Syllabus
Psychology 371/372
MSU Adolescent Diversion Project

Note: All grades will be held until the end of Psychology 372 and will then be recorded on students’ transcripts. Until that time Psychology 371 grades will be recorded as “ET” (extension).

Attendance Policy: Attendance during Psychology 371/372 is mandatory. These courses will meet during the first week of classes (even if you section meets before classes actually begin) and during Finals Week. All students who have been assigned to a youth are expected to work a full 6-8 hours per week with that youth during these two weeks.

Students are allowed only 1 absence during their involvement with the course. This absence must be excused by a supervisor prior to class time. Any absence during any term not excused by a supervisor prior to class will result in a grade of “0.0” or “F” your involvement in Psychology 371/372. You will not want to take this class if attendance is a problem for you.

Attendance through out the entire class period is required. Students are allowed 2 late arrivals or early departures during each semester. Arriving late or leaving class early 3 times during a semester will be considered equivalent to an absence.

Grading Policy for Psychology

Weekly grades will be determined as follows:

During Training: Grades for written questions, oral questions, role-plays, homework assignments and other classroom activities will be averaged for your weekly grade.

After Case Assignment: Case Responsibility = 50% of grade. Grades for written & oral questions, role-plays, homework, assignments and other classroom activities will be averaged for the other 50% of the weekly grade.

After Training: Case Responsibility = 70% of grade; Class Discussion 30% of grade

Written questions are graded as follows: students must answer three (only three) out of four written questions. If all four questions are answered only the first three will be graded.

- 4.0 criteria met originally
- 3.0 rewrites turned in on time with criteria met and additional question(s) correctly answered
- 0.0 rewrites either not done correctly or turned in by the Friday following the class the are questions originally administered

**If less than 50% of the criteria are met for two of the three questions on any one quiz, a new quiz must be taken. Students must make arrangements with their supervisors at the end of class to take the new quiz. This quiz must be taken before the next scheduled class period. Meeting all criteria upon taking a new quiz will result in a grade of 3.0. If this quiz must be rewritten, students must answer the question(s) correctly and turn in before the next scheduled class period to receive a 2.0. Failure to do either of these, will result in a 0.0. In addition to taking the new quiz, students must also rewrite their first quiz. If any of the questions on this rewrite are answered incorrectly, the student will receive a 0.0 for that week’s quiz but must still take and pass the make-up quiz.**

Oral questions: oral questions and discussion will count towards participation. Overall, participation will count for 30% of your grade.
Community service: Each student is required to do at least 10 hours of community service throughout the semester. In addition a thought paper about the overall experience is also required. This will be graded toward participation.

Presentation: Each student is required to make a group presentation with their class for all sections. Dates will be mentioned at the beginning of the course.

Thought Papers: A thought paper is required for every unit. Thought papers are based on your opinion, thoughts and feeling. You will received either a 4.0 or an 0.0 based on your effort and input into your thought paper.

During 371/372, case responsibility each week will be graded on a 4.0 scale based on the following:

1. Student makes a diligent effort toward meeting weekly goals agreed upon in supervision. Each goal will make up a % of your case grade. The % will vary based off how many goals you have for that week. For example, if you have 4 goals your grade each goal will be worth 25%. If you have 3 goals each goal will be based off 33.3 %.
2. Student spends 6-8 hours with or on behalf of her/his youth.
3. Student meets with his/her youth at least two times.

Note: If a student doesn’t complete his/her 6-8 hours a week that week will be continued if a meeting is missed or hours are not completed because of the student, they will be penalized by starting the scale from a 2.0. If hours are less 4-5 hours the week will be repeated.

Role-plays, homework assignments, Thought papers, group presentations, community projects, and classroom activities will be graded on a 4.0 scale and evaluated in terms of meeting specified criteria and level of participation. Late assignments will not be given credit, however, all assignments must be turned in. Incomplete are unacceptable. Failing to complete any course-related assignment or activity within one week past the due date, will result in a failure for the course. Class discussion is defined as actively listening to cases and offering feedback to those students with assigned cases. Both listening and offering feedback will earn a class discussion grade of 4.0; doing one of the two will earn of class discussion grade of 2.0; and doing neither will result in a class discussion grade of 0.0.
Week 1  Orientation to Psychology 371/372.

Discuss class format, grading criteria, participation agreement, importance of communication with supervisors, attendance policy.

Week 2  Unit 1: An introduction to The MSU Adolescent Diversion Project

Manual:  Read Unit 1

Assigned Readings:


3. Males, M (1998). Five myths, and why adults believe they are true. ***In class assignment**

Class:  Written quiz over Unit 1 and assigned readings and Thought paper: 50% of weekly grade, written quiz: 50% of weekly grade, thought paper.

Week 3  Unit 2: Environmental Resource Conception of Human Behavior and Delinquency

Manual:  Read Unit 2


Class:  Written Quiz over Unit 2 and assigned readings and Thought paper: 50% of weekly grade, written quiz: 25% of weekly grade Thought paper: 25% of week grade homework

Homework:  Advocacy Resource Assignment

Week 4  Unit 3: The Advocacy Model

Manual:  Read Unit 3

Assigned Readings:


Hardin, Carlette Jackson.; Harris, E. Ann Managing Classroom Crises


**Class:**
Written Quiz over Unit 3 and assigned readings. 50% of weekly grade, Written quiz: 25% of weekly grade thought paper: 25% of weekly grade Homework.

**Homework:**
Behavioral Assessment

**Week 5**

**Unit 4: Understanding Human Behavior and Behavioral Change Strategies**

**Manual:**
Read Unit 4

**Assigned Readings:**

Tharp, R and Wetzel, R,J Why parents and Teachers Goof: The Criticism Trap


**Class:**
Written Quiz over Unit 4 and assigned readings 50% of weekly grade, Written quiz: 50% of weekly grade thought paper

**Week 6**

**Unit 5: Putting it All Together**

**Manual:**

**Assigned Readings:**

*** There are no manual readings for this unit ***

**Week 7**

**Unit 6: Cultural Competency Part I**


Week 8  Unit 7: Culture Competency Part II

Manual: no reading

Assigned Readings:

Landis J. R Norms, Roles, Culture, Society In Socioloy; Concepts and Charteristics (PP., 74-97) New York: Wadsworth

*** There are no manual readings for this unit ***

Class: Class Discussion

Weekly case reports: Students with case assignment (approximately 2)
Homework (25% of weekly grade)
Case Report (25% of weekly grade)
Class participation (10% of weekly grade)
Class Discussion (40% of weekly grade)
Students without a case assignment
Class participation (10% of weekly grade), Class Discussion (40% of weekly grade & homework (50% of weekly grade)

Homework: Policy assignment

Week 9  Unit 8: Teen Issues

Manual: no reading

Assigned Readings Unit 8:


Programs Go Beyond Just Saying No, APA, Monitor, November 1995, Pg 41


Week 10 Appendix A&B

Class: Class discussion
Weekly case reports

Students with case assignment (approximately 3)
Class discussion (50% of weekly grade)
Case Report (40% of weekly grade)
Class Participation (10% of weekly grade)

Students without a case assignment
Class participation (50% of weekly grade & class discussion (50% of weekly grade)

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A. Psychology 372

During this course, the student will receive weekly case responsibility and class participation grades on a 4.0 scale. After everyone has been assigned, the grading breakdown for the remainder of the course is 70% case report and 30% class participation for each week. The final term grade for Psychology 372 is recorded as a 4 credited grade
Again, **case responsibility** is based on the following criteria:

1. **Student makes a diligent effort toward meeting weekly goals agreed upon in supervision.** While all goals are important, there may be certain goals which are specified as priority, meaning the utmost effort must be given to this goal. A greater proportion of the student's weekly grade for case responsibility will be allocated to the diligent effort made towards the completion of such a prioritized goal.

2. **Student spends 6-8 hours with or on behalf of her/his youth.**

3. **Student meets with his/her youth at least two times.**

4. **19 Weekly Progress Reports--One for each week of intervention--None will be accepted late**

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**Writing Assignments for 372**

**Paper 1:** Mid-intervention Case Study (at Mid-point of your intervention-week 9)

**Paper 2:** Termination Case Study (at end of your intervention-week 18)

**Log Book:** Completed Log Book (due at the end of the intervention-week 19)

***ALL WEEKLY GRADES WILL BE AVERAGED TO EARN THE GRADE FOR EACH SEMESTER. THE SEMESTER GRADES FOR 371 AND 372 will consist of eight graded credits.***

If a student does not have a case (either is not yet assigned or has already finished her/his intervention) then these weekly ratings will be based upon class participation alone. **Class participation** is defined as actively listening to cases and offering feedback to those students with assigned cases. Both listening and offering feedback will earn a class discussion grade of 4.0; doing one of the two will earn of class discussion grade of 2.0; and doing neither will result in a class discussion grade of 0.0.

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**SUMMARY:**

The following conditions must also be met to pass these courses:

1. Complete intervention with assigned youth
2. Maintain confidentiality
3. ATTEND ALL CLASSES!!!!!!!!!!!!
4. Complete all homework and quizzes at a mastery level
5. Complete Log Book
6. Complete Mid-intervention Case Study
7. Complete Termination Case Study
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Unit 7: Cultural Competency Part II

Unit 8: Teen Issues

Appendix A: Log Book, Weekly Goal sheets, and Termination Packet

Appendix B: Reports
TO THE VOLUNTEER

You are beginning an experience that we hope will be a fulfilling and rewarding one for you. You will be involved in an intensive helping relationship on a one-to-one basis with a youthful offender. We have found in the many years that this program has been conducted (both at the University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana and Michigan State University, East Lansing) that what is accomplished within the relationship can make an important difference both for the youth and for you the volunteer. For the youth it means making needed changes both in his/her environment and with significant others, as well as teaching him/her how to be his/her own change agent and advocate. For you the volunteer it will mean such things as learning a number of new skills, learning how to develop and institute plans and changes, developing a sense of your own capabilities and career interests, and gaining experience relating to a host of individuals in a variety of roles.

When you decide to participate you are making a commitment -- a commitment to follow through with a number of responsibilities until the end of the program. These responsibilities include but are not limited to the following key areas:

1. Advocates must attend all training/supervision sessions. Only one excused absence is allowed during the entire two semesters of the course. Any absence beyond this during the entire two semester sequence is grounds for dismissal from the course with a failing grade.

2. Prompt attendance to class is mandatory. More than two instances of being late during any single semester will be grounds for dismissal from the course with a failing grade. You are allowed two tardies during each separate semester before your participation in the course will be jeopardized.

3. Advocates must spend six to eight hours weekly with a youth. Advocates must make appropriate efforts to accomplish weekly goals for a week to be completed successfully. Weeks wherein at least six hours are not spent with the youth are not counted towards the required 18 weeks of intervention that the advocate agreed to provide.

4. Advocates must demonstrate 80% mastery of all course materials, homework assignments, and quizzes; and advocates must keep up-to-date records of their cases.

5. And finally, advocates should contact their supervisors (i.e., any of the supervisory staff) if difficulties arise.

You are a valuable part of this project and we welcome your participation!
Unit 1
UNIT I

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MSU ADOLESCENT DIVERSION PROJECT

Unit I Readings:


2) Anderson, D. C. (May/June 1998). When should kids go to jail? The American Prospect, Princeton; Iss. 38; pg. 72, (7 pages)

3) Males, M. (1998). Five Myths, and Why Adults Believe They Are True; Mike Males; New York Times, New York; Apr 29; Late Edition (East Coast); pg. G.9 (2 pages) *** In class assignment ***

Brief History of the Juvenile Justice System

Historically, the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency in America was created by the initiation of the juvenile court system at the end of the 1880's. Prior to that time, youthful offenders were handled with varying degrees of formality by adult courts. The initial thrust for the creation of the separate system for handling juveniles came from the desire to protect children from mistreatment while still providing a vehicle for safeguarding society from youthful wrongdoings. The failure of refuge homes, used for wayward youth in the nineteenth century, had resulted in children being severely treated and used as low cost manual laborers. The juvenile court was designed to provide for the care of children in a way that would approximate ideally that provided by "responsible" parents. Other central issues in the formation of a separate juvenile court were that the court per se would operate with a maximum amount of flexibility in order to allow informal truth-seeking procedures and would provide a format amenable to individualized treatment. In short, it was suggested that the juveniles exchange their constitutional right to a full-fledged trial for the benevolent concern of the court. This exchange was felt to be a fair trade-off for the juveniles, given the good intention of the law.

The court's sphere of influence was quickly expanded. The courts had been created with all the fervor of a publicly supported social movement. For example, Illinois Juvenile Courts, usually cited as indicative of early juvenile court development, were created by
the 1899 Juvenile Court Act and given jurisdiction over any youth who violated the criminal code. Its operation was based on the work of unpaid probation officers appointed by the court. By 1901, legislative change expanded the legal definition of juvenile delinquency to include uniquely juvenile offenses such as incorrigibility. In 1905, the Court's mandate was further expanded. Initially it was responsible for the adjudication (judicial decision) and disposition (sentencing or referral of cases). Now it was also to direct supervision of treatment services provided in carrying out its orders. In 1907, legislation further expanded the Court's arena by providing for professional probation officers and court staff.

After the fervor of the first decade of this century, the juvenile courts in this country essentially conducted their mission in a rather dormant fashion. Most other states had followed Illinois in creating separate courts for juveniles by the twenties. Separate Juvenile Bureaus in urban police departments were close behind. Procedural informality, individualized treatment, and provision of services approximating those of a natural home were held as basic operating principles. Such procedures were not thought to require multiple safeguards.

All continued relatively quietly until the middle 1960's. At that time the juvenile justice system, like many other social institutions, became the target of a variety of attacks, both from within and outside its ranks.

1) The first line of criticism attacked the juvenile court's justification for acting with procedural informality while at the same time holding the fate of the individual youth in its hands. In the 1967 Supreme Court decision in the case of Gault, the majority opinion stated that although the juvenile justice system had good intentions, the condition of being a youth did not justify a kangaroo court. It was thought that the system had failed to provide either sound, effective treatment or procedural safeguards insuring constitutional rights, thereby leaving the youth with nothing.

2) A second line of criticism focused on the mistreatment of youth by sending them to highly malignant correctional institutions. The poor conditions that existed in the juvenile institutions were almost unbelievable. In addition, recidivism rates (frequency with which youth continued to get into legal trouble after receiving treatment) were extremely high.

The juvenile justice system had originally been created to improve conditions and provide treatment for youths; however, critics of the late 60’s/early 70’s for not fulfilling this mission were attacking it. Presently, the trend in corrections policy for both adult and juvenile offenders has placed a greater emphasis on detainment and punishment, and less of an emphasis on rehabilitation. Judicial waivers (i.e., the practice of adjudicating juveniles in adult court rather than juvenile court), mandatory sentencing, and longer terms of incarceration are advocated by many of the leading political figures from all of the major parties of our day. Politicians advocate this approach despite the fact that none of these approaches have been shown to decrease crime or the rate of re-offending of
those convicted of crimes. On the contrary, much of the research done in this area suggests the need for alternative responses to crime, particularly juvenile crime.

The MSU Adolescent Diversion Project is just such an alternative. This program works from the perspective that all youths have unique strengths that are valuable to society, and that by helping youths to develop their strengths, one can reduce their delinquent behaviors. This approach requires that each youth receive an individualized intervention that is implemented within the youth’s home community. This perspective moves away from the emphasis that courts presently place on the use of punishment, and instead focuses on changing the manner in which the youth interacts with his immediate social environment (i.e., his/her school, family, etc). Because courts are typically understaffed and not designed to provide the type of individualized intervention needed to effectively reduce delinquent behavior, alternative sources of person power have been needed to carry out these plans. This current program is, in part, designed to provide qualified volunteers to serve as individualized change agents working directly with the youth in his/her natural environment.

**GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROJECT**

The primary goal of the project in which you are to be intensely involved over the next several months is to provide quality community-based service to local youth in legal jeopardy with the juvenile justice system. While the juvenile justice system has many components, which we will outline and discuss later, the aim of this project is to keep local youth out of the formal court system.

There are a large number of people involved in the operation of this project. Volunteers, such as yourselves, will furnish the critical ingredients of providing quality service to the youth with whom the project works and of bringing case related material to training/supervisory sessions. Trainer/supervisors will conduct the group meetings for the volunteers. The project director will in turn, supervise them.

Each of the training and supervision sessions will last for two and a half hours. One critical component of this project is your attendance at all of these training/supervision sessions. This requirement is not because we are particularly interested in making sure that all good little volunteers go to their meetings. Rather, we have found that the mutual discussion and input we can have as a group will have an important impact on our work with individual youth.

The training/supervisory sessions will consist of several things throughout the course of the year. During the first seven sessions class will focus on training you in effective methods of intervention with adolescents who have come into contact with the legal system. It is important that each one of you have a strong background in the approaches to youth used in this project. During the first term you will be assigned readings and homework relevant to your work in this project. The reading assignments are outlined at the beginning of each unit. Your trainer/supervisors will inform you where the readings are located. If homework is included in the unit, the assignments will be outlined at the end of that unit. They involve either individual or small group work. You will be
expected to have mastered the material in the assigned readings and have completed the homework by the time that you come to the class meeting.

When your meeting starts, your supervisor will spend the first portion answering any questions that you may have had about the reading assignment. You will then demonstrate your understanding of the material from the manual and from the readings. Your understanding will be assessed via a short answer, written quiz. You will be asked to write a short thought/discussion paper related to the readings. Class discussion will follow with the thought papers providing central themes. Class discussions also will include homework assignments, class exercises, role playing, and/or supervision of the early cases assigned to the project. Each class member is expected to read the material prior to class and to participate in class discussions.

After Psychology 371, the meetings will be focused on group discussion of the individual cases with which you will be working. The meetings will include the following components:

1) You will be asked to present a detailed oral description of your case each week to the group.

2) You will be expected to add input to the group discussion of individual cases and attend to suggestions about your case from other volunteers and the supervisor.

3) The discussion of each person's case will consist of goal-oriented group problem solving. In short, this method of group supervision consists of outlining the goals or problem areas for each case, the alternative solutions available, the costs and benefits of each alternative, and the selection of a course of action.

4) You will be asked to bring a weekly progress report to each meeting (see Appendix for a sample report).

5) You are expected to keep a log of your activities. The specifics of how you are to keep the log and some sample excerpts are presented in the Appendix. The log will summarize all contacts you have made with and for your youth during the entire intervention period.

It is also important that you are clear as to the relative degrees of responsibility that you have to each of the program's components. You should view as your first responsibility the youth with whom you will be working and his/her best interests. This responsibility includes your interactions with him/her as well as your interactions with your friends and others. The importance of confidentiality in your interactions with your friends, and relatives cannot be overemphasized. Your second responsibility is to the project as a whole. It is critical that you are honest with your supervisors about activities relevant to the youth. While they definitely will have positive expectations about your interactions
with the youth, do not hesitate to tell them about something that has gone on which you think may have been a mistake. If they and your group know about problems then they can work them out together with you. Your third responsibility is to your fellow students. This includes your input to the group discussions relevant to your own and other people's cases.

Up to this point we have discussed your involvement in the training/supervision sessions. However, your major involvement in this project, in terms of time, will be working with or on behalf of a young person from the local community. Three general principles apply:

1) You will spend six to eight hours per week providing service to the youth to whom you are assigned. This will include direct interaction with the youth, interaction with significant other people in the life of the youth, and preparing for future interactions.

2) The intention of this project is to provide individualized service to each of the youths referred. In other words, you will be applying the principles and techniques learned in the training units to each youth according to the characteristics of the individual and his/her situation.

3) Your role will become clearer to you as you participate in the project. You will be a negotiator, mediator, change agent and advocate. You will not be a police officer, probation officer, parent, or therapist. It is difficult to prescribe your role or spell it out in any more detail because each individual is unique and each intervention differs. You will need to take an individualized approach. This means that while you will always follow the principles of the models, the specific strategies that you will implement vary. Training/supervision sessions will provide a time and place for you to explore various roles and practice a number of intervention techniques. Further discussions about the planning of an individualized approach, the development of intervention tactics and the use of supervision will follow.
Basic Principles from Unit I

Manual

Overall goal of the MSU Adolescent Diversion Project (ADP)
Expectations of volunteers
Components of case supervision
ADP volunteers' responsibilities
ADP volunteers' role
Purpose of the juvenile justice system
Criticisms of the juvenile justice system

Readings

According to Males, what are five myths that Adults believe about adolescents?

According to Anderson, what power did parens patriae grant to the state?

What problems developed in the application of parens patriae (see Anderson)?

According to Anderson's article, what types of juvenile justice programs produce the greatest reduction in delinquency?
When Should Kids Go to Jail?

by David C. Anderson

While America’s latest crime wave appears to be subsiding, the legitimate fears it aroused in urban America leave a powerful political legacy. Along with new police strategies and more prisons, legislators continue to call for harsher treatment of juvenile offenders long granted special status because of a historic belief in the diminished culpability of children and adolescents. Nearly all states now permit the “waiver” of youngsters charged with serious crimes to adult courts; in more than half, legislatures have specifically excluded those charged with certain crimes from juvenile court jurisdiction. In some cases the exclusions apply to children as young as 13. Legislation moving forward in the current Congress would expand adult federal court jurisdiction over offenders as young as 14 and give prosecutors, rather than judges, the power to transfer a juvenile case to adult court.

Therein lies an important debate. The nation approaches the one hundredth anniversary of the first juvenile court, established in Chicago by Progressive Era reformers in 1899. It formally recognized that childhood should exist in the eyes of the criminal law. Youth, Progressives believed, can partly excuse even violent misbehavior and always permits hope for rehabilitation. Is that historic commitment really obsolete?

The question remains germane even as juvenile crime trend lines turn down, because demographics suggest a possible new crime wave. Scholars like James Alan Fox of Northeastern University have predicted a “baby-boomerang” 20 percent increase in the juvenile population and juvenile crime by 2005. The Justice Department predicts a doubling of juvenile arrests for violent crime by 2010.

The Senate Judiciary Committee report on the new juvenile crime bill relies heavily on such predictions to justify treating more juvenile offenders as adults. Defenders of special treatment find themselves hampered by the history of the juvenile court, whose usefulness has fallen into real question as it has succumbed to an advanced identity crisis.

The Whole Child

The Illinois Juvenile Court Act of 1899, which established the Chicago court, was based on the British idea of parens patriae. It granted the state the power to intervene on behalf of children when their natural parents failed to provide care or supervision. “Jane Addams and the dauntless women of Hull House,” who established the new court, “strove to develop a safe haven, a space to protect, to rehabilitate and to heal children, a site of nurturance and guid-

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ance, understanding and compassion." writes William Ayers in a new book about the Chicago court. Judges serving in the court were to receive social-science and child development training so that they could craft sentences in the best interest of the "whole child."

The idea spread rapidly. Thirty-two states had set up juvenile courts or probation services by 1910; by 1925, they existed in all but two states. The belief that a court should take over the nurture and discipline of troubled youth informed both philosophy and procedures. Sanford J. Fox, writing in an issue of The Future of Children devoted to articles about the juvenile court, recalls Judge Ben B. Lindsey, who served in Denver from 1901 to 1927. "Children who came to the Denver court were 'his boys' and were seen by him as fundamentally good human beings whose going astray was largely attributable to their social and psychological environment," Fox writes. "According to Lindsey, the role of the juvenile court judge was to strengthen the child's belief in himself and make available to him all of the support and encouragement from outside the court that the judge could harness on his behalf."

Today's juvenile courts continue the practice of dealing with cases of child abuse and neglect, along with "status offenses"—truancy, running away from home, unmanageability—as well as juvenile delinquency. A 1994 survey counted 1.9 million juvenile court filings (an increase of 59 percent since 1984); about two-thirds were for juvenile delinquency.

In the 1960s, pressures from both the left and the right began to move treatment of juveniles away from the original vision. In the early juvenile courts, pares paterae meant substituting the benevolence of an individual judge for the adult court's adversarial process, fact-finding by juries of peers, guaranteed rights to counsel and cross examination, and protection against self-incrimination. It also meant indeterminate sentences—locking up youngsters in treatment until the adults in charge agreed that they were rehabilitated, rather than for fixed periods of time. That was all well and good so long as juvenile court judges and treatment administrators were fair-minded, insightful, and caring. Where they weren't, juvenile offenders were routinely exposed to gross miscarriages of justice.

The Supreme Court recognized the problem in the 1967 case of 15-year-old Gerald Gault, who was charged with making an obscene phone call. A juvenile court judge ordered him to training school for six years; in adult court, the same case was worth a $50 fine or two months in jail.

In its ruling, the court rejected the whole idea of pares paterae and concluded that traditional juvenile justice violated the 14th Amendment's guarantee of due process. "Juvenile court history has again demonstrated that unbridled discretion, however benevolently motivated, is frequently a poor substitute for principle and procedure," the court wrote.

The Gault decision upheld a juvenile defendant's right to protection against self-incrimination, to notice and counsel, and to question witnesses. The result was to bring lawyers into juvenile court for both the prosecution and defense to force greater objectivity on the proceedings. While this curbed some of the abuse, it also curbed the capacity of judges to deal with the offender's broader problems. "Gault's insistence on procedural safeguards in juvenile courts formalized the connection between a youth's crime and the subsequent sanctions, and ironically may have legitimized more punitive dispositions for young offenders," writes Barry Feld, Centennial Professor of Law at the University of Minnesota.

T

hrough the 1970s and early 1980s, responding to pressure from a crime-weary public, legislatures began pushing for punishment rather than treatment, especially of
youngsters who looked like “hard-core” juvenile career criminals. They required juvenile courts to impose determinate or mandatory minimum sentences based on the severity of the crime rather than the needs of the offender. Some juvenile courts adopted the more punitive approach without any prodding from a legislature.

Juveniles sentenced to confinement, meanwhile, all too often wound up in training schools or detention centers that mocked the historic commitment to therapy, education, and rehabilitation. Inquiries and lawsuits during the 1970s and 1980s found juvenile inmates regularly subjected to systematic humiliation, solitary confinement in squalid cells, beatings, and homosexual assaults.

All this occurred in the face of evidence that more constructive approaches could work. In the early 1970s, the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, led by Jerome Miller, closed most of its training schools, reserving only a few institutions for the worst offenders. The rest went to residential community-based programs or home to their families while the state contracted with private agencies for appropriate social services. An evaluation 15 years after the training school closings found that half of 875 youngsters released from DYS programs were rearrested within three years; during that time, 24 percent wound up recommitted to DYS or incarcerated in adult prisons. That compared favorably with other states. In California, for example, 70 percent of youngsters released from reform schools were rearrested within only one year, and 60 percent were reincarcerated three years after release.

To this day, Massachusetts remains the leading example of how reform might help. A 1992 meta-analysis of 443 juvenile delinquency program evaluations lent support to the Miller approach. The author, Mark Lipsey, found that programs reduced the delinquency of their clients by 5 percent overall, from 50 percent to 45 percent, compared with control groups. But he found higher effects for programs that emphasized community-based rather than institutional treatments. Even so, use of secure training schools and detention centers continued to increase nationwide. The rate of confinement for juveniles rose from 241 per 100,000 to 353 per 100,000 between 1975 and 1987, according to one national study. Another found that while the number of juveniles in the population declined by 11 percent between 1979 and 1989, the number locked up in institutions rose by 30 percent.

States also encouraged the shift of more juvenile cases to adult courts by either lowering the age of adult court jurisdiction for crimes or giving judges or prosecutors discretion to order waivers. The trend continued despite research demonstrating that such measures were having less than the desired effect. Adult courts are typically far more lenient with property offenders than are juvenile courts. And in states where judges supervised transfer of juvenile cases to adult courts, they tended to send up many more burglary and larceny cases than robberies, rapes, and murders. The property offenders therefore benefited from the “punishment gap,” getting off with a year or two of lightly supervised probation, the routine in adult court, when the juvenile judge might have ordered them into a youth prison.

ADDCrackCocaineandStir

The juvenile court’s identity crisis was therefore well advanced by the mid-1980s, when crime rates spiked as crack dealers and gun dealers began aggressive distribution of their products to willing markets of young people. Juvenile delinquency cases not only increased; they involved more violence. Howard Snyder, a researcher for the National Center for Juvenile Justice, found that delinquency caseloads rose 23 percent between 1989 and 1993, nearly three times the percentage increase in the juvenile population. Juvenile offenses against the person (homicide, rape, robbery, assault) rose 52 percent, compared with a 15 percent increase for drug and property crimes. Weapons-law cases increased by 87 percent.

The statistics underlay a lurid popular perception. The news and entertainment media discovered the drug issue in general and crack in particular during the late 1980s, giving broad play to the teenage drug dealer turned outlaw millionaire, an image of adolescent fantasy come horribly true.
This only deepened questions about the credibility of juvenile courts. Young thugs were driving luxury cars, flaunting designer warm-ups and gold chains, arming themselves with assault weapons and paying their mothers' rent. Did they suffer from deprivation and a poor self-image? Were they really going to be helped by fatherly judges and caring social workers? Wouldn't they, not to mention the rest of us, be better served by a heavy dose of grown-up punishment?

The idea could drive even sober academics to feverish prose. James Q. Wilson, an influential political scientist at the University of California at Los Angeles, wrote of "innocent people being gunned down at random, without warning and almost without motive, by youngsters who afterwards show us the blank, unremorseful face of a seemingly feral, presocial being." William Bennett, with John DiIulio and John Walters, describes "superpredators"—radically impulsive, brutally remorseless youngsters . . . who murder, assault, rape, rob, burglarize, deal deadly drugs, join gun-toting gangs, and create serious communal disorders . . . [N]ot even mothers or grandmothers are sacred to them.

While such rhetoric rings powerful chimes with the public, should it drive public policy? However legitimate, fear and loathing inspired by excesses of some juvenile criminals at the height of the crack plague can inhibit careful thinking about a problem whose practical and moral complexities demand more than a turn to harsher punishments.

The majority of young people who break the law are not feral, presocial predators. Though juvenile violence increased at a shocking rate during the late 1980s, the more than 2,000 homicides reported each year remain a tiny percentage of all juvenile crime. Of the 1.4 million arrests referred to juvenile courts in 1992, 57 percent involved property offenses as the most serious charge, while 21 percent involved crimes against the person. There is real danger that legislative nets cast to capture the "superpredators" will sweep in thousands of lesser fry as well, at appalling social and financial cost.

Furthermore, whatever goals the move against special treatment might accomplish, greater public safety does not appear to be one of them. A Florida study published in 1996 matched 2,738 juvenile delinquents transferred to adult courts with a control group that remained in the juvenile system. "By every measure of recidivism employed, reoffending was greater among transfers than among the matched controls," the researchers stated. A 1991 study compared juveniles tried in New York adult courts with New Jersey youngsters whose cases remained in juvenile court. It, too, found higher recidivism rates and prompter new arrests for the New York youngsters.

An ethically sensible and potentially effective policy on juvenile crime should include three elements: broader crime control, social work outside the criminal courts, and a reconception of juvenile justice.

Crime control. By now the accumulating evidence documents overwhelmingly that the burst of youth crime in the late 1980s was caused by the rapid spread of drugs and guns. What to do about drugs remains uncertain. The crack epidemic appears to be expiring more as a result of natural causes than of smart policy, with saturated markets, aging addicts, and a skeptical new generation of street kids. But guns, in this context, are worth discussing.

Franklin Zimring of the Earl Warren Legal Institute, Alfred Blumstein of Carnegie Mellon University, and others have pointed out that guns account for the entire recent increase in youth homicide. In a striking article published in the Valparaiso University Law Review last spring, Zimring, a law professor at the University of California at Berkeley, noted that the number of reported killings committed with guns by youngsters between the ages of 10 and 17 increased sharply after 1984, from about 500 to more than 1,000. The number of non-gun homicides remained stable through those years, at slightly fewer than 500.

"If there were a large group of 'new, more violent juvenile offenders,' that was the proximate cause of explosive increases in homicide," Zimring writes, "one would expect the increase in killing to be spread broadly across different weapon categories." Instead, it appears that "a change in hardware rather than a change in software was the principal cause of higher youth homicide." In that light, the most effective response looks like aggres-
sive gun control focused on juveniles, backed up by the sort of innovative policing now credited with reducing juvenile gun use and homicides in Kansas City, Boston, and New York.

Social work. Beyond programs designed to deal with youngsters after arrest, students of juvenile crime remain fascinated with the idea of intervening in the lives of children and teenagers “at risk” of delinquency in hopes of averting criminal behavior before it starts. Research documents some success. The most famous study was of the Perry Preschool in Ypsilanti, Michigan, which provided two years of enriched schooling and weekly home visits to small children from poor minority families. By the time the kids had turned 27, half as many had been arrested as a control group that did not benefit from the enriched classes.

Other programs replicate the effect. A Syracuse University effort enrolled 108 low-income families, mostly headed by young single mothers, for five years of day care for their children along with parenting training beginning during pregnancy. Ten years after the families completed the program, only 6 percent of the children had been referred to probation, compared with 22 percent of a matched control group. Another New York study found that providing nurses for regular visits to young mothers at home with their infants greatly reduced instances of child abuse and neglect. A Houston program that enrolled families with small children from Mexican-American barrios found that a combination of home visits and day care reduced the children’s aggressive behavior.

In 1996, a team of researchers from RAND led by Peter Greenwood reviewed seven such studies and calculated that day care/home-visit programs could reduce by 24 percent the number of crimes the client children could be expected to commit. The group also reviewed programs that give parents special training to deal with children who have begun to behave disruptively in school and at home; the training was found to reduce the youngsters’ eventual juvenile criminality by 29 percent.

The RAND group also examined the Ford Foundation’s Quantum Opportunity Program, which will provide an “at-risk” youngster with cash and scholarship incentives averaging $3,130 per year to stay in high school and graduate. That simple approach might reduce the criminality of its clients by an astonishing 56 percent.

The RAND researchers attempted to estimate the cost-effectiveness of such approaches in comparison with increased incarceration resulting from California’s new Three Strikes Law. They found that if fully applied across the state, two of the social work approaches, parent training and graduation incentives, were more cost-effective; taken together, they could reduce crime by 22 percent at a cost of about $900 million per year. Greenwood and others had previously calculated that the Three Strikes Law might achieve a similarly defined crime reduction of 21 percent at a cost of $5.5 billion per year.

These results should be regarded with caution. The RAND study is a self-consciously artificial exercise designed to provoke pointed comparison rather than nail down a policy choice. It is based on necessarily speculative assumptions about how the effectiveness of well-resourced and well-managed pilot programs will “decay” as they are massively expanded. It also attempts to estimate the number of crimes children might commit over the course of their lives if they don’t benefit from the programs, an imponderable calculation. Yet however speculative, the results remain tantalizing; they certainly warrant close attention to preventative social work as part of a juvenile crime strategy.

Juvenile justice. Even as get-tough rhetoric encourages politicians to press for diminishing jurisdiction of the juvenile court or abolishing it entirely, other issues encourage some thoughtful academics in the same direction. Barry Feld, in a forthcoming paper, reviews legal decisions that imposed adult due process on juvenile courts, new laws that force more juvenile cases into adult courts, and the shift in attitudes away from treatment toward punishment.

Legislative, judicial and administrative changes within the past few decades have transformed the juvenile court from a nominally rehabilitative social welfare agency into a scaled down, second-class criminal court for young people that provides neither therapy nor justice... No compelling reasons remain to maintain a punitive juvenile court separate from an adult criminal court.

He calls for integration of juvenile and adult courts while “formally recognizing youthfulness as a mitigating factor in sentencing.” Pointing out that the law has long recognized diminished responsibility of young people who break the law,
he proposes a fractional “youth discount.” “A 14-year-old offender might receive, for example, 25 percent of the adult penalty, a 16-year-old defendant, 50 percent, and an 18-year-old adult the full penalty, as is presently the case.”

The appealing simplicity of such an idea, however, may be deceptive. Feld himself acknowledges that implementing it sensibly would require many states to get rid of mandatory minimum sentences to which legislators point with pride, and to increase judges’ discretion that legislators have fought for years to curb. For youth discounts to work, Feld writes:

the adult sentencing scheme itself must be defensible in terms of equality, equity, desert, and proportionality. A sentencing scheme which simply attempts to apply idiosyncratically “youth discounts” to the flawed indeterminate sentencing structures... runs the risk simply of reproducing all of the existing inequalities and inconsistencies.

Other scholars continue to believe in the need for a separate court that recognizes the possibility of rehabilitation for youthful offenders. They have been encouraged by recent research suggesting, contrary to decades of pessimistic findings, that rehabilitative programs can make a difference to the lives of delinquent youth.

They point to a 1990 meta-analysis that weighed 80 evaluations of rehabilitation programs, distinguishing between those that took care to match services with the needs and learning styles of the offenders and those that did not. The “appropriate” programs were found to reduce recidivism by as much as 50 percent. And Lipsy’s 1992 meta-analysis, which found positive effects for community-based, rather than institutional, programs, also affirmed the value of those that took behavioral, skill-oriented, or multi-modal approaches.

Such studies provide practical hope to shore up the moral case: so long as rehabilitative programs do not expose the public to more crime than prison does, they are worth pursuing. They create positive experiences for youngsters coming out of chaotic social environments (at lower financial cost than prison), and they send a broad message about a society’s willingness to help young people in trouble. It’s a valid argument, and it looks all the better with reason to believe continued experimentation with such programs might still produce real cuts in recidivism.
What Kind of Court?

But if there should be a juvenile court, how should it look? To some the best answer is: about the way it looks now, but with more resources, better people, and uniform standards nationwide. “Although there have been significant changes in the mission and function of the juvenile court since 1899, the basic differences between children and adults remain and continue to support the need for a specialized court,” concludes a group assembled by the Center for the Future of Children.

The group made a dozen recommendations that included elevation of all juvenile courts to the highest level of general jurisdiction, improved training for juvenile court judges, a requirement that judges serve at least two to three years, and greater use of alternative dispute resolution. The group also called for guaranteed legal representation, transfer of juveniles to adult court only on the basis of a judicial hearing, and a greater variety of sanctions.

Mark Moore, a professor of criminal justice policy and management at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, offers a more innovative and sophisticated idea. He recognizes the need for the transfer of some juvenile cases to adult courts if they show “unusual maturity, acted alone, or persisted in committing crimes.”

For the rest, he proposes a court whose goal would be “to help organize the increasingly complex task of child rearing by intervening in situations where breakdowns in child-rearing capacities have occurred.” It would do this in the manner of a bankruptcy court faced with a failing business:

It can decide to “liquidate” the existing arrangements and transfer the child to the care and custody of someone other than the current caretakers. Or, the court can seek to “restructure” the enterprise, keeping the family together but insisting that caretakers live up to their duties and overseeing the provision of publicly available services that would allow them to do so.

What would this mean for the youngster picked up for a first-offense burglary who turns out to have dropped out of school, is running with a street gang, and has developed a taste for drugs? Under the current system, transfer of such a case to adult court would result in a mild penalty—a year or so of sporadic supervision by an overworked probation officer. The current juvenile court might supplement that with an order to attend Narcotics Anonymous meetings and go back to school, which might or might not happen.

Moore’s court would call in members of the offender’s immediate family or others prepared to provide supervision and order them to make sure the youngster goes to school and a drug treatment program, stays away from his gang friends, and otherwise stays out of trouble. A social worker or probation officer would serve as a “special master” responsible for making sure the judge’s orders are followed. Should the caretakers fail to meet their obligation, the judge might sanction them, remove the child to a residential program, or both. With further offenses, the delinquent might finally be ordered to juvenile jail or prison.

Moore points out that such a court could deal more logically than current juvenile courts with the status offenses like truancy and running away from home that may be precursors to criminal behavior. It would also keep jurisdiction over child abuse and neglect cases, as well it should, given research documenting the propensity of their victims to act out violently later on.

All this would, of course, require more resources for juvenile justice and a sense of unity on the value of such an approach. Both are problematic in the ongoing political climate. But Moore’s basic goal is hard to gainsay: he would hold “children, and those who care for children, accountable for their actions in their joint efforts to move children from the status of defenseless barbarians to resourceful citizens.”

Is that really possible without threatening public safety? “One can err by allowing a child sufficient freedom and engagement with the community to put himself or herself and others at risk,” Moore says. But it’s also an error to keep a delinquent so locked up and isolated “that he or she never has the opportunity to learn how to become integrated into the community.” The existing setup, he says, penalizes public officials “for the first kind of error and tolerates the second kind of error. Yet it is the second kind of error that is arguably the most expensive.”

That aptly summarizes the whole discussion. It is still possible to imagine ways juvenile delinquents might be sanctioned and supervised effectively as juveniles, not adults, without removing them from the community. The drift away from historical juvenile justice remains premature.3
Five Myths, and Why Adults

By MIKE A. MALES

On the day last month that two youths shot four students and one teacher to death in Jonesboro, Ark., a mother in Daly City, Calif., was arrested for suffocating her three children with duct tape. About 10 days after the three West Paducah, Ky., school killings in December, parents in Weston, W.Va., were arrested for burning down their house and murdering five children to collect insurance.

The paradox: School killings receive enormous attention not because they are routine, but because they are rare. The National School Safety Center estimates that of the 52 million students in school, about two dozen are murdered each year, a number that is not rising. By contrast, the National Commission on Child Abuse and Neglect reports that every year 7,000 to 8,000 children and youths are murdered by parents, a toll that is rising.

The public image of teen-agers is shaped by sensational crimes like the Jonesboro killings and by a selective use of statistics that make uncommon events like teen-age murder or suicide seem epidemic. At the same time, many experts are declaring that today's youths are more criminal, more suicidal, more stoned, and less moral than their predecessors. John Dilullo Jr., a professor of politics at Princeton University, and William J. Bennett, a former Secretary of Education, for example, forecasted in their 1986 book "Body Count" that there is a growing "population of teen-agers with higher incidence of serious drug use, more access to powerful firearms and fewer moral restraints than any such group in American history."

It is hardly surprising, then, that the public stereotype of contemporary teen-agers is a hostile one. Deborah Wadsworth, the executive director of Public Agenda, a public-policy research firm, said its 1997 survey found that Americans tend to view young people with feelings of alarm or fear.

There are, however, who argue that adults berate teen-agers to excuse their own negligence. "Today's young people are scapegoated by an adult generation that is abandoning them," said Lori Nelson, the youth and education issues director for the Los Angeles chapter of the National Conference for Communities and Justice. "Race is a big reason. The kids people are scared of are kids of color."

A sober analysis of the statistics renders many of the commonly held beliefs about teen-agers into myths that ignore broader contexts like socioeconomic conditions and adult behavior.

MYTH NO. 1: While crime rates among adults are falling, youths are becoming more violent and criminally dangerous.

The facts: This popular myth confuses two different Federal Bureau of Investigation measures of crime. The first, violent crimes reported to police, rose from the mid-1970's to the early 80's and has since fallen. The second measure, violent-crime arrests, rose sharply among adolescents ages 12 to 17 (up 69 percent) from 1975 to 1995. But during that same period, violent crime arrests rose even more markedly among adolescents' parents' age group, namely adults 30 to 49 (a rate that is up 89 percent). Since 1995, arrest rates for violent crimes have declined for both teen-agers and adults.

Meanwhile, youthful killers are not overrunning the nation. The United States Department of Justice reports that fewer than one-half of 1 percent of juveniles in the United States are arrested for a violent offense every year. And arrest statistics overstate teen-age crime. The F.B.I., for example, reported that in 1998, youths accounted for 15 percent of murder arrests, but only 8 percent of actual murders were attributed to juveniles. The reality is that adults commit 11 of 12 homicides, including three-fourths of the murders of children and teen-agers, statistics that are usually ignored in the furor over "killer kids."

Poverty strongly predicts violent crime-arrest rates among all ages and races and both sexes. Teen-agers are not more violent than adults; rather, poor people are more likely to be arrested for violent crimes than the rich. The middle class, and these days, youths are twice as likely as adults to be poor. When there is economic parity between adults and teen-agers, teen-age violence rates are lower than for adults in their 20's and 30's.

Finally, the assertion that more teen-agers means more violence is contradicted by F.B.I. and Census Bureau figures.

From its 1976 peak to the end of 1992, the teen-age population fell, but the nation's violent crime rate rose by 60 percent. From 1992 to 1997, the teen-age population rose, but violent crime fell 20 percent.

MYTH NO. 2: Teen-agers have little to their well-being.

The facts: Teen-agers are better than their predecessors. Teen-agers have declined in teen-age suicide and homicide rates among all teen-agers and adults.

MYTH NO. 3: Teen-agers are more violent than adults.

The facts: Fruitless in the past, this myth is now becoming more exaggerated. As rates of violent crime and arrest fall, so too do the teen-age population and the teen-age age group.

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Adults Believe They Are True

Myth No. 2: Today's teenagers have little concern for their health or well-being.

The facts: Teenagers are healthier and taking care of themselves better than ever. Natural deaths have declined sharply. Rates of violent death (accidental, suicide and homicide) are 15 to 20 percent lower among teenagers today than in the 1960's and 70's, when their parents were growing up. The National Center for Health Statistics figures, from 1994, show that teenagers have relatively low suicide rates: 1.7 suicides per 100,000 among 12- to 25-year-olds, and 1.1 among 15- to 19-year-olds. By contrast, the rates are 15.4 per 100,000 for people 20 through 49 years old, and 15.9 for those who are age 50 and over.

Teenagers are much less likely to die by their own hand than adolescents were in the 60's and 70's. The types of self-inflicted teen-age deaths associated with suicide (gunshots, drugs, other poisons, hangings, drownings and falls) declined sharply over the last 25 years. But in 1970, coroners ruled four-fifths of the 5,700 adolescent deaths from those causes as accidents. In 1994, 70 percent of the 3,800 deaths from these same causes were ruled suicides.

Myth No. 3: Teenagers are prone to suicide.

The facts: Drug abuse among teenagers fell markedly in the 70's and remains low today. Adult drug abuse, on the other hand, has skyrocketed. One statistic sums up the generational change: from 1970 to 1996, drug death rates fell 66 percent among teenagers but rose 113 percent among their aging baby-boom parents, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. It is drug abuse among parents, not teenagers, that is a crisis today.

The so-called teen-age drug epidemic consists of survey findings, like those of the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, that 7 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds reported smoking marijuana once a month or more in 1996, twice the percentage in 1992. A 1997 review by the Lindesmith Center, a drug-policy research institute, of hundreds of studies, concluded that marijuana does not lead to use of harder drugs. Indeed, teenagers' use of heroin, cocaine (including crack) and methamphetamine remains so low that surveys cannot measure it.

Myth No. 5: Teenagers are naturally rebellious and impulsive risk-takers.

The facts: When scholars look for evidence that supports the stereotype that teenagers are reckless and defiant, they find that these prejudices, like those once held by scientists toward minorities, have no basis in fact.

Decades of study by leading researchers, like the work by Daniel Offer, a Northwestern University psychiatrist, suggest that teenagers' values and behaviors reflect those of the adults who rear them. "Our youths are no healthier or sicklier than us, their parents," Dr. Offer wrote. "They reflect us." A 1993 research review of 150 studies published in American Psychologist also found that the perception of personal invulnerability to risk was not more pronounced for adolescents than for adults.

Joseph Adelson, a professor emeritus of psychology at the University of Michigan and a top researcher on the behavior of teenagers, said that his views, which were reported in an article in Psychology Today in 1979, have not changed. "Taken as a whole, adolescents are not in turmoil, not deeply disturbed, not at the mercy of their impulses, not resistant to parental values and not rebellious," he said.

Whatever the evidence shows, the avalanche of negative information fuels public anger toward young people. The 1987 Public Agenda survey found two-thirds of Americans believe youth "rude," "irresponsible" and "wild," while only 37 percent of adults believe that when the current group of children grow up, they will make the United States a better place.

Yet Public Agenda's survey could be evidence that teenagers have healthier attitudes than grown-ups. While adults indulge in blanket hostility stereotypes of young people, teenagers judge adults more positively as individuals. The open-mindedness of most young people may turn out to be a crucial resource in an increasingly diverse America.
Chapter 15

Alternative Interventions for Juvenile Offenders: History of the Adolescent Diversion Project

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INTRODUCTION

Although crime and delinquency have always been concerns in American society, the popular responses to this social problem have fluctuated. Since its inception, the juvenile court has struggled with the often mutually exclusive roles of acting in the best interests of youth and protecting the public from juvenile crime (Krisberg & Austin, 1993). The emergence of juvenile diversion from the criminal justice system occurred during the late 1960s. Diversion was born out of the tripartite concerns about ineffective and inefficient correctional practices, violation of the rights of the accused, and concerns for humane treatment. The creation of Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs) through the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement Administration of Justice during the late 1960s facilitated the spread of juvenile diversion programs throughout the country (Davidson &

1 Authors are listed in alphabetical order to indicate equal contribution.

Handbook of Offender Assessment and Treatment. Edited by C. R. Hollin. © 2000 John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
Johnson, 1987; Hudzik, 1984). However, diversion programs were largely unable to fulfill public expectations and their popularity has since waned (Gensheimer, Mayer, Gottschalk, & Davidson, 1985; Palmer & Lewis, 1980). Unlike the 1960s and 1970s, the current trend in juvenile corrections has placed greater emphasis on detainment and punishment, and less emphasis on diversion and rehabilitation (The Economist, 1996; Stansky, 1996; Petersilie, 1995).

