smoke will never get lung cancer. Others will not smoke but will get lung cancer. And yet we know that there is a causal connection between the two. If you're a person who doesn't get cancer, it probably has something to do with your immune system.

Similarly, you can strengthen children's immunity to toxic influences, make them more resilient. As an educator, as a parent, as a court officer, or a public health official, you can play an important role in strengthening the immune system of children and youth by teaching them the patterns of thought that lead to nonviolent and effective solutions to problems.

Let me give you a concrete example. Ken Dodge looked at children who were physically abused by being beaten at home: we also know, from Cathy Widom's data, that early physical abuse is a strong predictive factor of criminal behavior in adulthood. Twenty-five percent of all kids in the Indiana court records who were physically abused found their ways to becoming a perpetrator of violence as a young adult, but 75 percent did not. Is the glass a quarter full or three-quarters empty? Well, compared to those who are not physically abused, 25 percent is an enormous factor, yet you have to ask the question, what characterizes the children who did not succumb to the experience of physical abuse by becoming a violent adult? They were the children who had the habits of thinking to see alternatives to violence; they had the skills for solving problems nonviolently. They were also the ones who had beliefs that challenged the idea that violence is always successful.

Children need cognitive ways to stand up to those

influences, to respond to those toxins so as to neutralize them, disassociate themselves from the abuse, and then take active steps to correct those toxins for violence. That's what the educator can do. Children who learn these patterns of thought have a resilient immune system that enables them to face the aggressor and solve problems nonviolently and effectively. The **Habits of Thought** model identified in the figure represent **cognitive mediators** if you're a scientist, **habits of thought** if you're an educator, **cognitive restructuring** if you're a criminal justice professional. Habits of thought hold the key to solving the violence problem. That is where we should intervene.

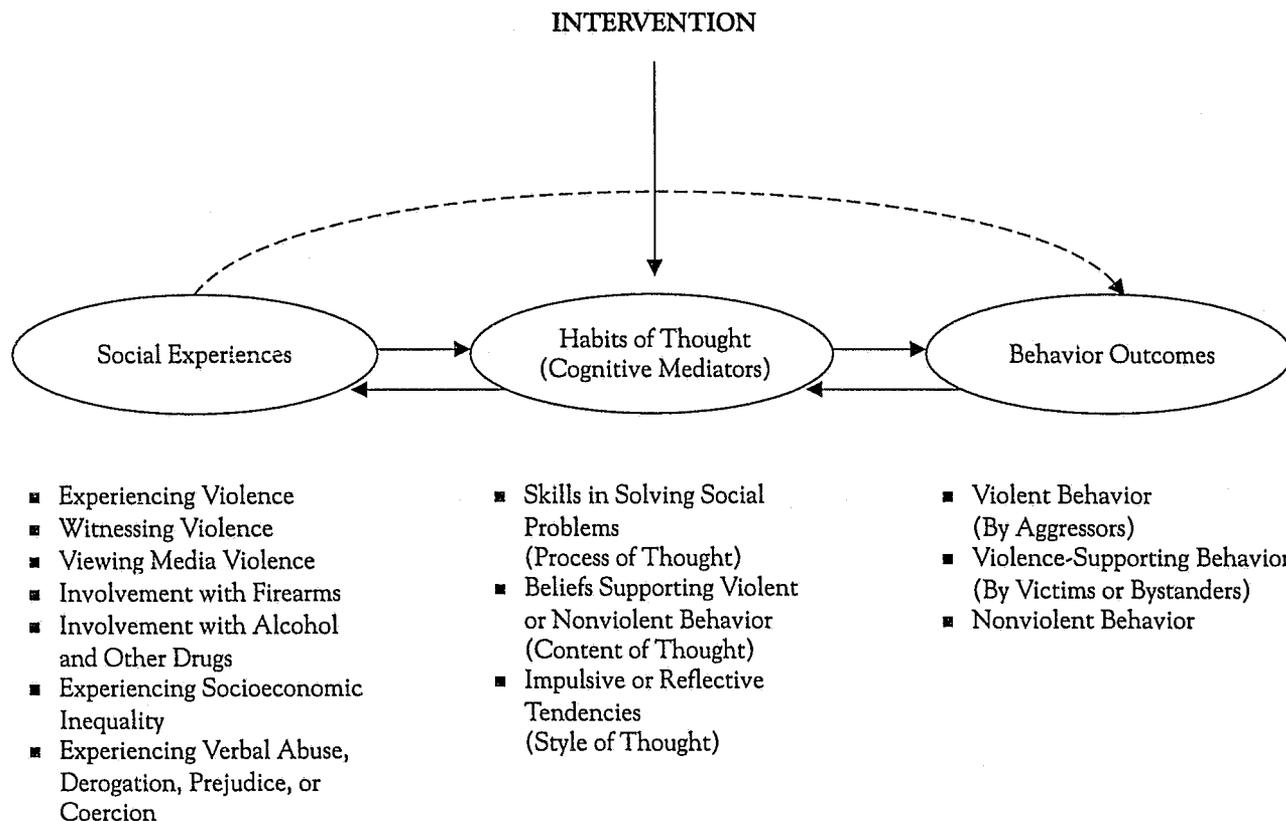
Let me point out how we could intervene. You can intervene by advocating the conservative, "get-tough" policies that are currently popular among elected officials. That is where 94 percent of our funding for crime prevention is going. Most of the money is being spent in that area and it won't work. We doubled our prison population during the eighties and the violence problem became worse. You can have tougher penalties, such as the 1992 Educational Reform Act, according to which high school principals

are virtually required to expel a child if they're caught carrying a deadly weapon or attacking a teacher. Is this a solution to the violence problem? It makes no sense whatsoever to have that "get tough" policy, which simply shifts the problem outside of the school, particularly if no treatment programs are available to address the problems. Alternatively, you could also take a "liberal" solution and throw our money at the front end, have a "war on violence," spend money for programs with no accountability. But is that effective? We've had a war on poverty. Has that been effective? We've got a war on drugs; is that effective? Successful interventions in the area of violence will depend largely on educators. We can begin teaching violence prevention in the classroom. We can begin doing it in effective ways.

Intervention Programs

Now, I'd like to finish my talk by discussing several intervention programs. One is the *Viewpoints* curriculum, which will soon be published by Research Press in Champaign, Illinois. We developed this program for juvenile offenders — juveniles who had murdered or attempted murder in a maximum security correction facility in California. This

*By the year 2003, it's
estimated that there will be
more deaths by firearms in
America than by motor
vehicle injury.*



Habits of Thought Model Violence is learned. Whether we are scientists, educators, or criminal justice professionals, we can intervene to change children’s “habits of thought.”

curriculum is now being used in the middle schools in the area that has the highest homicide rate in the nation. It’s the basis for Washington’s Community Violence Prevention Program, one among others being carried out in Washington, DC. The program is delivered by an interdisciplinary health team, a hospital outreach group. The doctors in this area, not surprisingly, decided that the most effective outreach program they could have would be on violence prevention. They looked for data, and when they found ours had been tested, they adapted it for use in the middle schools.

The team includes health practitioners and social workers, who bring the wisdom of their experience to the program. The program is, by definition, interdisciplinary and somehow captures the kids’ confidence in a way that even teachers have a difficulty doing. For example, one child revealed that her brother was murdered several weeks before. Her teacher hadn’t had a clue. The child talked

about it because she felt connected with the experienced team of practitioners.

We have observed that there are enormous differences in habits of thinking of aggressive and non-aggressive children. Aggressive children immediately perceive a problem as hostile, adversarial. Low-aggressive children and girls, more than boys, ask for facts. Facts are the only basis by which you can really determine the extent to which you’re right in your assessment of the situation. Nonviolent problem solvers get lots of information and they use it. The aggressive children don’t want information. They demonstrate a poverty of thought. They’ve learned to rely on only a few solutions, most of which will lead to violent encounters. Ironically, children who become violent offenders — those who are incarcerated for premeditated murder — are the ones who are least likely to have premeditated. They’re not thinking ahead about the fact that when they bought the gun and they loaded it and they pointed it at somebody,

that this might result in an impulsive act of shooting that person.

If "how you think" constitutes cognitive skills, then "what you think" has to do with your beliefs about aggression. Beliefs that support the use of violence can be learned from television any day of the week if you watch it uncritically. Aggressors think it is okay to hit somebody if they're mad enough. Doing so increases their self-esteem and helps them avoid a negative image. All the aggressors feel like victims and they deny the suffering in the victim. Aggressors also show an impulsive style of thinking — being quick on the draw, and drawing an aggressive rather than a socially appropriate conclusion from the situation.

Now, what is involved in one's habit of thinking? Habits of thought involve the process, content, and style of thinking. We found that 12, one-hour sessions of the *Viewpoints* curriculum can change each of those habits of thinking. If you target specifically what it is you want to change, the habits of thinking, you stand a good chance of having an effect on behavior. Children and youth can be taught the skills they need to solve problems nonviolently, the beliefs that support nonviolent solutions, and the reflective style of thought that generates effective responses tailored to specific situations.

There are several ways to teach this. *Aggressive Victims and Bystanders* is a 12-lesson program for grades six to nine that targets the habits of thinking of those children who are at risk as potential aggressors, victims, or bystanders. It will be published by Education Development Center in Newton, Massachusetts (which has previously published Deborah Prothrow-Stith's curriculum, entitled *Violence Preven-*

tion for Adolescents).

Finally, a book entitled *Early Violence Prevention: Tools for Teachers of Young Children* will be published in the fall of 1994 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The NAEYC has 90,000 members, and this book is designed for preschool, Head Start, and kindergarten teachers. It bridges the gap between the evidence from research and the practical wisdom of practitioners. It is not a curriculum, but it describes violence prevention techniques a teacher can use in the classroom. It discusses how to a) address children's experience with real-life violence, b) design the classroom environment, c) respond to children effectively, d) teach assertiveness and social problem-solving skills, and e) involve parents and community resources in helping to reduce aggression and lay the educational foundation for preventing violence. There are many concrete steps a teacher can take to launch young children on developmental pathways that foster thinking and acting to prevent violence.

To implement such a program, a great deal of professional education needs to be done to change the habits of thinking of the adults as well as the children. It's critical that educators build partnerships with parents. The parents can support or sabotage any program that you set up if you don't work with them. In addition, teachers need to build partnerships in the community, with the public health system, the criminal justice system, and the media. I hope that ten years from now instead of saying, "The war on violence is over and we have lost," we will be able to say proudly, "The effective and lasting prevention of violence has begun." Thank you.

Project Alliance: A Law Enforcement-School Collaboration

Kate Schluter, *Executive Director, Project Alliance*

Tom Reilly, J.D., *District Attorney, Middlesex County*

Irwin Blumer, Ed.D., *Superintendent, Newton Public Schools*

Todd Cronan, J.D., *Goodwin, Proctor and Hoar*

Karen Wilk, M.Ed., LICSW, *Coordinator, Partnerships for Violence Prevention*

KATE SCHLUTER: I'm Kate Schluter, Director of *Project Alliance*, and I will describe the practical aspects of *Project Alliance* — what it is and how it works. Tom Reilly, the District Attorney of Middlesex County, will talk about the *Community-Based Justice Program*, an interdisciplinary violence prevention and intervention program with youth. Irwin Blumer, Superintendent of Newton Public Schools, will review the process of creating *Project Alliance* — discussing stumbling blocks and the types of projects that can get people from various disciplines to work together. Todd Cronan will present some budgetary aspects of how to fund a project like this. For example, is it better to try for state money and become affiliated with a state agency, or to form a non-profit and seek grant money and other federal monies? Finally, Karen Wilk will describe *Partnerships for Violence Prevention*, a new effort in Essex County.

Project Alliance started in 1987. It was the result of a very unusual conversation that happened when 10 superintendents met with the Middlesex County District Attorney and said, "How can we work together?" At that point, their concern was mainly substance abuse in the schools. The issues they were interested in pursuing were legal in nature. What kinds of crimes committed on school grounds did they need to report to the police? What kinds of information ought the police report back to the schools? How should they enact search and seizure policy? What is a school-based crime? In its early years, *Project Alliance* was basically a continuing legal conversation among the county District Attorney, superintendents of schools, a few school districts, and the police. The participants needed to increase their sense of trust in one another to safeguard the learning environment for kids in school. From those conversations a "Memorandum of Understanding" emerged, which is now used as a blueprint by schools across the nation for reporting criminal activity on or near school grounds to the police.

Since 1987, when we began with 10 districts, *Project Alliance* now involves 45 districts in Middlesex County, the sixteenth largest county in the United States. Of its 54 cities and towns, 45 participate in the project, whose scope now includes a wide spectrum of legal, social, economic, and health-related problems facing schools, law enforcement, and society as a whole.

How does it work? Overall, *Project Alliance* is a collaboration between the District Attorney's office and the superintendents of schools. Participating professionals meet regularly during the year, and have training conferences on a variety of prevention topics. The District Attorney and the superintendents meet about six times during the course of the year to discuss prevention topics, legal issues, and common training needs in their districts. *Project Alliance* also sponsors "peer professional" group meetings for guidance counselors, health educators, and principals at the high school and middle school level throughout the school year. People across the county join with colleagues to share information, resources, and training. Guidance counselors in the same system may not have time to speak to each other, and the kind of cross-county collegiality that has formed in those groups has been amazing. We have addressed questions and concerns generated in those groups in large-scale conferences on prevention topics — including, for example, hate crimes, strategies for increasing multicultural awareness, girls' development, and parent programs.

From meeting regularly in small and large groups, people form relationships that become meaningful for them over time. They start to share a sense of support and trust with each other as their concerns surface. The interactive process provides us with information to plan training programs.

Structurally, *Project Alliance* operates on three tiers — theoretical, training, and support. Our *Sexual Harassment Prevention Project* is a good example of how *Project Alliance*

works. The first year, we sponsored two exploratory theoretical conferences to present the topic and assess people's concerns, which proved to be considerable. In the second year, we offered hands-on regional training on sexual harassment prevention to representatives of each of our school districts — two individuals from each school building. The regional training involved a legal overview, as well as strategic methods to identify and handle sexual harassment issues as they arise in the schools. The people trained regionally became trainers for the rest of their staff. In its third year, *Project Alliance* provides ongoing support and training for student teams, and a district professional team receives continued training and information to share with school communities.

A natural outgrowth of *Project Alliance's* communication between education and law enforcement is the effort to bring community agencies together for a dialogue about violence with youth. Tom Reilly will speak about that.

TOM REILLY: My name is Tom Reilly. I'm the District Attorney of Middlesex County and I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about our *Community-Based Justice Program*. We believe it represents a dramatic change in the way the criminal justice system deals with the problem of youth violence, particularly the collaboration that takes place between prosecutors, police, educators, social services, and juveniles. That's an extremely unusual concept, not only for law enforcement, but I believe for education as well. Kate briefly alluded to Middlesex County. It's the largest county in Massachusetts, and it's the sixteenth largest county in the country. It's a blend of urban, suburban, and rural areas with a total population of almost a million and a half people.

What we experience in terms of dealing with youth violence must resemble what you see in your communities, no matter what the size of the community or your location. We deal with a broad diversity of issues because of Middlesex County's location and population. The relationship between Middlesex County and *Project Alliance*, which was founded in 1987 by my predecessor, Scott Harshbarger, has created an unusual and important feeling of trust and confidence among many of us.

The program that I will describe had its origins in a tragedy that occurred just about three years ago in the city of Lowell, which is about 30 miles north of here. A 15-year-old boy was brutally murdered on his way home from high school. The murder was a half-hour after the end of school and the culmination of a serious escalation of gang violence that had virtually terrorized that community. As a "hands-on" District Attorney, I turned the prosecution of the case over to other individuals and began to concentrate on what

was happening in the community. What I saw had a profound impact on me. An event as serious as this one sent shock waves through that community. Children were afraid to go to school at all levels of the school system. I think attendance was down more than 50 percent at some points. Teachers were afraid to go to school. Parents were keeping their children inside, out of school and the neighborhood, because the killing was racial in nature and dividing the entire community in Lowell.

I wish I could tell you that that's the only time that I've had to experience something like that, but unfortunately I can't. In cities and towns throughout Middlesex County, I've seen some more types of these incidents, with varying degrees of severity, not always murder, but we see increasing numbers of young people armed with dangerous weapons and prepared to use them. I think my experience is not unique. We're seeing this throughout the country as we come to grips with this serious problem. How many of you have had incidents of violence in and around a school setting? You know what I'm talking about. It's traumatic, and the statistics throughout the country confirm that juvenile crime is up 80 percent in the last four years alone. Murder has increased with juveniles and young adults by 85 percent over that same period of time. The reactions in Middlesex County and wherever I go, whether to the killing or other incidents, are probably no different from the reactions that you have had in your own communities. Immediately there are demands for tougher and more elaborate security measures, metal detectors, tougher laws, more prison cells. These measures are short-term responses — hopelessly simple solutions to very complex problems. Then everything quiets down and people go away.

We tried a different strategy in Middlesex County three years ago, stayed with it, and have had much better results than we could achieve with short-term approaches. About three days after the killing, I convened a community-based task force in Lowell. At that first meeting, there were prosecutors, police officials, school officials, court officials, policy-makers, case workers, probation officers, youth service workers, and people from community-based agencies who knew who in the community was acting out or causing problems in a particular school. We started three years ago, on a Friday morning, in weekly meetings that continue to this very day and have now expanded to a dozen other communities in Middlesex County.

This morning, for example, I was at Malden High School. These are not academic discussions about how to deal with youth violence. We review specific names of individuals who have committed crimes. By identifying those individuals with that broad base of people in the room, we spread our net widely and discuss the great major-

ity of people who are causing problems. We have discovered that once you begin to exchange information and communicate with one another, everybody knows who the key people are. The schools have a little piece of information, and so do the police and the community. The problem is that the same children pass through every system — the school system and the criminal justice system — but no one is sharing information, no one is taking hold of them at a time when you can do something about it.

The other thing that we found out is that when we deal with the most serious terrorism and sit together to identify people by name, a small group of people is responsible for the problems in the community. But in every community, the same process occurs. After a single, highly publicized violent incident, fears of one specific large group or another break out. But our efforts demonstrate that the trouble-makers are limited to a very small number of "hard-core" individuals. And, in our meetings, we target these individuals by discussing their behavior. There's no entrapment, no "stop and frisk" policy, no surveillance. But, if you commit a crime and you get arrested, and your name is on a list, after that, we pay attention to you.

The central focus of our task force is on what we call a "priority prosecution list" that is kept on a weekly basis and constantly updated. That's important, and let me point out why. One of the real problems in the criminal justice system is that it's simply overwhelmed by numbers of cases. For instance, in Middlesex County, in our district courts alone, where the great majority of criminal activity must be processed, we have over 35,000 cases with one hundred prosecutors to handle those cases. There is no way that they can pay attention to everything. If you are on our "priority prosecution list," you're no longer one of 35,000 cases, but maybe one of two or three hundred cases that are monitored on a weekly basis. We pay attention to you.

The other thing I want to point out is that as these cases go through the system, every effort is made to use non-punitive ways to deal with a person's antisocial behavior. If there are alternative responses, we will use them. Most of these individuals have troubled family backgrounds, probably a single parent, and most often a mother who is trying to raise her child in a very difficult environ-

ment. We will try to work with that parent, bringing her outside resources. We'll do this in combination with attention from the schools, which can be very effective. We'll use mediation, counseling, and outside social agencies to intervene before we even consider jail or incarceration. We will try to devise creative kinds of probation — set specific conditions that require the youngster go to school, abide by the rules of that school, be off the streets and stay out of certain areas by a certain time of the day or night. And that person better abide by these terms because we monitor them on a weekly basis. If you violate the terms of your probation, we will surrender you and move you through the court system very quickly.

At any point along the way, if there is any agency or any person that will take responsibility for the youngster, we try not to recommend jail for that youngster. There has never been a situation in any one of our communities where

a school has felt very strongly that they could deal with that youngster when we haven't reached consensus about how to keep that youngster in school. When the Department of Youth Services feels that a youngster should not be transferred to adult court, we do not recommend jail for that youngster. With cooperation, confidence, respect, and trust among agencies, there comes a stronger sense of responsibility and accountability. If someone's going to take responsibility for a youngster, they better pay at-

tention to this agreement because we come back, week after week, to follow what has happened and answer to our community-based task force and to the people in that community. No one wants to let the others down. We're all constantly trying to help each other make the situation work.

Is it effective? It works for us. It is very labor intensive. We have it in a number of communities, and I hope to have the entire district covered by the end of the year. How do you measure whether or not it works? I could give you statistics in terms of how many kids we prosecuted, how many kids we put in jail. We've gotten the kids' attention. They know there are lists out there and they don't read about this in the *Globe* or the *Times*; they don't learn about it on TV. They know what's going on. We stand up in court, at an arraignment, and notify the court that Johnny Jones

The problem is that the same children pass through every system, but no one is sharing information, no one is taking hold of them at a time when you can do something about it.

has been identified by the community-based task force as a threat to this community, and ask the court to give special attention to that individual, from the time that bail is first set throughout the process. I prefer to measure our effectiveness by the success we've had in preventing crime. We've had a great deal of success. One of our programs developed after a violent, vicious summer in the playgrounds. Someone got killed; during one period of time there were 14 stabbings in 13 days on the playgrounds. People were beside themselves. Right now we've had two straight summers without an incident in any one of those playgrounds because we took those who were responsible for the trouble off the street.

Another example is from the city of S_____ where, at the worst time, probably 66 individuals were threatening the community. Right now we're monitoring between 12 and 15 individuals who are active threats to that community. My favorite story is a case we call the "gang of eight" in that community. About three years ago there were eight youngsters who were totally out of control, terrorizing an entire neighborhood, including adults. They were 13 and 14 years old. We couldn't get anybody to testify against them. I had to go meet with families, try to get one witness to come forward and confront these kids. Finally, we met with some parents who were very brave and came forward because at our weekly meetings the high school headmaster said, "You've got to get control of these kids now." We found somebody to testify against them and then we sought and used alternative sentencing for them, which got them under control, but didn't get them out of the community. We had a case on them and they ended up pleading guilty to violent assaults. We put them on very tight probation controls: they couldn't miss a day of school without an excused absence; they had certain curfews; we monitored their situation all last summer. One of them worked for me in the District Attorney's office. His job was to work in the playgrounds and keep the peace there, to make sure there weren't violent assaults. We worked very hard. Seven out of eight of those kids either graduated this year or are going to graduate within the next year. One is in prison. He will be there for a long time. We gave him a number of chances. Alternatives didn't work out for him, but he had his chance. But seven out of eight of those kids are going to make it. I don't want to say that there haven't been slips. There's an occasional joint or an open beer, here and there. But we stayed with these kids and one of them is going to get a college scholarship this year. He found out, very early, that our criminal system was going to have some teeth and that he would be held accountable. He got off the "train" for his own benefit and for the benefit of the community.

Can it work for you? I think something like this can

work wherever people are willing to work together. *Project Alliance* brings people together on a wide variety of issues. I would urge all of you to take the beginning step. It's no mystery. It's no magic. It's hard work. If I can be of any assistance to any of you, call me (617-494-4075). If I can't answer your questions, there are plenty of other people — school officials, community agency workers, youth workers, all types of people — who can get you the answers and the assistance that you need.

IRWIN BLUMER: I'm Irwin Blumer, Superintendent of Schools in Newton, Massachusetts, and I'm going to be speaking today not only as Superintendent of Newton, but for the other superintendents of the 46 communities that participate in *Project Alliance*. Middlesex County is a very diverse community that includes older urban environments, suburban kinds of cities, typical suburbs, rural areas, and regional school districts that bring together multiple small districts into one school system.

I'm going to talk about *Project Alliance* from a school's perspective. *Project Alliance* is about building positive communications and relationships. None of this can occur if you don't enhance trust among participants. The kind of work that Tom Reilly just talked about in the *Community-Based Justice Program* would not be possible if some prior relationships and trust had not been established. To be honest, a group of superintendents came together in 1987, with then District Attorney Scott Harshbarger, out of frustration. We saw lots of drug and alcohol abuse in the schools and the community. It was effecting what was going on in our schools. There was an increase in violence and weapons and we didn't know what to do. We saw courts making decisions that didn't seem to make any sense. You know the cycle; you bring a kid into court, the next day the kid's back on the street, the next day the kid's back in school, and the next day the kid's back in court. Police departments were supposed to be working with us, but they often didn't. In fact, if I described the relationship between our three groups — the District Attorney's office, the police, and the schools — I'd have to say that, on a good day, we weren't talking to one another. We were staying out of each other's turf. On a bad day, we were counterproductive and doing things that ended up being detrimental to kids.

From my perspective, primarily because of the two District Attorneys involved, Scott and Tom, *Project Alliance* has turned that around. This is a successful program. First, the District Attorney called a meeting of superintendents and police chiefs. This was interesting. If the superintendents tried to call a meeting with police chiefs, it would be one kind of a meeting, but when, all of a sudden, you had the District Attorney talking to superintendents and police

chiefs, it was a very different kind of meeting. The focus of our meeting was, "We are all in this together. Now, how do we work collaboratively?" From this came something that we called the "Memorandum of Understanding," a little piece of paper that said: **when drug and alcohol abuse ends up in the schools, here's what the schools will do, here's how the police will respond, and here's how we will work together on this issue.** Not a very complicated or sophisticated process, except none of us had such a policy in place. In each community, we began to work on the problems individually and then we shared our models and came up with what is now one model for the entire county.

As a result of the kinds of discussions that we had, what became apparent was that the police had certain assumptions about the schools and schools had certain assumptions about the police, but we were all operating out of data that just wasn't accurate. Nobody had bothered to break down the doors. Then we had more interesting discussions: "Ok, so we know what we're supposed to do if a kid brings alcohol or drugs into the school. But what about Friday nights, Saturday nights, Sunday nights, and summers, when all those things go on? School's open on Monday

morning. Who knows what happened in the community on Saturday night? We probably should know because it's going to spill over and show up in the school. What do we do about this kind of stuff?" The initial reaction was about confidentiality. There were many reasons why people just said we couldn't respond more coherently to these things, but we were relentless and now, as a norm, communication flows. The agreement we reached was simply that we allow communication to flow, on a "right-to-know" basis, when we think it's important for the police and the schools and other communities to share it, because it's in the interest of kids — *until somebody tells us we can't do it.* It's been six years now, and much to everybody's surprise, nobody's told us we can't do it. We've had one meeting a year to which the District Attorney invites the police chiefs, the superintendents, and now the DEA officers. These meetings have been incredibly helpful. At the beginning, many of us needed to get a better understanding of how the judicial process operated. The DA brought in assistant district attorneys who literally gave courses to school principals, counselors, assistant principals, and teachers about the legal

structure. For example, what is "due process" all about? What do you need to do if you want to do an investigation? It was very helpful. We had one meeting with judges, and though I'm not sure much changed as a result, at least we all felt better telling the judges of the country how unhelpful their behavior was in certain circumstances. If their goal was to help kids, they were missing the boat. We had similar kinds of meetings with DYS and DSS — meetings that need to be replicated and expanded because of frustrations about how we do and do not cooperate. In his *Community-Based Justice Program*, Tom Reilly has put all the players on the same team, working in the same direction.

