NATIONAL SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER

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Safe schools help create "cultures of caring"

By Ronald D. Stephens
NSSC Executive Director

Serious crises in recent months such as the shooting incidents at schools in Paducah, Kentucky, and Pearl, Mississippi, remind us that violence is neither a respector of persons nor stranger to any community, even in rural America. Violence can happen anywhere — without regard to race, color or location.

However, violence does not simply happen. There are warnings signs, and school officials need to look for them. Here are some tips for school administrators that may provide the needed wake-up call that trouble is on the horizon. The following questions help identify issues that can assist you in making a specific assessment in your school:

• **Are school attendance rates declining?** Low attendance rates may reflect a growing unhappiness or nonacceptance of the school environment by students. Nationally, one in 11 students who stays away from school does so out of fear. Find out why students are staying away from school. It could be due to fear or to not feeling a part of the broader school community.

• **Have you seen an increase in vandalism in your school?** Young people tend to protect the things they support and destroy the things they dislike. If a welcoming spirit has not been created on the campus, student dissatisfaction may be expressed through increasing graffiti or vandalism.

• **Have you noticed increased name-calling, cursing or "hard looks" on campus?** Generally, a violent student does not simply come to campus and start shooting a gun. Something has occurred to cause his or her aggitation. It could simply be name-calling or some type of bullying. Youngsters often get into fights because of comments such as, "S/he looked at me funny." Hard looks (known in various regions as "staredowns," "mean mugging" and "stink eye") should be made actionable offenses in the student behavior code.

• **Have you experienced an increase in fistfights?** Often a fistfight escalates a confrontation closer to physical harm. Fistfights should be taken seriously. They are not simply minor altercations; they are physical assaults. Every school should have procedures for calling in law enforcement when fights cross over from disciplinary matters to criminal offenses.

• **Is your campus openly accessible with few or no visitor screening procedures?** Entrance and exit points to the campus should be minimized. Procedures should be in place for greeting and supervising all students and visitors as they enter the school grounds and buildings. Despite all of the high-tech resources and tools that are currently available, the single most effective strategy for making campuses safe is the physical presence of a responsible adult who is both in touch with students and on site to monitor what is happening.

• **Do you have a safe school plan?** A safe school plan is an ongoing process that focuses on supervision and education strategies that make your campus safe. It may include a joint power agreement with law enforcement, crime prevention through environmental design and/or a plan to simply focus on courtesy towards every member of the school community.

• **Are your students allowed to place them-selves at risk by wearing gang colors or dress styles?** Gang paraphernalia, colors and dress styles, including sagging pants, should not be tolerated. Clear dress code expectations should be consistently publicized, enforced and fairly applied.

• **Are parents of students disgruntled?** Parental discontent and disruption often precede school disruption. Parental lack of knowledge or misunderstanding of school policies can breed distrust and dissatisfaction, which are then manifested in their children's behavior. Ensure that procedures are in place for planned parent conferences, along with mechanisms for eliciting parents' opinions and participation in children's school progress and activities.

• **Do your school grounds and facilities look unkempt or shoddy?** Such lack of maintenance may send a "We don't care" message to students, parents and community members alike. People are quick to pick up on such signals. Evidence that the outside of the school is deteriorating breeds disrespect for staff and students working inside the school to teach and to learn.

• **Is there a high turnover rate among school staff?** Good teachers want to stay in environments that are stimulating, fulfilling and challenging. A high turnover rate may reflect dissatisfaction and lack of interest from the staff or perhaps a dissatisfaction with the leadership of the school. A positive campus culture and climate will attract, retain and sustain quality personnel.

School safety is too important to leave to chance. Every school must have a comprehensive safe school plan to begin the process for protecting children and the professionals who serve them. Administrators and teachers working with students and parents must create a "culture of caring" that is responsive to needs and conducive to creating safe learning environments.

Responding to the need for comprehensive safe school planning, NSSC has scheduled three **School Safety Leadership Training** programs in 1998 to be held at the Westlake Inn in Westake Village, California. Dates for these three-day training seminars are May 13-15; September 16-18; and November 11-13, 1998. Call NSSC at 805/373-9977 for more information.

School Safety

About the cover:
Diversity has characterized this country's citizenry since exploration, colonization and the founding of the republic. To preserve safe school environments, educators and families must ensure that they foster development of reciprocal understanding, empathy and appreciation among today's diverse youth population. Artist: Jose Ortega, The Stock Illustration Source, Inc.

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BY JOSEPH V. ELLIS

*"History, despite its wrenching pain,/Cannot be unlived, and if faced/
With courage, need not be lived again." — Maya Angelou[1]*

History clearly reveals don'ts — do's are up to us

Despite all the similarities that people in every culture and subgroup share, it is differences that seem to polarize people. Far from noting and appreciating common values and emotions that testify to man's shared and boundless humanity, people instead fashion wedges of hate from diversity. Taunts and attacks based on dislike of difference transmogrify from bullying to gangbanging to hate crimes to the ultimate horror — genocide. An historian here briefly reviews man's historic tendency to nurture this hateful seed. It remains for each person to examine his/her life and culture, his/her community and schools, and his/her children — with hope of taking courageous steps into the future.

Writing as an historian, it seems to me that there is no real delineation one can or should make among genocides. One can, however, legitimately define the Holocaust of the Jews as a unique genocide by the Nazis in that it systematically attempted and almost completely accomplished the elimination of one group of people for one reason only — simply that they existed. All other genocides need not be compared statistically and emotionally. But all genocides must be addressed and examined, and lessons learned from them.

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As a white, Christian, Anglo-Saxon American, I am afraid of genocide. I am afraid because the four characteristics of myself that I just described are examples within the exact four categories one can find in the United Nations Genocide Convention of December 9, 1948. At that time the word genocide was defined as follows: "The intention to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethical, racial or religious group."[2] I, like a majority of persons, am a member of each and every one of those groupings.

As such, I am a possible victim — not on just one of those grounds but possibly on all four grounds — of those who would inflict the following things on me:
- cause me serious bodily or mental harm;
- deliberately impose upon me conditions of life calculated to bring about my physical destruction in whole or in part:
- impose measures on me to prevent me from fathering children;
- forcibly transfer my children to another group;
- kill me.

Those five actions I have just outlined are real fears of mine. Furthermore, those acts are real enough that they are the five things that the United Nations lists as the acts committed in the genocidal process.[3]

Those who are "safe"
I say to myself that today I stand on safe ground. I am a 67-year-old male, mid-income full professor, happily married, loving what I do for a living, a voting citizen who splits his ticket and has a nice home, kids and a new-model car. What can happen to me? I've got it made. Or so I say to myself.

But a voice born of history and nurtured in human frailty speaks to me of the millions who have gone before me and reminds me that they once, too, were alive, loving, loved, working hard, trying to improve their lots in life, loving their God — and then they were dead, murdered genocidally, brutally, totally, unfeelingly and rationally.

I stress the word "rationally" because that is the scariest part of the genocide process. Fredric Wertham, in his book *A Sign for Cain*, reminds us that genocides are performed "not by hotheads, mobs, but by cold-blooded ruling powers for material advantage."[4] Their motives, sadistic in operation, are often commercial and religious and are driven by an urge to cruelty.

"Genocidists," Wertham says, "must vilify people as subhumans. [Genocide] is carried out by ordinary people and planned, ordered and acknowledged by the highest authorities."[5]

Characteristics of genocide
Wertham summarizes perfectly the characteristics of genocide. His description of the Holocaust genocide can be applied to genocides in general. His listing of genocidal traits sounds ominous and familiar. He says of the Holocaust:

[It was] collective, bureaucratic, administrative, methodical, planned, calculated,

organized, systematic, stereotyped, routine, efficient, impersonal, purposeful. As one survivor expressed it, it was a 'fantastically well-organized spick-and-span Hell.[6]

Of such words are genocides fashioned.

Leo Kuper, in his book *Genocide*, explains how genocide becomes an amoral human action:

> [Genocide is] a crime against a collectivity, taking the form of mass slaughter, and carried out with explicit intent. As a crime against a collectivity, it sets aside the whole question of individual responsibility; it is a denial of individuality. All members of the group are guilty solely by virtue of their membership in it .... destroy the group 'as such' becomes the goal.[7]

Kuper adds a reminder of the rationality of genocide perpetrators. "The crime seems more horrifying when [the] extermination is carried out, not in blind hatred, but in pursuit of some further purpose."[8]

Authors of texts on genocide agree that dehumanization of the victims is an absolute prerequisite for all those who would slaughter people wholesale. Victims as "vermin" and groups as "gooks" is necessary nomenclature when one begins to "cleanse" the area of the soon-to-be-eradicated. Is it any wonder that Ben Whittaker, a former senior United Nations human rights commissioner, once called genocide "the ultimate crime: the gravest of all violations of human rights"?[9]

History's record

Let us begin to look briefly at genocides that have infected human history and still threaten to be imitated unless we learn from that history.

William Parsons, consultant to the United States Holocaust Educational Outreach Program in Washington, D.C., wrote in May 1991 that 50 million people have died in genocides in the 20th century.[10] But we dare not — nor can we — stop at the year 1901 if we are to realize fully the horrific conse-

quences of the genocidal instinct that has flourished across the millennia.

Early in the 12th century B.C., Troy was destroyed and its women were carried away. Eighth century B.C. Assyrians razed cities to the ground and carried off or killed whole populations. The Romans obliterated Carthage in 146 B.C. and sowed salt on its ruins.

The Monster

The names parade across the page;
Millions murdered from age to age.

Their crime was not that they were bad;
Nor had their neighbors all gone mad.

Moslem, Jew, Indian, Black —
Each group one time under attack.

Armenian, Cambodian —
Victims of the genocide sin.

They're in the way, they've got to go;
Who cares that soon the world will know.

The world's concerned with its own fate;
Who's got the time to quell the hate?

But we are safe, we have no fear;
We are the majority here.

That may be so, but woe betide
All those who shunned all those who cried.

Ignore, avert, turn away, hide —
Still lurks the monster — GENOCIDE.

Joseph V. Ellis

Harold Lamb, in 1927, wrote of the Mongol conqueror Genghis Khan, known as the "scourge of God," in this way:

> ...when he marched with his horde, it was over degrees of latitude and longitude instead of miles; cities in his path were often obliterated, and rivers diverted from their courses; deserts were peopled with the fleeing and the dying,

and when he passed, wolves and ravens often were the sole living things in once populous lands.[11]

History books describe in mind-numbing detail the atrocities of Tamerlane, the 14th century Mongol warrior responsible for killing hundreds of thousands of people in his conquest of lands from the Black Sea to the upper Ganges.

Religion

Genocide has many relatives, religion being but one of them, according to Wertham. Religious devotion and fanaticism have created many and various martyrs. The Crusades saw over 1 million people put to the sword or to other despicable ends. The Inquisition in Europe totaled over 250,000 executions and deaths in the name of God.[12] And it is estimated that 20,000 "witches" have been killed worldwide by those who would honor their Father in Heaven.[13]

Colonialism and colonization

High on the list of accessories after, before and during the fact of genocide are schemes associated with colonialism and colonization throughout world history. It has been estimated that 15 million people in South America lost their lives as the Spanish, Portuguese and others swept across the continent. In the first 35 years of the colonization of Haiti, of 1 million people on the island at the start, only 14,000 remained alive three and a half decades later.[14]

American Indians can attest to the consequences of territorial expansion of the United States. Blacks in Africa and in the pre-Civil War United States can tell of their history of misery associated with the slave trade and slavery, respectively. In the Congo, for example, of the 30 million people there originally at the start of European colonization, only 8.5 million were still alive in 1911.[15]

20th century

Still unrecognized by many people today is the startlingly high number of Armenians who died in mass killings during

World War I. Though the fact is still being denied today in some quarters, a United Nations report referred to the massacre as "the first case of genocide in the 20th century."[16]

Russia under Stalin and his successors looms large in the book of annihilation. Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes that between 1917 and 1959, some 66 million people were killed on direct orders from Stalin and his henchmen; 15 million people were driven from their homes, only to die on the tundra, sunken forever beneath the permafrost; 20 million died from bullets or state-induced famine.[17]

The Nazi Holocaust of 6 million Jews in the 1930s and 1940s is a separate story, though the designs of the Holocaust genocide were learned well by the Nazis from earlier genocides.

The partitioning of India after World War II through 1947 saw over 1 million people perish in the name of [establishing] nationalities. In Nigeria of the l960s and l970s, tribal warfare and post-colonialism infighting resulted in the deaths of between 600,000 to 1 million men, women and children.[18]

In Indonesia, from 1965 onward, Amnesty International calculates that 500,000 actual or suspected communists were killed by government army forces.[19]

In Pakistan and Bangladesh in 1971, over 3 million Bengalis died as a result of systematic eradication.[20] In August of 1972 alone, Idi Amin and his followers in Uganda annihilated some 75,000 East Ugandans.[21]

Following the accession to power of the Khmer Rouge in April 1975, Cambodia was virtually sealed off from the rest of the world. By January of 1979, Vietnamese and rebel Cambodian troops invaded what was then known as Democratic Kampuchea, and the first reliable accounts of the horrors of the killing fields began to filter to the outside world.[22]

In June 1991, the *New York Times* reported on anti-Semitism in Romania. By the 1990s, genocide appeared on the world scene still again in Bosnia and Hercegovina in the guise of "ethnic cleansing." The mass graves of those killed are still being discovered.[23]

Hope that there is hope

Yet, one hopes that there is hope. Genocide awareness is much greater than ever before. Genocide education, especially since 1970, is growing. States such as California, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia have recommended courses and materials in their school systems.[24] The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation are in the forefront of alerting people to the facts and consequences of genocide.

The bottom line of my own efforts to teach a course on the Holocaust must be the students' reception of and reaction to the course and its effect on their lives. It ought not to be just another three credits toward graduation — another one of those history courses to be suffered through and forgotten along with the definition of osmosis — or an ego trip by a professor wrapped up in something that interests him, yet is of no relevance to students.

I have some indication from my "barometric measures" of continued high course enrollment and class attendance, written class evaluations and remembered oral comments that students seem glad that they took the course.

A student once wrote: "I have always [before this course] viewed the Holocaust as an event in the past, just plain and written on paper." I hope he learned it was a living, breathing event of hatred, courage, cruelty, resistance, inhumanity and survival. What effect the course may have on his life I must leave for him to decide — just as each of us must decide on how the course of history affects our lives.

Endnotes

1. Maya Angelou, "On the Pulse of Morning," poem written for the Clinton inauguration (20 January 1993): quoted in James W. Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995): 137.
2. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 96, 11 December 1946.
3. Ibid.
4. Fredric Wertham, *A Sign for Cain* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Hayes Publishing Co., 1969): 57.
5. Ibid., 58.