Despite the current emphasis on retribution and deterrence in dealing with juvenile crime and the disappearance of most independent juvenile diversion programs, the Michigan State University Adolescent Diversion Project (ADP) has maintained its presence in the community since its inception in 1976. This chapter discusses the factors that have contributed to the ADP's longevity and success. Specifically, this chapter will first examine the historical context of the Project's inception and the rationale for its development. Second, this chapter will describe the Project and the Project values that have contributed to its success. Lastly, this chapter will summarize the results of research concerning the Project's efficacy and contribution to its community.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Ironically, the inception of juvenile diversion occurred against the backdrop of dramatic increases in violent crime combined with the fear of social unrest in a very similar Zeitgeist present during the inception of the original juvenile court in the state of Illinois in 1899. Beginning in the early 1960s, reported crime rates increased dramatically. Concerns increased as civil disobedience, urban unrest, and political demonstrations received increasing attention from the public and politicians alike (Hudzik, 1984). Concurrently, the juvenile justice system was criticized for its ineffectiveness in dealing with adjudicated youth and the rising cost of traditional approaches of handling juvenile offenders. Critiques of the juvenile system claimed that contact with the system actually made conditions worse through labeling youth and denial of youth rights (Davidson & Johnson, 1987; Smith, 1990).

In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice attempted to address these criticisms. The Commission suggested that part of an effective approach would include a focus on the prevention of crime through improved education, the provision of jobs, and increased opportunities for the poor. This led to the development of YSBs, which were to provide an alternative to the formal Juvenile Court. YSBs were to be composed of community representatives and professionals who would design needed services for young people. While widely acclaimed, the empirical evidence for the success of YSBs never emerged. Further more, a few studies suggested that YSBs were not effective and served to “widen the net” of the formal juvenile justice system potentially having the exact opposite of their intended effect. There was often conflict between community residents and agency personnel over program goals, and few residents felt that YSBs reflected the needs of the community (Hudzik, 1984; Palmer & Lewis, 1980).
The failure of YSBs to alleviate the problems associated with juvenile crime contributed to the eventual criticisms of youth diversion. In general, diversion fell short of living up to its high expectations and clearly did not eradicate juvenile crime. In response to this perception, public sentiment shifted to the view that violent crimes were due to juvenile offenders who had received too many chances in community-based programs. It was argued that in order to attack effectively the crime problem, youth should be locked up and given fewer chances. In short, the perception was that community-based programs did not offer the protection sought after by the public. This sentiment resonated with the conservative reform agenda which was gaining momentum during the late 1970s and 1980s. These positions dominated debates in the United States over juvenile justice during this period. With an emphasis on deterrence and punishment, vigorous prosecution of youthful offenders was demanded (Palmer & Lewis, 1980).

Despite this hostile environment, ADP continued to survive within this changing political climate. Through rigorous development and evaluation, ADP has continued to demonstrate its effectiveness at reducing youth recidivism, providing a cost-effective alternative to the juvenile justice system. In addition, ADP has provided an ongoing research site for community projects nested within a university setting.

ADOLESCENT DIVERSION PROJECT: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This section will describe ADP’s current goals, the essential values of ADP, the responsibilities of advocates, training procedures for advocates, and the components of an actual intervention.

Goals of ADP

The primary goal of ADP is to provide intense, effective, and efficient community-based service intervention to youth as an alternative to formal processing in the juvenile justice system. Although the project exists outside the formal structure of the justice system, it is tied to the courts through the referral of youth. The project uses non-professionals as catalysts to institute positive change in the lives of youths and ultimately to decrease recidivism back into the justice system. Currently, ADP uses undergraduate student advocates to provide a one-on-one, individualized, youth-centered intervention in excess of 120 hours to each youth referred. Intervention effort focuses on several environmental and behavioral variables in a youth’s life. Specifically, advocates are trained to work with not only the youth, but all the key people in the youth’s social environment (i.e. the youth’s family, teachers, potential employers, etc.). Advocate training focuses on the use of behavioral contracting and advocacy to create behavior
modification and resource attainment within the youths’ environments. Careful
group supervision of the advocates by staff members not only ensures interven-
tion quality, but also creates a supportive environment for advocates to share
their experiences and generate ideas. A more extensive description of the goals
and objectives of ADP will be provided in the following sections.

Values of ADP

Several fundamental values are central to the operation of the ADP. These values
are derived from the tenets of ecological and community psychology (e.g.
Fairweather & Davidson, 1986; Rappaport, 1977). A central notion is the idea
that a focus on positive areas of change rather than deficits or pathologies is a
more beneficial approach to preventing and decreasing delinquency. The other
values of ADP simply elaborate upon this basic premise.

ADP builds upon the strengths of youth by training advocates to focus on solu-
tions rather than problems. Specifically, advocates are instructed to concentrate
on utilizing the strengths of each youth to address areas of needed intervention.
Reinforcing positive behaviors is thought by ADP to be a far more effective
method of behavior modification than punishing negative acts, a strategy over-
emphasized by families of delinquent youth and juvenile courts. Emphasizing a
youth’s strengths helps advocates model a non-blaming approach to behavior
change for both parents and youth. This emphasis on strength is likewise more
likely to allow the youth and family to experience successful and positive behav-
ior changes.

Second, ADP values suggest that all youths have the right to basic resources
in our society. These include resources such as food, shelter, safety, education,
free time activities, and due process. Intervention training and implementation
specifically focuses on ensuring that advocates are capable of modeling and
teaching youths and their families tactics to fulfill these and any other needed
resources within their community.

Third, ADP stresses open communication and strict confidentiality between
the youth and the advocate. Advocates are not allowed to discuss any details con-
cerning their youths with anyone not affiliated with ADP, a policy that extends
even to the court system. Advocates are likewise not allowed to disclose confi-
dential information to parents, teachers, or other significant figures in a youth’s
environment. This policy is explained to youth during their intake at court, and
also during an advocate’s first meeting with his/her youth. Open communication
and confidentiality foster trust between the advocate and the youth, and protect
the youth from social labeling by family and community members. The ADP is
very concerned about possible social labeling, for it has been shown to have an
adverse effect on this population of youth (Goffman, 1963).

Another key value of ADP is working intensively with youths in their respec-
tive communities. Because ADP stresses the importance of environmental influ-
ences on the behavior of young people, it is essential that the intervention occurs
where these influences are most salient. This means that advocates encourage youths to utilize local resources (e.g. the neighborhood library, neighborhood recreation center, family members, etc.) before more distant or less available ones are considered. Teaching youths to access and control resources in their immediate environments has been found to ensure more longstanding change because such proximal resources are more readily accessible to these youths, and therefore these resources have the potential to exert a stronger and more immediate influence on these youths than more distal resources.

A final value of ADP is that it avoids a victim blaming the approach in dealing with delinquents. Youths are not seen as having innate and intractable personality problems that cause them to become delinquent; rather, these youths are seen as responding to environmental influences. Additionally, these youths are further hampered by unfair formal sanctioning policies and practices. These victim-blaming influences are especially prevalent in many home and school environments. ADP avoids victim blaming by focusing on more empowering approaches such as strengths-based, environmentally appropriate behavior modification, and on resource identification and attainment.

Course Structure and the Advocates

While the ADP model has been tried with paid staff as change agents, community college students as change agents, and community volunteers as change agents, the primary source of advocates has been undergraduate college students (Davidson, Redner, Amdur, & Mitchell, 1990; Smith & Davidson, 1999). This section will focus on the operations and procedures of the ADP when college students have served as advocates. Those interested in operations with alternative change agents are encouraged to contact the authors. To be admitted into the course, students must have attained at least sophomore status. They are required to pass introductory psychology and must attend two orientation sessions before given permission to enroll. Eligible students who enroll in the course commit to participating in a two semester course. The course consists of three major components. First, the students participate in a formal training segment which involves 12 intense weeks of written and oral quizzes, role-playing exercises, and training in direct advocacy and assessment strategies. Second, advocates agree to work with court referred youth for 18 consecutive weeks for 6–8 hours per week. Third, advocates agree to meet once a week throughout the two semesters to discuss their case with a supervisory group of peers and instructors. During this supervisory meeting, an emphasis is placed on peer support and group generation of ideas for each intervention. Finally, in order for students to remain in the course, they must show mastery of all course materials and attend every class meeting.

Using student advocates contributes to the efficiency of the ADP. Further more, it insures an energetic pool of fresh change agents each semester. It also avoids the difficulty of breaking traditional role behaviors frequently encoun-
tered when asking seasoned professionals to work as change agents in natural community settings.

The Training Component

Advocates are trained to understand human behavior and delinquency through two theoretical models: the behavioral model and the advocacy model. These models were chosen because earlier research has demonstrated each model's efficacy (Davidson, Redner, Blakely, Mitchell, & Emshoff, 1987). Furthermore, it was determined that student advocates preferred utilizing both models because it allowed for a flexible and comprehensive intervention (Davidson et al., 1990).

The behavioral model emphasizes the importance of a youth's environment in determining his/her actions. It likewise suggests that the focus of change should be the youth's environment and the youth's interaction with their environment, not the individual youth per se. The intervention strategy arising from the behavioral model focuses on interpersonal problem solving. Training focuses on gaining the knowledge and skills involved in improving the relationships between the youth and significant others through the use of behavioral contracts and agreements. Additional skills taught to the advocate, the youth, and the family include effective communication and negotiation skills.

The advocacy model emphasizes that delinquency is distributed among all youth and that youth that are unfortunately labeled as delinquent differ from other youth in the material and personal resources available to them. This subset of identified youthful violators often reflects the members of society who are denied social privileges based on race or economic standing. Advocacy training focuses on helping advocates to develop the skills to teach their youths to be proficient in identifying and securing access to various community resources to address unmet needs.

The use of these two models aims to provide the youth and the family with additional skills they may need in responding to the interpersonal and societal challenges of life. These models combined provide the framework for the intervention model of ADP by allowing advocates to work within the youth's natural environment, focus on the youth's strengths, and continuous progress assessment. The reader is referred to Davidson and Rapp (1976), Davidson et al. (1990), and Schillo, Monaghan, and Davidson (1994) for a more detailed description of the intervention models. Further more, the training procedures have been detailed in a 12-unit manual complete with role plays, practice assignments, assigned readings, and text material (available from the authors upon request).

Components of the Intervention

The first 4 weeks of the advocate's involvement with the project are comprised exclusively of training. During week 5 of training, the assignment of youths to
advocates begins. Each advocate is assigned one youth from the county serviced by ADP. Once assigned, the first phase of intervention occurs in which the youth, advocate, and significant others within the youth’s environment all provide input related to the desired behavioral changes and needed community resources that will be addressed during the course of the intervention. Areas of needed change are usually very specific to each youth; however, some general areas of intervention include improving a youth’s academic performance, helping the youth to establish pro-social free time activities, helping the youth secure employment, and helping the youth improve his/her relationship with important adults. The overarching goal of the advocate is to assist the youth and the family in developing the necessary skills to bring about whatever desired changes were identified during the assessment period at the beginning of the intervention.

After identification of intervention areas, the intervention enters phase two in which the advocate assists the youth and family in learning to negotiate and implement behavioral agreements and advocate for resources. Formal behavioral agreements are contracts between the youth and his or her caregiver(s) which allow the youth to earn desired privileges based on his/her performance of some specific responsibility. The implementation of such an agreement occurs during the second phase of the intervention. Also occurring at this time, the youth is taught how to identify and access needed community resources. It is expected that once these two skills are learned, they will remain with both the youth and the family even after completion of the intervention.

The third phase of the intervention consists of a timely review and (if necessary) revision of the intervention efforts up to this point. For example, if a behavioral agreement has been implemented which does not result in the targeted behavioral changes, it would be necessary to revise the contingency between the responsibilities and the privileges until the desired behaviors resulted. A similar process would be used to reassess any advocacy resources that proved to be ineffective in rewarding needed changes in the youth’s environment.

The final phase of the intervention consists of preparing the youth for the termination of the intervention. In the last weeks of the intervention, the advocate reviews with the youth and family the work they have done together, and how observed gains may be maintained in the future. Additionally, during the last meeting with their youths, advocates deliver a termination pack or portfolio which is filled with information relevant to the areas of change that were addressed during the previous 18 weeks. Such a pack might include information on study tips, job-hunting skills, reproductive health issues, and so on. Giving youths such a pack contributes to the ultimate goal of teaching the youth and family to be their own advocates of change, even after the 18-week intervention has terminated.

Staff

Project staff consists of a faculty member in community psychology, several graduate students in psychology, and a few seasoned undergraduate students
who have previously completed an intervention and received very high evaluations from their supervisors. Staff meet once a week for approximately an hour to discuss training topics and special case issues (e.g. if the two supervisors of an advocate need additional suggestions for how to respond to the unusual circumstances of an intervention). Additional responsibilities for the staff include the assignment of youths to specific advocates, and updating and maintaining course reading material and instructional exercises. Finally, staff are also responsible for establishing and enforcing procedural guidelines for advocates.

Relationship with Other Agencies

Establishing a good working relationship with the probate court is necessary to ensure the continued success of this project. ADP depends on the county’s juvenile court officers to refer youth to the program. Because of ADP’s relationship with the probate court, open communication is essential to the collaborative enterprise that ADP shares with the court. ADP maintains regular contact with court referees to ensure that important concerns and issues are discussed in a timely manner. In addition to this regular contact, ADP staff and court referees meet once a year for an informal gathering to renew old acquaintances and welcome new staff members.

EVALUATION

One component that is key to the survival of ADP in its community setting is continuous development and evaluation. During its early research and development period, federal funding from the National Institute for Mental Health supported research activities on the ADP model. After over a decade of such funding, ADP had established itself as a successful program for reducing youth delinquency. Its rigorous evaluation was an impetus in obtaining supporting funds from the county which it services. The next section is a summary of the research conducted to evaluate and improve ADP. For a detailed description of the developmental phases of ADP and results refer to Davidson et al. (1987), Davidson and Redner (1988), Davidson et al. (1990), and Smith and Davidson (1999).

Evaluation of the ADP model went through three phases. The first was focused on examining the basic efficacy of the model. The second was determining which components were critical to the efficacy observed. The third was aimed at determining the replicability and durability of the model.

Evidence of Effectiveness: Early Evaluations

Originally developed in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, the ADP was part of a larger project evaluating the effectiveness of non-professional change agents
in servicing a variety of populations including adolescents in legal jeopardy (Seidman & Rappaport, 1974). Only youth considered for petition to the local circuit court were considered for ADP. During a 2-year study, 73 youth met this criteria. These youth were then assigned randomly to undergraduate students who had been trained either in behavioral contracting or child advocacy. Additionally, some of the youth were assigned randomly to an outright release/no treatment control group. Of these 73 youth, 61 were males, 49 were White, and the average age was 14.3. In the year prior to their involvement with ADP, youth were arrested an average of 2.16 times (Davidson et al., 1977).

Undergraduate student advocates received 6 weeks of training which included reading assignments, homework assignments, and practice role plays. The training and supervision of the student advocates was conducted by advanced graduate students who were in turn trained and supervised by two faculty members. Intervention techniques focused on behavioral contracting, child advocacy, and resource mobilization.

There were three important results that emerged from this intervention. First, there was no difference in the efficacy of the behavioral contracting group or the child advocacy group in terms of recidivism or school attendance. Second, both the behavioral contracting and the advocacy groups were superior to the control group in terms of both recidivism and school attendance. Third, these results persisted through a two-year follow-up (Davidson et al., 1977; Davidson & Redner, 1988).

Evidence of Effectiveness: Examining Critical Components of the ADP

An initial replication of the ADP focused on examining the relative efficacy of various elements of the intervention model. In addition, two other comparisons were included. The first study had compared the ADP model with an outright release control group. For this second study, ADP models were compared with usual court processing. Further more, there were concerns for the degree to which the original results were a function of attentional components (i.e. perhaps simply giving delinquent youths positive attention would be enough to affect a reduction in recidivism). As a result, this second study also included an attention placebo condition. In order to accomplish these comparisons, different groups of students received training (10 weeks manual based) and supervision in different intervention models. In the first experimental condition, labeled the action condition, the behavioral and advocacy models were combined. Students received 10 weeks of training in the combined model and worked one-on-one with referred youth for 18 weeks. A variation of this model was directed exclusively towards the family and was labeled the action condition–family focus. This group utilized advocacy and contracting also, but these principles were applied exclusively with family members. Similar training and intervention intensities applied. A third condition, the relationship condition, focused exclusively on the relationship
between the youth and the student advocate and was based on Rogerian principles and emphasized the importance of interpersonal relationships as contributors to youth delinquency. A fourth condition embodied our concern with examining the transferability of the model to other settings. Labeled the action condition–court setting, students were trained in the action model by project staff but their work with youth was supervised by staff from the juvenile court. The action–court setting was administered with the juvenile court setting. The fifth group was an attention placebo group. This group was intended to mirror the typical model provided by university volunteers and reflect the same intensity of intervention as was present in the other groups. These students received brief training covering the history of the juvenile court, theories of delinquency, and focused on the importance of helping relationships. The intervention was atheoretical and mostly recreational, but of similar intensity and duration (Davidson et al., 1987).

Of the 228 youth that participated in this second study, 83% were males, 26% were minorities, and the average age was 14.2 years. The youth were arrested an average of 1.46 times in the year prior to their involvement in the project. Results indicated that the action group, the action–family focus group, and the relationship groups were all superior in preventing recidivism to the action–court setting, the attention placebo group, and the control group. The action–court setting was the least effective in reducing recidivism (Davidson et al., 1987).

These results support the previous conclusion that ADP was effective in reducing delinquency. Moreover, these results indicated that a specified model and training were critical to providing an effective intervention. Additional findings of interest indicated that the student advocates strongly preferred the action intervention resulting in the decision to employ it in future replications.

Another replication of this intervention examined the importance of college students as the type of advocates employed. In this study, students from a major university, students from a community college, and volunteers recruited from the local community all received training in the action model of intervention. They all received 10 weeks of manual based training and provided 18 weeks of one-on-one intervention to referred youth and their families. Youth were randomly assigned to one of the three groups of advocates or a court processed control group. Using the same criteria for youth participation as in the previous studies, 129 youth were included. Most of the youth were males (83.9%) and 29.8% were minorities. The average age of the youth was 14.1 years.

The first group of advocates (n = 47) consisted of undergraduates recruited from a large midwestern university had an average age of 21; 51% were female, the majority were single (91%), and most were White (91%). Most of the participants in this group had some previous human service experience (70%). These undergraduates received three academic quarters of course credit for their participation. The second group of advocates (n = 35) was comprised of students enrolled in a midwestern community college. Most of these students were White (91%), female (70%), and single (67%). Sixty-seven percent of this group had some human service experience. The students in this group received three acad-
emic quarters of course credit for their participation. The last group was comprised of community advocates \((n = 18)\). Their training, supervision, and intervention goals were the same as the other two groups but they received no course credits or grades for their participation. Although over 200 potential community advocates approached the project during the recruitment period, the vast majority dropped out before the training started. Of the remaining 18 advocates, most were female (67%), White (100%), and had human service experience (93%). Only 36% of the advocates were single, 43% were married, and 21% were divorced or separated.

A two-year follow-up indicated that all three intervention groups had significantly lower recidivism than the control group. However, there was no significant difference between each of the three intervention groups. These results offer support for the intervention model utilizing populations other than university undergraduates to serve as the service providers. Further more, it was discovered that the students from the major university provided the same level of intervention for significantly lower costs. This was due to the increased recruitment costs required to solicit and retain both community college and community volunteer groups (Davidson et al., 1990).

Evidence of Effectiveness: Replication in a Major Urban Area

Since the first three studies had taken place in medium-sized cities, proponents of the ADP felt it was important to begin exploring replication and dissemination possibilities in a large metropolitan area. As a result, the ADP model was also examined in a fourth study in a large metropolitan area. In addition, two important issues were examined in the fourth study. First, the ADP model was directly (Davidson et al., 1990) compared with an outright release control group and a court processing control group in the same study. This allowed examination of the two control conditions while controlling for the larger environmental influences. Second, the ADP model was implemented by a community agency rather than being based in a university setting. This meant that professional staff served as advocates.

In this fourth study, youth were referred by the police after being charged with an offense that would have normally been referred to the court. After agreeing to participate, 395 youth were assigned to one of three groups: (1) the diversion project, (2) released to parents with no further interventions, and (3) traditional court processing. The mean age of the participants was 14 years. Most of the youth were male (84%) and Black (91%). Professional staff (Bachelors degree level) underwent intensive training similar to the previous stages on assessment, behavioral contracting, and advocacy techniques, and methods to monitor intervention and termination. They each carried a case load of 4–6 cases to allow maintaining the intensity of the intervention for 18 weeks.

Results of this study indicated that the action model was statistically superior in reducing delinquency. In a 1-year follow-up, the ADP group had a significantly
lower recidivism rate than either the release to parents or the court processed group. There were no differences in recidivism between the release to parents group and the court processed group (an interesting and controversial finding in its own right).

What Makes ADP Effective?

In addition to the experimental comparisons reported above, there have been several other foci of our program of research aimed at understanding the potent forces operating in the ADP model. A first series of investigations conducted in parallel with the first three studies examined the salient processes operating in both the lives of the adolescent youth and the program. These results emanated from extensive open-ended interviews which were conducted at six-month intervals with the youth involved, their parents, the advocate, and a nominated best friend of the youth. While these results have been reported in great detail elsewhere (e.g. Davidson et al., 1990; Davidson & Redner, 1988) a brief summary is relevant here. Three important findings were identified. First, it appears that the ADP model operates to increase the fit of the youth in pro-social activities. This model has both a social control and social support component. Youth who receive ADP intervention remain relatively more involved in their families, school, and employment settings, and they are relatively less involved in peer activities and legal issues. Second, the ADP model appears to insulate the youth and their families from the negative influences which are exacerbated by court processing. In other words, the ADP model has a direct and positive effect while avoiding a negative effect. Third, it appears that interventions that are characterized as proactive, persistent, and accomplishment oriented are more likely to have positive effects. In other words, when the details of intervention process are examined in relation to outcome, those interventions which proactively addressed issues in the home, school, or employment domain are more likely to see the youth involved and reduce recidivism.

Other attempts to examine factors that contribute to the success of ADP have illuminated the role of labeling in the lives of youth serviced by ADP. As previously mentioned, one of the original goals of diversion programs was to remove the negative stigma applied to youth who came into contact with the criminal justice system. Later, diversion programs were criticized for not fulfilling this promise. Youth who are formally processed by the juvenile court are assumed to be stigmatized by the experience, and this stigma is believed to encourage future acts of delinquency as a function of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

An analysis of interview data from the youth and parent in the fourth study indicated that diversion from the juvenile justice system was successful in reducing the number of people who are aware of a youth's delinquency; however, diversion was positively related to the number of people in the youth's life who suspected further delinquency. Positive family relationships seemed to serve as a
Effects on the Advocates

Juveniles have not been the only focus of ADP research. Additional research has been conducted using the student advocates. In the hope of improving the selection of volunteers to be used as change agents, the first investigation of the advocates examined three key issues. First, the long-term impact on the volunteer of the intervention was examined to assess the possible influence effects the intervention experience may have on the volunteer’s future choice of career and education. Second, the volunteer’s attitudes toward the client population and related social services were examined over time. Third, the impact of the intervention experience on the volunteer’s evaluation of the students’ undergraduate education. The only clear finding that emerged was that students who participated in the project, compared with a control group, were significantly more likely to be employed in the human service arena (Davidson et al., 1990).

Later research examined the political empowerment beliefs of ADP advocates before and after completing their work with a court referred youth. The specific beliefs of interest in this study were political awareness, political competence, and political activism. Angelique (1997) expected that participants who actually worked with court referred youth (experimental group) would feel more politically empowered than waiting list participants who were never assigned youths (control group). Again, findings for this study were mixed. Angelique found that participants who were actually allowed to work with youth exhibited an increased level of political commitment compared with advocates in the control group. However, feelings of political efficacy decreased more significantly for the experimental group than for the control group. Despite the latter finding, a general trend was found which suggested that advocates who worked with youth were more likely to aspire to careers in social services.
CONCLUSION

The Adolescent Diversion Project is a community-based service provider which attempts to keep at-risk youth out of the formal juvenile court system by utilizing the efforts of trained undergraduate advocates. Despite significant social and political opposition to diversion programs that can be traced back to the early 1970s, this project has survived and flourished during the past 26 years due to a number of specific factors.

One of the most important contributing factors to ADP’s longevity is its strict adherence to the values that guided the original development of the Project. ADP has a set of empirically validated values which permeate all aspects of its implementation. Specifically, ADP endorses the view that delinquency is caused by youths whose needs have been thwarted by an unresponsive environment. This approach avoids victim blaming, and it helps advocates focus on helping youths to capitalize on their strengths. Additionally, ADP endorses the view that the focus of change in a youth’s life should be directed at his/her environment rather than the unique personality variables of the youth. Toward this end, advocates center their intervention efforts in the youth’s community. Lastly, ADP has a value for self-evaluation and program dissemination. The latter value allows ADP to quantitatively justify its existence, and because it has been able to demonstrate its efficacy, this fact makes it easier to disseminate program information to new communities.

Another important factor that helps to promote ADP’s continued existence and dissemination is its low cost and its use of non-federal funding sources. Because ADP is a program with demonstrated efficacy, many county and state agencies are willing to utilize it as an alternative to more expensive, less efficacious options such as building more detention centers or hiring more law enforcement officers. Additionally, ADP is able to keep its costs low because it enlists the aid of para-professionals. These advocates have been found to be effective agents of change, and they are also much less expensive than utilizing more traditional human service professionals. Utilizing non-federal funding sources and enlisting the aid of advocates has helped ADP reduce costs without sacrificing efficacy, and this allows ADP to avoid the criticism leveled at other diversion programs which asserts that such programs are too expensive and ineffective.

Finally, ADP’s concerted effort to maintain a very congenial and open relationship with juvenile court officials has also contributed significantly to its survival and ultimate success. By convincing court officials that ADP is a viable sentencing alternative, ADP ensures that these officials will find a place for it in their dispensation decisions.

This chapter has attempted to describe some of the major factors that have contributed to ADP’s ability to persevere when so many other diversion programs have been forced to expire. The heart of ADP is that it is a collaborative effort, not only of individuals and institutions, but also of ideas and values. It is
a program that is committed to the betterment of youth, and it has had over 20 years to refine this resolve. It is hoped that the information described in this chapter will be useful to other human service workers who may be attempting to start similar projects.

REFERENCES


Unit 2
UNIT II

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES CONCEPTION OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND DELINQUENCY RATIONALE FOR MULTIPLE STRATEGY MODEL

Unit II Readings:


Environmental Resources Conception of Human Behavior

This unit will provide an introduction to the advocacy approach to working with delinquent youths. The following outline provides a brief overview of delinquency theories.

Traditional Approaches to Addressing Delinquency

1. Individual Differences
   a. Basic Premise – Inherent characteristics of individual cause delinquency
      ■ demographic, physical, or personality factors cause this
      ■ genetic conditions cause delinquency
      ■ intrapsychic conflict or inadequate ego development
      ■ retarded cognitive development
   b. Criticism
      ■ proven to be ineffective approach
      ■ assumes stable factors predict human behavior
      ■ attempts to eliminate difference

2. Social Conflict
   a. Basic Premise – Various groups are given different means of attaining the "American Dream." Some are legal; some are not.
   b. Criticism
      ■ unproven efficacy
      ■ assumes stable factors predict human behavior
      ■ attempts to eliminate differences in people

3. Environmental Resource Approach
   a. Basic Premise – Differences are valued. Delinquency is seen as a product of youths having unmet needs, and all youths are assumed to have the right to have these needs fulfilled.
   b. Improvement over other 2 models
      ■ values differences in people
      ■ shown to be effective
individualized intervention, not based on static assumption of the causes of human nature

The **environmental resources conception** of human behavior forms the basis for the child advocacy approach and its related techniques. As with most theoretical and conceptual developments in the field of social science, the environmental resources conception of human behavior is very much a reaction to and an outgrowth of traditional conceptions and strategies within academic and professional realms.

The first of these traditional approaches, prominent within the fields of psychology, social science and within society as a whole, is generally characterized as the **individual differences** tradition. The basic premise of this school of thought is that human behavior is a function of relatively stable, individual characteristics, such as intelligence, personality, and family background. Furthermore this approach maintains that there are some individuals who act and think differently from "normal" individuals. This approach has led to a myriad of techniques to change "undesirable" individuals within a traditional therapeutic format. The basic strategy involves inducing change in the specific characteristics of the individual so that undesired actions disappear or are replaced by desired actions, self-esteem, and ego strength. Most of the change approaches that you are familiar with, in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, social work, counseling, and education, are aimed at changing individual characteristics as the appropriate route to therapeutic gain.

A second approach to human behavior, very prominent in the field of sociology in the fifties, and at the base of the social action movements of the sixties, is the **social conflict** theoretical position. The basic premise of the social conflict approach is that human behavior is to a great extent a function of social structures. In other words, formal and informal social structures and forces function to direct an individual and/or group towards behavior patterns considered to be normative or legal. This position suggests that cultures are successful in convincing their members of the desirable goals to obtain. In our own culture such common goals include material wealth, education, and good jobs. However, it also suggests that subgroups within each society are differentially provided with legitimate and illegitimate means of attaining the commonly esteemed goals. In other words, if legitimate means towards the commonly held goals are not available to individuals or groups, they will seek and find illegitimate methods of attaining congruence with society's ideals. Thus, deviance is viewed as an illegitimate means of obtaining a desirable goal and is a function of rather intractable social conditions and structures. The implication of this social structure/social conflict conception of human behavior is that the opportunity structures of American society have to be opened so that all groups have equal access. The social conflict approach is often related to the individual differences ideology by the suggestion that the observed individual differences (low intelligence, criminality, poverty, or a poor work record) are a function of an unequal opportunity structure within the society.

Although the environmental resources conception of behavior developed out of (and therefore shares some perspective with) the social conflict model, it is very different from
the earlier model in some important respects. In fact, theorists of the environmental 
resources approach criticize two major weaknesses that they see as common to both the 
individual differences and the social conflict models:

1) Both of these earlier models view the differences between people or between 
social groups as the major source of social problems. Both approaches focus on 
differences, and seek to eradicate these differences between people and 
groups. In contrast, the environmental resources approach suggests that the 
individual and cultural differences, which exist between people in a pluralistic 
society, are desirable. The importance and integrity of each and every 
individual is seen as paramount. This approach, rather than seeking to do 
away with the differences between people, instead upholds and supports each 
person's right to express and fulfill themselves as distinct individuals. This is 
not to condone the continuation of social structures that deny certain groups 
equal access to resources. The point is that rather than focusing on 
differences, the environmental resources approach focuses on the right of each 
individual to have their needs fulfilled.

2) Both the individual differences and the social conflict models are criticized for 
their fixed, static natures. They both suggest that relatively stable 
characteristics are predictive of human behavior. The environmental 
resources position in contrast proposes that human behavior is much more 
likely to be a function of ongoing social processes -- like those within the 
family, the government, the school system which by their very nature cannot 
be captured by a static model. Furthermore, it argues that the two other 
approaches, with their focus on static individual and social characteristics, 
provide an excuse for not being involved in the social process. The alternative 
suggested by the environmental resources conception is one of involvement, 
in which the basic right of each individual to society's resources is 
highlighted. The Joint Commission on Mental Health in Children most 
elaborately delineated this position during the early 1970's. The Commission 
stated that each individual in our society has a basic right to resources, in all 
life domains, which society has available. The constitutional rights to life, 
liberty, and happiness were reasserted as a systematic position about how to 
deal with human difficulty. In short, each individual has a right to have 
his/her needs fulfilled through education, vocation, recreation, interpersonal 
relationships, and upbringing.

The implications of the environmental resources conception of human behavior are that 
advocates need to work for various individuals and social groups, to ensure that the 
society and local community respond to the needs of all their members. The advocacy 
approach is hardly new to our society. In fact, advocates have existed in a number of 
naturally occurring and professional roles for some time. Parents are construed as 
advocates for their children, lawyers for their clients, professional associations for their 
constituents, and labor unions for their workers. This conception also suggests that the 
role of the advocate needs to be more widely dispersed among various demographic,
developmental, and professional groups. The advocate needs to intervene within the ongoing social processes that are relevant to the life of the individual or group. Thus, an advocate will insure that each individual receives the full gamut of resources to which he/she has a right, and which are needed to fulfill individual needs.

**Environmental Resources Conception of Juvenile Delinquency**

Initially the environmental conception was applied to the problem of juvenile delinquency due to a growing recognition that the traditional approaches failed to provide any productive strategies for dealing with youthful law violators. The traditional explanations of delinquency failed to account for the widespread incidence of illegal behavior by youth among all social and demographic groups. In addition, the traditional approaches to treatment had resulted in the apparently malignant conditions prevalent in the nation's juvenile justice system and in the programs designed to rehabilitate delinquent youth.

**The basic position of the environmental resources conception of juvenile delinquency is this:**

1) Illegal youthful behavior is widespread among all youth groups.

2) Police, parents, and school officials identify subsets of the youthful law violators as being official juvenile delinquents.

3) If sufficient material and personal resources are not exerted, the youth will in fact become officially labeled delinquent.

4) After a youth enters the system, access to important resources is further reduced.

The environmental resources conception suggests that delinquent youth are very much like all other youth (many of whom commit illegal acts), except that the material and personal resources, which could have been used to keep them out of the juvenile justice system, were not utilized. This subset of youthful violators that are identified often reflects the oppression of members of society who do not have privileges based on race or economic standing. Once a youth enters the system, his/her access to important resources is further reduced. The environmental resources model stresses the value of the individual. A youthful offender is seen as having unfulfilled personal and material needs. Thus, each youth must be respected and his/her rights to the community's resources guaranteed.

In the area of treatment of juvenile offenders, this individual rights/child advocacy approach has recently been recommended as a general intervention strategy. Success in American society, both material and personal, can be viewed as a function of one's ability
to manipulate society's resources for one's own benefit. Children have lacked advocacy
groups and hence have probably received less than their fair share of the community's
resources. Youth identified as delinquents have obviously received even fewer of the
resources to which they have a right. Thus, the child advocacy approach suggests that the
scales should be balanced so that the law violator has an equal chance of gaining the
resources necessary to fulfill his/her personal and material needs.

**Basic Principles from Unit II**

**Manual**

Basic premises of the individual differences model and the social conflict model

Criticisms directed at these two approaches by the environmental resources conception,
and how environmental resources conception differs from these.

Rationale and implications of the advocacy (E.R.) approach

Environmental resources conception of delinquency

The three general phases of the problem-solving process proposed by Davidson and Rapp
Unit II Homework

Advocacy Assessment

Each of you will be assigned a community resource frequently used by youths participating in this program. For the community resource you are assigned, you are to go in-person to the resource/agency to conduct a thorough assessment of the resource. The information needed for this assignment must be gathered in a very comprehensive manner, and it needs to provide a high degree of specificity in describing the resource. For example, you must include detailed information that addresses all of the following areas (even if your response is to say “not applicable”):

1) the unmet need(s) the resource fills,
2) the name of your resource/agency,
3) the location of the resource (complete address please- include directions),
4) the name and title of the contact person,
5) the phone number/email address, and
6) a thorough program/resource description.

Additionally, be sure to collect information related to:

1) eligibility requirements,
2) cost,
3) hours of operation,
4) enrollment procedures, and
5) transportation options (bus route?, provision of transportation, etc.).

You will lose points on this assignment if all of these areas are not covered in your assessment! In addition, make sure to include any relevant assessment information that you think is useful (such as the comfort of the environment, friendliness, cleanliness, etc.). All of this information is to be well organized and typed on a separate sheet of paper to be handed in (don’t forget to put your name on it). A resource packet consisting of the combined reports of every student enrolled in the class will be created and disbursed to every advocate. You will be referring to these packets throughout your intervention.

GOOD LUCK!!!!
Child advocacy in the justice system

William S. Davidson II and Charles A. Rapp

Traditional theories of juvenile delinquency have not yielded successful strategies for treatment. This article presents a multiple-strategy model with new and promising implications for child advocacy.

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An increasing concern of American society has been the problems of youth, in particular juvenile delinquency and youth crime. As witness to this, Shah observed: “It can be said with little fear of exaggeration that the phenomena of delinquency and crime constitute one of the most critical domestic problems presently facing the country.” This situation has led to a myriad of new approaches and suggested solutions.

The rationale for these current developments parallels the events that led to the original creation of the juvenile court in this country at the beginning of the twentieth century. Dissatisfaction with the treatment of delinquents, violations of individual rights, the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of large institutional programs, and inflated probation caseloads have all led to recent suggestions for alternative programs. One prominent strategy that has been suggested as an alternative is child advocacy. This article proposes to describe the conceptions and background underlying the child advocacy approach and to outline a multiple-strategy model of child advocacy. Because of the widespread attention that the advocacy approach has received and the dearth of specific prescriptions for action or evaluation, it seems critically important to describe the inception of such a model.

The tactic of child advocacy as a legitimate strategy for intervention with youths have recently enjoyed a rapid rush to prominence. Child advocacy was injected into the social service field by several federal government reports, the most potent of which was the Joint Commission on Mental Health of Children. Consider the following statement from one of its reports:

We believe that every American child has the right to a mentally healthy life of well-being and effectiveness. If we are to fulfill this right we must face squarely the social crises of our times and commit ourselves to radical social change.

The commission also suggested multiple tactics for implementing strategies of child advocacy, which included the establishment of a nationwide network of federal, state, and local advocacy councils that would be dependent on traditional social agency functioning. The recommendations, however, have been open to varied interpretations.

The report of the joint commission was a direct indictment of national policy and of the adequacy of service provided to the country’s youth. The advocacy approach suggests delinquent youths, like all youth, deserve the direction of community resources increase social potency rather than receive professional individual services or the enrichment of deprived environments.

STRATEGIES FOR ADVOCACY

Actually, although several general characteristics of child advocacy have emerged, little has been forthcoming about specific strategies for child advocacy since the joint commission’s report. First, the recommendations of child advocacy appeared to be manifestations of the principles that guided this country’s efforts in the federal-funded War on Poverty programs. Community organization approaches to social problems had provided an important part of the rationale behind such earlier efforts as the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Community Action Program. An approach such as these are hardly new to the social service fields.

Second, several roles have been suggested for child advocates, all included generating the necessary community resources for the client or with the client, or teaching the client to become his own advocate. The National Association of Social Workers’ Advisory Committee on Advocacy has suggested each of these roles.

Other authors have suggested that the role of advocacy dictates active political strategies for the particular client or group in question. At the opposite end of the continuum, Brophy, Chan, and Nagel proposed an advocacy model in the style of individual counseling. Others have conceptualized child advocacy in a semisystematic model involving action for an
with the client and instruction to him. Third, various groups have been singled out as the most effective advocates. In many arenas the skills of the lawyer appeared to be more appropriate to the task at hand than those of social service personnel. Others have suggested that advocacy programs belong in the schools, that a separate federal agency be established as a watchdog on services for youths, and that students provide the only sufficiently independent group to carry out advocacy functions. None of these suggestions has gone without criticism.

It can be stated unequivocally that the large amount of rhetoric concerning child advocacy has produced few operating principles and no data concerning the effectiveness of the proposed programs. In fact, a recent national survey of child advocates programs indicated that the concept of child advocacy had taken on multiple meanings, including many old services under new labels. Even more disappointing was the complete lack of any specific models for advocacy efforts or of studies relevant to the effectiveness of the approaches.

This article will outline the beginnings of a set of approaches that can be called a multiple-strategy model of child advocacy and will highlight its usefulness in the juvenile justice system. In addition, the approaches of child advocacy will be contrasted with traditional conceptions of problem youth. In essence, it is the conception behind the child advocacy approach, and therefore the rationale for engaging in advocacy efforts, that constitutes a wide departure from traditional techniques. The authors will delineate a problem-solving process that will indicate how the multiple strategies are to be selected for implementation in any given situation. Additional brief comments will describe the need for evaluation of the child advocacy approach.

The specific model to be described was developed for use in a program whose purpose was to examine the relative efficacy of various approaches for diverting youthful offenders from the juvenile justice system. Although the terminology and examples used will reflect the context of a delinquency intervention program, the model is not necessarily restricted to concerns for youths in legal jeopardy. Rather, the implications of this approach indicate an interest in all young people in our society. What is suggested is that the juvenile justice system begin to take an active role in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Commission on Mental Health of Children. A first step is to describe a model for such efforts.

CAUSES OF DELINQUENCY

As with most innovative approaches to human intervention, the strategies and concepts that comprise child advocacy came as a reaction to previous ideas. In the field of delinquency, as with most explanations of "deviance," two general positions have been used to explain the phenomena and provide directions for improvement.

On the one hand, the cause of delinquency has been said to reside within the individual. This position includes such diverse theoretical explanations as these: (1) the demographic, physical, and personality correlates of delinquency, (2) the suggestion of genetic predispositions of delinquent behavior, (3) the explanation of delinquency as a result of intra-psychic conflict and inadequate development of the superego, and (4) considerations of retarded cognitive development as an important variable in the prediction of illegal actions by youths.

The delinquent was seen as being unintelligent, a product of inconsistent and inappropriate parental upbringing, lacking in socialization skills and in a poten conscience, and even as having some genetic abnormality. Directives for treatment included special education programs to bring the youth's intellectual development into line with normal expectations, individual therapy to repair psychic imbalance, and highly structured institutional treatment to enhance socialization. More than sufficient evidence exists to attest to the ineffective-
mental resources conception, these differences are viewed as being among the assets of a pluralistic society. The magnitude of such differences, although statistically reliable, are of questionable social significance. More important, they provide a basis for unwarranted negative expectations concerning delinquents and erect stumbling blocks to confound effective intervention.

The environmental resources conception takes a universalist rather than an exceptionalist approach to delinquents. The universalist approach assumes that the aura of unmet needs displayed by delinquents is not exclusively characteristic of these few violators of the law. Rather, delinquents can be viewed in the same way as all other youths. Their areas of unmet needs—which culminate most dramatically in their entry to the juvenile justice system—happen to meet with severe social sanction. In fact, their entry into that system puts in motion a whole set of social processes that apparently leads to further delinquency. What is suggested by the child advocacy approach is that in a successful society all youths have the the right to have their collective and individual needs fulfilled. The vehicle of advocacy can be used to insure that those needs are met.

Given this view of youth, it is necessary to turn to the specific implications for intervention. The general model for the strategy comes from various long-existing advocacy groups. Lawyers, for example, see to it that the needs of their clients are met, unions do the same for workers, professional organizations act as watchdogs for their members, and lobbying groups assert the position of the constituents. Child advocacy suggests that similar strategies be applied to youth. Regarding the resources available to the youths of this country, particularly those in legal jeopardy, the last ten years have pointed to a dissatisfaction with existing resources in such areas of life as education, employment, health, and the law.

Within the framework of general advocacy, a multiple-strategy model is seen as being potentially beneficial. It is anticipated that this model must be applied in any advocacy efforts directed to the individual, group, and organizational levels of intervention. In general, the aim of advocacy is to provide an environmental resource to fill any area of unmet need. As the Joint Commission on Mental Health of Children asserted, all children have the right to needed resources.

**OVERVIEW OF THE MODEL**

In outlining a series of strategies for child advocacy efforts, the aim is to provide a working model for the proposed federal, state, and local child advocacy agencies. The multiple-strategy model of child advocacy provides the basis for a program to divert delinquents from the juvenile justice system. The senior author is currently investigating the efficacy of these techniques and extended reports are available on request. Several existing vehicles for advocacy—such as juvenile courts, their advisory boards, youth service bureaus, and youth councils—operate within the juvenile justice system. The thrust of this article is that the juvenile justice system must no longer accept the passive role of social control. Rather, it must work actively to change the social conditions that produce the youths with whom it is asked to deal. The model outlined here has implications for political action, program administration, and case management by the juvenile justice system and the various social institutions and agencies to which it relates.

The multiple-strategy model of advocacy includes a nine-step problem-solving format, which is presented graphically in Figure 1. Although each step will be discussed separately, it is important to note that the stages are interrelated and each step is dependent on previous and forthcoming ones as well as on input from external sources. The model contains a series of feedback loops that reflect this interdependence. Thus, rather than being a closed system, the model is a continuous process of evaluation, action, reevaluation, and reaction.

The general process through which a strategy is to be selected might be construed as rational problem-solving. In other words, there is a goal or a set of goals (needed resources) that must be generated, and a number of avenues through which those goals can be attained. The selection of a strategy must be based on the information collected in each step of the proposed model.

Who Is the Advocate? Ideally, the advocate should be selected after the entire problem-solving model has been completed. Only then can the strategy be matched with the person or group that could most effectively implement it. However, this is rarely if ever possible. The advocate is usually designated before the problem-solving process begins.

Because of the nature of the multiple-strategy model, it is impossible to construct a list of advocate characteristics that would encompass the variety of situations and strategies. It is critical, however, that advocate groups be formed. At present, it appears that such a group must include several professional groups and the youths themselves, together with additional technical “allies” as needed. Individually and together, the advocate group—referred to here as the advocate—must initiate the process described.

Although an ideal advocate group cannot be constructed, one fact seems to cut across situations and strategies. The advocate must have a degree of freedom that will not interfere with his commitment to youths or make him vulnerable to co-optation or negative sanctions. Social service professionals need to be aware of such constraints before adopting an advocacy strategy.

One source of restriction is the interaction between formal and informal processes—that is, incompatible loyalties; threats of being fired, sanctioned or not promoted; responses to existing norms, relationships, procedures, and channels. Responsibility to an advocate’s career, to his family and friends, limit the commitment and the range of strategies to be considered. In most segments of society, conformity and adherence to established procedures are rewarded. The important point is that multiple source
FIG. 1. MULTIPLE-STRATEGY MODEL OF CHILD ADVOCACY

PRIMARY ASSESSMENT

The primary assessment stage includes the first four steps in the problem-solving model. The selection of effective strategies is dependent on an accurate description of the needs of the youths, individually and collectively, the resources desired, the degree to which resources are available, and the vulnerability of those in control of the resources.

Assessment of Unmet Needs
perceptions of the youths’ concerns about unmet needs lack of resources are paramount. However, this should not negate the importance of outsiders’ opinions. For example, parents, educators, employers and the like add new dimensions. Other individuals, agencies, or organizations may have to be consulted to ensure that strategies of change are undermined. Knowledge of individuals and organizational contingencies facilitate the efficient development of the subsequent steps. Also, if any limiting factors are present, they may need to be altered as part of the advocacy effort. The client or the client group must be the primary director.

What Resources Are Needed?
Often this step is ignored because resources may be immediately obvious. However, the obvious ones not include all possibilities, nor they automatically the best. It is important for the advocate to generate many alternatives as possible to assess the subjective probability each will fulfill the unmet needs of the client group. This phase of assessment will include such multiple tactic interviewing, brainstorming, investigative reporting, and legal research.

Who Is in Control?
This step includes two phases—determining which needed resources are available identifying who is in control of the available resources, the
“Delinquency can be said to result from an insufficient access to educational, vocational, and economic opportunities—all legitimate means to success—and a disproportionate access to illegitimate means.”

SELECTED STRATEGIES

The multiple-strategy model suggests three sets of interrelated strategies. The first set of alternative strategies available to the child advocate consists of a continuum ranging from positive "salesmanship" approaches to aversive or negative approaches. In order to generate or stimulate a particular resource, the advocate must select a strategy that could be positive, negative, or somewhere in between. The points on the continuum include the following:

1. At the positive end, the advocate can attempt to gain the good favor of the person or agency in control of the needed resource.

2. At midpoint, the advocate could select a neutral strategy, often referred to as consultation, in which information would be provided to the critical individual or agency about the area of unmet needs.

3. At the negative end of the continuum, the advocate could decide to take direct aversive action against the critical individual or agency. If the needed resource is not provided, threats to take such action are also a major component of negative strategies.

The second set of strategies available to the child advocate consists of a continuum of approaches to bring about change that ranges from the individual level to the societal level. The points on this continuum include the following: (1) at the individual level, the advocate could identify the critical person in control of the needed resource, (2) at the administrative level, the advocate could identify a critical agency in control of the needed resource, and (3) at the policy level, strategies might include situation which the advocate could identify as political or social system was responsible for the resource was lacking.