Our profession, at its best, is a lonely business, and when we're dealing with the most difficult kids in school, it

becomes even more lonely because all of a sudden most people want to walk the other way. They don't know how to deal with these situations. As we began to see this, we recognized that one of the things that we needed to do, collaboratively, was to create support groups. So we started groups for counselors throughout the county who would come together, defining their own agendas. *Project Alliance* was our support. We added on nurses — whom we don't

often think about, but who are often crucial to kids that are in difficulty — health educators, curriculum specialists, principals, and assistant principals. They now all have their own support groups to break down their isolation, to talk with one another about what they're all doing in common, and learn from one another, in the best collegiate sense.

We began doing workshops, too. We started out with drug and alcohol abuse workshops, always practitioner oriented. The theory was nice, but we could all read it, and what we really wanted was to find people who were developing programs that worked. We wanted to hear how they set them up, what worked well, and what failed — so we could avoid some of the failure and not start from ground zero. The workshops rapidly evolved into community efforts, clear statements that schools were only one part of this triangle, and that unless the parents and other social agencies were involved, we were not going to make it. Our workshops were directed towards bringing parents and community groups into the schools to help us work with kids that were abusing alcohol and drugs. *The Community-Based Justice Program* is dealing with the most troubled

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ways to deal with a person's
antisocial behavior.*

youth in the county in a way that has allowed school people to finally believe that we're in control. You all know what it's like to work in an environment that you don't feel you control. This project has turned this around. District Attorney Reilly has done a wonderful job identifying the troubled kids, giving them the help that they need, and taking them off the streets before they hurt somebody. We now have a clearer focus. We want programs relating to violence prevention and mediation.

Finally, the project has given superintendents an opportunity, on a periodic basis throughout the year, to come together in our own support group. We talk with one another about what we're experiencing as we try to make the school environment all that it should be for all of the children. How do you start it? You can begin this process and be successful on a school-by-school basis, if you have some tenacity. It requires the leadership of a principal, a superintendent, a police chief who's willing to work at it, and the District Attorney. But you will miss a great deal this way because the power of this project is the collaboration that comes about when different communities join to address these issues together.

TODD CRONAN: I'm Todd Cronan, a former special assistant District Attorney for Middlesex County, now a lawyer in private practice. I want to make sure people understand the organizational structure of *Project Alliance*. *Project Alliance* is part of a larger, non-profit foundation. "Non-profit" means that the corporate structure is formed under section 5013C of the Internal Revenue Code, which stipulates that any income generated within the project is not taxable. You don't give part of your money back to Uncle Sam or to your state government. Second of all, and probably more important, the monies given to you are tax deductible for most of the donors. Now much of the project's funds will come from government or other non-profit related entities, but this structure gives the project the flexibility to accept money from large corporations, all of which have active charitable arms that are giving money. And lastly, by becoming a non-profit corporation, the project acquires a stamp of legitimacy in the view of donating companies who give to outreach efforts and prevention efforts. Some companies have a rule that they won't give at

all to unincorporated or to quasi-governmental groups.

Are some of the organizational steps really necessary? There are three practical advantages. First, as a non-profit corporation you give yourself greater flexibility as to what funding you can seek. *Project Alliance* operates principally through monies funneled up from the participating schools. This is a wonderful thing to do because the *Project* is not beholden to any board members who may want to write a big check or any corporations who may want to give themselves visibility in the community. But at the same time, being a non-profit, after we do a conference on a subject and want to build on that, we can take our success to a corporate donor, a Chamber of Commerce or a Rotary Club, and say, "We've got some wonderful things and we'd like to produce some resource materials, either for distribu-

tion in the schools, or to communities." We can bring in \$10-, \$15-, or \$25,000 donations to make this possible. Just in the child abuse area, *Project Alliance* has acquired a wonderful library of resource materials, all written by members and staff, and all funded through outside sources. We've done the same with videotapes, and we have a small trickle of tax exempt income coming in as royalties from the child abuse video tapes that we distribute as training materials for schools, police, and counselors.

One other way we could have organized *Project Alliance* was to have it fall under some broad rubric within the District Attorney's office. Tom really serves as the hub of the wheel, with respect to both the police and all of our participating schools, but if we do that, the budget of, say, \$100,000 is up for review each year by a state legislature. Even if it's not funded by state tax dollars, in down times (of which there are many in municipal finance) it would be intolerable to be in a position of saying, "Do you trade off hiring another assistant District Attorney, or funding this program?" We avoid situations like that by putting it outside of the District Attorney's office, or outside of any of the specific school districts, which would cause similar types of problems. Finally, you may have diversion programs, or violence intervention programs, which don't work. When there's an accident, people will look for someone to blame, saying that it's the fault of the school, the District Attorney, or the police. The

What became apparent was that the police had certain assumptions about the schools and schools had certain assumptions about the police, but we were all operating out of data that just wasn't accurate.

non-profit serves as an intermediary, given that its staff members are on the public salary and really going out of their way to broaden the vision of what can be done.

Setting up a non-profit and keeping it going is not hard. Like many legal things, once it gets demystified, it's very easy. It has some practical benefits, and has helped the people in the program focus on doing substantive things, which is the whole point of the work.

KAREN WILK: I'm Karen Wilk, from the Essex County District Attorney's office. Essex County, for those of you who are not from the area, is north of Boston. It's interesting for me to sit on a panel with my colleagues and hear about their work because, in many respects, their work parallels the work everybody has been doing in Essex County. We came to it in a little bit different way.

Many people move to Essex County to get away from Boston's problems. The county, composed of 34 cities and towns, is a coastal community, extending from just north of Boston, through Cape Ann, to New Hampshire. Its border falls between Lawrence and Lowell, two cities that are notorious for having problems. Unfortunately, in the last two years we've had two tragedies, highly publicized murders of teens involved in relationships or "wannabe" relationships, which have forced residents to acknowledge problems and begin searching for new solutions. Within the District Attorney's office we already had programs to deal with our problems. We had a child abuse project, which provides **multi-disciplinary interventions for child abuse**. We had a large **juvenile diversion program**, which takes first-time offenders and gives them the opportunity for an early alternative intervention. We had a **domestic violence unit** and a very active **victim witness program** that complemented the District Attorney's work. We also had ongoing existing **relationships with schools**, and were holding the yearly pro forma meetings with schools and police chiefs. Everyone thought that was all that was needed.

The first murder, which took place in a sleepy little town and was committed by an unlikely student, raised a lot of concerns. For the first time, the schools came to our

office for help. But at the same time they were asking for help, they were also saying, "We don't really want your expertise. We're in the schools. You're not the experts." So, when District Attorney Burke came up with the idea of *Partnerships for Violence Prevention*, he hired me not to be the expert, but to be someone who would involve and collaborate with schools and community agencies, and the people that were working in them. The goals of the project were to develop partnerships and a greater awareness of shared community approaches to violence. We were careful not to point the finger at any one constituency, but to make it clear that we wanted to establish the District Attorney's office as a resource for technical assistance and consultation. New dialogues between the District Attorney, school superintendents, and police identified needs for kinds of training in areas beyond the expertise of our school systems.

Most of our work now is very similar to that of *Project Alliance*. We develop training programs and facilitate a collaborative, multi-disciplinary, county-wide approach to violence prevention by bringing area agencies together to see who's doing what. There is a real need to acknowledge turf issues. When we walked into a school system, after they asked for our help, we became the brunt of anger that might more appropriately have been directed at the community for not acknowledging problems. We became the buffer, which pointed to the need for all of us to learn to work together.

Finally, we have been developing a clearinghouse of information and resources. If we don't have the answers or information people need, we track it down. School personnel don't have much time to search for information about new programs. There's not a lot of time to find out who's doing what. *Partnerships for Violence Prevention* tries to fill that need. We did a survey of existing programs, compiling a useful working guide for school systems looking for new curricula, policies, and procedures. Our job isn't to reinvent the wheel, but to identify gaps and meet new needs. *Partnerships for Violence Prevention* in Essex County helps empower communities to work together to address the issues of violence.

The Implementation of School-Based Mediation Programs

Richard Cohen, *Director, School Mediation Associates*

RICHARD COHEN (RC): My name is Richard Cohen and I'm the Director and cofounder of School Mediation Associates, an organization founded in 1984 to promote the use of mediation and conflict resolution in the schools. I'm accompanied by a team of presenters, including Denise Messina, coordinator of the mediation program in a Springfield middle school, and Maya Grey, coordinator of a mediation program in the Vocational Technical High School in South Easton, Massachusetts. They've brought students from their schools, who will tell you about their work and answer your questions.

I've asked Denise and Maya to join us today because of the conflict resolution model they use in their programs and because their programs are at two different levels — middle and high school. Denise is a full-time mediation coordinator and Maya is a counselor who fits her role as mediation program coordinator into her busy schedule. They have two wonderful, very effective mediation programs. After I do a brief overview, I will turn the presentation over to the coordinators and the students. I want to begin by giving you some of the fundamentals about conflict resolution.

First of all, I would like to dispel some myths about conflict. What is conflict? Conflict is the disagreement of two or more forces. Those forces can be embodied by human beings, but there can be conflicts outside of human interactions as well. Land masses are in conflict when we have an earthquake. Electricity or lightning results from conflict between positive and negative. You can even have a conflict within yourself. So, in fact, we don't even need two people to have a conflict.

So, first we want to dispel the myth that conflict is abnormal. Conflict is a normal part of life. We all get into conflict; it's the result of interactions, even between the most well-meaning people.

The second myth we want to dispel is that conflict is a negative thing. In fact, conflict can be positive.

The third myth is that conflicts need to be resolved competitively. In fact, conflicts can often be resolved cooperatively. Not every conflict: there are times when you have to compete. But many, many conflicts in our personal and professional lives, and certainly many of those that young

people get into, can be settled without competition. It's important to note that in order to resolve conflict, you don't have to give up anything.

Those are three myths that I'm going to dispel. I want to put mediation in context. The mediation programs that we're going to be talking about today, especially peer mediation, is something that's gotten increasing attention. When we started ten years ago there were about six programs in the whole country; now there are literally thousands in every state in the United States and in many other countries. There is a whole continuum of conflict resolution processes — mediation just being one of them.

We start with **communication**. Whenever two people are trying to resolve something, from simple things, like what movie to go to, to more serious things, they're communicating. That's a conflict resolution process.

The next one is **negotiation**, which is just a little bit more formal than communication. You may have people who represent your interest, negotiating for you, but it's you sitting there trying to formally talk something out.

Conciliation is a process in which a third person, a mediator, comes in and tries to help people resolve conflict. A **mediation** involves a third party, but the mediator has a lot more control of the process. The mediator decides what the parties talk about and when they talk about it, but the outcome is decided by the parties themselves. The parties are in complete control of what results from mediation. We'll talk more about mediation in a minute.

Arbitration may be familiar to you from either sports conflicts or union management conflicts in the school arena. Arbitrators hear from both sides, but the arbitrator has the power to make the decision. Finally, **adjudication** is when a judge makes a decision.

In all our conflict resolution work, we try to keep above mediation by helping students communicate better, negotiate better. Ideally the bulk of conflicts can be resolved through communication, by students talking it out. Certainly mediation is an important piece of conflict resolution, but ideally we want more resolved by communication because, as you can see, as we move down this list, the people in conflict lose power, they lose control. With communication, they have control of both the process and the

outcome. By the time we get to mediation, they have control of the outcome, but not the process.

Interestingly enough, when you talk about mediation, most educators say, "Oh, I mediate all the time. I'm a great mediator." But in fact they're arbitrating, and they don't even realize it. They're using their power and authority to influence students to make certain decisions. But mediators don't have that kind of power or that influence; they're just there to help the parties to communicate and work it out.

So today we're going to be talking about programs that foster this particular skill. For a variety of reasons, it's a very effective approach. I'm going to turn things over to Denise Messina and Maya Grey, who will tell you a little bit about their programs and introduce their students.

DENISE MESSINA (DM): I'm going to introduce my students in a few minutes, but before I do, I would like to tell you about our school and how Springfield's school department got its peer mediation program. Springfield is the second largest school system in New England, with 40,000 students. About three years ago, a local community mediation program received some grant money from the Massachusetts Attorney General's office. Because the majority of conflict is at the middle school level, our superintendent committed to funding three positions for our six middle schools. I had two schools to begin with, and now I'm a full-time coordinator in a school of about 900 students.

Springfield is a diverse community, which, like many urban communities, has a commitment to schools of choice. Any student in any neighborhood can go to any city school within our system. Consequently, we have pretty close to racial balancing in all our schools. Our population is about one-third white, one-third black, one-third Hispanic, and about five percent Asian.

You know we drove for two hours from Springfield, and in the car on the way here, there were some problems that were going on between two of my mediators. I was going to have them explain mediation, but instead I'm going to put them on the spot right now to resolve their problem. I was going to introduce them to you, but you'll find out more about them afterwards.

Richard (M1): I'm Richard, and this is my co-mediator Hassan. We'll be the mediators for the session. Mediation is voluntary; you don't have to be here if you don't want to. The purpose of mediation is to help you guys come to your own agreement. We're not judges, we can't tell you, "You're right" or "You're wrong." And mediation is confidential; everything said in this session will stay between us.

Hassan (M2): We'll be taking notes; we'll rip them up at the

end of the session. You guys can also take notes if you want to. There will be no interruptions. And there will be no name calling or violence in this session. If we have to go in private session, that means one of you will have to step out of the room. Do you want to go first?

Marilyn (G): Well, you see what happened, he just started pushing me, and this has been going on like this all day. And he's been talking about me, and saying I was a thief all week.

M1: OK, so now what you're saying is that he started it, that you guys started pushing each other, and that he started saying that you were a thief. And this started this morning?

Jonathan (B): You saw what happened. I didn't call her a thief and I don't know who called her a thief.

M1: So you're saying you didn't call her a thief?

B: Yes.

M2: You have anything else to say?

B: Not right now.

G: Well, my friends told me that you've been calling me a thief, and I believe my friends 'cause they never lie to me.

B: I was your friend.

G: Well, but now that I have new friends, it seems that you ain't. 'Cause you don't talk to me any more.

M1: So let's bring it back. What you're saying is that your friends told you that he started talking junk about you. Saying you're a thief and everything, and you believed them because they're your friends now, and he used to be your friend, but now he's not.

M2: So you guys used to be friends.

B: Well, I don't really have a problem with her and her new friends because we still have some of the same old friends.

M1: So you're saying you don't have a problem with her friends?

B: No.

M2: You want to say anything else?

B: Well, this wouldn't have started if she hadn't took my jacket.

M2: So you're saying that she took your jacket?

B: Yeah, it wasn't really mine, it was my brother's. Now I'll get in trouble with him because she wears it and acts like it's hers, even though I only let her borrow it.

M1: Oh, so you let her borrow your jacket, and she hasn't given it back yet.

B: No. I tried to call her and stuff, but I can never get

through to her, and her mother always sounds angry and stuff like that.

M2: OK, so what do you have to add to that?

G: Oh, well, the jacket, well I never see him wear it, so I asked him if I could have it, and he gave it to me. He shouldn't give something away if he wants it back. And I never knew it was his brother's. If it was his brother's and he would have asked for it, I would have given it back to him. He never asked for it.

B: I tried to, but with you or one of your friends wearing it, what was I supposed to say?

G: Well, you just come up to me and say, "Can you give it back?" And then about the phone calls, sometimes my mother doesn't give me the messages, and you know that when she ties up the line, she ties up the line. She does not get off the phone.

M1: OK, so what you're saying is that you asked him for the jacket and he gave it to you. And you didn't know it was his brother's, so you didn't give it back. He never asked for it?

G: No, no.

M2: And your mom, she didn't give you the messages? You didn't know who was calling and trying to reach you?

G: Sometimes I forget to call him, but sometimes my mom doesn't give me the message.

M2: You got anything to add to that?

B: No, all I want is my jacket back.

G: Well, I could give it back to him in a week.

M1: So how do you want this resolved?

G: Well, I just want him to apologize for calling me a thief, when I wasn't even a thief.

B: And I want her to apologize for embarrassing me in front of everybody.

M1: So do you think we can put that into an agreement? OK, so we can write, "Marilyn agrees to return Jonathan's brother's jacket." When?

G: Next week.

M2: Is that OK with you?

B: Yeah.

M1: Ok, so we can write, "Marilyn agrees to return Jonathan's brother's jacket next week, by the latest." Number two, we put "Jonathan apologizes to Marilyn for calling her mother names."

M2: What about the phone calls?

G: Well, he can call and leave a message, and I'll try and

call him back, but I don't want him to keep on calling.

B: Alright.

M1: OK, so we can put it, "Marilyn agrees to call back Jonathan if he leaves a message." Jonathan agrees to leave messages if he calls her house?

B: Alright.

M1/2: OK, Jonathan and Marilyn both agree to go back to their friendship. We have taken part in a mediation session, on July 7, 1994, and we have voluntarily agreed to the following. "Number one: Marilyn agrees to return Jonathan's brother's jacket next week. Number two: Jonathan apologizes to her for calling her mother names. Number three: Marilyn agrees to call back Jonathan if he leaves a message. Number four: Jonathan agrees to leave messages if he calls her house. Number five: They both agree to go back to their friendship." Please sign here.

Congratulations. Thanks a lot, we hope it works out. Here's your copy. And here's your copy.

DM: Thanks. We wanted to show you really what it looks like. Every year we train students. I'm a full-time coordinator available to the school, to the faculty, to the students. This year we had close to 500 referrals, 450 of which were actually appropriate for mediation. The model in my school means that I do some of the mediation myself. But 60 percent of those 450 cases were co-mediated by two students, like this one was. Sometimes I co-mediate with students, and we sit together as equals on one side of the table, and the parties sit on the other side. That kind of gives you a sense of our mediation program in Springfield.

RC: I'd like to have Maya Grey tell us about her program and then we'll take all your questions and talk about the pros and cons of this idea, the difficulties and the strengths.

MG: Our school is a regional vocational high school, drawing 1,200 students from eight towns and one city — Brockton. About 60 percent of our students are from Brockton and the rest from smaller communities such as Norton, Mansfield, Foxboro, and Sharon. All the students at our school come there competitively, but we're not looking for especially academically oriented students. Because it's a vocational school, many of the teachers have not had a lot of theoretical training in education. They are just beginning to learn about conflict resolution.

I wrote a grant for Drug-Free Schools funds and there was some extra money that I was allowed to use for violence prevention. I then wrote a second grant for mediation. Richard Cohen came and trained 15 students and five

adults for the program, and it's now in its first full year. We're making an effort to find alternatives to the suspension and punishment models, but of course, mediation doesn't take their place. I think that the most important part of a mediation program in our school is having the support of the staff. The people who are in charge of the students must see it as a valuable tool for themselves and for the students.

We had about 115 mediations in this past year, and I think it's helping the climate of the school enormously. I've watched the kids who are mediators grow by leaps and bounds. It's been a very positive experience for me personally and for the students. We're going to train 15 more students this year.

I did a number of things to publicize the program, including a demonstration with four of the mediators in all the tenth-grade social studies classes, and the ninth-grade health classes. We also had posters all over the school.

Now, I'd like the students to tell you about their experiences:

B: Last year we had 45 mediations in two months. We've helped a lot of people get the knives and the guns out of their hands. I've buried about six of my friends in the past two years from violence. The most recent incident happened about three months ago. The kid was shot in Brockton. He just happened to be a friend of mine who was in the wrong place at the wrong time. It's got to stop, that's all there is to it.

G: Well, I'm in the eighth grade and I trained in the sixth grade, and in that three-year period I did about 40 mediations.

B: I'm in the seventh grade, I got trained in the sixth grade. In that two- or three-year period, I've done about 35 mediations.

MG: Our trainings in the past have been primarily with students, but we also trained a total of 18 teachers this year and held two training sessions in which the students and teachers trained side by side. It was very powerful for all of us.

B: I liked the training, it was good that the teachers were there, so they could see the violence in the classrooms.

G: I'm in the eighth grade, and I'm not a mediator, but I have gotten involved with mediation. I think it works. It's helped a lot of my friends. There was a homicide right near my house about a month ago. The victim was one of my friends.

MG: How different was that issue than issues that come up in middle school? You were there when the original argu-

ment happened right?

G: Yeah. There could have been a way it could have been solved. It was just over a lot of dirty looks and stuff. If somebody had come and talked to the three people that were arguing, maybe it could have gotten solved that way instead of somebody getting shot.

I'm a recent graduate of South Easton, and in our school mediation is incredible. There's a big difference from before when the only form of punishment was *suspension*, period! Now they have a chance to work out their problem and come back from their suspension. They still get suspended, but sometimes they can get a lesser sentence. And they can come back and work it out through mediation. In doing that, they can work out the problem and not get suspended again, because if you're suspended you're out. And when you come back you've still got the problem there; it's not just going to go away.

RC: I think at this point we want to open up to your questions and comments and concerns. This is not an easy program to implement. It's also not a panacea.

Question and Answer Session

Q: I'd like lots of logistical information. How do you link the program to the overall discipline policy? Where does mediation take place in the building? How do you schedule trainings?

MG: Let me just address how it fits into our school's discipline policy. Students can refer themselves, and most of our referrals come directly from students. Students can also be referred by a teacher or an administrator. If there is a conflict and it hasn't gone to the point of breaking any school rule such as an actual fight, then it will be referred by a teacher. If the students have already broken the rule, or the discipline code about fighting, mediation doesn't substitute for discipline. The students involved still go out for suspension, but I usually see them when they come back in and see if they want to try to resolve whatever the issue was that got them into a fight and suspended.

G: Another part of his question was, *where*? We usually mediate in Mrs. Grey's office unless it's full. If it's full, we'll go down to one of the teacher's rooms, if they're not busy. Whenever we do a mediation, there's always an adult in the room unless it's not too serious, because if things get out of hand, we really don't have any power to stop it.

Q: Did you train people after school and during the summer?

G: We trained three days in the middle of the week during school.

G: We trained a total of 20 hours during school.

Q: So you were released from classes to go?

G: Yes.

B: If we are in classes, and a mediation comes up, then we have to make up the work; so we're not really getting out of school work.

DM: The kids worked out a schedule so they were on call.

G: Denise has a calendar on her door and we schedule ourselves when we're free, or if we have a test, we won't use that period.

Q: One quick question about your trainees. Do you have ongoing contact with your mediators? Our school has 15 mediators and they always want to get together as a group to talk about the process. And I wondered if you had that built into your system.

DM: I have a lot of contact with my mediators, but they don't get together as a whole group.

Q: The other question I had was, after you've done a mediation with two disputants, do you have kids who then try to bond with you and think that you're their personal confidante?

B: I had that happen once, and it's always good to have another friend. The kid was at my locker doing my combination for me — stuff like that. It's good; they're like hey, thanks a lot, and they tell their friends, "He helped me out."

Q: My question is about the recruitment process and how you all felt being recruited. How were you recruited, and what it was like if someone else recommended you? What did you hear from your peers?

G: I had to fill out an application like a job application. You write down how you feel about violence, and how you plan to stop it. And Denise goes to your teachers, and asks them if you're doing well in your classes, how they think you would be as a mediator, and are you doing well enough to take the time out of class.

DM: It's very prestigious in our school. There are more people who want to be mediators than could possibly be trained. I get input from teachers and parents, initially. Parents need to know that students are going to miss class time, and approve of it, and I can't take them out of class if the teachers don't want them to miss the class time. The students must have a minimum of a "C" or their teachers just won't let them out of class.

MG: I have a lot of kids who are not all "A" students. I want to have all kinds of students in our program. I think that if we didn't do that it wouldn't be successful for lots of reasons. I really like to involve the teachers, because they'll support the program if they feel like they're part of it, you know. So I send them a letter and tell them what we did this year and that I am looking for students to be mediators. Other kids have to like them; that's really the big thing.

DM: Something that I've done more this year than past years, which I feel is a really important part of my job, is to eat in the lunchroom where I actually can see the different groups of students. I really try to recruit at least one mediator from every group. I've never had a student say they didn't want to be a mediator.

RD: The diversity of the group is absolutely essential. It's so common for us, as trainers, to go to a school and have all the honor role type kids, which isn't helpful in terms of getting credibility from the rest of the school. Not only that, but when the students go into the training, they're often meeting a group of students that they would never have spoken to had they not gone through this sort of program.

Q: I was wondering if teachers sit in on any of the mediation that goes on and if you have a mediator for teacher-student differences.

DM: We did that this year. And I think the hardest thing is that the teacher has to have a measure of self-esteem. They really have to have a measure of confidence and a willingness to give up the authoritarian kind of power that many of them assume.

MG: The other thing I would say is in the middle school it is more of an obstacle because the middle school teachers have a more difficult time sitting with the student as an equal. We're three years now into the program. The teachers have accepted it and want the training. So I think we're moving in that direction.

RC: Just a quick note on that; some teams have started with a teacher and a student always mediating together, never only peers mediating. Personally I think that's a mistake. I think that it changes the whole tone when there's an adult as a mediator rather than just students. Students have some unique advantages as mediators.

B: Miss Grey's always in the room, and I've had people start to say something and they look over at her. They wouldn't tell an adult what they'd tell me, but because it's all confidential, it's not going to get out of the room. We only tell Miss Grey if it's life threatening, and she deals with it.

Q: How do you evaluate your program? Do you send out a survey? Do you question the parents or faculty, the students or mediators? How do you evaluate the program so that you can justify it to the folks downtown?

RD: That's always an issue, of course. It's very difficult to say if we hadn't had a specific number of mediations we wouldn't have had a certain number of fights. How do we know that? We don't know that. When I wrote my new grant, I wrote we have had so many mediations, we've had so many agreements, we've had so many mediations hold, and so many break down. Therefore, our percentage of success was 90, or whatever percent it was. Ninety percent of the mediations were resolved peacefully. I hear, too, being around the all the time; I know when mediations break down. I know that; the kids come and tell me.

DM: We keep statistics also, and have to report monthly how many referrals, how many cases, how many agreements. But I think that still doesn't address the question of justification. Our school department is looking at whether mediation is keeping the suspension rate down. And what's really interesting is that I think that that's a difficult question to answer because our city has changed in the last three years. We've gone from junior highs to middle schools. We've had schools of choice, which has moved kids to different neighborhoods. Our suspension rate may look as if it's the same, but with the changes that were going on in our system, it probably would have been higher without the program.

My school is notorious for fights that are left until the last day because the kids figure they won't get suspended. This year we didn't have one. My principal came up to me and said, "I just want to thank you." The police said that they see fewer after school problems. So you can't evaluate the program just by our suspension rate.

RC: Let me say, too, that there's going to be a conference this fall to evaluate mediation programs and to really set the agenda for the next decade. Although there are thousands of these programs, research is very spotty. We don't know exactly what's working, and what's not working.