6. Ibid., 59.
7. Leo Kuper, *Genocide* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981): 117.
8. Ibid., 142.
9. William Parsons, *Paths to Truth* (New York, N.Y.: Harper, 1990): 27.
10. Ibid., 28.
11. Harold Lamb, *Ghengis Khan* (New York, N.Y.: Pinnacle Books, 1927): 15.
12. Wertham, 33.
13. Ibid., 40.
14. Ibid., 41.
15. Ibid., 47.
16. United Nations Report on Genocide, January, 1974.
17. Parsons, 148-149.
18. Kuper, 207.
19. Ibid., 210.
20. Wertham, 52.
21. Ibid., 53.
22. Kuper, 150.
23. *New York Times*, 19 June 1991: A-10.
24. Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith publication, Facing History and Ourselves: 67.

"I guess my cultural background is kind of mixed. Mostly I'm French …The French, German and Irish are from my dad's side. My mom has German, Swedish, Cherokee Indian and Irish on her side of the family." - Matthew

Multicultural fair stresses heritage and harmony

Wearing the traditional dress of her Native American tribe, a young maiden moves rhythmically in a circle, her moccasins keeping time to a background of chanting, drums and the clicking of beaded fringe swaying together on her turquoise-hued dress. Gradually she is joined in the circle by other Native American youth — then by youngsters clad in blue jeans, tennis shoes and t-shirts as well as adults wearing office attire. The dance is but one display of a variety of arts, crafts, regalia and information offered at the fifth annual Multicultural Fair produced by youth in the Applied Career Education Program (A.C.E.) of the Marion County (Oregon) Juvenile Department.

Background of A.C.E.
Developed about five years ago, A.C.E. is a program for adjudicated youth. Assigned by juvenile court judges to attend a court-approved educational program as terms of their probation, youth typically between the ages of 12 and 17 attend classes daily. Total program enrollment and attendance vary

Information in this article was provided by Sandra Struven, director of education programs for the Marion County (Oregon) Juvenile Department, and by Patty Davis, an Applied Career Education program learning specialist responsible for inaugurating the multicultural fair. They may be reached at the Marion County Juvenile Department, 3030 Center St., NE, Salem, OR 97361, phone 503/588-5331.

due to the different lengths of instructional time based upon individual student needs. However, the program averages 44 students on any given day.

The program includes students who are Caucasian, African-American, Native American, Asian and Hispanic. Classes are designed to keep students current in their academic studies, but the program also offers classes leading to receipt of a high school diploma or a General Education Diploma (GED). Vocational "shadowing" — or nonpaid job opportunities — and various types of community services such as graffiti removal and weed eradication are also included among A.C.E. activities.

Two certified teachers — one of whom also has special education certification — four classroom aides and two teacher's assistants provide teaching and one-on-one tutoring for 108 students in the Marion County Juvenile Department. In addition, each student also maintains contact with his/her assigned probation officer.

Launching the cultural fair
Although the predominant population that the Salem-Keizer Public Schools serve is Caucasian, a number of other ethnic groups are also part of the school district's citizenry. As has been indicated, A.C.E. students represent varied cultural backgrounds. In an educational setting that includes such diversity among its at-risk youth, clashes born of culture-based differences of opinion often occur.

In an effort to create an improved learning atmosphere, A.C.E. staff member Patty Davis in the spring of 1992 developed the idea of staging a multicultural fair. The purpose of the fair was fourfold:
• to stage a cultural fair as a culmination activity at the end of the school year;
• to enhance appreciation of the diverse cultures and heritages in the community;
• to help students and staff build personal cultural pride in their heritage and gain appreciation and understanding of others; and
• to get community members involved in demonstrating cultural pride among A.C.E. clients by sharing information about heritage and representing their cultures at the fair.

The fair would also be a means of unifying students and creating an educational undertaking that would incorporate the practice of skills such as writing, arts and crafts, and historical research. Producing the fair would utilize the talents of all students and would also provide impetus for students to interact not only with each other, but also with A.C.E. teachers and staff members, parents and relatives, probation officers and visiting members of the community.

Extensive pre-fair planning included creating a timeline specifying organizational activities, such as the following:
• securing funds and fair sponsors;
• reserving a location for the event;

- arranging for student helpers and presenters from local colleges;
- identifying ways to evaluate the fair; and
- preparing fair publicity, such as flyers, invitations, posters and e-mail notices.

By September 5, 1992, Davis had been notified by the Salem Schools Foundation that A.C.E. had been selected as a grant recipient and would receive approximately $350 to assist with staging the fair.

The sixth annual fair

Friday, May 22, 1998, will mark the sixth annual Multicultural Fair. It will be held once more in rooms A and B in the Health Department building on Center Street, NE. Traditionally the fair is held on a Friday in May from about noon to 3:00 p.m. Pleasant spring weather facilitates transporting decorations and food to the fair.

Timing of the fair also contributes to the likelihood that invited visitors working in the area will walk to the fair for a visit. Visitors to the fair include students' parents and family members, juvenile probation officers and judges, staff and students of the Family Court Programs and other clients on probation caseloads of the Marion County Court. Further, the scheduled time precludes local high school students from attending, thus emphasizing the fair's focus on A.C.E. students and their achievements.

Funds are used to help students, assisted by A.C.E. staff and community members, to develop exhibits and booths reflecting their own cultures. In the past, booths have focused on Hispanic, African-American, Russian, Native American, German, Italian, Dutch, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Japanese and other Asian cultures. Students are encouraged to interview their parents, grandparents and other relatives regarding their own family's cultural backgrounds. Such interaction often facilitates increased and improved communication between generations within the students' families.

Reflecting even more of an emphasis on diversity, the 1997 fair also featured a booth dealing with the "culture" of those who are deaf, an Oregon booth and an Earth Day booth.

Autobiographies and passports

As a prelude to the fair, students write their families' histories based on their interviews of family members. These histories are compiled and presented in book form to be sold at the fair. The money earned from sale of the books, priced at about $2, is used to begin a fund for the next year's fair. Students and staff also keep copies of the booklets as mementos of the fair and their efforts.

Excerpts from three such histories follow:

... I am 14 years young. I am Filipino ... There are ten people in my family. Some are Hispanic and some are Filipino ... My family likes to hang around with all different races ... I have a lot of friends that just like to hang out with their own race, but I tell them every one is the same ...

... I have a pretty big family, most of whom I've never met ... I'm half Native American and half Irish. I actually have two different tribal roots in my blood. One is Cherokee and the other is Sioux. My grandfather has always called me Little Strong Foot ... I like the sound of it ...

... I'm doing this autobiography for my writing class ... I'm currently attending the A.C.E. program in Salem, Oregon. I've only been attending this school for a few weeks and so far I'm enjoying this school because I've been making a lot more progress in this school than I have in any other school ...

Stories are accompanied by student-drawn illustrations. In addition to autobiographies, booklets also contain student poems, historical essays and personal anecdotes.

As visitors enter the fair, they receive student-designed passport booklets. The passports facilitate interaction between students and fair attendees. When visitors enter and then circulate, they may have their passports stamped by giving correct answers to the multiple-choice questions listed on the booth's page in the booklet. For example, in the 1997 passport booklet "The World Belongs to Everyone," the page for the African-American booth focused on information about the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and featured questions about famous African-Americans.

International ambience

Rooms in which the fair is held are festooned with balloons, varicolored streamers, flags of nations around the world, handmade posters and maps. Long tables manned by teams of two to five students — and sometimes assisted by students' parents — reflect each booth's cultural theme.

Ethnic food samples donated by local restaurants that sponsor the event tempt fair participants and visitors alike to join in appreciating the culinary arts of various cultures. Japanese karaoke singing and music featuring Mexican guitars and Russian balalaikas provide background ambience and entertainment. Dances ranging from the limbo to meringues and the macarena and also including folk dances and Native American dances choreographed by students engage fair goers.

International students studying at local colleges also take part in the fairs, offering expertise during organizational brainstorming sessions, teaching origami (the Japanese art of paper folding), leading dances, playing music or assisting with master-of-ceremonies tasks.

Positive outreach

Overall, the multicultural fair provides youth the opportunity to get in touch with their heritage, to interact significantly with family members and to earn positive affirmation from peers and adults — goals that are worth emulating.

Furthermore, as a consequence of having produced the fairs for five years, students and staff of the Marion County Juvenile Department have expertise to offer student groups around the country. A.C.E. has compiled a Multicultural Fair Process Paper detailing timelines and tasks associated with planning a fair. Contact the Applied Career Education Program at 503/588-5331.

In addition, the Marion County Children and Families Commission has authored a manual titled "Implementing Cultural Competency." The commission may be reached at 503/588-5381.

BY MICHAEL W. COLLIER

The study reveals three key factors that characterize school "cultures of violence" — discourses of denial, noncaring school atmospheres, and security forces that are remiss in their duties.

Schools are vulnerable to cultures of violence

In a 1994 survey of America's school boards, 91.5 percent of respondents in school districts with more than 25,000 students reported school violence as a problem.[1] In light of such disturbing statistics, the President and the nation's 50 governors adopted National Education Goal 6 (later modified as Goal 7), which specifies, "By the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and the unauthroized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning."[2] Unfortunately, even with a national focus on reducing school violence, student drug use and school violence have continued to increase nationwide.[3]

School systems employ two principal strategies to deter, detect and control the continuing spiral of school violence. First, schools upgrade their physical security programs by hiring more school security guards, deploying more school metal detectors and installing more electronic surveillance systems. Second, schools implement student intervention programs that include increased efforts at student mentoring, conflict resolution and peer counseling. While combinations of these two strategies have shown short-term success in individual schools, they have not solved

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the nationwide epidemic of violence in America's schools.

Problems arising from violence

Recent school research reveals a fundamental problem related to the widespread American school violence: "cultures of violence" exist in schools with the most serious violence problems. Where school cultures of violence exist, school administrators, teachers and students become socialized into an environment where acts of school violence (bullying, sexual harassment, fights, armed attacks) become an accepted means of student conflict resolution and student daily personal interactions. Schools with cultures of violence spawn increased student fear of being victimized in schools, conditions associated with a variety of student antisocial/disruptive behavior, post-traumatic stress disorders and poor school performance. Schools with cultures of violence are thus antithetical to Goal 6's objective of providing "a disciplined conducive environment for learning."

This article summarizes a 1997 study of school violence in the Miami-Dade Public Schools.[4] This study revealed the important role that school cultures of violence play in fostering both increased school violence levels and increased student fears of being victimized. Before school officials can overcome these school cultures of violence, they must first understand the conditions that allow these cultures to permeate many of America's schools.

Culture of violence characteristics

Based on his work over a period of 10 years in New York inner-city high schools, John Devine provides one of the latest explanations for the violence that currently pervades many schools.[5] From his research in New York schools attended primarily by immigrant and minority students and located in neighborhoods with high violent crime rates, Devine concludes that the ethos of fear experienced by students is the result of school cultures of violence that allow neighborhood or local "street" crime to infiltrate many schools. Devine describes a school's culture of violence as a situation where acts of violence become normalized in everyday school life.

Devine suggests that three primary factors characterize schools containing cultures of violence. First, he submits that schools with a culture of violence also possess "discourses of denial" concerning the violence itself. He describes how administrators and teachers avoid acknowledging, downplay or outright deny school violence as a serious problem in their schools. When administrators and teachers do acknowledge a violence problem, usually at a much lower level than actually exists, they often rationalize that its causes and solutions lie in the family or community — anywhere but within the school itself. For example, in a 1993 nationwide survey, teachers responded that the major problems of school violence were: lack of parental supervision at home (71 percent); lack of family involve-

ment with the school (66 percent); and student exposure to violence in the mass media (55 percent).[6]

Second, Devine argues that development of a school noncaring atmosphere helps cultivate school cultures of violence. A noncaring atmosphere exists wherever students perceive that the school staff cares little about their personal development. Devine attributes one cause of noncaring school atmospheres to teachers being removed from primary responsibility for student control and discipline. Teachers in most schools are no longer required to maintain a before- or after-school, lunch-period, or between-class presence in school hallways and common areas. Instead, techno-security measures (security patrols, metal detectors, etc.) replace the teachers as the primary mechanisms for student control and discipline. Devine holds that reliance on techno-security programs for discipline eliminates the historical interpersonal bond between teachers and students.

Other recent school violence literature also highlights the relationship between noncaring school atmospheres and school violence. Dean Walker contends that "schools with low levels of violent behavior are distinguished from those with high levels by a positive school climate where nurturance, inclusiveness, and community feeling are evident."[7] Nel Noddings argues that for school violence prevention programs to work, "students must believe that the adults in their schools and communities care about them, that their well-being and growth matter."[8]

Third, Devine submits that school security forces — meant to reduce school violence — may cause elements of street cultures to come into the schools.[9] For example, a common problem in schools with cultures of violence is the sexual harassment of female students by male school security guards. Such behavior results in high lev-

els of student mistrust. Devine suggests that students often view authority figures such as armed school police and security patrols as the enemy — an enemy onto whom large masses of students transfer their feelings of mistrust and frustration every day. Overall then, student feelings of mistrust toward and actual misconduct of the security force personnel can thus add to a pervasive school culture of violence.

Devine maintains that when schools possess the three key factors that characterize school cultures of violence — discourses of denial, noncaring school atmospheres, and remiss security forces — the boundary between school and neighborhood becomes porous, and the school finds itself invaded by neighborhood crime. Therefore, instead of becoming a refuge for students from violence, the school itself perpetuates high levels of violence and student fear.

The Miami-Dade study
Four Miami-Dade public high schools were selected for a multi-method study of school violence. Table 1 provides the demographic data for each school. These same four pub-

lic high schools were the subjects of a Florida International University (FIU) Immigration and Ethnicity Institute longitudinal research project begun in 1995 to investigate the reasons behind varying positive and negative academic orientations of Miami-Dade immigrant and native minority students [see Endnote 4].

As the FIU researchers in this larger project began their fieldwork in 1995, researchers in three of the four schools immediately found themselves confronted almost on a daily basis with incidences of school violence. The need to further understand school violence and its effects on students in the longitudinal study has led to this present 1997 school violence study.

Using a combination of crime statistics, media reports, interviews, direct observations, focus groups, and student surveys, researchers conducting the Miami-Dade study intended to assess the relationships among levels of neighborhood violence, school cultures of violence, levels of school violence, and student subjective fears of victimization in school. Interviews were conducted with both school officials and

Table 1. Miami-Dade High School and Neighborhood Demographics

Type of Data	Northern High*	King High*	Coral High*	Everglades High*
High School Data				
Total Student Body	2,588	2,495	3,558	1,889
Black Students	64.0%	91.0%	3.0%	31.0%
Hispanic Students	21.0%	8.0%	90.0%	48.0%
School's Main Immigrant and Native Minority Groups	African-American, Caribbean (English-speaking), Haitian	African-American, Haitian	Cuban, Nicaraguan	African-American, Haitian, Mexican
Neighborhood Data				
Location	Inner-City/Suburban	Inner-City	Suburban	Rural/Suburban
Foreign-Born Residents	37.1%	33.7%	63.6%	13.4%
Residents With Less Than 9th-grade Education	11.2%	29.5%	25.2%	45.3%
Families Below Poverty Level	15.4%	43.8%	14.8%	29.4%

*Pseudonyms used throughout this article.

Miami-Dade police personnel. Direct observations of security personnel by researchers were carried out in each school.