Interaction of Strategies As can be seen, the first two sets of strategies necessarily interact. In other words, the advocate will need to select strategies that are positive or negative to identify individuals or systems that must be changed. The examples showing the interaction of the two sets strategies cannot be viewed as prescriptive because strategies or combinations of strategies must be executed on the basis of each advocate's situation. The possible combinations of strategies follow.

Positive strategy at the individual level. One common situation is the young people's needs for education not being met because of inappropriate or irrelevant aspects of their curriculum. Taking a positive-individual strategy, the advocate would identify individuals, teachers, and seek an agreement to try to make adjustments in the classroom curriculum that would be more conducive to the needs of youths.

Positive strategy at the administrative level. The absence of adequate recreational activities and facilities constitutes another typical area of unmet needs for youths. Taking an administrative-positive approach, the advocate would contact the city commission with a proposal for drafting an application for a community development grant to generate additional recreational facilities and programs.

Positive strategy at the policy level. Many youths who are seen in delinquency programs are unemployed. Taking a positive approach at the policy level, the advocate would lobby state legislators to amend irrelevant

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restrictions on the types of employment for which young people could qualify and try to initiate legislation to provide jobs in the public and private sectors.

Information-provision strategy at the individual level. Another example of unmet recreational resources could be a particular youth's desire to participate in organized athletics. Taking an individual-information approach the advocate might tell the coach of a local " pee wee " football team that the boy in question wanted to join the league.

Information-provision strategy at the administrative level. In the area of employment, the advocate taking an administrative-information strategy would present information about available employees and rates of unemployment to the director of the local youth employment service and would see that such information was highlighted by the media to influence policy-makers.

Information-provision strategy at the policy level. Educational resources are a common area of need for all young people. In fact, current educational systems fail to deal effectively with one-third to one-half of American youths, many of whom, in consequence, come into contact with the juvenile justice system. Taking an information strategy at the policy level an advocate would present the state board of education and state superintendent of schools with dropout rates and preferences for educational alternatives and would highlight the right of all students to a public education.

Negative strategy at the individual level. Youths are often denied access to employment because of the employer's knowledge of past deviance. Taking an individual-negative approach, the advocate would have the local media cover the story about a young person's being denied a job by the particular employer.

Negative strategy at the administrative level. Youths are often denied access to alternative education because of the lack of availability. Taking a negative strategy at the administrative level, the advocate would initiate a class-action suit against the school district for failing to meet its legislative mandate to educate all youth.

Negative strategy at the policy level. Frequently, youths are not employed by the very programs designed to employ them (for example, the Neighborhood Youth Corps), because of group membership or place of residence. Taking a negative-policy strategy, the advocate would join the legislative committee to investigate the federal agency charged with operating such youth-employment programs, holding it responsible for its employment practices and the quality of the jobs provided.

The actual combinations of strategies that could result are practically endless and depend on the situation, the people involved, the resource in question, and the person controlling the resource. A critical step is to assess the potential impact of alternative strategies.

STRATEGY FOR ACTION

A critical component of the child advocacy approach is the selection of a strategy that will produce the resource needed. By necessity, this will have to be accomplished in each individual situation. In the first place, at the heart of the advocacy approach is a belief in the rights of youths and the self-control of environmental resources. It is critical, then, that youths be involved in the selection of the necessary resource as well as in the selection of a strategy for intervention. In addition, child advocacy is still in its infancy. This means that it is not yet possible to provide an a priori prescription as to what resources are needed, which strategies are indicated, and who should carry out the actual advocacy. The action-reaction sequence will provide considerable information for selecting the next strategy.

Consequences. The consequences of a strategy are multiple. Fundamentally, a strategy has consequences for three parties—the client, the advocate, and the target. Systems theory has proposed that it is not possible to affect one part of the system without affecting the whole. Therefore, depending on the nature of the resource needed and the strategy used, varying numbers of people would be affected.

A few generalizations about the relationship between the strategy and its possible outcome can be proposed. At any level, positive and neutral strategies have little chance of causing short-range negative consequences. The converse is that negative strategies have a high probability of incurring backlash or short-range negative consequences. Many strategies including combinations of positive, neutral, and negative approaches. The crucial consideration that supersedes all others is how to obtain the resource while satisfying the client needs. The client and the advocate must decide which strategy offers the highest probability of attaining the necessary resource at the same time that it minimizes any potential negative consequences. Obviously, in many instances, backlash must be risked to ensure that the position of the youth is not compromised.

Similarly, the selection of only single levels of intervention is inadvisable. Most social services, particularly those relating to delinquent groups have focused their efforts exclusively at the individual level. A major implication of the universalist conception of child advocacy is that intervention at the administrative and the policy levels must be a major part of any effort.

Another continuum of alternative strategies used by the child advocate is whether to act for the client, with the client, or whether to teach the client and client group to be their own advocates. Since the goal of any advocacy effort must be to engender independence, the multiple strategy model of advocacy suggests that this continuum be included in a sequential fashion, overlaying the other two continua.

Necessarily, the advocate will have to begin by actively assessing needs, identifying available or potential resources, selecting alternative strategies, executing the strategy, monitoring the strategy's effectiveness in meeting the need, and finally carefully instructing the client, client group, or organization in the techniques of advocacy.
In his discussion of the competent community, Isscoe suggested that the goal of intervention should be the development of a community that "utilizes, develops, or otherwise obtains resources of the human beings." In the end, youths must have full access to the rationale for the advocacy approach, the potential resources available, and the way of selecting alternative strategies for action. In one sense, the entire advocacy effort can be viewed as preparation for self-advocacy.

USING THE MODEL

As stated at the outset, the multiple-strategy model of child advocacy must be construed as a set of intricately related and interacting components. As shown in Figure 1, however, the model does not imply that orderly execution of the phases of assessment, decision, and implementation will lead automatically to a successful disposition. The continual goal of maximizing gains while minimizing losses dictates an ongoing interplay of components in the advocacy effort. For example, the process of assessment—including assessment of unmet needs, potential resources, identified individuals and institutions, and the vulnerability of these groups—continues to take place throughout the advocacy effort. In many instances, the best assessment can be carried out by initiating a particular strategy and carefully monitoring the reaction of the group providing the resources.

In addition, initiation of a particular strategy may result in feedback from other individuals, groups, or organizations in the client's environment that could provide excellent information for selecting further strategies or altering the initial strategy. Consider the situation in which an advocate identifies a school district as needing to provide innovative alternative programs for educating youths who are functional dropouts or who have been pushed out of the traditional school system. After careful assessment and selection of strategies, the group is in the process of attempting to convince the superintendent of schools that an alternative high school is needed. Attention to these efforts by the media stimulates the interest of a group of neighborhood parents who are also working on educational alternatives. However, efforts to convince the school district to include an alternative high school in educational program-planning aroused the objections of the local teachers union. The combination of these developments would require the advocate to incorporate the new information into his strategy. Depending on the anticipated influence of such developments, additional strategies could be selected, other groups enjoined in the effort, or different targets for change isolated.

Similarly, it can be anticipated that the assessment of one area of unmet needs might point to other areas; the identification of resources can lead to information concerning other available resources; the careful mapping of a strategy can lead to previously unconsidered resources; and the monitoring of a strategy's strength can lead to adjustments in the assessment of earlier needs. The advocate must be sensitive to supplementary information that would be useful in gaining additional resources or that indicates strategies which are potentially more efficient. The complexity of the arena for child advocacy dictates that all options be maintained, that no strategies be arbitrarily discarded, and that the action-reaction cycle be used both for accomplishment and information-gathering. The position of the youths is not to be compromised.

NEED FOR EVALUATION

The prevalence of the advocacy approach has reached nationwide proportions. To date, however, no systematic evaluations on an experimental format have been reported. Moreover, the juvenile justice system has probably never before witnessed an equivalent demand for alternative approaches to intervention, nor has it been so vulnerable to contemporary therapeutic fads. Essential to the model of child advocacy are multiple organizational levels of intervention and assessment. Thus, simplistic approaches to evaluating and understanding child advocacy hold little promise of providing relevant feedback.

Social scientists and practitioners have a responsibility to carry out systematic experimentation on the efficacy of the child advocacy approach in comparison to usual traditional intervention procedures or other innovative approaches. This responsibility is highlighted by the proclaimed accountability of the advocacy approach. Only feedback from careful field experimentation, complete with randomly selected control and comparison groups, can provide conclusions that will have an impact on the formulation of policy.

The need to understand the processes at work in the approaches of child advocacy indicate the necessity of going beyond the pre-post control group evaluation design suggested by Campbell. As was outlined previously, child advocacy involves a highly complex set of processes that can operate at a multiplicity of social levels and requires a multitude of strategies. The relative infancy of the advocacy approach precludes proposing a highly standardized set of procedures that would be amenable to traditional hypothesis-testing.

If the approach to child advocacy is to be effective, a great deal of understanding about the processes, the various types of strategies, and the interaction of such interventions with other components in the social environment must be obtained. It will be necessary to monitor the operation of advocacy programs from different perspectives and at various different times to gain an understanding of the salient features of child advocacy, its impact on...
other youths and organizations, and its relative effectiveness. A series of experimental social programs must be initiated that will focus on child advocacy and its effectiveness.

NOTES AND REFERENCES


24. Kahn, op. cit.


Unit 3
UNIT III

THE ADVOCACY MODEL

PUTTING THE ADVOCACY MODEL TO WORK

The advocacy intervention used in the ADP involves a multiple-strategy, problem-solving process proposed by Davidson & Rapp (1976). The steps of this intervention model are interrelated and contain feedback loops. The process is classified into three general phases: 1) primary assessment, 2) strategy selection, and 3) implementation.

During the first phase, **primary assessment**, the advocate: a) assesses the strengths of the youth; b) generates a list of all possible resources that could be used to fulfill those needs; c) identifies who controls the needed resources; and d) assesses the means by which to influence those who control needed resources; that is, those factors to which the target individual/institution would be most responsive and which would lead to the procurement of desired resources.

The second phase involves **selecting a strategy** that will produce the resources needed. Strategies are multiple and can be viewed as varying along two continuums, a **positive-to-negative continuum** and an **individual-to-policy level continuum** (Davidson & Rapp, 1976). The first describes various advocacy strategies ranging from positive to negative approaches to change. Points on this continuum include the following:

1) At the **positive** end, the advocate can attempt to gain the good favor of the person or agency in control of the needed resource.

2) At midpoint, the advocate could select a **neutral** strategy in which information would be provided to the critical individual or agency about the youth's unmet needs.

3) At the **negative** end of the continuum, the advocate could take, or threaten to take, direct aversive action against the critical individual or agency.

The reality is that you are likely to be engaged to some degree in all of these strategies at the same time.
The second set of strategies available to the child advocate consists of a continuum of approaches to bring about change that ranges from the individual level to the societal level. The points on this continuum include the following:

1) At the **individual** level, the advocate identifies the critical person in control of the needed resource.

2) At the **administrative** level, the advocate identifies a critical agency in control of the needed resource.

3) At the **policy** level, strategies include situations in which the advocate identifies some political or social system that is responsible for the resource that is lacking.

As can be seen, the two sets of strategies interact. In other words, you will select strategies that are positive to negative and identify systems or individuals that must be changed.

A critical step is to assess the potential impact of alternative strategies. You will want to select the most promising advocacy strategy based on the following factors:

1) What you know about the target individual(s) and where they are vulnerable to change efforts. Anything we jointly know about the target individual and previous attempts to institute change should provide us clues as to what type of strategy and level of intervention holds the most promise.

2) What intervention strategy is likely to produce the most durable change. There's no sense in following exclusively short-term approaches. Many unmet needs may call for policy level changes in the handling of various community resources rather than only a decision relevant to a particular case.

During your involvement you will carry out advocacy efforts for and with your youth. To the greatest extent possible, your efforts should be directed towards advocacy with your youth. This will minimize the amount of time spent in doing things for your youth. Your purpose is to teach the youth the advocacy skills that will enable them to create positive change in their own lives, long after you are gone. The experience the youth will gain through observation and participation is invaluable. If it is necessary to conduct efforts on behalf of your youth, you must verbally review with them how you gathered the information in order to further their advocacy skills.

The actual advocacy effort is governed by the general principle of action. You are to be very outgoing, persistent, and insistent in your efforts to mobilize the community's resources for your youth. Advocacy efforts will include personal contact with the target
individual or individuals. Several things are important about how you should approach the target individual.

1) **Do not present the youth you are working with in a negative light as an excuse for why he/she needs a certain resource.** Each individual has the right to community resources, therefore no excuse is necessary. Other people will have identified your youth as having problems. Being problem-focused will not help your youth gain access to resources. Focusing on your youth's strengths and assets will help gain access to resources.

2) **It is important that you are well aware of the style of the target individual you will be trying to persuade, so that your entry into the system can be facilitated.** This does not mean that you need to agree with or be co-opted by the local school, employment, recreational, or social systems. However, you will need to be intricately aware of their modes of operation so that you can use their existing resources to the best advantage of the youth. The initial phase of assessing the target individuals and systems provides you with a critical base for gaining entry to the community's resources.

3) **Do not jeopardize the credibility or integrity of the youth you are working with, yourself, or the program.** Be positive, diplomatic and knowledgeable in your interactions with others. For example, if there is a problem at school, talk thoroughly with the youth and parents before you approach the school personnel. Be diplomatic and positive with the school personnel even when conflict occurs.

***important note: do not try to be a “phone advocate.” Generally, advocacy work must be done in-person. You are more difficult to ignore when you are present. Go to the people and places that you wish to influence***

In addition to direct advocacy efforts via personal contact, you may also be involved in **indirect advocacy efforts** which involve phone calls, correspondence, and contacts with others closely related to the target person. In addition to trying to convince the target person of the unfulfilled need of your youth, another effective route for advocates is to bring indirect pressure on the target individual through other people. For example, suppose the targeted individual was the director of a local youth employment program. In order to get a useful job for your youth you might also want to contact the local Board of Directors and/or funding source of that program to bring additional influence on the targeted individual. Indirect advocacy efforts will be accomplished as a supplement to the direct advocacy effort. It is critical that a single individual be targeted for the advocacy effort so as not to engage in amorphous system blaming as an alternative to action.
The third phase of the advocacy intervention model is implementation. This involves carrying out the selected advocacy strategy and monitoring the outcome to insure that the needed resources are obtained.

Within the context of this intervention model, three general roles and responsibilities of the child advocate emerge:

1) The advocate needs to take on the role of identifying, mobilizing, and generating the necessary community resources to meet the needs of the individual or group that is his/her constituent. The unmet needs of the individual are to be identified by the advocate together with the constituent individual or group. The advocate is called on to use the existing resources of the community. In general, a wide variety of resources exist which are little known to or used by the population in question relevant to their personal and material well-being. The advocate must also meet the needs of the individual through the creation of community resources that may be non-existent.

2) The advocate must devise an individualized advocacy strategy to mobilize or generate community resources. Obviously, multiple tactics are available and none are universally applicable or predictive of success. The advocate is called upon to carefully consider the various strategies available, the idiosyncrasies of the individual and the situation and resources to be targeted, as well as to make a decision about a course of action likely to lead to the desired goals. At the very heart of the child advocacy approach is an individualized strategy rather than a set of carefully specified steps to follow in all instances. Obviously, the child advocacy approach relies a great deal on the individual resources and capabilities of the advocate.

3) The goal of the advocacy effort is to teach the individual being helped to assume a self-advocacy position. Since the approach is based on the sanctity of the individual and his/her rights to resources, it is critical that the individual be involved in the advocacy effort, so that he/she will be able to assume self-advocacy at the close of the intervention. Obviously, the aim of the intervention is not to require that the person need a formal external advocacy system to maintain his/her well-being. The individual needs to be directly taught the methods and organization of self-advocacy efforts and/or the option of organizing others to join in the approach.

**Monitoring the Advocacy Intervention**

Careful monitoring is also an important component of the advocacy approach and it involves paying close attention to the effects of your advocacy efforts. It is important that you determine the youth's satisfaction with the changes that have occurred. It is also important that you check the specific effects of the change directly. Advocacy and accountability go hand in hand. You may find that changes, which have been specifically
agreed to by the target individual, are not being carried out exactly as planned or may be producing undesired side effects. For example, the youth who you are working with has been assigned to a special education program which is irrelevant to his/her areas of interest and future vocational or educational aspirations. You could work out a curriculum change with the school counselor so that the youth's interests and potential were better served by the education system. After implementing a strategy you need to follow-up by carefully checking with the youth and others. If after careful questioning you find that the new classes were in fact also irrelevant for the needs of the youth, you would need to reassert the rights of the youth through additional advocacy strategies.

The key to adequate monitoring of your advocacy efforts is to ask very specific educated questions of the youth and the other parties involved. You need to know enough about the situation so that you are able to accurately assess whether anything useful has happened. The response "Everything's okay" is not sufficient when inquiring about the progress of change efforts. You need to find out exactly what has happened without playing 20 questions. You are likely to get accurate feedback if you:

1) have established rapport with the youth;
2) are sufficiently informed about the changes desired;
3) can ask questions in a manner that the youth can understand; and
4) can convince the youth that you know what you are talking about.

**Secondary Advocacy Efforts**

Similar to the renegotiation process in the behavioral approach, you will also find it necessary to initiate secondary advocacy efforts. The following principles apply:

1) You should allow adequate time for the initial changes to take place. Skeptical patience describes the position you should take.

2) Careful monitoring of the change process should provide you with additional information to use in the event that further direct or indirect action is needed.

3) You should assess both with the youth and your supervisory group whether additional effort in an area of unmet need is indicated.

In general, secondary advocacy efforts should include a careful scrutiny of the initial strategy used, the approach taken, and the specific targeted individual. You may decide that another strategy is indicated or that the initial effort needs to be executed again.
The Role of Crises

Crises may occur during any phase of the intervention period. How they are handled may determine the effectiveness of your intervention. People are typically more susceptible to influence and change during crisis periods. Thus, crises yield rich opportunities for the youth and significant others to develop different approaches and receive new understanding of their world. For you, they provide an excellent opportunity to be especially useful. By not overreacting or panicking as others in the youth's life are doing, you can continue in your role as negotiator/advocate to help the youth and significant others to find alternative ways of dealing with the new problems. However, although crises demand immediate attention, it is critical that you do not set up new reinforcing contingencies or put a major focus on the crisis situation, for that would only tend to reinforce the occurrence of these events. In addition, do not let crises jeopardize the areas of change already being worked on and the successes already accomplished.

Important things to remember:

1. **Remain calm.**
2. **Gather information.**
3. **Call your supervisors.**
4. **Refer to the basic philosophies.**
5. **Advocate for your youth.**
6. **Continue working on other areas of intervention.**

Basic Principles from unit III

The roles and responsibilities of the child advocate
Multiple strategy rationale
Monitoring the advocacy intervention
Secondary advocacy efforts
Volunteers’ role during crises
COMMUNICATION BRIEFS

USING ACTIVE LISTENING
Improve your communication skills with the most powerful tool available.

BY STEPHEN D. BOYD, PhD, CSP
CORPORATE TRAINER • FORT THOMAS, KY.

One of your staff nurses pulls you aside to discuss a problem she’s having with a patient’s family. She talks; you listen. Who’s active? Who’s passive? The answer may seem clear-cut: The nurse is active and you’re passive. But in reality you’re both active.

Listening well requires an active mind and increased energy. In fact, listening is probably the most important factor in effective communication. In your next conversation, use these four tips to improve your listening skills:

1. Ask open-ended questions. Questions that command yes, no, or one-word answers produce responses that are less revealing to the listener. On the other hand, questions such as “What other factors are involved?” and “What else might influence the way we handle this problem?” encourage the speaker to give details and force you to pick up the conversation where she left off.

2. Paraphrase. Paraphrasing verifies the accuracy of your listening and makes sure the other person’s perspective is clear to you. If you can paraphrase accurately, you’ve been concentrating. When you push yourself to paraphrase occasionally, you become more actively involved with the speaker. This opportunity typically occurs when you’re listening to an employee’s or a physician’s complaint. Before leaving a conversation, say, “Let me make sure I understand you correctly. What I’ve been hearing is that…”

3. Listen first; advise second. When someone comes to you with a problem, your first impulse may be to offer advice or a solution. But sometimes all that person wants is someone to listen and understand. By listening first, you’ll understand her problem better, and if she doesn’t solve her own problem by talking about it, you’ll be better prepared to offer advice. Ask her, “How can I help?” Many times, people will reply that they just want to talk.

4. Commit completely. Don’t let anything distract you while you’re listening. If you’re in an office, forward your phone to voice mail. If you’re tempted to watch other people in the hallway, turn your back to the action. These actions signal to the speaker that active listening is your top priority.

WHAT’S YOUR CQ?
Take this quiz to measure your communication quotient.

BY LIN GRENSING-POPHAL
BUSINESS CONSULTANT • CHIPPEWA FALLS, WIS.

If your ideas sometimes fall upon deaf ears or your proposals are frequently met with indifference, you may not be communicating well. This quiz will measure your CQ—communication quotient. Answer true or false, then check the tips for improving your score.

1. When a colleague or staff member speaks with me, I nod my head and smile because I know what she’s going to say.  
2. It’s easier to speak with people I like or people who are similar to me.  
3. People frequently ask me, “What do you mean?”  
4. I often think of what I’ll say next when someone is talking with me.  
5. On a hectic day, I can’t always give my full attention to someone.  
6. I’ve been told many times, “Don’t get defensive.”  
7. No one ever understands my point of view.  
8. I sometimes feel challenged or threatened by others when they ask me about my work.  
9. If I’m unsure of how to react to a situation, I’ll take the lead from the other person.  
10. I always evaluate my perceptions before acting on them.  
11. If I run into staff members who seem upset, I’ll ask what’s wrong.  
12. Before interpreting what a facial expression might mean, I always check my perceptions verbally.  
13. I make a conscious effort to get feedback on my own nonverbal cues.

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July 1998/Nursing Management 55

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Poor listening is responsible for missed business opportunities, strained relationships and conflicts, mistakes and lost business, angry customers, unproductive meetings, poor business decisions, and low employee motivation and morale. Key words: listening

Ruth Carstens
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We live in the information age. We have easy access to more information than we can possibly use. Yet most of what we need to know to succeed during our workday and at home comes from what other people say. But do we really pay attention?

It has been estimated that we only listen to about 25 percent of what we hear. This means that 75 percent of the time we ignore, forget, misunderstand, or distort the messages we hear from others. The implications of this in the workplace are enormous.

Poor listening is responsible for missed business opportunities, strained relationships and conflicts, mistakes and lost business, angry customers, unproductive meetings, poor business decisions, and low employee motivation and morale.

On the positive side, organizations with managers and staff who practice good listening skills enjoy a variety of benefits. Good ideas are offered and implemented on everything from new business opportunities to solving quality problems. Employees

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you stop coming back to hear them. You've tuned them out.

- While someone is speaking, it is natural to be thinking about what you want to say next. This causes you to hear the words being said but to miss the speaker’s meaning and intent.
- We hear what we expect to hear. This is known as selective hearing. We hear the words that are consistent with what we expect and ignore anything that doesn’t fit. This leads to a distorted message.
- Our society has a bias for action. As soon as we think that we know what someone is going to say, we want to move on. We interrupt to add our own ideas and opinions without making sure we understand what the other person meant.
- Listening is hard work. It requires us to consciously put our thoughts aside and concentrate completely on the other person. It is easier to not listen well.

Here are the steps to effective listening.

**Step 1.** As the speaker is talking, listen for the main idea or ideas. Pay attention to verbal and nonverbal clues about how they feel.

**Step 2.** During a natural break in the conversation, restate the main ideas of what the person has said. Include an understanding of how they feel about it. Avoid repeating the details; they are important only because they support a main point.

- “So, you are concerned that the cost of raw materials is going to go up before the end of the year.”
- “You are relieved that the Denver plant has figured out how to correct that defect without having to issue a recall.”

**Step 3.** Listen and look for confirmation that your statement was accurate.

**Step 4.** Wait for clarification, if necessary. Then restate your new understanding of the main ideas.

**Step 5.** Continue the conversation. Listen for the next idea or contribute your ideas or opinions on the subject.

When you practice active listening, you find that others are more willing to listen to your point of view. When people know they have been understood, they no longer have to think of ways to make you understand. They can concentrate on what you are saying. Good listening encourages better listening.

**HOW TO BE A GOOD LISTENER**

To be a good listener, you have to put aside your own thoughts and listen for both the content and meaning in what someone is saying. The goal is to understand the other person's main point without judging or reacting.
complaints of a friend without really vague guilt feelings later about having significant. And learning to recognize might ease the pain as you walk away h a shallow proverb still stuck awkw- lf-disclosure.

CHAPTER 5

QUESTIONS

"THE MOST POPULAR PIECE OF LANGUAGE."

WE USE questions all over the place. We use them for reasons that are plain and veiled, innocent and wicked, protective and generous, loving and spiteful . . . and for other reasons known only to a few super-specialized linguists. The spoken question is used for a wider range of motives than any other talk tool. That’s why it’s the most popular piece of language for adults, and by far the favorite with kids.

I estimate about 25 percent of everything we utter is followed by a question mark. My students accuse me of exaggerating when I mention that figure. They find it hard to imagine people trying to find out something during every fourth utterance.

It is hard to believe that such a huge amount of our talk is motivated by curiosity. The typical person in a typical conversation doesn’t seem that eager to gather information.

But gathering information isn’t the issue here. The issue is question use—and questions are used for much more than gathering information. Many of our questions aren’t the least bit aimed at “finding out.” I’m not just referring to those colloquial questions like, “How ya doin’?” (a friendly, familiar way to say, “Hello”), but to an entire family of talk tools that are loaded with the potential to perform dozens of important psychological functions. The biggest news about questions is that much of the “asking” in our lives is, in fact, “telling.”

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Questions

Stacy uses a question loaded with advice—an "advising question" that carries a rather insistent, commanding piece of advice. June can't answer because her mouth is full, but even if she could, a yes or no would not be forthcoming. The formal grammar of Stacy's loaded question calls for simple agreement or disagreement. But the embedded rules of the talk game say, "Change your reading of this question into a piece of commanding advice: 'Cease and desist with the cheesecake.'" So Stacy's question isn't really motivated by curiosity or an urge to find out. She's irritated or frustrated or worried, and she's advising June to change her habit. There's no need to answer.

As June chews, Stacy speaks again with a question mark in her voice: "Why don't you try counting to ten while you picture a fresh, low-calorie, juicy orange?"

Advisement alert!

That talk tool is loaded with a prescription for performing self-care in the area of cheesecake addiction. Stacy has delivered an explicit diagnosis, a command for action, and a therapy treatment plan with two quick advising questions. If June seriously attempted to answer her sister's second advising question as if it were a genuine inquiry, she'd be performing sarcasm: "Because I believe a cheesecake a day keeps the doctor away." Or if she habitually went around answering all loaded questions as if they were innocent inquiries, she'd be diagnosed as nothing less than mentally disturbed. Inability to follow all of the implicit rules for using questions is an emblem for pathology in thinking. Most of us just obey this language law automatically. Even nursery school children know how to play a few subtle games with questions. Some three- and four-year olds use loaded questions, observes Professor Mathilda Holvman, who found that "at this early period in language development, children already use the interrogative form [questions] analogously to their mothers for making suggestions [a form of advisement]. . . ."! These kids used advising questions such as, "Where's my tapioca?" to commandingly advise, "Get me some tapioca." There's no doubt—literally "no question"—in the kids' minds that the tapioca will be delivered.

As children grow into adults, they use social commands with less insistence. When they begin to learn that others have wills of their own, the advising question serves to soften the presumptuousness of hard advisements that directly suggest or command. As kids mature, the self-absorbed "Where's my tap-
y become, "Could you bring me more tapioca when adult decorum arrives, "If it's next time..."

Questions

I've located an unusual conversation in my tape collection that not only contains popular loaded questions but also illuminates most of the other question varieties. After all, there are questions that do want to find out and willingly accept answers—decent, straightforward, simple questions like, "Can I have some ice cream after dinner, Mommy?" I put these in a category called "semi-innocent" as a reminder that they aren't always perfectly innocent questions. Even though semi-innocents differ significantly from loaded questions—because they can be appropriately answered—they can serve some scheming purposes.

"Can I have some ice cream after dinner, Mommy?" asked by a six-year-old with a hidden agenda transforms the child's language into mock innocence—into a semi-innocent question. If you're puzzled as to what could possibly constitute a hidden agenda for a six-year-old, you may have forgotten your own early gift for perceiving language behavior in adults (especially parents) and how it helped you get what you wanted from them. An early drive toward necessities like ice cream quickly teaches kids that parents produce a fairly predictable proportion of yes's. A six-year-old can learn, for example, that her health-minded mother rejects after-dinner ice cream pleas about half the time. From that, it's easy to sense the advantage of making many bids, even if a sizable percentage of them fail. Thus, the semi-innocent question gets used as a mother-management device in hundreds of situations.

Sometimes kids use questions to resist demands: "Why do I have to do the dishes?" Or in calling for justice: "Is Shirley gonna stay up later than me again?"

Semi-innocents in the hands of adults serve a panoply of daily needs, from getting a bit of approval ("What do ya think of this new sweater?") to a trite pickup gambit ("Haven't I seen you around here before?"). For both adults and kids, these semi-innocent questions—with their motives and ability to extract answers—are major managers in social exchange.

The variety of their managerial skills is displayed in the following phone conversation between 16-year-old Denise (the girl..."
Managing classroom crises.

Author: Hardin, Carlette Jackson; Harris, E. Ann. Source: Phi Delta Kappa Fastbacks no465 (2000) p. 7-48 ISSN: 8756-6494 Number: BED100012873 Copyright: The magazine publisher is the copyright holder of this article and it is reproduced with permission. Further reproduction of this article in violation of the copyright is prohibited.

INTRODUCTION After the horrors of Littleton and Paducah, school systems across the country developed crisis intervention plans. They established crisis teams and have provided them with extensive training in handling life-threatening situations. Millions were spent on training, personnel, materials, and safety equipment.

Unfortunately, many of these plans do not provide classroom teachers with appropriate training to deal with the daily crises they face in their classrooms. Peterson (1997) found that teacher training was ranked as the least used strategy in a list of 10 strategies implemented by schools to prevent crises. The teacher training that has taken place often consists only of explaining how to refer students with troubling behaviors to better-trained professionals. Such training fails to deal with the most fundamental issue facing the classroom teacher: the appropriate interaction between a teacher and the student in crisis.

The failure to train teachers is a terrible mistake because teachers have more contact with children than do other adults in a school. As Noguera (1996) stresses, those responsible for implementing crisis management plans become so preoccupied with controlling students and ensuring safety that they forget that the primary responsibility of teachers is to create classrooms that are centers of learning where children receive intellectual and psychological nurturing.

Most crises faced by classroom teachers do not make the evening news. The majority of classroom crises are not life-threatening, but such crises can be life-changing. If crisis situations are not handled correctly, students in crisis may face a lifetime of emotional problems, academic failure, or violence toward others or themselves. When children are bullied and ridiculed by classmates, the hurt and anger may not present itself until years later. When children feel their teachers care nothing about their feelings, they withdraw physically and emotionally from the classroom. When children fail to learn effective problem-solving skills, they face year after year of failed personal and professional relationships. While all crisis situations do not threaten personal safety, they still negatively affect the learning environment, disrupting learning for all students. While these crises pale when compared with the events making the nightly news, they are devastating for the students, their classmates, and classroom teachers.
of the most critical factors in preventing a crisis is a positive
relationship with a teacher who is available to provide support when
needed (Department of Education and Justice 1999). Certainly
there are situations that will escalate into a crisis regardless of what an
individual teacher does or does not do. However, teachers themselves
can escalate a situation by their interactions with students.

Classroom teachers must be trained to handle the daily crises they face in
their classrooms. They also must be trained to see a crisis as an
opportunity for both students and teachers. For students, a crisis is an
opportunity to learn to solve problems, to deal with difficult situations and
people, and to find options where there had been none. For teachers, a
crisis is an opportunity to develop skills in handling troubling situations
and students. The effective management of crisis situations is an
opportunity to promote personal growth and enhance self-esteem through
the mastery of difficult circumstances.

972: stress that teachers successfully deal with crisis situations require skills with an attitude of caring, trust, respect, honesty and support. This feedback will deal with: the skills and attitudes expected by teachers to be effective crisis managers.

WHAT IS A CRISIS? Before teachers can help students deal with a crisis,
they must be able to identify when students are in crises. This is not as
easy as it seems, because a crisis is self-defined (TCRS 1999). What is a
crisis for one student may not be a crisis for another, and a
life-threatening situation for a student may not be viewed as serious by an
adult. Time and setting also affect what will become a crisis; what causes
a crisis today may not have triggered a crisis yesterday. And students
who have coped with many changes in their lives (for example, divorce or
death of parents, a move to a new home and school) may go into crisis
when another, less significant event occurs (for example, losing a book).

A teacher must know the students beyond a superficial level in order to
recognize when a student is in crisis. The teacher must recognize subtle
changes in the student. Thus a teacher may overlook a crisis state in a
student who has just recently moved to a classroom. In addition, a high
school or middle school teacher may not notice problems that would be
detected by an elementary teacher who spends much more time with a
student.

A crisis has some of the same characteristics as stress. Both are a result
of the demands and tensions felt by the student and both are measured
subjectively (CCCL 1999). However, there is a realistic appraisal of the
event in stress, while in a crisis the student's perception of events is
distorted. In addition, the student in stress has personal support and
coping mechanisms, whereas the student in crisis feels that there are no
adequate support or coping mechanisms. In a crisis, the problem is
unresolved and the student begins to panic. As the crisis intensifies, the
situation seems insurmountable, and the student displays characteristics
that signal the need for adult intervention.

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS IN CRISIS A student in crisis often
changes his or her typical behavior. If the student typically is quiet, a crisis
may cause the student to be extremely distressed or to act out. The
acting-out student may be sullen or may appear withdrawn. It is critical
that the teacher knows the student well enough to recognize these
changes.

Students in crisis display a sharp rise in emotional energy and turmoil.
They cannot think of appropriate ways to solve the problem and will vent
their distress verbally or physically (Callahan 1998). In these cases, body
language, such as stares, glares, or obscene gestures, signal potential
problems. There also is a loss of control, loss of judgment, loss of clear
thinking, and loss of ability to follow directions.

When in crisis, students perceive events as having a disturbance in thinking. They are unable
to perceive events as having a disturbance in thinking. They are unable to
solution. Normal processes, such as the ability to hear, think logically, and react normally, are limited. Concern for self increases (Callahan 1998). As the crisis escalates, students are less likely to respond to others in an appropriate fashion and often display antisocial behavior, which results in rejection by others (Meadows, Melloy, and Yell 1996).

A student in crisis has an urgent need to work toward resolution. The need to resolve the problem is partly biological; the body seeks a resolution so that it can return to a state of equilibrium. This desperate need to resolve the crisis, coupled with the student's inability to think logically, creates a potentially explosive situation. The student reacts in a way that threatens relationships with others and in a way that may threaten the student's own life.

TYPES OF CRISIESMeadows and her colleagues (1996) note that it is important for teachers and other adults to be able to identify the type of crisis the student is experiencing because different types of crisis demand different types of intervention.

Bolt from the Blue Crisis. A common type of crisis occurs when there is a sudden, unexpected event in the student's life. This "Bolt from the Blue Crisis" catches the student and teacher unaware, and they have little time to deal with the situation. News that someone has been injured or has died might create such a crisis. A student not prone to crisis reactions during normal circumstances might experience a crisis in these unexpected situations. The less experience the student has coping with such events, the greater the likelihood of a crisis.

Developmental Crisis. Some students enter a crisis state because of the expectations and role changes resulting from growing older. Some students experience developmental crises as they start school, move to middle school, or face graduation. While everyone goes through transitions between the stages of life, some children experience a developmental crisis as they move from stage to stage (CCCL 1999). Such transitions can become crises because they involve periods of severe and prolonged stress.

Exacerbation Crisis. This type of crisis involves a situation where functioning has been at a low level and many continuing problems already exist. When an additional stressor is added, a "straw that breaks the camel's back" syndrome develops. For example, a student who suffers from an academic, physical, emotional, or behavioral disorder may enter a crisis when additional stressors are encountered. Gable, Bullock, and Harder (1995) note that the effects of added stress to a student in a crisis state are multiplicative, rather than cumulative, creating a very difficult situation for the student and for those trying to offer assistance.

Relationship Crisis. This type of crisis results from a breakdown in a relationship. While the relationship may be one outside the school, it also can be one between the student and another student or a teacher. Kriedler (1984) found that a relationship crisis in the classroom may be the result of a competitive atmosphere, intolerant behavior of classmates (including cliques and scapegoating), racial or cultural intolerance by students and teachers, poor communication, inappropriate expression of emotions, or misuse of power by the teacher.

SEVERITY OF CRISIS SITUATIONSRegardless of the type of crisis the student is experiencing, the severity of the crisis situation depends on several factors (CCCL 1999):.

Intensity of the Event: The more a triggering event affects the child personally, the stronger its effect. However, it is important to remember that the effect is determined by the individual. While a school would prepare for crisis situations after the death of a student in the school, teachers might be unprepared for the impact of the death of a student from another school or even in another state. Since it cannot be determined how a student will internalize an event, the intensity of the event might not be evident.
Suddenness: When an unexpected crisis develops, neither the student nor the teacher is prepared. If it is the first time a student has experienced a particular emotion (for example, grief or hurt from a failed relationship), the student will not have developed the coping skills to deal with the pain. The student has no way to know that the pain eventually will ease and life will go on.

Duration: When the stressful events continue over an extended period, the child's psychological and physical capacity to cope will fail. In order to get relief, the student may take actions that are not productive and, in many cases, are harmful.

Ability to Understand: Students, especially young children, expect fairness. Thus they have a hard time understanding events when their sense of fairness is removed. When students feel they have no control, when they do not understand why a situation happened, or when there is a sense that they have been wronged, they can have crisis reaction.

Stability of Student: When children are not equipped with a repertoire of behaviors that allow them to deal with a stressful situation, the likelihood of a crisis increases. Therefore, even subtle changes in a low-functioning student should be viewed as the potential for a crisis reaction.

A student in crisis is overwhelmed by emotions: fear, anxiety, anger, confusion, guilt, and grief. The student mobilizes all internal and external resources in hopes of finding a resolution. They have a heightened suggestibility and are vulnerable to both good and bad advice. Therefore it is critical that it is a caring adult who reaches out to help the student find a resolution to the crisis situation.
Approaching School Personnel: Considerations for the Effective Advocate

by

Steven J. Cormier

During the first few weeks of your intervention, you will be conducting an in-depth assessment of your youth's interpersonal situation and a thorough analysis of the various social systems with which s/he comes in contact, one of which is the youth's school. There are several things the volunteer must consider in order to effectively intervene on behalf of youth in this project. It is crucial that you gain the confidence and trust of your youth and significant individuals in his/her life while at the same time being able to solicit relevant information which is positive and behavioral in nature. With your goal being to change how people relate to each other and how relevant social systems or their component parts and individuals respond to meet the needs of your youth, it becomes readily apparent that this is a political undertaking which requires both adherence to our model of providing services to young people in community settings and a necessary amount of "tact" in dealing with individuals in the youth's environment and interpersonal situation.

These two considerations must be effectively reconciled by the volunteer in order to provide individualized, high-quality services to youth in this project. The effective volunteer will be one who has a good grasp of the project's intervention package and related strategies, and a thorough understanding of those systems in which they are attempting to facilitate change. No where is this more important than when one attempts to make changes on behalf of youth in the area of school. In approaching schools and their related personnel, an appreciation of entry issues, bureaucratic structures, and approach is crucial.

During the assessment phases of your intervention, it is likely that you will be contacting personnel at your youth's school in order to identify goal areas in which to conduct intervention activities. Your ultimate success in these intervention activities will be in part facilitated by your appreciation of the considerations which follow.

I. School Facility Entry Procedures:

Each separate facility which youth attend in the Lansing School District has their own set of specified entry procedures. Adherence to these entry procedures is important in order to avoid alienating yourself from relevant personnel and the overall administration of these separate facilities. The effective volunteer should be aware that these differences exist, and that s/he will access this information prior to approaching particular schools.

II. Identifying Relevant Personnel:

There are a variety of individuals with whom youth interact on a regular basis in school. The identification of relevant school personnel is crucial
for gaining information necessary to conduct an adequate assessment as a prelude to later intervention activities. As a starting point, individual academic counselors of youth have a wealth of behavioral information (e.g., class schedules, names of teachers, credits earned) and serve as gatekeepers by which volunteers may access individual teachers of the youth. Counselors, in large part, also have control over academic scheduling matters and may be prime determiners of which youths get into which classes and school programs. The resources and information which counselors possess are crucial in the process of identifying resources necessary to meet individual needs of your youth and to build upon his/her strengths, assets, and interests. Consequently, how one goes about approaching these identified individuals is crucial.

III. Approaching Relevant Personnel:

Your initial contacts with identified personnel are very important. How you go about initiating this relationship and the manner in which you conduct yourself will set the tone of your intervention. You wish to develop a working relationship with school personnel which will result in the harnessing of school resources to maximally meet the needs and build upon the strengths of your individual youth. Consequently, the effective volunteer will need to work with school personnel in this endeavor.

Your initial contact with identified personnel will most likely be by phone. Identify yourself as being from the "MSU Volunteer Project" or the "MSU Adolescent Project" and set an appointment to meet with the identified individual. School personnel, particularly school counselors, are busy people and may have specified office hours or planning periods. Be brief yet courteous with school personnel while talking on the phone and setting appointments.

When you initially meet identified personnel, it is very important that you set the tone for your future working relationship. You will want to solicit, relevant, behavioral information from these people. Much of the information that school personnel have about individual youth is primarily archival and subjective in nature, being derived from school records and past reports of counselors and teachers. The effective volunteer needs to solicit from these individuals that information which is behavioral and positive in nature. You need to listen politely, but be ready to prompt and redirect the conversation towards that specific, behavioral information you will need to conduct behavioral contracting or advocacy intervention activities on behalf of your youth. Such information includes: current class schedules; the names of individual teachers; information regarding the availability of remedial, vocational or recreational programs or activities; and procedures for gaining access to these resources or other identified school personnel.

Your objective is to establish a positive "pro-active" relationship with identified personnel, one which seeks to direct the resources and energies of school personnel towards meeting the needs and strengths of individual youth rather than being exclusively "problem" focused. This will set the stage for future positive interactions between yourself and school personnel, allowing you the opportunity to pro-actively and positively involve youth and their parents in the area of school. Therefore, the effective volunteer is one who gets parents and youths involved in such advocacy efforts right from the
start. Positively gaining parental involvement on behalf of youth in the area of school, as well as other community settings of which your youth is a part of, is a major objective of this project, so they can assume a self-advocacy position at the end of the 18 week intervention. How you initially establish yourself as a link between key individuals associated with these social systems and the youth and his/her family will be a major determinant of the eventual success of your intervention.

Initially written Winter 1983 by S.J. Cormier; revised by L.K. Gensheimer, Fall 1986.
UNIT 4
Unit IV

Understanding Human Behavior and Behavioral Changes Strategies

Behavioral Conception of Human Behavior

The roots of the behavioral approaches can be traced to learning theory and experimental psychology. In addition, it should be noted that the behavioral conception of human behavior and problems is in many ways a reaction to traditional medical model and intra-individual approaches.

The traditional explanations of human behavior often focus solely on internal psychic health or illness. Supposedly, intra-individual characteristics resulting from early childhood experience and genetic background produce observed differences in human behavior and personality structure. Internal states are seen as predictive of actual human actions. The traditional approaches view human problems as individual problems and the individual becomes the focus of therapeutic and change strategies. Great emphasis is placed on professional therapists to initiate this change within the individual.

The behavioral conception differs in several important respects from the traditional approaches discussed above.

1) It emphasizes the importance of an individual's environment in determining actions.

2) It suggests that the focus of change be the environment of the individual rather than the individual per se.

3) It stresses that the target of change include multiple environmental components rather than only the individual via one-to-one therapy. Therefore people other than the professional therapist are viewed as critical to the process of change.

4) It suggests that ongoing human behavior is a function of the principles of learning theory rather than relatively intractable intra-individual characteristics.

5) It stresses that deviance is a function of societal labeling processes rather than a characteristic of individual deviant actions. In other words, behavior is only termed deviant when observed by and defined as such by important others or by the individual.

The behavioral approach suggests that human performances are a function of several basic processes. These processes were initially highlighted in early laboratory
experimentation. First, there are five processes for initiating, maintaining, and increasing human behavior.

**Instruction or Prompting** - defining specifically how and what to do; verbal instruction about how to engage in the desired behavior. This strategy is often used to help develop a new behavior.

For example: you could ask the youth you are working with to meet you someplace, telling him/her specifically where you will meet, what you will be doing, the time of the meeting, and how to get there.

**Modeling** - having someone observe another person doing something; providing a behavioral example of the behavior. This strategy is often used to help develop a new behavior.

For example: you might show the parent(s) of the youth a different way of interacting with him/her. You could have the parent(s) watch you and the youth engage in a positive conversation about the youth's activities for that day.

**Positive Reinforcement** - presenting a positive or desired event following the occurrence of some action. Positive reinforcement increases the incidence of the behavior it is contingent upon.

For example: you could set up a situation where your assigned youth would receive an allowance based on performance in school each day.

**Negative Reinforcement** - discontinuing a negative or undesired event following the occurrence of some action. Negative reinforcement increases the incidence of the behavior it is contingent upon. Our program emphasizes the use of positive reinforcement, and generally negative reinforcement is not used in formal behavioral agreements. However, an example of negative reinforcement would be: parent(s) agree to remove a chore the youth hates if the youth agrees to do the dishes Monday through Friday by 8:00 pm. The reward would be the removal of the hated chore by the parents.

**Shaping** - reinforcing successive approximations of the desired behavior. This strategy is used when the likelihood of an individual emitting the fully perfected criterion behavior is low.

For example: a youth who has a history of never doing homework might be reinforced for successive approximations of the desired 30 minutes of study time by being reinforced first for sitting at the kitchen table for 3 minutes quietly with an open schoolbook in front of him, then for 5 minutes, 10 minutes, solving 3 questions and so on.
Second, in addition to the strategies above for increasing and maintaining desired actions, there are three principle methods for decreasing human behavior:

**Extinction** - the reinforcing event which was maintaining the behavior is no longer presented or made available.

For example: a teacher decides to ignore the attention-seeking comments of a student who receives much attention from the class when confronted by the teacher.

The process of extinction may lead to two side effects before the target behavior decreases and eventually disappears: 1) the target behavior may increase in frequency for a time before it begins to decrease, and 2) sometimes there is the appearance of frustration behaviors such as crying and aggressive actions. Since extinction does not teach any new alternative behavior, it should always be used in combination with the positive reinforcement of an acceptable alternative to the behavior being extinguished.

**Distract and Redirect** - As suggested this technique employs planned ignoring of the undesired behavior, techniques for distracting the person’s attention, and redirecting their attention toward a desired behavior.

For example: A child begins a tantrum during class. The teacher ignores the tantrum (i.e. he does not focus upon the behaviors) and begins talking quietly about a book he knows the child likes. As she becomes interested in the book he engages her and praises her for the desired behavior.

**Punishment** - there are two forms of punishment:

Punishment I (negative event) - presenting a negative or aversive event following some undesired action.

For example: you could set up an agreement between the youth and parent(s) such that if the youth returned home late, he/she would have to do extra household chores.

Punishment II (loss of positive event) - removing a positive event following some undesired behavior.

For example: under a family agreement a youth might be prohibited from watching evening television each day s/he did not attend school.
Although punishment can be an effective method for reducing undesired behavior, it is not a recommended intervention strategy. Five undesirable consequences are associated with using punishment (Tharp & Wetzel, 1969). These are:

1) Punishment may prompt counter-aggressive behavior, which could take one of many forms from a passive refusal to comply to a violent physical attack on the punisher. Such counter-aggressive behaviors often cause the initial punisher to retaliate through the use of more intensive punishment, creating a spiraling interaction in which both individuals emit increasingly more aversive/punishing behaviors.

2) Punishment may weaken the relationship between the punisher and the person being punished, who may begin to fear and/or exhibit anxiety around the punisher.

3) Punishment may elicit avoidance or escape behavior. The person who is punished may purposefully avoid the punisher. For example, a youth who is always hassled by his/her parent for one thing or another, may "tune out" the parent(s) or never stay around the house.

4) Punishment tends to only temporarily suppress the undesired behavior.