We know for instance that the mediators benefit a lot. We don't know how much all the parties benefit. If we know that conflicts are resolved and that 90 percent of the time kids don't have to come back, we know that mediation is powerful, but we don't know what kind of long-term impact it has on the parties at this point.

Q: How much work is done within your school curriculum, dealing with the upper part of that continuum, with the resolution process?

DM: Springfield has a violence prevention life skills program for the fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade level. I have actually brought some of my mediators to do some outreach in the local elementary schools. Every fourth, fifth, and sixth grader in our system now has been exposed to these ideas, and the last piece is the option of mediation at sixth grade.

RC: In general, the curricular approach has been a lot more effective at the elementary level because it's a lot easier to do it in self-contained classrooms. But there are all sorts of curricula increasingly available on conflict resolution.

Q: During the mediations that you guys described, are there ever times that issues like trauma come up, or that something is getting out of hand? There's violence? Someone has a weapon? Do you ever see signs of difficulties at home, for example, and have any of you received training on how to deal with issues like trauma or violence in mediation itself?

G: I've had a mediation come up where there was a gun involved, but we haven't really received any instruction on how to handle trauma, or abuse in the family.

Q: If that did come up in a case, what would you do?

G: If it was something we thought we couldn't handle I would have to refer it to Mrs. Grey. Or even take her aside and ask her how I would handle it myself.

MG: That's one of the reasons why there's always an adult in the room.

G: We've had some cases where it's ended up that one person just runs out, and the other one runs after them, and it's just like, Oh God, you know . . . What do we do now?

Q: What do we do now?

G: We can't do nothing, all we can do is sit there because we don't have the authority to go after them.

W: When you're doing training you need to be very clear about anything that comes up about a weapon or anything illegal or life threatening; they're an immediate referral. You need to be very clear and concise: such incidents immediately go to a higher level.

G: It does, it does, it does.

B: Say someone, say I've had one of these situations where a kid owed another kid money for drugs; it's dangerous, it's life threatening, but you can't refer it up. I'm not going to pass it up because it's confidential — you're not supposed to tell anybody.

MG: Things that are life-threatening are not confidential.

B: But it's different. It depends, you got to use your best judgment if it's really life threatening or not. If someone mentions drugs, I don't automatically bring it up.

G: If we did that for every case, we'd have none.

RC: Drugs is a Pandora's box; we've had programs almost close because the students didn't want to mediate because the administration said, any time someone mentions drugs in our building, you have to tell us.

Q: I'm wondering what you did to get the teachers to understand the importance of mediation?

MG: In my school, what I needed to do was have the staff accept me first as a staff member. They needed to trust the process and so, at every opportunity, I let them know that it was in their hands. In other words, "If you don't want to let a student out of your class, that's ok with me, you don't have to give a pass." I would address faculty meetings. When I sent for a student from a class, I'd say, "Only with your permission, only if it's convenient at this time," always letting them choose whether or not the student was going to participate. Now after three years, few teachers will not

let students out of their class. I think most of them support the program and will encourage students to use it, or at least support them, and if a student says, "I really need to go to mediation," the teachers will just write a pass and say, "Go ahead."

DM: I want to say, too, that when I get referrals for mediation, I always report back to the teacher who makes the referral. It's really important to call them back or send a paper back, so that they know what happened, and that we paid attention to them.

RC: The way I conceptualize this is that we have to work on several levels: through the curriculum, through staff education, through service, and through training. We have to work through the administration so that they feel comfortable and model this when they're dealing with each other, with the teachers, and parents. Finally, we need programmatic efforts, like peer mediation. The more you can work on all those levels, the stronger your effort will be. If you just do a mediation program, it's not going to be as strong as if you do mediation and staff training. Or mediation, staff training, and some sort of curricular component.

Violence Prevention Programs in Four School Systems: Practitioner Teams Describe the Implementation Process

Jersey City, New Jersey

Joseph Sperlazza, Sylvia Elias, Daniel Guerra

DR. SYLVIA ELIAS (SE): Let me give you a little bit of history about Jersey City so that you can understand how we came to be the first school district ever in the United States to be taken over by a state Board of Education. The city was mismanaging the district's funds. The New Jersey Office of Administrative Law held months of hearings before deciding that the district should be taken over. In October 1989, the old superintendent, the director of pupil services (my predecessor), and others were removed, and a new administrative team was put in place. I came in after the state takeover, into one of the few district positions designated to remain intact once the state had left, and we began to look at what the district needed, particularly in my area of responsibility, student personnel services. I had under me not only Special Education, but also Student Support Services, including the guidance counselors and the alternative programs we developed as part of *Project REACT (Referral to Educational Alternatives, Counseling and Training)*, a comprehensive model for service delivery.

People who come from districts like Miami, with over a million students county-wide, laugh when I call Jersey City a large district. But with 30,000 kids, we're the second largest in New Jersey, behind Newark. For us it was no joke, because we felt every kid in the district was at risk. We had a rather dramatic drop-out rate, as you may have guessed already, in the ninth grade, where the kids have to make that transition. For me, the ideal schools are K or pre-K-12 schools, but in Jersey City we are diffusing the delivery of services even more by further developing middle schools. I think this is tragic.

Anyway, we developed *Project REACT* with the idea that instead of delivering services to kids and their families in isolation — having one building deliver one thing and another building deliver another thing — we would try to

consolidate all the services around one theme. We began to combine services in an effort to serve the kids best. That's how we developed *REACT*.

In the last three or four years, we have developed a number of initiatives. One of them we call the *Pupil Assistance Committee*. This initiative, which for now is mandated in New Jersey, helps general education students obtain remedial services or counseling services without referral to a child study team.

The second is the *Bridges Alternative School*. We started with 40 or so kids and now we have 451. It serves students from fourth grade to ninth grade, and it operates under the assumption that not every kid who is failing needs to be in Special Education. There are many kids who need services because they may have moved about frequently. They may have had disruption in their lives. Before you know it, they're two or three grade levels behind their peers. The *Bridges* program is functioning very well now. I just attended this year's graduation of 67 students from the eighth grade, up from the 23 who graduated the first year. The program has really come a long way. We see the kids making progress emotionally and academically. *Bridges* functions like a family, breaking the cycle of anonymity that we all say is so dangerous for kids. There are only 15 kids per class, guaranteeing that an adult gets to know every student's name. Many of us come from schools where there were at least 30 kids in a class.

Using local, state, federal, and private funding sources, we also developed the *Interagency Task Force*, a community agency support system. We weren't sure how to get it off the ground at first, but now it's one of our most successful projects. It started two years ago, when I was approached by a member of Horizon Health Center. Horizon is a Jersey City agency somewhat like Planned Parenthood that, in addition to delivering prenatal, pregnancy, and postnatal

care for adolescents, does counseling with the fathers of the teenagers and runs a cooking school for the client population. This has been so successful that they just bought a restaurant. Horizon is developing as a community resource, a place where kids really feel welcome. Anyway, the director of Horizon Health Center, Marilyn Bennett, told me the agency had been wanting to work with the Jersey City Public Schools for a long time but had never had an opportunity. Nobody had ever been receptive. So I invited my colleague, Joe Sperlazza, to go to a meeting with her and Martha Lewin from the YWCA, one of the assistant superintendents, and an executive state assistant. We gave her our vision of what we wanted to do — to work with the community agencies in the city, with the non-profits as well as with the welfare department, to form a cohesive group that would provide services to kids and families. We were all servicing the same kids and the same families, and the kids rotating through all of our agencies were falling through the cracks.

As a result of that initial meeting, we called our very first joint meeting in August, inviting all the non-profit agencies, including DYFS, Welfare, and the hospitals. In the past two years, we have been meeting monthly, developing a number of initiatives in the district that really have had an impact on kids. As an example, jointly with the non-profit agencies, we hired an MSW social worker, housing her at one of our elementary schools. Her job was to link the kids and families to services in the community so that they wouldn't get lost. She had access to the highest person in that organization. She didn't have to go through the usual case management process of calling a social worker at DYFS, for example, and having to wait until it was her turn. She could call the director or the director's designee directly and get immediate results. That consortium or task force has been working very well for us and for the kids.

We are now at the point that others have heard about our efforts and joined us. The prosecutor's office now sits with us. In addition to the prosecutor, the Afro-American churches sit with us — they have been very supportive of our beginning efforts. The city, too, has now joined us. In fact, in an effort to obtain a three million dollar grant, the city used the Interagency Task Force to produce a plan for funding. They consulted us on both the school and the

human services support segments. They asked us to help them figure out how to write a proposal that would predict the impact of these new school collaborations.

When we began to hear that violence is our worst problem in the schools, we wondered what we could do to stop it. We recognized that we alone in the Jersey City Public Schools could not solve the problem, because these are kids who go through the court system and come out of the court system, who go through the youth house and come out of the youth house. Since they have various involvements with community agencies, we figured that the best way to begin to develop a violence prevention initiative was not only to do it internally, but to work closely with the community.

JOSEPH SPERLAZZA (JS): For our purposes, the collaborative contextual piece is absolutely essential. Once the barriers between the separate organizations started to tumble, it got us to thinking about kids in many contexts and all the agencies that were working with different pieces of the families' problems — courts, social services, schools, whatever. It was important that we recognized the need to blend our efforts. We couldn't have come as far as we have without people in different agencies sharing our motivation and interests. Our *Project REACT* really gave us an umbrella within

which we could work together — a framework to keep coming back to, to see how specific services were relating to one another in the district.

Our violence prevention program is not just a mediation program. An important component of our program is our early childhood program. Our early childhood team consists of social workers, support staff, and an education team that works with families, going into the housing projects to work with families. Conceptually, we view Head Start as a violence prevention program.

It is important to us to make services as seamless as possible from birth onward. We used a design borrowed from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) to help us all think about change. The more we learn about the process — change itself — and remember that our efforts to devise new programs are happening within that context, the more successful we will be. While we are responsible for what goes on in schools, we

We were all servicing the same kids and the same families, and the kids rotating through all of our agencies were falling through the cracks.

need to be attentive to what's happening outside of schools. We discovered, for example, that lots of people were doing things with parents, but parent trainers were not talking to each other to synchronize their efforts. We can run lots of programs inside a school building, but if everything in the neighborhood, the community, and students' homes goes untouched, what's it all for? We need to support neighborhood initiatives — like the neighborhood leadership training program that has emerged out of our county's community partnership grant.

Staff development is a big part of our violence prevention effort. Our staff has received extensive training and supervision by the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ). We're doing staff training and supervision in both the sudden violent loss and mediation areas. Our framework includes both district and cluster-level crisis intervention teams. Dr. Guerra will now talk to you about the curricular components of what we're doing.

DR. DANIEL GUERRA (DG): After my colleague Sally Juliano and I returned from last year's *Coping With Violence in the Schools* conference here at Harvard, we were asked to develop a violence prevention curriculum by January 1994. We were also given responsibility for staff development, parent training, and a mediation program to be conducted in ten pilot schools. We found the six elementary schools and four high schools with the most reported incidents of violence and designated them as pilot schools.

We decided that rather than re-invent the wheel, we would use existing curricula, if practical. Every curriculum that we looked at dealt with anger management, impulse control, empathy training, and conflict resolution. We have tentatively decided to use the *Second Step* curriculum in grades one through eight. It was "teacher friendly," developmentally sequential, and it allowed you to teach isolated lessons. We also tentatively chose Deborah Prothrow-Stith's *Violence Prevention* curriculum for the high schools.

One stumbling block we encountered was getting the principals on board. We ran into the following kinds of reactions:

"I'm the captain of my own ship; I don't need your help." "We've tried it before. It doesn't work." "I can't release my teachers for hours of training because there's nobody to take their place." "We have a vice principal in charge of discipline. He'll handle it."

Thanks to Joe, who kept trying to put some kind of carrot in front of them so they'd understand that there was something in this for all of them, eventually six of the ten

principals bought into the programs. Now that the programs have shown some success and we've gotten positive community response, the others have become more interested. It's amazing how things have snowballed — with the Interagency Task Force behind us, the community responding, the principals all wanting to participate. Following Margot's lead and the conference here last summer (*Coping With Violence*, 1993), we are now going to run our own conference next week.

Concurrent with our curriculum focus is our effort to synchronize parent training. Our pre-school program had social workers delivering the EPIC program, and our health supervisor was delivering an AIDS-related parent program, and our DFSCA (Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act) staff were working with parents as well. So Joe Spelazza suggested that we all get together, and that is what we're doing now. We're trying to get all the components of what we're doing in parent training under one umbrella so that we can be more effective.

The eight-week parent training course that Sally and I do with some child study team members aims to help parents identify and cope with their feelings. Through activities, written exercises, and dialogue, we show parents that there are constructive ways to channel anger and to express frustrations without being destructive. The parents love it. We provide baby-sitting, coffee, and donuts. We have volunteers. People come in early to help us set up and use the library.

Sally and I also conducted the staff development programs. They included six hours of violence prevention training (in three two-hour blocks) at each of our high schools. Six to ten teachers from each school participated. We dealt with four specific areas: values, communication, feelings, and anger management. Many of the teachers found it helpful and enlightening. Many times teachers didn't realize they were exacerbating the situation — not realizing that a kid was angry, for example. One of the teachers said to me:

You know, after coming here (to the training) for six weeks, I realize what I've been doing wrong. Johnny didn't come to my homeroom. I would see him in the hall and, as I was walking on patrol, I'd see him and say, "You didn't come to my homeroom. You're in trouble now." But what does the kid do then? He has to defend himself. There are all kinds of ways to approach kids and that's not the right one. What I was doing was wrong. Now, I'm not exactly friendlier, but I'm more aware of my own feelings, of the destructive communication style I was using, of the barriers I was putting

up between me and Johnny. I realize that my actions and behavior and temperament may cause a violent reaction in the student and I just better back off and redefine how to deal with him. It works!

We treated the teachers like professionals. And you know, 50 percent of the challenge is knowing you have the problem. Once teachers, students, and parents realize they have a problem, they begin to find alternatives and channel anger into something constructive.

JS: Dan spoke before about getting the principals on board. When we did the staff training, the staff from one high school told us that they couldn't get their principal to sit down with them. Their principal and vice principal are both former military men and retain a certain military mindset. Imagine our surprise to be called to a meeting with this principal who asked us, "What am I going to do about violence in my school?" The final straw for him was standing with a police officer in the hall and stopping a kid. The kid pulled a knife on him, was arrested, went to court, and was back in the building in three days. The principal now has a high level of motivation to do something. At one point, he called the police when he heard there was going to be a fight at three o'clock and they told him they couldn't send anybody because it was when the officers go off shift. The police officers that are going off duty and the ones who are coming on have to be at the precinct. What's wrong with the picture? Do we have to talk with the unions? Clearly systems interface issues need to be addressed here. Our work was — and is — to help the principal make new connections between himself, his staff, and others who are ready to make new, supportive links.

We've had several tragedies this year. In December we had a suicide at Snider High School. A special ed student was shot in the head at PS 32. We had a triple murder in the projects adjoining PS 22 where a mother, her 14-year-old daughter, and her four-year-old daughter were killed. The 14-year-old attended PS 22. There's now an empty seat where there used to be a kid. Children miss that girl. Staff miss that child. There's much that we need to deal with here. In terms of context, there's a responsiveness in that building for the things we're talking about. At PS 3, a kid pulled out a gun and shot a friend in the hand. At another school, a sixth grader was busted in school with a suitcase of cocaine and a gun. Incidents like these certainly created a climate in which people were calling for something to be done.

At a community meeting after one shooting, I met an assistant prosecutor who is involved with a human relations

committee in our county. We talked a bit, and soon the guy was coming to our Interagency Task Force meetings. His boss, our prosecutor, has turned out to be a really good ally for us. His name is Carmen Mesano. What is wonderful about him is that he sees the need for prevention, all the way down to early childhood. He's busting adolescents and adults and prosecuting them, but his awareness is broader than that. Carmen is not only a friendly ear, he's a voice in our community.

We've also been working with a number of people from the courts. We hired a Crisis Intervention Teacher to work with kids moving in and out of the court system, but there was a shortfall in funding and the position had to be postponed. We've been working closely with a judge who's the chair of our County Youth Services Commission. The commission oversees the money that comes into our county for youth services programs and case management at the courts.

While I'm talking a lot about programs, models, and mechanisms, ultimately everything I'm describing relies upon a person's relationship with another person — the kid with the staff person, the staff person with the principal, or us with the prosecutor, for instance. Developing relationships is what any of our successes is really all about.

SE: Many of the problems we've experienced have been internal, and I'll give you my perception of why that has happened. Number one, Jersey City's was a hostile state takeover. In many instances, people are waiting for the state to leave so that they can go back to "business as usual." Part of the resistance that we have had from some of our principals and staff can be attributed to that. In fact, the principal Joe and Dan were describing is a person who resisted many of our intervention efforts and did so very calmly. He is now being considered to be the next superintendent because our superintendent has resigned. So we are headed for another major transition. To add to some of the difficulties we have had internally, we have also been faced with a number of organizational changes. In four or five years, we have reorganized the district five times. This is the first year we have had staff cutbacks. *Project REACT*, which we developed three years ago, all of sudden has been spread apart in the organizational chain. Joe will be responsible for *Project REACT*, but the people with whom he needs to work are not going to be within my department but somewhere else.

We had expanded our programs from mediation training and curriculum to a projected boot camp. This morning people were saying that the boot camp concept is not a popular idea. Our boot camp concept was different. The idea was that we would create a center for kids that was not limited to six months like most boot camps. Kids could

leave the camp for various kinds of social services and intervention, and would exit the program with at least one area of solid training so that they could be immediately employable.

Between the mediation and the boot camp, we had a very nice program that we were intending to develop for kids who had been through the court system repeatedly. What we wanted to do was to put no more than six in a class. We intended to train everybody in that building, including the guards, in mediation and violence prevention. We were working through the Interagency Task Force so that there would be community involvement. Unfortunately, a high-ranking member of our district spoke to the press prematurely, and once the press got hold of it, the residents of the area where we were planning to place the school raised holy hell and the whole thing had to be scrapped.

JS: You all know what NIMBY is: "Not in my backyard." The headline went something like "Program for Disruptive Youth to be Housed in Old PS 35."

When kids are violent and get arrested, they move through a sequence. They are arrested, prosecuted, and defended in the courts, and a disposition decision is made by the judge. They might, for instance, go to a juvenile detention facility and then re-enter the community on probation. On July 11th, we will sponsor a conference that will gather together about 100 people to talk about this sequence and the interface with schools. The principal from the high school where many weapons were confiscated will talk about what it's like living with violence in a high school. The principal who lost a 14-year-old is going to talk about what it's like to have an empty seat where there used to be a kid. Reverend Troy DeCohn from *Life Changing Ministries* is going to talk about how, for instance, snowball fights in front of his door turn into gunfights. Juvenile detention and probation people will also be presenting, as will the police director and the public defender. Two judges will also take part.

One of our detectives is as much a community activist as you could ever pray to have. He is doing all sorts of things, like setting up volunteer programs. He's wonderful to work with. And he's from the streets. When he talks his stuff, he talks from the streets. His message is powerful. For

lots of the connections we need to make with kids in the community, hearing that side is just as important as any highfalutin stuff that we might share with them. When the judges heard that the conference would provide an opportunity for them to sit down with others and talk about glitches in the system, you didn't have to sell them. People want to get together.

On the first day, we're hoping to get these folks who are key players in different systems together with our ten violence prevention pilot school people and some key members of the community. We're targeting important issues that we need to start talking about. On the second day, we'll be presenting some of the initiatives underway in the district. We're going to show them what we're doing with curriculum, with the early childhood program, and parent training. Then we will invite them — as the leaders in our community — to become part of Action Teams.

Systems interface points are critical. We know we can't work alone inside a building. At the county level, we're working very closely with the people that are reforming Welfare. In fact, Dr. Elias had mentioned the service broker

that's based at PS 3. We picked PS 3 because 86 percent of the population there is on public assistance and it was a nice marriage of interests. We need to target family self-sufficiency if kids in that school are going to progress. The service broker's position was co-funded this year so that the salary came from our district, from the coalition of non-profit agencies, and from the family development program.

Resistance shows up everywhere. Anytime somebody feels they are losing something — prestige, power, influence, money — you can expect it. Ours is a takeover district, so we know a lot about resistance to change. We found ourselves fighting to get staff out for training for the new programs — principals and other administrators didn't want them out of the building. "They should be with the kids. That's what they're paid for." To get around barriers like that we had to sponsor Saturday training sessions. We used Drug-Free Schools money for this because there's a clear link between violence and drugs.

Another great thing was making contact with Dr. Paulette Hines, a psychologist who coordinates the Office of Prevention Services for UMDNJ. Paulette went to the

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New Jersey Psychological Association and began talking about what we were doing. "You should see these guys in Jersey City. If you want to volunteer, you should spend some time there." She's trying to secure psychologists willing to provide *pro bono* services to our district. In the NJPA newsletter, psychologists were urged to come and volunteer. Paulette has also tried to secure similar volunteer services from the New Jersey Black Psychologists Association. Contacts really help. These things can happen in your communities too.

Throughout the year we met with a cadre of 24 staff members from the ten pilot schools. When we first came together, we were at odds with each other, but it was wonderful to see the camaraderie and rapport that we established in ten months. The first few sessions that we were together, they indicated that their workloads had to be reduced in order for them to work successfully and use their sudden violent loss training and their mediation training. In the end, there was little if any reduction in their workload, but they became much more able and willing to work with us.

We have mediation programs going on in ten pilot schools, but the level of use is different in each building. We need to determine where they fall on a continuum from level zero (absolute non-use) all the way to level six (where people are highly trained, clear about what they're doing

and can even take the program beyond what its developers intended). It's important, to be effective, to determine where people are on a kind of continuum of need — kind of like Maslow's developmental hierarchy. If people don't feel comfortable about the impact of new programs on them, and aren't fully aware of what you're talking about, you can't move on to tackle management and implementation issues. As you move up, sharing information and building relationships with them, you'll see that they and their programs become more sophisticated and responsive.

SE: We have benefitted from a lot of assistance and we have encountered tremendous obstacles. For example, someone who supported us wholeheartedly at the beginning of our project withdrew support at the last minute, after we were already wholeheartedly committed and had the staff motivated and interested. Last year at the conference here we were a group of rebels — going off to meet by ourselves, in the afternoons, to develop our three year project. We had it all outlined by the time we left here last year. Joe, Danny, and Sally have shown tremendous resiliency and have put forth great effort and commitment in getting this project off the ground. They really deserve all the credit for this project because they have convinced people, they haveajoled, they have threatened, they have not lied but close to it, and have really given this project their all.

Worcester, Massachusetts

Ed Faron

ED FARON (EF): I'm going to talk to you about the development of our *Crisis Response Program*, a school safety evaluation, violence prevention, and intervention format and curriculum for a system of 22,000 kids. Worcester is a small city about 40 miles west of Boston, with a population of 169,000 in 1990. We lost 6,000 people between the 1990 census and July of '92. The loss was the fourth largest urban population drop in the country. Between 1982 and 1992, the city lost 16,000 jobs, primarily manufacturing. Worcester is an old New England manufacturing city. The school minority population within a period of ten years went from about 17 percent to 40 percent system-wide. The school system started a voluntary desegregation program without forced busing by setting up community schools, magnet schools, and specialty schools. Economically, the city has a low-income population of

about 17 percent, compared to an 8 percent community average across the state.

The city is 37.7 square miles. Most of the gangs come from an area of 3.7 square miles, where 18.6 percent of the population lives on 10 percent of the land. And 70 percent of all of the city's low-income people are in that area. The population density in some neighborhoods is as high as 15,000 per square mile. It's a very dense and intense area.

There are seven elementary schools in that area; we focus on six. The average minority rate in those six schools is 46.6 percent, ranging from 30 percent in one school to 64 percent in another. But the issues are more socioeconomic than racial because the average percentage of low-income kids in those six schools is 78 percent.

I was working as a school adjustment counselor, which is a school social worker, in a high school of about 1,100

kids. The year prior to my arrival, there had been a stabbing and a student had died. The death of this student had an incredible impact on the community because there had never been any situation even close to that event. The immediate response was to place blame and to chop heads. As a result, some very good, competent people were hurt. The principal retired with 39 years, one more to go, and went out under a cloud. A transition team went into the school, and my job was to bring people together to write a Crisis Response Plan, to do a school safety assessment, and to set up a violence prevention program. We set up a mediation program. I was the only one who had any mediation training, so I trained three other people, and in the first year we did 53 mediations.

The mediations were always voluntary and confidential. And the mediators had to stay neutral — they could not take sides. What they did was facilitate agreements. If there was an act of violence, mediation did not take the place of discipline. It was a secondary prevention. In other words, if there was some kind of a problem that had already developed, we moved in and talked with the kids, and if they agreed to mediate, we did. Because there had been no major rules violation, if they did not reach an agreement, there was no punishment.

We did 53 of those the first year, and 162 the second year. We went to the faculty and did a presentation and asked them to watch for and report anything that they thought might be a problem. We told them, "If you see or overhear anything that seems as if it could erupt, tell the Assistant Principal or one of the staff mediators and we'll investigate it right away. If it turns out to be nothing, we'll let you know. And if it turns out to be something, we'll let you know." We always gave the teachers feedback. They felt supported in that they were listened to. We didn't tell them what the issues in the mediation were, but we might say, "Boy, it's a good thing you came and told us about those two kids because I'll tell you, if this situation had waited until lunch time, there would have been an explosion in the cafeteria."

The third year we did 267 mediations, with about 50 percent of the referrals coming from faculty and about 40 percent from kids. Often these were kids who had mouthed off to someone, were afraid of getting their butts kicked, and wanted a way to save face without being assaulted. The

other 10 percent of the referrals came from the community. Over time we developed such an incredible system that if there was a fight at a party in a particular section of the city, either kids or parents or police or a clergyman or neighbor would call the principal or one of the teachers. We would get notified Sunday night and would meet at 6:30 a.m. on Monday. We'd be standing waiting for the buses and immediately separate the belligerents. Kids really accepted mediation as a viable alternative to fighting. It was a legitimate out. As a result, the final year we were in that school, we

did 322 mediations that were all voluntary. In the beginning, most of the mediations were done after a fight, and then the kids finally figured out, well, if we're going to end up mediating and can stop this, let's mediate first. Our criteria for success was that if two kids reached an agreement, they did not make any promises they did not intend to keep. And we periodically monitored the agreement that they reached; it had to hold for

the remainder of the year. That's what made the mediation a success.

The last year we had ten staff mediators. We did 322 mediations with only nine failures. That meant that nine of the agreements did not hold. We went back and reviewed every one. Four failures resulted in fights, but all were outside of school.