Researchers organized four ethnicity-based focus groups, each composed of students from each school. That is, one group was composed of African-American students drawn from each school; Caribbean (English-speaking) students from each school comprised a second group; students from each high school having Haitian and Hispanic ethnic backgrounds constituted the other two groups.

Focus groups were conducted in a professional marketing facility equipped with two-way mirrors and built-in video and recording equipment. While one researcher moderated each student focus group, several other researchers observed and video-taped the groups through two-way mirrors. By observing and recording the interactions of students in the four focus groups, researchers were able to tap the students' subjective attitudes toward school violence and their fears of victimization in a way not possible through either individual interviews or direct observation.[10] Finally, 377 students in the three schools found to have severe violence problems were surveyed using a modified version of the *California School Climate and Safety Survey (CSCSS).* (Versions of the *CSCSS* have been used successfully in California school research since 1989.)[11]

The Miami-Dade results
Table 2 summarizes the findings of the Miami-Dade school violence study. Crime statistics, interviews with Miami-Dade police, and student focus groups revealed that in three of the study's four schools — Northern, King, and Everglades high schools (not their real names) —the surrounding neighborhoods were extremely violent and crime-ridden. These same three schools were also found to have high levels of school violence. Of special interest were the student surveys in these three schools, which revealed that students were more concerned with school violence than with rampant neighborhood violence. The majority of students surveyed perceived their neighborhoods as being much safer than their

schools.

Having shown that high levels of neighborhood violence had invaded three of the study's four schools, researchers next assessed the presence of school cultures of violence in these schools. School cultures of violence were evaluated by determining if the schools had both high levels of school violence and if the three key factors that characterize school cultures of violence were present. First, school staffs — administrators, teachers and security personnel — from each of the study's four schools, including Coral High (not its real name), which did not have high violence levels — exhibited strong discourses of denial. The investigations revealed that a refusal to acknowledge school system problems was not just a problem at these individual schools, but was a problem throughout the Miami-Dade Public Schools.

One school system police official forewarned the researchers that they would encounter this problem when he stated: "Some principals don't want to admit it, because they don't want that school labeled as a problem school. But every school in [Miami-]Dade County has gang problems. And every school in [Miami-]Dade County has drug problems." This warning turned out to be prophetic, since school staffs in each of the study's investigated schools evidenced strong discourses of denial regarding their schools' gang, drug, and violence problems.

Second, two of the three schools with serious violence problems — Northern and King high schools — were found to have severe noncaring atmospheres. The direct observations conducted for the 1997 school violence study and the observations of the researchers in the FIU longitudinal project revealed substantial evidence of Northern and King high school staffs caring little for their students' personal development and well-being. The student focus groups were especially revealing in demonstrating the severe student mistrust and even disdain for administrators, teachers and security personnel in these two schools. Such an atmosphere of mistrust was not present at Coral High and only slightly evident at Everglades High. In fact, the researchers found

that Coral High, despite being significantly overcrowded, had a friendly, nurturing atmosphere and a strong sense of community. Everglades High, on the other hand, while not displaying as strong a caring and cooperative atmosphere as Coral High, did not present the severe student mistrust and fractious atmospheres found in Northern and King high schools.

Third, each of the three schools with high violence levels also evidenced security forces that were remiss in their duties. The student focus groups and surveys were especially revealing of the low regard students had for the security personnel at Northern, King and Everglades high schools. The student focus groups uncovered numerous reports of security guards in these three schools sexually harassing female students. The student surveys disclosed that only 27 percent of the total 377 student survey respondents from these three schools felt safer in school due to the presence of school security personnel. Evidence from researchers' direct observations and from student focus groups also revealed the extremely inconsistent enforcement of school regulations by security personnel. This lack of school regulation enforcement, which Devine terms the "marshmallow effect" — where students quickly discover they can push the "marshmallow" of acceptable school behavior — contributes to a school's culture of violence as it demonstrates to students that no one cares enough to enforce school discipline.

Based on the totality of evidence concerning high levels of school violence and the presence of discourses of denial, noncaring atmospheres and remiss security forces, Northern, King and Everglades high schools were evaluated as having strong school cultures of violence. As might be expected, student focus group and survey data also revealed high to moderate levels of student fear of being victimized in these three schools.

Study's key findings
The Table 2 results for Coral High reveal that this school was not a good test subject for Devine's explanations for school violence. Having little neighborhood and

school violence and a generally caring atmosphere, Coral High offered a rather pleasant environment in which students could learn and grow. This was not true of the study's other three schools.

Northern High's Table 2 results closely parallel the conditions Devine found in New York inner-city schools. A strong school culture of violence at Northern High led to high levels of school violence. Northern High's results support Devine's general conclusions that in American inner-city schools in low-income neighborhoods populated by large concentrations of immigrants and native minorities, school cultures of violence allow neighborhood violence to invade the schools.

King High's Table 2 results also support Devine's general conclusions. However, the investigation of King High also revealed a further intriguing aspect. Of the four Miami-Dade schools studied, King High possessed the largest, best-equipped and best-supervised security force. The King High security personnel were extremely proactive in deterring school violence and in responding to violent acts, keeping violence at much lower levels than would be possible with a less efficient security force. King High's results provide insight for those who advocate upgrading school physical security programs as the principal strategy in dealing with school violence. Despite a large and efficient security force, the King High atmosphere of police-power intrusion and the misconduct of security personnel (e.g. female student sexual harassment) were still major contributors to the school's culture of violence.

Everglades High's Table 2 results provide at least three important insights to school violence research. First, as a rural/suburban school, Everglades High demonstrated that Devine's work is transferable outside the inner city. Further research is needed to confirm if the results from Everglades High are typical of school violence situations found throughout American schools in low-income neighborhoods populated by large concentrations of immigrants and native minorities and possessing high neighborhood violent crime rates.

Second, the Everglades High investiga-

Table 2. Summary of Findings, Miami-Dade Violence Study

Concept Evaluated	Northern High*	King High*	Coral High*	Everglades High*
Neighborhood Violence Levels	Moderate - High	High	Low	High
School Violence Levels	High	High	Low	High
School Culture of Violence Exists	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Discourse of Denial Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Noncaring Atmosphere Present	Yes	Yes	No	Borderline
Remiss Security Forces Present	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Student Fear Levels	High	High	Low	Moderate

*Pseudonyms used throughout this article

tion disclosed that Devine's three factors contributing to school cultures of violence — discourse of denial, noncaring atmospheres, remiss security forces — do not have to be particularly strong to allow neighborhood violence to invade the school. While the staff of Everglades High evidenced a strong discourse of denial and a security force that was remiss in its duties, the school's atmosphere appeared neither clearly caring nor noncaring. Conditions such as those present at Everglades High imply that a culture of violence may be possible even in schools having weak caring school atmospheres.

Basing conclusions strictly on Devine's work and this study, however, one cannot conclude that any one of the three factors is, by itself, necessary or sufficient for a culture of violence to exist. A more likely conclusion is that a complex relationship exists among these factors. This study reveals that the strengths of these three factors vary and that they no doubt can combine and interact in a variety of ways to create a school's culture of violence. Exploration of such possible integration of these factors is an area requiring further research.

Third, Everglades High's results provide insight for those who advocate student intervention programs as the principal strategy for dealing with school violence. Everglades High had the most comprehensive student intervention programs of the four Miami-Dade schools in this study. Its programs included very active school psychologist group therapy sessions, excellent guidance counselors and a solid peer counseling program. The peer counselors taught a variety of intervention classes, including conflict resolution and stress reduction, and one or two peer counselors were always available to help students with problems. The peer counselors reported they spent most of their time in one-on-one conflict resolution sessions, student conflicts with other students and student conflicts with their parents.

Nevertheless, despite its commendable student intervention programs, Everglades High still evidenced a strong school culture of violence and high violence levels. However, on a positive note, students at Everglades High were not as afraid of being victimized as were those at Northern and King high schools. Perhaps this difference was due in large part to the student intervention programs and at least a borderline sense of caring evident at Everglades High School.

A third strategy against violence and fear
Because of the complexity of factors giving rise to school violence and resulting student fear, campaigns to combat these serious problems must include a combination of strategies. In the past, combining strategies that upgraded school physical security programs and improved student intervention programs has not solved the school violence and student fear problems. As a result of recent research, including the Miami-Dade school violence study summarized in this article, school officials now have a third strategy — attacking school cultures of violence — to add to their campaigns against school violence and fear. By confronting the key factors that contribute to the creation of school cultures of violence — discourses of denial, noncaring school atmospheres and remiss security forces — and combining these actions with strategies related to increasing school physical security and improving student intervention programs, school officials may yet eliminate the nationwide scourge of school violence and its associated student fear levels.

Endnotes
1. W. Weisenburger, K.E. Underwood and J.C. Fortune, "The Violence Within," *The American School Board Journal*, 182 (1) (January 1995): 33-38.
2. National Education Goals Panel, *The National Education Goals Report, Building a Nation of Learners*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995): 13.
3. *Ibid.* 50-53.
4. This study was supported by the National Science Foundation Anthropology Grant No. SBR-9511515, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation.
5. J. Devine, *Maximum Security, The Culture of Violence in Inner-City Schools* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).
6. Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, *Violence In America's Public Schools* (New York: Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1993): 35-38.
7. D. Walker, "School Violence Prevention," *ERIC Digest*, 94 (2) (1995): 3.
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9. J. Devine, 95-96.
10. For a more thorough understanding of focus group, see R. A. Krueger, *Focus Groups, A Practical Guide for Applied Research*, (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1994).
11. *California School Climate and Safety Survey* © VUSD-UCSB School Climate and Safety Partnership, Furlong and Morrison (1996). See M.J. Furlong, A. Chung, M. Bates and R.L. Morrison, "Who Are the Victims of School Violence? A Comparison of Student Non-Victims and Multi-Victims," *Education and Treatment of Children*, 18 (3) (1995): 282-298.

New booklet provides information, insight about Islamic practices

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), based in Washington, D.C., announced in September 1997 the publication of a handbook designed to assist educators in formulating and implementing school policies and programs that will help create culturally sensitive academic environments. Entitled *An Educator's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices*, this 16-page booklet contains information about Muslim holidays and also includes dietary and clothing practices.

Earlier in 1997, CAIR released *An Employer's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices*. Future books in the series will be developed for health care professionals and administrators of correctional facilities.

There are an estimated 6 million Muslims in America.[1] The presence of Muslims in this country's culturally diverse society is perhaps most evident in public school systems. This growing demographic group adds a new dimension to be considered as teachers, principals and other educators work out the many issues associated with diversity.

CAIR executive director Nihad Awad states, "As the Muslim population in school grows, educators will need accurate information about Islam in order to deal with issues of religious accommodation. We must find a balance between the needs of school systems and the religious obligations of Muslim students."[2]

Publication of the booklet was in part prompted by incidents of bias and insensitivity in public schools reported to CAIR by Muslim parents. For example, two Muslim students were denied admission to an ROTC program because they refused to remove their head scarves.[3] A child was called a "terrorist" by his classmates, and his teacher did not come to his defense.[4]

Most public school curricula include appropriate information about various groups' religious holidays, their origin and associated practices. Social studies and history classes typically include information that traces the development of America's pluralistic society, including the influx of immigrants seeking religious freedom.

Creating and maintaining safe school environments must include practices, procedures and programs that promote harmony and understanding among students and staff from diverse cultures. This booklet can perhaps assist in achieving such a long-term goal.

1. Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), (Washington, D.C.: CAIR, September 1997 press release): 1.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 2.
4. Ibid.

To receive information or copies of An Educator's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices, *contact the Council on American-Islamic Relations, 1050 17th Street, NW, Suite 490, Washington, DC 20036; phone: 202/659-2247; fax: 202/659-2254; e-mail: cair1@ix.netcom.com; http: //www.cair-net.org.*

BY NORINE DRESSER

Those who make the effort to be aware of cultural "hot spots" and to understand others' expectations and taboos are likely to develop respect for diversity and to reap the rewards of improved human relations in a multicultural society.

Multicultural Manners gives insights on diversity

In the fall of 1992, I took over a community college English as a Second Language (ESL) class. The students, new immigrants from at least 10 different countries, greeted my unexpected appearance with wariness and some hostility. I was their third teacher in four weeks.

The subject of the day seemed safe enough to open with, though. "What American idioms confuse you?" I asked. An attractive Middle Eastern woman in her twenties responded. "'Feel her up' is an idiom?"

Terror swept over me. My twenty years of university teaching had taught me to be comfortable with any subject. Still, I was reluctant to begin this opening class talking about sexual matters. Stalling, I asked, "Feel her up?"

"Yes," she insisted. "Feel her up."

"Ah, yes. 'Feel her up' is an idiom."

I panicked. Where should I begin? Should I speak about sexual harassment?... Bidding for more time, I once more said, "Yes, 'feel her up' is an idiom."

Frustrated by my hesitation, the young woman spoke more emphatically. "Feel her up!"

I still could not answer. Exasperated, the student clarified her question. "You know, you go to the gas-a station and you

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say, 'Feel her up!'"

I cannot describe my relief on hearing the student's explanation. I had been spared a terrible embarrassment. That small difference in the pronunciation of a word might have plunged me into a cross-cultural morass. If I had attempted to explain American sex habits, the students would have been astonished and offended. Most of them came from cultures where sexual information would not be disseminated to males and females at the same time — especially by a woman. Some might even come from places where sexual information is withheld or limited to basic procreation issues. Certainly, sexual arousal techniques would not be discussed in a coeducational language class.

Assumptions based in cultural differences frequently lead us astray. In this situation, language differences caused the misunderstanding between the woman and myself. Yet this incident crystallizes how communication can backfire when dealing with people who come from places where customs, beliefs, language and values differ from those of mainstream America.

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, the foreign-born population totaled a record 19.8 million, surpassing previous highs of 14 million in 1930 and 1980. In addition, more than 100 languages are spoken in the school systems of New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Fairfax

County, Virginia. Furthermore, over 31 million people speak English as their second language, which means that roughly 14 percent of the American population speaks 140 different languages. These high numbers increase the potential for cross-cultural miscommunication.

Who are "we Americans"?
Just who are mainstream Americans? The population of the United States is variously referred to as a "melting pot" or a "salad bowl." In any event, fewer than 300 years have produced a population that is at the very least an amalgam of indigenous Native Americans; descendants of explorers, colonists, adventurers; refugees fleeing religious and political upheaval and wayfarers seeking economic opportunity. Small wonder that cultural encounters occur.

Cultural encounters are not limited to major cities. It is virtually impossible for most Americans NOT to interact with people who are different from themselves. Clumsy moments such as the "Feel her up" incident occur every day in multicultural America. A nurse's touch, meant to comfort, insults; a clerk's eye contact, meant to ease transactions, hampers them instead. Persons may offend someone or be offended when their intentions to do the right thing backfire. This happens because they are unschooled about others' customs and values. Living in a multicultural society has hazards.

Learning from mistakes

A need for understanding occurs not only in classrooms, but also in the business world, in social settings and in the medical field. Issues are interrelated; behavior occurring in one setting also occurs elsewhere. For example, eye contact as a form of disrespect surfaces in school hallways as body language, but it also has application in business, on the street and in conversations, interviews and counseling sessions.