5) Punishment does not teach any new/appropriate alternative behavior. Punishment may decrease the frequency of undesirable behavior, but this does not guarantee an increase in desired behaviors.

**Figure 2**

Operant Conditioning Basics Used in ADP

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<td>Positive reinforcement</td>
<td>Planned ignoring</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Negative reinforcement</td>
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<td>Prompting/instructing</td>
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While this brief overview of a behavior approach to human behavior has summarized the basic processes governing the actions of people, most of these principles are usually conceived of as operating at the individual level. In other words, one person, in control of the reinforcers, is viewed as controlling or influencing the behavior of another individual. In the situations that you will be dealing with as part of this program, it is usually the case that interpersonal interactions define the areas which need attention. These interpersonal exchanges operate in a two-way fashion (rather than one individual having absolute control) according to the principles outlined above. In actuality, the youth and significant other, e.g., parent, teacher, friend, employer, have considerable mutual influence over the actions of each other.

An operant interpersonal view of human behavior applies learning theory principles to the interpersonal situation. Within this framework a number of assumptions are made regarding interpersonal relations between youth and significant others in their lives (Stuart, 1971)³.

1) The receipt of positive interactions in the interpersonal situation is viewed as something that has to be earned rather than an absolute right. People have to act nice towards others in order to expect positives in return, and vice versa.

2) Effective interpersonal relationships are governed according to the norm of reciprocity. In other words, the adage of "If you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" turns out to be true.

3) The value of an interpersonal relationship is a function of the range, rate, and magnitude of positive reinforcements involved in that relationship. People value others who treat them positively, on many occasions, and in many ways.

4) Rules can be used to create freedom in an interpersonal relationship. When two individuals specify what they can mutually expect from each other it allows a certainty that will increase the chances of positive exchanges, and allow the exploration of additional positive alternative modes of interaction.

Behavioral Conception of Juvenile Delinquency

There have been many theories of juvenile delinquency put forth by social scientists since the early part of this century. Most of them have focused on either pathological or deviant individuals as the cause of delinquency. Other theories have argued that delinquency was the product of deprived or discriminatory social conditions. Neither of these very prominent sets of approaches has produced adequate explanations of delinquency nor have they suggested helpful intervention approaches.

The operant framework views delinquency as a function of a set of ongoing interactions. It is very important to note that the principles, which are said to govern the initiation and maintenance of delinquent behavior, are the same as those which are said to function in all human actions. Delinquency is not viewed as pathological or deviant in and of itself. Rather, delinquency is socially defined. In fact, the mere commission of the unlawful act is insufficient to identify a delinquent. The act must be observed and formally labeled in order for a youth to become known to the juvenile justice system. In short, there are many interpersonal forces in the form of contingencies that have led the youth towards a path of unlawful activity.

The focus of interventions must be the interpersonal relationships within the life of your assigned youth. One major goal for you will be to move these relationships towards the norm of contingent reciprocity, that is, a giving back and forth based on specified rules of behavioral exchange. Positive reciprocal interactions are a central component in averting further difficulty. You will want to work with the youth and his/her significant others to change their interaction patterns, creating a positive quid pro quo (“this for that”) relationship. In addition, you need to be aware of the importance of your own relationship with your youth. This relationship should also be based on the positive principles outlined above. The training units will, in part, be spent teaching you how to use these principles in modifying the relevant interpersonal relationships. The importance of assessing and intervening in each case on an individual basis will be stressed.

It must be noted that your interventions will be with both the youth and the various significant individuals in his/her life. Many traditional approaches, particularly those involving volunteers such as you, have placed exclusive focus on the individual youth in isolation.

As can be seen from the explanation of delinquency reviewed above, an important goal for you will be inducing changes in the interpersonal environment of the youth. If you focus solely on the youth it would probably be next to impossible to bring about change, and any change that might occur would not likely continue after you terminate working with the youth. As will be seen in the next unit, it is also critical to focus on the youth's needs and the related environmental resources in order to maximize the relevance and longevity of change.

Behavior Modification and Contingency Management

The MSU Adolescent Project advocates an approach to behavior modification that emphasizes contingency management. This is a process wherein someone is given a reward (e.g., money, praise, positive attention, etc.) for engaging in a behavior that is desired by significant people in the person’s environment. A specific example of this might be when a child is given a set amount of cash for every “A” he/she brings home from school, or when a child is allowed to stay out with friends later on the weekend because he/she has done a specific chore (e.g., taking out the trash, etc.) a set number of times during the week. Contingency management involves the creation of reciprocal
behavioral agreements. **The cardinal rule of this approach is to identify and build upon existing positive behaviors.** This will involve creating change in the youth’s environment such that positive reinforcement is the primary response to your youth.

**The Behavioral Agreement**

First, behavioral agreements are not necessary components of an intervention. If the situation warrants the creating of a behavioral agreement, the following discussion will help guide its creation and maintenance.

Effective Behavioral agreements are based upon the principle of reciprocity. Under the principle of reciprocity, one party's privileges become the other's responsibilities and vice versa. The agreement should be presented to the parties involved as a selective set of their concerns that they agree to work on as a beginning step in producing change. You should be ready to acknowledge that the first agreement cannot focus on everything; rather it provides a place to start. The agreement should be signed by each of you. You will need to check back quite frequently initially to monitor the progress of the agreement. If you have selected contingencies that are truly important to each party, in other words, contingencies that function as reinforcers, the agreement should be successful. The importance of carefully watching, listening, and inquiring about important changes for each party will become very clear at this point.

There are several general rules that you should keep in mind when you are in the process of negotiating a behavioral agreement.

1. Every item in an agreement must be monitorable. It must be specific and observable by both parties involved, otherwise there's no way to deal with it. A common mistake is to be concerned with things over which you can have no influence. For example, parents frequently want to decide where their child goes and with whom he/she associates. Given that they can't follow the youth around when not at home, it's better to focus on whether or not the youth returns on time and informs them of his/her whereabouts.

2. A request for change by either party must be capable of generating reciprocal change by the requester. The agreement should involve an equal exchange of responsibilities and privileges.

3. Work on a few things that appear important to both the youth and the other party involved. You obviously don't have time nor can you change everything right away. The intention is to get a pattern of positive interaction initiated by focusing on a few important events.

4. The terms of the agreement must be clear, specific, and written in common language.
How you introduce agreements to the youth and his/her family is important. To begin, meet separately with each party. Discuss what each person would like to see changed, or would like to receive from the other person, along with what they would be willing to give in exchange. An agreement should then be discussed as a tool to help them make these changes. You may need to meet more than once with each party to clarify potential ideas.

After discussing the desired privileges and responsibilities with each party, you will then meet with all the parties involved. The purpose of this meeting will be for you to select the responsibilities, privileges, and bonuses to be included in the agreement. This will involve extensive discussion in which you will facilitate negotiations. During this process, it will be important for you to keep the above rules in mind. A further task for this meeting is the establishment of a mutual monitoring system of each person's performance under the rules of the agreement. More specifically, you will develop, in writing, an interpersonal agreement between the youth and the various others you have identified as important. The agreement should include the following components:

1) **Privileges**: Specific things, which each party desires such as, free time with friends, spending money, or use of the family car.

2) **Responsibilities**: Specific things that each party agrees to do for the other such as attend school, maintain curfew, or complete household chores. (NOTE: The number of responsibilities should equal the number of privileges that could be earned, e.g., if three responsibilities are specified, the agreement should contain three privileges.)

3) **Bonuses**: An extra desired event that the youths can expect if they do especially well while performing their responsibilities such as permission to stay out longer than usual, extra spending money, or the opportunity to have a party.

4) **Monitoring**: A method for monitoring the performance of each party on each of the above components that can be verified by both parties. Common examples include diaries, checklists, charts, and grade cards.

**Resistances to Behavioral Contracting**

In approaching families about developing behavioral contracts between them and their children, advocates may encounter a number of resistances from the parent. These resistances may be due to parents’ values or particular philosophy about parenting. Also, there may be institutional resistances, which come from the school and community in which the child is raised. Although there are a number of resistances that students may encounter in developing behavioral contracts between the parent and the child, only those mentioned below will be surmised and discussed.
SAMPLE AGREEMENT


IF MARK AGREES TO:                  THEN MOM AGREES TO:

Come home for dinner by Give Mark $.15 a day
5:00 pm (Mon-Fri) ($ .75 possible per wk)

Complete homework before Give Mark $.15 a day
going out after dinner ($ .75 possible per wk)
(Mon-Fri)

Come in at specified curfew Give Mark $.15 a day
(Sun-Thur 9:30; for Sun-Thurs and
Fri & Sat 10:00) $.40 a day for Fri & Sat
($1.55 possible per wk)

BONUS: If Mark comes home on time every night (7 days) in any
given week, then he earns a one hour out extra, to be
used one night of his choice the next week.

This agreement will begin on Monday, November 5, 1990 and will
run until Sunday, November 25, 1990.

Both Mark and his mother will monitor the above conditions by each
initialing the prepared monitoring chart.

We will meet on Sundays to discuss how it is going and figure out
what privileges and bonuses Mark will receive.

We will renegotiate this agreement in three weeks, on Sunday,
November 25, 1990.

_________________________  __________________________
(Youth)                          (Parent/mediator)

(Volunteer)
**MOM AND MARK WILL INITIAL THE BOX IF MARK DOES THE FOLLOWING:**

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Home for dinner  
(5:30 Mon - Fri)

Completed homework  
before going out  
(Mon - Fri)

In by curfew  
(Sun - Thurs: 9:30;  
Fri & Sat: 10:00)

**TOTAL AMOUNT EARNED?**

**DID MOM PAY THIS AMOUNT AT END OF WEEK?**

**WAS BONUS EARNED?**

*IF YES, WHAT NIGHT OF THE WEEK WILL MARK TAKE HIS ADDITIONAL HOUR OUT?*
Individual Resistances

1. The issue of bribery. A frequent complaint among many advocates has been that of the parents' reluctance to engage in behavioral contracts because such an endeavor is seen as bribery. Many parents respond by saying, "Why should I have to pay him (or her) to do something that they are supposed to do?" Advocates, in the past who have been successful in dealing with parents who are reluctant to engage in behavioral contracts with their kids, have suggested to the parents that behavioral contracting is not bribery in that bribery consists of paying someone to do something that is wrong or unethical, and in the case of behavioral contracts, the child is rewarded for doing the right thing, or what is expected by the parent.

2. A preference for aversive control. In working with many families, the advocate also finds that there are parents who, because of various reasons, believe that punishing a child is the best way to control his or her behavior. These individuals prescribe to the old adage or heuristic that if you spare the rod, you spoil the child. Thus, spanking and strict punishment are seen as more optimal for controlling behavior. Such a stance is not only inconsistent with the philosophy of the MSU Adolescent Project, but many times, the children may find the punishment and attention rewarding if they are in situations where the negative behavior is the only way they can elicit attention from the parents.

3. Modern family dynamics. Another resistance encountered by advocates has to do with the organization and competence of the parents. Many of the parents the advocates encounter are not much older than the advocates themselves, and the structure and dynamics of the family in which the child lives may be far different from that of the advocate or so-called traditional family. There may be instances in which the child is in a single-parent home with a young mother and three or four other kids. Because of the stress of being a single parent and working, many of the parents may not have the time to adequately monitor a behavioral contract. Thus, it is critically important that the advocate makes the contract simple and easy to monitor. Such contracts must be posted in visible sight so that the parent can be easily reminded of the agreement established between him or her and the child.

Institutional Resistances

1. Parental discord. In some of the families that the advocate encounters, one may find a good deal of marital discord among the parents. In some cases, this discord can lead to inconsistencies and differences of opinion on how the children should be raised. Even when the parents are separated, there may be disagreement among the parents regarding issues of behavioral change and reinforcement for positive behavior. Separated parents may find it necessary
to be seen as the good parent in the eyes of the child, and instead of punishing inappropriate behavior, the parent will reward and overly indulge the child in an effort to gain the child’s favor. Such situations can be disastrous for developing behavioral contracts and fostering change within the youth. Therefore, it is imperative that the advocate explains the contract to both parents. Make sure that both parents are abreast of the desired behavioral changes and the schedule of reinforcement that has been established.

2. Insistence on Equity. We have all heard the saying that all children should be treated alike. This is a common utterance of many of the parents our advocates have encountered. They firmly believe that establishing a different method of parenting for one child, which includes rewarding the child, is unfair to the rest of the children. To deal with such resistances, we suggest that the advocates tell the parents that this is a tool that could be used for each child. Once the parents have bought into the process and seen the effectiveness of the behavioral contract, they may begin to use them on all of their children.

3. The school. Developing a behavioral contract between student and teachers can be difficult. Not only may the teacher feel that such a contract is time consuming, but many teachers’ views about behavioral change are influenced by the views of the school system. Many school systems throughout the country are managed almost entirely through aversive controls: suspension (in and out of school), expulsion, loss of hall passes etc. Punishment is seen as the most optimal method of controlling and changing behavior in school children. In developing contracts with teachers and school administrators, it is important to note that this way of thinking has been prevalent in our education system for years. Furthermore, due to the recent violence in our schools, teachers and administrators may, unfortunately, become even more apt to use aversive controls.

As noted, there are a number of resistances to behavioral contracting, and only a few have been outlined here. It is important to remember that no matter how many excuses and explanations the parent or teacher gives you for not conducting a behavioral contract, research has shown this method to be the most effective in dealing with troubled teens.
Renegotiation

There may be times when you find that the original agreement is not meeting the interpersonal goals of the parties involved. Such failure may be a result of inadequate assessment in determining which changes are actually important to each party or perhaps the initial interpersonal situation has changed. It may also be the case that the initial agreement quickly accomplished its stated goals. There may be times when you decide that it would be more beneficial to attempt to renegotiate the initial agreement. Such renegotiation should follow these general decision rules:

1) You should not consider renegotiation until three to four weeks after implementing the initial agreement.

2) The agreement renegotiation should follow the same procedures as the negotiation of the initial agreement.

3) You should involve all parties, including the supervisory group, in the renegotiation process.

4) The renegotiation should be based on the information you have gained from executing the initial agreement.

It is important that each party involved receive additional privileges if they take on additional responsibilities. You should be able to select new privileges for each party from the information provided in the original negotiation session. You may also generate ideas by listening carefully to each party's concerns and watching the things they do in interpersonal exchanges.

When either party renegotiates an agreement because of inadequate performance, you should also follow the principles laid out for the initial agreement negotiation. In general, if one or both of the individuals is not meeting the terms of the agreement, then they have not received interpersonal exchanges that they value for their performance. You may need to negotiate additional privileges for either or both parties to be exchanged for increased performance. If the existing privileges are insufficient to induce the desired change, you may need to upgrade the execution of the specific terms of the agreement such as how and when privileges are delivered or the consistency with which they are delivered. A list of agreement problem areas prepared by DeRisi and Butz (1976) is included at the end of this unit. This is an extremely useful guide to refer back to when troubleshooting an unsuccessful agreement.

Troubleshooting Guide

The following questions may help you to spot the problems in your agreement system.
The Agreement

1) Was the target behavior clearly specified and worded positively?
2) Did the agreement provide for immediate reinforcement after the behavior occurred? (i.e. monitoring and praise)
3) Did it ask for small approximations to the desired behavior?
4) Was reinforcement frequent and in small amounts?
5) Did the agreement call for and reward accomplishment rather than obedience?
6) Was the agreement mutually negotiated?

The Target (Youth)

1) Did (s)he understand the agreement?
2) Is (s)he getting the reinforcer from some other source?
3) Do the reinforcers have to be reevaluated (are they sufficient/desired)?
4) Has a new problem behavior developed that is drawing the mediator's attention away from the target behavior?

The Mediator

1) Did the mediator understand the agreement?
2) Did (s)he dispense the kind and amount of reinforcement specified in the agreement?
3) Did (s)he dispense it according to instructions, at the rate specified, and with consistency?
4) Did punishment accidentally accompany the performance being reinforced?
5) Did (s)he stop mediating?


The Importance of Communication

Finally, it is important that you remember to use good communication skills in all aspects of your work with your youth. Your ability to effectively communicate with your youth and his/her family will form the foundation of all of the work that you will accomplish during your intervention. We have included some very basic communication skills articles in your readings for this unit, and we expect that reviewing your skills in these areas can only augment your ability to work productively with your youth.
UNIT IV HOMEWORK

Behavioral Assessment

The objective of this assignment is to provide you with experience in conducting some of the tasks associated with behavioral assessment, in particular, provide you with practice in observing, counting and recording targeted behavior.

Part of your skill in assisting others to change their behavior comes from your understanding of how behavior change works in yourself. Therefore, this week you will initiate a self-management program by monitoring your own behavior for a period of several days.

1) **Target/select a behavior you would like to change.** When selecting a behavior, keep in mind the rules associated with properly pinpointing behaviors. Ideally you want to select a positive behavior and define it in specific terms. State the behavior and write a clear definition, one that describes the behavior in observable terms.

2) **Devise a method of recording/counting the targeted behavior.** Make sure to show your method.

3) **Collect data** on the occurrence of the behavior for a minimum of 5 days. Make sure to show your data.

4) **Bring to class** your written definition of the targeted behavior, your recording chart/system, your data, and complete answers to the following questions:
   a. Did you adequately pinpoint the behavior? Why do you think so?
   b. How easy was your recording system?
   c. Could someone else have been able to observe the targeted behavior and have reliably recorded its occurrence using your system?
   d. Could your system be improved? If so, how?
   e. Did you notice any patterns or changes over time?

5) This homework assignment will be collected and graded.
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Basic Principles from Unit IV

Manual

How the Behavioral conception of human behavior differs from traditional approaches
Basic processes for affecting human behavior
Effects of the use of punishment
The operant framework view of delinquent behavior
Intervention goals based upon operant explanation of delinquency
Components of a good agreement
The principle of reciprocity
Pinpointing behaviors
Cardinal rule of behavioral model
Choosing target behaviors for behavioral agreements
Resistance to behavioral contracting
Unit 5
Unit V

Putting It All Together

Rational for the combined Approach

Thus far, we have discussed the fundamental concepts of the behavioral and environmental resources approaches. Although the application of these theories is distinct, we will be using a combination of these two concepts in dealing with the youth involved in this project. It is crucial that you understand the reasons for presenting both approaches within the same manual. This summary will provide the rationale for promoting the multiple strategy model and will show how the two models will fit together:

1) Each method of mediating change for the youth has been selected for its soundness in theory and in practical application. In the Illinois Delinquency Project (University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana) there were no major outcome differences in number of police contacts, number of court petitions, and seriousness of police contacts between the group using the environmental resources model and the group using behavioral agreements. However, there were significant differences between youths who were involved with the Project and those who received normal court services. The latter group had a greater number of police contacts and court petitions than those who participated in the Project, regardless of which intervention model they received. In other words, both approaches were very effective.

2) Although both groups did better than those not receiving the new strategies, it was clear that because of a special need or situation a particular youth might have done better if another strategy had been permitted. As a result of in-depth assessment you will become knowledgeable about the needs and special problems of your youth. Each of the youths assigned will of course differ in many respects. Behavioral and environmental resources initiatives are presented together so that options are expanded.

3) The use of a tailor-made program will help to eliminate the tendency to make assumptions about the youth's problems. While guidelines for implementing each model are given, the youth and family need to determine which areas will be targeted for intervention. Obviously, how you and your youth use the methods must be largely determined by the individual's circumstances. Individualized programming is a major advantage of this approach.

4) The combination of these models will help to insure the stability and durability of the changes you plan and execute. When considered together, a combination behavioral/environmental resources approach covers more of what may be significantly affecting the youth's life. A multi-level
Having the opportunity to plan a strategy and pick methods appropriate for your youth will allow you and your youth the freedom to be more than technicians following a routine. You and your youth will have the freedom and flexibility to be innovative in implementing your plans. Innovation will provide good role modeling for your youth and will lead to creative solutions.

The manual portion of this unit will describe the process of conducting behavioral and advocacy assessments. All interventions will pass through five general phases:

1) assessment
2) implementation
3) monitoring
4) adjustment, and
5) termination.

Your initial introduction to a youth and his/her life situations will actually involve several sequential steps. After a youth and his/her legal guardian have agreed to participate in this program, the project director assigns the youth a volunteer. Your supervisors will begin assigning cases somewhere around week four or five of training. When assigned a case, you will be provided with some basic facts about him/her such as name, address, age, and interests. It is critical that you make contact with the youth as soon as you are assigned. This contact will generally consist of a telephone call to the youth to set up a mutually agreed upon time and place to get together. You should introduce yourself by name and identify yourself as being from the "MSU Volunteer Project". Often a commonly agreed upon activity will provide an opportunity for the youth and volunteer to begin to get acquainted. Be very specific about the time and place, and live up to the arrangements precisely.

You and your youth will spend the first few weeks primarily getting to know each other. These initial meetings should be fairly relaxed so that you and the youth can become acquainted and feel comfortable with each other. In addition, you should use this opportunity to begin the very important process of assessment. During this period you will assess the youth's environment. This assessment will include: family life, school, peer groups, employment, access to resources, and the local community. It is important to note that this assessment should focus upon strengths rather than upon problems. You do not want to be exclusively "problem" oriented. These youth will likely have been "problemed" to death in the past and may be turned off by such an approach. Instead, during the first weeks you want to focus your early discussions on what the youth does and inquire specifically about each area discussed. These discussions with your youth will help identify strengths upon which to build and areas that your youth wishes to change. The interpersonal atmosphere in which the early conversations are conducted is very important. You should attend to the individual, familial, and social strengths that can be enhanced, supported, and built. However, you should avoid playing social worker or
attempting to force an emotional bond where one does not exist. At the same time, you must gather necessary information about the youth and be constantly sensitive to possible information about interpersonal relationships and/or unmet resource needs. The last thing you want to do is come on like the local cop or an investigative reporter. To summarize, while your initial contacts with the youth will be similar to getting to know any new acquaintance, it is essential that you be aware at all times of the need to gather pertinent information about the youth and his/her social and environmental situation. During this phase you and your youth should gather enough information to develop a comprehensive intervention plan. As stated earlier, advocates should explore all areas of their youth’s life in an effort to identify their strengths.

You and your youth will then be making some decisions about which areas upon which to build. If appropriate, you and your youth will choose which model and techniques to implement to bring about desired change. Next you and your youth will initiate and implement the chosen plan of action. For example, your youth is excellent in mathematics, but quite bored in class. You and your youth meet with the teacher to plan more challenging activities. It is important to avoid imposing your values upon your youth. Coercing advocacy agendas upon your youth is likely to damage the relationship and impede the assessment process.

After you have implemented a plan of action you will monitor its outcome. You and your youth need to continually evaluate your success in achieving goals and be sensitive to sources of feedback. Information secured from your monitoring efforts may indicate the need for intervention modifications. You and your youth may need to adjust your original plans, and/or additional areas may be targeted during the eighteen-week intervention period. By the time you finish your involvement you will have helped to foster durable, meaningful change in the youth's life by strengthening the youth's and significant others' abilities to renegotiate interpersonal contingencies and act as their own advocates in accessing resources.

The Environmental Resources (Advocacy) Approach

In using this approach you will want to set the stage for yourself to assume the role of advocate for the youth and his/her situation in areas of personal or collective need. Further, your goal is to help your youth become an effective self-advocate. This will involve gathering information from the youth and significant others in his/her life, as well as familiarizing yourself with resource options potentially available. In other words, you will want to begin to identify the critical interfaces between the youth and the social systems of the local community. The components of this process include: 1) the unmet needs of the youth; 2) the resources desired; 3) the various community resources available to
meet those needs; and 4) the techniques to influence those who are in control of the resources.

1) As soon as possible you should identify with the youth and family the areas of unmet needs upon which you would all like to work. A cardinal rule in the advocacy approach is that **YOU WANT TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF UNMET NEED WHICH WILL RESULT IN POSITIVE CHANGES RATHER THAN ONLY BEING CONCERNED WITH STOPPING AREAS OF HASSLE.** Talk not only to the youth about what resources he/she would like to have, but also speak to significant people in his/her life. Parents, teachers, employers, and others add new dimensions and ideas. When initiating this discussion with your youth you should emphasize the positive. Asking questions about your youth’s strengths and interests will help you establish the rapport necessary to discuss areas of difficulty within your youth’s life. For example, asking your youth questions such as: what do you do well in school? and, what is something about your family that makes you proud? or, what do you like most about your neighborhood? will emphasize the positive elements in your youth’s life. These types of questions allow your youth to tell you about his/her positive qualities. They also provide a great deal of information based upon what is not said.

2) The next step is to decide what resources are needed. This step is frequently overlooked because several resources may be identified immediately. However, the most obvious resources might not include all the options, and they might not be the best ones for the youth. It is crucial for you and your youth to brainstorm and generate as large and complete a list of alternatives as possible.

3) Next, you and your youth must identify the critical individuals at the interfaces between the youth and the social system who can provide the resources to fulfill his/her unmet needs. It is insufficient merely to target a system for advocacy. You and your youth need to identify and isolate the individual who is in control of the desired resources. For example, it is not appropriate to target the local school system as failing to provide your youth an adequate education. What you and your youth must do is to identify the individual administrator, principal, secretary, or teacher who can provide the targeted resources. In other words, each area targeted for change that you mutually select must include the specific resources that you would like to obtain and the individual who has control over those resources. Similarly, it is insufficient to indict the local employment field for failing to provide your youth with meaningful and rewarding employment. What must be done is to select what kind of job(s) would meet the individual need, what rate of pay is reasonable and needed, and exactly who is in
the position to provide the youth with the employment situation desired. For the resources that are not presently available or accessible, the individuals or organizations known to be interested or involved in the general area may prove to be a useful starting point.

4) Finally, you need to determine how the individual that you targeted can be influenced. An assessment must be made of the factors to which the individual would be most responsive, and of the strategies that would most likely lead to attainment of the resource. You and your youth will need a good deal of information about the target individual in order to make decisions about the strategy to be used during the advocacy effort. Quite like the attorney taking a case to court, you have to have your case together, know the issues involved, and understand how the judge and jury can be persuaded.

5) Remember to look for existing strengths and community resources upon which to build.

Finally, although assessment is especially crucial in the early phase of your contact with the youth, you should remain attentive to any new information or changes in the need or resource situation throughout your work with the youth. Assessment is a continuous and dynamic process that will begin with your first contact with your youth and continue throughout the 18-week intervention.

In addition to asking your youth, talking with others in your youth's life such as parents, teachers, and employers, is likely to add additional information. Observation is another method of collecting information about youth's unmet needs. This includes observing naturally occurring behaviors as well as asking your youth to try a new behavior and watching his/her response. For example, if your youth wants a job you could secure a sample application, have him/her complete it, and review the form with him/her. This will provide you with information on your youth's reading and writing abilities, whether s/he has all the necessary information such as social security number and references, and the type of job youth would like.

In your search to identify resources you will engage in such activities as brainstorming as many alternatives as possible, interviewing community members, and doing investigative research. Similar tactics are used to identify the advocacy target. The target is the individual in control of the needed resources. Assessment of the means by which to influence the target is a more difficult task. Some questions that will help guide your assessment of these means include4:

1) Does the target have an ideology that would resist or encourage the provision of the resource for the youth?

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2) Is there any relationship between the advocate and the target, or between the youth and the target?

3) Does the target view the relationship as positive or negative?

4) What are the target's self-interests?

5) To whom is the target most responsive -- supervisors, taxpayers, consumers, legislators, and pressure groups?

6) How accessible is the target?

7) Does the target have direct control over the provision of the needed resource or is the target only one part of the decision-making process?

8) Does the target have many potential allies and how influential are they?

Once you have gathered the pertinent assessment information, you will be prepared to select a specific advocacy strategy to secure the needed resource.

**The Behavioral Approach (Social Learning Theory)**

In using the behavioral approach, you want to set the stage for yourself to facilitate negotiations between the youth and various significant others in his/her interpersonal network and to work with them toward interpersonal agreement. To be able to accomplish such a task, you must first gather the necessary information about the youth's interpersonal network. This information includes:

1) Who are the important persons in the network? (such as parents, teachers, community folk, and employers)

2) What are the present contingencies operating in the network? (such as: what are the reinforcers that are maintaining the behaviors? and who are the potential mediators?)

3) What are the identified strengths?

4) What are the areas of need in the network?

If you and your youth believe that the behavioral approach is appropriate you should, as soon as is feasible, identify the interpersonal contingencies upon which you all would like to work. A cardinal rule is that **YOU WANT TO SELECT GOAL AREAS IN TERMS OF IMPROVEMENT RATHER THAN ONLY STOPPING OR REDUCING HASSLES**. Your role now includes facilitating negotiations, for the purpose of establishing and monitoring interpersonal agreements.
At this point the assessment phase moves into a more advanced stage. Now assessment will be intermixed with specific action steps. Once you have established rapport with the youth and identified areas in which you will be working, the next step is to set up meetings between yourself and the important people you have mutually identified. While the range of important persons who might be identified should be based on the individual youth and the situation, generally you will be most heavily involved with parents, teachers, and employers. The purpose of the initial meeting with the youth and each of the significant others identified is to establish what each party would like to see improved in their mutual interaction. After setting up such meetings, and making necessary introductions, your task is to identify what each party would like changed in the most exact terms possible. The best way to gain such information is to ask each party that question directly, and then further question them in order to get their desires more clearly specified and translated into positive rather than negative statements.

For example, a common thing that teachers want is for the youth to do his/her "school work". Your response would be to find out exactly what the schoolwork entails in terms of daily and weekly tasks. A common request by parents is for the youth to "follow household rules". Your response would be to ask exactly what those rules are. Kids often want to get parents "off their backs". When inquiring specifically as to what that means, you might find out that the youth wants to be able to go out with his/her friends without a 30-minute lecture about why he/she shouldn't. Your response here would be to find out exactly what the youth would like the parents to do instead.

To properly specify the behavior(s) that is to be built, enhanced, or changed, you should be able to answer the following two questions:

1) Do you know exactly what each party is asking for so that all concerned would agree on whether the change had taken place or not?

2) Can each request be stated in positive terms, rather than in terms of what each would like the other to stop doing?

Seeking the answers to these two questions should guide your assessment interactions with your youth and his/her significant others. It is imperative that behavior is specifically defined and that only positive behaviors are targeted for intervention. After identifying the desired changes of each party you are ready to negotiate an agreement.

Tharp and Wetzel (1969) have divided the assessment process into five specific tasks. These tasks involve the assessment of:

1) The behavioral repertoire of the youth.

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2) The antecedent events, which are the conditions leading to the targeted behaviors.

3) The stimulus maintaining or reinforcing the behavior.

4) The reinforcement hierarchy.

5) The identification of potential mediators.

The first task involves identifying and selecting of the behavior(s) targeted for intervention. Behaviors can be classified into three general categories. These three categories are:

1) **behavioral excess**: behavior that is problematic because it occurs in excess frequency, intensity, duration, or under conditions when it is socially unacceptable/sanctioned. For example: habitual truancy, cursing.

2) **behavioral deficit**: behavior that is problematic because it fails to occur with sufficient frequency, with adequate intensity, in appropriate form, or under socially expected conditions. For example: illiteracy, social withdrawal.

3) **behavioral asset**: Kanfer and Saslow define this as non-problematic behavior. Assets can also be defined as strengths, such as what the individual does well, appropriate social behaviors, special talents, assets, and/or skills. For example: a youth's tendency to come home by set curfew, mechanical skills, and musical abilities.

You and your youth will want to focus your assessment efforts on identifying and selecting behavioral assets (positive behaviors) for intervention purposes. You will need to assist your youth and those in his/her interpersonal network in pinpointing specific positive behaviors. Remember, behavior should be defined in terms such that it can be easily observed and counted.

The second task involves identifying antecedent events. This means identifying the conditions under which the targeted behavior occurs. You are to ask yourself: "what conditions or what events set off the target behavior"? For example, does the youth's parent start nagging at him when he begins playing his stereo? Identifying antecedents events is a difficult assessment task and consequently has not been incorporated to a great extent in behavior modification techniques. You will spend most of your efforts engaged

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in the other assessment tasks, however, it is important that you are aware of the influence of antecedent events on behavior.

Carefully assessing the events, which are maintaining the behavior, is the third assessment task. You and your youth will need to identify the functional relationships between the targeted behavior and the consequences of the behavior. The consequences could occur naturally or they could be purposely arranged in order to bring about desired change. An example of a naturally occurring consequence would be a teacher who praises a student for providing a correct answer. The teacher's social praise may be the maintaining stimulus for the student's study behavior. An example of a consequence purposely arranged to maintain a desired behavior is a parent who gives her son the use of the car Saturday afternoon for having babysat his four-year-old sister.

The fourth assessment task involves assessing the reinforcement hierarchy of the youth. This is simply identifying the rank order of the youth's reinforcers. Although many events may have reinforcing properties, some reinforcers are more powerful than others. For example, perhaps a three-day suspension from school and the associated chance to sleep-in late and watch morning television, is more reinforcing than parental social praise for attending school. To some youths an extended curfew is a stronger reinforcer than a five-dollar allowance. This assessment task can be accomplished by asking the youth about the strength of potential reinforcers, asking the parents and significant others, and through direct observation.

The number and diversity of potential reinforcers is virtually limitless. Some of the major categories include:

1) material reinforcers (material goods given in response to desired behavior),
2) token reinforcers (symbol given in response, these can have material value also),
3) social reinforcers (things such as praise, respect of peers, etc.),
4) people reinforcers (access to/time with people valued by target), and
5) activity reinforcers (ability to participate in meaningful activities).

Further, it is important to keep in mind what may serve as a strong reinforcer for you may not be a reinforcer for your youth and vice versa. Although any event that increases the behavior upon which it is contingent is considered an effective positive reinforcer, not all potential reinforcers can be used in your behavioral interventions. Any reinforcer you select to manipulate must conform to two criteria. First, it must be available in the youth's natural environment for dispensing on contingency. Second, it cannot be anything that is socially considered antisocial, illegal or immoral. For example, no matter how strong the potential reinforcing power of marijuana, skipping school, or driving without a permit, such things cannot be used as reinforcers.
The fifth and final assessment task is identifying potential mediators. An effective mediator must have three qualities:

1) Possess strong reinforcers for the youth.

2) Be able to dispense reinforcement on contingency.

3) Be in the youth's environment and frequently around when the target behavior occurs.

The dispensing of positive reinforcers has the effect of increasing the positive value of the dispenser, and consequently, can increase the emotional bond between the mediator and target. The intervention strategy of using behavioral agreements is based on this principle. Therefore, through the application of this principle you will help your youth improve and strengthen his/her interpersonal relationships. Specifically how you will structure such interactions is the topic of the next unit.

**Observation, Counting and Recording**

The activities of observing, counting and recording targeted behaviors go hand-in-hand with assessment. Whether for initial preliminary assessment purposes or for monitoring implemented intervention plans, observing, counting and recording targeted behaviors are essential components of the intervention process. These activities are important for five major reasons:

1) **Behavior change is usually a slow process.** Some behavior may require several weeks before significant change is noticed. By systematically observing, counting and recording the behavior one can see small improvements as they occur.

2) **Rectifies misperception or invalid assessment of targeted behavior.** For example, the school attendance officer informs Mr. Sidewell that his son, Terrance, has been absent every day for the past week. The class attendance-monitoring sheet that the volunteer helped Terrance and his father create indicates that Terrance attended all but one of his five classes every day last week. The school attendance record was incorrect. Terrance's school bus was late each day causing him to miss homeroom where attendance is taken.

3) **May reinforce desired behavior.** The mere act of observing and/or recording improvements in targeted behaviors has been found to have reinforcing value for some, bringing about behavioral change without other forms of intervention.
4) **Serves as a prompt to the mediator** to administer social praise and/or to deliver other reinforcers.

5) **Provides a means of continuous evaluation.** These activities allow one to systematically evaluate the outcome of implemented intervention strategies. They provide a valid assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention and indicate if changes are needed.

**Monitoring a Behavioral Agreement**

Once you have put into effect the strategies discussed in the past units, you must immediately begin the important process of monitoring your intervention. Indeed, a critical part of the agreements you negotiate and the advocacy you conduct is the monitoring systems that you build into the overall strategy. The monitoring procedures for the behavioral and the advocacy interventions will be discussed separately. Keep in mind that you will be simultaneously carrying out and monitoring interventions of each type in your work with your youth. One of the most important facets of any agreement you negotiate and execute is the system you design for monitoring the agreement. The monitoring system for a behavioral intervention will include a chart which provides spaces for recording the occurrence of the desired, agreed-upon behaviors -- both responsibilities and privileges. A good monitoring system will have the following characteristics:

1) It should be **simple** and easy to understand in format.

2) It should be **easy to use.** For example, it should involve checks and initials rather than written out descriptions of what occurred.

3) It should require **mutual monitoring.** Both parties should be involved in recording the information.

4) It should be **stated in terms of specific positive** behaviors, as the agreement is. Do not include space for other comments. That just invites the inclusion of irrelevant and negative information.

5) The monitoring system should be designed so that the information is recorded immediately following the desired behavior. This reduces the likelihood of inaccuracies and also increases the probability of positive interactions between the parties involved.

6) The system should provide a **built-in incentive** for monitoring. If the system has the above characteristics, this will be achieved. If monitoring is easy and results in positive interactions and consequences for both parties, it will continue.
A sound monitoring system is important for primarily three reasons. First, and most importantly, the monitoring tasks will initiate frequent, positive, goal-oriented interactions between the youth and the significant people in the youth's environment. Since the development of these interactions is the primary goal of using behavioral agreements, the monitoring phase is a crucial component of this process.

A second important reason for implementing a monitoring system is that it provides accurate and specific feedback about the effectiveness of the behavioral intervention. By carefully reviewing the information from the monitoring system with the parties involved, everyone will achieve a clear picture of what progress is being made and, specifically how they are enacting the agreement that was negotiated. Without the monitoring system, this would be a matter of recollection and subjective opinion.

Finally, a sound monitoring system is important because it helps everyone involved to maintain a constructive focus and to avoid irrelevant arguments. Since the monitoring system describes mutually monitored accomplishments, it removes the possibility of disagreements over what has or hasn't occurred. It also provides a current and proactive focus, thereby reducing the likelihood that either party will bring up unrelated accusations from the past.

Your role during this monitoring phase of the behavioral intervention will require that you maintain a very active involvement with all of the participants in the agreement. Any newly negotiated agreement requires that both parties develop new behaviors. Negotiating an agreement, while important, is only the beginning. Actually living out the agreement on a day-to-day basis is the more demanding part. During this phase your involvement will be crucial to the success of the intervention.

Your activities while monitoring a behavioral intervention will fall into two major categories. First of all, you will arrange weekly review sessions with the parties involved in the agreement to review the monitoring charts and discuss the progress that has been made. You should schedule a minimum of two such meetings during the first week that a new agreement is in effect. After that, meetings at weekly intervals are sufficient. These meetings should continue regularly throughout the intervention. Since you may have difficulty in coordinating everyone's schedules for these meetings, the best approach is to agree upon times for the weekly review sessions during your agreement negotiation session. There are several important considerations to keep in mind concerning these weekly review sessions.

1) The meetings should always include all involved parties.

2) Your overall goal for these meetings is to keep the discussions brief and positive in tone.

3) Gather accurate information. Pay particular attention to exactly how the people involved are executing the agreement. The information you receive from the monitoring system should provide you with the basis for
further inquiry. You will have to ask specific questions several times in order to find out exactly what happened. Finding out how the agreement is being used in actuality will allow you to accurately assess progress and provide constructive suggestions.

4) **Restrict the discussion** to information from the monitoring chart. Don't allow the discussion to stray from the monitoring task. It may happen that one or both parties are eager to bring up other issues or areas of concern. These other topics must be put off to another time. Your primary goal for these monitoring meetings is to review and discuss the progress made in the agreement behaviors.

5) Everyone involved must keep in mind that change is a gradual process. Be prepared to accept set-backs as a natural part of the change process. Your task is to help everyone maintain a positive focus and not overreact to any negative occurrences. Caution them to be realistic and patient in their expectations and yet help them to maintain a sense of optimism and motivation.

6) These monitoring sessions are great opportunities for you to model the behaviors you are encouraging them to develop in their interactions with each other. Be positive and reward any small changes that have occurred. Prompt and encourage positive interactions between them (e.g., "I see you were on time to fourth hour every day this week James. What do you think of that Mrs. Smith? "). Provide feedback in terms of what alternative responses the person could make in a certain situation rather than only providing empty criticism. Remember that changing old habits is very hard work. Leave both parties with the knowledge that you appreciate and respect the efforts that they have made.

The second type of monitoring activity that you will engage in is daily monitoring which involves frequent spontaneous contacts with the parties involved in the agreement to prompt and encourage the newly agreed-to activities. These interactions should be timed so that you can prompt or provide instruction for the new agreed-upon behaviors or monitoring activities. For example, if your youth Sue has agreed to take out the trash on Tuesday night, give her a call to remind her. Then Wednesday morning you might call Sue's father to see that he noted it down on the chart and responded positively when he saw that she had completed her chore. Or, for example, if a school monitoring system has been arranged that requires that Sue get weekly notes from her counselor, make calls to her and her counselor on Friday to remind them to do so. Remember to monitor the privileges in the agreement as well. Did Sue and her father remember to arrange the ride to her friend's house that she had earned?

These frequent contacts not only increase the likelihood of compliance and success but also allow you to troubleshoot as minor issues and misunderstandings arise. When you are in frequent contact with the parties involved these issues can be resolved quickly.
advocacy techniques, and supporting your youth’s practice of self-advocacy. It is important that the youth not only be told about and observes how to execute self-advocacy, but that he/she actually gains first-hand experience in pleading his/her own case. During the last four weeks your focus should be helping your youth refine their self-advocacy techniques. As you finish your intervention you should provide your youth with a packet that outlines all of the advocacy techniques you have practiced. Useful information to include in this packet are the names, telephone numbers and pertinent information associated with various community resources you've helped your youth gain access to, as well as resources that may be of future use. Once again, this packet serves as a resource to which your youth can refer when carrying out self-advocacy on his/her own.

Before we conclude the training segment, let's review the phases and processes involved during the intervention period (see Figure 4). The model provides both a repertory of skills and a series of circular, inter-related paths to be used as needed rather than a rigid plan that has to be followed. Several important points need to be considered in using this flow chart.

1) Assessment and monitoring of all areas of the youth's life should continue regardless of the stage of the intervention.

2) Several areas of the youth's life may need attention at any given point in time. Intervention may be proceeding simultaneously at several different stages on the chart.

3) Certain phases of one strategy (advocacy or agreements) may be appropriate in conjunction with the other.

4) The process (path followed) on the chart flows in both directions.

A final task you will accomplish is to prepare a termination report. This report will incorporate the information you have been compiling on the case in your weekly progress reports and log book. Your termination report will include an expanded version of the following components:

**Goals.** What were you specifically working on with this youth and his/her situation during your 18 week involvement. Include your original goals and any additional goals you identified later.

**Techniques.** Detail exactly what you and others involved in the case did to accomplish the goals identified above.

**Evaluation.** What is your assessment of the degree to which the goals were accomplished and the techniques utilized were helpful.
This intensive monitoring also provides you with an opportunity to provide a great deal of encouragement and praise to all parties. Be creative in this regard. If your youth and his/her parents have been working hard to improve their relationships through complying with an agreement, initiate a celebration with them. Engage in some joint activity that they would both enjoy or do anything that lets them know you appreciate their efforts. This sort of celebrating helps them to appreciate the progress they've made too.

**Termination Phase**

The goals of this project are to increase resource awareness and self-advocacy skills of the youth, mobilization of the community, increase access to resources, and assist in strength identification and life skill development. In accomplishing these goals we will help prevent the youth returning to the juvenile justice systems. Our means of accomplishing these goals are to get the youth and the important people in his/her environment to use the methods of behavioral agreements and advocacy as alternatives to seeking formal societal means of control (e.g. boot camps, parental punishment, etc.). The accomplishments that you and your youth are able to make with the youth and his/her situations are the beginnings of changes in interpersonal strategy and meeting individual needs. In accomplishing these goals your youth will establish sustainable strategies for future self-advocacy.

One problem, which any program of this type has, is that the involvement with the population being helped cannot last forever. Decisions to terminate at any particular time point are merely subjective. In this project we have selected eighteen weeks as the model intervention time period. Eighteen weeks allows sufficient time to accomplish significant changes, allows a mutually visible time period to accomplish goals, and has been shown to be short enough to avoid undesired dependency.

During the last four weeks of the 18 week intervention period your primary focus will be preparing the youth and his/her community for your departure. In particular, you will assist the youth in solidifying his/her goals and self-advocacy skills. At this point you should reflect upon your experience with your youth. This reflection should include assessing the degree to which your youth has developed his/her capacity to self-advocate. This is a time to address gaps in his/her self-advocacy capacity.

If you used behavioral agreements, one effective termination practice involves compiling an agreement packet for those you have worked with. Such packets should contain a summary of information necessary to effectively negotiate and establish sound agreements. Including sample agreements and/or fill-in-the-blank agreements are also useful. Such packets should be clear, concise and written in common terms. These packets serve as a resource for individuals to refer back to when establishing behavioral agreements on their own. This piece is a component of the termination packet.

In the case of advocacy, you will be assisting the youth and significant others in the methods of advocacy from the beginning, and modeling advocacy techniques throughout the intervention. This will take place through your mutual discussions, modeling
I am addressing this book to one set of persons I know and am concerned about in the hope that it will help them to know and understand more fully another set of persons I know and am concerned about. The latter group are the obvious victims of the racism and of the social and economic injustice that infect all parts of American life. The former appear to have escaped victimization. They have decent jobs and houses and send their children to decent schools. More important, they have not been made insensitive by their own good fortune. As I picture the person I hope will be reading these words, he already knows in some detail about the obvious victims, he knows that there are poor families, slums, discrimination, miseducation, exploitation. He not only knows, but he is concerned, and his concern is not abstract. He acts—at the polls, in civic groups, in church organizations. He wants change. He wants an end to racism and injustice. And, despite the pessimism of many, I still cling to the belief that this group of concerned citizens who act on their concern hold the key, the only key, to nonviolent change in American life.

But, in another sense, this concerned citizen has not escaped; he too is a victim. He has been miseducated and
misled by an ideology, a mythology, a set of officially-certified nonfacts and respected untruths, and this ideology—which has been infused into the very cells of his brain—prevents him from seeing the process of victimization as a total picture.

In part this is so because his attention is constantly occupied with the details of truly sad and touching stories about individuals. He knows, or has read, or has heard, a hundred or a thousand such stories, but he has no way of fitting them together. The standard content of popular American social thought (as well as the set of cognitive and emotional dispositions by which that content is structured), as it has been filtered into the intellectual apparatus of the reasonably well-read, average citizen, is insufficient and irrelevant to the task of understanding the pattern that these stories form.

For years, with some sense of despair, I have been observing this process. Let me illustrate. A woman I know read Jonathan Kozol’s *Death at an Early Age* and Herbert Kohl’s *36 Children*. She was moved and outraged. She heard other stories in conversations with friends about the specifics of life in a ghetto classroom. She was horrified, and her horror was genuine and deep. But when I talked with her, it became clear that what horrified her was that particular series of stories; what appalled her was that there are individual teachers—even in large numbers—who can behave so badly to individual children. She does not fully grasp the fact that ghetto education is not merely an infinite series of teachers acting badly, but is, more importantly, a social institution of American life, a mechanism for destroying black children. Moreover, like other modern engineering miracles, this mechanism uses interchangeable parts: it can substitute one individual teacher for another and still achieve its purpose with no difficulty.

This woman’s failure to grasp the total picture leaves her an easy subject for disorientation, and at another time she can support the operations of that engine of destruction with equal sincerity because those operations have been defined plausibly to her as benevolent (like the series of fraudulent programs that are constantly being initiated “to benefit innercity children”).

What is even worse, she participates directly in the process of victimization although she does so unintentionally. A number of the white middle class parents my wife and I know are men and women with the best of intentions whose sincerity and devotion is attested to by their grim determination to keep their children in the New Haven public schools: these parents of our daughter’s classmates spend many nights and weekends working to improve those schools. They are nevertheless completely acquiescent to the operation of one of the most rigid and mindless tracking systems in the country—it explicitly defines and labels their children as educable and college-bound while the children of the poor and the black are dismissed as “unprepared” or “academically untalented.”