We also discovered that there were some kids with personality adjustment problems. We'd mediate with them and then a week later they'd have a problem with another kid; a week later, they'd have a problem with another kid. They never learned from the process. A side benefit of the process was that we were able to rapidly identify serious personality problems. We could bring the parents in and try to get the kid into counseling. In many instances, when parents refused, we would not mediate with that kid any more because he wasn't learning from the process and mediation wasn't stopping any violence. The Assistant Principal would deal with him. The three Assistant Principals all felt that the mediations cut down on their workload by about 50 percent, in terms of student versus student discipline problems.

You might have a problem where two kids start mouthing off to each other in class. They might get sent out and they might mediate, but they still might get a sanction for the fact that they disrupted the class. We held information

*Most of the gangs come from
an area of 3.7 square miles,
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population lives on 10
percent of the land.*

confidential, seldom writing things down. We'd write down the names of the two kids and whether or not they reached an agreement. Every once in a while we would do some contracting, and we found it was very successful.

We had three spheres of mediators. There were two adjustment counselors and a Hispanic aide who were on call and would drop everything to deal with breaking problems. We had a second line of guidance counselors and school psychologists who were there as backup if we got overwhelmed. And then we had some teachers doing less serious mediations that could hold until the next day. The teachers would mediate during their prep periods. We trained enough staff mediators so that last year we had mediation coverage from staff people in every one of our 53 schools.

During the 1992-1993 school year, I was aware of some work that was being done in other parts of the city. There were two peer mediation programs, but I didn't know who the peer mediator coordinators were. I didn't know the nature of the programs or how they originated. We had a school system with 53 schools, but no communication. I wouldn't have recognized the mediator coordinators if I had passed them in the hallways. There were also some teachers in schools doing some independent violence prevention work.

I wrote a proposal that suggested that we should coordinate services. It was basically a very simple program to try to raise some money to train some additional staff mediators, and to take a look at curriculum and to see what might be done in the schools. What I was going to be doing was working with principals and teachers who were already carrying a lot of burdens. Many principals did not even know what mediation was. I talked to them about problems between kids and they would say, "Oh, I've been doing that for twenty years." Well, what they'd been doing wasn't mediation. So we approached them as caregivers. We were coming not to make their jobs any more difficult but to provide them with support and resources so that they could better serve kids.

The second step was that we made the commitment to plan, and the major process for the planning began here at Harvard at last summer's conference. We were able to send ten people here from two middle and high school groups, from the two quadrants in the city where there had been the most problems and where teachers were taking action as independent counselors. What developed was a 14-point action plan. We decided that we would plan and pilot and evaluate everything, because we were not going to institute programs and then discover two years later that they didn't work. The third element we decided upon was cost effectiveness. We wanted programs that would meet the basic

criteria but were inexpensive to operate and maintain, and thus would be more likely to endure.

The people who came here all signed a letter of commitment to, in a sense, trade back for their tuition having been paid by working and developing certain programs. Most of them went far beyond what they had committed to do.

Another thing we decided was that we would do no add-ons in terms of when we started training teachers in conflict resolution and violence prevention. Conflict resolution would not be another albatross to hang around teachers' necks to further burden them. Our approach to teachers was, "Look, we want you to be able to have more teaching time. What percentage of your teaching time is taken up with disruptions and discipline?" Time lost ranged anywhere from 5 percent all the way up to 35 percent or 40 percent. Added time to teach was the pay-off for them: they would have less conflict in their classrooms.

We decided that we would use soft money [grant money] very carefully, and only as a means to an end. What happens all too often is that one receives the grant money, hires people, and builds a good program. Then the grant money runs out and the school system is supposed to pick up the cost, but doesn't. The following year there is a bastardized version of the program as staff try to maintain it. Then the year after, the program pretty much caves in, and within three years it's a shambles and dissolves. Periodically we would have an agency come in and get paid, say, \$2,000, to run a special program for 50 kids for 12 sessions, then move on. What we told the agencies was that we would pay them the same \$2,000 but that we wanted them to train our staff in each school to run their program. We wanted to give them \$1,000 for two days of training for four high school teams and four middle school teams, then we would use the other \$1,000 to have them do quality control and supervision for the rest of the year. Then, when the money was gone, we'd have trained teams and a set of people to draw from to keep those programs going and to use as trainers.

Those were our basic goals: to plan, pilot, and evaluate everything; to develop a cost-effective, functional program utilizing existing resources; to come as caregivers and avoid overburdening people; and to very, very carefully use soft money to gain long-term results.

Q: Did you say that in your school you offered teachers the opportunity to come and see how the mediation process worked?

EF: No, we gave a presentation on mediation and talked to them about the process. But teachers never came in to see how mediation worked because that would have been a violation of confidentiality. As a result of the presentation,

we had recruited and trained some classroom teachers and counselors. There were certain situations that we would never put teachers in, because they didn't have the skills. No matter how much training one has, it takes a lot of experience to deal with some issues.

The new principal that I arrived with had already watched mediation work in our previous school, and he made it very clear to people that he wanted mediation to work. One of the things that made it work was if we got a rumor of a problem, I could walk right into a classroom and say, "Excuse me, but I need to see Norma for a few minutes." I could immediately take her from class.

Now, Norma may not have ever seen me before, but I would identify myself and say that I'd heard she was having a hassle. I'd ask her to tell me what was going on, letting her know that whatever she said would be confidential. Then, I would repeat back what she told me, talk to her about the mediation process, and ask her if she wanted to be involved. I would tell Norma that I would talk with the other kid, Fran, and see if she were willing to mediate, divulging no information except the fact that Norma was willing to mediate if Fran was.

I would also tell her that during the session the only information that came up would be the information that each kid chose to bring up. That fact was very important, because kids might see me for the first time and lie about the situation because they had never before worked with a school staff person who tried to solve a hassle without punishing.

I had no way of knowing what the truth was or who had instigated what. Principals have to make a judgment; they're going to give some sanctions. But many times they punish the kid who's the poorer of the two liars. By staying neutral and not taking sides and by not forcing the kids to agree to anything — not even recommending what they should agree to — we are very effective. Staying neutral is why we had such an incredibly high success rate.

Q: Would these kids be spared any sanctions?

EF: If the two of them had slapped each other, there would

be no mediation. They'd be suspended for five days. On return from suspension, there might be a mediation if they agreed to it. In proposing mediation, I would tell them that I was offering them the opportunity to come together with me to see if they could reach an agreement for treating each other with respect in school. Then I would go over the ground rules three times. I would say, "Fran, I know you and Norma have had a hassle. But I want you to know that we will not come together unless both of you agree that there

will be no name calling, no swearing, no sarcasm, and no threatening, either with your eyes or verbally. You have to treat each other with respect and you have to listen. And no interrupting. If the other kid says something that's upsetting or a lie, just hold your upset until it's your turn to speak."

At the beginning of the next period, I would bring the two of them together in my office and review the ground rules again. Then, as if we had never talked before, I would say, okay, Norma, tell me what happened. She would tell me her version of the incident and I would repeat it back to make sure that I understood it to her satisfaction. I would maybe talk about some of her feelings,

then ask if she had anything else to say. Then I would talk to Fran.

It often happens that kids get pushed into hassles by their friends. We discovered what we call the Don King or Donna King — the fight promoter who runs back and forth between the two kids, "cranking it up." I might ask Fran, "Did you hear her insult you, or did someone tell you about it?" I would ask Norma the same question, then have them both write down the name of the kid who had reported the insults. It would often turn out to be the same kid, making it obvious to both Fran and Norma that they had been set up. Then I would have another problem: these two would want to kick the hell out of the third kid, so I would try to bring him into the mediation to help sort things out.

I want to return to the organizational process and what we did to get the principals involved. The new superintendent wanted to be able to walk into the office in any school and find a copy of the Crisis Response Plan on the public address console. And he said that he wanted each school to

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get involved with the parents to do a school safety assessment, with the principal writing a commentary and making recommendations.

To heighten their awareness, we brought all the principals together for a luncheon and a program with the police community relations department, which does educational programs in the schools. We wanted the principals to understand the reasons for school safety and for developing a crisis response plan. We showed them a documentary film called *School Crisis Under Control* from the National Center for School Safety at Pepperdine University.

During the summer I met with the principals, then in September we gave them materials for school safety assessment and model plans for crisis response teams.

Here is an example of the kind of crisis I discussed with the principals to make them more aware. Rather than describe a stranger coming into school with a gun or somebody getting stabbed, I talked about something easier to imagine and more likely to happen.

Mr. and Mrs. X are getting a divorce and they're in a custody fight over the kids. Mrs. X has a restraining order to keep Mr. X away from her and the kids because he drinks. At 10 o'clock one Thursday morning, Mr. X is drinking at the neighborhood bar and he decides that he wants to see his kids, restraining order or no restraining order. He walks into your school and goes up to one of the sixth graders who's going by and asks, "Where is Mrs. Jones' third-grade classroom?" The sixth grader shows him without checking with anybody. Mr. X walks to the classroom, opens the door, and says, "I'm Mr. X and I'm taking Sally with me." Mrs. Jones says that he can't do that, that he has to talk to the principal. She won't release Sally. Mr. X gets belligerent. The teacher refuses to let Sally go. He punches her out. She's down on the floor. The class is hysterical. He's got Sally under his arm and runs out the door. Okay. The 911 call gets made. The local newspaper and TV news are on site before the cops arrive. So the principal has a kid taken, a mother hysterical, the press at the door, a class upset, a teacher down, a faculty in an uproar, cops moving through the building, and all of these situations happening simultaneously.

I asked the principals, "What are you going to do in that situation? How are you going to reach your school social worker if he's not in that day? How are you going to reach your psychologist? What's the procedure? Who are you going to call first?"

Although we prepared guidelines and materials, we let each principal and staff decide how they were going to set up their own crisis response plan. Each school formed crisis response teams which were trained and drilled.

One of the recommendations that the school commit-

tee made and the principals accepted was to lock the doors 15 minutes after the school opens. Doorbells were installed. At 20 out of the 53 schools, some staff now carry two-way radios. If there is a problem on the playground or at the bus stops, the staff person is not isolated from help.

In one crisis that came up, a principal got a call at five in the morning saying that one of his third-grade teachers had died. She'd taught in that school for 21 years. So, he came into school about 5:45 and called every one of his teachers to have them come in early. He had me come in. We reviewed the guidelines and talked about the process for explaining the loss to the kids. I left the building for another crisis, and he brought all of his teachers in and discussed what they were going to do. He went around and personally spoke to every class of kids. Then the kids from the class of the teacher who had passed away met in two small groups with a counselor and a psychologist. The principal had initially thought that he was going to have to talk to only that one class, but this death was a third-grade teacher. The fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-graders had had her too.

The following week I went in to do what's called "critical incident debriefing." The principal, in dealing with the loss, had absorbed everybody else's sorrow and pushed all of his own feelings down inside. I went in and spent about two hours with him over several cups of coffee, not processing what went right or wrong, but just talking about what he thought when he got the call. What were the thoughts and feelings he had during the day? At what points did he feel okay, at what points did he worry? What recommendations would he make to us? One of the counselors did the same with some of the other teachers.

One of our goals was to organize training for teachers and education for kids about conflict resolution and violence prevention. We sent a team of five of our best elementary and one of our middle school people and an assistant director of health education to an Educators for Social Responsibility program called *Creative Conflict Resolution in a Peaceable Classroom*. The team came back and wrote a 94-page manual, with 210 suggested activities.

We trained the health educator and two teachers from each school and sent them back into their schools as a resource team. We had hoped to provide subs so that the resource teams could train other teachers, but that goal proved a little too ambitious. Instead, we asked them to use the materials as they saw fit until June and then complete an evaluation form. We asked them how they worked with the health educator, what work they did with other faculty members, what worked for them in the classroom, what exercises they tried. Then we asked them, Was this very useful? Useful? Somewhat useful? Or an absolute waste of

time? Out of 11 schools we got ten responses: nine "very useful's" and one "useful."

In October and February, we gave 24 counselors, school psychologists, and health educators 24 hours of mediation training. In the February session we also had six elementary principals who were really interested in the mediation training. I told them that as administrators they had a conflict of interest. They explained to me that there was a real difference between being a secondary administrator and an elementary administrator, and what they wanted to do was sharpen their skills for helping kids resolve differences without having to be disciplinarians.

So they took the training, and two of them have asked for "conflict managers." Conflict managers are fifth and sixth graders who are peer mediators, but do not work during the school day except on the playground, in the cafeteria, and on the school buses. We're going to introduce that program first by going to the entire faculty, secondly by informing all of the family members, thirdly by recruiting and training kids, and fourth by giving a presentation so that every kid in the school knows that if they have a problem with another kid, there's another way to solve it other than violence. The managers work in pairs. If they see a hassle, they try to diffuse it by asking the kids if they're willing to mediate. This is not going to work in every situation and we're talking about elementary school kids here, but particularly on the playground and in the cafeteria there will always be teacher supervision. And the kids will have T-shirts or something to designate them. The area of concern will be on the buses. We'll have to say to kids, if there is already violence on the bus, stay out of it because it's too late. If you hear two people swearing at each other you might want to get up and talk about it. But if there is no other peer mediator on the bus to give you support then just go up and tell the bus driver.

One of the things that happened this year is that Massachusetts put a 25-cent-per-pack tax on cigarettes to be used for tobacco, alcohol, and drug education. We were able to hire 12 elementary health educators. These were RNs, one of whom was also a certified alcohol counselor. They used the Michigan Comprehensive Health Curriculum, a K-6 curriculum. It's a developmental program that centers around interpersonal skills. They began doing prevention work in the classrooms and could use the trained adjustment counselors and school psychologists for intervention work. The teachers were required to stay in the room so that they could learn the language, watch the activities, and begin to use the skills that were being taught to the kids.

The Massachusetts Attorney General's office has an

excellent program called SCORE. They have a director of mediation and programs operating in about 30 schools as a joint venture between a community agency and the Attorney General. The Attorney General provides half the money for a full-time mediation coordinator, and it's the responsibility of the school system or the community agency to raise the other half. We have one high school with a SCORE program. We brought mediation into our high school, but were not designated a SCORE school by the Attorney General. However, the agency that does the training for the Attorney General came forward and did the work for free. They trained three coordinators and set up the program.

Q: What do you think is operating in the schools where the principals or the staff have not bought into the mediation process?

EF: They just don't believe that it works, that kids have the capacity to make decisions and keep their word. I don't think it's a power issue or a control issue. Most of those principals have been on the line for years and have seen magic pill after magic pill presented. As far as they're concerned, it's just one more gimmick, and if they just hold tight it will pass. But our assistant principals went to the regional assistant principals' meeting and heard from their peers, who have mediation programs in their schools, that their disciplinary workload had been cut in half because potential disputes could be referred to mediators.

Q: Did you use a violence prevention curriculum at the secondary level?

EF: Yes, Deborah Prothrow-Stith's *Violence Prevention Curriculum* from the Education Development Center. We put it into the ninth-grade health classes. The problem was that the ninth-grade health teachers had so much to do that they cut the program down from ten sessions to four and it wasn't much good. This summer we trained six counselors who were working in the summer programs and gave them copies of the curriculum. They're using it in the summer program groups and will be taking it back to their schools in the fall. It will still be in some of the ninth-grade health classes.

There were a couple of problems with the curriculum. For one, the teacher has to be very strong because there is a lot of role playing and interaction, and if she doesn't have good control, it's not going to work. For another, the program has not been revised to keep it up to date, and I don't know if EDC has any intention of doing so. If they don't update it in the next year, we're going to have to find another program.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina

Richard Moniusko, Christopher Eaddy, Beth Pendleton,
Cynthia Woods, Robin Girardi, Arnie Epps

RICHARD MONIUSKO (RM): I'm Richard Moniusko, from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina. Charlotte is characteristic of what they call the New South, which means that it's the old South with a lot of Northerners in it. Charlotte is a very rapidly growing city of 533,000 people. It's a communications and finance center, the third largest financial center in the country behind New York and San Francisco.

The school system has 85,000 students and 112 schools. We have 78 elementary schools, 23 middle schools, and 11 high schools. The system is growing by about 3,000 students a year. Our vision and mission statement reads something like this: "Our mission is to ensure that Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools become the premiere urban integrated school system in the nation, where all students acquire the skills and values necessary to live rich and full lives as productive members of society." Pretty lofty goals. We are very outcome-based — a performance driven system. We have a very dynamic superintendent, John Murphy, who is definitely a change agent as a superintendent, one of the leading educational reformers in the country.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg is experiencing change at what I consider a dizzying pace. One of the original court ordered busing cases was in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools about 20 years ago. That's why the mission statement refers to "the premiere urban integrated school system in the country." If you picture Boston annexing a few surrounding counties and then busing all the kids both ways, that's sort of what Charlotte has been doing.

One of the changes Dr. Murphy has effected is the creation of magnet schools. We now have 25 magnet schools, in an attempt to draw students to inner-city schools with declining enrollments. We have math/science magnets at the high school level and performing arts magnets at the elementary and middle school level. We have French immersion and German immersion schools. We have communication arts programs where kids have their own TV and radio studios at the elementary level. We have two gifted and talented magnets that are identifying kids based on Howard Gardner's work. We have a Global Studies Elementary School where the kids have their own society and their own government. So it is a school system in which change is taking place very rapidly.

But we are a city with urban problems. We have 24,000 families below the poverty level. The areas that we targeted

for the programs I'm going to tell you about have a median income of about \$5,300 per family. Thirty-one percent of our school populations is on free or reduced lunch. The ethnic breakdown is a bit different than in the Northeast. The county is 71 percent white, 26 percent African American. However, the schools are 55 percent white, 40 percent African American, 3 percent Asian, and 2 percent other, the other being primarily American Indian and Hispanic.

Charlotte is a very affluent city with a large disparity between the haves and the have-nots. I think the experience of socioeconomic inequality hits kids like a ton of bricks in our school system, particularly when inner city kids are bussed to the affluent areas and vice versa.

The FBI crime report that came out last fall lists Charlotte as number 11 in the rate of violent crime in the United States. There has been a 35 percent increase in violent crimes in the past year. We are above the U.S. average in violent teenage deaths, at 71.7 per 100,000. And possession and use of weapons in the schools is rising, too.

A couple of incidents in the past two years have galvanized the community to try to get something done. In one incident a student transferred from up north to one of our high schools. He and another kid bumped into each other in the hall, had words, and this continued for about a week, with the glaring and the posturing. Finally, one fellow had enough, came into school with his gun, walked up to the other kid at his locker, and put the gun to his head and pulled the trigger. Miraculously, the kid survived because the gun misfired. This happened at a suburban school in a fairly affluent area. It shook people up.

In another incident, two guys got into a dispute over a girl. This went on for a few weeks, and finally one guy called the other on the phone and said, "Look, I'm tired of this, we're just going to go out behind the shopping center and settle it." He thought he was in for a fist fight, but the other guy pulled out a gun and shot him in the leg as he ran away. Then two other boys proceeded to hold him down while the shooter put the gun to the back of his head and killed him.

These events were like a lightning rod for folks with a can-do attitude to say, "We've got to do something about this." Various task forces dealing with violence in the schools began to fall into place. One was commissioned by the county government and one was started by WTVI, the public TV station. Then, there were five groups within the

schools working on various kinds of violence prevention programs.

The State of North Carolina became concerned because of the incidents I mentioned and some others around the state. They passed legislation allocating \$10 million during the 1993–1994 school year for additional counselors, psychologists, and social workers to work on violence prevention. Charlotte-Mecklenburg received \$800,000. They also passed a \$2,500,000 piece of legislation called the Safe Schools Initiative, which asked school districts to compete for innovative programs to make schools safer. They were designed to be \$50,000–\$100,000 grants. It was shared by the governor's office and the Department of Public Instruction.

So a year ago, there were five competing groups within the school system. One of them had the grant completed and was awaiting the superintendent's signature. The grant would have asked for \$100,000 to put police and metal detectors in the schools, and develop a SWAT team for weapons. Another group wanted money to do peer mediation in the schools.

Other groups had various programs they wanted to do. The money itself was not, I think, as important as getting all of these people to sit down and engage each other. There were some heated discussions. There are now only two violence prevention task forces, those at WTVI and in the schools.

The first objective of our grant proposal was to increase field staff. The second was to increase the skills of school staff and students to respond constructively to conflict situations, looking at not only intervention, but prevention. The third objective was to increase the awareness and involvement of parents and families and give those folks some skills in violence prevention and intervention. We submitted a proposal for \$300,000 from the governor's office and the Department of Public Instruction.

We had hoped for a proportionately large grant, given that we have 20 percent of the students in the State of North Carolina. Unfortunately, due to political realities, we received the same amount as a rural county with 2,000 students — \$175,000 to be spent over an 18-month period.

We have 112 schools, but with the limited funds, we ended up with a plan to target 18 schools with a pilot program that will start this fall. One of the targeted schools

is a "management school," which is one of Dr. Murphy's concepts for dealing with disruptive students. We have four or five of them at the middle school level and two at the secondary level. Kids who are chronically disruptive or facing expulsion can be reassigned to those schools, which emphasize discipline.

We focused on the three highest crime areas of Charlotte for the project. As a result of busing, the kids of those three went to 19 different schools, which was how our target schools were identified. We hired parents from those three communities to work as home/school liaisons at all

three school levels. At the middle schools, we're doing a *Second Step*. We have the CHASE team, which started out as a law and order team, but has evolved into a school safety issues advisory group. SAVE (Students Against Violence Everywhere) is a student-initiated group that started after the murder of a student at one of the other high schools a few years ago. We're doing peer mediation at the middle and high school level. We have a peer violence reduction program at the high school called *Teen to Teen*,

which was authored by some folks in Charlotte and the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

CE: At the discipline schools, we have some initiatives that are a little different. It is self-evident that these kids have not succeeded in the regular schools. Kids at management schools go through a survival skills curriculum. In one part of the curriculum, we present a scenario in which a banana is secured inside a box. When a monkey comes along, he'll reach inside and refuse to let go of the banana, even as he watches the trappers approach and capture him. The kids grasp that this is a parable of what keeps conflicts going. We get into conflicts with other people, and we think, "I'm right, and you're wrong." What we teach the kids is how to let go of the banana. And we teach them that, in letting go of the banana, we're not making the other person wrong, but beginning a peace-making effort. It becomes a universal statement, not just for the kids, but for the adults as well. It lowers power struggles between teachers, just getting them to let go of the banana. It's a simple but effective means of starting a peace process between kids.

I want to make a few points about peer mediation. For

Many kids want the metal detectors. This results from kids wanting safety. They want to know that they've got a little bit of power in helping to keep things at a peaceful level.

one, you're going to have to model. And you're going to have to make sure that it starts from the top down. You have to plug your administration. The enthusiasm that your administration shows is what will cause everyone else to jump on board.

Our peer mediation is very interactive, with a lot of empowerment by way of activity. We try not to lecture, but rather to be the co-facilitators of learning. You'll find that many kids want the metal detectors. This results from kids wanting safety. They want to know that they've got a little bit of power in helping to keep things at a peaceful level. Peer mediation works in our school system. And from the administration down, we're all enthusiastic about it, and that carries a lot of weight throughout the entire organization.

The management schools in theory are designed for kids who get put out for possessing weapons or being chronically disruptive. When they're put out of their regular home school, they can't go to any other school in the regular school system. They're going to have to go through the alternative school for at least a minimum of 60 days to get back into the regular school system.

Q: At the parent's discretion?

CE: Yes, because the parent could put them in private school. But failing that, we still have the district attorney as a heavy. If the child is not enrolled within 20 days, the parent could be in a position where he's paying fines or being jailed.

We don't use the term expel. We assign them to the alternative school.

Q: How did you get people to accept management schools in their neighborhood?

CE: We didn't have a major problem. There were a number of proposed sites that elicited objections, but the schools were situated there anyway. Some of them are in shopping centers. One is next to Miss Donna's School of Dance, and I know Miss Donna had a heart attack, but the school is still there.

Q: I am concerned that principals might find this model a convenient way to be rid of disruptive kids, and that it could become a place just to isolate kids in a prison-like situation where they learn the worst there is to learn from each other.

CE: I think those are continual concerns. There are a couple things in place to address them. One is that the kids go through a hearing process where the principal has to show that he's made attempts to deal with the kid in the regular school. And as far as the kids having poor peer models, we put things in place where these kids are motivated, not so much by what they see others doing, but by the structure of the school.

Q: Could you talk about some of the activities you mentioned earlier?

CE: They include role-playing and skits. We have a process that we take the kids through who are going to be mediators, as well as the advisors and the teachers who are going to be involved. We take them through violence prevention, have them look at their own issues, what makes them angry, etc.

One activity is for violence awareness. Take a piece of tape, put it across the room, have everyone stand on this side of the room, and then read them questions like, "Have you ever spit on anybody? If you have, step across the line." "Have you ever hit anyone? Step across the line." They're stepping back each time. "Have you ever been told a racial joke you didn't do anything about?" "Have you ever told a racist joke?" When you get some across the line, you get them to turn

around and look who's not across it. The purpose of doing that is to make them aware that verbal things as well as physical things can be violent, and so let them see that some things they may have done have been vile and objectionable.

Another activity addresses stereotypes. Have them write down every stereotype they've ever known. You can talk about nerds, people who study a lot. Then ask them, "Is there anybody that's part of this group?" You have them stand up. Then someone reads the list, and then you process individually how that makes them feel. And so we talk about the fact that stereotypes are simply not true. It fosters awareness, but we don't leave them there, we give them something to do with it, that eventually takes them to the point where they're a peacemaker, and they see how they handle conflict personally.

We also use the *Second Step* curriculum, which is the cornerstone of the elementary prevention program. *Second Step* comes out of Seattle. It was developed by a group called

*I'm not convinced that
incident reduction is an
adequate measure of violence
prevention.*

the Committee for Children. It's based on the premise that violence is a learned behavior from a young age. The curriculum starts with a free kindergarten component, which has two puppets, Compulsive Puppy and Slow Down Snail. It also relies heavily on role playing. As the kids get older, there are videos and other elements. It teaches children to change the behaviors and attitudes that contribute to violence. The four principal areas covered are empathy training, anger management, impulse control, and problem-solving.

Second Step will go into all of our elementary and middle schools next year. We selected one teacher and one counselor or psychologist from each school to go through the training with the folks from Seattle. Those people were asked to come back to their school and train the entire faculty. The thing that I like about *Second Step* is that it's a well-structured, teacher-friendly, school-wide program, not just something that the counselors come in and do.

Another thing I like about the program is that it's designed to be done by teachers, but it's not going to overwhelm them. With our academic focus as a school system, it is getting increasingly difficult to get teachers to spend time on anything that's not measured in our criterion reference tests and student outcomes.

BP: One thing with *Second Step* is that one thing builds on another. You wouldn't do impulse control before you did empathy. And it's interesting that when the whole school does empathy in the month that is allocated, everyone is practicing empathy together — students, teachers, custodians, and cafeteria workers are all practicing together. So you can see a lot of modeling going on with this program.

CE: Beth teaches at First Word Elementary, which is an inner-city school located adjacent to a housing project with kids from the neighborhood and kids bussed in from the suburbs.