People often realize belatedly that they have made a mistake in a given cultural encounter. For example, let's say you sell real estate, and you've had difficulty in closing sales with Chinese clients. You sense the reluctance of your customers to purchase a certain house or commercial property, but you have no clue as to the cause of their hesitance. Knowing something about "Feng Shui" would help you understand how ancient Chinese beliefs can influence contemporary purchasing decisions.

Or perhaps you were too friendly either in a business or social setting: You called clients or acquaintances by their first names, and they reacted negatively. By familiarizing yourself with customs associated with forms of address you might avoid future errors.

Experienced teachers simply performing ordinary tasks can sometimes blunder. For example, Mrs. Gussman is one of the best English teachers in her school. She spends hours reading and correcting her students' compositions, writing careful comments in easy-to-see red pen. She often writes something personally encouraging to her students. "Jae Lee, these are fine ideas ..." What she may not know is that in some cultures, a person's name written in red is associated with death and thus can instill fear or at the very least cause offense.

Even the giving of gifts in business or social settings can cause misunderstanding. For example, umbrellas, knives, scissors and clocks are best avoided as gifts. The English word *umbrella* is similar in sound to the Chinese word for *separation*; knives and scissors can also sym-bolize the severance of a relationship. A clock can be a reminder that time is running out, that one is closer to his or her last moments of life.

Guidelines are not absolutes

When one shares knowledge of various cultures' customs, it should always be with the knowledge that guidelines are not absolutes. You may hear or read about various customs and feel compelled to say, "That's not true. My brother-in-law NEVER does that."

Descriptions and guidelines will not apply to every person, to every situation. There will be exceptions to every rule because conduct differs with individuals. Furthermore, the acculturation process is not completely predictable. Many variables influence how quickly a person replaces traditional behavior with the new country's customs and values.

Exciting journeys ahead

I have written *Multicultural Manners* because I wanted to ease the conflicts and misunderstandings that happen to all of us every day. My experience as a teacher has convinced me that we really want to understand and accept each other; most of our failures to do so stem from ignorance rather than from bad intentions. Thus it is my hope to provide you with insights that I have derived from personal experience and field research, as well as information collected from books, pamphlets, newspaper articles, magazines and journals. I am sure that once you begin listening to and learning from the many cultures that are part of your daily life, you, too, will find that your own special journey will be a most exciting one — without need of passport or luggage.

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Multicultural Manners

This book has many purposes. First, it can be read for entertaining information about how this country is changing. The stories will move, amuse, amaze. *Multicultural Manners* promises to give the uninitiated reader an idea about what is going on out there.

For those who have already been touched by changing demographics, the book provides solid information about ways in which to improve cross-cultural interactions.

• *Part One: The New Rules of Communication* — Organizes miscommunications according to major issues, for example, Body Language, Child-Rearing Practices, Classroom Behavior, Clothing. Different examples follow each heading. Guidelines or generalizations are marked with bullets. Throughout the book, topics are consistently cross-referenced.

• *Part Two: Rules for Holidays and Worship* — Entries in the section "At New Year's Celebrations" are presented alphabetically according to ethnic group: Cambodian, Chinese, Hmong, and so on. The section "At Places of Worship" is organized alphabetically with specific places listed as they might be found in the yellow pages of the telephone book: Armenian Apostolic Church, Buddhist Temples, and so on.

• *Part Three: Multicultural Health Practices: Remedies and Rituals* — Information is arranged alphabetically by cultural groups, for example, Caribbean: Cuban, Haitian, Puerto Ricans; Latin American: Mexican.

• *Appendix of Southeast Asian Refugees* — If the reader is unsure about differences between some of the ethnic groups to which this book refers, the appendix gives brief descriptions of these ethnic groups' origins, languages, religions and histories.

• *Bibliography* — Documented sources.

ASPIRA's basic belief: Puerto Ricans and Latinos have the collective potential to develop the community's resources to share equitably in the socioecomomic benefits and responsibilities of the larger society.

Program assists Latino youth, parents, adults

The ASPIRA® Association, Inc. is the only national nonprofit organization devoted solely to serving Puerto Rican and other Latino youth through leadership development and education. ASPIRA takes its name from the Spanish verb "*aspirar*," to aspire. Since 1961, ASPIRA has pursued its mission of empowering the Latino community. All of ASPIRA's goals and activities spring from one basic belief: Puerto Ricans and Latinos have the collective potential to develop the community's resources in order to share equitably in the socioeconomic benefits and responsibilities of the larger society.

ASPIRA looks at Latino youth and sees the great potential there — future leaders waiting to help move their communities forward. With community-based offices in the inner cities of six states and Puerto Rico, ASPIRA's staff members work with 17,000 youth and their families each year to develop that potential. These are the "*Aspirantes*" — those youth who will become educated, committed leaders for the future benefit of the community. Since its founding, ASPIRA has provided over 250,000 youth with the personal resources they need to remain in school and contribute to their communities.

The ASPIRA process
ASPIRA has developed a unique and highly successful intervention model. The process consciously accentuates the positive, placing emphasis on developing the potential of Aspirantes rather than on trying to overcome their perceived weaknesses. This process of leadership development is grounded in decades of research about youth. It teaches youth to become aware of their current situations, their environments and their communities; to analyze their situation's causes and consequences; and to take action for change in their personal lives and in their communities. This process also builds pride in the Latino cultural background as a stimulus for self-assertion and motivation to succeed. ASPIRA brings together students, parents, schools and community members to promote educational success, youth leadership and community development.

ASPIRA also works with foundations, corporations and the government to improve educational opportunities for young Latinos.

The ASPIRA Association
This confederation of independent statewide ASPIRA community-based organizations currently has offices in Latino communities in Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico. Each associate organization operates a variety of programs that grow out of the specific conditions and needs of their communities. However, they share a common mission: promoting the development of the Puerto Rican and Latino community through the education and leadership development of its youth. The ASPIRA process is at the center of all ASPIRA activities. ASPIRA associates, along with ASPIRA's broader network of 5,000 community-based organizations, school districts, local and national policymakers, and corporate representatives, receive information and assistance from the ASPIRA Association national office in Washington, D.C., which operates national model programs and serves as the national voice for the association.

Youth leadership
The ASPIRA Clubs Federation is a national network of school-based ASPIRA clubs that help students develop leadership skills, improve academic skills, learn to work together, enhance self-esteem through increased awareness and pride in their cultural background, and gain a better understanding of their communities.

The ASPIRA Public Policy Leadership Program provides 90 high school students with the opportunity to study public policy and work with local leaders in community service internships for a full year. Selected students participate in a national fellowship program, spending the summer in Washington, D.C., working with policymakers in Congress, federal agencies and national organizations.

ASPIRACorps (ASPIRA/Americorps) Community Service Program supports 130 full-time volunteers in Bridgeport, Conn., Newark, N.J., New York and Philadelphia. Volunteers spend a year tutoring and men-

toring middle school and high school students and working to bring families together in after-school activities. In New York, 70 ASPIRACorps members collaborate on Americorps/Project Safe and Sound to create a violence-free environment in the South Bronx.

The ASPIRA Alumni Association is creating an active network of over 250,000 ASPIRA alumni to expand and enrich community-based, self-help activities, promote mentoring programs and volunteering, and support ASPIRA.

Educational access and careers

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the Talent Search Program targets first-generation college-bound students who demonstrate a potential to succeed. Counselors provide information on opportunities in higher education, assist with applications for admission and financial aid, and help with ACT/SAT preparation.

The ASPIRA National Health Careers Program has for 25 years provided over 1,000 high school and college students each year with the counseling, motivation and academic support to stimulate them to become health professionals.

The ASPIRA process is fully realized in the ASPIRA schools. The Antonia Pantoja Alternative High School in Chicago, ASPIRA of Florida's Accolade Middle School and Accolade South Middle School, and ASPIRA of New York's Beacon Schools offer a sound, comprehensive, full-time academic program to students who have dropped out of school or are deemed at high risk. Over 98 percent of ASPIRA schools' students remain in school.

ASPIRA of Pennsylvania has developed the highly successful "*Abriendo Caminos*" Community Learning Center which serves over 500 adults each year, offering GED programs, vocational training and English as a second language services. The ASPIRA Mathematics/Science Academy improves the math and science skills of Latino middle school students with hands-on activities, mentors, field trips and academic assistance. The initiative includes after-school and summer enrichment programs and an alternative school curriculum.

Empowering Latino parents

The ASPIRA Parents for Educational Excellence (APEX) Program reaches out to Latino parents who desire to be involved in their children's education. APEX teaches parents to improve education in their communities and to help parents mobilize other parents to join in their efforts. APEX was initially funded by a three-year grant from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and has been re-funded for an additional three years.

There are two basic APEX components: the APEX Workshop Series and one-on-one technical assistance (provided on an as-needed basis). Interested parents may sign up for a series of 10 workshops that address such topics as self-esteem in parents and children, school structure, helping children improve their study habits, communication skills for the home, parents' rights in the schools, group dynamics, and leadership skills. The curriculum for the workshops comes in two easy-to-read manuals in both Spanish and English.

Because one of the main goals of the APEX Program is to enhance parent leadership in the Latino community, parents who have graduated from the APEX Program can elect to be trained further to conduct the APEX Workshop Series. These parents then join into pairs called parent teams; each member of the team takes the responsibility for recruiting at least five persons for whom they and their partners will conduct the APEX Workshop Series. This process led 17 of the first year's 63 APEX graduates to conduct workshops for over 100 parents.

Parents who have participated in the APEX Program report more involvement in their children's education in a variety of ways, from simply creating a quiet space at home for their children's study to campaigning for election to a local school council. One outstanding result of the training during the first year of the APEX Workshop Series was the election of 10 APEX parents in Chicago to positions on local school councils, Chapter One committees, and local school bilingual committees.

Research and advocacy

ASPIRA has been at the forefront of the effort to focus attention on the often dis-mal educational conditions and exceedingly high dropout rates of Latino students and to offer positive solutions to these problems. The Mobilization for Equity provides information to community members on public policy issues related to the equity of educational services and educational reform. It helps the Latino community understand students' rights and promotes effective advocacy strategies for change. ASPIRA is recognized as a major force in Latino youth advocacy on local and national levels and is also recognized for its collaborative work with other national organizations such as the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, which brings together the 30 major Latino organizations in this country.

ASPIRA associates advocate in major cities as well as statewide, before local school boards, councils, city assemblies and state legislatures, to inform policymakers about issues that affect the education of Latino youth. The national office is a visible advocate at the national level, informing Congress and federal agencies about the same issues.

The ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research conducts both educational and policy research and performs analyses of issues affecting the Puerto Rican and greater Latino communities. The results are widely disseminated through reports, pilot projects, electronic networks and collaborations with other organizations.

Looking to the future

As the 21st century approaches, the education issues that ASPIRA has dealt with for so long are becoming even more critical. ASPIRA's growth has been impressive since its beginning as a parent-initiated community organization, but there is always more to do. The next several years will see ASPIRA enhancing and extending its program assistance to better serve the rapidly growing Latino community.

NSSC Publications

The National School Safety Center (NSSC) serves as a national clearinghouse for school safety programs and activities related to campus security, school law, community relations, student discipline and attendance, and the prevention of drug abuse, gangs, weapons and bullying in schools.

NSSC's primary objective is to focus national attention on the importance of providing safe and effective schools. The following publications have been produced to promote this effort.

School Safety News Service includes three editions of *School Safety,* newsjournal of the National School Safety Center, and six issues of *School Safety Update.* These publications feature the insight of prominent professionals on issues related to school safety, including student discipline, security, attendance, dropouts, youth suicide, character education and substance abuse. NSSC's News Service reports on effective school safety programs, updates legal and legislative issues, and reviews new literature on school safety issues. Contributors include accomplished local practitioners and nationally recognized experts and officials. ($79.00 annual subscription, $99.00 outside of the United States)

School Safety Check Book (1990) is NSSC's most comprehensive text on crime and violence prevention in schools. The volume is divided into sections on school climate and discipline, school attendance, personal safety and school security. Geared for the hands-on practitioner, each section includes a review of the problems and prevention strategies. Useful charts, surveys and tables, as well as write-ups on a wide variety of model programs, are included. Each chapter also has a comprehensive bibliography of additional resources. 219 pages. ($20.00)

Set Straight on Bullies (1989) examines the myths and realities about schoolyard bullying. Changing attitudes about the seriousness of the problem are stressed. It studies the characteristics of bullies and bullying victims, and, most importantly, it provides strategies for educators, parents and students to better prevent and respond to schoolyard bullying. Sample student and adult surveys are included. 89 pages. ($15.00)

Child Safety Curriculum Standards (1991) helps prevent child victimization by assisting youth-serving professionals in teaching children how to protect themselves. Sample strategies that can be integrated into existing curricula or used as a starting point for developing a more extensive curriculum are given for both elementary and secondary schools. The age-appropriate standards deal with the topics of substance abuse, teen parenting, suicide, gangs, weapons, bullying, runaways, rape, sexually transmitted diseases, child abuse, parental abductions, stranger abductions and latchkey children. Each of the 13 chapters includes summaries, standards, strategies and additional resources for each grade level. 353 pages. ($75.00)

Developing Personal and Social Responsibility (1992) is designed to serve as a framework on which to build successful school/community programs aimed at training young people to be responsible citizens. 130 pages. ($10.00)

Gangs In Schools: Breaking Up Is Hard to Do (1992) offers an introduction to understanding youth gangs, providing the latest information on the various types of gangs — including ethnic gangs, stoner groups and satanic cults — as well as giving practical advice on preventing or reducing gang encroachment in schools. Already in its seventh printing, the book contains valuable suggestions from law enforcers, school principals, prosecutors and other experts on gangs. The concluding chapter describes more than 20 school- and community-based programs throughout the country that have been successful in combating gangs. 48 pages. ($8.00)

School Crime and Violence: Victims' Rights (1992) is a current and comprehensive text on school safety law. The recently revised book offers a historical overview of victims' rights, describes how such rights have been dealt with in our laws and courts, and explains the resulting effects on America's schools. The authors cite legal case histories and cover current school liability laws. The book explains tort liability, sovereign immunity, duty-at-large rule, intervening cause doctrine and foreseeable criminal activity, as well as addresses the significance of these legal aspects to schools. The concluding chapter includes a "Checklist for Providing Safe Schools." 127 pages. ($15.00)

Educated Public Relations: School Safety 101 (1993) offers a quick course in public relations for school district public relations directors, administrators and others working to achieve safe, effective schools. This newly revised book explains the theory of public relations and successful methods for integrating people and ideas. It discusses how public relations programs can promote safe schools and quality education and gives 101 specific ideas and strategies to achieve this goal. 72 pages. ($10.00)

School Discipline Notebook (1992) will help educators establish fair and effective discipline policies. The book reviews student responsibilities and rights, including the right to safe schools. Legal policies that regulate discipline methods used in schools are also explained. 53 pages. ($8.00)

Student Searches and the Law (1994) takes a close look at the legality of conducting searches on the school campus. The book examines recent court cases concerning student searches, including locker searches, strip searches, searches by probation officers, and searches using metal detectors or drug-sniffing dogs. 80 pages. ($12.00)

School Safety Work Book (1994) highlights prevention/intervention models that show promise in stemming the rising tide of school crime and violence. The loose-leaf notebook showcases more than 100 school- and community-based programs. Contact information provides a resource for those who may seek to replicate these successful programs. Contents target conflict resolution, gang prevention, social responsibility, substance abuse prevention, truancy reduction, violence prevention and weapons prevention. 125 pages. ($20.00)

Resource Papers

The National School Safety Center (NSSC) has produced a series of special reports on a variety of topics related to school safety. Each NSSC resource paper provides a concise but comprehensive overview of the problem, covers a number of prevention and intervention strategies, and includes a list of organizations, related publications, and article reprints on the topic.