These same concerned persons might see a set of pictures of cracked walls, falling plaster, leaking toilets and broken staircases; they might even strip away the protective distance behind the static photograph and visit slum tenements and become nauseated and enraged. They might very well speak out against the slum landlords and condemn the laxity of city officials. But then they are easily hoodwinked into supporting an urban renewal program, the staff of which clouds their vision with quite believable rhetoric about rehabilitation, slum clearance, and badly-needed social services to the “unacculturated” slumdwellers. They remain completely blind to the truth that urban renewal is one of the very creators of the slums that have so outraged them.
Good intentions and vigorous actions to improve social conditions are constantly being crippled, sabotaged, and deflected by insidious forces that have already pre-shaped the channels of thought. Because those who intend good and act with vigor also believe certain things to be true about the poor, the black, and the victimized. And, so believing, they are easily tempted into accepting the mythology of Blaming the Victim.

This book is about that mythology and that ideology. My purpose is, first, to persuade the reader that many of his friends and neighbors—and perhaps even he himself—have been tricked into believing many lies and, second, to provide him with a viewpoint and a method of analysis that can armor him against future tricks and future lies.

In this discussion I will try to resist the constant temptation to make this book more “interesting,” more “entertaining,” more “readable.” I will not tell a long series of heartbreaking stories—although, God knows, I know enough of them to fill a book. Others have done that and done it well. I will attempt to be informative: I will aim more frequently for the head than for the heart although it is my firm hope that the heart can be touched more profoundly by way of that detour.

The book grows out of my own experience, both professional and personal. As a psychologist and a social scientist, I have spent some years in clinical work and more recently have engaged in research and planning for the solution of urban social problems. Over these years I have found myself forced, painfully and gradually, to discard one supposed social fact after another, facts that made up some of the core of my own professional identity. My own process of relearning and rethinking has been accelerated by many, many years of activity as a citizen on the battleground of what used to be called the civil rights movement. During these years, I have come to know some of the people who have been victimized and lied about—at meetings, on picket lines, in confrontations with landlords, in living room talks, and at coffee sessions around kitchen tables. The realities I have experienced are very different from the myths and untruths dealt out by politicians and bureaucrats and even by some of my fellow social scientists.

I have now come to believe that the ideology of Blaming the Victim so distorts and disorients the thinking of the average concerned citizen that it becomes a primary barrier to effective social change. And, further, I believe that the injustices and inequalities in American life can never be understood (and, therefore, can never be eliminated) until that ideology is exposed and destroyed.

Since I believe that the quality of my own life, and that of the lives of my wife and daughter and friends, is polluted daily by these injustices, I want that change to come and I want to help to destroy that mythology.

I will not be telling you moving stories, then. Rather, I will be debating with those who have been lying to you. And I will try to tell you some truths as I, at least, have learned them to be true.
Twenty years ago, Zero Mostel used to do a sketch in which he impersonated a Dixiecrat Senator conducting an investigation of the origins of World War II. At the climax of the sketch, the Senator boomed out, in an excruciating mixture of triumph and suspicion, "What was Pearl Harbor doing in the Pacific?" This is an extreme example of Blaming the Victim.

Twenty years ago, we could laugh at Zero Mostel's caricature. In recent years, however, the same process has been going on every day in the arena of social problems, public health, anti-poverty programs, and social welfare. A philosopher might analyze this process and prove that, technically, it is comic. But it is hardly ever funny.

Consider some victims. One is the miseducated child in
the slum school. He is blamed for his own miseducation. He is said to contain within himself the causes of his inability to read and write well. The shorthand phrase is "cultural deprivation," which, to those in the know, conveys what they allege to be inside information: that the poor child carries a scanty pack of cultural baggage as he enters school. He doesn't know about books and magazines and newspapers, they say. (No books in the home: the mother fails to subscribe to Reader's Digest.) They say that if he talks at all—an unlikely event since slum parents don't talk to their children—he certainly doesn't talk correctly. (Lower-class dialect spoken here, or even—God forbid!—Southern Negro. (Ici on parle nigra.) If you can manage to get him to sit in a chair, they say, he squirms and looks out the window. (Impulse-ridden, these kids, motoric rather than verbal.) In a word he is "disadvantaged" and "socially deprived," they say, and this, of course, accounts for his failure (his failure, they say) to learn much in school.

Note the similarity to the logic of Zero Mostel's Dixiecrat Senator. What is the culturally deprived child doing in the school? What is wrong with the victim? In pursuing this logic, no one remembers to ask questions about the collapsing buildings and torn textbooks, the frightened, insensitive teachers, the six additional desks in the room, the blustering, frightened principals, the relentless segregation, the callous administrator, the irrelevant curriculum, the bigoted or cowardly members of the school board, the insulting history book, the stingy taxpayers, the fairy-tale readers, or the self-serving faculty of the local teachers' college. We are encouraged to confine our attention to the child and to dwell on all his alleged defects. Cultural deprivation becomes an omnibus explanation for the educational disaster area known as the inner-city school. This is Blaming the Victim.

Pointing to the supposedly deviant Negro family as the

"fundamental weakness of the Negro community" is another way to blame the victim. Like "cultural deprivation," "Negro family" has become a shorthand phrase with stereotyped connotations of matriarchy, fatherlessness, and pervasive illegitimacy. Growing up in the "crumbling" Negro family is supposed to account for most of the racial evils in America. Insiders have the word, of course, and know that this phrase is supposed to evoke images of growing up with a long-absent or never-present father (replaced from time to time perhaps by a series of transient lovers) and with bossy women ruling the roost, so that the children are irreparably damaged. This refers particularly to the poor, bewildered male children, whose psyches are fatally wounded and who are never, alas, to learn the trick of becoming upright, downright, forthright all-American boys. Is it any wonder the Negroes cannot achieve equality? From such families! And, again, by focusing our attention on the Negro family as the apparent cause of racial inequality, our eye is diverted. Racism, discrimination, segregation, and the powerlessness of the ghetto are subtly, but thoroughly, downgraded in importance.

The generic process of Blaming the Victim is applied to almost every American problem. The miserable health care of the poor is explained away on the grounds that the victim has poor motivation and lacks health information. The problems of slum housing are traced to the characteristics of tenants who are labeled as "Southern rural migrants" not yet "acculturated" to life in the big city. The "multiproblem" poor, it is claimed, suffer the psychological effects of impoverishment, the "culture of poverty," and the deviant value system of the lower classes; consequently, though unwittingly, they cause their own troubles. From such a viewpoint, the obvious fact that poverty is primarily an absence of money is easily overlooked or set aside.

The growing number of families receiving welfare are
fallaciously linked together with the increased number of illegitimate children as twin results of promiscuity and sexual abandon among members of the lower orders. Every important social problem—crime, mental illness, civil disorder, unemployment—has been analyzed within the framework of the victim-blaming ideology. In the following pages, I shall present in detail nine examples that relate to social problems and human services in urban areas.

It would be possible for me to venture into other areas—one finds a perfect example in literature about the underdeveloped countries of the Third World, in which the lack of prosperity and technological progress is attributed to some aspect of the national character of the people, such as lack of "achievement motivation"—but I plan to stay within the confines of my own personal and professional experience, which is, generally, with racial injustice, social welfare, and human services in the city.

I have been listening to the victim-blamers and pondering their thought processes for a number of years. That process is often very subtle. Victim-blaming is cloaked in kindness and concern, and bears all the trappings and statistical subterfuges of scientism; it is obscured by a perfumed haze of humanitarianism. In observing the process of Blaming the Victim, one tends to be confused and disoriented because those who practice this art display a deep concern for the victims that is quite genuine. In this way, the new ideology is very different from the open prejudice and reactionary tactics of the old days. Its adherents include sympathetic social scientists with social consciences in good working order, and liberal politicians with a genuine commitment to reform. They are very careful to dissociate themselves from vulgar Calvinism or crude racism; they indignantly condemn any notions of innate wickedness or genetic defect. "The Negro is not born inferior," they shout apoplecticly. "Force of cir-

cumstance," they explain in reasonable tones, "has made him inferior." And they dismiss with self-righteous contempt any claims that the poor man in America is plainly unworthy or shiftless or enamored of idleness. No, they say, he is "caught in the cycle of poverty." He is trained to be poor by his culture and his family life, endowed by his environment (perhaps by his ignorant mother's outdated style of toilet training) with those unfortunately unpleasant characteristics that make him ineligible for a passport into the affluent society.

Blaming the Victim is, of course, quite different from old-fashioned conservative ideologies. The latter simply dismissed victims as inferior, genetically defective, or morally unfit; the emphasis is on the intrinsic, even hereditary, defect. The former shifts its emphasis to the environmental causation. The old-fashioned conservative could hold firmly to the belief that the oppressed and the victimized were born that way—"that way" being defective or inadequate in character or ability. The new ideology attributes defect and inadequacy to the malignant nature of poverty, injustice, slum life, and racial difficulties. The stigma that marks the victim and accounts for his victimization is an acquired stigma, a stigma of social, rather than genetic, origin. But the stigma, the defect, the fatal difference—though derived in the past from environmental forces—is still located within the victim, inside his skin. With such an elegant formulation, the humanitarian can have it both ways. He can, all at the same time, concentrate his charitable interest on the defects of the victim, condemn the vague social and environmental stresses that produced the defect (some time ago), and ignore the continuing effect of victimizing social forces (right now). It is a brilliant ideology for justifying a perverse form of social action designed to change, not society, as one might expect, but rather society's victim.

As a result, there is a terrifying sameness in the programs
that arise from this kind of analysis. In education, we have programs of “compensatory education” to build up the skills and attitudes of the ghetto child, rather than structural changes in the schools. In race relations, we have social engineers who think up ways of “strengthening” the Negro family, rather than methods of eradicating racism. In health care, we develop new programs to provide health information (to correct the supposed ignorance of the poor) and to reach out and discover cases of untreated illness and disability (to compensate for their supposed unwillingness to seek treatment). Meanwhile, the gross inequities of our medical care delivery systems are left completely unchanged. As we might expect, the logical outcome of analyzing social problems in terms of the deficiencies of the victim is the development of programs aimed at correcting those deficiencies. The formula for action becomes extraordinarily simple: change the victim.

All of this happens so smoothly that it seems downright rational. First, identify a social problem. Second, study those affected by the problem and discover in what ways they are different from the rest of us as a consequence of deprivation and injustice. Third, define the differences as the cause of the social problem itself. Finally, of course, assign a government bureaucrat to invent a humanitarian action program to correct the differences.

Now no one in his right mind would quarrel with the assertion that social problems are present in abundance and are readily identifiable. God knows it is true that when hundreds of thousands of poor children drop out of school—or even graduate from school—they are barely literate. After spending some ten thousand hours in the company of professional educators, these children appear to have learned very little. The fact of failure in their education is undisputed. And the racial situation in America is usually acknowledged to be a number one item on the nation’s agenda. Despite years of marches, commissions, judicial decisions, and endless legislative remedies, we are confronted with unchanging or even widening racial differences in achievement. In addition, despite our assertions that Americans get the best health care in the world, the poor stubbornly remain unhealthy. They lose more work because of illness, have more cavities, lose more babies as a result of both miscarriage and infant death, and die considerably younger than the well-to-do.

The problems are there, and there in great quantities. They make us uneasy. Added together, these disturbing signs reflect inequality and a puzzlingly high level of unalleviated distress in America totally inconsistent with our proclaimed ideals and our enormous wealth. This thread—this rope—of inconsistency stands out so visibly in the fabric of American life, that it is jarring to the eye. And this must be explained, to the satisfaction of our conscience as well as our patriotism. Blaming the Victim is an ideal, almost painless, evasion.

The second step in applying this explanation is to look sympathetically at those who “have” the problem in question, to separate them out and define them in some way as a special group, a group that is different from the population in general. This is a crucial and essential step in the process, for that difference is in itself hampering and maladaptive. The Different Ones are seen as less competent, less skilled, less knowing—in short, less human. The ancient Greeks deduced from a single characteristic, a difference in language, that the barbarians—that is, the “babblers” who spoke a strange tongue—were wild, uncivilized, dangerous, rapacious, uneducated, lawless, and, indeed, scarcely more than animals. Automatically labeling strangers as savages, weird and inhuman creatures (thus explaining difference by exaggerating
Blaming the Victim is an ideological process, which is to say that it is a set of ideas and concepts deriving from systematically motivated, but unintended, distortions of reality. In the sense that Karl Mannheim used the term, an ideology develops from the "collective unconscious" of a group or class and is rooted in a class-based interest in maintaining the status quo (as contrasted with what he calls a utopia, a set of ideas rooted in a class-based interest in changing the status quo). An ideology, then, has several components: First, there is the belief system itself, the way of looking at the world the set of ideas and concepts. Second, there is the systematic distortion of reality reflected in those ideas. Third is the condition that the distortion must not be a conscious, intentional process. Finally, though they are not intentional, the ideas must serve a specific function: maintaining the status quo in the interest of a specific group. Blaming the Victim fits this definition on all counts, as I will attempt to show in detail in the following chapters. Most particularly, it is important to realize that Blaming the Victim is not a process of intentional distortion although it does serve the class interests of those who practice it. And it has a rich ancestry in American thought about social problems and how to deal with them.

Thinking about social problems is especially susceptible to ideological influences since, as John Seeley has pointed out, defining a social problem is not so simple. "What is a social problem?" may seem an ingenuous question until one turns to confront its opposite: "What human problem is not a social problem?" Since any problem in which people are involved is social, why do we reserve the label for some problems in which people are involved and withhold it from others? To use Seeley's example, why is crime called a social problem when university administration is not? The phenomena we look at are bounded by the act of definition. They become social problems only by being so considered. In Seeley's words, "naming it as a problem, after naming

| name the rather large quantity of people on earth as the problem of overpopulation, or the population explosion. Such phenomena often become proper predicaments for certain solutions, certain treatments. Before the 1930's, the most Anti-Semitic German was unaware that Germany ha
"Jewish problem." It took the Nazis to name the simple existence of Jews in the Third Reich as a "social problem," and that act of definition helped to shape the final solution.

We have removed "immigration" from our list of social problems (after executing a solution—choking off the flow of immigrants) and have added "urbanization." Nowadays, we define the situation of men out of work as the social problem of "unemployment" rather than, as in Elizabethan times, that of "idleness." (The McConel Commission, investigating the Watts Riot of 1966, showed how hard old ideologies die; it specified both unemployment and idleness as causes of the disorder.) In the near future, if we are to credit the prophets of automation, the label "unemployment" will fade away and "idleness," now renamed the "leisure-time problem," will begin again to raise its lazy head. We have been comfortable for years with the "Negro problem," a term that clearly implies that the existence of Negroes is somehow a problematic fact. *Ebony* Magazine turned the tables recently and renamed the phenomenon as "The White Problem in America," which may be a good deal more accurate.

We must particularly ask, "To whom are social problems a problem?" And usually, if truth were to be told, we would have to admit that we mean they are a problem to those of us who are outside the boundaries of what we have defined as the problem. Negroes are a problem to racist whites, welfare is a problem to stingy taxpayers, delinquency is a problem to nervous property owners.

Now, if this is the quality of our assumptions about social problems, we are led unerringly to certain beliefs about the causes of these problems. We cannot comfortably believe that we are the cause of that which is problematic to us; therefore, we are almost compelled to believe that they—the prob-

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ematic ones—are the cause and this immediately prompts us to search for deviance. Identification of the deviance as the cause of the problem is a simple step that ordinarily does not even require evidence.

C. Wright Mills analyzed the ideology of those who write about social problems and demonstrated the relationship of their texts to class interest and to the preservation of the existent social order. In sifting the material in thirty-one widely used textbooks in "social problems," "social pathology," and "social disorganization," Mills found a pervasive, coherent ideology with a number of common characteristics.

First, the textbooks present material about these problems, he says, in simple, descriptive terms, with each problem unrelated to the others and none related in any meaningful way to other aspects of the social environment. Second, the problems are selected and described largely according to predetermined norms. Poverty is a problem in that it deviates from the standard of economic self-sufficiency; divorce is a problem because the family is supposed to remain intact; crime and delinquency are problematic insofar as they depart from the accepted moral and legal standards of the community. The norms themselves are taken as givens, and no effort is made to examine them. Nor is there any thought given to the manner in which norms might themselves contribute to the development of the problems. (In a society in which everyone is assumed and expected to be economically self-sufficient, as an example, doesn't economic dependency almost automatically mean poverty? No attention is given to such issues.)

Within such a framework, then, deviation from norms and standards comes to be defined as failed or incomplete socialization—failure to learn the rules or the inability to learn how to keep to them. Those with social problems are then
viewed as unable or unwilling to adjust to society's standards, which are narrowly conceived by what Mills calls "independent middle class persons verbally living out Protestant ideas in small town America." This, obviously, is a precise description of the social origins and status of almost every one of the authors. In defining social problems in this way, the social pathologists are, of course, ignoring a whole set of factors that ordinarily might be considered relevant—for instance, unequal distribution of income, social stratification, political struggle, ethnic and racial group conflict, and inequality of power. Their ideology concentrates almost exclusively on the failure of the deviant. To the extent that society plays any part in social problems, it is said to have somehow failed to socialize the individual, to teach him how to adjust to circumstances, which, though far from perfect, are gradually changing for the better. Mills' essay provides a solid foundation for understanding the concept of Blaming the Victim.

This way of thinking on the part of "social pathologists," which Mills identified as the predominant tool used in analyzing social problems, also saturates the majority of programs that have been developed to solve social problems in America. These programs are based on the assumption that individuals "have" social problems as a result of some kind of unusual circumstances—accident, illness, personal defect or handicap, character flaw or maladjustment—that exclude them from using the ordinary mechanisms for maintaining and advancing themselves. For example, the prevalent belief in America is that, under normal circumstances, everyone can obtain sufficient income for the necessities of life. Those who are unable to do so are special deviant cases, persons who for one reason or another are not able to adapt them-
rather than merely repairing or treating—to see social problems, in a word, as social. In the field of disease, this approach was termed public health, and its practitioners sought the cause of disease in such things as the water supply, the sewage system, the density and quality of housing conditions. They set out to prevent disease, not in individuals, but in the total population, through improved sanitation, inoculation against communicable disease, and the policing of housing conditions. In the field of income maintenance, this secondary style of solving social problems focused on poverty as a predictable event, on the regularities of income deficiency. And it concentrated on the development of standard, generalized programs affecting total groups. Rather than trying to fit the aged worker ending his career into some kind of category of special cases, it assumed all sixty-five-year-old men should expect to retire from the world of work and have the security of an old age pension, to be arranged through public social activity. Unemployment insurance was developed as a method whereby all workers could be protected against the effects of the normal ups and downs of the business cycle. A man out of work could then count on an unemployment check rather than endure the agony of pauperizing himself, selling his tools or his car, and finding himself in the special category of those deserving of charity.

These two approaches to the solution of social problems have existed side by side, the former always dominant, but the latter gradually expanding, slowly becoming more and more prevalent.

Elsewhere I have proposed the dimension of exception-alism-universalism as the ideological underpinning for these two contrasting approaches to the analysis and solution of social problems. The exceptionalist viewpoint is reflected in arrangements that are private, voluntary, remedial, special, local, and exclusive. Such arrangements imply that problems occur to specially-defined categories of persons in an unpredictable manner. The problems are unusual, even unique, they are exceptions to the rule, they occur as a result of individual defect, accident, or unfortunate circumstance and must be remedied by means that are particular and, as it were, tailored to the individual case.

The universalistic viewpoint, on the other hand, is reflected in arrangements that are public, legislated, promotive or preventive, general, national, and inclusive. Inherent in such a viewpoint is the idea that social problems are a function of the social arrangements of the community or the society and that, since these social arrangements are quite imperfect and inequitable, such problems are both predictable and, more important, preventable through public action. They are not unique to the individual, and the fact that they encompass individual persons does not imply that those persons are themselves defective or abnormal.

Consider these two contrasting approaches as they are applied to the problem of smallpox. The medical care approach is exceptionalistic; it is designed to provide remedial treatment to the special category of persons who are afflicted with the disease through a private, voluntary arrangement with a local doctor. The universalistic public health approach is designed to provide preventive inoculation to the total population, ordered by legislation and available through public means if no private arrangements can be made.

A similar contrast can be made between an exceptionalistic assistance program such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children and the proposed universalistic program of family allowances based simply on the number of children in a family. The latter assumes that the size of a family should automatically be a consideration in income supplementation,
since it is in no way taken into account in the wage structure, and that it should be dealt with in a routine and universal fashion. The AFDC program, on the other hand, assumes that families need income assistance only as a result of special, impoverishing circumstances.

Fluoridation is universalistic; it is aimed at preventing caries in the total population; oral surgery is exceptionalistic, designed to remedy the special cases of infection or neglect that damage the teeth of an individual. Birth control is universalistic; abortion exceptionalistic. It has been said that navigational aids have saved far more lives than have rescue devices, no matter how refined they might be. The compass, then, is universalistic, while the lifeboat is exceptionalistic.

The similarity between exceptionalism and what Mills called the “ideology of social pathologists” is readily apparent. Indeed, the ideological potential of the exceptionalist viewpoint is unusually great. If one is inclined to explain all instances of deviance, all social problems, all occasions on which help is provided to others as the result of unusual circumstances, defect, or accident, one is unlikely to inquire about social inequalities.

This is not to devalue valid exceptionalistic services. Despite fluoridation, some instances of caries and gum disease will require attention; despite excellent prenatal care, handicapped children will occasionally be born; husbands will doubtless continue to die unexpectedly at early ages, leaving widows and orphans in need. And at any given moment, the end products of society’s malfunctioning—the miseduced teenager, the unskilled adult laborer, the child brain-damaged as a result of prenatal neglect—will require service that is predominantly exceptionalistic in nature.

The danger in the exceptionalistic viewpoint is in its impact on social policy when it becomes the dominant com-
ponent in social analysis. Blaming the Victim occurs exclusively within an exceptionalistic framework, and it consists of applying exceptionalistic explanations to universalistic problems. This represents an illogical departure from fact, a method, in Mannheim’s words, of systematically distorting reality, of developing an ideology.

Blaming the Victim can take its place in a long series of American ideologies that have rationalized cruelty and injustice.

Slavery, for example, was justified—even praised—on the basis of a complex ideology that showed quite conclusively how useful slavery was to society and how uplifting it was for the slaves. Eminent physicians could be relied upon to provide the biological justification for slavery since after all, they said, the slaves were a separate species—as, for example, cattle are a separate species. No one in his right mind would dream of freeing the cows and fighting to abolish the ownership of cattle. In the view of the average American of 1825, it was important to preserve slavery, not simply because it was in accord with his own group interests (he was not fully aware of that), but because reason and logic showed clearly to the reasonable and intelligent man that slavery was good. In order to persuade a good and moral man to do evil, then, it is not necessary first to persuade him to become evil. It is only necessary to teach him that he is doing good. No one, in the words of a legendary newspaperman, thinks of himself as a son of a bitch.

In late-nineteenth-century America there flowered another ideology of injustice that seemed rational and just to the decent, progressive person. But Richard Hofstadter’s analysis of the phenomenon of Social Darwinism shows clearly its functional role in the preservation of the status quo. One can
scarcely imagine a better fit than the one between this ideology and the purposes and actions of the robber barons, who descended like piranha fish on the America of this era and picked its bones clean. Their extraordinarily unethical operations netted them not only hundreds of millions of dollars but also, perversely, the adoration of the nation. Behavior that would be, in any more rational land (including today’s America), more than enough to have landed them all in jail, was praised as the very model of a captain of modern industry. And the philosophy that justified their thievery was such that John D. Rockefeller could actually stand up and preach it in church. Listen as he speaks in, of all places, Sunday school:

The growth of a large business is merely a survival of the fittest. . . . The American Beauty rose can be produced in the splendor and fragrance which bring cheer to its beholder only by sacrificing the early buds which grow up around it. This is not an evil tendency in business. It is merely the working-out of a law of nature and a law of God.1

This was the core of the gospel, adapted analogically from Darwin’s writings on evolution. Herbert Spencer and, later, William Graham Sumner and other beginners in the social sciences considered Darwin’s work to be directly applicable to social processes: ultimately as a guarantee that life was progressing toward perfection but, in the short run, as a justification for an absolutely uncontrolled laissez-faire economic system. The central concepts of “survival of the fittest,” “natural selection,” and “gradualism” were exalted in Rockefeller’s preaching to the status of laws of God and Nature. Not only did this ideology justify the criminal capacity of those who rose to the top of the industrial heap, defining them automatically as naturally superior (this was bad enough), but at the same time it also required that those at the bottom of the heap be labeled as patently unfit—a label based solely on their position in society. According to the law of natural selection, they should be, in Spencer’s judgment, eliminated. “The whole effort of nature is to get rid of such, to clear the world of them and make room for better.”

For a generation, Social Darwinism was the orthodox doctrine in the social sciences, such as they were at that time. Opponents of this ideology were shut out of respectable intellectual life. The philosophy that enabled John D. Rockefeller to justify himself self-righteously in front of a class of Sunday school children was not the product of an academic quack or a marginal crackpot philosopher. It came directly from the lectures and books of leading intellectual figures of the time, occupants of professorial chairs at Harvard and Yale. Such is the power of an ideology that so neatly fits the needs of the dominant interests of society.

If one is to think about ideologies in America in 1970, one must be prepared to consider the possibility that a body of ideas that might seem almost self-evident is, in fact, highly distorted and highly selective; one must allow that the inclusion of a specific formulation in every freshman sociology text does not guarantee that the particular formulation represents abstract Truth rather than group interest. It is important not to delude ourselves into thinking that ideological monstrosities were constructed by monsters. They were not; they are not. They are developed through a process that shows every sign of being valid scholarship, complete with tables of numbers, copious footnotes, and scientific terminology. Ideologies are quite often academically and socially respectable and in many instances hold positions of exclusive validity, so that disagreement is considered unrespectable or radical
and risks being labeled as irresponsible, unenlightened, or trashy.

Blaming the Victim holds such a position. It is central in the mainstream of contemporary American social thought, and its ideas pervade our most crucial assumptions so thoroughly that they are hardly noticed. Moreover, the fruits of this ideology appear to be fraught with altruism and humanitarianism, so it is hard to believe that it has principally functioned to block social change.

III

A major pharmaceutical manufacturer, as an act of humanitarian concern, has distributed copies of a large poster warning “LEAD PAINT CAN KILL!” The poster, featuring a photograph of the face of a charming little girl, goes on to explain that if children eat lead paint, it can poison them, they can develop serious symptoms, suffer permanent brain damage, even die. The health department of a major American city has put out a coloring book that provides the same information. While the poster urges parents to prevent their children from eating paint, the coloring book is more vivid. It labels as negligent and thoughtless the mother who does not keep her infant under constant surveillance to keep it from eating paint chips.

Now, no one would argue against the idea that it is important to spread knowledge about the danger of eating paint in order that parents might act to forestall their children from doing so. But to campaign against lead paint only in these terms is destructive and misleading and, in a sense, an effective way to support and agree with slum landlords— who define the problem of lead poisoning in precisely these terms.

This is an example of applying an exceptionalistic solution to a universalistic problem. It is not accurate to say that lead poisoning results from the actions of individual neglectful mothers. Rather, lead poisoning is a social phenomenon supported by a number of social mechanisms, one of the most tragic by-products of the systematic toleration of slum housing. In New Haven, which has the highest reported rate of lead poisoning in the country, several small children have died and many others have incurred irreparable brain damage as a result of eating peeling paint. In several cases, when the landlord failed to make repairs, poisonings have occurred time and again through a succession of tenancies. And the major reason for the landlord’s neglect of this problem was that the city agency responsible for enforcing the housing code did nothing to make him correct this dangerous condition.

The cause of the poisoning is the lead in the paint on the walls of the apartment in which the children live. The presence of the lead is illegal. To use lead paint in a residence is illegal; to permit lead paint to be exposed in a residence is illegal. It is not only illegal, it is potentially criminal since the housing code does provide for criminal penalties. The general problem of lead poisoning, then, is more accurately analyzed as the result of a systematic program of lawbreaking by one interest group in the community, with the toleration and encouragement of the public authority charged with enforcing that law. To ignore these continued and repeated law violations, to ignore the fact that the supposed law enforcer actually cooperates in lawbreaking, and then to load a burden of guilt on the mother of a dead or dangerously-ill child is an egregious distortion of reality. And to do so under the guise of public-spirited and humanitarian service to the community is intolerable.

But this is how Blaming the Victim works. The righteous humanitarian concern displayed by the drug company, with
its poster, and the health department, with its coloring book, is a genuine concern, and this is a typical feature of Blaming the Victim. Also typical is the swerving away from the central target that requires systematic change and, instead, focusing in on the individual affected. The ultimate effect is always to distract attention from the basic causes and to leave the primary social injustice untouched. And, most telling, the proposed remedy for the problem is, of course, to work on the victim himself. Prescriptions for cure, as written by the Savage Discovery set, are invariably conceived to revamp and revise the victim, never to change the surrounding circumstances. They want to change his attitudes, alter his values, fill up his cultural deficits, energize his apathetic soul, cure his character defects, train him and polish him and woo him from his savage ways.

Isn't all of this more subtle and sophisticated than such old-fashioned ideologies as Social Darwinism? Doesn't the change from brutal ideas about survival of the fit (and the expiration of the unfit) to kindly concern about characterological defects (brought about by stigmas of social origin) seem like a substantial step forward? Hardly. It is only a substitution of terms. The old, reactionary exceptionalistic formulations are replaced by new progressive, humanitarian exceptionalistic formulations. In education, the outmoded and unacceptable concept of racial or class differences in basic inherited intellectual ability simply gives way to the new notion of cultural deprivation: there is very little functional difference between these two ideas. In taking a look at the phenomenon of poverty, the old concept of unfitness or idleness or laziness is replaced by the new-fangled theory of the culture of poverty. In race relations, plain Negro inferiority—which was good enough for old-fashioned conservatives—is pushed aside by fancy conceits about the crumbling Negro family. With regard to illegitimacy, we are not so crass as to concern ourselves with immorality and vice, as in the old days; we settle benignly on the explanation of the “lower-class pattern of sexual behavior,” which no one condemns as evil, but which is, in fact, simply a variation of the old explanatory idea. Mental illness is no longer defined as the result of hereditary taint or congenital character flaw; now we have new causal hypotheses regarding the ego-damaging emotional experiences that are supposed to be the inevitable consequence of the deplorable child-rearing practices of the poor.

In each case, of course, we are persuaded to ignore the obvious: the continued blatant discrimination against the Negro, the gross deprivation of contraceptive and adoption services to the poor, the heavy stresses endemic in the life of the poor. And almost all our make-believe liberal programs aimed at correcting our urban problems are off target; they are designed either to change the poor man or to cool him out.

IV

We come finally to the question, Why? It is much easier to understand the process of Blaming the Victim as a way of thinking than it is to understand the motivation for it. Why do Victim Blamers, who are usually good people, blame the victim? The development and application of this ideology, and of all the mythologies associated with Savage Discovery, are readily exposed by careful analysis as hostile acts—one is almost tempted to say acts of war—directed against the disadvantaged, the distressed, the disenchanted. It is class warfare in reverse. Yet those who are most fascinated and en-
chanted by this ideology tend to be progressive, humanitarian, and, in the best sense of the word, charitable persons. They would usually define themselves as moderates or liberals. Why do they pursue this dreadful war against the poor and the oppressed?

Put briefly, the answer can be formulated best in psychological terms—or, at least, I, as a psychologist, am more comfortable with such a formulation. The highly-charged psychological problem confronting this hypothetical progressive, charitable person I am talking about is that of reconciling his own self-interest with the promptings of his humanitarian impulses. This psychological process of reconciliation is not worked out in a logical, rational, conscious way; it is a process that takes place far below the level of sharp consciousness, and the solution—Blaming the Victim—is arrived at subconsciously as a compromise that apparently satisfies both his self-interest and his charitable concerns. Let me elaborate.

First, the question of self-interest or, more accurately, class interest. The typical Victim Blamer is a middle-class person who is doing reasonably well in a material way; he has a good job, a good income, a good house, a good car. Basically, he likes the social system pretty much the way it is, at least in broad outline. He likes the two-party political system, though he may be highly skilled in finding a thousand minor flaws in its functioning. He heartily approves of the profit motive as the propelling engine of the economic system despite his awareness that there are abuses of that system, negative side effects, and substantial residual inequalities.

On the other hand, he is acutely aware of poverty, racial discrimination, exploitation, and deprivation, and, moreover, he wants to do something concrete to ameliorate the condition of the poor, the black, and the disadvantaged. This is not an extraneous concern; it is central to his value system to insist on the worth of the individual, the equality of men, and the importance of justice.

What is to be done, then? What intellectual position can he take, and what line of action can he follow that will satisfy both of these important motivations? He quickly and self-consciously rejects two obvious alternatives, which he defines as “extremes.” He cannot side with an openly reactionary, repressive position that accepts continued oppression and exploitation as the price of a privileged position for his own class. This is incompatible with his own morality and his basic political principles. He finds the extreme conservative position repugnant.

He is, if anything, more allergic to radicals, however, than he is to reactionaries. He rejects the “extreme” solution of radical social change, and this makes sense since such radical social change threatens his own well-being. A more equitable distribution of income might mean that he would have less—a smaller or older house, with fewer yews or no rhododendrons in the yard, a less enjoyable job, or, at the least, a somewhat smaller salary. If black children and poor children were, in fact, reasonably educated and began to get high S.A.T. scores, they would be competing with his children for the scarce places in the entering classes of Harvard, Columbia, Bennington, and Antioch.

So our potential Victim Blamers are in a dilemma. In the words of an old Yiddish proverb, they are trying to dance at two weddings. They are old friends of both brides and fond of both kinds of dancing, and they want to accept both invitations. They cannot bring themselves to attack the system that has been so good to them, but they want so badly to be helpful to the victims of racism and economic injustice.

Their solution is a brilliant compromise. They turn their
attention to the victim in his post-victimized state. They want to bind up wounds, inject penicillin, administer morphine, and evacuate the wounded for rehabilitation. They explain what's wrong with the victim in terms of social experiences in the past, experiences that have left wounds, defects, paralysis, and disability. And they take the cure of these wounds and the reduction of these disabilities as the first order of business. They want to make the victims less vulnerable, send them back into battle with better weapons, thicker armor, a higher level of morale.

In order to do so effectively, of course, they must analyze the victims carefully, dispassionately, objectively, scientifically, empathetically, mathematically, and hardheaded, to see what made them so vulnerable in the first place.

What weapons, now, might they have lacked when they went into battle? Job skills? Education?

What armor was lacking that might have warded off their wounds? Better values? Habits of thrift and foresight?

And what might have ravaged their morale? Apathy? Ignorance? Deviant lower-class cultural patterns?

This is the solution of the dilemma, the solution of Blaming the Victim. And those who buy this solution with a sigh of relief are inevitably blinding themselves to the basic causes of the problems being addressed. They are, most crucially, rejecting the possibility of blaming, not the victims, but themselves. They are all unconsciously passing judgments on themselves and bringing in a unanimous verdict of Not Guilty.

If one comes to believe that the culture of poverty produces persons fated to be poor, who can find any fault with our corporation-dominated economy? And if the Negro family produces young men incapable of achieving equality, let's deal with that first before we go on to the task of changing the pervasive racism that informs and shapes and distorts our every social institution. And if unsatisfactory resolution of one's Oedipus complex accounts for all emotional distress and mental disorder, then by all means let us attend to that and postpone worrying about the pounding day-to-day stresses of life on the bottom rungs that drive so many to drink, dope, and madness.

That is the ideology of Blaming the Victim, the cunning Art of Savage Discovery. The tragic, frightening truth is that it is a mythology that is winning over the best people of our time, the very people who must resist this ideological temptation if we are to achieve nonviolent change in America.
Manual

Rational for the combined approach
Five general phases of the intervention
Initial contact with youth
Interpersonal atmosphere and strategies in the initial phase
Need/Rationale for assessment
Factors that influence behaviors and their implications for assessment (Kanfer & Saslow)
Assessment of interpersonal network and existing behavioral contingencies
Length of assessment
Five assessment tasks in the behavioral model
Assessment and classification of behaviors
Questions which gather advocacy assessment information
Methods for collecting advocacy assessment information
Assessing the vulnerabilities of the advocacy target
Rationale for 18-week intervention period
Purpose of the termination strategy
Sequential components of the termination approach
Termination Packets (agreement and advocacy packets): rationale and contents
Strategies for maintaining change
General components of the termination report
Overview of intervention process
Unit 6
Unit VI

Cultural Competence

Unit V Readings:


There are things you can do in these situations. This will be as important in group supervision and class discussion as it will be in your work as an advocate.

RECOGNIZE your own values and be able to set them aside; recognize that others' values are also valid.

VALIDATE the other person's values (i.e. - "I can see that this is really important to you").

EXPLORE the value for the other person and yourself. Why is the value important? How was it learned? How much do you feel you can compromise?

CLARIFY how your values differ without trying to justify or explain yourself.

Because we are agreeing to respect another's values, we are not necessarily saying that we won't feel angry or frustrated. We are saying that we can manage our values and feelings in order to work together.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Approximately 50% of the adolescents we work with in the Diversion Program are minority youths. Since the greatest number of our volunteers are members of the European-American majority, many of our volunteers will be assigned to work with a youth and family of a race or ethnic background different from their own. Additionally, many of the youths and families we serve have a lower socio-economic status than that of our volunteers. An important aspect of being an effective advocate includes an understanding and respect for the different racial and cultural experiences of our youths and their families.

Members of the majority often look for some sort of "recipe" for dealing with minorities. We are not attempting to create a cut-and-dry cookbook answer for every situation you may encounter. The Adolescent Diversion Project, rather, stresses the importance of each youth's individuality. We have provided the following information, articles and exercises in an attempt to raise your awareness of cultural diversity and to guide you in dealing with these issues throughout your intervention. As volunteers, you are asked to approach this training material and your intervention with an open-mind about these sensitive and often controversial issues. In addition, we encourage you to seek out additional resources regarding cultural diversity for yourself, your youth, and his/her family as needed.
Two important challenges you will face throughout your intervention will involve issues surrounding values and cultural diversity. This training unit has been designed to provide you with information and sensitize you to the issues and their potential impact on your intervention.

VALUES

We touched briefly on the topic of values in the article and discussion on blaming the victim. You have also heard us emphasize the importance of keeping your values out of your intervention. Included in this section is specific information about values and the role they play throughout your intervention.

Everything we do, every decision we make is based on our consciously or unconsciously held beliefs, attitudes and values. Since values are such an important part of interactions, it helps to become more aware of the values we hold, the type of values they are and to assess if they are values we want to keep.

As a helping person and an advocate, it is important to look at values for two reasons:

1) The values and beliefs of the youth and family you are working with will strongly influence the areas they want to work on and their response to situations.
2) Your values and beliefs will affect the way you feel about and interact with the youth and family you are assigned.

Values are essentially the ideas, beliefs, wants and expectations that mold and influence all of our decisions and choices. They are a major part of who we are and so they are extremely important to us. Strong feelings may be aroused when our values are challenged or disregarded.

Some areas that we may have strong values about are:

Religion
Love/Sex
Family
Racial Issues
Sex-role Norms
Money

War
Politics
Personal Tastes
Health
Aging
Friendships

We hold some values more strongly than others, and some values we believe so intensely that they become truths for us. What is difficult yet crucial in working with values, is to remember that our "truths" are not necessarily anyone else's "truths." When we are experiencing a value conflict, we may become defensive, angry, inattentive, directive or judgmental; this will be felt in your relationships and will generally cause a breakdown in communication.
In order to help you think and discuss issues surrounding cultural diversity, it may be helpful to provide you with some working definitions.

**CULTURE** - A body of learned beliefs, traditions, principles, and guides for behavior that are shared among members of a particular group. Culture serves as a road map for both perceiving and interacting with the world. Because culture is dynamic and ever changing, the road map can lead in different directions. Culture is a strong determinant of behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, and values. (1)

2. **PREJUDICE** - An attitude, opinion, or feeling formed without adequate prior knowledge, thought or reason. Prejudices can be prejudget for or against any person, group, sex or object. Race prejudice involves positive attitudes towards one's own race and negative attitudes towards others races. People belonging to any race or ethnic group can be prejudiced. (2)

3. **RACISM** - Race prejudice plus the back-up of institutional power, used to the advantage of one race and the disadvantage of other races. Racism is an attitude, action, or institutional practice - backed by institutional power - which subordinates people because of their color. A useful formula is: Prejudice + Power = Racism. (3)

4. **INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION** - A subconscious belief in negative stereotypes about ones' group that results in an attempt to fulfill those stereotypes and a projection of those stereotypes onto other members of that group.

5. **MULTICULTURALISM** - The recognition and acknowledgement that the United States is a pluralistic society, and that in addition to the dominant culture there exist many other cultures based around ethnicity, sexual orientation, geography, religion, gender and class.

6. **ANTI-RACISM EDUCATION** - Education which focuses on increasing peoples' awareness of racism, how they may be benefiting from racist practices and specific anti-racist action they can take toward the elimination of racism.

7. **HETEROSEXISM** - A belief in the inherent superiority of one pattern of loving over all others and thereby the right to dominance. (4)

8. **SEXISM** - The belief in the inherent superiority of one sex over the other and thereby the right to dominance.

9. **ABLEISM** - The assumption that everyone has the same physical abilities, resulting in inadequate accommodations for the range and variety of physical abilities which exist, and the belief that a lack of ability in one area is always accompanied by a deficit in other areas.
CLASSISM - The United States is a stratified society, where people with wealth, education, property and business have greater power. They are favored in the political process, educational institutions, individual interactions and most areas of life. The belief that greater privilege should be extended to the upper and middle class because of their affluence and position in the society. Any attitude or institutional practice which subordinates people due to their economic condition.

References


(2) YWCA of the U.S.A., Addendum 10, Action Audit for Change, New York, pp 1-3.


CULTURAL COMPETENCY

A lifelong process which includes the examination of personal attitudes, the acquisition of relevant knowledge, and the development of skills which facilitates working effectively with individuals and groups who are culturally different from you.

Steps to Cultural Competency

1. The personal recognition and acceptance that all types of cultures have a profound influence on our lives.

2. The personal awareness that oppression is pervasive in our society, it is part of our history and, as much as we may want to escape that fact, it colors our relationships.

3. The acceptance that there are cultural differences and we need to learn to respect what we may not always understand.

4. Having the humility to accept that we do not know everything about other cultures, and never will; therefore we need to ascertain what it is we need to know about the specific groups with whom we are working.

5. A willingness to pursue that information in all the ways available to us.

6. When we are unable to do the above, having the courage to identify and confront our personal resistance, anger and especially our fears.

REFERENCE: IAM 8/91
Inca Mohamed's Steps to Cultural Competency
White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

by Peggy McIntosh

Throughout work to bring materials from Women's Studies into the rest of the curriculum, I have often noticed men's unwillingness to grant that they are over-privileged, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged. They may say they will work to improve women's status, in the society, the university, or the curriculum, but they can't or won't support the idea of lessening men's. Denials which amount to taboos surround the subject of advantages which men gain from women's disadvantages. These denials protect male privilege from being fully acknowledged, lessened or ended.

Thinking through unacknowledged male privilege as a phenomenon, I realized that since hierarchies in our society are interlocking, there was most likely a phenomenon of white privilege which was similarly denied and protected. As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage.

I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege. So I have begun in an un-tutored way to ask what it is like to have white privilege. I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks.

Describing white privilege makes one newly accountable. As we in Women's Studies work to reveal male privilege and ask men to give up some of their power, so one who writes about having white privilege must ask, "Having described it, what will I do to lessen or end it?"

After I realized the extent to which men work from a base of unacknowledged privilege, I understood that much of their oppressiveness was unconscious. Then I remembered the frequent charges from women of color that white women whom they encounter are oppressive. I began to understand why we are justly seen as oppressive, even when we don't see ourselves that way. I began to count the ways in which I enjoy unearned skin privilege and have been conditioned into oblivion about its existence.

My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. My schooling followed the pattern my colleague Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow "them" to be more like "us."

I decided to try to work on myself at least by identifying some of the daily effects of white privilege in my life. I have chosen those conditions which I think in my case attach somewhat more to skin-color privilege than to class, religion, ethnic status, or geographical location, though of course all these other factors are intricately interwoven. As far as I can see, my African American co-workers, friends and acquaintances with whom I come into daily or frequent contact in this particular time, place, and line of work cannot count on most of these conditions.

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.

2. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.

3. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.

4. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.

5. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.

6. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.

7. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who may not like them.

I can speak in public to a power male group without putting my race on trial.

I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.

I am never asked to speak for all people of my racial group.

I can remain oblivious of the guage and customs of persons of color who constitute the world’s majority without feeling in my culture any ality for such obliviousness.

I can criticize our government and about how much I fear its policies will fail without being seen as a traitor.

I can be pretty sure that if I ask to be the person in charge, I will become a person of my race.

a traffic cop pulls me over or if RS audits my tax return, I can be I haven’t been singled out because of my race.

can easily buy posters, postcards, re books, greeting cards, dolls, and children’s magazines featuring people of my race.

can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, or feared.

I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.

I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.

I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.

If my day, week, or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has racial overtones.

I can choose blemish cover or bandages in “flesh” color and have them more or less match my skin.

I repeatedly forgot each of the realizations on this list until I wrote it down. For me white privilege has turned out to be an elusive and fugitive subject. The pressure to avoid it is great, for in facing it I must give up the myth of meritocracy. If these things are true, this is not such a free country; one’s life is not what one makes it; many doors are open for certain people through no virtues of their own.

In unpacking this invisible knapsack of white privilege, I have listed conditions of daily experience which I once took for granted. Nor did I think of any of these perquisites as bad for the holder. I now think that we need a more finely differentiated taxonomy of privilege, for some of these varieties are only what one would want for everyone in a just society, and others give licence to be ignorant, oblivious, arrogant and destructive.

I see a pattern running through the matrix of white privilege, a pattern of assumptions which were passed on to me as a white person. There was one main piece of cultural turf; it was my own turf, and I was among those who could control the turf. My skin color was an asset for any move I was educated to want to make. I could think of myself as belonging in major ways, and of making social systems work for me. I could freely disapprove, fear, neglect, or be oblivious to anything outside of the dominant cultural forms. Being of the main culture, I could also criticize it fairly freely.

In proportion as my racial group was being made confident, comfortable, and oblivious, other groups were likely being made inefficient, uncomfortable, and alienated. Whiteness protected me from many kinds of hostility, distress, and violence, which I was being subtly trained to visit in turn upon people of color.

For this reason, the word “privilege” now seems to me misleading. We usually think of privilege as being a favored state, whether earned or conferred by birth or luck. Yet some of the conditions I have described here work to systematically overembrace certain groups. Such privilege simply confers dominance because of one’s race.

I want, then, to distinguish between earned strength and unearned power conferred systematically. Power from unearned privilege can look like strength when it is in fact permission to escape or to dominate. But not all of the privileges on my list are inevitably damaging. Some, like the expectation that neighbors will be decent to you, or that your race will not count against you in court, should be the norm in a just society. Others, like the privilege to ignore less powerful people, distort the humanity of the holders as well as the ignored groups.

We might at least start by distinguishing between positive advantages which we can work to spread, and negative types of advantages which unless rejected will always reinforce our present hierarchies. For example, the feeling that one belongs within the human circle, as Native Americans say, should not be seen as privilege for a few. Ideally it is an unearned entitlement. At present, since only a few have it, it is an unearned advantage for them. This paper results from a process of coming to see that some of the power which I originally saw as attendant on being a human being in the U.S. consisted in unearned

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advantage and conferred dominance.

I have met very few men who are truly distressed about systemic, unearned male advantage and conferred dominance. And so one question for me and others like me is whether we will be like them, or whether we will get truly distressed, even outraged, about unearned race advantage and conferred dominance and if so, what we will do to lessen them. In any case, we need to do more work in identifying how they actually affect our daily lives. Many, perhaps most, of our white students in the U.S. think that racism doesn’t affect them because they are not people of color; they do not see “whiteness” as a racial identity. In addition, since race and sex are not the only advantaging systems at work, we need similarly to examine the daily experience of having age advantage, or ethnic advantage, or physical ability, or advantage related to nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.

Difficulties and dangers surrounding the task of finding parallels are many. Since racism, sexism, and heterosexism are not the same, the advantaging associated with them should not be seen as the same. In addition, it is hard to disentangle aspects of unearned advantage which rest more on social class, economic class, race, religion, sex and ethnic identity than on other factors. Still, all of the oppressions are interlocking, as the Combahee River Collective Statement of 1977 continues to remind us eloquently.

One factor seems clear about all of the interlocking oppressions. They take both active forms which we can see and embedded forms which as a member of the dominant group one is taught not to see. In my class and place, I did not see myself as a racist because I was taught to recognize racism only in individual acts of meanness by members of my group, never in invisible systems conferring unearned racial dominance on my group from birth.

Disapproving of the systems won’t be enough to change them. I was taught to think that racism could end if white individuals changed their attitudes. [But] a “white” skin in the United States opens many doors for whites whether or not we approve of the way dominance has been conferred on us. Individual acts can palliate, but cannot end, these problems.