Q: Could you tell us a little about what your teachers' impressions were?

BP: At first the teachers felt irritated at having to attend an extended workshop, but as they started to see the value of it, they began getting thrilled. You should have seen their faces. At our school, we're all going to do it together. We're going to have a big assembly, to kick off empathy.

Q: Are you going to involve the parents?

BP: We're going to do some training with the parent liaisons, but our plan for parental involvement is not as strong as we wanted it to be. That was one of the things that got cut. I think that it would add incredible power to the program if parents knew the approach and language of the

program and reinforced it at home.

There are parent letters that go with the curriculum that you send home. The theory behind it is that the language of the program and the problem-solving steps will go home as well. But some parents, of course, won't read the letter.

Q: I really question the effectiveness of any conflict resolution program that does not try to bring the parents on board to look at a different way of handling conflicts. When I started my conflict resolution program this year, I had two calls from very angry parents saying, "You're preaching your values with your program about how my kid should react when he's being bullied. And I don't agree with that." I thought afterwards, I'm not going to blame this parent because I've really not done anything to bring the parents on board. And what is the effect on a child in a classroom of hearing about the way people should treat other people, when they know that that's not happening in their home? Is it going to have the effect of deteriorating their respect for their family, for their roots, for where they're coming from? I think that we need to look at that.

RM: I'll let Cynthia Woods talk about the parent program. Cynthia was hired through the grant for the 18 months that it lasts to coordinate all these things and to make sure that all the ideas that the committee came up with actually happened.

CW: The three target areas are each slated to have a parent violence prevention counselor/liaison person. These are persons who live in these communities. It's the parent counselor's job to go into the neighborhoods and assess their needs and either to plan workshops for them, according to what they feel they need, or to get together with other outside agencies and work together. There's also going to be a parent resource center in each of these communities.

One part of the job is for the parent/counselors to learn *Second Step* and the various programs that are offered in the system, and visit homes and community meetings to share the information they have learned. They can accompany parents to the schools, if the parents feel uncomfortable going by themselves. Richard's already told you about some of the differences between where people live and where their children attend school, and sometimes there is not that comfort level there.

The parents in the communities will not have *Second Step* lessons, but they will get some information on anger management, so that they can hopefully handle conflict in their relationships in the same manner that we're asking their children to handle conflict.

Kids will often tell you, "Well, my Mamma told me to do this," or "My Dad told me to hit him back." One of the things that we try to get over to parents and families is that we can't tell our children to do what we did back in the old days because they could be killed. We are collaborating with outside agencies, with mentoring groups, with MAMOS, Mothers Against Murdered Offspring — anybody who's willing to come and work with us. That's what we're hoping for the parent liaison. The community needs to know what we're doing and work along with us. And we need to work along with the community. We need to be fostering mutual respect.

RM: One thing I neglected to mention was the advisory group that helped us put together the grant proposal. The participants were the human relations council, the PTA council, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the substance abuse services, the health department, the city/county police departments, the Mecklenburg County mental health system, and representatives from the court system. Also some community-based groups: one called Stop the Killing; another called Save the Seed, which is a mentor program; the student group, SAVE; and the Citizens Against Violent Crime.

Q: Was your full day of teacher training part of the teacher's work year or an add-on?

BP: We had a week of work days after the last day of school, so we chose to do the training during that week.

Q: How will you evaluate the program? How will you be able to make a case for it after the soft money runs out?

RM: I'm not convinced that incident reduction is an adequate measure of violence prevention. We're struggling to find a way to demonstrate that these skills should be basic criteria in public education, along with reading, math, and science. We have performance standards in the school system that are measured by criterion reference tests for reading, math, social studies, and science, and I spent the last year developing them for the guidance program. A number of these skills have been incorporated into the performance standards at various grade levels for guidance. Now, how we're going to measure whether kids have these skills and what we are going to do if they don't have them are questions that haven't yet been answered.

CW: It may take two to three years to see clear results after the children have learned the language.

RM: As with any prevention program, gauging results is difficult. Even if the program does have a positive effect, it may serve only to halt the *rise* in violence. Let us tell you

quickly about the remainder of the programs. *Teen to Teen* is a peer violence prevention program, designed in partnership with the National Conference of Christians and Jews in Charlotte. Robin Girardi, who teaches at East Mecklenburg High School, went to the first *Teen to Teen* retreat, a student initiated program that originated at West Charlotte High School. Robin, would you tell us a bit about the program?

RG: Richard began the *Teen to Teen* violence prevention program at East Mecklenburg High School in April. Student participants were selected primarily on the basis of peer credibility. These are students who have leadership potential, but are not necessarily high academic achievers. But they do have high verbal skills and are people who can connect and communicate. We're asking them to go out and encourage violence prevention. The skills that they are going to be taught will eventually be taught to teens at a much younger age, as they come through the system. These include peer mediation, anger control, conflict resolution, and gun safety, among other things.

We began in May with a three-day pull-out program that was sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. It was based on some work they had done at a camp setting in northern North Carolina. The students spent three days talking about racial and gender issues. Then, having gone through this tremendous three-day bonding experience off campus, they went into the middle schools to select rising tenth graders who will be incorporated into the program next year, who they felt would be committed and could make a contribution to the group. The next step is training peer mediators. That will take place in August.

RM: Independence High School is piloting a project through the Human Relations Commission. Arnie, why don't you tell us a little bit about this?

AE: The project basically deals with cultural diversity. I began conducting required cultural sensitivity sessions for all the staff. The sessions with adults were much tougher than those with the children. I took every student in this 2,000 population school through an awareness workshop, which lasted between 45 minutes and an hour. They would interact, and I would do different creative things to get their attention, like singing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" straight, then with a gospel interpretation. And immediately, because singing is something they will listen to, they heard it and seemed to understand.

RM: Okay, just to run quickly through the law and order component, the CHASE team came out of the task force and became a school management team for the violence

prevention program. It is an attempt to involve everyone in the school, including custodians, bus drivers, and secretaries, and build them into a management team that will identify safety issues, whether they be facility issues or interpersonal issues. Some of the schools have chosen to incorporate this approach into their school planning and management teams, which include parents. As we're site based, each school can do whatever it likes with this.

Another thing that just kind of popped from heaven was that the Children's Theater of Charlotte came to our superintendent with an idea to produce a play. He thought it was a wonderful idea and partially funded it, then told them to talk with me and work it out. The play will be presented to all eighth graders in the school system in October. It will be followed by an hour-and-a-half discussion including some role playing triggered by the actors. It's a pretty exciting play with a lot of audience participation.

Another exciting thing that has happened lately is that the State of North Carolina came up with a one billion dollar surplus this fiscal year. The governor convened a special crime session and allocated additional money for violence prevention programs. We're going to get some money out of that, too, which will probably go into a transition program identifying high-risk kids their first year in middle school or high school. Then we'll do some intensive work with them.

Q: I just want to say that I've been looking at your North Carolina group; I've talked to some of you, and I envy the fact that while we have two central administrators here, you've brought people who are working in the trenches. I've seen you at the hotel working and talking together, and I really admire the fact that you've got such a strong multidisciplinary team.

Lawrence Township, Indianapolis, Indiana

Duane Hodgkin, Linda Knoderer, Caroline Hanna

DUANE HODGIN (DH): Good afternoon. Welcome to our presentation, "Safe Schools: A Collaboration Model for the '90s and Beyond." I would like to introduce my two colleagues. Caroline Hanna is the Principal of one of our district's two high schools. And to my left is the Administrative Assistant for Educational Support Services, Linda Knoderer. My name is Duane Hodgkin, and I am the Assistant Superintendent for Educational Support Services.

The first thing we want to do is make a disclaimer. We are not experts. We are practitioners. All we can do is try to share with you what works for us. But we do guarantee you will learn six things in the next hour and a half. We call it a "PEP" presentation: "People Encouraging People, by being Positive Energizing Persons."

We have some cards here with special messages on them that we hand out to our teachers. One is our PEP acronym. Another has to do with the CARE principle in which we believe in Lawrence Township: Concern, Appreciation, Respect, and Encouragement. The Human Relations Principle is on the back. Another card has four things to ask yourself about relations with your kids, your students, your family, and other people. Next is our SAFE Schools card. And, finally, the 10 Expectations of Lawrence Town-

ship Educators, with our Vision Statement on the back.

How do these things relate to effective, safe schools? These are concepts, practices, and expectations that we want all of our people to work toward modeling — the superintendent, the teachers, the parents, and certainly our students. The "CARES" principle is "Creating A Responsive and Responsible Education System" based upon Concern, Appreciation, Respect, and Encouragement of all people. The "SAFE Schools" model is "Security, Action, Follow-up, Education, and Enforcement." At this time, my colleague Linda will share a special activity.

LINDA KNODERER (LK): When I give you the signal, I want you to look around the room and try to find someone who looks just as intelligent as you, go up to that person, introduce yourself, and find out five things from them. I want you to find out what their name is, where they are from, how many years they've been in education, what their job is and what their "hot and cold buttons" are.

Once we give you the signal to stop, I'm going to toss "Safety Man" (nerf ball) to two or three of you unsuspecting souls, and I want you to stand up and introduce us to your new acquaintance. OK, please begin.

[LOUD EXPLOSIVE NOISE — A BLANK GUNSHOT]

DH: In education today, we certainly have to expect the unusual. And I know none of you were expecting to hear a gunshot. To some of you it was certainly nerve wracking and upsetting. You're saying, "Why'd that crazy guy do that?" I did it to illustrate a point. This is a blank gun. Today, a lot of kids bring different types of weapons to school, from blank guns, to beebie guns, to pellet guns. If this gun were held on you, most of us wouldn't know the difference between this and a real gun. You can see how unnerving and frightening that is to you right now, even though this was a simulation. But think of the trauma a tragic shooting in school leaves in the lives of the kids and staff. We've had guns in our school, just as many of you have. We've not had anybody shot in school. One student was killed this year over a dispute on a weekend. That was our first tragedy like that.

LK: We have a checklist here with some ideas you can use to plan, evaluate, or review your own school safety plans. Some of the key things in this are communicating to teachers, parents, and students what your plan is going to be and training the staff. We want our students and parents to know that we're serious about safety. Also, many of our police security personnel are parents or people who live in the school district. It helps when you have someone other than a teacher, a parent, or a coach to help maintain security.

DH: Another handout we have for you contains our Memorandum of Understanding and Collaboration with our Lawrence Police Department and city. We have developed suggestions for planning and have set up a similar collaborative model among schools, city government, and the community.

Safe schools are essential for students to learn and achieve, and for teachers to be able to teach at their best. And school safety is a very serious matter these days. The time when two boys could fight and risk little more than a lost tooth is long gone because of the availability of weapons.

If you look back at the public schools of the '40s and '50s, the main behavioral concerns were things like chewing gum, talking, making noise, running in the halls, getting out of line, wearing improper clothing, and putting paper in the wastebaskets. Now, let's look at the '80s and '90s and beyond. Drug abuse, alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, suicide, rape, robbery, assault, attempted murder and murder in our schools. It's a changing society that brings us new challenges, opportunities, and possibilities.

At this time, I'm going to ask Caroline Hanna, principal of Lawrence Central High School, to speak from the principal's perspective and also as a member of district-wide School Safety and Planning Committee.

CAROLINE HANNA (CH): Duane will talk to you later about the township-wide school safety plan, but as a practitioner in the high school, I couldn't really wait for that because we were already experiencing some incidents of violence.

My school has 2,000 students. Although we are a suburban school, we sit on the edge of the inner city. We're two blocks from an interstate highway, so it's easy for people to get off the interstate, commit acts of violence or vandalism in our parking lot, and escape. We are a school that exhibits a lot of socioeconomic and ethnic diversity. We're about 35 percent minority and, socioeconomically, we draw from five communities: an army base, a blue-collar neighborhood, a yuppie neighborhood, a lake community of very wealthy citizens, and an African American community, part of which was under a busing order a few years ago. So it is important that we consider ourselves a community within that school; because we are very diverse, we have many different cultures to serve.

Prior to coming here last summer, we had experienced almost no violence. We had apprehended a student with some bullets in his pocket, but there was no gun, so we didn't become too worried about it. I guess the event that evoked the most fear in us was the racial tension that occurred after the first Rodney King verdict. I don't know how it was in your area, but in Indiana we had considerable tension. We were able to work it out very successfully by canceling classes for the day and talking with the students about the significant issues involved. And they appreciated that, and violence was averted.

Last year, though, we had a stun gun in the building. We think it was brought in by an outsider, although we didn't catch him and we weren't sure. We also experienced an unloaded gun, which a student brought to school and showed to other students. By the end of the day, we took the weapon from him, or, rather, he gave it up voluntarily. And we had the second Rodney King verdict to deal with, and again we experienced a bit of racial tension. So we were very eager last summer to find out more about school safety.

We read with interest Deborah Prothrow-Stith's model of ten elements, and discovered that we already had six of them in our high school. For instance, we do have an extended day at Lawrence Central because we have latch-key teenagers. These kids hang out after school because school is a comfortable and safe place. We run two activity buses in the evening, and they can hang out until about

5:30, during which time they can participate in athletics or clubs or just be with their friends. We hired a plainclothes police officer to walk around the building during the time that the kids are waiting for the final activity bus to take them home. We've long had a peer counseling program and a peer tutoring program. We began a conflict resolution peer mediation pilot last year, and we began a teacher mentoring program for all entering ninth graders, a program that meets once a week. Next year the program will have a ratio of about one teacher for every ten students. In addition, we have a very firm and consistent disciplinary code, which has worked well for us through the years.

So we had some things going for us already, but when we left Harvard last summer, on the way home, we developed a school security plan. As a high school practitioner, I think there are three essential elements to such a plan. One is the physical facility, and the logistical things that you can do to make it safer. We were on the tail end of a renovation, so we installed surveillance cameras on our roof, which can view the four parking lots that surround the building. The monitors are situated at the receptionist desk, and she can monitor them for vandals while she's doing her routine duties. We also knew that we would be experiencing greater community involvement in an evening school program, and that women simply weren't going to come to their local high school after dark if they didn't feel safe in the parking lots. So this proved to be a worthwhile expenditure for us.

We examined the traffic flow around the building and decided that we needed to gate-off some of the entrances. We gated-off one entrance in particular and hired an off-duty police officer to help the kindergarten students entering the kindergarten wing in our building. And we stationed an off-duty police officer in the main entrance. He logs in everyone who enters our building. We see that as very important. We see it as a proactive stance. It's much easier to find out who's trying to enter your parking lot and your building and turn away those who have no business there than it is to react once someone has already entered the building to kidnap a student or commit violence or vandalism. So our township feels that these are good expenditures.

Another measure we took was to begin using picture IDs in combination with our bar-coded library card. Last summer, I heard from some colleagues that they ask their students to wear IDs all the time, and the faculty as well. I think there is a lot of merit in that, particularly if you have a lot of outsiders in your building, as we did during our renovation. But our faculty and students weren't ready for that. We also put an outside pay phone in our parking lot so that anyone caught outside could dial 911 in an emergency. We lock all of our doors at 8:00 in the morning and don't open them again until 3:00, except for the front and back entrances. We station student greeters at desks at both of these entrances. We have log books there, which serve a double purpose. The students help us with the security

aspect of knowing who is in our building, and they are also able to warmly greet members of the community who have business in the school and direct them to their destinations. There is a secretary posted nearby to intervene if there should be a problem. To facilitate that, we purchased 16 walky-talky radios that we've dispersed throughout the building so that help is quick to come by.

But all of those are just logistical things, aspects of controlling the facility, that wouldn't really work if we didn't give some attention to the human element. For instance, we had developed a plan in the past to deal with student walk-outs. At the time of the first Rodney King verdict we were able very quickly to fine tune that and make it work for us, and it was very successful. We know that quarrels sometimes arise from interactions between young men and young women, and we've begun to talk to our student body about sexual harassment and to offer training for our staff. We know that since we've already had one gun, we are probably not far from the day when we'll have a loaded gun, and Dr. Hodgkin has arranged with our local police force to offer members of the administration, and any volunteer teachers, hostage training so that we would be able to deal with something more than just the gun.

We have taken a close look at our club program to see the level of student involvement, because we believe that kids who are involved in their school aren't likely to become problems. As I reviewed those a couple of weeks ago,

The students help us with the security aspect of knowing who is in our building, and they are also able to warmly greet members of the community who have business in the school.

I noticed that we've had a drop in some of our involvement, and particularly in our minority involvement, and we will focus on that this coming year. We've established a multicultural club, and the parents of those kids serve as a parent advisory board to me and a link to the African American community to keep the lines of communication open. We also have a building-level school safety committee.

Following the tensions after the Rodney King verdicts, our students told us that the dialogue we had on those days was so successful and so helpful in renewing a sense of community that we really needed to do it on an ongoing basis. So this fall, we will have weekly forums during our activity period where students can come together on any topic they wish to discuss. They will be loosely titled, "Discussions on Things that Matter."

I've also made more of an attempt to hire people of other cultures than I have in the past. I've also made an attempt to link up with our local African American churches because some of them have experienced violence in their community and they already have proactive programs. Parents have offered to become that link for us. I think that when looking at the psychological element of dealing with school violence, it's important to be proactive, and it's important to seize the moment. I try not to get too far ahead of the faculty in terms of what they're willing to do at a given moment. And whenever we have an incident of some sort I already know what my next plan is going to be, at least the loose elements of it. I always call a special faculty meeting to tell them immediately what has happened during the day so that rumors don't get spread and exaggerated. At that time I usually preview my next plan, because as school safety becomes a more acute issue we have to get more proactive. It's important always to be honest in terms of public relations.

Our superintendent is very PR-minded, and he didn't really like the idea that we would be hiring police officers to log-in people coming into our building. But Dr. Hodgins and others convinced him that in these times the public would applaud such interventions. The public wants its students and teachers to be safe in school. The time was right to be very open and honest that any school could become the victim of a random act of violence, and that it was the duty of every school administrator to prepare for it. So I have always made it a point to be honest with parents, and whenever we've had one of these incidents at school, I've made a statement on the public address system to the student body the morning after and given them all of the information. Then I talk to the three parent booster groups and tell them exactly what's gone on, what we've done about it, and what we have in place to prevent such incidents in the future.

One of our greatest challenges as educators is what we are going to do to decrease the anonymity of our big school buildings. The elements of our school safety plan I've been discussing are not the answers of choice. I would much rather be dealing with kids on a human basis. If we could help our kids to be known by and connect with one caring adult, we wouldn't have to spend so much time and so many resources on the issue of school safety.

Our mentoring program is a step in that direction. Recently, we reorganized our counseling and guidance department so that they spend the major part of their time running support groups. Since they're running support groups, they don't have much time to deal with student scheduling, so our mentors are working with students, developing their career education plans, and selecting their courses. That load very largely has been taken from the guidance department so that they can give a personal support to students.

As another way of dealing with the issue of anonymity, we have put together ten teaching teams for next year. Last year we piloted a couple of teams and the teachers really liked it. They didn't think that they would, but what they found out was if they could work with another colleague of their choice, whom they respected, and who shared a similar philosophy and teaching style, a lot of the stress could be alleviated. The teachers found it convenient to have a division of labor on a team.

I had originally hoped that we would have some interdisciplinary studies come out of this, and we may well, but I have learned that not every teacher is able to make those connections readily. But there is a lot more to teaming than just integrating the subject matter. The important thing is that there is much greater connection between teachers and students in a teaming situation.

So that's what our high school has done over the course of the last year, and it was all set in motion by attending this conference last year. We found it very productive and we're really feeling very optimistic about school safety at this point. We feel as if we've made a good start toward solving our own local problems.

DH: Caroline was one of the first female principals in Indiana, and has been the principal of Lawrence Central High School for 14 years. She has been named district and state principal of the year and is a dynamic leader, as you can see. Now Linda will speak about some of the policies we developed.

LK: We have drafted a number of policies that have been adopted by the Board of Education. We have a vision statement for the districts, and each school has developed

its own vision statement as well. We've also developed a Human Dignity Policy. We've got a Parent Involvement Policy — we encourage our parents very much to be a part of our school district, and as everyone knows, the more the parents are in the schools, the better it is for the students and teachers. And our last one that we've just done this year is the Safe Schools Policy. We have had all of these framed and have given them to all our schools. They're hanging in the offices where the parents and teachers and the students can see them. It's important that everyone knows what we believe in, and we want people (students, staff, and parents) to see it.

DH: These policies took several months to develop, and had to go before two public readings, with the board making the final revisions. Our Human Dignity Policy states in essence that we believe in the dignity of all people. If you violate the Human Dignity Policy or feel your human dignity has been violated, then there's a procedure to address that.

We have an Adopt-a-Judge program in our middle schools, which is a component of the collaborative effort we have with our prosecutor's office and our judge's office. Each of our three middle schools is assigned a superior court judge. They make occasional visits to talk with the kids about juvenile law, juvenile crime, the role of judges, and things like that. It's very impressive because they wear their robes. Everyone rises when the judge comes in, and the kids really get into asking questions.

We have a peer facilitation program at the high schools. Kids take a class that meets two days a week, then three days a week for training, and a regular class for credit. They go out and work not only with peers within the high school, but in the middle schools as well, working with personal issues and support.

Student assistance programs are a big component of our schools. We have teachers as well as counselors who run support groups. Our coordinator of psychological services sets up and trains the teams, which will be in all of our elementary schools this year. We already have them in our middle and secondary schools.

We incorporate curricular things as well. We have looked at a lot of different programs and have tried to develop our own eclectic model and integrate it as we do our multicultural and diversity education throughout the curriculum. A humanities teacher at the high school, while dealing with literature and the arts, might weave in the concept of dealing with conflict and anger. We're con-

stantly working towards more of that.

CH: Students, parents, teachers, counselors, or anyone else can refer a student to the peer mediation team. We have two peer mediators on duty all day in a conference room in the office. It is the Dean's pilot program, and he is available to facilitate, should they experience any difficulty. It was a very inexpensive program to get up and going. We heartily recommend it. The kids like it a lot and it's showing good results.

DH: We meet with the peer mediation coordinators three or four times a year. Lawrence Central had close to 200 peer mediations in the spring semester. The percentage of those that were felt to be successful was 80 percent. We feel that's a success. It saved a lot of suspensions and possible expulsions, perhaps even someone getting hurt. My daughter was one of the peer mediators, and she was very skeptical going into it. She said, "Dad, kids aren't going to do this. They're not going to come down and talk with us." And she's really been surprised. We always have two facilitators and basically no more than two disputants. It's private, but there's an adult outside in the hall. If the mediators have to dismiss the disputants, the adult files a report. They go up and tell the Dean or the coordinator, "Hey, this needs follow-up or there's going to be some trouble."

There's probably not a single school district that doesn't go through trying to find the perfect attendance policy that helps make them accountable. It's not a policy, but a behavior that causes kids to want to come to your school, and the kinds of things that happen to them when they're there. Our attendance policy was revised about three years ago, and we became more specific in defining what excused and unexcused absences were. We have progressive incremental steps in place for truancy.

We also have a Traveling Truancy Court, another partnership with the juvenile justice system. A judge comes into our school district once a month and holds truancy court right in our central office. And if that doesn't get the parent's attention, they are sent the contract. If they don't sign it, they're subpoenaed into court and fined. They can even be jailed.

Establishing a "SAFE Schools" model is truly a collaborative effort that has involved our local police department, mayor, community, students, the Lawrence Education Association, teachers, administrators, and parents. In the Lawrence Township Schools, we feel "safety is everyone's business."

Thinking About Values and Violence

Robert Kenny, Ed.D., *The Concord Collaborative*

Diana Paolitto, Ed.D., *The Concord Collaborative*

ROBERT KENNEY (RK): My name is Bob Kenney and I'm from the Concord Center for Collaboration here in Massachusetts. Since 1986, we have worked in the area of moral education, values education, character, civic education, and other euphemisms that people use when talking about "teaching values." We have worked in large and small school districts all over the country.

How do we actually teach young people about trust and respect and responsibility and caring? They're fundamental questions. We've done a lot of talking during this conference about self-respect and behavior. One of the things that we're pretty clear about is that self-destructive behavior increases when people have a sense of isolation. There really is only one way to build self-esteem, and that is by having a positive, trusting, respectful relationship with another person.

You cannot work on values without talking about relationships and vice-versa. We always make it clear to the groups we work with that this is not a values education program exclusively for kids. Adults need to take the lead in treating people in a respectful, trusting, and caring manner.

The last phrase of the Declaration of Independence declares, "We mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor." One of the founding goals of the public schools in this country is to teach kids how to be citizens in a democratic society. I think if we're going to do that, we need to teach kids not just to memorize the phrase, but to understand what it really means to pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor. Look at some of the other phrases — a perfect union, establish justice, domestic tranquility, the general welfare. What do these words mean? These are the ideas we're trying to teach.

DIANA PAOLITTO (DP): I'm Diana Paolitto and I also work at the Concord Center for Collaboration. I have been working in the field of value-based education for over 20 years, and have seen many different programs and philosophies come and go.

In listening to the speakers the last few days, I have heard some confusion about prevention and intervention. This values-based workshop we're doing now is in the area

of prevention. Prevention involves everyone, not just high-risk kids, but also the whole school, and communities. In an article from the *American Psychologist*, I read a sentence that strikes me as important: "Intervention for the purpose of prevention needs to be designed to reduce the risk factors and/or to enhance the protective factors." Now, what does this mean? Reducing the risk factors is hard in our society. The risk factors are poverty in the face of great affluence, overcrowded urban dwellings, and all the other socioeconomic problems that are threatening to overwhelm us. So what can we do in the schools? How can we keep kids resilient? How can we keep the adults from burning out?

Trust is very important. If you don't have trust, it's awfully hard to get to any other values you would like to instill. What we'd like to do now is to get you engaged in a values-based activity, as opposed to sitting through yet another lecture. We'd like to have you get together in groups of two or three and share with each other how you learn about trust.

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Now, we'd like a few of the groups to share what you learned or what you heard.

WOMAN: We talked about trust as coming from very early experiences with parents and in the different ways we related to each of our parents. The parent who was more consistent and rational was the easier parent to trust and be trusted by.

WOMAN: My partner and I echo the idea that you learn to trust from your family environment, your mother in particular. In my instance she was my role model. She modeled how trust is developed. Unconditional love is the way I learned to trust.

RK: Learning to trust is a complicated process. It's a developmental process, how we learn to trust our mommies and daddies when we're three, how we learn about trust when we're eleven, how we determine whom to trust and whether we can trust everyone.

MAN: You may have learned it from your mom and dad through a process that was mostly unconscious, but the task many of us face today is to figure out how to teach young people about trust.

WOMAN: Another thing that people said in the groups was that trust happens in the context of relationships. I don't know how we could learn trust alone.

WOMAN: Then there's the question of the mixed messages children are given. You should trust people, but don't talk to strangers.

WOMAN: Everybody knows that people are raped, kidnapped, and assaulted because of misplaced trust. Most pedophiles know how to create a trusting image. Is there a rational reason why I'm trusting this person?