Safe Schools Overview offers a review of the contemporary safety issues facing today's schools, such as crime and violence, discipline, bullying, drug/alcohol trafficking and abuse, gangs, high dropout rates, and school safety partnerships.

Corporal Punishment in Schools outlines the arguments for and against corporal punishment. It also discusses the alternatives to corporal punishment that have been developed by schools and psychologists.

Drug Traffic and Abuse in Schools, after summarizing students' attitudes and beliefs about drugs, covers drug laws and school rules; the legal aspects of student searches and drug testing; and the connection between drug use and truancy, crime and violence.

Weapons in Schools outlines a number of ways to detect weapons on campus, including using searches and metal detectors, establishing a security force, and eliminating book bags or lockers where weapons can be hidden.

Role Models, Sports and Youth covers a number of programs that link youth and sports: NSSC's urban school safety campaign that uses professional athletes as spokesmen; several organizations founded by professional athletes to help youth combat drugs; and a number of programs established to get young people involved in school or neighborhood teams.

School Bullying and Victimization defines bullying, offers an overview of psychological theories about how bullies develop, and covers intervention programs that have been successful.

School Crisis Prevention and Response identifies principles and practices that promote safer campuses. It presents reviews of serious schools crises —fatal shootings, a terrorist bombing, armed intruders and cluster suicide. Interviews with the principals in charge are also included.

Student and Staff Victimization, first outlines schools' responsibility to provide a safe educational environment, then covers strategies for dealing with victimization.

Increasing Student Attendance, after outlining the problem and providing supporting statistics, details strategies to increase attendance by preventing, intervening with and responding to students who become truants or dropouts.

Display Posters

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BY DAVID LEVINE

Developing appreciation for diversity is more than recognizing differences. Educators and parents as mentors must sensitize students to similarities and demonstrate respect for individual uniqueness.

Songs build empathy and social responsibility

As we look for more lasting ways to positively shape student behaviors away from intolerance, it is imperative that we listen carefully to the voices of those we wish to impact: the students themselves.

Listening and hearing
I often use music in my work as a facilitator of student workshops on social skills and understanding others. One day as I picked up my guitar, about to begin a learning session, an eighth-grade student raised her hand and the following exchange ensued.

Student: Are you going to sing us self-esteem, sing-along, feel-good songs?

Facilitator: No, I'm not.

Student: Well, that's a relief.

It was an amusing moment, but one which provided me with a significant message. Young people have had many "assemblies" on self-esteem with messages about "believing in yourself," "feeling good" and "being nice to one another." While many of these messages may have potentially beneficial effects, after a while, the students think the best part of such programs is that they get out of class. It is not so much *what* is delivered but *how* the lesson is facilitated that makes learning meaningful.

I started my career as an elementary and middle school teacher. Today I work as a

David Levine, a former teacher, is a visiting consultant/songwriter and author of books on social skills development and peer leadership.

prevention educator and group facilitator with students, school staff and parents throughout the United States. I define prevention as teaching the skills necessary to manage stressful life events. My approach is a process-oriented one, working with people as a *connector* — encouraging them to explore real-life issues, make their own discoveries and come up with their own solutions.

The beginning of a journey
In the spring of 1985, my colleague and mentor Marsha Brown gave me a cassette tape. She thought I would be interested in the music because it was recorded by songwriter Lee Domann, an artist who, like myself, plays guitar and sings.

Later that night, while driving home, I played the tape in my car stereo. As the third song, "Howard Gray," came on and the story of Howard unfolded, I found myself increasingly absorbed. I had to pull my car over so I could concentrate on the words. Lee's song recounted the story of Howard Gray, a seventh-grade boy who was different and was ridiculed by his peers because of that.

As I listened, memories began pouring out of me: memories of times I had made fun of people during my school years and memories of times when people had made fun of me. I soon learned the song and have been using it as a workshop and learning tool ever since. Following are my reflections on the thousands of learning sessions I

have facilitated for students in kindergarten through 12th grade over the past 12 years utilizing the power of the song "Howard Gray."

Setting the scene for dialogue
As I prepare an older group for the song "Howard Gray," I ask open-ended questions about real-life issues to make connections and establish rapport.

Facilitator: Who here has ever dressed for school and changed your clothes at least once before leaving your home in the morning? *(Usually all hands go up to a sprinkling of laughter.)*

Facilitator: What's the reason you changed your clothes?

Student: I wanted to be cool.

Facilitator: Who has ever said something to their parent or guardian like, "Well, you can buy it, but I'm not going to wear it?" *(Everyone laughs, indicating that they have all said or done something similar at some time.)*

Facilitator: Let's say it's Monday morning and you've just arrived at school. Three of your friends are hanging out talking about a movie each has seen over the weekend. You walk up to your friends, smile and listen. You haven't seen the movie. Suddenly, one of them turns to you and asks, "Have you seen it?" You hesitate for a moment and then say, "Yeah, I saw it." Who's ever done something like that? *(Many hands go up.)*

Facilitator: What's the reason you said

Excerpts from "Howard Gray"

One day after lunch I went to comb my hair and saw
They had Howard pinned against a locker in the hall.
They were pokin' fun about the big hole in his shirt.
They had his left arm twisted back behind him 'til it hurt.

To this day I can't explain and I won't try to guess
Just how it was I wound up laughin' harder than the rest.
I laughed until I cried but through my tears I still could see
The tear-stained eyes of Howard Gray lookin' back at me.

(Chorus)
Howard Gray, oh Howard Gray, I can't believe
I joined 'em all treatin' you that way.
I wanted to apologize but I was too afraid
Of what they'd think about me, Howard Gray.

From that moment on after I'd made fun of him,
He never looked my way; he never smiled at me again.
Not much longer after that his family moved away
And that's the last I ever saw or heard of Howard Gray.

That was 20 years ago and I still haven't found
Just why we'll kick a brother or a sister when they're down.
I know it may sound crazy, but now and then I dream
About the eyes of Howard Gray lookin' back at me.[1]

you saw a movie or television show even if you didn't see it?

Student: I wanted to be a part of what they were talking about.

The purpose for asking questions like these is to create a *setting of authenticity* in which a dialogue about real-life issues and experiences takes place. To dialogue means to explore an issue collectively within a group as a means of increasing understanding of self and others. In this context, it means listening to one another without labeling or judging what is said. The group "dialogues" about what I have described, resulting in the realization that "being cool" is the driving force in most of the choices students make.

Once this association has been made, I continue. "My goal is for this session to be a memorable experience, so that some of the thoughts, feelings or ideas that come up today will help you in the future whenever you are involved in a real-life situation with other people." What I am really saying is that I want to facilitate a *relevant experience*. If a person sees the relevance in a lesson, his/her motivation to learn will be high because the lesson will be meeting a need: in this case, the need to belong.

The song
Once we have established a connection, I tell them that I will be singing a song for them that tells the true story about something that happened to two people who wanted to belong. (See box above.)

After I finish singing the song, someone will invariably ask.

Student: Is that story really true?

Facilitator: Yes, Howard is a real person.

As soon as I reaffirm that Howard Gray is a true story, it feels like the group collectively decides to talk about issues — being different, being made fun of, how it feels to be a target of others' hurtful words. For many, it is as if they had been waiting for such a moment, when reality could be examined in a safe way.

Howard's story could be anyone's story; many of us have faced Howard's realities in a personal quest for belonging and accep-

tance. The combination of the story, the simplicity with which it is told, the fact that it is true, and the power of the music in general provide a significant, memorable learning experience.

The essence of empathy
The song "Howard Gray" and the feelings it evokes allow a listener (of any age) the opportunity to experience the essence of empathy, to truly feel what another person is feeling. Here are some reflections from a recent third-grade class:

- *I learned about how to treat others as you want to be treated yourself.*
- *I learned that if you make fun of someone, it will be a memory for the rest of their life.*
- *I was surprised because so many people had problems.*

A parent once said to me, "I wish I could protect my daughter from the teasing she experiences every day from her classmates." He was yearning to do the right thing for his child. A caring adult, whether a parent,

teacher or mentor can best serve a child by modeling the skills necessary for managing life's pressures rather than by sheltering that child from life's realities.

The approach that has worked for me is what "Howard Gray" and student responses to it have taught me: If learning is to be memorable and thought-provoking, if it is to be internalized, if it is to shape behaviors positively, then learning must be nonthreatening and inclusive. "Howard Gray" helps to create unity and understanding around the issues of separation, isolation and fear because everyone has experienced Howard's story on some level.

Teachable moments
The world of Howard Gray embodies injustice, unfairness, intolerance and cruelty. The song creates an opportunity for students to reflect on a story that could very easily be their own. Instead of preaching about the importance of "acceptance" or "being nice to others," Howard's story allows students to explore the question: Why are people ridiculed?

Each time I ask students why people are made fun of or put down, *different* is one of the top three responses. It would be easy to shut down a brainstorming lesson of this type if I reacted in a judgmental way to an answer. I work hard at not overreacting to what might seem like an inappropriate response. Put-downs and labeling happen all the time in real life — even during a workshop session or classroom lesson. The only behavior I will not accept is purposeful hurtfulness in an answer. I state this guideline in the beginning and rarely have had to refer back to it.

My approach is to take student responses and turn them back to the group. We discuss the ideas of judging others and having the right to an opinion. I continue to ask questions until we get to the key — anyone who is different is potentially a target. The students who have felt like targets at some time in their lives will be "right there with me;" often they will offer the most poignant insights.

Clarifying terms
Whenever "retarded" shows up among stu-

dent responses, I ask what that word means. Students often say something like "mental problems." We examine the literal definition of retarded, and I ask if anyone has ever needed extra time to figure out something, either in or out of school.

If skin color shows up during this brainstorming session (and it usually does), we begin to dialogue about injustice, prejudice and racism. We continue to discuss the words as we list them. Often I ask a student who has contributed a word or phrase to the list to clarify (not defend) a term.

Once, an African American fifth-grader said that skin color was one reason people made fun of him. I asked him how that made him feel. He paused, looked down, smiled and said, "Well, it really doesn't bother me too much because they're a different color too." The entire group of 20 students and four teachers (all white) broke into a round of spontaneous applause of appreciation and support.

Another time, a seventh-grader said that she was made fun of because of her advanced math placement. I asked her how she felt when people made fun of her. Without hesitation she said, "It makes me feel dumb."

As we continue our dialogue, students begin to understand that they are not the only ones who have felt put down, afraid and alone. Often, at the end of the lesson, they express surprise at how open people were. For some students, I believe it is the first time they have ever had an opportunity to express how they truly felt in front of their peers.

Recently, some students were working in pairs practicing listening skills, taking turns speaking about the need to respect and honor someone who is different. I asked the group to share what it was like to listen to another person's thoughts and feelings. One student raised her hand and said, "I felt like I left my body and entered into the feelings of my partner." Her description captured the beauty of empathy and touched my heart.

Cooperative learning
Once when I had sung "Howard Gray" to a kindergarten class, a little boy looked up at

me and said, "That's what happens to me when I go to my cousins' house. They chase me around and tease me. ... I don't like it very much."

When I work with primary grade students, I ask them to work in pairs to create a picture of Howard — before he came to their class and after. Then we sit in a circle, and the students share their before/after pictures and describe how they would help Howard. Sometimes for this lesson I match up an intermediate class with a primary one. After I sing the song, an older student mentors two younger ones as they work on a picture and talk about the story.

Songwriting
I also work with classes writing songs as part of a "social skills songwriting residency." We explore the feelings people have when listening to "Howard Gray" as well as other songs about real-life experiences.

The students work in small groups, identifying common feelings and writing lyrics that tell a story about someone with those same feelings. Common feelings are sadness, loneliness, exclusion and confusion. We put the lyrics to music, and the songwriters create lessons to go with their original songs.

Here is an excerpt from a song written by three seventh-grade students in Attleboro, Massachusetts.

Who Am I?
You want to be friendly
funny and smart.
You want to fit in
but where do you start?

Your friends are all laughing
sharing some news.
You join in the laughter
you haven't a clue.

Who am I?
I really should know.
I have so many faces —
which one should I show?

The pressures in school
are beginning to double.
It's not so easy
staying out of trouble.

We're like pieces
in a complicated puzzle.
Trying to fit in —
it's such a struggle.

Courage in a song

There are other songs that I sing for groups, always with a process and purpose in mind. I recently facilitated four days of learning sessions with seventh- and eighth-grade students at Christa McAuliffe Middle School in Jackson, New Jersey. The focus of these sessions was on the critical need we all have to belong and feel connected to others.

The McAuliffe School is in the third year of an anti-bullying program, of which my offering is a small part. Classroom teacher Marion Carolan and principal Terry Kenney together have championed this effort, which includes student sessions on bullying and its effects, peer mediation, an anti-prejudice student group, and peer tutoring and mentoring.

I used the song "Courage" by Bob Blue as a means of pointing out a progression of "events:" cliques in a school leading to polarization of groups, to separation and intolerance of those who are different, to what at times is a tragic outcome of these events.

"Courage" also tells of Diane, a student who is not accepted by others. The story is told by a person who feels sorry for Diane, but chooses not to befriend her. The song also raises the question of whether or not it is wrong to "stand idly by." The song weaves its way from personal choices to world events — such as the Holocaust and the Mei Lai massacre — in which persons and entire populations were treated with cruelty.

Reaching conclusions

We had some lively dialogues about the idea of peer influence and not standing up for others when you know they are being treated unfairly or cruelly. We explored the meaning of courage; many students revealed how hard it was to "go against the crowd" in an effort to stand up for what was right.

The song presents the concept of consequences for the decisions a person makes. "Courage" also teaches the critical lesson that we do the best we can based on

what we know. Every day provides new opportunities for growth and understanding. The song ends with the singer making the following declaration:

I promise to do what I can
to not let it happen again.
To care for all women and men,
I'll start by inviting Diane.[2]

We explored the power of the message: We can all do one small thing which, in the end, can turn out to be a big thing. In an effort to help create a supportive school experience for all people, some students made declarations in front of their peers that they would change their behaviors towards others and seek to understand more about those who were different.

The connection between the daily hurtful things that happen to students at school and crimes against humanity had been made.

Choices

Another song that I wrote was inspired by the Lift Me Up program in a nearby elementary school. Lift Me Up involves students in making positive, healthy choices towards one another. The song closes with the following message.