To redesign social systems we need first to acknowledge their colossal unseen dimensions. The silences and denials surrounding privilege are the key political tool here. They keep the thinking about equality or equity incomplete, protecting unearned advantage and conferred dominance by making these taboo subjects. Most talk by whites about equal opportunity seems to me now to be about equal opportunity to try to get into a position of dominance while denying that systems of dominance exist.

It seems to me that obliviousness about white advantage, like obliviousness about male advantage, is kept strongly inculturated in the United States so as to maintain the myth of meritocracy, the myth that democratic choice is equally available to all. Keeping most people unaware that freedom of confident action is there for just a small number of people props up those in power, and serves to keep power in the hands of the same groups that have most of it already.

Though systemic change takes many decades, there are pressing questions for me and I imagine for some others like me if we raise our daily consciousness on the perquisites of being light-skinned. What will we do with such knowledge? As we know from watching men, it is an open question whether we will choose to use unearned advantage to weaken hidden systems of advantage, and whether we will use any of our arbitrarily-awarded power to try to reconstruct power systems on a broader base.
Chapter 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

From Culture Shock to Cultural Learning

Eleanor W. Lynch

Recognizing what we have done in the past is a recognition of ourselves. By conducting a dialogue with our past, we are searching how to go forward.

—Kiyoko Takeda (as quoted in Dormann, 1987, p. 92)

The river of truth is always splitting up into arms which reunite. Land between them the inhabitants argue for a lifetime as to which is the mainstream.

—Cyril Connolly, The Unquiet Grave (as quoted in Gross, 1987, p. 255)
Everyone has a cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and racial identity. All of us are products of one or more cultural, language, and ethnic groups. For some, cultural, language, ethnic, and racial origins continue to be a major part of their overt identity. The foods served; the celebrations of major holidays and life events; and the values held regarding family, child rearing, time, independence, authority, responsibility, and spirituality reflect their cultural and ethnic heritage. Their roots are very near the surface, and day-to-day life tends to be shaped by their global place of origin, its culture, its language, and sometimes by the color of its people’s skin.

For others, roots are deeply buried; layers of adjustment and adaptation have blunted awareness of their origins. They may think of themselves as products of the American culture with little reference or connection to an ethnic, cultural, or global heritage. However, regardless of how long ago or how recently our ancestors came to the United States, our roots—in subtle and not-so-subtle ways—influence our attitudes and behaviors.

The influence of culture, language, ethnicity, and race is always easier to see in other people than in ourselves. Culture, similar to a second skin, is something to which we have grown so accustomed that we have ceased to notice that it exists; however, it is not surprising that culture has such a profound influence on our behavior. It is a part of our life from inception—our mother’s practices during pregnancy, the way we are cared for as infants, the language and sounds that surround us, and the rules that we are taught as we grow. Guthrie (1975) described five reasons for the difficulties that people experience when they try to understand or function in a culture other than their own.

1. Cultural understanding in one’s first culture occurs early and is typically established by age 5. Culture, similar to language, is acquired very early in life (Brown & Lenneberg, 1965). Every interaction, sound, touch, odor, and experience has a cultural component that is absorbed even when it is not directly taught. Lessons learned at such early ages become an integral part of thinking and behavior. Table manners, the proper behavior when interacting with adults, and the rules of acceptable emotional response are anchored in culture. Many of the behaviors and beliefs learned at an early age persist into adulthood and achieve the status of “truth.” Perhaps there were rules about how to dress in different environments—for example, a place of worship versus school. Learning to eat may have involved using a knife, fork, and spoon; chopsticks; or one’s right hand. There may have been rules related to speaking to adults: As children, some people were not allowed to initiate a conversation with an adult; some may have been required to use titles of respect; some may have been taught to look at the adult while speaking, whereas others may have been taught to look down.

2. Children learn new cultural patterns more easily than adults. As in language learning, children are more adept than adults at acquiring new cultural skills. Whether it is because they have the ability to be more flexible, because their patterns of behavior are less established, or because they have less information to manage, children tend to cross cultures more easily than adults. In most instances, when children of varying ethnic groups play together, they find constructive ways to adapt to new rules, to different languages, and to different behaviors. They may act out what is supposed to happen, negotiate a resolution verbally and nonverbally, ignore behavior that they do not understand, or confront the other child about the behavior. Although the interactions do not always go smoothly, children are typically able to make cross-cultural interactions work.

3. Values are determined by one’s first culture and may have to be revised to be effective in a second culture. Values are responsible for many of our built-in biases. The importance that individuals ascribe to cooperation versus competition, action versus passivity, youth versus age, family versus friends, or independence versus interdependence reflects cultural values. The concept of competition is a good example. In the mainstream American culture, children are encouraged from an early age to excel in whatever they do—that is, to be better than everyone else. There are contests for everything from spelling to pie eating to hog calling. The free enterprise economy is built on entrepreneurial competition. Newspapers are filled with the latest records set in high and low temperatures, sports, and the stock market. In the United States, competition is highly prized; however, the reverse is true in many Native American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Pacific Island, and Southeast Asian cultures. Competition is viewed as self-serving; and the emphasis is on cooperation and teamwork. Because competition is a negative trait in these cultures, being viewed as competitive rather than cooperative would bring shame rather than pride.

4. Understanding one’s first culture introduces errors in interpreting the second culture. Individuals interpret situations based on their past experience, and those interpretations are never culture free. For example, the rules for touching differ from culture to culture. In the United States, it is quite common to see members of the opposite sex holding hands, walking with their arms around one another, or kissing in public. In many other parts of the world, such public displays of affection between men and women are not tolerated; however, it would be commonplace to see members of the same sex walking hand-in-hand or with their arms around one another. In the United States, such behav-
behavior is a signal of sexual orientation; in other countries, it is more likely to be a demonstration of friendship. Likewise, laughing and giggling are interpreted as expressions of enjoyment among most Americans—signals that people are relaxed and having a good time. Among other cultural groups, such as Southeast Asians, the same behavior may be a sign of extreme embarrassment or discomfort or what Americans might call "nervous laughter" taken to the extreme.

5. Long-standing behavior patterns are typically used to express one's deepest values. Old habits are not easily changed. People often revert to old behaviors out of habit or in times of high emotion or stress. From the caller who realizes she is saying thank you to a computer voice to the American in England who discovers himself looking for the steering wheel on the left side of the car, individuals discover that behaviors they have practiced for years are difficult to modify. We as individuals behave as we have been culturally programmed to behave, and sometimes our cultural program conflicts with someone else's. For example, careful time management and punctuality are important and widespread values in the dominant U.S. culture. The majority of people wear a watch, and nearly every professional (and many parents) carry bulky calendars full of appointments that must be kept and responsibilities that must be fulfilled within a certain time. Everyday conversations are replete with comments about time—"I don't have time"; "when I have time"; "what a time waster that was"; "I can't, I'll be late"; "check your calendar." However, this preoccupation with time as a commodity that can be bought, sold, or apportioned is not typical in much of the rest of the world. In Central and South America, parts of Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, the Mediterranean, the Pacific Islands, and among many ethnic groups within the United States, time is generously shared. People are more important than clocks; individuals operate on their sense of priority rather than on predetermined times. This difference is particularly problematic when people from the two cultures attempt to work together. The interventionist is infuriated when families are late for or do not keep their appointments, and the family does not imagine that clock time would take precedence over everything else.

Because cultural influences are such an integral part of our lives, they are often invisible and elusive. When we are out of touch with our own culture and its influence on us, however, it is impossible to work effectively with people whose cultures differ from our own. Cultural self-awareness is the first step in intercultural effectiveness (Locke, 1992). Only when we examine the values, beliefs, and patterns of behavior that are a part of our own cultural identity can we distinguish

truth from tradition. (To examine your own cultural values and beliefs, you should complete A Cultural Journey in Appendix A in Chapter 3.) Such an examination is not easy. It requires a consideration of all of the things that we have learned from childhood and an acknowledgment that those beliefs and behaviors represent only one perspective—a perspective that is not inherently "right." To begin to understand one's self, one's culture, and the range of worldviews that others bring to every situation, it is important to keep the following three points in mind:

1. Culture is not static; it is dynamic and ever-changing. The cultural practices that individuals remember and practice from their country or place of origin are often different from the practices that are occurring in that same place today.

2. Culture, language, ethnicity, and race are not the only determinants of one's values, beliefs, and behaviors. Socioeconomic status, educational level, occupation, personal experience, and personality all exert a powerful influence over how individuals view themselves and how families function. Although this chapter focuses on culture, it should be understood that culture is only one of many elements that family members use to define themselves.

3. In describing any culture or cultural practice, within-group differences are as great as across-group differences. In other words, no cultural, ethnic, linguistic, or racial group is monolithic. There are wide variations in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. To assume that people who share a common culture or language are alike is to make a dangerous mistake.

As Samovar and Porter pointed out,

At any given moment our behavior is a product of millions of years of evolution, our genetic makeup, the groups we have been affiliated with, our gender, age, individual histories, our perception of the other person, the situation we find ourselves in, and a long list of other factors. Although culture is the cardinal context, and also offers us a common frame of reference, none of us is ordinary. Simply put, we are our culture and much more. (1991, p. 16)

Throughout this book, we emphasize the constructs of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Racial identity, although discussed in various places, is not a focal point. Some readers will see this decision as a strength; others will view it as a shortcoming. However, the choice was based on the overall goal of the book—to help interventionists be more effective in their day-to-day interactions with children and fami-
lies who differ from themselves. Although scientifically unsubstantiated, race continues to be the first thing that many people see when they look at others (Helms, 1994). Race is based on physical differences, and historically some of these differences have placed people at a disadvantage in America (Taylor, 1994). Therefore, a book that emphasizes race would need to be about sociopolitical change rather than about building relationships between families and interventionists. As interventionists work with families from different racial backgrounds, it is essential to consider the larger ecology. What are the societal barriers that each family encounters? How have institutional racism and unequal access affected their lives? What are the effects of educational and economic barriers? And, perhaps most important, how can I help to change these inequities?

CONCEPT OF CULTURE SHOCK

Anyone who has traveled outside his or her own hometown has probably experienced some form of culture shock. Whether it is the New Yorker trying to adjust to the language and lifestyle of Mississippi, the Texas rancher negotiating the New York subway, or the Alaskan native in Hawai‘i, each is confronted with unfamiliar sounds, sights, odors, and behaviors. The unfamiliarity that each of these travelers experiences may produce interest, excitement, fear, anger, frustration, confusion, or disgust; however, regardless of the emotion that it evokes, it is certain to have an impact. The farther that individuals travel from their home, the greater the likelihood that they will be confronted with the unfamiliar. Thus, an American in Jakarta, a Cambodian in Fiji, a Native American Indian in New Delhi, or an Italian in Beijing is more likely to experience confusion, frustration, or anger with the unfamiliar than the New Yorker in Mississippi, the Texan in New York, or the Alaskan in Hawai‘i. It is these confrontations with the unfamiliar that create culture shock.

In the academic literatures of anthropology, sociology, psychology, and communications, the concept of culture shock and its stages and characteristics continue to be debated (Brislin, 1981). Although some of the early work that described the stages of culture shock (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963) has not been successfully replicated in subsequent studies (Klineberg & Hull, 1979), individuals who have worked, studied, or traveled extensively in cultures different from their own are usually able to describe their experiences on this curve of cultural adjustment and learning. Those preparing others to work cross culturally use the concept of culture shock as a framework for helping individuals understand what they are experiencing emotionally and physically. Thus, culture shock has been included in this book as a conceptual framework that can assist interventionists as they work with families who have recently arrived in the United States and are experiencing culture shock, as well as a framework for examining the interventionist’s own feelings when faced with unfamiliar values, beliefs, and practices.

Culture shock was first described by Oberg (1958, 1960). Although many investigators have elaborated on Oberg’s work and used other words to describe the phenomenon and explain its cause and manifestations (e.g., Ball-Rokeach, 1973; Byrnes, 1966; Guthrie, 1975; Smalley, 1963), in this chapter, the term culture shock is used to describe a normal and universal response to the unfamiliar. Culture shock is most often discussed and studied when businesspeople, students, project staff members, or government officials are being prepared to live and to work or study outside of their own country. However, the concept of culture shock may also “be experienced by individuals who have face-to-face contact with out-group members within their own country” (Brislin, 1981, p. 155). Thus, culture shock may occur when families and interventionists from different backgrounds work together. Understanding the concept of culture shock and its characteristics and
stages provides a framework that enables individuals to recognize their feelings, analyze the cause of the shock, alter their approach, consciously manage their own behavior, and regain emotional equilibrium.

The sections that follow examine the concept of culture shock and apply its stages and principles to the transactions between interventionists and families when the interventionist and family do not share the same ethnic or cultural heritage. Culture shock is conceptualized as a two-way street—one that both families and interventionists travel as they work together. Interventionists play a dual role on that street: They must acknowledge, respect, and build on the cultural values and beliefs that the family brings to the relationship, and they must interpret the new cultures—the American culture and the culture of the service delivery system—to the families. For example, if a family engages in a cultural practice (i.e., from its first culture) such as physical punishment that may be legally governed in the United States, the interventionist must explain the problems that could arise and provide the family with alternatives.

**Defining Culture Shock**

Culture shock is the result of a series of disorienting encounters that occur when an individual’s basic values, beliefs, and patterns of behavior are challenged by a different set of values, beliefs, and behaviors. Although values are typically unacknowledged until challenged, they are the cornerstones of our being and behavior (Bohm, 1980). Once values are internalized, they become standards for guiding our personal behavior and evaluating the behavior of others (Samovar & Porter, 1991).

Since values are the products of basic human and societal needs, the number of human values is small, and they focus on similar important concepts the world over. Values reflect a culture’s view toward such central issues as politics, economics, religion, aesthetics, interpersonal relationships, morality and the environment. Cultural differences and conflicts arise from the fact that individuals and societies order these values in differing hierarchies. (Brislin, Cushman, Cherrie, & Yong, 1986, p. 299)

Culture shock occurs when the strategies that the individual uses to solve problems, make decisions, and interact positively are not effective and when the individual feels an overwhelming sense of discomfort in the environment (Draine & Hall, 1986). The discomfort may manifest itself in emotional or physical ways, such as frustration, anger, depression, withdrawal, lethargy, aggression, or illness. In any of these states, it is difficult for the individual to take constructive action.

Families who have recently arrived in the United States typically experience culture shock as they attempt to negotiate a new culture, language, and set of behaviors. What was accepted behavior in their homeland may be misunderstood, disdained, laughed at, or even illegal in their new country. For example, in many countries outside of the United States, spitting or blowing nasal mucus onto the ground is commonplace. Capturing saliva or mucus in a tissue or handkerchief that would then be put back into a pocket or purse is considered a filthy habit. No one would carry something like that with them! In the United States, expectorating on the ground is viewed with disgust; in some cities, it is even a misdemeanor. Although both cultures have placed a value on personal hygiene, its interpretation is drastically different.

Behaviors that were appreciated and valued in a family’s country of origin may be confusing to individuals in the United States. For example, an interventionist may be frustrated by a family’s desire to chat over a cup of tea before “getting down to business” in the home visit; the interventionist may interpret the behavior as avoidance rather than as an important cultural practice. As a result of different behaviors and interpretations of those behaviors based on culture, ethnicity, or language, tensions may emerge between families and interventionists in their interactions with one another. Confusion and tension lead to discomfort and may cause both parties to withdraw. A typical transaction in the United States when an infant or a toddler attracts the attention of a stranger in a supermarket, an office, or another public place is an example. The adult usually engages in a game of Peekaboo with, makes faces at, or talks in a sing-song fashion to the baby. When the adult or the child tires of the game, the adult usually turns to the child’s parents/caregivers and comments on the child’s attractiveness, alertness, or delightfulness. The parents/caregivers express pleasure at the compliment and are pleased that the stranger has recognized the superiority of their child. In many other cultures, however, this would be a very disquieting interaction for the parents. In some Mexican and Central American, Islamic, Native American Indian, and Southeast Asian cultures, calling attention to the child’s positive traits can cause the evil spirits to become jealous, and the evil spirits may then cause harm.

Different values and differing interpretations of behaviors introduce confusion and discomfort into cross-cultural interactions. The discomfort is often heightened by limited ability to verbalize the conflict. Families who are not conversant in English and interventionists who speak no other language may quickly encounter barriers that are difficult to overcome.
Navigating the Stages of Culture Shock

Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) described a predictable set of stages of adjustment that long-term, overseas sojourners experience. The ups and downs of their experience can be depicted in a W-shaped curve. At the beginning of the experience, spirits and expectations are high and individuals feel extremely satisfied. During the middle phase of the experience, individuals become dissatisfied. By this time, they have discovered that their problem-solving strategies are ineffective in the foreign environment and their expectations are not being met; as a result, they often become angry and lash out. This period of anger and frustration is followed by an improvement in outlook and a general upswing in mood and effectiveness that peaks near the end of the experience. The return to being highly satisfied with the experience is a period during which the individuals begin to function comfortably in the environment.

It is interesting to note that many long-term sojourners experience reverse culture shock when they return to their home country and go through a shorter series of readjustments or relearning that mirror those they experienced in the overseas experience. As an example, the author of this chapter had a difficult readjustment period following a 5-month assignment in Indonesia. In the first few weeks back in the United States, on several occasions, trips to the grocery store were abandoned because other shoppers seemed so large, so loud, and so aggressive—opposites of the Indonesian people.

The time it takes an individual to pass through the hypothesized stages of culture shock is not predictable. Each person brings different needs and different resources to the situation and finds ways to cope that slow or hasten the passage. Similar to the grief cycle that is frequently used to describe parents’ reactions to the birth of a child with a disability (Solnit & Stark, 1961), culture shock is an experience without temporal norms.

The Family’s Viewpoint

Imagine the stages of culture shock as they might apply to a family with a young child with a disability who has recently arrived in the United States. The family has chosen to emigrate to the United States and has high expectations for success here. Although they recognize that the streets are not paved with gold, they are imagining a land of opportunity that will welcome them and the many skills they bring. However, the feelings of enthusiasm and great expectation that they have are slowly eroded by everyday experiences. For example, only the father speaks English, and his skills in the language were learned from a textbook rather than through conversations with native speakers. Every interaction is a struggle that leaves him very tired at the end of the day. Because he is the family’s only communicator with the new environment, he is constantly in a position of trying to make himself understood, as well as trying to explain what is going on to other members of the family. In addition to the problems of spoken English, there are the problems of written English. It seems that every interaction results in the need to complete a stack of forms, and comprehending and completing the forms is even more difficult than speaking. The mental energy that is required is exhausting and sometimes overwhelming.

In the family’s homeland, the members arose with the sun, rested in the heat of the day, and returned to work late in the afternoon. However, in the United States, all activity seems to be governed by the clock instead of by any natural rhythm; therefore, even though they have conquered jet lag, they have not yet adjusted to these new patterns. Getting things done also is very different and often leads to no results or very unpleasant exchanges. For example, several people have spoken to them very rudely at the post office and in the bank about not standing in line; however, in their native country, everyone crowded...
had just tried to enroll her in kindergarten next year?) Family members seemed to turn to stone when the interventionist asked what their goals were and how they would like to be involved in their daughter’s education—really uninvolved. Another thing that was very upsetting was a sense of hostility that seemed to be a palpable presence in the home. Everyone was polite, but they seemed angry. (If they’re going to be that hard to work with, why bother? After all, there are lots of other families who appreciate what interventionists do and want to be part of their child’s program.)

Assume that you are one of the interventionists who meets the family members when they are unhappy and confused by their experiences in the United States, that is, when they are at the lowest point in the culture shock curve. They may appear angry, uncooperative, uncommunicative, resistant, or withdrawn; many of the verbal and nonverbal cues may be inconsistent with your expectations of involved and caring families. The whole situation may be tense and uncomfortable, and it may be very tempting to give up. However, this is a time when helping families understand and negotiate the new culture is most needed. Acknowledging the difficulties that they are encountering and finding ways to reduce these problems through translators; professionals or paraprofessionals who share the same background; or watching, listening, and making small gestures of support may be the key to serving both the child and the family at all. It will certainly be the key to serving both effectively.

Another Family’s Viewpoint

Imagine another family who has recently entered the United States from a country divided and destroyed by civil war. The family members fled their small, rural village where they had sustained themselves through subsistence farming and small amounts of money from family members working in the city. After witnessing the guerrilla attack that killed more than half of the village’s residents, including all of their kin, the family members made their way across a border to an overcrowded refugee camp. After 6 months in the camp with little food, poor sanitation, and almost no medical treatment, the family was sent to the United States.

The family’s youngest son was born in the refugee camp during a long and difficult labor; he remained weak and hard to feed throughout his infancy. Although his parents knew that he was not developing similar to other children, they did not know that he had a disability until he was examined in the United States. The doctors say that he has cerebral palsy, but the closest translation that the family has understood is that he is “sick and crippled forever.” In the family’s home,
land, such a diagnosis would have meant that nothing could be done and that the child would probably die at a very early age. Confronted with a language that they do not understand, a diagnosis of disability that they interpret as a death sentence, the violent loss of their family, and a world in which nothing is familiar, the family members are frightened, withdrawn, and seemingly uninterested in any of the services available for their son.

Another Interventionist’s Viewpoint

The referral for this family has come from social services and a community health clinic. When the interventionist met the child and his parents at their last clinic appointment, it was clear that he needed early intervention. However, after spending more than 2 hours with the family and a translator, the interventionist still did not get any indication that the family was interested in anything that the program had to offer. The parents hardly spoke, had almost no affect (i.e., expression of emotion), and appeared to have no attachment to their son. (Given the family’s limited abilities, the difficulty in getting a translator, and the family’s apparent disinterest, what in the world could the program do?)

Unfortunately, this is not an uncommon example. Not only is this family experiencing culture shock, but they also are probably suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder. War, terrorism, violence, and displacement are occurring in countries throughout the world, and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) estimates that “10 million children worldwide suffer psychological trauma from wars” (Boyd, 1993, p. 122). The lack of affect, apathy, and resignation that this interventionist saw are common among those who have witnessed such violence. The family’s behavior is not surprising given its new and vastly different homeland and its discovery that its youngest son has a disability. It also is not surprising that the interventionist should feel overwhelmed. In this situation, a team of mental health professionals and cultural mediators may be the most valuable, immediate resources for the family. With the family’s agreement, interventionists may work with the child until his parents become emotionally available to be a part of the team.

AMELIORATING CULTURE SHOCK FOR THE FAMILY

Culture shock requires adjustment—adjustment on the part of families who are unfamiliar or inexperienced in the ways of the service systems that they encounter and adjustment on the part of the interventionists who are unfamiliar and inexperienced in the ways of the families whom they meet. Culture shock is most pronounced when individuals initially discover that there are dramatic differences between their beliefs and values and those of the people around them. Thus, families who have recently arrived in the United States may be most affected by culture shock. However, some families who have spent many generations in the United States may still find the predominant culture unfriendly and frustrating. Likewise, interventionists may experience greater degrees of culture shock when they are working with families who have recently immigrated from other countries and cultures. They also may experience some degree of culture shock when they work with families who have been in the United States for many years but have beliefs, values, and practices that are foreign to those of the interventionist. The following section focuses on culture shock from the perspective of families who are new immigrants and from those who have spent many generations in the United States apart from the mainstream.

New Immigrants

Families who have recently arrived in the United States are most affected by culture shock. Even those immigrants who are financially secure and skilled in English typically experience a period of adjustment that may resemble a ride on a rollercoaster. For those who have limited resources, who are unfamiliar with English, and who have experienced considerable trauma leaving their country of origin, the shock of a new culture is magnified. Although culture shock is very personalized, several issues may interfere with effective interventions during this period of time: language barriers, systems barriers, differing perceptions of professional roles, family priorities, and the family’s belief system. Each is briefly elaborated in the sections that follow.

Language Barriers

Language is the primary means of access to understanding, relationships, and services. It also is “one of the most significant markers of ethnic diversity” (Green, 1982, p. 68). Whenever someone is conversing in a second language, they are putting more effort into the communication. Thus, families may be frustrated by difficulties in communication. Even if family members speak and understand English, the language of interventionists is often highly technical. When family members do not speak the language of the interventionist, they must rely on interpreters who may or may not provide accurate information. (That “something got lost in the translation” is an understatement in many situations.) Because few programs are able to call on interpreters who have both the language and the intervention skills, translations are of-
ten imperfect. Many times younger or extended family members are asked to interpret, and their own concerns may shape the information being transmitted. In other instances adequate translations do not exist for the concepts that are being shared. Just as English speakers are unable to express the fine distinctions among the kinds of snow that Alaskan Eskimos describe easily, so too is it difficult to explain the nuances of behavior management to someone who has never felt that it was necessary to change a young child’s behavior or thought in terms of baselines and reinforcers.

**Systems Barriers**

In a world in which an estimated 17 million children from developing countries die each year from a combination of poor nutrition, diarrhea, malaria, pneumonia, measles, whooping cough, and tetanus (Chandler, 1986), and 90% of all infant disability is attributable to poverty and disease rather than genetic causes, the luxury of early intervention programs may be difficult to comprehend (Boyden, 1993). Many families, particularly those who have been in refugee camps, have come from situations in which basic sanitation, nutrition, and health care were nonexistent. To arrive in a country in which specialized services exist for young children with disabilities is almost unbelievable; it may take time for them to accept the services. Focusing so much attention on a situation that tradition tells them has no solution may be part of the culture shock that some family members experience when they encounter interventionists. In addition, systems typically are not organized to be responsive to cultural differences (Walker, Saravanabhavan, Williams, Brown, & West, 1996). Translating agency brochures into Farsi, Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Swahili, or other languages and leaving them in agency reception rooms does not respond sufficiently to family needs. Strategies for reaching out to groups using the structures that are part of their culture, such as sharing information about services with older adults, religious leaders, healers, political leaders, cultural advocacy groups, patriarchs, or matriarchs, may be the most effective way to infuse information into the entire cultural community (Lynch, 1987).

**Differing Perceptions of Professional Roles**

Family–professional partnerships in intervention and education are now being emphasized across service delivery systems in the United States (Beckman, 1996; Capone & Divenere, 1996; Dunst, Trivette, & Deal, 1988; Erwin, 1996; Hanson, Lynch, & Wayman, 1990; Kroth & Edge, 1997; McGonigal, Kaufmann, & Johnson, 1991; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1990). This focus on including parents and other family members as full participants on the intervention team has not been the typical perspective of many agencies; such participatory decision making is uncommon in many other countries and cultures. Among people from the majority of world cultures, professionals are held in high esteem, particularly teachers and healers. Thus, expecting families from many cultural groups to be assertive, talkative participants in developing and evaluating services for their children is unrealistic. In fact, the implied definition of an active participant typically varies from one culture to another (Lynch & Stein, 1987). Directly asking parents to state their concerns and priorities to the interventionist in a formal meeting may be an upsetting and embarrassing request that adds to the family’s confusion and culture shock; however, this does not mean that their concerns, priorities, and resources should be ignored. Rather, a slower approach, more informal strategies, and careful observation of what each family prefers will probably be more effective than direct approaches (Harry, 1992b; Leung, 1988).

**Family Priorities**

Family priorities should guide all interventions with young children with disabilities, especially when the family’s culture differs from that of the interventionist. Culture shock may emerge as families who have recently arrived in the United States encounter priorities that differ dramatically from their own. For example, many mainstream United States families regard toilet training as a crucial milestone that should occur as soon as possible; they regard independent feeding as an important step in development; and they are eager to enroll their children in toddler and preschool programs that emphasize educational activities and experiences. Members of other cultures do not always feel the same way. In other cultures there is typically less pressure placed on toilet training. In many Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Island cultures, young children are not diapered. Adults expect young children to relieve themselves freely, and both the child and the adult are simply washed as needed. Breastfeeding may continue much longer among other cultural groups and then may be followed by an extended period in which adults or older children feed the youngest child. Because interdependence rather than independence is more often the value in some cultures, caring for a younger child or a child who has a disability is not viewed as a burden. In addition, home and family are viewed as the appropriate place for young children; educational programs for children under age 6 or 7 are not commonplace, and families prefer not to send their children away from home at such an early age. Any intervention that is designed will have a much greater likelihood of success if family priorities form the foundation of the plan.
Family's Belief System

Finally, the family’s belief system will affect the degree of culture shock that family members experience. If a family believes that everything that happens is attributable to fate or is in the hands of God, seeking to control any situation will seem contradictory, if not blasphemous. If a family believes that women should be shielded from all outside influences, then the interventionist’s desire to make home visits or to have both parents participate in program activities may cause conflict or confusion. If a family believes that a traditional shaman has the power to exorcise the evil spirits that cause illness, they may not see the need for sophisticated medical, diagnostic tests. The recommendations that interventionists make so readily may seem extremely strange to the family and may increase culture shock.

Long-Term Residents

In many areas of the United States, interventionists work with families from diverse cultures who have been in the country for many years. Although the parents often were born in the United States, these families have not adopted the beliefs, values, and language of the dominant culture. In many barrios, Spanish is the primary language, and customs are an amalgamation of those from the residents’ original culture and the mainstream U.S. culture. Many large cities have “Chinatowns” or “Japantowns” that have existed for decades with few changes. Although the concept of culture shock does not make sense when describing the reactions of families who have maintained such close ties to their original culture and language, there are explanations for their reluctance to get involved with the new culture and the system. Lack of trust of the system, different priorities, and decisions about the degree of acculturation that they desire may interfere with effective relationships with intervention programs (e.g., Harry, 1992a, 1992c; Harry & Kalyanpur, 1994).

When many of these families first came to the United States, there was considerably less attention placed on cultural pluralism. Immigrants were expected to assimilate, and little was done to assist them. As a result of this policy, many families were extremely successful in joining the American mainstream; others were not. Those families who were not may have had negative experiences with various systems that have caused them to remain isolated and enculturated. As time passes, change becomes even more difficult, and individuals or whole families remain outside the mainstream culture in both thought and opportunity. Other families may believe that systems are not the appropriate vehicle for taking care of their needs. In many cultures, families are responsible for providing for any family member who cannot provide for him or herself; using the services of “outsiders” would represent a loss of face in the cultural community. Finally, some families may have consciously chosen to isolate themselves from the mainstream culture. There is considerable evidence that “sizable numbers of people prefer a single set of values and behaviors” (Brinlin, 1981, p. 290). Maintaining the values, beliefs, language, and practices that are understood and comfortable is more attractive to some families than risking loss of some of those aspects of their lives through exposure to another culture.

SENSITIZING THE INTERVENTIONIST TO THE IMPACT OF CULTURE SHOCK

Throughout this chapter, the concept of culture shock has been viewed as a two-way street. Just as families from different cultures may be confused, frustrated, or upset by their encounters with the mainstream culture, interventionists also may be uncomfortable with their encounters with practices that differ from their own. Interventionists may discover that they disapprove of practices that they encounter, or they may find that some families engage in behaviors that generally are not
acceptable in the United States. In addition to the culture shock that they may experience, interventionists also may have concerns about their lack of cross-cultural training and the lack of time to assist families to the extent that they would like.

For example, in the United States, the majority of interventionists are women. They are accustomed to lives in which they are free to make decisions, earn money, and speak openly on any subject. In many other countries, however, women do not have the same rights. Even within the United States, groups may differ radically in their views of women's rights and roles. In some families, wives may defer to husbands or to their mothers-in-law. Although it is their responsibility to carry out whatever is decided, they may have little or no role in decision making. For interventionists, these situations may be very difficult; however, advocating for the rights of the mother would be a direct affront to the cultural tradition and that may be upsetting to her and to the rest of the family.

In rare instances, interventionists may encounter practices that they find difficult to accept. Unfamiliar foods such as snake, squid, sweetbreads, or Rocky Mountain oysters; healing practices, such as coinage; gender-based practices, such as male circumcision and ear piercing of infant girls; or purification rituals that keep mother and newborn separate for several weeks following delivery are often difficult for the mainstream interventionist to understand and accept. Consequently, the interventionist may experience some of the same emotional turmoil in working with the family that the family is feeling toward the new culture. Anger, frustration, and a desire to pull away are typical. There is nothing wrong or even unusual about these sensations; however, they do signal a need for the interventionist to assess his or her feelings, seek consultation from colleagues, and decide whether he or she can continue to work effectively with the family. In most instances, a short time-out and a discussion with a colleague who is knowledgeable about the culture are all that is needed to regain one's equilibrium. Now and then, however, another interventionist may need to be assigned to the family.

Separate from the issues of culture shock are the concerns that many interventionists express about their lack of cross-cultural training and the time demands of effective intercultural interactions. Although professionals are typically well trained in their own disciplines, few have been trained to work with families from cultures different from their own. Even those families who come from the same culture or speak the same language as the interventionist often represent different socioeconomic strata or educational levels, and, as a result, the interventionist may find it difficult to relate to these families with complete comfort. One of the goals of this book is to assist interventionists in the field as they develop and expand their cross-cultural skills; another goal is to provide a book that can be used in university classes so that students in training will enter their professions with the skills and the knowledge that will be needed in a changing world.

It takes time to learn cross-cultural skills and to work with families from diverse cultures. Many interventionists are already overburdened by growing caseloads and new demands. The range and extent of many families' needs strain the capability of the service delivery system; however, the time spent working respectfully and sensitively with families from different cultures is a sound investment, and it may be the only way to ensure that needed intervention occurs.

**SUMMARY**

Working effectively with families from cultures that differ from one's own requires an understanding of one's own beliefs and values as well as a recognition that one's language, culture, and ethnicity do influence interactions. As the demographics of the United States change to include growing numbers of people from Mexico, Central and South America, Central and Southeast Asia, Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, and the Middle East, the need for effective cross-cultural interactions increases. This brings new opportunities as well as new demands. Families and interventionists may experience confusion, alienation, and general discomfort as they struggle to understand and appreciate each other's perspectives. This discomfort, sometimes referred to as culture shock, typically occurs in predictable phases. After initial excitement and enthusiasm about the new culture, people may become overwhelmed and disenchanted. Positive feelings may turn negative; enjoyment of the new challenges may be replaced by withdrawal, anger, and frustration. Neither families nor interventionists can be effective when they are experiencing the negative aspects of culture shock; however, the disillusionment can be overcome. Time, understanding, continued exposure, and a sensitive mediator can be crucial to success for everyone involved. As interventionists expand their understanding of other worldviews and their ability to work cross culturally, new doors open—not only for families but for interventionists as well.

**REFERENCES**


Unit VII

Cultural Competence, cont.

Unit VII Readings:

Norms, Roles, Culture, Society

The Meaning of Culture

Norms

Types of Norms • Norm Conflict

Cultural Diversity

Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism •
Subculture and Counterculture • Multiculturalism •
Culture and Personality

Society and Social Structure

Status and Role

Achieved and Ascribed Status • Role Strain and Role Conflict
TWO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. For every 100 girls born worldwide, between 105 and 106 boys are born. But an official Chinese fertility survey in 1988 showed gender ratios of up to 120 boys per 100 girls among children born in China between 1980 and 1987. Why did the Chinese suddenly give birth to even more boys than girls? How can this be explained?

2. Some people are involved in many different jobs, activities, or positions in society; other people are more focused, are committed to one job or position. Would their approach to life, as indicated by the number of activities in which they are involved, have any effect on how long they live? Would the more focused live longer, would those with more varied lives live longer, or would their life spans be unrelated to style?

In the previous chapter, we focused on how individuals develop into social beings. We discussed the socialization process, the development of the self and personality, and the importance of language. Our analysis was detailed, and it concentrated on the individual's growth from a helpless infant to a person capable of participating in complex social situations. The focus, again, was on the individual. In this chapter, we move away from the individual to the stage or setting in which the processes described in the previous chapter take place. We could call this stage the social environment. Within this environment, individuals live in specific societies and cultures, they occupy positions, they play parts, they are governed by rules, and they behave in predictable ways. Concepts like culture, norm, society, and role help us better understand and explain what happens on this stage.

THE MEANING OF CULTURE

The importance of culture in sociology is comparable to the importance of evolution in biology, of gravity in physics, and of disease in medicine. It is a central concept that allows us to organize and explain what we see. Much of human behavior can be understood and indeed predicted if we know a people's culture, their design for living.

For social scientists, the concept of culture is very important. By culture we mean that complex set of learned and shared beliefs, customs, skills, habits, traditions, and knowledge common to the members of a society. Culture is viewed as the social heritage of a society. According to anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn, culture represents the distinctive way of life of a group of people, their complete design for living.¹

There are many cultures in the world, some similar to each other and some very different from most others. A culture evolves through time, it is continually modified, and its complexity reflects its sources in human creativity. A culture is shared by the members of a society and is learned through the socialization process. The culture in which we live determines for us what we will want to eat, whom we will like or hate, what we will
so obvious and ingrained that we do not even think about them. Characteristically, norms do not become apparent until they are violated. According to norms concerning student-teacher relationships, the student will show respect for the teacher, will laugh at his or her jokes, and will generally obey the authority that the teacher represents; that is, students will respect any reasonable demands made by the teacher without resorting to mutiny. When, as in our previous example, behavior is contrary to the norms, the situation becomes uncomfortable for others. Instructors who have tried this “stand up” experiment on classes (with the aid of a willing villain) report that the experience is almost as hard on the two of them (instructor and villain), who know it’s a fake, as it is for the rest of the class, who don’t know that it has been set up.

Other experiments in norm violation have been devised. For example, get somebody you don’t know very well in a game of ticktacktoe. Invite the other person to make the first move. After he or she makes a mark, erase it, move it to another square, and make your own mark. Act as if nothing unusual has happened. Or select a person (not a family member or very close friend) with whom you will engage in an ordinary conversation. During the course of the conversation, without indicating that anything unusual is happening, bring your face closer to the person’s until your noses are almost touching. The first experiment deals with norms concerning game playing, and the second with norms concerning spatial invasion, or the appropriate distance between people. In each case, the subject will react noticeably, and possibly unpredictably, because common norms that ordinarily one doesn’t even think about are suddenly being violated.

Norms continually change and may even break down completely. The most likely time to see norms breaking down is during periods of rapid social change, such as during wars or disasters. When norms cease to be effective at controlling people’s behavior (when they don’t “work” any more), we say a state of “normlessness” is present. One tends to lose all sense of stability, security, and orderliness when this happens. Imagine the consternation if we did not know what to expect of an oncoming driver—if we had no idea what he or she was going to do.

Types of Norms

Norm strength varies greatly. One way of determining the relative strength of norms is by the sanctions that the norms carry. A sanction is the punishment one receives for violation of a norm, or the reward one receives for correct norm performance. Sanctions take a variety of forms: a look on someone’s face, an A on an exam, a sharp word from a spouse or boss, a kind word from a parent, a traffic ticket from a police officer, a life sentence in a penitentiary. The norms that are most important to a society, that tend to be obeyed without question, and that have harsh sanctions if they are violated are called mores. In our society, norms dealing with taking another person’s life, with eating human flesh, and with sexual activity with one’s parents are examples of mores. Mores are often traditional norms that are a
part of the customs of a society—"things have always been that way." When a society feels it necessary, perhaps because increasing violations mean that the informal sanctions aren't working, mores can be translated into written law. Whether written or unwritten, the emotional force of mores is strong; they still represent the "musts" of behavior.

We also have norms dealing with what we should do, rather than what we must do. These norms are less obligatory than mores, and the sanctions for violation are milder in degree. People may look at us rather strangely if we violate these norms, but they probably will not lock us up or banish us. These norms are called folkways. Practices such as shaking hands when meeting someone or norms regulating the type of clothes one wears would be considered folkways. A student who comes to class in a bathing suit and golf shoes would probably be allowed to stay in spite of the obvious violation of the folkways. At the same time, there would likely be ample private discussion of the student's character and intelligence.

A further distinction can be made between ideal norms and real norms. Ideal norms refer to what people agree should be done. Real norms refer to what they actually do. Ideal norms indicate that cheating on tests, extramarital sexual intercourse, and falsifying one's income-tax returns are wrong. What would observation of actual behavior—real norms—tell us? It would tell us that behavior doesn't always follow stated norms.

Norm Conflict

As we said earlier, norms develop from a set of beliefs and values people have about the way things should happen. Norms probably develop first at the group level when specific friendship groups, clubs, work groups, clans, organizations, or communities of people establish rules. Often these rules are informal and unwritten. Sometimes, if the people involved have sufficient power, their rules may become written down in the form of laws.

Norms vary in how widely they are supported. For example, norms dealing with taking a human life, stealing property, or eating human flesh are probably looked at in the same way by most people in United States society. On the other hand, because norms emerge from groups and because each group has its own interests and viewpoints, we shouldn't be at all surprised to see norm conflict—the norms of one group conflicting with the norms of another. People who have been taught the norm of not killing other people may find themselves as soldiers being trained to kill. The norms of the consumer often conflict with the norms of the manufacturer. Car owners want a vehicle that runs cheaply, looks beautiful, is safe, and won't fall apart in the first six months. The manufacturer is interested more in reducing costs per unit and cutting corners where possible. One would hope that the producers of the food you eat are as concerned about its purity and wholesomeness as you are when you eat it. Perhaps they're not, however; consider that laws and agencies (Food and Drug Administration, for example) are necessary to force food producers to maintain standards. So, because different groups have conflicting viewpoints and motivations, norm conflict is bound to occur.
OBEDIENCE AND DISOBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY

Social psychologist Stanley Milgram conducted a fascinating series of experiments on what happens when people are faced with conflicting norms. A subject is told by the experimenter to teach a learner a task, to test the learner, and to punish the learner if the learner makes mistakes. The subject punishes the learner by administering electric shocks. Shocks are given by a special machine controlled by the subject. Shocks are increased in intensity (marked from “Slight Shock” to “Danger: Severe Shock”) with each wrong answer. The learner continually makes mistakes, continually gets shocked, and pleads with the subject to stop the shocking: “I can’t stand the pain,” “I have a heart condition,” “Get me out of here... I refuse to go on!” then shrieks of agony, and finally silence. The subject is reluctant to keep shocking but the experimenter tells the subject to continue. In reality, the experimenter and the learner are working together; the shocks, and the cries and screams are fake, but the subject doesn’t know this. The subject has a problem, a norm conflict: Should the subject follow the orders of the official-looking white-coated experimenter, or heed the cries of the poor suffering learner? What would you do?

It turns out that the subjects were much more obedient to the experimenter than Milgram had imagined they would be. He had guessed that few would go beyond “Strong Shock,” and yet in practice, many subjects were willing to give the most extreme shocks available. Milgram then added conditions to see if the degree of obedience would change. In one condition (Remote Feedback) the learner was in another room and couldn’t be seen or heard by the subject, but as the shocks got higher the learner pounded on the wall. In a second condition (Voice Feedback) the learner couldn’t be seen but could be heard. In a third condition (Proximity) the learner was in the same room, about two feet away from the subject. In a fourth condition (Touch-Proximity) the learner had to put his hand on a shock-plate, and if he refused, the subject had to force his hand on the plate. As you might guess, the closer the subject was to the learner, the more trouble the subject had going through with the shockings. But even in the last two conditions, 30 to 40 percent of the subjects remained obedient. Milgram also tried moving the authority figure, the experimenter, out of the room to see if that would have an effect. Obedience dropped off tremendously with the experimenter gone, and many of those subjects who remained obedient, cheated; they gave lower shocks than they were supposed to.

What does it all mean? Milgram suggests several reasons for why the subjects were as obedient as they were. For some subjects, perhaps the shocking provides a release for aggressive feelings. From a sociological viewpoint, the subjects became entangled in a complicated social situation from which they had trouble escaping. There were conflicting norms: Who should be heeded, the authority figure or the person in pain? Milgram somewhat pessimistically concludes, “A substantial proportion of people do what they are told to do, irrespective of the content of the act and without limitations of conscience, as long as they perceive that the command comes from a legitimate authority.”

Excerpt from “Some Conditions of Obedience and Disobedience to Authority,” Human Relations, February 1965, pp. 57-76.
Examples of conflict over norms are not hard to find. There seems to be
almost constant conflict over norms dealing with sexual conduct.
Prostitution is not unknown in our society, although it is against the law
nearly everywhere. Groups upset by the existence of prostitution get
together to stamp it out. Other groups get together to defend prostitution.
Police agencies often don’t know whether to attempt to enforce laws pro-
hibiting prostitution or to ignore its existence. For a time, narcotics laws
defined possession and use of marijuana as a serious crime. In some parts of
society, a different set of norms existed that didn’t view marijuana as dan-
gerous and encouraged its use. Californians passed Proposition 215 in
November 1996, which legalized the use of marijuana for medicinal purpos-
es. This created quite a bit of excitement in high places throughout the
country as lawmakers tried to figure out how to balance conflicting laws.
Automobile speed limits keep changing—people weren’t obeying the sup-
sposedly safer and gas-saving 55 mph limit and now it has been raised.

Society’s laws usually reflect its mores, but sometimes they don’t. As we
have said, it is natural for various segments of society to disagree on norms.
Occasionally, however, a special-interest group gains enough power to
manipulate laws. Also, sometimes the change in norms is rapid, and the
change in laws does not keep pace. When either of these situations occurs,
laws may not reflect the mores of society. Usually, when laws and mores are
in conflict, mores will win in the long run. The prohibition laws in the 1920s
and 1930s apparently did not reflect the mores of the country, and the laws
were flagrantly violated until they were changed. What often happens when
there is conflict between norms and laws is that low priority is given to
enforcement of existing laws. This won’t resolve norm conflict, but it repre-
sents an attempt to achieve a compromise between conflicting viewpoints.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

When we compare different cultures we find similarities and differences.
All cultures seem to have some form of family arrangement, and they all
have some system for educating their young. I suppose that cultures are
more similar than they are different. But the differences attract our attention
and are often fascinating. Why are there differences? Several factors are
probably at work. Cultural patterns can reflect responses to a harsh or
benevolent physical environment (very wet or dry, agriculturally rich or
poor, desert or mountain). Cultural patterns can be affected by accidents or
variations in history—revolutions, wars, overpopulation, starvation, inven-
tions, stage of development of neighbors, and so on. Finally, and perhaps
most important, cultural patterns are a consequence of the almost random
variation that emerges out of human creativity. As we look at a few exam-
pies of cultural diversity, try to figure out what produced these patterns.

Every four years, writers from England and Europe flock to the United
States to observe a very peculiar ritual the like of which is unknown
throughout the rest of the civilized world. These strange ceremonies are
written up and read about by disbelieving audiences everywhere. The tribal
celebrations being enacted are called locally the "American political conventions." Strange indeed.

In November 1995, the National Grid, the company that manages England's electric transmission system, announced that it was preparing for an anticipated major power surge. It seems that Princess Diana was to be interviewed on the BBC on the state of her marriage. A year earlier when Prince Charles was interviewed on the same subject, a 700-megawatt surge occurred after the broadcast as citizens all over the country turned on their tea kettles.

Anthropologists specialize in the study of cultural patterns in different societies, especially in primitive or preliterate societies, and in their studies they have made many discoveries that seem strange to Americans. They describe a society in which very fat women are highly regarded. Women in this society spend weeks in fattening sheds where they eat starchy, fatty foods and have their bodies greased to make them more attractive. On festival day they are paraded before the king, who chooses the fattest and heaviest as his mate. Very peculiar people. But imagine for a moment that you have to explain to a member of that society the popularity in America of the various dieting and health spas where men and women spend great sums of money to lose weight.

Some Indian tribes living along the Amazon have an interesting reaction to childbirth. The woman breaks off work in the fields and returns home for only two or three hours to give birth to the child. Meanwhile, her husband has been lying at home in a hammock, tossing about and groaning as if in great pain. Even after the birth when the woman has returned to the fields, the husband remains in bed with the baby to recuperate from his ordeal.

The first research question at the beginning of this chapter described a curious circumstance concerning the gender ratio in China—many more boy babies or many fewer girl babies were born during the 1980s than should have been the case. Demographers (those who study population patterns) are still working on this one, but the answer seems to be related to two factors. In 1979 the Chinese government, in attempts to control rapid population growth, introduced a strict policy limiting Chinese families to one child. The second factor, clearly a cultural one, was the desire of Chinese parents to have a boy. In that culture, a male baby is much preferred to a female baby. If the family was allowed to have only one child, it was very important that it be a boy. Birth statistics and the peculiar gender ratio implied that between 1980 and 1987 about 2.5 million female births were never reported. The experts first concluded that because boy babies were desired, girl babies were killed (female infanticide) or their births somehow hidden and not recorded. Perhaps that's what happened, but Swedish statistician Sten Johansson thinks there is another answer. He studied adoption records and found that the vast majority of children adopted during that time were girls. He concludes that more than 1 million girls were, in some way, left by their natural parents and adopted, some secretly and some openly, by foster parents. By the way, is Chinese culture alone in its preference for boy babies?
CHOICES

Diarrhea kills 3.1 million people annually, almost all of them children. Usha Bhagwani, the mother of two boys, lives in a one-room hovel in Thane, India. Her boys play barefoot in muddy fields, squatting and relieving themselves as the need arises, casual about the filth around them. The water that the village families drink comes from cracked pipes that run in a ditch filled with sewage. Sewage seeps into the water and produces diarrhea. The water has already killed two of her children, and Mrs. Bhagwani is worried about her 5- and 7-year-old boys. She has very limited money and she frets about which choice to make: Should she buy food so that the boys will get stronger? Or should she buy shoes so the boys will not get hookworms? Or should she send them to school? Or should she buy kerosene to boil the water?


Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism

All cultures differ to some extent, and yet because we are so used to our own, we often forget that basic fact. The tourist is reminded of this even in countries similar to our own when, for example, he or she encounters the English motorist driving on the left side of the road, the German driver approaching at a very high speed with lights flashing, Volkswagens and Porsches used as police cars, Spanish restaurants not opening for dinner until after 9:30 in the evening, French children drinking wine, or English police officers not carrying guns. The failure to anticipate and plan for cultural differences is common. Professor David Ricks has found that companies doing business in foreign countries make the same mistake. Chevrolet had trouble selling Novas in Latin American markets: “No va” in Spanish means “does not go.” Pepsodent’s promise of white teeth did not go over well in a part of Southeast Asia where black, discolored teeth are a sign of prestige. “Body by Fisher” translated to “Corpse by Fisher” in a Belgian ad. “Come alive with Pepsi” in a German translation became “Come alive out of the grave.” Some firms forgot when labeling their products that green is the color of disease in Africa and white the color of death in Japan. And a firm had difficulty selling a refrigerator to the mostly Moslem Middle East when it used an ad picturing the refrigerator full of food, including a giant ham on the middle shelf. Some examples of odd notices in non-English-speaking countries include a Hong Kong dentist—“Teeth extracted by the latest Methodists”; a Greek tailor shop—“Order your summers suit. Because is big rush we will execute customers in strict rotation”; a Mexican hotel—“The manager has personally passed all the water served here.”

Ethnocentrism describes a type of prejudice that says simply, my culture’s ways are right and other cultures’ ways, if they are not like mine, are wrong. Racism (a particular race is superior to others) and sexism (one sex is superior to another) are related to ethnocentrism but are more specific
types of prejudice. Informal practices and formal policies (who gets hired, who gets paid most) can emerge to support racism, sexism, and ethnocentrism, as well as other types of prejudice. The ethnocentric person says that the familiar is good and the unfamiliar or foreign is bad. An ethnocentric person in the United States might maintain, among other things, that non-Christians are barbarians; that Inuit tribes practicing sexual hospitality are totally lacking in moral fiber; that anybody who eats dogmeat, horsemeat, or human flesh is not civilized; that democracy is the only way of government; and generally that we are doing other cultures a favor when we go in and Americanize them.

Ethnocentrism is, to some degree, difficult to avoid. Informally, while interacting with family and friends, and formally through a kind of indoctrination within the educational system, we are frequently taught that our ways are best and, at least by implication, the ways of others are less good. The mass media encourage ethnocentrism by treating the foreign and unfamiliar as easily recognized stereotypes. It is probably true that ethnocentrism is impossible to escape, for it is encouraged in one way or another by most societal institutions, such as the family, the church, the schools, and the government. This is at least partly due to the positive functions of ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism probably leads to greater group solidarity, loyalty, and patriotism, and a certain degree of ethnocentrism may be essential for the survival of a culture. The effects of ethnocentrism are complicated: As we reinforce our belief in the goodness of our own ways, we make unfair and often derogatory judgments about the beliefs of others.

Even social scientists (who know better) sometimes run into difficulties when studying other cultures. Because most social scientists are white middle-class representatives of the dominant culture, they may have a tendency to describe minority cultures that are different—Amish, Inuit, delinquent gangs—from the viewpoint of their own value system rather than from the viewpoint of the people they are studying. As you come across descriptions of research in this book and elsewhere, see if the research seems to have been influenced by ethnocentrism. See if you can detect ethnocentrism in the choice of topic, in the way the research is done, or in the interpretation of results.

Related to ethnocentrism but opposite in meaning is the concept of cultural relativism. Cultural relativism suggests that each culture be judged from its own viewpoint without imposing outside standards of judgment. Behaviors, values, and beliefs are relative to the culture in which they appear. The cultural relativist believes that what is right in one society may be wrong in another and that what is considered civilized in one society may be seen as barbaric in another; however, the relativist believes basically that judgments should not be made about the "goodness" or "badness" of traits in cultures other than in one's own. Although cultures share many values, beliefs, and behaviors, differences between cultures do exist. When one evaluates particular traits, one should do it from the viewpoint of the society in which they appear.
Recently, Robert Edgerton has raised some interesting questions that have broadened the ethnocentrism/cultural relativism debate. Edgerton feels that cultural relativism has been fashionable among social scientists and has led them to make some mistakes in analysis. Two assumptions that stem from cultural relativism bother him: (1) that primitive societies were more harmonious and better adapted to their environment than are larger more urbanized societies; and (2) that a society's long-standing beliefs and practices must play a positive role or these beliefs and practices would not have lasted.

Edgerton believes that it is possible to critically evaluate other societies without being ethnocentric. For example, he challenges the first assumption by citing research that shows that modern urban societies have done better than many primitive societies at feeding their populations, maintaining their health and quality of life (lower homicide rates than many primitive societies, much longer life expectancy than most primitive societies). He challenges the second assumption by citing such practices as cannibalism, torture, infanticide, feuding, witchcraft, painful female genital mutilation, ceremonial rape, and head hunting and wondering whether these practices serve beneficial or positive functions. Edgerton's point is that social scientists should be objective and critically evaluate—look at a society's beliefs and practices and determine if they are beneficial and adaptive (serve some useful purpose), or harmful and endanger people's health, happiness, or survival. We should recognize that some beliefs and behaviors serve human needs and social constraints better than others.  

Subculture and Counterculture

Most societies, especially large, complex societies like the United States, have groups that, by their traits, beliefs, or interests, are somewhat separated and distinct from the rest of society. Such groups may share many of the characteristics of the dominant culture, but they have some of their own specific customs as well. If these groups have definite boundaries and if their differences from the rest of society have some permanence, they are called subcultures. Sociologists generally use the term subculture to refer to groups that stand out in that some of their values and customs are different from or even at odds with those of the rest of society. The sociologist asks such questions as, How do the subculture's values differ from those of the dominant culture? Is there conflict? Does the dominant culture attempt to change the subculture? What does the subculture do to maintain its separate identity?

Some religious groups, the Amish for example, seem to qualify as subcultures. A major problem for the Amish, as for many subcultures, is to maintain their identity, even their existence, in the face of a dominant culture frequently hostile to their beliefs. The opposition of the Amish to electricity, which means no lights at night on their horse-drawn carriages, and their opposition to any formal education beyond the eighth grade has brought well-publicized confrontations with the authorities in several midwestern
AMISH GO WILD FOR SKATING

The Old Order Amish may not drive a car, ride a motorcycle or use a bicycle because of their religious beliefs. A horse and buggy is the typical mode of transportation. However, the New York Times reported in 1996 that, for young people at least, a break through had occurred: in-line skates. Hundreds of young Amish have taken up in-line skating, reported to be much faster than a buggy and providing greater freedom. Change is slow among the Amish and something new must fit in with their way of life. In-line skates are permissible because they are seen as a new version of roller skates, a cousin of the ice skate, and an improvement over the leg-powered scooter, all of which have long been used by the Amish.

states. Other examples of subcultures might include terrorist organizations, college students, Hare Krishnas, Chicanos, the Hutterites, professional baseball or football players, and sociologists.

The line of distinction between culture and subculture is not always clear. Some believe that over a period of time societies go through a melting-pot experience in which different nationality, racial, and interest groups become so mixed and merged together that their subcultural differences cease to exist. The result of the melting-pot experience would be a society representing a mix of the remnants of former subcultures.

There is an element of conflict in some subcultural behavior, and this has led to the use of the term counterculture. The central element in a counterculture is opposition to, or conflict with, certain norms and values of the dominant culture. Examples of countercultures might include youth gangs, motorcycle gangs, revolutionary groups, and terrorist organizations. Subculture is the more general term, counterculture the more specific. Countercultures are subcultures, but only those subcultures that include the element of opposition to the dominant culture could be called countercultures.

Multiculturalism

Many societies, especially large complex societies like the United States, have a complicated mix of nationalities, cultures, subcultures, and countercultures. Do these separate groups mix and merge, ultimately losing their individual identity as in a melting pot? Or do they keep their distinctiveness and exist as separate groups or subcultures within the larger society, perhaps like a mosaic? More important, what should societies encourage and support—should the separate groups be expected to mix and merge, or should they be encouraged to keep their individuality?

Since the late 1980s, the United States has been confronting these issues in the debate over multiculturalism. Multiculturalism means acknowledging a society's cultural diversity by formally treating both genders and all
racial and ethnic groups equally in the educational and political process. The focus is on public institutions, governmental policy, and perhaps most visibly, schools, colleges, and universities. Some examples of attempts to establish and encourage multiculturalism have had the following results: In Canada, concerns about protecting and promoting French distinctness has meant requirements for using the French language in Quebec. In the United States, the groups most often identified are African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and women. In April 1993, after administrative resistance to establishing a separate Chicano studies department at the University of California at Los Angeles, a campus demonstration led to the establishment of the Cesar Chavez Center for Interdisciplinary Instruction in Chicana and Chicano Studies. The University of California at Berkeley, now requires all undergraduates, whatever their ethnicity or major, to study at least three out of five cultural groups: Asians, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, African Americans, and Europeans. The explicit goal: to move away from an “Anglo centric” curriculum toward one that validates other cultures as equally and essentially American. Stanford University replaced its Western Culture requirement with one called “Culture, Ideas, and Values,” which added study of works of some non-European cultures and works by women, blacks, Hispanic Americans, Asians, and Native Americans. In late 1996, the Oakland, California, school board proposed that Ebonics (from ebony and phonics) be recognized as a distinct language. The school board hoped that recognition of and respect for “black english” would help improve the academic performance of black students in the Oakland school system.

Multiculturalism is controversial, ruffling feathers on all sides. Does it bring people together or is it divisive? Should society encourage the melting pot in which individual cultural differences eventual disappear, or the mosaic in which distinct cultural identities are maintained? Is there a core (language, common set of beliefs) to which all must adhere, or is the strength of a society gained through its diversity? Does multiculturalism help by encouraging identity and cultural awareness, or hinder by encouraging exclusiveness and separation? Culturally diverse societies like the United States that are committed, at least in principle, to equal representation of all must find an answer, a balance, that works.5

Culture and Personality

Personality and temperament vary from one culture to another. In her book *Sex and Temperament*, Margaret Mead describes what she found when she visited three primitive societies in New Guinea. First, Mead describes the mountain-dwelling Arapesh, among whom both the men and women behave in a way that Americans would describe as maternal or feminine. Both parents devote their lives to raising the children. The men are gentle, and there is complete cooperation between both sexes at all times. Next, Mead describes a cannibalistic tribe, the Mundugumor, living along a river. Here both the men and women behave in a way that Americans would
HOW NATIONS PERCEIVE EACH OTHER

Do cultures have particular personalities? A survey conducted by Research International and the Henley Centre for Forecasting (reported in the London Times, November 16, 1992) found that personality stereotypes associated with nationalities certainly exist. The purpose of the research, interestingly, was to decide whether companies should play up or disguise the nationality of their products. (For example, a British firm made goods under the Japanese-sounding brand name Saisho to benefit from the Japanese reputation for high-quality products.) In the table below, “HIGH” and “low” describe how particular traits are associated with nations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Italy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successful</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clever</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HIGH</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td></td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrogant</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boring</td>
<td></td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrustworthy</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

describe as masculine. Men and women work in the fields together and are aggressive individualists. Finally, Mead describes the lake-dwelling Tchambuli. In this society, the men behave in a manner that Americans would define as feminine or maternal, and the women are masculine by our standards. The women spend the days fishing and weaving, and they have all the power. The men spend their time dancing in ceremonies, dressing and making themselves up, and engaging in artistic endeavors. The men gossip, quarrel, and become very jealous of each other over the affections of a woman. The women’s attitude toward the men is one of kindly tolerance and appreciation; they watch the shows that the men put on.

We tend to believe that some patterns of behavior and temperament are automatically, necessarily related to gender. We might believe that to be male is to behave naturally in a certain way, and that female behavior is innate as well. The results of Mead’s research suggest that the relationship between gender and the corresponding behavior and temperament is not necessarily biological, but is determined by the culture in which one lives—as are preferences for body shape and size, taste in food or art, belief in a supreme being, the nature of recreational activity, and many other characteristics.

David Riesman in The Lonely Crowd describes the effect of culture on personality in a somewhat different manner. His subject is American character, and he describes how character and personality change as other aspects within the culture change. According to Riesman, three types of social character...
have been dominant in American society. In earlier years the dominant type of character was tradition-directed. In a tradition-directed culture, behavior is carefully controlled. Routine orients and occupies the lives of everyone. Ritual, religion, and custom are dominant. New solutions are not sought, and change is very slow. Later, the inner-directed type of character appeared. Inner-directed people are taught early in life to have an inward focus, with emphasis on the self and its needs and gratifications. Other people are not of crucial importance. Individuals might be internally driven toward such ideals as power and wealth; they are encouraged to set their own goals and to be on their own. Their lives are concerned with self-mastery and accomplishment. Finally, and more recently, the other-directed type of character appeared. The chief interest for other-directed people is to be liked by other people. According to Riesman, other-directed people have built-in radar systems that search out the reactions and feelings of others so that they may adapt themselves to them. These people are more concerned with conformity, are shallower, friendlier, more unsure of themselves, and more demanding of approval from others. The peer group is all-important, as is the front that one puts up. Riesman believes that these character types result from other changes within the culture, such as population growth or change, changes in economic, industrial, and agricultural techniques, and urbanization. This major point applies to all of us: The culture in which we live plays an important part in determining who we are and how we behave, including patterns of personality and character.

American males have one of the highest heart-disease rates in the world. By contrast, Japanese males have one of the lowest rates. Obviously a cultural factor is working here, but which cultural factor is it? For years scientists thought the explanation to be diet. The Japanese diet of fish and rice is much lower in cholesterol than is the American diet of meat and dairy products. However, a nine-year study completed in 1975 of 4,000 Japanese Americans living in this country found another cultural factor to be the culprit. The key turned out to be lifestyle. The Japanese living in the United States who maintained their traditional lifestyle—downplaying individual competition and accepting their place in family and society—had low heart-attack rates regardless of what they ate, how much they smoked, their blood pressure, or their weight. Those Japanese who adopted the American lifestyle (or personality) and became impatient, aggressive, hard-driving, competitive go-getters were five times as likely to have heart attacks as those who maintained Japanese ways. The Japanese culture is apparently better able to protect the individual against the effects of pressure and stress. Unhappily, then, one's culture dictates not only how one will live, but also how and why one will die.

SOCIETY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

We learned in Chapter One that sociologists study the origin, development, organization, and functioning of human society. In its most general meaning, the term society refers to human association and the existence of social
THE AMERICANIZATION OF GEORGE

America is coming between me and my 12-year-old son. Actually, it started earlier, when George was hardly 10. Since then, I have helplessly watched this incursion, often with dismay and alarm.

Over two years ago we escaped the horrors of Lebanon, and chose quiet Princeton over the vibrancy of Harvard. . . . But little did I know that he was to face, at such an early age, the more subtle "terror" of American peer pressure, tantalizing communications media, and the unsettling dissonance of conflicting norms and expectations.

The family system in Lebanon is, on the whole, intimate, warm, and affectionate. A child there grows up in a nurturing atmosphere of extended kinship networks sustained by filial piety and mutual obligations.

The Lebanese, much like adjacent Mediterranean cultures, are very tactile. Touching, kissing, hugging, and the outward display of emotion—regardless of gender—are generously and spontaneously expressed. At least children of George's age indulge in these emotive expressions with little self-consciousness or feelings of shame or guilt.

I feel resentful that George should be disarmed of such harmless but reassuring expressions. I first noticed this transformation (or deformation) upon returning from a brief trip a few months after we had settled in Princeton.

Normally, even after the regular daily return home from work, George would interrupt his play and rush across the driveway to greet me; often, he would literally hurl himself into my open arms.

On that day, however, just as he was about to heed his normal impulse as he rushed across the driveway, he suddenly "froze" in mid-passage, looked in the direction of his watchful playmates, and with obvious hesitation and embarrassment, calmly walked over to greet me with a cold handshake and a casual "Hi, Dad." Bit by bit, even this gesture has been abandoned.

Such "frozen" moments have recurred and spilled over to other daily encounters with members of the family, and in particular acquaintances from Lebanon. I could see him fret as relatives and friends he has not seen for two years try, in vain, to solicit a hug or a kiss on the forehead. The reluctant denial has been transformed into a boast, that he is now an "American boy."

His "Americanization" was most forcefully conveyed by a recent incident on the tennis court. We were struggling in a doubles game against two other, more seasoned partners who normally beat us. After a long and heated game we won the set, partly because of two exquisite shots by George. He was ecstatic. As he rushed across to share his exuberance with me Lebanese style, he "froze" once again and treated me to a tamed version of the American "high five."


relationships. This is too general for our use, however, because it suggests that any set of people interacting could be called a society. A more precise definition states that a society is a continuing number of people living in a specific area who are relatively organized, self-sufficient, and independent and share a common culture. Continuing means that there is some permanence to the society. The number of people can vary greatly: American society
numbers more than 260 million people, whereas other societies number fewer than 1,000 people. By organized we mean that there is some systematization and structure to the patterns of social interaction. A society occupies an area; it has boundaries that separate it from other societies. These boundaries—an ocean, a river, a mountain, or even a line drawn on a map—are not only geographical but social as well; the vast majority of the social interactions of a society take place within a particular area. Finally, each society, because of its particular cultural beliefs, habits, and traditions, has certain unique characteristics that distinguish it from other societies.

As you can see, several terms in our definition involve matters of degree. There is often much interaction among societies, and probably no society is totally independent of others. Although interpretation will always be necessary, this definition should give us a reasonably good idea of what is meant by society. However, other uses of the term don’t fit our definition. Special-interest groups such as professional organizations (Society for the Study of Social Problems), political groups (John Birch Society), social clubs (Second Street Skateboard Society), and other groups are not societies in the sociological sense. And whatever those people have whose pictures appear in the “society” pages of the newspaper, isn’t a society. None of these groups alone constitutes a society; all of them are part of a society.

How do sociologists study human society? Let’s suggest for a moment that any given society has a form, a composition, a structure. Imagine society as a building with many parts—wood, steel, bricks, and concrete—all somehow attached together in a coherent structure. If you look at the end product you’ll see a five-story building, but thousands of elements actually make up the whole. Yet rather than a group of random parts, the building is a network, a structure. Now keep that image of society as a building: The many parts are people, and they are held together by the ways they relate to each other, their relationships to each other. The people of society, just like the steel and concrete of the building, are held together in very specific ways.

Just as we can take the five-story building apart to examine its elements, so can we take apart and examine society’s elements. As we look at the ways people relate to each other, we find that these ways fit consistent patterns. The same important elements seem to appear again and again. Social structure refers to the network of ways people relate to each other in society. In their study of human society, sociologists concentrate on the important elements of social structure: status, role, group, and institution. Status and role will be discussed in this chapter; group and institution will be the focus of later chapters.

STATUS AND ROLE

When students and an instructor walk into class the first day of the term, they know without thinking what to expect of each other and how each will behave. They know these things even though they have not seen each other before. The students know that the instructor will stand in front of the class behind a lectern, probably call roll, assign reading, and dismiss them early the
first day. The instructor knows that, unless the class is required, students will be shopping around. They will be trying to decide whether to take this class, and their decision will be based on course content, the viewpoint and personality of the instructor, the amount and type of work required, and how the instructor is known to grade.

We know these things about each other partly because of the system of norms discussed previously. The concepts of status and role are closely related to norms, and they play a major part in the situation just described. People typically use status to refer to one’s rank in society—“she’s a neurosurgeon, which means she has high status and a Mercedes Benz . . . .” This usage is not incorrect, and I may even use the term this way in Chapter Five when I’m not careful, but for the time being let’s forget this usage. When sociologists are using the concepts status and role, we use the term status in a slightly different way. By status we mean a position in society or in a group. There are innumerable positions one can occupy: teacher, student, police officer, president, football player, father, wife, convict. Furthermore, each of us can occupy several positions at once: teacher, handball player, father, husband, and so on. By role we mean the behavior of one who occupies a particular status. As Robert Bierstedt puts it, a role is what an individual does in the status he or she occupies; statuses are occupied, roles are played.

A set of norms surrounds each status and role. These norms, called role requirements, describe the behavior expected of people holding a particular position in society. Recalling our earlier example, the behavior of the student who refused to stand up was disturbing because it was unpredictable. He was occupying the status or position of student, but the role he played—his behavior—was contrary to the expected behavior of a person in that status. His behavior was outside the limits set by the norms, or role requirements.

Within the boundaries set by the role requirements, there is often extensive variation in how a role is played. On a football team, status would refer to the positions, role to the behavior of the incumbent of the position. One status would be quarterback. Role requirements of quarterbacks are generally to call the plays, to direct the team, and to try to move the ball down the field. But now look at the actual performance of several quarterbacks. One passes frequently, another seldom passes but often runs with the ball, and a third does neither but usually blocks. Compare four or five of your instructors in their role behavior. Although all occupy the status of college professor, no doubt their behavior varies markedly. One paces the floor; another stays behind the lectern while lecturing. One demands class discussion; the next dislikes having lectures interrupted. One has beautifully organized and prepared lectures; another has a disorganized, stream-of-consciousness presentation put together on the way to class. Or compare the behavior of the last three presidents of the United States. Again we see marked role differences within a given status. These differences in behavior obviously occur because people holding the same status define the role differently. This should sound familiar because it’s essentially the idea we had in mind in discussing definition of the situation in Chapter Two. As a result of a particular pattern of socialization, each individual defines status and role in a
particular way. Each individual brings to the situation a specific personality and a set of skills, interests, and abilities. Therefore, although each status carries with it certain role requirements, there is still variation and flexibility in actual behavior.

Role—behavior that is suited to a particular status—varies not only because of the style of a particular quarterback, college professor, or president; roles must also be seen in an interaction setting. While behaving, people are always socially interacting with others, and consequently their behavior adjusts to and is modified by the responses of others. This continues the viewpoint introduced in the previous chapter in which we pointed out that socialization and self-development occur through the process of social interaction. Roles we play are shaped by others’ reactions to us. For example, after comments and complaints from an unhappy class, the unprepared, stream-of-consciousness professor mentioned earlier may modify his or her performance. It is a common occurrence to go into a situation prepared for one sort of role only to find that, in the process of the interaction, another sort of behavior is necessary.

Sociologist Erving Goffman analyzed people’s behavior by likening it to being performers in a play. Each of us plays numerous roles in our everyday life, and in each of these roles we try to present our self in a particular and convincing way. There are several aspects to our performance, according to Goffman. There is the “front stage” where we play out a role for an audience. The teacher’s front stage behavior takes place in a classroom in front of students, the coach on a basketball court or a football field in front of players, the doctor in an examining room in front of patients. There is a “setting,” which involves clothes, furniture, props, and other background items that help make our front stage performance convincing. The teacher has a blackboard or an overhead projector; the coach has a whistle, clipboard, and particular set of clothes depending on whether it’s practice day or game day; the doctor has a stethoscope, diplomas on the wall, and a receptionist to keep people out. There is also a “back stage” for after the performance is over. Now we are no longer trying to convince an audience—we can relax. Back stage behavior often contradicts the front stage image—the audience would be disappointed if they knew. The teacher gets home and can’t answer the simplest question his child asks, or the coach who is such an authority figure on the field is a wimp with her friends, or the doctor doesn’t look as God-like when in sloppy clothes and having trouble removing a splinter. Goffman’s analysis is helpful in reminding us how we try to “manage” social interaction, and how we try to project the image of ourselves that we want others to believe.8

The second research question at the beginning of this chapter compared people who had many different jobs, activities, or positions in society with those who were more focused on one. We can now see that we were talking about roles—about people who are involved in many roles compared with those who concentrate more on one. Would the number of roles one is involved in have any effect on life span? A recent study says yes. A number of women were randomly selected and interviewed in 1956 and again in
1986. Those who actively “played” many roles, such as worker, church member, friend, neighbor, relative, and club or organization member, were compared with those who focused more on one role. The study found that those involved in many roles lived significantly longer. Of the various roles studied, active participation in clubs or organizations seemed to have the greatest effect on longevity. The scientists involved in the study concluded that role enhancement—being involved in multiple roles—seems to enhance health. This supports earlier studies that have shown that integration into society by “playing” multiple roles reduces the likelihood of psychological distress among both men and women.⁹

Achieved and Ascribed Status

How do we happen to occupy the statuses that we do? Some, probably most, statuses are earned or achieved in some way, and hence these are called achieved statuses. The astronaut, police officer, college professor, and truck driver represent achieved statuses. Some statuses are automatically conferred on us with no effort or choice on our part. These are ascribed statuses. One’s gender, race, and nationality are ascribed (although occasionally some changes can be made). Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether a status is ascribed or achieved. Consider the student who feels forced to go to college because of the wishes of his or her parents: Is the status of student ascribed or achieved? Or how about the statuses a child inherits from his or her parents, such as political and religious affiliations: Are they ascribed or achieved?

Statuses are stratified, or ranked, at several levels. Some statuses are of high rank and bring much prestige to the occupant. The doctor, board director of a large corporation, college president, author, artist, scientist, and movie star represent statuses that have high value and prestige in our society. An evaluation of position is usually determined by the requirements one must have to fill that status: extensive education, wealth, beauty, skill, or some other extraordinary characteristic. Sometimes this ranking is based on a societal tradition that automatically ranks certain characteristics above others, such as a particular gender, race, religion, or aristocratic affiliation. Sometimes having high ascribed status makes it easier to obtain desired achieved statuses. For example, a child born in a middle-class family (ascribed status) will have a better chance of becoming a doctor or scientist (achieved status) than will a lower-class child. Sometimes having high ascribed status is limiting, however. People who are members of royalty may find that their freedom is severely restricted. Living up to their ascribed statuses can mean declining to pursue more attractive achieved statuses.

Role Strain and Role Conflict

Problems may occur when a person must play several roles simultaneously or when one role requires a person to perform in several different ways. These situations are called role conflict and role strain, and they can lead to personal stress and discomfort. Role strain refers to the situation in which
there are differing and conflicting expectations regarding one's status or position. A student may experience role strain when he compares the expectations of his parents (to study, get A's, prepare for a vocation) with the expectations of his fraternity brothers (to be social, to be active in fraternity affairs, to be athletic). Police officers, who are trained to arrest people who have committed crimes, probably feel role strain when they are ordered by superiors who do not want to make a bad situation worse to stand by and watch looting take place during a riot. A typical situation on college campuses leads to role strain for young professors: Their students expect them to be good teachers, but the school tells them that keeping their jobs and getting promoted will depend on how many articles and books they publish. Doing one takes valuable time from the other—what to do?

Role conflict occurs when a person occupies several statuses or positions that have contradictory role requirements. Here there is no confusion or disagreement about the requirements of a single role, as in the first case. The requirements of the roles are clearly understood; the problem is that the requirements of two or more roles are contradictory. Imagine the dilemma of a police officer invited by friends to a party where marijuana is being smoked. Police officers are trained to respond to violations of the law with the authority of their position, both on and off duty. But the officer is a normal citizen who is expected by friends—and who wants—to behave like everyone else at the party and have fun. The requirements of the two roles are clearly contradictory. Doctors seldom treat members of their own families because of the role conflict that can occur. Similarly, the football coach whose son is trying out for the team experiences conflict between the contradictory requirements of two different roles: coach and father.

THEORY AND RESEARCH: A REVIEW

This chapter primarily introduces and illustrates a series of concepts: society, social structure, norm, status, role, and culture. Of the three theoretical perspectives introduced in Chapter One, the discussions in this chapter are most influenced by functional analysis. Specifically, the discussion of society and social structure and the sections on norms, status, and role, and much of the rest of the chapter, revolve around the ideas of stability and unity while focusing on the structure and the integration of the parts of society. All these elements are characteristic of functional analysis. Studies of the differing interests that lead to norm conflict (car owners versus manufacturers) and of the characteristics of countercultures turn more in the direction of conflict theory.

Of the research efforts described in this chapter, the comparative study of Japanese and American incidence of heart disease was a nonreactive survey using records. The example of the recalcitrant student who wouldn't stand up and Milgram's study on administering shocks are experiments. Milgram's study is interesting in that, by varying selected conditions in his experiment (for example, distance between subject and learner, and presence or absence of experimenter), he introduced certain controls that
sharpened his findings. Mead's research on primitive societies is an example of participant observation.

**SUMMARY**

In the first chapter in this section on socialization and culture, we focused on how individuals develop into social beings. In this chapter, we have turned our attention from individuals and the processes of socialization and self-development to the stage or setting where these processes take place. This setting is called the social environment. Within this environment, individuals exist in specific societies and cultures; they occupy numerous positions, are governed by rules, and behave in a variety of ways that are sometimes appropriate, sometimes inappropriate, but seldom unusual. The membership of individuals in a given society and culture, whose patterns and customs developed long before them and will probably long outlive them, affects and explains much of their behavior.

*Culture* is made up of the learned, shared patterns of behavior and knowledge common to a society, which includes both material and nonmaterial aspects. *Norms* are the rules of society. Because of these rules, we behave appropriately and behavior becomes predictable. Norm breakdown occasionally occurs, and when it does, it can produce crises both for society and for individuals. Norms vary in strength: "Shoulds" are called *folkways*; "musts" are called *mores*. There are *group norms* and *societal norms*, and sometimes these sets of norms conflict with each other. When this happens, those people influenced by the conflicting sets of norms experience problems. *Subcultures* refers to groups that share many of the traits of the dominant culture but have some unique customs and traits as well. Our cultural and subcultural affiliations are crucially important in determining who we are and what we do. The concept of *ethnocentrism* helps us understand the familiar tendency to assume that the world everywhere is the same as it is here and that if by some chance it's not, it should be. On the other hand, *cultural relativism* is an attitude that judges each culture from its own viewpoint.

*Society* is defined as a continuing number of people who live in a specific area; who are relatively organized, self-sufficient, and independent; and who share a common culture. A *status* is a position in society, and *role* describes the behavior of one who occupies a status. Norms define the boundaries for role requirements, but within these boundaries, the performance of roles will vary. Statuses, which can be either achieved or ascribed, are ranked in value or prestige. When a person occupies several statuses with contradictory role requirements, role conflict can occur. Role strain can result from one who tries to play a role that includes conflicting expectations.

Three readings follow that deal with norms and culture. In the first reading, Edward Hall shows that the way in which people view time and space determines how they communicate and that these norms vary more than we might think from one culture to another. In the second reading, Terry Williams describes a teenage drug ring in New York City. And finally, in his
classic article, “One Hundred Percent American,” Ralph Linton explores whether new elements of the American culture are introduced from within through invention or whether they are adapted from other cultures through the process of diffusion.

**TERMS FOR STUDY**

- achieved status (94)
- ascribed status (94)
- counterculture (86)
- cultural relativism (84)
- culture (75)
- ethnocentrism (83)
- folkways (79)
- ideal norms (79)
- material culture (76)
- mores (78)
- multiculturalism (86)
- nonmaterial culture (76)
- norms (76)
- real norms (79)
- role (92)
- role conflict (95)
- role requirements (92)
- role strain (94)
- sanction (78)
- social structure (91)
- society (90)
- status (92)
- subculture (85)
- values (77)

For a discussion of research Question 1, see page 82.
For a discussion of research Question 2, see page 93.
The Way We Weren't
The Myth and Reality of the "Traditional" Family

Stephanie Coontz

Families face serious problems today, but proposals to solve them by reviving "traditional" family forms and values miss two points. First, no single traditional family existed to which we could return, and none of the many varieties of families in our past has had any magic formula for protecting its members from the vicissitudes of socioeconomic change, the inequities of class, race, and gender, the consequences of interpersonal conflict. Violence, child abuse, poverty, and the unequal distribution of resources to women and children have occurred in every period and every type of family.

Second, the strengths that we also find in many families of the past were rooted in different social, cultural, and economic circumstances from those that prevail today. Attempts to reproduce any type of family outside of its original socioeconomic context are doomed to fail.

Colonial Families

American families always have been diverse, and the male breadwinner-female homemaker, nuclear ideal that most people associate with "the" traditional family has predominated for only a small portion of our history. In colonial America, several types of families coexisted or competed. Native American kinship systems subordinated the nuclear family to a much larger network of marital alliances and kin obligations, ensuring that no single family was forced to go it alone. Wealthy settler families from Europe, by contrast, formed independent households that pulled in labor from poorer neighbors and relatives, building their extended family solidarities on the backs of truncated families among indentured servants, slaves, and the poor. Even wealthy families, though, often were disrupted by death; a majority of colonial Americans probably spent some time in a stepfamily. Meanwhile, African Americans, denied the legal protection of marriage and parenthood, built extensive kinship networks and obligations through fictive kin ties, ritual co-parenting or godparenting, adoption of orphans, and complex naming patterns designed to preserve family links across space and time.

The dominant family values of colonial days left no room for sentimentalizing childhood. Colonial mothers, for example, spent far less time doing child care than do modern working women, typically delegating this task to servants or older siblings. Among white families, patriarchal authority was so absolute
that disobedience by wife or child was seen as a small form of treason, theoretically punishable by death, and family relations were based on power, not love.

**The Nineteenth-Century Family**

With the emergence of a wage-labor system and a national market in the first third of the nineteenth century, white middle-class families became less patriarchal and more child-centered. The ideal of the male breadwinner and the nurturing mother now appeared. But the emergence of domesticity for middle-class women and children depended on its absence among the immigrant, working class, and African American women or children who worked as servants, grew the cotton, or toiled in the textile mills to free middle-class wives from the chores that had occupied their time previously.

Even in the minority of nineteenth-century families who could afford domesticity, though, emotional arrangements were quite different from nostalgic images of "traditional" families. Rigid insistence on separate spheres for men and women made male-female relations extremely stilted, so that women commonly turned to other women, not their husbands, for their most intimate relations. The idea that all of one's passionate feelings should go toward a member of the opposite sex was a twentieth-century invention — closely associated with the emergence of a mass consumer society and promulgated by the very film industry that "traditionalists" now blame for undermining such values.

**Early Twentieth-Century Families**

Throughout the nineteenth century, at least as much divergence and disruption in the experience of family life existed as does today, even though divorce and unwed motherhood were less common. Indeed, couples who marry today have a better chance of celebrating a fortieth wedding anniversary than at any previous time in history. The life cycles of nineteenth-century youth (in job entry, completion of schooling, age at marriage, and establishment of separate residence) were far more diverse than they became in the early twentieth-century. At the turn of the century a higher proportion of people remained single for their entire lives than at any period since. Not until the 1920s did a bare majority of children come to live in a male breadwinner-female homemaker family, and even at the height of this family form in the 1950s, only 60 percent of American children spent their entire childhoods in such a family.

**Not until the 1920s did a bare majority of children come to live in a male breadwinner-female homemaker family . . . .**

From about 1900 to the 1920s, the growth of mass production and emergence of a public policy aimed at establishing a family wage led to new ideas about family self-sufficiency, especially in the white middle-class and a privileged sector of the working class. The resulting families lost their organic connection to intermediary units in society such as local shops, neighborhood work cultures and churches, ethnic associations, and mutual-aid organizations.

As families related more directly to the state, the market, and the mass media, they also developed a new cult of privacy, along with heightened expectations about the family's role in fostering individual fulfillment. New family values stressed the early independence of children and the romantic coupling of husband and wife, repudiating the intense same-sex ties and mother-infant bonding of earlier years as unhealthy. From this family we get the idea that women are sexual, that youth is attractive, and that marriage should be the center of our emotional fulfillment.

Even aside from its lack of relevance to the lives of most immigrants, Mexican Americans, African Americans, rural families, and the urban poor, big contradictions existed between image and reality in the middle-class family ideal of the early twentieth century. This is the period when many Americans first accepted the idea that the family should be sacred from outside intervention; yet the development of the private, self-sufficient family depended on state intervention in the economy, government regulation of parent-child relations, and state-directed destruction of class and community institutions that hindered the development of family privacy.

Acceptance of a youth and leisure culture sanctioned early marriage and raised expectations about the quality of married life, but also introduced new tensions between the generations and new conflicts between husband and wife over what were adequate levels of financial and emotional support.

The nineteenth-century middle-class ideal of the family as a refuge from the world of work was surprisingly modest compared with emerging twentieth-century demands that the family provide a whole alternative world of satisfaction and intimacy to that of work and neighborhood. Where a family succeeded in doing so, people might find pleasures in the home never before imagined. But the new ideals also increased the possibilities for failure: America has had the highest divorce rate in the world since the turn of the century.
In the 1920s, these contradictions created a sense of foreboding about “the future of the family” that was every bit as widespread and intense as today’s. Social scientists and popular commentators of the time hearkened back to the “good old days,” bemoaning the sexual revolution, the fragility of nuclear family ties, the cult of youthful romance, the decline of respect for grandparents, and the threat of the “New Woman.” But such criticism was sidetracked by the stockmarket crash, the Great Depression of the 1930s, and the advent of World War II.

Domestic violence escalated during the Depression, while murder rates were as high in the 1930s as in the 1980s. Divorce rates fell, but desertion increased and fertility plummeted. The war stimulated a marriage boom, but by the late 1940s one in every three marriages was ending in divorce.

Admirers of these very nontraditional 1950s family forms and values point out that household arrangements and gender roles were less diverse in the 1950s than today, and marriages more stable. But this was partly because diversity was ruthlessly suppressed and partly because economic and political support systems for socially-sanctioned families were far more generous than they are today. Real wages rose more in any single year of the 1950s than they did in the entire decade of the 1980s; the average thirty-year-old man could buy a median-priced home on 15 to 18 percent of his income. The government funded public investment, home ownership, and job creation at a rate more than triple that of the past two decades, while 40 percent of young men were eligible for veterans’ benefits. Forming and maintaining families was far easier than it is today.

Yet the stability of these 1950s families did not guarantee good outcomes for their members. Even though most births occurred within wedlock, almost a third of American children lived in poverty during the 1950s, a higher figure than today. More than 50 percent of black married-couple families were poor. Women were often refused the right to serve on juries, sign contracts, take out credit cards in their own names, or establish legal residence. Wife-battering rates were low, but that was because wife-beating was seldom counted as a crime. Most victims of incest, such as Miss America of 1958, kept the secret of their fathers’ abuse until the 1970s or 1980s, when the women’s movement became powerful enough to offer them the support denied them in the 1950s.

In 1964, after fourteen years of unrivaled family stability and economic prosperity, the poverty rate was still 19 percent; in 1969, after five years of civil rights activism, the rebirth of feminism, and the institution of nontraditional if relatively modest government welfare programs, it was down to 12 percent, a low that has not been seen again since the social welfare cutbacks began in the late 1970s. In 1965, 20 percent of American children still lived in poverty; within five years, that had fallen to 15 percent. Infant mortality was cut in half between 1965 and 1980. The gap in nutrition between low-income Americans and other Americans narrowed significantly, as a direct result of food stamp and school lunch programs. In 1963, 20 percent of Americans living below the poverty line had never been examined by a physician; by 1970 this was true of only 8 percent of the poor.

Since 1973, however, real wages have been falling for most Americans. Attempts to counter this through tax revolts and spending freezes have led to drastic cutbacks in government investment programs. Corporations also spend far less on research and job creation than they did in the 1950s and 1960s, though the average compensation to executives has soared. The gap between rich and poor, according to the April 17, 1995, New York Times, is higher in the United

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**The 1950s Family**

At the end of the 1940s, after the hardships of the Depression and war, many Americans revived the nuclear family ideals that had so disturbed commentators during the 1920s. The unprecedented postwar prosperity allowed young families to achieve consumer satisfactions and socioeconomic mobility that would have been inconceivable in earlier days. The 1950s family that resulted from these economic and cultural trends, however, was hardly “traditional.” Indeed it is best seen as a historical aberration. For the first time in 100 years, divorce rates dropped, fertility soared, the gap between men’s and women’s job and educational prospects widened (making middle-class women more dependent on marriage), and the age of marriage fell—to the point that teenage birth rates were almost double what they are today.

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**The Post-1950s Family**

In the 1960s, the civil rights, antiwar, and women’s liberation movements exposed the racial, economic, and sexual injustices that had been papered over by the Ozzie and Harriet images on television. Their activism made older kinds of public and private oppression unacceptable and helped create the incomplete, flawed, but much-needed reforms of the Great Society. Contrary to the big lie of the past decade that such programs caused our current family dilemmas, those antipoverty and social justice reforms helped overcome many of the family problems that prevailed in the 1950s.
These inequities are not driven by changes in family forms, contrary to ideologues who persist in confusing correlations with causes; but they certainly exacerbate such changes, and they tend to bring out the worst in all families. The result has been an accumulation of stresses on families, alongside some important expansions of personal options. Working couples with children try to balance three full-time jobs, as employers and schools cling to policies that assume every employee has a "wife" at home to take care of family matters. Divorce and remarriage have allowed many adults and children to escape from toxic family environments, yet our lack of social support networks and failure to forge new values for sustaining intergenerational obligations have let many children fall through the cracks in the process.

Meanwhile, young people find it harder and harder to form or susta-"... romanticizing “traditional” families and gender roles will not produce the changes . . . that would permit families to develop moral and ethical systems relevant to 1990s realities.

America needs more than a revival of the narrow family obligations of the 1950s, whose (greatly exaggerated) protection for white middle-class children was achieved only at tremendous cost to the women in those families and to all those who could not or would not aspire to the Ozzie and Harriet ideal. We need a concern for children that goes beyond the question of whether a mother is waiting with cookies when her kids come home from school. We need a moral language that allows us to address something besides people’s sexual habits. We need to build values and social institutions that can reconcile people’s needs for independence with their equally important rights to dependence, and surely we must reject older solutions that involved balancing these needs on the backs of women. We will not find our answers in nostalgia for a mythical “traditional family.”

Stephanie Coontz teaches history and family studies at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. Her publications include The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap and The Way We Really Are: Coming to Terms with America’s Changing Families (both published by Basic Books). She is a recipient of the Washington Governor’s Writer’s Award and the Dale Richmond Award of the American Academy of Pediatrics.
Unit 8
10 Tips for talking with kids about tough issues

Raising a child is probably the most gratifying job any of us will ever have — and one of the toughest. In large part, that’s because times have changed. We live in an increasingly complex world that challenges us everyday with a wide range of disturbing issues that are difficult for children to understand and for adults to explain.

We believe this booklet can help. It offers practical, concrete tips and techniques for talking easily and openly with young children ages 8 to 12 about some very tough issues: sex, HIV/AIDS, violence, drugs and alcohol.

Some parents and caregivers may question the appropriateness of talking about such sensitive topics with young children. Maybe you’re one of them. But consider this: our kids are already hearing about these issues from TV, movies, magazines and school friends. If we don’t talk with them early and often — and answer their questions — they’ll get their facts from someone else. And we’ll have missed an important opportunity to offer our children information that’s not only accurate, but also in sync with our own personal values and moral principles.

Kids are hearing about and forced to cope with tough issues at increasingly early ages, often before they are ready to understand all aspects of these complicated ideas. Additionally, medical research and public health data tells us that when young children want information, advice and guidance, they turn to their parents first. Once they reach the teenage years, they tend to depend more on friends, the media and other outsiders for their information. As a parent, you have a wonderful opportunity to talk with your child about these issues first, before anyone else can confuse your child with incorrect information or explanations that lack the sense of values you want to instill. We need to take advantage of this “window of opportunity” with young children and talk with them earlier and more often, particularly about tough issues like sex, HIV/AIDS, violence, alcohol and drugs.

While we want our children to feel comfortable enough to come to us with any questions and concerns — and thus give us the opportunity to begin conversations — this doesn’t always occur. That’s why it’s perfectly okay — at times even necessary — to begin the discussions ourselves. TV and other media are great tools for this. Say, for instance, that you and your 12-year-old are watching TV together and the program’s plot includes a teenage pregnancy. After the show is over, ask your child what she thought of the program. Did she agree with how the teenagers behaved? Just one or two questions could help start a valuable discussion that comes from everyday circumstances and events.

Also, when speaking with your child, be sure to use words she can understand. Trying to explain AIDS to a 6-year-old with words like “transmission” and “transfusion” may not be as helpful as using simpler language. The best technique: use simple, short words and straightforward explanations.
words and straightforward explanations.

If you have more than one child -- and your kids are widely spaced -- try to speak with them separately, even about the same subject. The reason? Children of varied ages are usually at different developmental levels, which means that they need different information, have different sensitivities and require a different vocabulary. What's more, older children will often dominate the discussion, which may prevent the younger ones from speaking up.

If you feel uncomfortable talking about such sensitive subjects -- particularly sex and relationships -- with your young child, you're not alone. Many parents feel awkward and uneasy, especially if they are anxious about the subject. But, for your kid's sake, try to overcome your nervousness and bring up the issue with your child. After all, our children are hearing about it both through the media and on the playground, and that information may not include the values that we want our kids to have.

Young children want their parents to discuss difficult subjects with them. However, our kids will look to us for answers only if they feel we will be open to their questions. It's up to us to create the kind of atmosphere in which our children can ask any questions -- on any subject -- freely and without fear of consequence.

How do you create such an atmosphere? By being encouraging, supportive and positive. For example, if your child asks, "How many people have AIDS?" try not to answer with, "I don't know. Please just finish your lunch." No matter how busy you are respond with something like, "That's an interesting question, but I'm not sure. Let's go look it up." (FYI: Don't worry that if your children learn that you don't know everything, they won't look up to you. That's simply not true. Kids accept, "I don't know," and "let's go find out," and they are better responses than any inaccurate or misleading answers you may be tempted to offer.)

One more point: You don't need to answer all of your children's questions immediately. If your 10-year-old asks, "Mom, what's a condom?" while you're negotiating a tricky turn in rush-hour traffic, it's perfectly okay for you to say something like, "That's an important question. But with all this traffic, I can't explain right now. Let's talk later, after dinner." And make sure you do.

As a parent, you have a wonderful opportunity to be the first person to talk with your child about tough issues like drugs and violence before anyone else can confuse him with "just-the-facts" explanations that lack the sense of values and moral principles you want to instill. Likewise, when talking with your child about sex, remember to talk about more than "the birds and the bees," and communicate your values. Remember: research shows that children want and need moral guidance from their moms and dads, so don't hesitate to make your beliefs clear.

How many times do we listen to our children while folding clothes, preparing for the next day's meeting, or pushing a shopping cart through the supermarket? While that's understandable, it's important to find time to give kids our undivided attention. Listening carefully to our children builds self-esteem by letting our youngsters know that they're important to us and can lead to valuable discussions about a wide variety of sensitive issues.

Listening carefully also helps us better understand what our children really want to know as well as what they already understand. And it keeps us from talking above our youngsters' heads and confusing them even further. For example, suppose your child asks you what crack is. Before you answer, ask him what he thinks it is. If he says, "I think it's something you eat that makes you act funny," then you have a sense of his level of understanding and can adjust your explanations to fit.

Listening to our children and taking their feelings into account also helps us
understand when they've had enough. Suppose you're answering your 9-year-old's questions about AIDS. If, after a while, he says, "I want to go out and play," stop the talk and re-introduce the subject at another time.

Whatever your children's age, they deserve honest answers and explanations. It's what strengthens our children's ability to trust. Also, when we don't provide a straightforward answer, kids make up their own fantasy explanations, which can be more frightening than any real, honest response we can offer.

While we may not want or need to share all the details of a particular situation or issue with our child, try not to leave any big gaps either. When we do, children tend to fill in the blanks themselves, which can generate a good deal of confusion and concern.

Often it can feel like forever before a youngster gets his story out. As adults, we're tempted to finish the child's sentence for him, filling in words and phrases in an effort to hear the point sooner. Try to resist this impulse. By listening patiently, we allow our children to think at their own pace and we are letting them know that they are worthy of our time.

It's important to try to talk with your kids about tough issues often, but there isn't always time in the day to sit down for a long talk. Also, kids tend to resist formal discussions about today's toughest issues, often categorizing them as just another lecture from mom and dad. But if we use "talk opportunities," moments that arise in everyday life, as occasions for discussion, our children will be a lot less likely to tune us out. For instance, a newspaper item about a child expelled from school for carrying a gun to class can help you start a discussion on guns and violence. A public service TV commercial can give you an opportunity to talk about AIDS.