WOMAN: In addition to teaching about trust, you have to teach a child to be street smart.

MAN: A lot of times we leave this subject out, but doesn't spirituality play a role in this trust, regardless of what your spiritual beliefs are?

DP: I said earlier that Bob and I have been around the field of values-based education a number of years, seeing different approaches come and go. The most traditional values approach has occurred since the beginning of time. In traditional moral instruction, adults are the knowers, the authorities on values, and the transmitters of the culture. They tell children what trust, caring, respect, responsibility, all of the values in the culture are. The positive side of that is the adults use their knowledge, experience, behaviors, and skills to pass on to the next generation the wisdom they have. The negative side of that is that at times it can border on coercion: "You must do what I say because I'm the adult and you're the child and I know what I'm doing."

WOMAN: I'm for didactic instruction. I really am. There are lots of kids who are like empty holes.

DP: Let me give you a second school of thought. There's a reaction against didactic moral teaching by adults. Some of you might be as old as I am, have lived through the '60s, and remember the movement of values clarification, the school of thought Sidney Simon developed. The idea was that authority does not know everything about values, and children should have a dialogue with each other and with adults about what these values are. Children ought to be clarifying what values they already have innately. The job of the adults was to get out of the way of the kids, who have the values but need to articulate them. The role of the adult in this situation was to be neutral, not to give his or her opinion.

The positive side of this was to have children discuss values and bring them into the classroom in an interactive way. The negative side was that adults opted out and became "values neutral" or "values relative." There is now 20 years of research on what works in values education and how we look at developmental questions in relation to

teaching values. Part of what we're talking about here today is called comprehensive values education. We're looking at the process whereby people develop values and how adults can go about helping children in that process. You use yourself in the classroom to teach values. You model. You talk about values. It's not enough to tell them what you would do and what they ought to do. They have to recreate the whole experience of making meaning in values themselves.

WOMAN: When you say right and wrong, it implies that there is someone who knows what is right and what is wrong. But what I might think is right and wrong may not agree with what you think.

DP: There's a difference between *values*, which are beliefs that we choose and cherish highly, and *moral values*, which have to do with right and wrong and with underlying principles by which human beings can live together in a community — how we take responsibility for other people in this society. You ask, who's to say what's right and what's wrong? In this society, there are laws and documents and the fundamental principles underlying them on which the society is based.

WOMAN: Homosexuality is morally wrong to some people and to others it's absolutely acceptable. There's nothing in the Constitution that says it's right or wrong.

RK: If I was in the classroom, I'd want a student to say, "Why is it wrong? Why is it right? What's your reasoning?" I think it's very important that we establish that for people to respect each other and to take some responsibility for their own behavior is really fundamental.

But the other discussion that has to take place in developmentally appropriate ways across the curriculum and up and down the system is about trust. We have to be able to feel that we're not going to get shot at even if we do say something is right or wrong. Someone might challenge us, but they're not going to shoot us.

WOMAN: The parents say, I want you to teach values, but I want you to teach my values. And their values may not be universal values.

WOMAN: Let's keep in mind we are a diverse group, and while some of us cannot say the "V" word, in Illinois we are saying it loud and clear. In fact, parents and school groups are insisting that we include values in our curriculum.

MAN: In the states of Indiana, Illinois, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania it's now in the law.

WOMAN: The *Boston Phoenix* had an article this week about the question of values education in the schools. They concluded that no matter what angle you take, people who

want to disassemble public schooling are using that as a means to support their point of view.

RK: Sometimes because we have somewhat of a reputation for dealing with values and character, I get calls from school districts to help them address the problem of kids cheating. You get down to the community and one of the things you find is that the kids are cheating and the adults are fighting. The school board is fighting with the principal, the principal is fighting with the teachers, and the union is fighting and the janitors are fighting. They're all fighting in public, in the newspapers, in public forums. And this fighting is not taking place in a respectful, airing, trusting manner: people are calling people names, in public; people are picketing in ways that are intrusive. There's a lot going on. And guess what? The kids are cheating.

It's important to have a process where the kids can see the adults engage in respectful dialogue. So, the first and foremost thing to do is to get the adults in the school to sit down and agree on the values that they're going to teach and use. It just doesn't make any sense to insist that kids trust and care and respect and are responsible while coming to class late yourself, not collecting homework, or bad mouthing the teacher next door. The adults need to model responsible and respectful behavior first.

The second thing that really needs to happen is that people need to articulate what they're doing. I'm giving you this pass to go to the bathroom because I trust you. Now, the first time that a kid usually hears the word trust from a teacher, it's often, "I'm not giving you the pass because the last time I gave you one, you abused it and I don't trust you anymore." Talking about trust, respect, responsibility, and caring in everyday dialogue is very important.

In one school we worked with, we asked the kids to evaluate whether or not their teachers were caring. At the beginning of the project they got a certain score and then months later they got another one. We found that the kids said the teachers were less caring after having used our program than before. What we found when we looked into it was that the kids had different criteria for what caring was, that saying hello in the morning no longer got you a caring teacher rating. They expected more than that. They had been told to expect more than that and more than that had been modeled. So the ante was really raised for some of the adults.

In this process, you're elevating the dialogue in the school to a different level so that when you say, "That isn't very respectful behavior," it doesn't sound like you're preaching, it sounds like you're making a comment. That's not a very respectful behavior, and we've had this conversation 32,000 times as to why it's so important for people to respect each other. It becomes part of the dialogue when we're talking about social studies, English literature, math, or whatever. It makes a difference whether the cafeteria

workers serve lunch with a smile. It's possible to drive a bus that way, or run a science lab. And that's what I mean by a coordinated effort among the school community.

WOMAN: Teachers are often very much in touch with their own power. They're looking down and they hold the cards. We all work in a pyramid of power, and I find people who are rude to kids but nice to the principal or the superintendent.

They have it in them. They're choosing when to display those behaviors.

RK: Whether or not someone is my principal or in my classroom, if I treat them in a respectful, caring, and trusting way, the power pyramid shouldn't make much difference.

DP: Do most of you know about the classroom meeting? It was originally Glasser's idea and is discussed in a book by Tom Lickona. It can be a core activity for developing values and teaching civic democracy. It's not for just the classroom, but can be useful for teacher meetings, central office meetings, and meetings between staff members.

These sample questions are basically values questions on what the process is in the meeting. How does it go smoothly? How do we show trust? How do we show that we care about each other's opinion when we're collaborating? Collaboration is a transformation of thinking; it's not a competition. It's how I listen to you so that my ideas might be changed and modified as a result of listening to your ideas, because you have important things to say as well as I. Together we can create a more respectful, caring, and responsible environment by pooling our ideas.

These are the kinds of questions that can be focused on even before you talk about the American Revolution or mixing chemicals in chemistry class. What's a fair way to go about having this discussion with me? Some elementary schools require that each school day begin with a classroom meeting, setting an agenda, explaining the rules, asking the

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children what the rules are. Should the rules be modified? What is the problem that we're having? This can be a classroom problem, it can be a curriculum problem. Maybe no one is bringing their homework back.

When teachers ask children a question, they wait an average of only 2.5 seconds for a reply. People need to think. Children are thinkers.

Lickona has an entire chapter on how you close a meeting. You can just close it, we don't always have to summarize, we don't always have to review what we've done, we can leave the discussion unfinished. I think teachers tend to want to come to closure and wrap the package up. If you don't wrap the package up, guess what? The next day the children will come back in the classroom discussing what happened the day before, as opposed to thinking it's a dead issue, we finished that.

I'd like to voice a little critique of the video we saw yesterday. Perhaps the teacher was nervous being filmed, but I would have preferred it if the teacher had set her chair in the circle with the children. She did an awful lot of talking. She repeated what the children said. The children need to hear what each other has to say and not have the teacher repeat it, or else they'll listen to the teacher's repetition and not what the child next to them is saying.

It's really shocking to me that American schools have seating like this, with desks in rows and the teacher standing up front. I don't like this arrangement at all. Sitting in a circle does an amazing number of things in terms of attention, children talking to children, partnering. It's easy to talk to your neighbor for a few minutes and then come back to the whole group.

MAN: Bill Glasser originated the classroom meeting idea back in the '60s. One of the questions I've heard him ask kids is, "Do you feel like you have power in this classroom and this school?" As an administrator I've come to ask my colleagues the same question. Class meeting is a place where you can deal with that.

Glasser also says that we all have the need for power. Chances are that my power need and your power need may be in conflict. Values education is a process of going from the *me* to the *we*. Frankly, I am not going to go to the *we*

unless I can know that it is going to help *me*. And part of what I need as a human being is to have some sense that I have a shot at power.

School is something that the grownups do to kids. We are not truly respected because the whole structure of conventional school doesn't respect kids. We've been talking about multiculturalism. I think maybe what I see as the biggest problem in schools isn't racism or sexism, it's adultism. Adultism is where it's all our thing. The class meeting is a perfect opportunity to reaffirm to the kids that if they weren't there the school would be a storage shed.

DP: It's the crucible of American citizenship, this training in terms of feeling that kids do have power, they do have a voice. Each child's voice is equal to that of the teacher in this situation. The teacher organizes it and takes the suggestions and implements them because that's our role as adults, but the children have power and a voice.

What we're suggesting is to change small and long and to keep at it. We have to start by changing ourselves; we don't start with the kids. One of the messages we're trying to give here today is that we have to start with our own values, our own behavior. It's on all levels, up and down the system.

We don't have a "program." It has to start with you. It's a process that occurs in dialogue and in knowing, feeling and doing. And through that process you creatively take what you already have in your school and infuse or integrate it with an articulated and coordinated set of values.

I just passed out examples of activities that highlight the importance of dialoguing about dilemmas and situations that occur in the everyday life of the school, and in your existing curriculum. In chemistry, two chemicals, Na and Cl, bond to produce salt. Besides teaching chemistry, you can talk about how it's important for two elements to bond to create a compound. Some elements are free floating and don't combine to create other compounds, and they're not as useful or helpful to people. Social studies, too, abound with possibilities. Writing the Constitution, the Civil War, all of history has to do with values questions. With literature, it's a question of putting your values lens into focus so that you discuss the values in the books you read with your children.

All Our Children: Violence as a Public Health Emergency

Deborah Prothrow-Stith, M.D., *Harvard School of Public Health*

You may recognize Terry William's name. He's the author of *Crackhouse and Cocaine Kids*, an ethnographer and journalist who took the time to organize young people into a writing crew and teach them some writing skills. Tanya, a member of this group, wrote this:

Within each and everyone of us there is a fear. Maybe a fear of flying, a fear of an animal or even the fear of death. My worst fear is dying in the street. Every morning I wake up and I kiss my daughter and I thank God we have made it through the night. I live in Spanish Harlem, and I'm surrounded by crackheads and drug dealers. This is not the type of environment I want to raise my child up in. But I'm stuck here, until I get to a higher level. Every night I can hear loud explosions. The children run through the street screaming and cursing as though fighting were going on. And, you know, a lot of times they're just doing that for fun, because they want to be heard. They enjoy disturbing people at 4 o'clock in the morning, by throwing bottles at cars, just to hear the alarms go off. Sometimes I sit in the dark and I think about when is it all going to end. Or is this the end? I just keep feeling pain in my heart when I look at all the children in the street suffering. Just keeps getting worse and worse. Tears run down my face when I embrace my daughter and I pray she doesn't become another victim of life. Everyone is born an innocent baby that is full of joy. All they want is to be loved and comforted, and they want to have play time, and food. I begin to wonder what goes through the minds of these teenagers that still receive love and comfort and play time from their parents. Why do they resort to violence? As a baby resorts to crying when hungry. What are they hungry for?

I like Tanya's essay a lot. It reminds me of a couple of things. The first thing that it reminds me of is that my children are going to get my attention. One way or the other. It can be four o'clock in the morning when they're

throwing bottles at cars, or it can be early on in their lives when I give it to them in a loving and preventive way. But one way or the other, they are going to get my attention. But what I also realize is that it's not just my children, it's collectively, our children. The children of your community will get your time, your attention, your money, and your resources one way or the other. We make decisions almost daily when we vote and fashion public policy about whether we're going to give them our time, attention, money, and resources early on and in a preventive way, or whether we're going to wait until four o'clock in the morning when they're throwing bottles at cars just to hear the alarms go off.

The other thing I like about Tanya's essay is that she asks even when a child receives love, play time, and food from his or her parents, "Why would they resort to violence? What are they hungry for?" I love her analogy, with the baby crying, and her question, "What are these teenagers hungry for?" You know they might be in a pretty good family; sometimes I ask that question. I say to myself, "That kid didn't really have any reason to get involved in that. You know, that kid was from a loving family. What happened?" You've heard some of the young people's stories earlier; sometimes they fit and you understand how things went wrong to damage a child, or a child's future. I don't know the whole answer to that question, but I think it's, in part, this notion of a *community*; it takes a village to raise a child. It's not enough to have a healthy child and a healthy family. If the community is unhealthy, by the time that child becomes a teenager, you can get some bad outcomes.

The more I think about violence, the more I realize that, in fact, to prevent violence in America, we must build a healthy community around *all* of the children. Not just *some* of the children. Right now we do it for *some* of the children. Most of us spend a lot of time building a healthy community around our children. This sometimes means that we take them trick or treating over here, drive them in the car over there, go to church way over here, gather at this person's house, that person's house. But we literally are building a healthy community around our children. It just dawned on me that that's not enough. The story of a father whose son was killed is particularly telling in this regard. He

was being interviewed by a reporter who said, "You know, you sent your son to private school. He was an athlete and a scholar. He was well liked by all the kids. He had a scholarship to college, and yet he was killed. You did everything right. But your son was killed." The father looked up and said, "I forgot to do one thing. I forgot to raise all the other children too." This father, in his grief, was able to put his finger on the fact that we fail to provide all children with a healthy and supportive community. And that failure puts all of our children at risk.

I like Tanya's essay and the way it reminds me of my parental, civic, and community responsibility. I'm a bit annoyed by our public policy at this point. This is the first time in the history of this country that we're spending more on jails than we are on schools. I'm annoyed, but I think you educators should be really annoyed. I really think that the educators among us ought lead a major protest across this country about the fact that we are spending more on

jails than we are on schools. I get annoyed at our public policy when I look at the "three strikes and you're out" provision of the Federal Crime Bill. It is a very expensive provision that is projected to double the number of people in jails and prisons in five years. In 1980, in the United States, we had a half million people in jails and prisons. In 1990 we had a million. You remember that decade, when we got "tough" on crime? Law and order

was on the lips of every politician. We doubled the number of people in our prisons from a half million to a million in that decade. Violent crime went up 12 percent in that decade. Yet you look at the Federal Crime Bill and you would think that getting tough on crime was something new. Something we hadn't tried. There is a very expensive provision that may double our prison population in five years. I bet it will have very little impact on our violent crime rate because, historically, getting tough on crime has had very little impact on our violent crime rate. Secondly, there is an analysis of violence in California that shows that of 300,000 episodes of violence there each year (rape, assaults, all violent crimes), 2,500 of these crimes (less than 1 percent) are committed by somebody who would have been in jail had "three strikes and you're out" been the law. So our policy-makers have used political expediency to fashion a very expensive piece of the Federal Crime Bill that will double the number of people in jails and prisons

in five years, which may affect less than 1 percent of the violent crimes.

I have one slide that I'd like to show you, comparing the homicide rates of the United States to that of other countries. You may have read some of these statistics in the newspaper, but it suggests that, in our country, we treat violence (in particular homicide) as if it were a natural, inevitable part of the human condition. When you compare the U.S. to other industrialized countries, it becomes very clear that we're doing something wrong. There are things that we ought to do, like building healthy communities, for instance. But we don't have to accept or tolerate violence. Look at these figures and notice that our homicide rate is ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, and seventy times higher than that of other countries. Clearly, we are doing something wrong.

If you think about this problem of violence in America, what comes to mind immediately are drive-by-shoot-

ings, gangs, robberies, burglaries, some of the stranger, "bad guy" threats. But I was surprised to learn, when I started studying this problem, that half of the homicides occur among friends and family. People who know each other get into an argument, don't know how to get along, and don't know how to handle anger. In Boston, if a black person kills a white person, or a white person kills a black person, it makes the news for three or

four days. It may even make national news. This is very misleading, because 90 percent of the white people who are killed are killed by white people, and 90 percent of the black people who are killed are killed by black people. That's also true for the Hispanic community. Interracial violence and stranger, "bad-guy" violence seems to dominate our media. But we don't even know how to get along with the people we know, the people we love, people who look like us. I really am beginning to find that public policy is the result of bad politics, and it focuses almost all of our attention on stranger, "bad-guy" violence, while very little attention goes to prevention or to our inability to get along.

Now let's think about the Federal Crime Bill, which has passed the Senate and the House. There are two versions now, in both of which there's an ounce of attention paid to prevention. One version reserves about \$1 billion; the other holds about \$1.3 -1.4 billion. But the total crime bill is \$28 billion. The good news is that the ounce of

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prevention is there. The Children's Defense Fund is leading a major effort to help it stay there because, during the process, it could go away. We wouldn't want that to happen. The bad news is that of the \$28 billion, \$26 billion or so is being spent on the same old thing that *hasn't* really worked, that's very expensive, and I'm beginning to get annoyed not just at our elected officials, but I'm beginning to get annoyed at you. I apologize for that. I'm annoyed a bit at myself, quite honestly, around this issue. Sometimes I think we've lost our minds. What do we think that we are doing? What are we trying to produce?

I was in Milwaukee not too long ago, and I had a chance to talk to the mayor, and we had an interesting conversation. The mayor told me that they had had a pretty successful summer jobs program, but that the Federal government hadn't kicked in all the money that they wanted. And the private sector hadn't come up with the number of jobs they expected the business sector to provide. They had a pretty successful program, but they only met about half of the need. He told me about some other things that were happening in Milwaukee, some exciting things. But he started telling me about a heinous murder that had just taken place and talked about the 17-year-old who had just been convicted of that crime. With some understandable satisfaction, he said that the 17-year-old was going to jail for 73 years, without parole, and that seemed at least what he deserved for that horrible crime. But it struck me, as I reflected back on that conversation, that we are a society that is willing to spend \$35,000 a year for 73 years on the same kid to whom we don't give a \$2,000 summer job.

I'm really kind of getting annoyed because I don't know what we think we're doing. I don't know what it is we expect to happen. I work at one of the health centers here in Boston on Wednesday evenings. We were trying to get a young man into our after-school program because he was getting in a lot of trouble, after school. After some calling around and some negotiation, we realized that there were no more subsidized slots. He probably wasn't going to get in after school unless he signed up for the next year at *that* moment, early enough to get one of those subsidized slots. And as he was leaving, I realized that he could walk outside that clinic and get shot. I could admit him to Boston City Hospital, and I could spend \$30,000 a day, and nobody would ask me any questions. I get annoyed. I don't know what we want from a public policy perspective. I don't know what we expect. I often get asked what are we going to do, what we can do. I have only one response, and that is to launch a very basic, very grassroots, very political campaign. That's why I travel all over the country speaking on this issue.

It's going to take a movement, a national movement,

to prevent violence in our lives and change some of our public policy. I want to share with you a very helpful model from public health. It's the model of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. Sometimes when I'm in the classroom teaching violence prevention, the model helps me understand that there are kids in that classroom who need more than a curriculum. I find this model helpful because sometimes people say to me, "How are you going to take a gang member who's killed people and teach them nonviolence in ten sessions?" This model helps me put what I'm doing in perspective and understand what's wrong with our public policy.

Primary prevention is what we do to change attitudes and social norms. If we were trying to prevent lung cancer, primary prevention would be education in the classroom, public service announcements, using the television, an interesting array of things that change social norms and attitudes. Most of you will remember when cigarette smoking was a pretty glamorous thing to do. Now, it's offensive and unhealthy and people are in smoke-free buildings. That's a major change. You can't even smoke on airplanes now. Five or six years ago, when I was flying, people would smoke in my face. We've had a major change in attitudes and social norms around this issue of smoking. That's primary prevention at work. **Secondary prevention** focuses on people who are at risk — helping people who smoke to stop, for example. You know some of the strategies we've used there. **Tertiary prevention** is not really prevention at all, but the response itself. It's what you do when somebody has lung cancer. It's the treatment, surgery, chemotherapy.

When I take that model and apply it to violence, I realize we need some primary prevention — not for bad kids, but for all of us. Some primary prevention teaches kids how to get along and celebrate getting along. Some primary prevention calls into question our love of violence, the ways we are entertained by it, and the ways we encourage and promote it. You know, I get a lot of calls about *Beavis and Butt-head*. I respond by noting that *Beavis and Butt-head* is not the only offender. We promote violence through a lifetime of messages — laughing at violent cartoons, admiring super heroes and their violent tactics. We've got some pretty good research on the impact of this on children. We need some primary prevention, because a lot of parents say to their kids, "You better go back outside and beat him up, or I'm going to beat you up." The peer mediators whom I have a chance to meet and visit say that the fights that are the most difficult to mediate are those in which the mother told her child to beat up the other kid. We need primary prevention, not only for bad kids. When the President bombs another country and his popularity goes up, whether he's a Republican or a Democrat, we celebrate. We like violence,

we encourage violence, we're mean. We've got Rambo hearts and Terminator heads. Mean has become popular. The stuff that you need to get along in life — compassion, empathy, communication, forgiveness — that's all pretty unpopular, wimpy stuff.

If we're going to get along we are going to have to forgive each other. Forgiveness is so unpopular in America. We don't even understand it. You may remember the confusion people had when Rodney King stood up and said, "Can't we just all get along?" It's as if he's saying something un-American. If somebody beats you up, then you're supposed to beat them up. It really became clear to me when Reginald Denny stood up and said about Henry Watson, his assailant, "I forgive him." I was watching *Phil Donahue* about eight months ago, when Denny, Watson, a couple of the jurors, family members, and a lawyer were on the show. The audience started getting more and more hostile toward Reginald Denny. They were saying things like, "Why did you hug his (Watson's) mother in the courtroom? If you hadn't hugged his mother, that man would be in jail now, where he's supposed to be." A lady stood up and said, "Why were you talking about all that forgiveness? Why don't you just let the courts do what they were supposed to do?" Reginald Denny eventually, said, "It's in my religion to forgive." The lady said, "Well, I don't know what kind of religion you have!" And I thought to myself, "Whoa! I don't know all the world's major religions, but forgiveness is pretty consistent in the ones that I know." Reginald Denny answered, "Well, I'm a Christian." And the lady said, "Well, I don't know what kind of Christian you are!" And I thought to myself, "Now I know that religion. Almost all of the New Testament is about forgiveness!" Forgiveness is so unpopular in our culture that even in the context of a discussion about the major institution of justice, this woman didn't understand it. Forgiveness is very unpopular. The list of things that we need to learn to get along is an unpopular list.

We need primary prevention to change what and how we think, to change the way we feel about things, to change what we celebrate. One of the football players at the Burke High School in Boston told me that he ran an 80-yard touchdown play, and they won the game, but they weren't

in the newspaper. However, he said, "If I shoot somebody, I'm going to be on the front page of the *Boston Herald*, and they'll probably have my picture." We've got to do some primary prevention, because what we watch, what we like, what we celebrate, is violence. We encourage it, either directly or indirectly. We teach our children to like it, and demean the important social skills that help us to get along. Nobody wants to be called "nice." "What do you mean, I'm 'nice?' You mean I'm *ineffective*?" It's interesting. To get along we've got to celebrate the things that we need, the skills to get along. It's never too early to start teaching it or too late to start learning it. It's a skill, we can all learn it, and we can all get better at it.

Primary prevention is about all of us — classroom education, conflict resolution, public service announcements. We have some *secondary prevention needs* because there are kids who are at risk. These are the kids that you suspend from school regularly for fighting. You know these kids, the ones that I was stitching up all the time in the emergency room. These are the kids that the police will see when they respond to calls of domestic violence. Kids who watch their mother beaten, the runaways, the truants, the kids throwing bottles at cars at four o'clock in the morning just to hear the alarms go off. These are the

kids who are trying to get our time, our attention, our money, and our resources. We need secondary prevention because we have a mixed-up, confused set of values around this issue. Some kids are at greater risk, and we need to pay attention to them earlier.

Tertiary prevention is the stitching them up response, putting them in jail; that's prosecution, that's defense. We spend a lot of money doing that right now. So the kids are going to get our money and it's pretty shameful that we watch and wait, we suspend and watch and wait and ignore; we literally watch and wait until these kids have committed some horrible violent offense, and then we get all mean and puffed out. We say things like, "I'm for 'three strikes and you're out.'" "I'm for expelling you if you look like you're going to cause trouble in my school this year." It doesn't make a lot of sense. I do get to meet a lot of people working on a lot of programs, doing a lot of things that can turn lives around. I actually stay optimistic, because I meet people

*Interracial violence and
stranger, "bad-guy" violence
seem to dominate our media.
But we don't even know how
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like Clementine Chism from Detroit, whose son was killed. She founded *SoSad* (Save Our Sons and Daughters) and for ten years directed that organization to help kids and families survive the violence. *SoSad* sponsors Survivors Institutes and focuses on public policy around gun issues in Detroit.

I can stay involved. I meet kids who are struggling, and if they can overcome all odds to stay safe, we can do this. You know, our meanness shows when we hear people saying, "I'm tired of hearing those hard luck stories. I had a hard time when I was growing up, and I just pulled myself on up and did what I was supposed to do. I'm tired of hearing all those excuses!" Well, you know, if you were ever raped by your father, or beaten daily when you returned home from school, you might not say that. It's pretty mean to say that. I think we've got a chance to make a difference now.

I think we're at a kind of critical point, and the seeds of this national movement are out there, all over, in little towns, big cities, north, south — all over this country. Some of you are doing some of this important work. I think we're on the verge of a national movement to prevent violence in all our relationships. We'll have to, and we can have an impact on public policy. Some of you know the controversy around conflict resolution in the schools. Does it work? Is it worth the time? Is there a convincing case to be made for its effectiveness? I'm asked a lot about evaluation, what we know, and what's working. We will know more soon: the information is beginning to accumulate. We don't know as much as we want to, yet, but I hear the stories from all around the country. The one I want to close with comes from Boston — a story of one of our violence prevention educators. He's a young man whose family moved him from L.A. to Boston because he had been involved in a lot of violence. They wanted him to have a second chance. He met a kid at school who brought him to the *Boston Violence Prevention Project*, where the staff really incorporated his street skills into the training program. He became a trainer. They had some money to hire a student, so he spent the summer, full time, at the *Project*, and trained people to use the violence prevention curriculum. He told us about four months ago that he was walking down a street, and a kid confronted him on the street in a way that made him frightened. He said that, had he been in L.A., he'd have just shot the kid

immediately. He said he thought about walking away, because he'd been involved in the *Violence Prevention Program*. But then he said, "The only reason I walked away was because I thought I was going to get killed anyway." He was pretty desperate. He turned and started walking away, and nothing happened. And he kept walking, and kept walking, and nothing happened. Later he saw the young man on the basketball court, and they both realized, in his words, "There wasn't that much bad between us, and we wound up playing on the same team." That renewed my faith in what we are doing. It also made it very clear to me that, like that young man, we are pretty desperate as a society. If he can learn and try something different, so can we. The tragedy of violence in America is overwhelming us. Some of the

stories are very close to you. But if he can try something different, so can we. You've got to go back to your schools and try something different. You've got to go back to your communities and try something different. You've got to go back to your families and try something different. We can make a difference. He had a little bit of a success there, which means he's probably going to try it again. It's nice.