Every day as you make your choices,
Can you hear all the voices?
Of the people in this town,
Crying out a familiar sound,
Lift me up, don't put me down.[3]

Remembering

In order to help the young people with whom we work, we must seek to understand more about them. One way is to let them have a voice in telling their stories. So often in schools, young people are labeled or judged rather than heard and understood. This article's theme focuses on the need all people have to belong, to be accepted, to be a part. To feel separate from people and events is essentially to feel "dismembered," or cut off from the group. The opposite of "dismember" in this case is "remember"; that is why our stories are so important. They allow us to share who we truly are. "Howard Gray" is one person's story, told in a way to let others see through the eyes of Howard Gray and thus experience empa-

thy for Howard. Another song of mine, "Let Me In," is a plea often heard from young people in school.

Please let me in.
Don't push me away,
I need you to listen to my words today.
You don't even know what I've seen or
where I've been.
Please, please let me in.[4]

Connecting

The success of these sessions is not contingent on the singing of a song, but rather on the telling of a story to which people can relate. Stories keep people, memories and life's lessons alive. The oral tradition of storytelling is a connector, a vehicle for learning and discovery. Stories provide the listener with information to shape his/her world view. Honoring others by allowing them to tell their stories and by listening to each unique voice creates great interpersonal understanding, appreciation and support.

Student: If you ever see Howard again, tell him I know how he felt. I felt the same way. Why did Howard move away? I don't like moving away. (fourth-grader)

Student: I'm sorry everyone picked on you. I know how you felt because I've been picked on a lot in my life. If I had been in your class, I would have been your friend. (fourth-grader)

Student: I will always remember that song, because some day that might be me. (seventh-grader)

Student: Thank you for coming into our class. When you were here, I felt like I belonged. (sixth-grader)

Endnotes
1. Lee Domann, "Howard Gray" © 1984, 17th Avenue Music, ASCAP.
2. Bob Blue, "Courage" © 1988, Black Socks Press.
3. David Levine, "Lift Me Up, Don't Put Me Down" © 1996, Swinging Door Music.
4. David Levine, "Let Me In" © 1996, Swinging Door Music.

David Levine's most recent publication, "Through the Eyes of Howard Gray," *is an anti-bullying, empathy-building video/audio project that utilizes six songs. He can be reached at Blue Heron Press, P.O. Box 277, Shokan, NY 12481; 914/657-5805; e-mail: Devidavid@aol.com*

Enlightening day of cultural surprises

American Indian Heritage School, an alternative school in the Seattle Public School District, has as its aim the preservation of Native American cultures and traditions. About 160 students, three-fourths of whom are of Native American descent, attend AIHS. Student/reporter Tomieka Garrett, 17, visited on Sept. 15, 1997, and wrote the following account.

As I walked through the doors of American Indian Heritage School in North Seattle, I didn't know what to expect. Half of me wanted to turn around at the door, but the other half was determined to finish what I had started. I accepted this assignment because I wanted to know for myself what going to a culturally specific school would be like. It interested me how a place of learning geared toward one culture could be socially acceptable. I guess I had never realized, or maybe even thought about, how important it was to know your roots.

Still, I was apprehensive about being the only one on the outside, looking in. I turned into the main office, and I could see the looks on students' faces. I could only imagine what thoughts were shooting in their brains about me — an outsider.

As I walked to [the principal's] office I saw goals that the students of AIHS had made for themselves plastered to the wall. Many put thought into their goals, such as wanting to be a respectable role model or graduating from college. Others just named the obvious, like getting up for school on time (which is hard for almost all of us).

The teachers at AIHS welcomed me into their classrooms to observe and to chat with the students. The school only had four classes a day, each 85 minutes long. After second period, the students had a 30-minute lunch break.

The first class of the day, I was in an 8th-grade language arts class, about 13 pupils. The size of AIHS shocked me in a way; I had always thought a culturally specific school would have more kids. For that reason alone, if I had the chance to go to a school of that kind, I'm pretty sure I would take advantage of the opportunity.

There were other things that appealed to me. At AIHS I didn't hear hate being spread all over the place because of the color of someone's skin. This is all too common at my public high school. Racial slurs at my school don't surprise me anymore. They still offend me, but I've gotten used to the ignorance people display.

Many of the students with whom I spoke felt that the small size of the classes was essential to learning. Robin Rich, an 8th-grader, stated that the teachers were able to pay more attention to them, and they were able to get the help they needed.

I began to wonder if the curriculum at AIHS was any different than what I was used to. The answer stunned me a little. The curriculum used was the same as mine, and I had expected to find books geared more toward Native Americans. Although I didn't, it still was very apparent to me that going to a culturally specific school was different somehow.

It was different, not only in a way that could be seen, but felt, too. Not just the color of everyone's skin, because there was quite a mix, but the overall feeling of security, which doesn't happen too often in my school. I'm not saying that I go to the worst school in the world; all I'm saying is that knowing everybody in the school you attend might take away some uneasiness, especially in high school.

The halls at my school are far too congested with people trying to fit into a crowd that doesn't necessarily need or want them. At AIHS, the students didn't seem to need to fit in to any certain group; everyone was just themselves. This is a school where the halls aren't crowded with people, new faces didn't usually appear every day. Everybody in some way is connected.

The close-knit relationship between staff and students is visible. For instance, I saw a sign posted by students congratulating a first-time grandmother. I began to wish I had relationships like that with my teachers and the staff at the school I attend. I've never been in a close-knit environment of learning, where everybody knows each other and/or helps each other through hard times. I barely know my whole senior class of about 230 people.

Terry Brewster, a sophomore, and I had a very intense conversation on religion. Listening to this student made me almost think twice about what I believed in. Brewster sounded like a young man who knows exactly where he's going in life. He has started writing an anthology of poems and thought-provoking sayings. You don't find many teen-agers who are even thinking about doing anything like this.

I now believe that too many people look upon culturally specific schools in the wrong way. If students can come out of any school with an understanding of life and what lies beyond school doors, then somewhere, somebody is doing a good job.

Even though I had thought that an American Indian school — or any culturally specific school — would teach pupils somehow to hate and disrespect other cultures, I now know I was wrong. The staff at AIHS, I believe, move their students toward the outside world, teaching them how to be proud of themselves and their heritage.

BY RONALD DIETEL AND MARJORIE CRESWELL WALSLEBEN

Effective evaluation is not an afterthought. Evaluation planning must commence at the time of program conception, and some types of evaluation begin before the program does.

Accountability essential for effective programs

There are two truisms that should always be considered when designing new prevention and intervention programs for any population: First, there are no simple solutions, and second, the key to effective programming is evaluation. Lasting changes in behavior among youth do not result from silver-bullet, one-shot, one-size-fits-all interventions. Similarly, programs cannot correctly be termed effective unless evaluation has taken place.

The need for evaluation

The demand for evaluation is growing. Budgets are tight. Governmental, corporate, private and school-based funding must be prioritized according to greatest need. Funding agencies are increasingly demanding accountability: How were funds used? What results did the program produce?

Two factors most commonly cited as reasons that a program has not been evaluated are cost and time. The fallacy in such reasoning is that great expenditures of time, materials and personnel are often invested in programs that yield feel-good perceptions, but few measurable results.

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Why evaluate programs?

Typically, the driving force for evaluation seems to be that a grant or a funding agency requires a program evaluation. An example of the need to monitor expenditure of public funds is the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. It requires federal government agencies to set specific goals and develop indicators for achieving program results. The act requires performance plans, goals, and measurable objectives by fiscal year 1999. These requirements apply to any program funded by the federal government.

Increasingly, grant applicants lacking strong evaluation components in their grant proposals will be found less competitive than applicants who integrate evaluation into their program design process. Effective evaluation is not an afterthought. Rather, evaluation planning must commence at the time of program conception, and some types of evaluation begin before the program does.

Formative and summative evaluation

It may be instructive to differentiate between *formative* and *summative* purposes of evaluation. In practice, both types of evaluation are essential for well-planned programs. Basically, *formative evaluation* is carried out during the operation of a program, whereas *summative evaluation* is conducted at the conclusion of the program.

For example, curriculum developers need to subject their proposed curriculum content to examination by experts; to conduct pilot tests and field tests with small and then larger numbers of children, respectively; to consider teachers' feedback; to test the curriculum in a number of schools that include a variety of student populations. Questions characterizing formative evaluation might be: What seems to be working? What needs to be improved? How can modifications be made? What additional information is needed? Such formative evaluation leads to curriculum modification, revision and refinement.

In contrast, school administrators, teachers and students, along with funding agencies and even taxpayers, may assist in summative evaluation of such a curriculum. They can cooperate in making program decisions relative to curriculum effectiveness, adoption and continuation/expansion or termination; school funds expenditures and other resource allocations; and other program management decisions. Summative evaluation questions that might be asked include: What results have been observed? Whom did the results affect? Under what conditions did results occur? Do program results and costs justify program continuation?

While formative evaluation accompanies the initiation, data collection and evolution of a program, it ultimately gives way to summative evaluation for purposes of long-term program implementation and planning. In any case, rapidly changing environments

in which programs are planned and carried out require program evaluators to be flexible, to make considered choices among diverse evaluation designs and approaches, and to adapt evaluation strategies to produce information that will help stakeholders make important decisions. What should now be clear is that waiting to plan any type of evaluation until a program nears completion may simply be a case of too little, too late.

Practical evaluation issues

Regardless of evaluation design or strategy, practical evaluation issues tend to remain constant. Three such issues explored here are: data collection, finding qualified evaluators, and planning for and controlling costs.

Data Collection: Data exists everywhere: demographic information; school attendance records; test scores; artifacts of student work and teachers' lesson plans; dropout rates; suspension/expulsion rates; juvenile criminal statistics. Existing data such as demographic information and school attendance records may be useful if they are accurately maintained and reasonably reliable. While seldom sufficient for measuring attainment of program goals, existing data — sometimes called baseline data — should be considered as a possible data source if it is relevant to answering pertinent evaluation questions.

Several benefits of baseline data should be considered. First, once program goals and measurable objectives have been identified, data collectors may start before the program begins, recording existing data that will ultimately be needed for program evaluation. In cases in which a given program cannot be contrasted with another similar program or in which it might be impossible to follow an experimental design using a control group and an experimental group, baseline data can at least provide some kinds of pre- and post-intervention data. Second, existing records may already be contained in a database — ideally, for example, a computerized school database — thus saving the data collector time.

On the downside, however, existing data may not be recorded in the needed format or may not be comparable to new data collected during the program's evaluation. For example, available data may include test scores or grade level data that are not comparable. Another fairly typical evaluation data collection problem is a tendency to collect data because it *might* be needed, not because it *is* needed. Even the most expert evaluators collect more data than they will ever be able to report. Thus one should guard against loading a questionnaire with too many items in an attempt to "capture the whole program." If a survey is too long, many respondents may fail to complete all items, or may not return the survey at all. Incomplete questionnaires and low response rates reduce data credibility. Program developers and evaluators must work closely together to collect the minimal amount of data that produces reliable answers to the most important evaluation questions.

Finding qualified evaluators: One of the most difficult challenges to program managers is selecting a qualified evaluator. Few evaluators train in the profession, and only a small percentage of universities offer comprehensive evaluation programs. Evaluators are neither certified nor licensed, so what should one look for in a good program evaluator?

Selecting an evaluator with proven integrity is a good rule of thumb to follow. Ask to read reports of the evaluator's previous evaluations, and if time allows, also ask colleagues to review submitted materials and to offer their opinions of the evaluator's record. While one may desire to expedite the evaluation process, one should take time to check that the evaluator's background and experience include the following 10 types of evaluation expertise:

- committing to the evaluation project for a specified amount of time;
- detailing the type and amount of evaluative work that the evaluator will perform personally;
- specifying the amount and type of work that will be assigned to graduate students or hired personnel;
- estimating realistically the length of time that the evaluation is likely to require;

- documenting estimated costs of the evaluation;
- using both quantitative and qualitative evaluation techniques expertly;
- communicating clearly and concisely, both verbally and in writing;
- recording thoroughly and accurately program results and needed areas of improvement;
- reporting honestly and systematically methods used in the evaluation; and
- preparing and submitting a final written evaluation document.

It may be a good idea to ask the potential evaluator if s/he follows "The Program Evaluation Standards" published by the American Evaluation Association (AEA), or if s/he is an AEA member. While membership does not necessarily guarantee high quality, it does at least suggest that the individual has more than a superficial knowledge of evaluation.

In any case, the time spent up front investigating and selecting an evaluator may save countless hours, days or even weeks at some later stage of the evaluation. Furthermore, such thoroughness goes a long way toward ensuring the integrity of the program evaluation.

Sources of evaluators: Universities receive frequent requests for assistance with program evaluation or selection of qualified evaluators. Many professors of education have been involved in at least one or two program evaluations during their careers. Although such professors may not be able to fit such a task into their academic or personal schedules, they may be able to recommend outside program evaluators who are former graduate students or are evaluators with whom they have worked before. Many authors of books on evaluation are also affiliated with universities, and they may also be able to recommend evaluators in their local areas.

All of the U.S. Department of Education-funded research-and-development educational regional laboratories have evaluators on staff and may be a good source for evaluation expertise. A fifth source of evaluators may be any of the 16 Educational Research and Improvement Clearinghouses (ERIC).

(Please consult the U.S. Department of Education web site: www.ed.gov. or call toll-free 1-800/464-3742 for the Assessment and Evaluation Educational Resource Information Center located at Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.)

Two additional sources to consult for evaluators are the American Evaluation Association's (AEA) listservs: http://www.eval.org and large management consultants such as Arthur Andersen, who typically has program evaluators on staff.

Costs of evaluation: Responses to the question "What is your budget for evaluation?" range from nothing to $20,000 or more, depending upon the overall program budget. Those programmers whose evaluation funding is close to nothing often seek out graduate students who might want to take on the given program evaluation as a master's or doctorate project. Such a match is ill-advised. A desperate client with no money paired with a graduate student with limited or no practical experience is unlikely to produce an evaluation that provides useful information upon which important decisions will be made. Even for those with an evaluation budget of $20,000 or more, that amount is often insufficient to fund realistic expectations of the potential client.

To address the question of how much a program evaluation should cost, it is important to consider three essential components of nearly every evaluation:

• a trained evaluator, usually one having at minimum a master's degree, but more often a doctorate. In addition to the substantial costs associated with the evaluation, funds for the evaluator must cover such items as benefits, vacation time, travel, meetings, proposal-writing time, overhead (such as office, computers and office equipment) and professional development time;

• at least one part-time data collection specialist. In addition to collecting data, this person may be required to input and code data and run basic statistical analyses. If the projected program is large, perhaps more than one data collection specialist may be needed; and

• miscellaneous costs, including such things as transcriptions of interviews, instrument development or purchase, instrument administration and copies of reports.

As quickly becomes obvious, evaluation costs are substantial, and there are few items listed in this brief treatment that are not essential. Generally, between 5 percent to 10 percent of a program's budget should be allocated for evaluation. Smaller program budgets usually require a higher percentage, while larger budgets can get by with less.