Those of us who already work in these programs have a little bit of a success, so we're going to try it again. It's great. I don't want to be annoyed. It causes your blood pressure to go up. It causes you to have problems sleeping at night. I bet you're pretty annoyed. You and I can make a difference. And like that young man, we don't have much of a choice.

Let me close with another story. This is the ambulance story. And this comes from teaching the *Violence Prevention Curriculum*. When we asked the students to list all the things that make them angry, a young man said that his friend had been stabbed over the weekend and it took the ambulance 20 minutes to get there, and his friend died. He was pretty angry because he only lived about five blocks away from Boston City Hospital. And the boy felt like it was probably racism and classism that kept the ambulance from getting there any sooner than 20 minutes. So here is a boy with a lot of anger about some big stuff, racism and classism. Now we list all the things he could do with his anger. So, for example, he can beat up the ambulance driver. We talk about the impact that would have on the ambulance response times in the future. We list "slash the tires," "break the windows," "do nothing" — which is probably the most common response. This is probably as hurtful

We are a society that is willing to spend \$35,000 a year for 73 years on the same kid [in jail] to whom we don't give a \$2,000 summer job.

to him in the long run as beating up the ambulance driver. I don't know that one is even better, though obviously, for the ambulance driver, one is preferable. But "doing nothing" with that kind of anger leads to self-esteem depletion, and a kind of apathy, withdrawal, rage. We list, "Write the mayor a letter." If the mayor writes back, you know, you get a little boost in self esteem. I wanted to include some healthy ideas on the list because they were pretty good at the impulsive solutions — getting out, beating up the dog, beating up the neighbor, beating up your younger sister, beating up the ambulance driver. So we pushed and they said, "Write the mayor a letter." The truth is that there's not much healthy you can do with that kind of anger. But then we came upon what I thought was the best response. The boy gets so angry, really so filled with rage, that he decides

to finish high school and become an ambulance driver. Now it's easier to say that than to do it. If you're going to do it, you're going to need role models and mentors. You're going to need a school system that's going to teach you something. And you're going to need a city that's going to let you be an ambulance driver when you pass the test. You are going to need a healthy community in order to do that. But that's what I try to do with my anger, and that's what I try to teach my children to do with their anger. And I really think that we have an obligation to make racism go away, to make classism go away, to make poverty go away. And I also think that while we do this, we also have an obligation to help children handle the horrible things that happen to them. If we do that, well, they'll help us make some of the violence go away, in the long run. Thanks for your attention.

The Challenges of Implementation and Job Satisfaction

Margot A. Welch, Ed.D., *Harvard Graduate School of Education*

MARGOT WELCH: I've been very impressed by the competence, perspectives, wisdom, and experience of all of you here and feel grateful to have been able to spend the week with you. I will try to tie up some loose ends now. Many will remain untied, which gives us a nice tapestry to think about working on together.

First I want to suggest some secrets of success about implementation, because we all know that we will meet with resistance — from colleagues, school systems, kids, families, and communities. In May, about 20 of us from last summer's New England teams met for a reunion. Having listened to them and to some of the presentations this week by practitioners, I have assembled a list of considerations that I hope may be helpful.

A) Collaboration is difficult, time-consuming, and essential.

B) Too many disparate actions can be inefficient and counterproductive. As Joe Sperlazza said, "Don't splinter your models. Try to get all the components under one umbrella."

C) Get teachers and administrators involved in planning and training for violence prevention programs. This decreases their resentment about classroom "pull-outs" and increases their feelings of ownership in programs.

D) Change and planning take time. We know this, but we forget to schedule in planning time. Administrative reluctance to grant planning time, like budget problems, may reflect personal and systemic resistance.

E) Distinguish between community and internal problems. Think and talk about this carefully, to break down the obstacles, build useful alliances.

F) Many people would rather not think about the need for increased numbers of security officers in schools, or include them as players on the administrative school teams. This may reflect denial and fear. Thoughtful school-law enforcement partnerships can help to address this resistance. On the other hand, we must be careful not to mistake weapon detectors for the real security that all kids need to feel when they are in school.

G) Many kids who most need the kinds of relationships

and connections that are made possible to them through good preventive programs are the most skittish, most afraid of intimacy, most nervous about meeting expectations, least unfamiliar with respect. We must take special care with those children. Tim Dugan reminded us about those children whom we may have seen only once, but who then may have gone on to build teams of other people for themselves. Seeing a kid once doesn't mean that we haven't had an impact.

H) Time can be the most precious resource of all, the hardest to find.

I) Patience with everybody, including ourselves, is essential.

J) Isolation can corrode our spirits and our programs. We need to have colleagues in this work.

K) The urgency and the scope of the needs that we are being asked to meet can sometimes make us feel so scattered that we lose our way, direction, and momentum. We need to try to stay focused.

L) Short-tempered hostility on the part of others with whom we work may reflect personal feelings of powerlessness, isolation, fear. Teachers need training and support.

M) Striving for a sensitive, respectful balance between local control and central coordination is important. To make changes, we need support at the top from principals, superintendents, mayors, legislators, etc. And everybody wants to feel that they understand what's happening, to feel a part of innovation. We must be careful not to underestimate the anxiety of the adults with whom we work and, of course, the anxiety of the kids.

N) Watch out for the media. They can be damaging. Single players with their own ambitious agendas can sabotage collaborative actions.

O) Engage parents and families as allies. This is a very important component of success in schools that are establishing new programs — as we heard from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg team, who are finding gifted people to serve as parent liaisons.

P) Diversity in all kinds of ways is central: cultural diversity, role diversity, age diversity, gender diversity. The more diverse we are, the more likely it will be that we will begin working together in new ways, with a broad base from

which we can reach all kinds of people.

Q) And then there's the factor that Ed Faron calls "synchronicity," the fortuitous, serendipitous coincidence when good things happen at once — people come together at the same time, make plans, and find new commitment. Our belief in the importance of what we're doing helps us to find others who care as deeply as we do about making the world better for kids.

This conference gives me a context in which I can describe some of my own research about people who work with multi-problem populations and don't burn out. Though my data were not gathered in schools but in community health centers and highly bureaucratized state social offices, what I learned about what keeps some people from burning out might be of interest to you. Though I deliberately chose low-status sites, workplaces that aren't even given the kind of respect that schools receive, my findings have relevance for all of us who are working hard, in human services, with few resources and multiple challenges.

In your binders, you'll find some readings about "Flow," a phenomenon that describes how some people become totally absorbed in different kinds of work and play. "Flow" is the kind of experience that happens when there is the right balance between perceived challenges and skills — a balance so perfect that we lose track of ourselves and simply enjoy the opportunity for mastery and achievement. Some people experience it when rock-climbing, sailing, skiing, playing music, dancing, playing chess, painting, writing. Some are lucky enough to find it in their work. I have asked myself if it applies to some of us who have much to lament about our jobs, but still keep finding satisfaction in them? Is it perhaps related to the resilience of that self-starting, active, likable kid whose traits we heard catalogued when we began the week?

What follows may be just conjecture, but in case you resemble the people I interviewed, whom I called "thrivers," you may be interested. If you are like the social workers, welfare workers, doctors, and nurses I know, and if you love your impossible work *and* you are good at it, then you too are "thrivers." There's a good fit between you, your personal history, your belief systems, and your work. There may have been an ethos of service in your family of origin. Perhaps the 1960's were important to you. You're constructively attracted to action. Not only do you flourish under pressure, but you thrive on adversity. What you love about

your work are the relationships you have with people, the variety of tasks that you have in your job, your own personal sense that you can make a difference in people's lives, and having an opportunity to see change happen as a result of your efforts over time. You are able to quietly appreciate the value of your own good work.

Thriving in multi-problem work assumes a constant, cognitive balancing act. You have great expectations for people, which is very important, but you can also scale down your hopes and take pride in seeing them take more appropriate smaller steps. Innate optimists, you believe that people become stronger when they are given increasing control over their lives. You like empowering others. You have the capacity to keep the big picture in mind, which means you can take a long-term view of change. You know how important the broad, sociocultural context is and you are patient. You can tell yourself that if you were not doing the job, though there are problems, nonetheless the situation might be a little worse. You are able to generate personal feelings of effectiveness within yourself. You're insightful, tirelessly energetic, and have great sense of humor. How do you see yourself? Perhaps as a juggler, a dabbler, a jack-of-all-trades, but not as a "big wheel." You are someone who loves to learn and will keep doing it for as long as you live and are given the opportunity to face new challenges. You like being involved in communities. You understand connections. You are tenacious, caring, open-minded, curious, respectful. You accept limits in yourself and others. And as you see it, the greater the need, the greater the sense of achievement. In the trenches, you can get something done. What other work can you imagine doing? It's a test, a trial at times, but you like that: often you can't imagine doing anything else because you believe in the rightness of what you're doing.

Are thrivers all resilient? How can we know, definitively, any more than we can decide if Richard Rhodes is resilient or vulnerable? As Cathy Ayoub pointed out, his accomplishments are extraordinary in the face of his history, but his history also helps us to understand his struggle with addiction and illness. Resilience and vulnerability are closely related phenomena. I tend to think it's all about tension and change and balance. It's all dynamic. Without our sensitivities, we might not have our strengths. In our work, we must continually shift the focus from problem to context, holding contradictions and challenges in a dynamic balance that makes human services important to us.

Young People Share Their Stories

Thomas E. Brennan, S.D.B., Ed.D., *Archdiocese of Boston*

Chris, Jessica: *Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth*

Rob, Kevin: *ROCA-Revere Youthstar*

Dave, Andrew: *Alcoholics Anonymous*

TOM BRENNAN (TB): During the course of this week, we have spent a lot of time talking about the theory of resilience. Now we have an opportunity to see and hear the theory in action. We have a group of six young men and women who will share their stories of struggle and the ways that they have been able to overcome these struggles. We will hear three different perspectives on resilience. One is represented by a group called BAGLY, the Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth. Chris and Jessica, now openly gay, will tell us their stories. Since we know that for gay and lesbian adolescents the suicide and addiction rates are much higher than in any other adolescent population, a resilient adolescent who is gay or lesbian can have much to teach us. Ron and Kevin come to us from ROCA, Reach Out to Chelsea Adolescents, an organization that helps young people who have been involved with gangs and other high-risk activities to become community workers, to be educated, and to turn their lives around. David and Andrew are recovering young addicts who have grown up in alcoholic families, become addicted themselves, and are now in recovery.

CHRIS (C): My name is Chris Hanon and I'm from BAGLY, the Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth. They've asked me to share a few of my experiences with violence. Just to give you a little background, I was raised in Dorchester, in an alcoholic home, which was abusive, so my coping skills around violence began very early. When I was first coming out, I was in a private Catholic high school. I told one friend that I was gay, who in turn told the school of about 3,000 boys and I was ousted from the school. I was attacked, got death threats, and asked by the school to leave because they couldn't deal with my problem. I can share a recent story, which is actually kind of still fresh in my heart. After I left that school, I went to public school for kind of "misfits" — kids who just couldn't make it in, say, a "normal" high school. I just fit in and it was the best experience of my life and up until about a week ago, everything was going perfectly, but last week, the last week of school, I walked out of school one day and this new kid, who had just begun at the school about a month ago, whom

I thought hadn't found out about me yet, had seen me on a talk show. He came up to me and asked, "Aren't you the dude that likes dudes?" And I said, "Yeah," and then he attacked me, tried to throw me down the Kenmore Square T steps. I was just shocked. I hadn't experienced blatant, in-the-face homophobia since I'd been at my old school and it scared me. I mean, he was literally crazy. He wanted to hurt me, which was a strange concept for me. The coping skills I use and have used in my entire life have always been to rely on peer support and adult support. This time the peers that I was in school with came to my aid. You know, when they first heard him say a homophobic comment, they screamed at him. Then they literally pulled him off me. Something I hadn't had in the past was institutional support. At my old school, they had asked me to leave once the problem had started. They had asked the victim to leave, but my new school expelled the other student and just really came to my aid. As for adult support, it's something I had off and on in my life. When I was a child, I really didn't have it because I was in an alcoholic home and my father wasn't really there for me, but I had a really supportive guidance counselor whom I'd been able to turn to throughout my coming out, and she was really just there for me after this incident. I was a wreck afterwards, a bawling, crying mess, and she was there for me, dealt with some of the issues, and it turned out to be, overall, an okay experience. And this is something that a lot of GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual) youth face.

KEVIN (K): I'm Kevin Foley and I'm with ROCA. I started going to ROCA in March 1993 because I got thrown out of two schools. The first one was the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School. I have to catch my breath now; hold on. I got thrown out of there because I got into a fight and ended up stabbing the kid that started the fight. Since I acted out of self-defense, we both got thrown out. I couldn't go back to that school or to the high school, because when I got thrown out, it was too late for me to enter the Revere High School, which is where I'm from. So I had to repeat the ninth grade and I did that and I passed, and I made it to sophomore year. In sophomore year, I just

basically gave up and I never went, so they ended up throwing me out. I guess you could say I quit. I was in trouble with the law for a little while — just minor stuff like vandalism, attempted motor vehicle theft, and stuff like that. I first went to ROCA because of my probation officer. I was just doing community service hours, cleaning up the gym that they used for basketball, but then the program that I'm in now, *Youth Star*, started in February '93 and I applied and didn't get accepted until March '93. Since then I've earned my GED; I've gotten my driver's permit, and I've gotten accepted to Brandeis University this fall. [Applause] Thanks. The thing that made me turn myself around was basically my girlfriend. I'd gone out with her for a year when I started at Revere High School. I started going out with her, but we broke up on our anniversary the next year because of, well, basically the way I was. I was an asshole, but I just kept striving to do better than I was, and to get her back. I got her back and we're going out now and we've been seeing each other for the past eight months, I think. Eight months — it's basically the deal right now.

DAVE (D): I'm Dave and I'm an alcoholic and an addict. I grew up in an alcoholic home. I had two older sisters. I grew up in Boston. My father was abusive, and I was real young when I lived with him. I looked up to him until I was around seven years old. During those seven years, you know, he'd come home, whack us around, whack my mother around, and he would always be drunk. That's how I remember my father. After a while my mother left him and she took me and my sisters with her. When I lived in that house, I had a lot of fear, seeing my father. I was always scared. I didn't want to say certain things or anything, you know. So I ended up going with my mother, and at that time, she didn't discipline me, you know. So I pretty much did what I wanted. I ended up not going to school. I was probably going one or two days a week, and after a while, the courts caught up to me and I ended up going to court, getting taken out of my home. I bounced around for a couple of years in foster homes, you know, DSS and all. When I was in there, I didn't talk much to people. I didn't like making friends or anything, I was in my own world, and I ended up drinking, you know. I was hanging on the corners and my drinking, it wasn't just on Fridays and Saturdays after awhile. It went right through the week. My Fridays would end up being a Monday, a

Tuesday, and a Wednesday. It wasn't just the weekends anymore, but I didn't see it, you know. Being young and everything, this is how I thought it was, you know. This is what you do, you know, you hang out with your friends, you get drunk or you get high or whatever. When I was about 16 I ended up going back with my mother. When I was younger, I didn't realize that my mother had a drug problem. My mother, to this day, she's addicted to cocaine. I realize that this is a disease today, just like cancer, AIDS, or anything. Alcohol and drugs is a disease. It kills just like any other thing, you know. But it can be treated, a day at a time, like I do. I stay sober one day at a time. I don't worry about tomorrow and I don't think about yesterday, you know.

When I moved back in with my mother, I ended up using drugs with her, you know. At the time, I was younger, you know. I'm 21 now. But when I was 16, I thought that was cool, you know. My friends thought that was cool. I could sit down and smoke a bone with my mother. You know, this was happening all over the neighborhood. It wasn't just my home. It's out there. People just don't like to see. For me to admit that I'm an alcoholic, well, I always thought an alcoholic was someone you step over downtown in Boston, you know what I mean. But there's doctors out there who are alco-

holics and there's young people, you know. When I first came to believe that I was an alcoholic, I had a friend that said to me, "You know, if you think you're too young to be an alcoholic, think how old you have to be to die." I realized that there is no age. You know, you see the drinking and driving ads and you know that it kills you physically and it also kills you mentally. I mean, I was in such a depression from drinking and drugging that I went weeks at a time not talking to anyone. I had so much anger in me, you know what I mean, that I just couldn't talk to anyone. I wasn't going to tell my friends, "Hey, you know, I'm hurting inside. I'm scared," or whatever. They'd say, "Get away from me." They don't want to hear that stuff. They want to hear, "Hey, let's get some beers. Let's go hang out." I experienced black-outs when I was drinking and drugging. Sometimes, I woke up the next day with blood all over me from fighting or whatever, but not knowing what I did. Someone had to tell me, "Well, you did this, or that," you know. It brought me to stupid things, you know. I broke into police paddy wagons. I wouldn't do this stuff sober. To see my mother today, you know, she's a forty-something-year-old, but she looks

*The coping skills I use
and have used in my entire
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support.*

like she's 90 and she still lives in the basement of the project today. I've been sober almost two years now and my life has gotten better. It really has. It's not perfect or anything like that, you know. I still have problems, but I realize that's part of life and I'm going to have to deal with that, you know. I don't have to run to a drink or drug. I don't fight anymore how I was. I don't lash out all the time, you know. Today, I can talk to people. I have friends I can talk to, real friends, not ones that are just going to laugh at me if I say, "Hey, I'm not feeling too good." That's good, you know. Like I said, being sober, my life has changed so much. I have so much. I don't have personal possessions, like cars or anything like that, but I have myself today and I can really say that, you know. I know what I want to do in life. I have a lot of faith, and the halls of AA, where I go, that's what it gives me. That's all I have to say, thanks.

JESSICA (J): Hi, my name is Jessica. I'm 20 and I've been a BAGLY member for about five years. When I started going to BAGLY, it was when I was in high school and I was more confused about life. I go to group meetings there now for my sexuality issues. The main cause of the violence I experienced was my gender identity. I'm transsexual, which means that I was born male and I grew up a boy when I was in high school. Then I started living as a girl two years ago, when I went to college. Since then it's been a lot better because I can just become invisible, you know. People don't notice a lot, I guess. But when I was in high school, it was really bad. Remember what Tom Brennan said before about the fact that the majority of youth suicides are related to homosexuality? I used to think that was true and I don't anymore. I think that probably, the figures are that a third of those suicides are related to homosexuality. I think probably half of the so called "gay" suicides are actually related to gender and gender identity. It's a lot harder thing to deal with, you know. I know like a lot of gay kids who are homeless or prostitutes or something, but everyone I know who is my age who is transgender or transsexual is homeless or a prostitute, except for me. It's just really hard to deal with. I went through high school and everyone assumed because of how I presented myself, because I wore nail polish or I had long hair, that I was gay, you know, that I was a gay boy. That I was a "faggot." And I used to get harassed. People would yell things at me, my locker got vandalized a few times, and I got chased through the snow one night by these drunk kids. One time, I got beaten up by 15 kids. I mean it was happening all the time. Now I've come to identify more or less as a lesbian, but back then people thought I was straight because I was living as a boy and they couldn't understand why a faggot would go out with a girl. It just made everything more complicated. I guess the thing

that's helped me out is just being able to be myself. When I first went to college in the fall of '92 and could start living how I really wanted to live, I could finally be comfortable with myself and with the world and with the way people treated me and dealt with me. I think that it's really important that people are able to talk about gender and issues about gender. Even within the gay community, no one wants to talk about it. No one wants to touch it. And you know, my friends are all dying. They're being murdered or raped or they're prostitutes or they smoke crack. Someone has to do something about it.

ROB (R): My name is Rob and I'm part of ROCA Revere, part of *Youth Star*. Kevin's part of that. My story starts, well, I moved here in 1985 from Mobile, Alabama. I've been here for about eight or nine years. My parents moved to Boston because they thought that maybe if they moved here, they could start a better life and stuff. When I first moved here, I moved in with my stepfather and my mom and my sister. Everything was okay for about a year or a year and a half. Before we moved here, I knew that my stepfather had a drug problem. He was shooting heroin before we moved here. My mom thought that maybe if he moved here and he got away from his old friends that maybe he'd turn around and stuff, but that didn't happen. My dad got my mom hooked on it. She hid it for a year, a year and a half, you know. And then she just finally come to me. She told me that she was addicted. She wasn't addicted to heroin, but she was addicted to crack and stuff. She told me that. And things just started getting real, real bad in my home. My parents would fight. People would come over — people that I never saw in my life, you know, would come over to my house, spend nights, and my parents would go in the room, shut the door, smoke and come out and start fussing at me and my sister, for no apparent reason. When I turned 12 years old and my sister was ten, I was forced to take care of my sister. I had no childhood. I couldn't go out with my friends because I was taking care of my sister. That went on for like a couple of years. When I turned 14, I got a job at a supermarket that paid me four dollars an hour. That wasn't helping me. That was not enough to take care of me and my sister. We had to have school clothes, food and stuff. My mom wasn't doing it. My dad wasn't doing it. I worked there for six months and stuff, but the money wasn't good enough. So I went out with my friends and my cousins and they did show me a better way to get more money, you know. I started selling drugs and stuff, selling weed, but that wasn't making enough money for me, that wasn't doing it for me. So I started selling cocaine with my cousins and then, as time went on, I got bigger and bigger in the neighborhood and people started knowing me and then I

started joining gangs in the neighborhoods and stuff.

This is hard to talk about. Man, this is hard. I started hanging out and I quit school completely. I didn't want to hear about school. I didn't want to go to no schools. There was one particular night when I was down in Chelsea Square and I had been drinking. I had been smoking weed and I bought a gun the day before and I was in the square and I guess I was out of my mind. I was swinging the gun around, you know, and a lady from ROCA, she pulled up from nowhere. She just came up to me. This is what people told me. I was out of it. I didn't know what was going on. She me told that she talked to me for a half an hour and then I just gave the gun to her. Ever since then, I've been going to ROCA. I've been doing community stuff.

While I was going to ROCA I was in and out, back and forth with gangs and stuff, you know. The last gang that I joined was a gang called the Latin Kings. I was doing like a lot of stuff with them. They basically took control of me. They basically told me where to go, when to sleep, who to be friends with. They were like my parents, you know, until the beginning of the year 1993 when I went back to school. I went to an alternative school, called *Pathways*, which ROCA got me into. I went there for a year. I tried to avoid the gangs and stuff, but they kept coming around, coming around, pulling me in, pulling me in. So I went back with the Latin Kings again. Whatever I did with them — sold drugs and stuff, robbed people and stores — whatever else that I did with them, I still didn't give up. I still went to school and then I got my diploma from Chelsea High School. I got my diploma and just one day I said to them, "You know, I'm not going to do this no more. You're not my dad, you're not my mom, You're not me. You know, you're not taking care of me. I'm not going to do it no more." To get out you have to take a beat down. I took my beat down, I got out.

I joined *Youth Star* and I've been there for just about a year. *Youth Star* gave me meaning. They gave me something to do, you know. Mollie's like my mom. Rick's like my dad. They're white, but you know what I'm saying: they took care of me. I'm going to Brandeis in the fall. I just want people to know that it's hard for kids, you know. It's hard for kids and especially kids whose parents are all messed up. It's real hard for those kids because the kids are trying to figure out, "Am I going to go my way? Am I going to go my parents' way?" That's my big problem, you know. I was scared that I was going to end up like my parents. You know,

that's scary. I don't want to be an addict. I don't want to do that, that's not me. I don't want to do that.

ANDREW (A): My name's Andrew. I'm an alcoholic and a drug addict. And you know, like everyone else here, I grew up in an alcoholic home, you know, a dysfunctional home. My parents were always fighting. I can remember being about five and six years old. The only thing I remember about my childhood is watching my mother bleed, and my father yell and scream and hit us. That's about all I remember. I don't know. I remember sitting on the front hall stairs, just trying to stick my head through the railing, listening to my mother scream, and swearing up and down I was never going to be like that. I was never going to turn out like my father. And I was never going to drink because every time he drank that's what happened. I had a little brother, two older brothers, and a sister, and it was always like just me and the little brother. We'd always sit

on the stairs like that. It'd be the same thing over and over and over again. The first time I got high I was in second grade. I was with my sister. Her and some of her friends got me real stoned. I remember walking home, and it seemed like everything was just fine. I remember the day exactly. I remember walking home, sitting on the couch and watching *Chips*. It just seemed like everything, you know, I didn't hear anything, no one was screaming, it was just like, "Wow, you know? This is what I need." From there it was just back to the same old things.

I remember going to school. Always in school they would be telling me, "What's wrong with you? You don't try. You don't do this, you don't do that." Well, I was up until four o'clock at night, listening to my parents fighting. I'd come to school, and that'd be the only time I could sleep without hearing people yell. And the teachers, you know, they never thought about that. They always thought, "You're just a dumb kid, you're a stupid kid." That's what they told me. That's what I believed after a while. All through grade school that's how it was. Finally, when I hit high school I thought, alright, now I can do it my way. I remember going to one high school. I lasted about two months there. They threw me out. I remember sitting down in one of those board meetings, whatever the hell they call them, and they said to me, "Listen, we have two choices here. We can get rid of the senior and junior class, or we can get rid of you." I was high at the time, and I thought, "Wow, that's going to take a lot of kids out of the school." And they

When I moved back in with my mother, I ended up using drugs with her.

came right back, without skipping a beat, and said, "No, it's just going to take one," and I was like, "Oh, wow." So, that was my first high school I got thrown out of indirectly due to the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs.

Since I was in sixth grade, I've never passed a class. I've been pushed through every class. Seventh grade I never passed. They just pushed me on to eighth grade. Eighth grade I never passed. My freshman year in high school I got thrown out for two months. They said, "Yeah, we'll get you into a school in three weeks." But it didn't happen until the beginning of my sophomore year. I don't know how I ever made it to my sophomore year, but somehow all these credits appeared out of nowhere, and they said, "Sure, you know, here you go." I was a sophomore. And I went to that school, that was like three towns away from the town where I lived. So I had this little bus come by and pick me up. It took me three days before I started getting the bus driver high. The guy used to pick us up in the morning, I'd get him high, and after school, he'd go to the packy for me to get my beers. And then he'd drop me off at my house. I'd see him the next day, and we'd do the same thing all over again. And they were always wondering why the kids on my bus were always in trouble in school. We were all drunk and stoned.