Cutting costs: Is there a way to reduce costs of evaluation? Yes. One of the most time-consuming tasks is the writing and preparation of the final evaluation report. In nearly all cases, it must be done by the highest paid person on the evaluation staff. If an abbreviated report or a final presentation can be substituted for a full-fledged evaluation report, considerable savings are possible. However, most funding agencies expect a full report if they either require an evaluation to be conducted or know that one was done.

Another cost-cutting alternative is to hire an evaluator to guide program personnel through the evaluation process in which program team participants do most of the data collection, analyses and writing. Admittedly, this method is not the ideal way to conduct an evaluation, but the suggestion is based on the fact that the majority of programs developed are often either underfunded or currently exist in an environment in which evaluation was not included at all or at an early stage in program planning.

Finally, many excellent books and publications on evaluation exist. An inquisitive, persistent program developer can consult such guides and acquire a considerable amount of insight and instruction. While none of these books or kits are complete "recipes" for successful evaluation, they do offer a distillation of helpful hints, usually detailed in succinct, well-defined prose. For example, SAGE Publications publishes a variety of books on evaluation, including the *CSE Evaluation Kit* (Joan Herman, editor); *tracking Your School's Success: A Guide to Sensible Evaluation* (Joan Herman and Lynn Winters); *Evaluating School Pro-grams* (Richard Jaeger, editor); and *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* (Michael Patton). SAGE Publications can be reached at 805/499-0721 or on the internet: http://www.sagepub.com.

Effective preventions/interventions

Evaluation is complex, as are the multitudinous risk factors that produce attitudes and behaviors deemed in need of change. Program evaluators continue to find fault with program designers and previous generations of evaluators, seeking to eliminate errors and omissions that render programs ineffective.

Regardless of the budget available to perform evaluation, one caution must be kept in mind. The main thrust of evaluation should be on measuring quantifiable results rather than on merely eliciting perceptions and attitudes. Assessment of outcomes must include more than questionnaires or surveys circulated among practitioners and program participants. Feelings give rise to attitudes, and attitudes usually produce behaviors. Common sense persuades us, however, that though feelings and impulses engender behavior, only behavior is easily quantifiable.

Observed behaviors that influence educators to plan for needed change must be evaluated in terms of observable results that can be documented and can be used to assess a program's efficacy. Subjective input gleaned from interviews and surveys can be used to add a human dimension to data — accumulated facts that might otherwise seem dry and lacking in appeal.

Listed below are some considerations to remember when designing programs and planning evaluations:

• *Target a specific population.* Not all children are at risk. Intervention/prevention programs designed specifically for the group that has been identified as needing such remediation will have greater impact on the targeted population than programs that try to address an array of needs in the general youth population.

• *Use a control group or a pre-/post-intervention design.* Ensure that observable outcomes resulting from the intervention have a base for comparison. It

may not be possible to set up an experimental design in which one group of students receives instruction as usual while an experimental group receives not only that instruction, but also the significant intervention component. In such a case, at least contrast the targeted group's baseline measures with results obtained following intervention.

- *Ensure the integrity of all programs.* Both the control group and the experimental group must be assured the same *basic* benefit of instruction or "treatment," consistent with their best educational interests. Augmentations designed to *improve* instruction or the basic treatment conditions constitute the experimental intervention that members of the experimental group additionally receive.
- *Select an appropriate setting for the intervention.* If high-risk students are the target population, then be aware that classroom-based interventions often miss absentees and dropouts. Another setting, such as an after school club or weekend social activity or community project may be designed to attract the targeted students.
- *Incorporate a reasonable intervention/ result time span.* Learning and skill-building takes time. Provide adequate time for teaching and practicing intervention strategies before measuring effects.
- *Plan for normal attrition.* Initially select as large a representative group as possible of the targeted youth. Between pre- and post-tests (or baseline measures and the intervention), family mobility, illness and other such factors can reduce numbers of program participants, thereby making evaluation more difficult.
- *Consider collaborating with other schools.* If two or three schools in the district have similar problems, consider combining resources and programs so that the benefits, as well as the costs, of program planning and evaluation can be shared and larger numbers of youth can be served.
- *Take into account population diversity.* Be familiar with the diverse groups that constitute the community's population and a given school's population. Ensure

that your program includes and meets the needs of all the various ethnic and social groups that constitute your community's at-risk youth population.

- *Measure behavior outcomes.* Psychologically-oriented tests and measures of variables such as self-esteem, preferred learning styles and locus of control can add persuasive dimension to interpretations of outcomes. However, without measures of behavioral outcomes — such as frequency of absences or incidents of bullying, for example — program evaluation will have little practical implications for continued programming or development of new policies and programs.
- *Plan for program continuity and replicability.* Provide adequate training of personnel and document procedures and strategies. Ensure that a core of trained personnel can maintain the program by training others. Prepare and constantly update manuals, activity files and evaluations. Without close and caring supervision and coordination of those who implement the program, the integrity of the intervention can be compromised and the best of programs can founder.

A comprehensive prevention program[1]

Joy Dryfoos, a respected independent researcher, writer and lecturer, writes about prevention evaluation and lists seven bottom-line components of an effective comprehensive prevention program:

- Early and sustained intervention over time;
- Individual attention, assuring attachment of high-risk youth to a responsible, caring adult (may involve the provision of food and housing):
- Focus on the acquisition of basic cognitive skills;
- Provision of social and life skills training to promote social competency and resistance to peer influence;
- Involvement of youth in decision-making and exposure to the world of community and work;
- Involvement of parents through home visits, provision of services, and concern for their basic needs;
- Staff development for all levels of caretakers (teachers, social workers, case aides, etc.) to understand child and adolescent development and cultural differences in the age of new morbidities.

Just as students have long been held accountable for what they learn and do in school, educators are increasingly being held accountable for programs and practices that they design to ameliorate the impact of myriad risk factors on the successful learning and maturation of youth. Evaluation is an inherent part of accountability. Effective evaluation occurs at genesis, during the planning process.

Endnotes
1. Joy G. Dryfoos, *Prevention Evaluation Report* (Rockville, Md.: Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Spring 1993): 3.

BY BERNARD JAMES

> *Both IDEA and the proposed regulations would allow educators to hold disabled as well as nondisabled students accountable for misconduct, provided free appropriate public education is maintained.*

IDEA: a review of "stay-put" provision, amendments

Few areas of the law have raised greater anticipation among educators than the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997. Signed into law by President Clinton on June 4, 1997,[1] the amendments are the latest in a series of adjustments to the federal policy of educating handicapped children that began in 1965.[2] In fact, since its inception as the Education of the Handicapped Act and continuing through the 1991 restatement as IDEA,[3] federal policymakers have been searching for a proper balance between the public responsibility to educate children having special learning needs and the duty to provide for all students a safe and effective learning environment.

The balance has been difficult to strike. What began as an exploratory grant scheme to encourage states to enhance the education of disabled children has evolved into what many characterize as an invasive body of law that unfairly compromises the learning environment by immunizing special education students from accountability under the disciplinary code of conduct. Critics have been unsparing in characterizations of IDEA and its impact on schools. Most agree that the so-called "stay-put" provision of IDEA[4] should be the focal point of reform discussions on how to reconcile the competing philosophies of school safety

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and mainstreaming.

History of the "stay-put" provision

The "stay-put" provision has been seen as an almost inscrutable subcode of IDEA that has frustrated the attempts of educators to crack and apply to their campus disruption situations. Prior to the 1997 amendments, the "stay-put" provision essentially required a special education student to remain in his/her current placement unless both the educator and the parent agreed to a change in placement. In the case of an initial assessment and admission for placement, IDEA required that the student be placed in the mainstream classroom until all proceedings were completed. This interpretation had obvious and severe potential consequences for educators in whose schools special education students engaged in disruptive and violent classroom conduct. These consequences materialized in many schools when the parents of such children refused to agree to a change in placement for the disruptive student. The U.S. Department of Education and the courts have concurred that a disruptive, disabled child must remain in the mainstream classroom until the educator and the dissenting parent can complete the dispute resolution procedures of IDEA.[5] One commentator has made this assessment of the law:

> The IDEA has created a dual disciplinary system in public schools where nondisabled students are held fully ac-

countable for their actions, but students protected by the IDEA may utilize the stay-put provision to avoid full responsibility for their actions. [I]t compromises the learning environment in a variety of ways. In the case of a disruptive or physically abusive student, not only must a teacher devote more attention to that student at the expense of all other students (including other disabled or disadvantaged students), but the stay-put provision also jeopardizes the safety of all students for an extended period of time. In addition, teachers who are frustrated by their limited ability to control their classrooms and their inadequate training to deal with children with specialized needs are resigning because they can no longer control their classrooms or maintain an effective academic environment. Some educators fear that this situation will inevitably cause parents of nondisabled students to remove their children from public schools.[6]

The IDEA amendments of 1997 address this problem by altering the "stay-put" equation to allow school officials to treat disabled children more like other students for disciplinary purposes. In so doing, some but not all of the previous burdens of mainstreaming have been lifted from the educator. These burdens have been described in vivid detail by the court decisions interpreting IDEA, serving to underscore the urgency that led Congress to

reconsider the disruptive impact of the "stay-put" provision. Judges had held that disciplinary actions taken against a special education student that resulted in the removal of the student from the classroom for longer than 10 days represented a change in placement under IDEA. This so-called "cooling off period" of 10 days or less was the most drastic weapon an educator had to fall back on when removal of the disruptive special education student from campus became necessary. Educators were given little more than time-outs, detention and perhaps the loss of privileges with which to respond to disruptive disabled students. Moreover, if the misconduct could be linked to or arose out of the diagnosed disability, then parents could insist that the child "stay-put" in his/her current placement.

As a result of this interpretation, a special education student who was involved in campus violence along with non-special education students could not be expelled.[7] In another case, a group of special education students found responsible for a wide range of violent and profane acts could not be expelled unless it could be shown that the conduct was not related to their disabilities.[8] Later the court restricted even further the authority of school officials, holding that unless the educators could show that "maintaining the child in his or her current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to either that child or to others," the student must "stay-put" unless the parent agrees to a change in placement. As a result, school officials were not allowed to expel two middle school students who were responsible for widespread misconduct and violence — including choking another student and destroying school property.[9]

By 1990, it was apparent to all concerned — Congress, educators and parents — that special education children had a special right to exemption from discipline that could be used to thwart established codes of conduct. The courts soon confirmed these suspicions by ruling that school officials could not expel a special education student for bringing a gun to school if the behavior was related to his disability.[10] Later, under a similar fact pattern, educators were

shocked to discover that the "stay-put" provision could be manipulated to prevent expulsion. In a case involving a student who had not been diagnosed with a special educational disorder, the court ruled that diagnosis after disciplinary action was taken by the school triggered the "stay-put" provision and prevented expulsion.[11]

The modified "stay-put" provision
The IDEA Amendment of 1997 should be seen, then, as the completion of the modifi-

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cations to the "stay-put" provision that began in 1994, when Congress responded to weapons cases by making an interim revision that in effect would allow educators to suspend a special education student for bringing a gun to school.[12] The Amendment of 1997[13] attempted to provide educators with additional disciplinary tools and to restore balance to the law. The best evidence of what educators can expect is found in the proposed regulations of the Department of Education,[14] which in the fall of 1997 issued notice of its intent to carry out the intent of the new provisions of IDEA. The regulations on this subject are found in the Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities Program under Part B of IDEA.[15]

With the 1997 amendments, the objectives of IDEA remain largely the same: (1) ensure that all children with disabilities have available a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special educa-

tion and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living; (2) ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of those children are protected; (3) assist states, localities, educational service agencies and federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities; (4) assist states in the implementation of a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families; (5) ensure that educators and parents have the necessary tools to improve educational results for children with disabilities by supporting systemic-change activities; coordinated research and personnel preparation; coordinated technical assistance, dissemination and support; and technology development and media services; and (6) assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities. However, as to discipline, both IDEA and the proposed regulations would allow educators to hold disabled students accountable for their misconduct on the same basis as nondisabled students, provided that a free appropriate public education is maintained.

The statutory language provides:
School personnel under this section may order a change in the placement of a child with a disability —
(i) to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 school days (to the extent such alternatives would be applied to children without disabilities); and
(ii) to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but for not more than 45 days if —
(I) the child carries a weapon to school or to a school function under the jurisdiction of a state or local educational agency; or
(II) the child knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function under the jurisdiction of a state or local educational agency.[16]

Under this change, educators may act quickly to discipline special education students who are engaged in specific unlawful activity. It builds upon the 1994 gun exception to include drugs. The proposed regulations add nothing to the statutory language except to reinforce the limit of the removal from the current placement of the disabled student to not more than 45 days.

The more significant modification, which strengthens the disciplinary hand of the educator, is found in 20 U.S.C.S. § 1415(K)(2). It allows a hearing officer to order a change in placement for a disruptive disabled student if the school demonstrates "by substantial evidence that maintaining the current placement of such child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others." This general power to remove a disruptive special education student is also limited to 45 days, but it allows the school to initiate an expedited process hearing to make a showing that no other "reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of harm in the child's current placement" exist to secure the removal order.

These changes seek to re-establish some balance "to the issue of discipline for students with disabilities that reflects both the need to protect the rights of children with disabilities to appropriate educational services and the need of schools to be able to ensure that all children, including children with disabilities, have safe schools and orderly learning environments."[17] Simply stated, educators may suspend or expel disabled students by effectively removing them from their educational placements. In order to meet the FAPE requirements of IDEA, educators must provide an interim alternative educational setting. Under the new regulations, educators would be able to use funding otherwise dedicated for physical plant and improvement activities to support services to children who have been suspended or expelled. These services would be required whenever a disabled student is removed from his/her current placement for a period longer than 10 days. The proposed regulations use the following example to illustrate the new rule:

[I]f a child with a disability who has not previously been suspended in the school year receives a three-week suspension, services must be provided by the eleventh school day of that suspension. If a child with a disability who has received two five school-day suspensions in the fall term is suspended again in the spring of that school year, services must be provided from the first day of the third suspension.[18]

The IDEA 1997 Amendments also implement a collaborative model to assess a disabled child's needs by providing for involvement of regular classroom teachers and parents in almost every aspect of the individual education plan (IEP). Parental participation is encouraged under the new regulations. Educators are required to give parents an opportunity to have a role in the identification, evaluation or educational placement of their child or in the decision on how to meet IDEA obligations to provide a free appropriate public education to the child. Decisions concerning the educational placement of a child must also include the parent. Dialogue between parents and educators must take place more routinely, "as often as reports are provided to parents of nondisabled children."[19]

The new provisions also seek to more fully include children with special needs in the regular classroom activities. After the amendments, the presumption is that the IEP will be structured so that disabled children will be educated with nondisabled children. Educators must explain in the IEP why a student will not be included in general activities. The heightened mainstreaming is designed to use the regular classroom as a normative measure of the success of special education efforts by "(1) relating a child's education to what nondisabled children are receiving; (2) providing for the participation of regular education teachers in developing, reviewing and revising the IEP; and (3) requiring that the IEP team consider the specific needs of each child, as appropriate, such as the need for behavior interventions and assistive technology."[20]

It is unlikely that the 1997 Amendments will be the last tinkering that Congress will do with IDEA. The changes will be seen by many educators as too incremental and not responsive enough to attempts to preserve a safe, effective learning environment. The 45-day limit on discipline for the disabled student still creates two classes of students for purposes of discipline and with it, continuing concerns over inequality of treatment for similarly offending students. The 45-day limit may also exacerbate the current attraction by parents to the IEP and the IDEA law as a civil right to be used against educators. The alternative placement requirement may simply be out of the reach for school districts with limited resources, leaving these educators in need of other solutions. The courts may interpret the new provisions in a manner that creates new challenges for schools. The IDEA Amendments of 1997 have established that school safety is a legitimate element in the quest for providing FAPE for learning disabled students. The attempt to balance the public responsibility to educate children having special learning needs with the duty to provide all students safe and effective learning environments is well worth the ongoing efforts to achieve such equity.