During my school career in seventh grade I was real drunk. One night I was at a movie and my teacher saw me. She told me, "I'll give you a ride home." I said, "No, I'll walk." So I went home. I went to school Monday morning, and she said, "I want to see you after class." I thought I was in trouble. I went there after class, and she said, "If there's ever anything you need that I can get for you, I'll be glad to buy it for you." So she extended her hand for me, for alcohol. That was a great thing at the time, but I never took advantage of it. I always knew I could get beer somewhere. So I don't know. Everyone at school, they all told me this, that, and the other thing, that I was never smart enough, but they were always there just to enable me to keep going. I'd go to my class, my sophomore class, in that school, after getting off the bus, and I'd walk into the classroom and the teacher says, "Let's talk about drugs today. Let's start with Andrew." Everyone knew I was on them, but there's nothing they did, you know. They didn't want to do anything, so it just continued like that. And my parents were still fighting, my family was still drinking, everything was up in the air. I was getting arrested ten, fifteen times, and I went away for a little while. I went to a DYS facility. I said to myself, "I'm going to do it right this time." So I did it right. I stayed sober for nine months, but nothing changed, you know. My attitude was still that I still hated people. In school, I was doing alright, but they were still sticking me in the classes because of my past. Just to make the point,

okay? "This is what you did when you were younger, so this is where you belong." That's how I lived, you know. I accepted the idea that this is who I am, that's what they tell me, so I'll be like that.

I ended up starting to drink again, and the same old things happened, nothing changed. It was always the same thing — same fights, same jails. This time I started going to real jail. I went to the Dedham House of Correction. I was sitting here, looking around, and talking to people. And I had a half ounce of weed on me, that I brought in, and I was just thinking, "Wow, you know, this is it." But I just turned around and started talking to people. I smoked a joint that day and I started talking to this guy. He said, "I've been here eight times. I have a bunch of friends that are in Walpole, you know. They're all doing the same things, and it's all due to alcohol and drugs." And I said to myself, "Wow, that's me in ten years if I keep this up." I decided from that day, you know, that I was really going to give it a shot. I was going to try it again. And that's what I did. While I was in there, I decided to change my life around. I ended up getting my GED. I had a teacher there who believed in me. It was the first time for that in a long time. And it was just a good feeling, you know. I got to work at my own pace, so I finished it up pretty quick. I got it all. I got everything done. My mother couldn't stand me. She hated me after all the incarcerations I've been to, from New York all the way to Florida. In Massachusetts I got thrown out of about 12 rehabilitation programs. I have been to four different lock-ups and two psychiatric hospitals, and they always thought the problem was violence, that I was just an angry kid or I was a dumb kid. But the problem was alcohol. And everyone just looked past that. They'd say, "The problem can't be alcohol, when he's so hot-tempered and everything." And it was, you know. That was the problem.

Today, like someone said, something has to change. This is the change right here. We're young, we're the next generation, and if we change then we can start a better upbringing for our own kids. That's what it takes. I'm a product of my parents and society, you know. My kids will be a product of what I do. I'm their influence, and if I keep doing the things I do today, maybe I can have a positive influence. Maybe I can be someone's role model, someday. My little brother got sober after me. He saw how I did it, and then he did it. And today, you know, this kid, he's going off to college. He never drank in high school. He got sober in the summer of eighth grade. It's amazing when I think about that. I look at him, he's only 18 years old, and he's got five years of sobriety. No kid at 13 years old can admit that they're an alcoholic and a drug addict, and decide to change their life. It's a miracle, you know. You know, that's what it's about. That's reality. That's the only way anything's going

to change. You got to change first. And just show people that you can. This is it. My life today is excellent. I can look at myself in the mirror. I don't have to break it. I get along with my father. I have a life today with my father. My father's recovering. My mother just went off on a vacation. It's her first vacation since I can remember. It's awesome, you know. She's just leaving us there. She can trust us today. I have two brothers that are sober. And we've got a life. We don't wrestle around on the kitchen floor any more. We're not throwing shit at each other. It's an awesome feeling, you know. I just finished off a class. I'm taking a college class in a community college right around the corner. I think I did pretty good, and everything. I just finished off my last baseball game last night. I coach a baseball team — 10-, 11-, and 12-year-olds. It's such a great feeling to sit in there watching those kids, watching a little 10-year-old kid get up there and get a base hit. And then having them run down the base, and then he turns to you with this big smile on his face, you know. That's some-

thing I always took for granted. I was never like that. When I got to hit, I'd be sitting there all pissed off, I'd be saying, "Did you see how close he came to me with that pitch? I'm going to get him." That's how I was. It's amazing, just seeing a smile on a kid, you know. That can make my day. If I'm having a shitty day, and I turn around and I see that, right there, you know, that changes my whole day around. It's an awesome feeling. I'd like to just say to all the kids who spoke tonight, you know, it was excellent hearing them. It's all different views and everything, but it's coming right. It's deep, but thanks for having us.

TB: We, I think were rather privileged to get this glimpse into young people. Are there questions?

Q: Most of the kids that I work with are in situations similar to some of yours — in foster homes, kicked out of schools, for example. Can you tell us if there was a specific individual that encouraged you — a coach, a teacher, someone in the neighborhood that helped you get to the other side? How I can perhaps do that?

A: In one of my foster homes, I lived with someone for about five months, this kid named George. His mother was in recovery. He and I were in lock-up schools together. After a while his mother got sick of it and put him away in a rehab program, and him and I ended up going our own

ways, you know, because at that time I wasn't ready to admit that I was an alcoholic. I wasn't willing to accept that he was either, because then I would have to take a look at myself because I did the same as he did. So I would say one of my influences was him because he's now, he was like my brother, he was sober when he was 13 and he's now 20. He's been sober all that time. And today, I share an apartment with that same kid, and so I would say, at that time, it was him who helped me. I had a couple of nice teachers when I was in school, but I never went past the seventh grade, to this day, still. That's something that I lost from drinking and drugging that, you know, I'm going to get back. I did have

some teachers at the time that were sticking out their hands to me, but I just wasn't accepting it at the time.

TB: Do others want to respond to this question about an individual who stands out in your mind as having helped you turn things around?

D: What's important is if you can just show them that there is more to life than what

they're doing. If you can just be there for them, they'll see it someday. It took me years and years and years before anything sank in. The first time I met Tom, I was tied to a bed in a hospital. He said, "Do you need help?" and I said, "Get away from me." It was there, the hand reaching out was there, but I never wanted it. You're going to kill yourself trying to help all of these kids, you know. It's them, it's got to come from within, it's got to be them who really wants to get the help. Just by you being there for them, that's enough, that's what you can do. I don't know really what to tell you, but just keep doing what you're doing. You're appreciated.

R: To add on to what he said, what you have to do is you have to stick by them. Don't give up on them. There's a lot of people that if they don't straighten up the first time, then they don't try a second time. But just constantly stay on their back, stay on their back, and eventually they'll straighten up. It might be three or four years from now, but you know, they'll eventually straighten up.

Q: What is the Brandeis program?

TB: Brandeis has a special transitional program for inner-city kids, or kids who have been struggling to try and make it. Some can get in through ROCA. I've known some other kids from South Boston, who apply for it, but it is a competitive process. Just because you are coming from trouble

I think probably half of the so-called "gay" suicides are actually related to gender and gender identity.

doesn't necessarily mean that you'll get in.

Q: Can you tell us more about ROCA?

R: ROCA is a youth organization. It started in Chelsea, at first as a teen pregnancy program. The founder sat down with teens and kids basically said, "You know, there's more problems than teen pregnancy. That's not the only problem in Chelsea." So the program expanded to become a youth organization. What they basically do is they get kids like me off the street, and they turn them into doctors and lawyers. They have a whole series of activities or GED classes for kids that school don't work for them. They give inner-city kids jobs and they teach kids how to focus their anger towards something positive, instead of something negative. They do a whole lot of things.

Q: How do you get out of a gang without being killed?

R: What it was with me was that I was the vice president of that organization, and so it was easy for me to get out. The majority of the people that was in the chapter, the majority was my family. They were my cousins. I had uncles that was in it too, so it was easier for me to get out. Now, the average kid that would want to get out, they would have to go through a whole series of punishments or, as they would say, "beat downs." Because I had a little bit of clout, that's why it was easier for me to go.

Q: What is it that you think that we can do with kids, what can we offer kids who haven't quite reached the level of addiction, of being in gangs even when they don't have the family structure to keep them from crossing over into gangs or into drugs?

R: Be their friend, that's it, be their friend. Like I said, constantly stay on them. Constantly, constantly stay on them. You know what I'm saying. They going to tell you things, I'm sure you know that. They going to say bad things, you know, "Fuck off. Get out of my face. I don't want to hear you," but constantly stay on them. I think that the younger they are, you have a better chance of reaching them. A person like me, I'm 19 years old now. And if I was still doing what I was doing, if a person came up to me and said, "You just stop drinking, you just stop ganging, you stop doing gang activities," just like that, I would tell them to fuck off. Because I know I had reached that point where I'm deep into it, so I don't want to get out. Just be their friend. Be their friend.

TB: Kev, you were going to answer that as well, I think.

K: I'd just like get them involved in activities that they might enjoy or they do enjoy, at a young age, so that they don't get as far as any of us up here did, or most of my

friends did.

D: For me, I actually started drinking when I was in the sixth grade. Each of us here, we kind of found second families, be it BAGLY, or ROCA, or AA. You almost need to become like a surrogate mother, or surrogate father, just so they know that someone in the world cares about them, and knows what happened, and cares what happens to their life. That always helps.

Q: Rob, with your own children, what do you anticipate being able to do to help them not do the things that you did?

R: My kids are still young, so I'm hoping that when they get older they'll see that I made a change. I'll sit down with them. I'll tell them my story, I'll tell them what I've been through. I'll tell them what happened to me. And I'm just hoping that they can see that. That I made a change and then they don't have to go the way that I went. I want to be their role model, you know.

Q: Have any of you found that any kind of physical exercise, activities, sports has helped you develop inner strength, or inner self-esteem?

A: I play sports, but I don't know if that does anything for me in that way. I jog every now and then and I play a lot of basketball, but mainly I would say that for me, I believe in a higher power, which I choose to call God. I have a lot of faith. Without faith I don't believe I would have anything. So if I just believe that, then I know I'm going to go the right way.

Q: I've heard several of you mention that school just wasn't appealing to you. What was it about school — teacher things, peer things? Most of us in this room are educators. How can we make where we work better so our schools don't do what your schools did to you — force you out the door?

K: Mainly the thing that screwed school up for me was that I have this condition called "alopecia," which makes my hair fall out. They wouldn't let me keep my hat on during school, and all the kids would always stare at it, and point at it, and even some of the teachers would. I told them about it and I told the principal, and I told the superintendent, but they all said the same thing, "You got to keep the hat off in the public school." Some of the teachers would crack on me, and the kids would be cracking on me, and I just didn't want to deal with it, and so I just stopped going. And then they threw me out.

R: In some of the public schools I went to, I had some teachers that would come into school drunk. I remember

once I got into a fight in a cafeteria, and the teacher at that time, he was like the vice principal, he kept us in the cafeteria until everyone left, and then locked both of us in a room. This kid was like three times the size of me, and he locked us in a room and let this kid beat the shit out of me, you know. So I had a lot of fear going to school after that you know.

I went to this other school, basically a special school with three different levels. One level would be for kids that were locked up, you know; they'd go to school in handcuffs and everything, coming from jail or whatever. I was on another level where we'd be locked in the rooms. This school I messed up for myself because of alcohol and drugs, and also laziness. So that was my own fault there. But at that school you called the teachers by their first name, you treated them how they treated you, you know. They would actually sit around, they'd talk to you after school, and I looked at them as more as our friends than characterizing them as teachers or principals. There weren't any formal names. They were just, you know, "Gabe," or whatever. Basically I would just say, treat kids as equals, don't make them feel less than you. To me, when I was in the public schools, I always felt like teachers were pointing the fingers at you, or whatever. You do this, you do that. Immediately when someone tells me, "Here, you do this or you do that," I'm not going to do it, basically. If someone treats me with respect, I'm going to give them respect back, you know. That's how I see it.

J: I feel sort of out of place on this panel in some ways, 'cause I grew up in lily white suburbs and like didn't have to go through this kind of stuff. And neither of my parents were like drug addicts and stuff. But I had a really hard time in school for a number of reasons. But a major one was that people wouldn't leave me alone, wouldn't let me dress how I wanted, and stuff like that. For me it was such an awful thing. It was the same kind of thing as like your hair, you know what I mean. 'Cause I would say to people like, "No, I'm not doing this for attention, like this is just me." And they'd say, "Oh, no, you're just trying to get everyone to look at you," and all this kind of shit. Maybe that seems like a minor issue, but it's the same thing, the same intolerance. And people not taking things seriously. And I really think that has to change, and people have to be more tolerant. It

was the staff and everyone. I went to the guidance department in my high school for all four years. I went like four or five times a semester and said, "You have to start a group for gay students or do something." And they said, "Oh yeah, we're working on it, we're working on it." And like, that was it, you know. They never did anything.

K: One of the things that I've seen is schools also often don't face reality. I mean if you, as a teacher, had to go home every day and watch your father beat up your sisters, would you want to come to school and teach the next day? I mean, they just think about college and grades, and don't look at what's happening to you so that you can't get into college, or you aren't getting good grades. In my first school, I was getting beat up every day, and then I had to go home and watch my father beat up my sisters. So I did not want to hear about Napoleon. I couldn't really relate. But at my new school, we, the teachers and the students and the principal, all have mutual respect. We use first names. If I

need a mental health day, I take a mental health day, and I explain that. It's not like, "Well you have to come to school because that's the policy." I mean, we're talking about people, not policies.

Q: I'd like to applaud the whole panel for your candor in coming out and speaking. My question is to you who are up there from BAGLY. What are some specific things that you think that schools can do to help young people who want to come out, to be accepted? I'm concerned about the rates of suicide and drop outs.

K: I've actually spoken to a lot of schools about this. The first thing you need to realize is that a lot of teachers walk into a class and just assume that everyone is straight. That is rarely true. Specific things you can do are, number one, call the Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth. They put out a manual on things you can do. Talk to your administration. If they aren't supportive, then find allies in the school — like the guidance counselors, who understand and support the issues. And start talking to the students, finding out what kind of problems there are. 'Cause the students are always more aware than the administration and the teachers. I mean, they're in there every day with the other students who know what's going on. And find out, you know, how other students feel about gay

I was up until 4 o'clock at night, listening to my parents fighting. I'd come to school, and that'd be the only time I could sleep without hearing people yell.

students. Do they use the term "faggot" or do they say "homosexuals?" How do they feel about it? There's little things you can do, like if you have like an office, put up a supportive poster on the office door. Get information; order pamphlets so you can have those ready. For me what really sucked, was that I was the first gay student, the experiment. No one had any clue what to tell me. My guidance counselor told me to act less gay so I wouldn't get beat up. They had no clue. Read up beforehand. I mean, this is true with alcoholism and drug abuse, too. Know the facts beforehand, and get resources beforehand.

J: I think that the most important thing is just the climate of the faculty. I know that in my high school, the teachers would tell fag jokes all the time, and that's because the students follow that. I mean, those people need to get fired. As far as I know, it's illegal now, isn't it, since the Massachusetts law against discrimination passed. There's no reason anyone should have to put up with that shit. And if the teachers are doing that, then the students do it too, you know. And you have to have a climate where people can just be themselves. I mean, that's the most important thing.

Q: I, too, want to thank you all for coming. We were introduced to you as teachers and people in education, but we're also here because we're learners. Today you are our teachers. My question is why you folks decided to come and talk to us?

D: The reason why I'm here today is, like I said, I'm alcoholic and for me to stay sober, I have to do it one day at a time. I mean, if I think I got to stay sober for the rest of my life, I'm putting too much on my back. So for me to be here today, this is, you know, helping me stay sober today. This helps me not pick up a drink or a drug today. And you know, with all honesty, I'm not here for anyone. I'm here for me, basically, for me to stay away from my drinking and drugs. And this is helping me.

Q: If you had to start your own school — I'm really concerned about students of low socioeconomic problems — could you tell me how you would do it? How can we change what we are doing and make a school where you're learning and some things are different, so that it fits your needs better?

K: Well, in my model school, I'd have to say that the classes

would definitely be smaller than at the typical public high school. There'd be small classes and the teachers would definitely have to have some experience with all kinds of young people and know what it's like to be in our shoes, so to speak, I guess. And like, teach people the realities about issues like AIDS, and gay and lesbian issues, and teach them the facts, instead of the stigmas and basically the bullshit.

J: I think it's really bad to put people in a typical classroom setting, where you're all sitting in seats that are in rows, so you just see everyone's back. That doesn't make any sense. That's stupid. People should be in a circle so everyone can talk. That's just common sense. And there's no reason that you should call your teachers "Mr. So and So," or "Professor." That's dumb and puts them on this plateau to give them all this power. And I know a lot of my teachers, I would get in arguments with them and they'd be wrong, but they wouldn't admit it, you know. That system is bad. And it's also really, really important to talk about current events, like AIDS, like politics, and things that are going on. But no one wants to touch that stuff. Everyone wants to teach

U.S. History from the Puritans until the beginning of the Civil War. And they don't really want to do the Civil War, 'cause they don't want to admit how racist they are. In the three years I spent taking history in high school, we went from the Puritans to the Civil War, and that's it. It's ridiculous.

K: I kind of think I'm in the model school at the moment — a school for misfits, kids who couldn't make it in normal

high school. We have kids who were sent there by the courts. Young mothers. Gay people. And the only thing that I would change is I would have the students more involved in the administration process. Like if you're going to hire a teacher, I want to be involved in that. I do have one or two teachers now who I don't think should be teaching. If the students had been involved in that process they wouldn't have been hired. If a teacher is going to be disciplined, I think that the students should be involved. Youth empowerment is something I'm big on because students know the schools basically better than the teachers do. We're kind of the customers; you're the people supplying the product, and we're the ones who are going to tell you if we don't like the product.

R: Also I think that the school should have more minority

I have been to four different lockups and two psychiatric hospitals, and they always thought the problem was violence. But the problem was alcohol.

teachers. I don't think that if you have a school where the majority of students are Hispanic and black, and you've got all white teachers or no minority teachers, that's not right. You need some Afro-American teachers, you know. And also, teach me something that I want to learn about. Don't teach me stuff that's not going to help me in the future. Teach me something that I want to know. Like about my culture, and about other cultures. I want to learn about my culture, I want to learn about other people's culture because that will help me later on to understand where he's coming from, what she's coming from.

Q: How have your relationships with your parents changed now that you're healthier?

D: Ah, with me, you know, I'm in recovery, and my mother's not. So basically, pretty much, we really don't get along. She looks at me as if I act like I think I'm better than her or something, you know. You know, I can't do anything for her. I have tried, when I first came around, but I realize if she wants to get better, she's going to have to admit that she has a problem, you know. So I really can't do anything about it. As far as the relationship between her and I go, there really isn't one. You know, basically, all I can do is tell her I love her or something. I do feel a lot for her, you know. Sometimes I feel embarrassed, but I've got to realize that she's got a disease just like I had one. But basically, as for now, I'm hoping something for the future, that her and I will get along better, but really she, you know, we see on two different levels. As for my father, I rarely see him — probably every couple years. There really isn't — basically he's just like someone I know, he's not really like a father or anything.

R: I don't go to my mom that much 'cause when I graduated she left, and she left me here, with no, without nobody. There was just me and my girlfriend and my kids. She left me here, you know. So, I basically don't get along with her. She always told me that I was never going to amount to nothing; I was never going to make it. So basically, I don't see her, she don't talk to me. I try to call her sometimes, like, I been calling her the past month, but she told my sister not to accept any of my phone calls anymore. So, I'm just going to let it go.

Q: What about your sister that you took care of so much?

R: I can't talk to her neither. My mom will stop me from talking to her. My sister is, from what I hear from my grandparents, she's going to school. But she's, how can I explain it? She's trying to get her own family. She want her own family. I guess my mom's family ain't working for her, so she's trying — going from guy to guy, guy to guy. She want her own family and stuff, so she's messed up. My mom messed both of us up, you know what I'm saying? You know, I have nightmares sometime. She messed our heads up. We're lost, we're lost to a point.

C: Family is a hot issue for me. I don't get along with mine. My father, I didn't used to call him "father." I do now, but I don't know why. He's never been a father. I don't like him, I don't love him. My mother and I, she's been the one who raised me. I love her more than anyone else in the world. And the whole gay thing, she's had trouble dealing with it since I have two other gay brothers. She's kind of blamed herself. But she's getting a lot better.

Q: Do you think any illegal drugs should be legal?

K: I think all drugs should be legalized.

Q: Since Rob dealt drugs, could you answer?

R: I don't think that no drug should be legalized, personally, you know. If you see society as it is now, the biggest problem is the drug problem. If you legalize drugs the problem is going to be bigger, and bigger, and bigger. I think that the reason drugs are even so big as they are now is because of the media, you know. The media blows everything up. If the cops make a drug bust, this is on the news. It's on the front page of a newspaper. No, I don't think you should legalize drugs. It's crazy.

K: I think the only drug that should be legalized is marijuana because it's a fun drug, actually. Well, okay, not for everybody.

D: Marijuana was my drug of choice, mainly. I mean, I smoked that daily, a lot. And so that's really not harmless. At first it mellows you out or whatever; you feel great. But after a while, it's like a downer, you know, and you get depressed. The feelings I got from that drug, I wouldn't wish them on anybody. For that to be legal? After too much of that stuff, I don't know the feelings that I had, but I really wouldn't wish them on my worst enemy.

Conclusion

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There is much good news. Over the past few years, everyone has begun to talk about violence. Even those whose lives have not been directly touched by the trauma of violent loss or assault are now speculating about the current of violence, which, in one way or another, is flowing through all our end of the twentieth century lives. There is greater recognition that our children are vulnerable and that we, as adults, have been inhibited from creating the kinds of caring connections with each other that will make life better for all of us.

The problems associated with violence are much more widely acknowledged than they were a few years ago. The Metropolitan Life Foundation, which has conducted national teacher surveys for the past ten years, has devoted its last two studies to the topic, documenting the levels of concern about violence for teachers, students, and families. As corporations and foundations begin to focus new resources on prevention, so are people in schools and communities finding all sorts of new ways to share expertise and commitments, to make life safer and fuller for all of us, in and around all of our schools.

A recent typology of "attempted solutions to school violence and vandalism" (Goldstein, 1994) groups these programs in nine categories: student oriented, teacher oriented, curricular, administrative, directed to physical school alterations, parent oriented, oriented to security personnel, community oriented, and state and federal oriented. Their scope is large. One of the Metropolitan Life Foundation's most important findings is that "parents, students, and teachers must learn to talk more effectively with each other if there is to be real progress in stopping violence" (Kamen, 1994). The emphasis on communication in our byte-sized age is not to be taken lightly. Young people are telling us, in words and actions, that they want to talk, to be heard — that they need us.

The value of our summer programs becomes evident over time. Just as youngsters need time to develop and incorporate what they experience and learn, so do school practitioners need time to become functioning teams and find ways of matching what they have learned with specific possibilities in their schools. Innovation and change take a while to happen. There are heartening stories from our conference teams about new developments in their schools.

An art teacher in Middlesex, New Jersey, acknowledges that her attitude about students shifted during the

resilience program. She has been concentrating on what they are good at and how much she cares about them and she finds, with amazement, that there is no more fighting in her classes. She has begun looking for support for an art mentoring program that would bring gifted juniors and seniors down to work with gifted students in her middle school art classes. A principal of a school for emotionally challenged children in New York City has tried all sorts of strategies over the years to keep her staff sensitive to the special needs of her students. She reports that after attending the Institute on resilience, she put together a large team (with representative counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents) to think together about the role of violence and resilience in the children's lives. Giving people a chance to talk about their own fears and dreams seems to have had a major impact on the entire staff, who are demonstrating new respect for one another and for the children. Staff members have begun to write songs! On Long Island, blueprints for comprehensive preventive programs have recently gained broad support from a whole district of superintendents. A system-wide plan will create new community-university-school system task forces to realize the team's mission to "create a climate of prevention that encourages caring, involvement and high expectations that will help young people reach their own self-determined goals." An English teacher and two guidance counselors in Quincy, Massachusetts, have organized a student assembly and a rumor clinic for middle school students.

Jersey City and New York City teams have sponsored large-scale conferences in their communities, pulling together policy-makers and representatives from different agencies to bring new perspectives and energy to the issue. Jersey City, Worcester, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg applied for major federal funding to enhance the safety of their schools. A Pupil Services administrator in Charlotte-Mecklenburg has proposed a new structure for providing services to children in the large system, which that would maximize the skills and training of school counseling practitioners and enhance the delivery of responsive interventions and preventive programs. The state of Connecticut sent a very large team of people to our conference, each one representing a different district. This large group is now collecting reports from across the state: each district that sent a representative to our program is required to develop and implement a violence prevention program this year. In

regular meetings, Connecticut participants are sharing what they are learning — including information about new ways to access electronic resources — and are developing a vision statement for the entire state! The team from Prince William County Schools in Manassas, Virginia, used our program to develop, refine, and elaborate on a “Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan for Developing Resilient Youth in a Violent World,” including components focused on policy, enforcement, prevention, intervention, and collaboration. Their school board has just accepted this plan, enthusiastically, which allows the district to “track implementation, assess and revise strategies, and incorporate new approaches as they become available.”

It is a privilege to be able to report about these good works-in-progress. And, indeed, that is the spirit in which this report is issued: to document a process that has not been previously attempted. In fact, we think we may be describing the beginning of a rather revolutionary, grass-roots movement — the kind that Dr. Prothrow-Stith describes in her remarks. People who are not accustomed to sitting at the same table because differences in academic discipline, job description, training, politics, generation, or heritage, for example, have done much to keep us apart are coming together to cope with the problem of violence. There is something extraordinarily fortifying about this new cooperation, as we find ourselves forging new solutions with people we are not used to thinking of as colleagues, peers, neighbors, friends. A third summer conference, *New*

Strategies for Violence Prevention: Schools and Communities Working Together, planned for July 1995, will focus on the importance of these new collaborations.

At the end of our program, our young panelists were asked how adults could help young people “get to the other side” of trouble. Rob answered, absolutely and insistently:

What you have to do is to stick by them. Don't give up on them. There's a lot of people that, if they don't straighten up the first time, then they don't try a second time. But just constantly stay on their back, stay on their back, and eventually they'll straighten up. It might be three or four years from now but you know, they'll eventually straighten up. . . . Be their friend. That's it, be their friend. Like I said, constantly stay on them. Constantly, constantly stay on them. You know what I'm saying. They going to tell you things, I'm sure you know that. They going to say bad things, you know, “Fuck off. Get out of my face. I don't want to hear you.” But constantly stay on them. . . . Just be their friend. Be their friend.

As the world shrinks, the possibilities for interdependence grow. And the strengthening of caring, mutual connections between adults and young people will make it a safer, promising place for all. Listening closely to and talking with young people will keep us all on track, together.

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