Endnotes
1. Pub. L. 105-17.
2. Pub. L. 89-750.
3. Pub. L. 101-476; 20 U.S.C. § 1401; 34 C.F.R. 300.
4. 20 U.S.C. § 1415(e)(3)
5. 20 U.S.C.A. § 1415(e)(3)(A).
6. Disciplining Children with Disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 12 J Contemp H L & Pol'y 155 at 159 (1995).
7. Stuart v. Nappi, 443 F. Supp. 1235 (D. Conn. 1978).
8. S-1 v. Turlington, 635 F.2d 342 (5th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 454 U.S. 1030 (1981).
9. Honig. v. Doe, 484 U.S. 305 (1988).
10. Hacienda La Puente School District v. Honig, 976 F.2d 487 (9th Cir. 1992).
11. Governing Board of Grossmont Union High School District, 858 F. Supp 1044 (S.D. Cal. 1994).
12. 20 U.S.C.A. § 1415(a)(3)(B).
13. 20 U.S.C. § 1400(c).
14. 62 FR 55026.
15. 34 CFR part 300.
16. 20 U.S.C.S. § 1415(K)(1)(a).
17. 62 FR at 55034.
18. 62 FR at 55034.
19. 62 FR at 55029.
20. 62 FR at 55026. (*See also* proposed regulations §§ 300.344; 300.346-300.347).

States up penalties for staff assaults
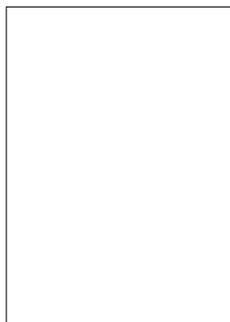
"She deserved to get hit, but not with no hammer. A stick or his fists maybe. But no hammer. Maybe just hit her upside the head a few times. With his fist."[1]

This rationalization is by the younger brother of an eighth-grade boy who attacked his teacher with a steel hammer, causing five metal plates to be implanted in her head, diminished vision and loss of memory. The principal of the Chicago elementary school in which the attack occurred expelled both boys on the same day, the younger brother for threatening the life of his teacher.

Pressure on school personnel to maintain discipline in classrooms and at the same time reduce suspensions and expulsions is forcing educators to become officers of the peace. Increasingly, school representatives are being assaulted while carrying out their school duties.

Attacks on school employees often occur as a result of employee intervention in student fights or as direct attacks on the school employees by students, parents or others. Direct attacks often occur after student grades are issued or after the implementation of discipline. In most instances, assaults amount to a challenge of authority.

Though statutory provisions vary, many states are consequently following a trend to reclassify assaults on school officials as felonies, usually resulting in longer sentences and even more severe repercussions when the criminal acts trigger application of the increasingly popular "Three Strikes and You're Out" legislation. Such increased protection for teachers brings them into a group of local officials that also includes such persons as police and parole officers, firefighters, health care providers and department of corrections employees.

The language chosen to describe the offenses varies. Some states use "battery" to refer to cases where intentional physical contact occurs and "assault" to depict the threat of battery. Others use "assault" to describe situations resulting in physical contact with the victim caused by the accused attacker or by forces set in motion by the attack.

The broadest type of coverage is shown in Alabama's statute proscribing acts causing physical injury to any person if the intent was to injure a teacher or school employee "during or as a result of the performance of [a public educational institution employee's or a teacher's] duty."[2] Under this statute it is irrelevant if the injured party is the same against whom the act is intended.

Georgia's statute includes battery as a "designated felony act" battery if the victim is a "teacher or other school personnel," where the juvenile perpetrator is at least 13 years old.[3] The purpose of this latter designation is to ensure that the juvenile is placed in restrictive custody by removing him/her from the community at large.

Pennsylvania has one of the strongest laws proscribing attacks on school personnel.[4] The state's definition of "assault" includes both attempts to cause physical injury as well as actual injury. Victims include employees of essentially any secondary or elementary school, public as well as private. The only limitation is that the person be acting in the scope of his/her employment or that the assault be because of the employment relationship.

Unlike Pennsylvania, Illinois' recently passed legislation distinguishes between attempts and actual physical contact.[5] While battery (actual touching) is considered a felony, assault, which in Illinois is

likened to attempted battery, is classed as a misdemeanor.

Amendments to Texas law regarding assaults on school personnel revised the language to create felony assault where "the offense is committed against a person the actor knows is a public servant while the public servant is lawfully discharging an official duty, or in retaliation to or on account of an exercise of official power or performance of an official duty."[6]

Conflicts may arguably arise when a student who is disabled and who thus falls under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) threatens or physically attacks a school employee.[7] IDEA limits suspensions and expulsions of special education students where the behavior can be traced to the student's particular disability. Statistics from New York City's teacher's union indicate that half of all criminal incidents against teachers were committed by special education students.[8] However, the limits placed by IDEA on a school district's ability to discipline disabled students do not transcend that context. Civil and criminal lawsuits remain a viable option.

The intended results of reclassifying assaults upon school personnel as felonies are to restore discipline by removing dangerous students from the classroom and to deter future incidents by punishing attackers severely.

Endnotes
1. John Kass, *Kids, System Beat Teacher Long Before Her Work Was Done*, Chicago Tribune (Chicago) 24 July 1997: 1.
2. ALA. CODE § 13A-6-21 (1996).
3. GA. CODE ANN. §§ 16-5-21, 15-21-37 (1997).
4. 18 PA. CONS. STAT. ANN. § 2702 (West 1996).
5. 1997 Ill. Legis. Serv. 90-406 (West 1997) (amending 720 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/12-2 (WEST 1961)), 1997 Ill. Legis. Serv. 90-115 (West 1997) (amending 720 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/12-4 (West 1961)).
6. TEX. PENAL CODE ANN. § 22.01 (1995) (as amended by 1995 Acts, 74th Leg., ch. 318, § 5).
7. June Kronholz, *Educators Say Proposed Law Boosting Ability to Punish Disabled Kids Doesn't Go Far Enough*, Wall Street Journal (New York) 14 May 1997: A-24.
8. *See* Ibid.

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Supreme Court *v.* "fighting words"
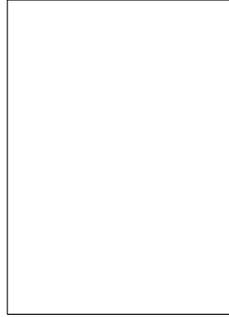
Although the words of the First Amendment read "Congress shall make no law ... abridging freedom of speech," freedom of speech is by no means absolute.[1] Through the years, the Supreme Court has interpreted the First Amendment to provide freedom of speech, except in those cases where the speech was obscene, libeled another person or consisted of "fighting words." These exceptions attempt to strike a balance between speech that is essential to the functioning of the United States' republican form of government and speech having the sole function of harming others.

The boundaries between protected and unprotected speech are amorphous. The Supreme Court develops judicial tests to analyze the nature of the speech, and it is especially difficult to determine when speech constitutes unprotected "fighting words."

The Supreme Court first recognized that fighting words are not protected in *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire*.[2] In that case, a Jehovah's Witness distributing religious pamphlets called a city marshal a "racketeer" and "Fascist" for intervening between him and a hostile crowd. The pamphleteer was arrested for violating a state law prohibiting offensive and derisive speech in public. The Court recognized the difference between protected speech and speech "of such slight social value" that any potential societal benefit is out.[3]

Subsequent cases have narrowed the fighting words doctrine to require some imminent hostile reaction.[4] The working definition of fighting words is "personally abusive epithets which, when addressed to the ordinary citizen, are, as a matter of common knowledge, inherently likely to provoke violent reaction."[5]

The determination whether a reasonable person would be incited to violence depends largely on which looking glass the Court uses to view societal behavior. Currently, the increase of hate crime statutes prohibiting speech intended to incite racial or religious violence has refocused the Court's approach.

In *R.A.V. v. City of St. Paul*, the Supreme Court found that a hate crime statute was unconstitutional because it prohibited fighting words on the basis of content.[6] Justice Scalia wrote: "The Government may not regulate use [of fighting words] based on hostility — or favoritism — towards the underlying message expressed."[7] Even though the prohibited language did come under the purview of fighting words, special prohibitions against views on disfavored subjects are counter to the First Amendment.[8]

Protection also depends upon where the speech is made, especially if that speech is on school grounds. Even though the Supreme Court declared, in *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District*,[9] that students do not leave their First Amendments rights at the schoolyard gate, the Court has later emphasized that part of *Tinker* allowing schools to limit speech where the speech would have a disruptive effect and interfere with the school's educational mission.

In *Bethel School District v. Fraser*,[10] the Supreme Court held that a student's nomination speech at an assembly was unprotected. The student used sexual metaphors that induced an audience reaction ranging from confusion to mimicking of the behavior to which the student was alluding. The Supreme Court strengthened the right of school authorities to prohibit and punish speech that is offensive. In its reasoning, the Court cited the function of the public school system as inculcating those values "necessary to the maintenance of a democratic political system."[11] Therefore, schools, "as instruments of the state, may determine that the essential lessons of civil, mature conduct cannot be conveyed in a school that tolerates lewd, indecent, or offensive speech and conduct."[12]

Later interpretations of this decision by lower courts vary. One approach is that schools have the right to suppress speech found to be "vulgar, lewd obscene, or plainly offensive" just so long as purpose in suppressing it is "reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns."[13] Another approach is to require a stronger relation between suppression and the reasoning for it. As elucidated in *Tinker*, school concerns must be that the conduct would "materially and substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline."[14]
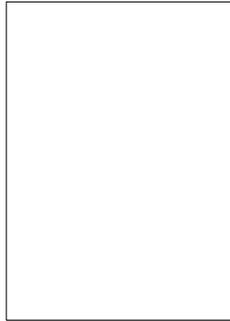
When school systems enact discipline codes limiting speech, they must keep in mind the constitutional requirements described in *R.A.V.* and *Fraser*. Fighting words restrictions must not discriminate based on specific viewpoints and must relate to school safety or the educational mission. The Court views content regulation as the biggest threat to freedom of speech.

Endnotes
1. U.S. CONST. Amend I.
2. 315 U.S. 568 (1942).
3. *Id.* at 572.
4. Cohen v. California, 403 U.S. 15 (1971).
5. *Id.* at 20.
6. R.A.V. v. City of St. Paul, 505 U.S. 377 (1992).
7. *Id.* at 386.
8. *Id.* at 391.
9. Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Community School Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1969).
10. Bethel School Dist. v. Fraser, 478 U.S. 675 (1986).
11. *Id.* at 681 (citing Ambach v. Norwick, 441 U.S. 68, 76-77 (1979).
12. *Id.* at 683.
13. Chandler v. McMinnville School District, 978 F. 2d 524, 529 (9th Cir. 1992).
14. Tinker at 509.

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Diversity requires respect, empathy

Teaching Tolerance, *by Sara Bullard, Doubleday, 1996, 235 pages*.

Subtitled "raising open-minded, empathetic children," *Teaching Tolerance* addresses the issue of how children learn to demonstrate acceptance and respect for others.

First, children must feel secure in their parents' love. It is parents who forge the emotional bonds of belonging, which in turn give rise to children's capacities for empathy, respect, acceptance and forgiveness. Parental involvement in their children's lives cements those bonds.

Next, moral guidelines and parental modeling of moral behavior provide the background for children to learn to make moral choices. Bullard points out that parents do not have to be perfect, but that they must value morality, be able to articulate the reasons behind their morality and strive to incorporate moral principles in their daily lives.

Firm, calm, consistent discipline is the third requisite for raising tolerant children. Trustfulness towards the world grows from a positive attachment to parents.

Conversely, children raised by parents who demonstrate harshness or inconsistency in discipline and emotional support become people with a "suspicious outlook on the world" — wary of differences and prone to creating barriers of distrust against those differences. It is the manner of parental guidance that most significantly influences children and their values and attitudes.

Feeling "connected" to humanity gives children satisfaction with their individuality, respect for those unlike themselves as well as for moral values, and personal "courage" to act upon those values.

Making the Peace, *by Paul Kivel and Allan Creighton with the Oakland Men's Project, Hunter House Inc., 1997, 180 pages*; Days of Respect, *by Ralph Cantor with Paul Kivel, Allan Creighton and the Oakland Men's Project, Hunter House Inc., 1997, 56 pages*.

Making the Peace is a 15-lesson curriculum that gives adolescents the opportunity to discuss interpersonal violence among young people through an examination of social/community bonds, race, economic class and gender-role training. The curriculum can be used on consecutive days, or lessons may be interspersed with regular behavior" and that emphasizes "diversity and differences as strengths." The Days of Respect program is designed to:
- prepare students to be leaders in building a schoolwide climate of respect;
- engage and mobilize students to build respect and decrease violence;
- develop family/community participation in building respect;
- sustain an annual Days of Respect program; and
- establish within the school a permanent, collaborative violence-reduction process that involves students, staff, parents and the community.

The program depends upon collaboration at every stage, and adult participants need to be aware that they are models for the collaborative process. Mutual respect between students and adult committee members is a must.

The manual covers planning, committee formation, funding sources, recruitment of volunteers, media coverage and involvement, conducting surveys, presenting the idea to the faculty, training of facilitators, conducting the actual event, and follow-up. The inclusion of sample letters, handouts and surveys makes such a multi-tasked undertaking a bit easier for student organizers. *Days of Respect* can either follow the *Making the Peace* curriculum or stand on its own as an independent project.

Individual copies of Making the Peace *and* Days of Respect *may be ordered from Hunter House Inc., P.O. Box 2914, Alameda, CA 94501-0914; 1-800/266-5592.*

Prepared by Sue Ann Meador, associate editor of School Safety.

NSSC announces 1998 "School Safety Leadership Training" schedule

NSSC presents the 1998 **School Safety Leadership Training** seminars to be held at the Westlake Inn, located in Westlake Village, California, on the following dates:
- **May 13 - 15, 1998**
- **September 16 - 18, 1998**
- **November 11 - 13, 1998**

Each of the three-day seminars focuses on creating and maintaining safe school environments. Participants will learn strategies and skills related to issues such as managing school crises, school safety and the law, diversity, school security and school violence prevention.

Don't miss this opportunity to become affiliated with NSSC's national school crime prevention network and to become a member of NSSC's International Association of School Safety Professionals.

Participant cost for training is $495, excluding transportation and accommodations. Enrollment deadline is 30 days prior to each program. Call 805/373-9977 for information/registration materials.