Since most young children can only take in small bits of information at any one time, they won't learn all they need to know about a particular topic from a single discussion. That's why it's important to let a little time pass, then ask the child to tell you what she remembers about your conversation. This will help you correct any misconceptions and fill in missing facts.

Finally, in an effort to absorb all they want to know, children often ask questions again and again over time — which can test any parent's nerves. But such repetition is perfectly normal, so be prepared and tolerant. Don't be afraid to initiate discussions repeatedly, either. Patience and persistence will serve you and your child well.
Raising a child is one of the most gratifying jobs you'll ever have and one of the toughest. Try as you might to be the best parent you can, our complex world challenges you every day with disturbing issues that are difficult for children to understand and for parents to explain. But explain we must, or we miss a critical opportunity. Research shows that children, especially those between the ages of 8 and 12, want their parents to talk with them about today's toughest issues, including violence. Even when they reach adolescence, they want to have a caring adult in their lives to talk about these issues. In fact, those who have early conversations are more likely to continue turning to their parents as they become teens.

Violence in today's world in the media, in our neighborhoods and even in our schools can make our children feel frightened, unsafe and insecure. Kids are hearing about and often must cope with tough issues such as violence at increasingly earlier ages, often before they are ready to understand all the aspects of complicated situations. Yet, there is hope. Parents and other caring adults have a unique opportunity to talk with their children about these issues first, before everyone else does.

Even in such complex times, parents have the ability to raise healthy, confident, secure children who know how to resolve conflicts peacefully and make smart decisions to protect themselves. Parents should talk with their children to help them learn correct information and to impart the values they want to instill. Parents should also be a consistent, reliable, knowledgeable source of information. Here are some tips on getting started.

- **Develop open communication**
  It is important that you talk with your kids openly and honestly. Use encouragement, support and positive reinforcement so your kids know that they can ask any question on any topic freely and without fear of consequence. Provide straightforward answers; otherwise, your child may make up her own explanations that can be more frightening than any honest response you could offer. If you don't know the answer, admit it then find the correct information and explore it together. Use everyday opportunities to talk as occasions for discussion. Some of the best talks you'll have with your child will take place when you least expect them. And remember that it often takes more than a single talk for children to grasp all they need to know. So talk, talk and talk again.

- **Encourage them to talk it out.**
  Children feel better when they talk about their feelings. It lifts the burden of
Children feel better when they talk about their feelings. It lifts the burden of having to face their fears alone and offers an emotional release. If you sense that a violent event (whether real or fictional) has upset your youngster, you might say something like, “That TV program we saw seemed pretty scary to me. What did you think about it?” and see where the conversation leads. If your child appears constantly depressed, angry or feels persecuted, it is especially important to reassure him that you love him and encourage him to talk about his concerns. And if he has been violent or a victim of violence, it is critical to give him a safe place to express his feelings.

- Monitor the Media
Over the years, many experts have concluded that viewing a lot of violence in the media can be risky for children. Studies have shown that watching too much violence—whether on TV, in the movies, or in video games—can increase the chance that children will be desensitized to violence, or even act more aggressively themselves. Pay special attention to the kinds of media your children play with or watch. Parental advisories for music, movies, TV, video and computer games can help you choose age-appropriate media for your children. Try watching TV or playing video games with your children and talk with them about the things you see together. Encourage your children to think about what they are watching, listening to or playing—how would they handle situations differently? Let them know why violent movies or games disturb you. For example, you might tell your nine-year-old, “Violence just isn’t funny to me. In real life people who get shot have families and children, and it’s sad when something bad happens to them.” Watching the news and other media with your child enables you to discuss current events like war and other conflicts, and can provide an opportunity to reinforce the consequences of violence.

- Parents and other caring adults can help tone down the effects of these violent messages. Here’s how:
  - Actively supervise your child’s exposure to all forms of media violence.
  - Limit TV viewing to those programs you feel are appropriate.
  - Be selective about which movies your child sees and which video and computer game he plays.
  - Establish rules about the Internet by going online together to choose sites that are appropriate and fun for your child.
  - Consider using monitoring tools for TV and the Internet, like the v-chip, a new technology that allows parents to block TV programs they consider inappropriate.
  - Take advantage of the ratings system that provides parents with information about the content of a TV program or movie.

- Acknowledge your children’s fears and reassure them of their safety
Children who experience or witness violence, as well as those who have only seen violent acts on TV or in the movies, often become anxious and fearful. That’s why it’s important to reassure a child that their personal world can remain safe. Try saying something like this to your 7 or 8-year-old: “I know that you are afraid. I will do my very best to make sure you are safe.” The recent school tragedies in Colorado and in Georgia have shown that violence can not only frighten children but can make them feel guilty for not preventing it. By providing consistent support and an accepting environment, you can help reduce children’s anxieties and fears.

- Take a stand
Parents need to be clear and consistent about the values they want to instill. Don’t cave in to your children’s assertion that “everybody else does it (or
has seen it")' when it comes to allowing them to play what you view as an excessively violent game or to watch an inappropriate movie. You have a right and responsibility to say, "I don’t like the message that game sends. Know that you play that game at your friend’s house, but I don’t want it played in our house."

- **Control your own behavior**
  When it comes to learning how to behave, children often follow their parents' lead, which is why it is important to examine how you approach conflict. Do you use violence to settle arguments? When you’re angry, do you yell or use physical force? If you want your child to avoid violence, model the right behavior for her.

- **Set limits regarding children’s actions towards others**
  Let your child know that teasing can become bullying and roughhousing can get out of control. If you see your child strike another, impose a "time out" in order for him to calm down, then ask him to explain why he hit the child. Tell him firmly that hitting is not allowed and help him figure out a peaceful way to settle the problem.

- **Hold family meetings**
  Regularly scheduled family meetings can provide children-and us- with an acceptable place to talk about complaints and share opinions. Just be sure that everyone gets a chance to speak. Use these meetings to demonstrate effective problem-solving and negotiation skills. Keep the meetings lively, but well controlled, so children learn that conflicts can be settled creatively and without violence.

- **Convey strict rules about weapons**
  Teach your child that real guns and knives are very dangerous and that they can hurt and kill people. You might say, "I know in the cartoons you watch and the video and computer games you play, the characters are always shooting each other. They never get hurt; they just pop up again later like nothing ever happened. But in real life, someone who gets shot will be seriously hurt; sometimes they even die."

- **Talk about gangs and cliques**
  Gangs and cliques are often a result of young people looking for support and belonging. However, they can become dangerous when acceptance depends upon negative or antisocial behavior. If you believe your child might be exposed or attracted to a gang, talk about it together. Look for an opportunity-say you see an ad for a movie that makes gang life seem glamorous-and say, "You know, sometimes it seems like joining a gang might be cool. But it’s not. Kids in gangs get hurt. Some even get killed because they try to solve their problems through violence. Really smart kids choose friends who are fun to be with and won’t put them in any danger." Many communities have programs that help prevent gang violence.

- **Talk with other parents**
  Help give your kids a consistent anti-violence message by speaking with the parents of your kids’ friends about what your children can and cannot view or play in your homes. Ask other parents if there’s a gun in their home. If there is, talk with them to make sure they’ve taken the necessary safety measures. Having this kind of conversation may seem uncomfortable, but keep in mind that nearly 40 percent of accidental handgun shootings of children under 16 occur in the homes of friends and relatives.

- **Pay particular attention to boys**
  Most boys love action. But action need not become violence. Parents must distinguish between the two and help their boys do so as well. Allow them safe and healthy outlets for their natural energy. And recognize that talking—especially about violence—is different for boys than for girls. Boys may feel ashamed to express their real feelings about violence. Instead of sitting down for a "talk," initiate the topic while the two of you are engaged in an activity he enjoys. Provide privacy for these conversations. And be ready to listen when he's ready to talk, even if the timing isn’t ideal. (Pollack, Real Boys, 1998.)
- **Ask the schools to get involved**
  Find out about your school's violence prevention efforts. Encourage the teaching of conflict-resolution skills and "peer mediation" programs (where children counsel other children). Suggest training teachers in de-escalating and preventing violence.

- **Get additional support and information**
  We hope you have found this information helpful. If you still want more information, contact any of these organizations listed or go to the library or bookstore and check out these books for parents. There are lots of people you can talk with like doctors, teachers, members of the clergy or other parents.

A bully usually feels badly about himself and that's why he picks on people. I know you want to stand up to him, but try hard not to get mad or let him provoke you. If you feel like you can handle it, try to stand tall and say, "I'm not going to fight with you." But remember, you don't have to handle it on your own. I'm there for you and if you need me to talk with your teacher or principal, I will.

If you ever see a gun anywhere, never touch it. It is important that you tell an adult-like your teacher or us, right away. That way, you'll stay safe and help make sure no one else gets hurt.

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Talking With Kids About Tough Issues is a national campaign by

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How Should We Teach Our Children About SEX?

Bombarded by mixed messages about values, students are more sexually active than ever, and more confused

Nancy Gibbs

SOME INGREDIENTS IN THE STEAMING HORMONAL STEW THAT IS American adolescence:

For Prom Night last week, senior class officers at Benicia High School in California assembled some party favors—a gift-wrapped condom, a Planned Parenthood pamphlet advocating abstinence and a piece of candy. "We know Prom Night is a big night for a lot of people, sexually," senior Lisa Puryear told the San Jose Mercury News. "We were trying to spread a little responsible behavior." But administrators confiscated the 375 condoms, arguing that the school-sponsored event is no place for sex education.

Fifty students in Nashville, Tennessee, stand in front of a gathering of Baptist ministers to make a pledge: "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, those I date, my future mate and my future children to be sexually pure until the day I enter a covenant marriage relationship."

"Tonya, 17, began having sex when she was 12, but rarely uses a condom. "I know a lot of people who have died of AIDS," she says, "but I'm not that worried." Every six months she gets an AIDS test. "The only time I'm worried is right before I get the results back."

Last Wednesday the student leaders at Bremerton High in Seattle voted that no openly gay student could serve in their school government. The goal, they stated, was "to preserve the integrity and high moral standards that BHS is built upon."

Teenagers in York County, Pennsylvania, celebrate the Great Sex-Out, a sex-free day to reflect on abstinence. Among activities suggested as alternatives to sex are baking cookies and taking moonlit walks. Since the event was held on a Monday, it wasn't much of a problem. But Friday, said one student, "that would be harder."

Owen, 19, of Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, carries a key chain bearing the inscription, A TISKET, A TASKET, A CONDOM OR A CASKET.

Just Do It. Just Say No. Just Wear a Condom. When it comes to sex, the message to America's kids is confused and conflicting. The moral standards society once generally accepted, or at least paid lip service to, fell victim to a sexual revolution and a medical tragedy. A decade marked by fear of AIDS and a public over society's values made it hard to agree on the ethical issues and emotional context that used to be part of learning about sex.

Those on the right reacted to condom giveaways and gay curriculums and throbbing MTV videos as signs of moral breakdown. Those on the left dismissed such concerns as the rantings of religious zealots and shunned almost any discussion of sexual restraint as being reactionary or, worse yet, unsophisticated. "Family values" became a polarizing phrase.

Now, however, the children of the sexual revolution are beginning to grapple with how to teach their own children about sex. Faced with evidence that their kids are suffering while they bicker, parents and educators are seeking some common ground about what works and what doesn't. It is becoming possible to discuss the need for responsibility and commitment without being cast as a religious fanatic and to accept the need for safe-sex instruction without being considered an amoral pragmatist.

In one sense, the arrival of AIDS in the American psyche a decade ago ended the debate over sex education. Health experts were clear about the crisis: By the time they are 20, three-quarters of young Americans have had sex; one-fourth of teens contract some venereal disease each year. About 20% of all AIDS patients are under 30, but because the incubation period is eight years or more, the CDC believes a large proportion were infected with HIV as teenagers.

In such a climate of fear, moral debate seemed like a luxury. Get them the information, give them protection, we can talk about morality later. There is a fishbowl full of condoms in the nurse's office, help yourself. While only three states mandated sex ed in 1980, today 47 states formally require or recommend it; all 50 support AIDS education.

But as parents and educators watch the fallout from nearly a decade of lessons geared to disaster prevention—here is a diagram of female anatomy, this is how you put on a condom—
there are signs that this bloodless approach to learning about sex doesn't work. Kids are continuing to try sex at an ever more tender age: more than a third of 15-year-old boys have had sexual intercourse, as have 27% of 15-year-old girls—up from 19% in 1982. Among sexually active teenage girls, 61% have had multiple partners, up from 38% in 1971. Among boys, incidents like the score-keeping Spur Posse gang in California and the sexual-assault convictions of the Glen Ridge, New Jersey, jock stars suggest that whatever is being taught, responsible sexuality isn't being learned.

Beyond what studies and headlines can convey, it is the kids who best express their confusion and distress. Audrey Lee, 15, has taken a sex-education class at San Leandro High School in California, but, she asserts, "there's no real discussion about emotional issues and people's opinions." The program consists mostly of films and slides with information on sex and birth control. It lacks any give-and-take on issues like date rape and how to say no to sexual pressure. "The school doesn't emphasize anything," she says. "If you have a question, you go to your friends, but they don't have the answers." As for her family, "sex is not mentioned."

Adults have one foot in the Victorian era while kids are in the middle of a world-wide pandemic," complains pediatrician Karen Hein, of Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City, who has seen too many teens infected with HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases come through her hospital. She laments the fact that sex ed is only "about vaginas, ovaries and abstinence—not about intimacy and expressing feelings."

"Kids, she says, "don't know what they're supposed to be doing. Adults are really not helping them much."

—America has long wrestled with the tension between its Puritan and pioneer heritages, and its attitude toward sex has seemed muddled. Victorian parents, fearful of their children's sexuality, would try to delay the onset of puberty byunderfeeding their children. By 1910 exploding rates of syphilis drove the crusade for sex education in much the way AIDS does today. In 1940 the U.S. Public Health Service argued the urgent need for schools to get involved, and within a few years the first standardized programs rolled into classrooms. But by the 1960s came the backlash from the John Birch Society, Mothers Organized for Moral Stability and other groups. By the early '70s they had persuaded at least 20 state legislatures to either restrict or abolish sex education.

"There's something wrong," sex educator Sol Gordon once said, "with a country that says, 'Sex is dirty, save it for someone you love.' " But families at least agreed on a social standard that preached, if not practiced, the virtues of restraint and of linking sex to emotional commitment and marriage. "It used to be easy to say it's just wrong to have sex before marriage. You could expect churches to say that, adults from many walks of life to somehow communicate that," notes Peter Benson, president of Minneapolis-based Search Institute, a research organization peacilizing in child and adolescent issues. "We went through a sexual revolution since the '60s that poked a major hole in that."

Nothing has come along to replace it. What's responsible duty now? Does it mean no sex unless you're in love? No sex unless you're 21? No sex unless it's protected?
Have you ever had sexual intercourse?

| Age 13-15 | 19% |
| Age 16-17 | 55% |

How old were you when you first had sex?*

| Under 14 | 23% |
| 14       | 24% |
| 16       | 20% |
| 17       | 6%  |

How many different people have you had sex with?*

| 1        | 42% |
| 2 to 3   | 29% |
| 4        | 6%  |
| 5 or more| 15% |

Where have you learned the most about sex?

13-15 AGE 16-17

| Parents | 30% |
| Friends | 26% |
| School  | 37% |
| Entertainments | 15% |

*Asked only of those 131 teens who said they had had sexual intercourse. Sampling error ± 8%.

What are the reasons kids you know have sex?**

**Girls**

They were curious and wanted to experiment 80%

They wanted to be more popular or impress their friends 76%

They were in love 58%

**Boys**

They were under pressure from those they were dating 65%

They were under pressure from those they were dating 50%

They were in love 50%

**Asked only of those 373 teens who know another teen who had sexual intercourse. Sampling error ± 5%.

World in which everything is sensual and physical," says Dr. Richard Ratner, who this week takes office as president of the American Society for Adolescent Psychiatry. "Even in this era of feminism, rap songs preach, 'Take this bitch and —— her.' Everything is more explicit. It's the difference between wearing a bathing suit and walking around nude."

The content of popular culture has been a favorite target among politicians caught up in the culture wars, but kids themselves have their own criticisms of what they see. Many recoil at the sexual pressures they feel from Calvin Klein ads, MTV, heavy-breathing movies, all the icky, staged or oddball sex they see in books by Madonna and rock videos. "If you turn on TV, there's a woman taking off her clothes," says Marcela Avila, a senior at Santa Monica High, who was among a group of students who sat down with Time's Jim Willwerth to discuss the sexual landscape they face. "It makes you doubt yourself. Am I O.K.? You put yourself down—I'll never be able to satisfy a guy." Her classmate Elizabeth Young agrees. "The media doesn't make it seem like it's really about love," she says. "Nowadays sexuality is the way you look, the way you wear your hair. It's all physical, not what's inside you."

Many kids, who can be lethal critics of the sexual mores of their parents' generation, say they are offended that adults have so little faith in them. "Not all teenagers have sex. They're not all going to do it just because everyone else is," says Kristen Thomas, 17, of Plymouth, Minnesota. "They kind of have a lack of faith in us—parents and general society."

Traditionally, it's been the role of parents to convey the messages about love and intimacy that kids seem to be missing in their education about sex. Although today's parents are the veterans of the decade that came after free love and before safe sex, that doesn't automatically make them any more able to talk about sex with their children; if anything, the reverse may be true. Hypocrisy is a burden they carry. "Do as I say," they instruct their teenagers, "not as I did."

As for those who sat out the sexual revolution, they may be too embarrassed or intimidated to talk to teens—or afraid of giving the wrong information. Phyllis Shea, director of teen programs for the Worcester, Massachusetts, affiliate of Girls Inc. (formerly Girls Clubs of America), recently ran a sex-education workshop for 12 girls and their mothers. In many cases, she says, mothers lag far behind their daughters in knowledge. Five of the mothers had never seen a condom. A mother who had been completely unwilling to discuss sex with her daughter told the group that she had been molested as a child. On the way home, she and her daughter drove around for two hours, deep in conversation.

Of all the mixed-messages that teenagers absorb, the most confused have to do with gender roles. The stereotypes of male and female behavior have crumbled so quickly over the past generation that parents are at a loss. According to the Time/CNN poll, 60% of parents tell their daughters to remain chaste until marriage, but less than half tell their sons the same thing. Kids reflect the double standard: more than two-thirds agree that a boy who has sex sees his reputation enhanced, while a girl who has sex suffers.
48. Teach Our Children about Sex

That is not stopping girls from acting as sexual aggressors. However, teenagers in Time's survey say girls are just as interested in sex as boys are—an opinion confirmed by recent research. "My friends and I are a lot less inhibited about saying what we want to do," says Rebecca Tuyman of Santa Monica High. "A lot of the change is admitting that we like it." Tuyman says that while she was taught that boys don't like girls who come on too strong, her brother set her straight. "He said he'd like it if girls came after him. I'll always be grateful to him for saying that." Her classmate Tammy Weisberger notes that like so many boy jocks, girls on her soccer team brag about whom they've slept with—but with a difference. "The guys say how many girls they did it with. With the girls, it's who they did it with."

For all the aggressive girl talk, some experts are worried that what the sexual revolution has really done for teenage girls is push them into doing things they may not really want to do. "The irony is that the sexual revolution pressured girls into accepting sex on boys' terms," argues Myriam Miedzian, author of Boys Will Be Boys: Breaking the Link Between Masculinity and Violence. "If they don't engage in sex, they're not cool. At least under the old morality, girls had some protection. They could say their parents would kill them if they had sex."

As for boys, researchers are finding that among parents, the fear that their son will grow up to be aggressively promiscuous is nothing compared with the fear he will turn out to be gay. Manhattan social worker Joy Fallek has seen boys who fear that "they might be gay if they haven't had sex with a girl by age 16."

...has told Miedzian that they will not let their boys watch TV's Mr. Rogers because of his gentle demeanor. "This is a major barrier to parents' raising their sons to be caring and sensitive people," she contends. "Other parents have told me that they're afraid not to have their sons play with guns because they'll grow up gay. And yet there's not the slightest shred of evidence for this."

Schools are attempting to fill in where parents have failed. But it has been hard for educators over these past few years to know what to teach when society itself cannot agree on a direction. Absent any agreement over what is "proper" sexual conduct, teachers can be left reciting, word for word, the approved text on homosexuality or abortion or masturbation. The typical sex-ed curriculum is remarkably minimalist. Most secondary schools offer somewhere between 6 and 20 hours of sex education a year. The standard curriculum now consists of one or two days in fifth grade dealing with puberty; two weeks in an eighth-grade health class dealing with anatomy, reproduction and AIDS prevention, and perhaps a 12th-grade elective course on current issues in sexuality.

Joycelyn Elders, President Clinton's nominee for Surgeon General, is leading the fight for a more comprehensive approach from kindergarten through 12th grade. As head of the Arkansas health department, she was one of the country's most outspoken advocates of wide-ranging sex education. "We've spent all our time fighting each other about whose values we should be teaching our kids," she complains. "We've [been] allowed the right to make decisions about our children for the last 100 years, and all it has bought us is the highest abortion rate, the highest nonmarital birth rate and the highest pregnancy rate in the industrialized world." But Elders is no advocate of values-free instruction. "Proper sex education would be teaching kids to develop relationships and about the consequences of their behavior. Kids can't say no if they don't first learn how to feel good about themselves."

But the issue of teaching kids about sex remains politically explosive. This week the results are expected to be announced in an unusually bitter election for New York City community school boards in which the religious right joined with the Catholic Church to try to elect more tradition-minded representatives. Earlier this year, the system's highly regarded Chancellor Joseph Fernandez was ousted largely because of his effort to expand condom distribution and teach children about gay lifestyles. The New York City Board of Education last week chose as its new president a conservative Queens mother who had cast the deciding vote against the chancellor.

If there is one point of agreement among all parties in the debate, it is that sex education has to be about more than sex. The anatomy lesson must come in a larger context of building relationships based on dignity and respect. The message these programs have in common: learn everything you want and need to know, and then carefully consider waiting.

Some of the most innovative and successful efforts have been launched by private religious and social-service organizations. Girls Inc., with 165 chapters nationwide, launched Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy (PAP) in 1985 to help low-income teens avoid cycles of early pregnancy, poverty and hopelessness. The first section, called Growing Together, invites girls ages 12 to 14 to talk about issues of sexuality with their mothers. The second section, Will Power/Won't Power, is designed to help girls develop strategies for postponing sexual activity and preventing pregnancy. "It's our experience that kids this age really know it's too early to be having sex," says Heather Johnston Nicholson, director of the National Resource Center for Girls Inc., in Indianapolis. "But when you're that age, you don't want to be considered a complete dweeb. We're establishing a peer group that says it's O.K. not to be sexually active."

In the third segment, Taking Care of Business, 15- to 17-year-olds are encouraged to focus on their goals. The final step, Health Bridge, helps older teens establish ties with a community clinic to ensure that they will have continued access to affordable reproductive health care. "It gives kids an opportunity to think through the reasons for not becoming sexually active," says Nicholson. But she cautions that "this is not a Just Say No program. When kids ask questions, they get straight answers. While we're focusing on postponement, we're not doing it in a context of fear and scare tactics."

That approach distinguishes PAP from the more hard-line abstinence programs that are gaining ground across the country (see box). While both types of programs are designed to help teens make healthy decisions, there remains a fault line over whether to include detailed information on contraception or to focus on abstinence in a way that assumes that no lessons on applying condoms will be necessary.
Acquaintance Rape
Prevention Tips for Women
Prevention Tips for Men
Date Rape Drugs

Rape Among Friends
(Acquaintance Rape)

Our Reactions as a Victim
Supportive Services
Counseling

Acquaintance Rape

Over 80% of rape victims know their attackers. As children you were warned not to talk to strangers. The fact is you are more likely to be assaulted by someone you know: a friend, date, ex-boyfriend, classmate, neighbor, relative or employer.

Acquaintance rape and date rape are more common than left-handedness or heart attacks or alcoholism. (Warshaw, 1988)

Acquaintance rape is using physical force, emotional bargaining, blackmail or mind games to force sexual intercourse, fondling, kissing, holding ... any sexual contact forced on you by a stranger or someone you know. If it is against your will, it is against the law.

One of the most common types of acquaintance rape is date rape. If you are a female between the ages of 16-24, you run the greatest risk of being raped by a date. The use of alcohol or drugs also increases your risk. In one study, 74% of the men and 55% of the women had been drinking or using drugs prior to the sexual assault.

Date rapes often occur as a result of misunderstood sex role behaviors and/or communication styles. Males who regard sex as "scoring" and are sexually aggressive often believe "no" can be changed to "yes" with a little more persuasion or force. Females frequently say "no" too softly or indirectly because they don't want to hurt feelings or jeopardize a relationship.

Realistically, those closest to you can easily take advantage of and assault you.

Prevention Tips for Women

- Say no as if you mean no: if you don't mean no then don't say it.

- Be clear, honest and consistent in your verbal communications about sexual desires.

Trust your instincts. If you have any hesitations about a man, think carefully about dating him. Pay attention to situations that make you uncomfortable and think of ways to decrease potential problems.

- Be aware that nonverbal behaviors or actions may be interpreted differently than you intended. That DOES NOT mean it is your fault if you are assaulted.

- Avoid excessive use of alcohol and/or other drugs.
Prevention Tips for Men

- Understand that forced sex is NEVER acceptable. It is against the law.
- Accept "no" as "no." Don't read other meanings into that word.
- Know the difference between desire and action. Being sexually aroused does not give you permission to force sex on another.
- Be responsible for your own sexual limits and actions: they are your responsibility.
- Realize that dating for a long time, spending money or previous sexual intercourse does not obligate a woman to have sex.
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol and/or other drugs.
- Don't make assumptions. Just because your date welcomes some sexual contact doesn't mean she wants other types of sexual contact.

Protect yourself from date rape drugs

- Never leave a drink unattended. NEVER.
- Do not accept a drink from anyone you would not "put your life into their hands." Remember, any stranger or casual acquaintance could be suspect. Even those people who are mixing or pouring drinks.
- If you are feeling sick or dizzy while out socially, go to someone you KNOW and TRUST. If there is no person you can talk to about your condition, call someone on the phone. Never leave alone. NEVER. (The intent of date rape drugs is to get you isolated and then to assault you.)
- If you think you have been drugged and cannot tell or call someone, call 911. A blood sample can be collected and appropriate tests run.
- Remember, alcohol greatly increases the effects of these drugs. The mixture could be lethal.

Why Rohypnol, GHB and Ketamine are used in Date Rapes:

- They are easy to administer. (Stir and dissolve)
- When victims to feel the effects, they often leave and are caught alone and vulnerable.
- If victims "come to" during an assault, the drugs render them totally helpless and unable to do anything.
- When victims are raped, they doubt their experience because of the impaired memory of it.

Our Reactions as a Victim

Victims of sexual violence experience many different feelings, such as:

- confusion
- denial
- shock
- fear
- self-blame
- embarrassment
- helplessness

Victims of date or acquaintance rape often have:
- fear of guilt and responsibility
- concerns about their ability to make good judgments about people
- difficulty accepting what happened as rape

All these feelings and reactions are normal. You need not hide your feelings or pretend they are not there. Working through them is the first step toward coping with the crisis.

No one asks or deserves to be raped! There is help...someone you can talk with, who will listen, who understands.

Supportive Services

The WCSC Advocate or office Counselor can provide information and support to victims pursuing police or medical follow-up, assailant identification, prosecution, (that is accompany her to police station, courtroom, etc.), as well as assist victims with concrete needs like shelter, financial assistance, medical care and clothing. Call the Women’s Coalition at 773-9272 for assistance.

Counseling

The assault and its aftermath can be disruptive to the victim's lifestyle in many ways. A crisis period may extend for several months or may recur years later. Sexual assault victims often find it helpful to talk over their concerns with a counselor during these times. Counseling is available through Mental Health at the victim’s and/or family’s request. Call 773-1311.

The Women’s Coalition would like to be of assistance to you in any way. Please do not hesitate to contact the Women’s Coalition Office at 773-9272 or 773-WCSC or your advocate.

[Back to Rape Topic Index]
What Is Dating Violence?

Dating violence is the physical, emotional and/or verbal abuse of one partner by the other partner in a current or former dating relationship. Abusive behavior is any act carried out by one partner aimed at hurting or controlling the other. Dating violence happens in male/female relationships as well as in lesbian and gay relationships.

A violent relationship means more than being hit by the person who claims to love or care about you. Violence is about power and control. When someone uses abuse and violence against you, it is always part of a larger pattern to try and control you.

Even though most people think that violence in relationships happens only between married persons, the same kind of violence also happens between people who are dating regardless of their sexual orientation. Even if you are not being hurt physically, verbal and emotional abuse are just as painful and often lead to physical violence.

Types of Dating Violence

Emotional Abuse - harms the person’s self esteem or causes shame.

Examples:

- repeated lies, broken promises, withholding affection
- jealousy so extreme that it keeps a partner away from friends or interests
- insults and put-downs
- threats against a person's safety
- controlling a person’s every move, including how to dress, what to eat, where to go

Physical Abuse - causes physical pain or injury.

Examples:

- punching, kicking, or slapping
- shaking, pushing or grabbing hard enough to cause discomfort
- attacking with a knife, gun or other weapon
- any physical act that is unwanted or hurtful - even tickling or hugging if it is unwanted

Sexual Abuse - is any kind of unwanted sexual advance or contact. It can include everything from unwelcome sexual comments to kissing to intercourse. Forced sexual intercourse between two people who know each other is called "date rape"
Effects of Dating Violence

Dating violence can range from broken bones and bruised self-esteem to permanent injury and even death. Victims may also come to view abuse as a normal part of their relationships. Dating violence can prevent a young person from growing and learning from healthy relationships.

Some of the effects are:
- loss of appetite
- shame
- mistrust of self and others
- depression
- fear
- terror
- self-blame
- sadness
- confusion
- anxiety
- guilt
- suicide
- death

Build Healthy Relationships

- communicate clearly
- avoid dangerous situations
- be in control
- be selective
- trust your instincts

In An Unhealthy Relationship?

If you're involved in an unhealthy relationship
- believe in yourself
- get help
- get out

*Dating someone is never worth being hurt or feeling afraid*

Breaking Up is Hard to Do

No matter what type of relationship you are in, breaking up can be a difficult task. We are often being tugged in different directions by our emotions. Here's some of the reasons why its hard to break-up:

Love - Abusers are not always hurtful. Many abusers have a likable and loving side that makes their victims with only that the abuse would stop. Many victims think they can change the abuser's behavior.

Fear - Many times a date/partner will threaten to hurt him or herself if the other decides to leave. Many times the abuser will threaten to hurt the victim if s/he decides to leave. Abusers often threaten that the violence will get worse if the partner decides to leave.

Doubt - It is not always easy to admit that the relationship you are in is abusive. If your date is peculiar at school (athletics, academics, etc.) you may be concerned about losing social status with your peers.

Emarrassment - Teens who ask for help (especially from parents) may perceive themselves to be failures. Some teenagers believe that their parents will react violently if they are aware of the abuse.
Know a Victim of Dating Violence?

If you know a victim of dating violence:
- believe the person
- support the person
- suggest options

Need Someone to Talk to?

| Women's Coalition of St. Croix               | 773-9272 |
| Crisis Help Line                             | 1-800-233-4357 |
| National Youth Crisis Line                   | 1-800-448-4663 |
| Child Help USA, National Hotline             | 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800 422-4453) |
| Covenant House                               | 1-800-999-9999 |

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Last Update June 07, 1999
web development and maintenance donated by St. Croix Web Design
This publication was supported in part by a grant from the 93.991 Preventive Health Services Block Grant, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Public Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services.

The purpose of this booklet is to help young adults understand the

1. dynamics of healthy relationships;
2. signs of controlling relationships;
3. strategies for dealing with dating violence;
4. resources available to end the cycle of violence;

Healthy Relationships

Learn about yourself - Take time to think about who you are, who you want to be and how you want others to see you. Learn about building trust, respect and affection for yourself and others.

Learn about others - Find out with what kind of person you want to spend time. What are the qualities you like in a person? What is most important to you in a relationship?

Include family and friends - Good and vibrant relationships welcome interactions with family members and with friends of both parties. Good relationships are inclusive not isolating of others.

Support each other - In a healthy relationship, you and your partner feel good about yourselves and the relationship. You can talk with each other about problems; you have fun together; you trust each other. In good relationships, neither partner is afraid of the other. You want what is best for yourself and the other person.

Make your feelings clear - It may seem easier at times to go along with what your date wants even if you don't feel the same way, but you can't have a healthy relationship with a partner who doesn't respect or know what you really think.

Foster respect Respecting thoughts and ideas, needs and wants of both people makes relationships safe and fun. In healthy dating, both people make decisions about the relationship together.

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SECTION: SCIENCE & SOCIETY; Vol. 119, No. 7; Pg. 51

LENGTH: 1251 words

HEADLINE: Sins of the fathers

BYLINE: By Joseph P. Shapiro; Andrea R. Wright

HIGHLIGHT: It is adult males who are fathering the babies born to teenagers

BODY:
The problem with teen sex is not simply that teens are having sex. Adults, in disturbing numbers, are having sex with teens. It is not just Joey Buttafuoco and Amy Fisher, Woody Allen and Soon-Yi Previn or the fact that O.J. Simpson was 30 when he began dating an 18-year-old waitress named Nicole Brown. Federal and state surveys suggest that adult males are the fathers of some two thirds of the babies born to teenage girls. According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute, 39 percent of 15-year-old mothers say the fathers of their babies are 20 years old or older. For 17-year-old teenage moms, 55 percent of the fathers are adults; for 19-year-olds, it is 78 percent.

Little inspires more national hand-wringing these days than the reality of teenage pregnancy. Americans blame impulsive kids and their raging hormones, ignoring the role of adult males. But in fact, teenage girls having sex with men is hardly a new phenomenon. In 1920, for example, 93 percent of babies born to teenagers were fathered by adults. What has changed is that more often than not, pregnant teens no longer marry the father. Today, 65 percent of teenage moms are unmarried, up from 48 percent in 1980. These teens and their children are at high risk of poverty, school failure and welfare dependency.

Welfare reform, sex education and teen pregnancy prevention programs are doomed to failure when they ignore the prevalence of adult-teen sex. The welfare reform bill passed by the House of Representatives would deny benefits to unmarried mothers under the age of 18, a provision that has become one of the most contentious points of the current debate in the Senate. But most studies suggest that curbing benefits alone will not stem the tide of teen pregnancies.
What drives teenage girls to become sexually involved with adult males is complex, and often does not follow the logic of Washington policy makers. In the minds of many teens, choosing an older boyfriend makes sense. Francisca Cativo was a 16-year-old high school junior when her daughter, Vanessa, was born last September. Her boyfriend, Jose Confesor, is 24. To Cativo, who says she chose to get pregnant, Confesor's age was a plus; it meant he was more mature and more likely to support her child. "The boys around my age just want to be out in the streets playing around," she says. Still, on Confesor's salary as a part-time janitor, the couple is forced to live with his mother in a crowded apartment.

Unwanted sex. Older men seek out young girls for equally complex reasons -- from believing there is less risk of disease to more chance of control. They often hold exaggerated power over their young companions. When teens get pregnant, foreexample, they are half as likely to have an abortion when their partners are 20 or older.

More disturbing, a sizable amount of teen sex is not consensual. Girls under the age of 18 are the victims of about half of the nation's rapes each year, according to Justice Department data. When researchers Debra Boyer and David Fine surveyed poor and pregnant teens at Washington State's public health clinics, they were startled to find that two thirds of these girls reported prior sexual abuse, almost always by parents, guardians or relatives. Even more shocking: On average, the girls were less than 10 years old at the time of the first abuse while the offending male was 27.

Other adult-teen relationships simply blur the lines between unwanted and consensual sex. Eilene Stanley, who runs a Big Sisters teen-parent program in Tacoma, Wash., says girls -- particularly those from broken families or who have been abused -- are easy prey for men who show the smallest kindness, even something as simple as giving flowers.

"The justice system does not take care of these girls," complains Hazel Woods-Welborne, who runs a San Diego school program for teenage mothers. Police refused her request to invoke statutory-rape laws and prosecute a 51-year-old man who had a child by a supposedly willing 13-year-old. Woods-Welborne is also disturbed by the recent increase in relationships between very young teens and older men: "I'm talking about 12-, 13-, 14-year-old girls. Most times, they cannot even spell intercourse."

The role played by older men raises doubts about pregnancy-prevention programs aimed at teens. "It's hard to teach teens about sex if one of the sexual partners is not sitting in the classroom," notes Kristin Moore of the research group Child Trends. She points to the adult-teen -- sex numbers as one reason why high school sex education classes have failed to curb teen pregnancy rates, which after several years of leveling off have been climbing since 1987, fueled primarily by increases among white teens. One answer, Moore says, is to extend sex education to where the boys are -- to such places as vocational schools and themilitary.

Similarly, welfare reform can work only if it targets both teenage moms and their adult partners. Some legislative plans, including ones put forward by Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole and President Clinton, would give cash payments to pregnant girls only if they lived with a parent or another responsible adult. But to Tina in Tacoma, getting pregnant was a conscious decision that had nothing to do with the size of her welfare check. Tina left home at 15 when her parents objected to her 21-year-old boyfriend, Rocky. She says her parents would have insisted that she give up her son, Kevin, for adoption and end her relationship with Rocky. Three years later, Rocky and Tina plan to marry soon. Her child, she says, gives her the type of bond "I never had with my mom or with my dad."

Welfare reformers have recognized that adult fathers are more likely to hold jobs and be able to pay child support. Most welfare proposals would require hospitals to establish paternity at birth and then create a national database of fathers' names, so that men who refused to support a child would have their wages withheld or lose their driver's licenses. Yet there are limits to how much money can be collected: One Baltimore study found that 32 percent of the adult male partners of teenage girls were neither working nor in school at the time of a child's birth.
Still, teenage girls have become convenient scapegoats for what are really adult problems, argues Mike Males, a graduate student at the University of California at Irvine who has written extensively on adult-teen sex. Indeed, teenage pregnancy patterns are not that different from those adults: Rates of pregnancy among teens correlate more closely to class and ethnic background than they do to age demographics. Motherhood outside of marriage is on the rise for women of all ages. According to Child Trends, in 1991, for the first time, women over 20 accounted for more of the first births to unmarried women than did teenage girls. While single motherhood is becoming more acceptable for adult women, it remains a stigma for the unmarried teenage mother. As yet, there is little censure for the adult partners of these teenage girls.

A crisis in the making
Adult men getting teenage girls pregnant is a growing problem.

Births to mothers ages 15-17, by age of the father
younger than 18: 20 percent
18-19: 30 percent
20 and older: 51 percent

Note: Figures do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

USN&WR -- Basic data: Alan Guttmacher Institute

GRAPHIC: Picture, The teenage mother. Francisca Cativo was 16 years old when she chose to have daughter Vanessa with her 23-year-old boyfriend. (Jim Lo Scalzo -- USN&WR); Chart, A crisis in the making (Alan Guttmacher Institute; Rod Little -- USN&WR); Picture, The adult counselor. Eileen Stanley says teenage girls from broken homes make easy prey for men. (Rich Frishman for USN&WR)

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: August 11, 1995
Normal Adolescent Development

from: American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychology

Each teenager is an individual with a unique personality and special interests, likes and dislikes. In general, however, there is a series of developmental tasks that everyone faces during the adolescent years.

A teenager's development can be divided into three stages -- early, middle, and late adolescence. The normal feelings and behaviors of adolescents for each stage are described below.

Early Adolescence (12-14 years)

Movement Towards Independence
Struggle with sense of identity

Moodiness
Improved abilities to use speech to express oneself
More likely to express feelings by action than by words
Close friendships gain importance
Less attention shown to parents, with occasional rudeness
Realization that parents are not perfect; identification of their faults
Search for new people to love in addition to parents
Tendency to return to childish behavior, fought off by excessive activity
Peer group influence interests and clothing styles

Career Interests
Mostly interested in present and near future
Greater ability to work

Sexuality
Girls ahead of boys
Same-sex friends and group activities
Shyness, blushing and modesty
Show-off qualities
Greater interest in privacy
Experimentation with body (masturbation)
Worries about being normal

**Ethics and Self-Direction**
Rule and limit testing
Occasional experimentation with cigarettes, marijuana, and alcohol
Capacity for abstract thought

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**Middle Adolescence**

**Movement Towards Independence**
Self-involvement, alternating between unrealistically high expectations and poor self-concept
Complaints that parents interfere with independence
Extremely concerned with appearance and with one's own body
Feelings of strangeness about one's self and body
Lowered opinion of parents, withdrawal of emotions from them
Effort to make new friends
Strong emphasis on the new peer group with the group identity of selectivity, superiority and competitiveness
Periods of sadness as the psychological loss of the parents takes place
Examination of inner experiences, which may include writing a diary

**Career Interests**
Intellectual interests gain importance
Some sexual and aggressive energies directed into creative and career interests

**Sexuality**
Concerns about sexual attractiveness
Frequently changing relationships
Movement towards heterosexuality with fears of homosexuality
Tenderness and fears shown towards opposite sex
Feelings of love and passion

http://education.indiana.edu/cas/adol/development.html
Ethics and Self-Description
  Development of ideals and selection of role models
  More consistent evidence of conscience
  Greater capacity for setting goals
  Interest in moral reasoning

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Late Adolescence (17-19 years)

Movement Towards Independence
  Firmer identity
  Ability to delay gratification
  Ability to think ideas through
  Ability to express ideas in words
  More developed sense of humor
  Stable interests
  Greater emotional stability
  Ability to make independent decisions
  Ability to compromise
  Pride in one's work
  Self-reliance
  Greater concern for others

Career Interests
  More defined work habits
  Higher level of concern for the future
  Thoughts about one's role in life

Sexuality
  Concerned with serious relationships
  Clear sexual identity
  Capacities for tender and sensual love

Ethics and Self-Direction
  Capable of useful insight

http://education.indiana.edu/cas/adol/development.html

07/25/2000
Stress on personal dignity and self-esteem
Ability to set goals and follow through
Acceptance of social institutions and cultural traditions
Self-regulation of self esteem

Teenagers will naturally vary slightly from the descriptions in the charts above, but the feelings and behaviors listed for each area are, in general, considered normal for each of the three stages. The mental and emotional problems that can interfere with these normal developmental stages are treatable.

If a teenager seems very different from the descriptions presented here, it may be appropriate to consult with a mental health professional.
ESCAPING FROM THE DARKNESS

Drugs like Prozac, Paxil and Luvox can work wonders for clinically depressed kids. But what about the long-term consequences?

By HOWARD CHUA-EOAN

Megan Kellar is bubbly and bouncing and lip-synching to the Backstreet Boys. Get down, get down and move it all around! The sixth-grader is dancing to the synthesized bubble-gum beat at a talent show at the John Muir Elementary School in Parma, Ohio. Get down, get down and move it all around! There is nothing down about Megan, even as she gets down in front of the audience. Her mother remembers a similar effervescence half a dozen years ago. “She’d be singing to herself and making up songs all the time,” says Linda Kellar. And sure enough, that part of her is still there. “Megan’s such a happy child,” the mother of a girl on Megan’s baseball team remarked to Linda. Yes, Linda agreed, but there’s something you ought to know. Megan is clinically depressed and on the antidepressant Paxil. Says Linda: “She couldn’t believe it.”

Six years ago, Linda wouldn’t have believed that her daughter was clinically depressed either. But shortly after her parents separated, Megan stopped singing. When other kids came over to play, she would lie down in the yard and just watch. At Christmas she wouldn’t decorate the tree. Linda thought her daughter was simply melancholy over her parents’ split and took her to see a counselor. That seemed to help for a while. Then for about eight months, when Megan was 10, she cried constantly and wouldn’t go to school. She lost her appetite and got so weak that at one point she couldn’t get out of bed. When a doctor recommended Paxil in conjunction with therapy, Linda recoiled. “I did not want to put my baby on an antidepressant,” she says. Then she relented because, she says, “Megan wasn’t living her childhood.” Linda noticed changes in just two weeks. Soon Megan was singing again. “She’s not drugged or doped,” says Linda. “She still cries when she sees Old Yeller and still has moody days.” But, as Megan says, “I’m back to normal, like I used to be.”

Megan Kellar shares her kind of normality with hundreds of thousands of other American kids. Each year an estimated 500,000 to 1 million prescriptions for antidepressants are written for children and teens. On the one hand, the benefits are apparent and important. Experts estimate that as many as 1 in 20 American preteens and adolescents suffer from clinical depression. It is something they cannot outgrow. Depression cycles over and over again throughout a lifetime, peaking during episodes of emotional distress, subsiding only to well up again at the next crisis. And as research increasingly shows, depression is often a marker for other disorders, including the syndrome that used to be called manic depression and is now known as bipolar disorder. If undetected and untreated in preteens, depressive episodes can lead to severe anxiety or manic outbursts not only in adulthood but as early as adolescence.

On the other hand, come the questions. How do we tell which kids are at risk? Has science fully apprised us of the effects on kids of medication designed for an adult brain? Have we set out on a path that will produce a generation that escapes the pain only to lose the character-building properties of anguish?

TO MEDICATE OR NOT TO MEDICATE? THE DILEMMA CAN BE TRACED BACK TO 1987, WHEN THE FDA APPROVED PROZAC AS THE FIRST OF A NEW CLASS OF ANTIDEPRESSANTS KNOWN AS SELECTIVE SEROTONIN REUPTAKE INHIBITORS (SSRIS). PROZAC HAD NONE OF THE MORE SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS AND RISKS OF THE EARLIER ANTIDEPRESSANTS AND WORKED FASTER TO CONTROL DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS. PROZAC AND THE OTHER SSRIS (THEY NOW INCLUDE ZOLOFT, PAXIL, LUVOX AND CELEXA) HAD ONE OTHER ADVANTAGE OVER THE OLDER, TRICYCLIC ANTIDEPRESSANTS: CHILDREN RESPONDED TO THEM. ONE OF THE FEW RECENT STUDIES ON THE SUBJECT SHOWED THAT AMONG DEPRESSED CHILDREN AGES 8 TO 18, 56% IMPROVED WHILE ON PROZAC, IN CONTRAST TO 33% ON A PLACEBO. SAYS DR. DAVID FASSLER, CHAIR OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION’S COUNCIL ON ADOLESCENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES: “PHYSICIANS HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE USING THE MEDICATIONS WITH ADULT PATIENTS WITH GOOD RESULTS, AND RECENT RESEARCH INCREASES THEIR GENERAL LEVEL OF COMFORT IN USING THEM WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS.”

But which kids?

Not so long ago, many psychiatrists argued that children and young teens could not get depressed because they were not mature enough to internalize their anger. Today, says Fassler, “we realize that depression does occur in childhood and adolescence and that it occurs more often in children than we previously realized.”

Still, depression is slightly harder to diagnose in adolescents than in adults, and not because teens are expected to be moody and more withdrawn. They are less likely to realize that they are depressed and thus less likely to seek help. “Younger kids also have more difficulty expressing their feelings in words,” says Dr. Boris Birnhaier, a child psychiatrist at the University of Pittsburgh. “When kids become depressed, they become irritable, act out, have temper tantrums and other behavioral problems. It’s hard to ascer-
tain that these are the symptoms of depression unless you ask them questions in a language they can understand.

Furthermore, the very definition of being a child—what makes him survive and grow—is being able to move up and down emotionally, having a basic elasticity. Says Dr. Peter Jensen, child and adolescent psychiatrist at the National Institute of Mental Health: “A child is more fluid and plastic than an adult. A child may look depressed one day because his dog died but seem O.K. three days later.”

But if parents live in a world of family mood swings, that doesn’t mean they are prepared to put their own child on mind-altering drugs. That prospect can lead to major soul searching: Will they be thought less of as parents? And if they do agree to antidepressants, will the child still be the one they know?

Donna Mitchell was told her daughter, eight-year-old Sawateos, had attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, but she also showed signs of serious depression and anxiety, which are often found in combination. Mitchell’s first reaction was, “I can pray this away. I thought, Listen, nobody in my family is going on drugs. That’s an insult. I figured all we needed was family talks.” But two years after the diagnosis, Mitchell has agreed to put her child on the ADHD drug Ritalin. She still resists the idea of antidepressants. It’s her preteen daughter who’s making the case for it. “Mama, it’s in our genes,” Sawateos tells her.

All this help may explain why it is so hard for the people closest to children to detect that anything is really wrong. Studies show that parents consistently miss the signs of depression. In one survey by researchers at Ball State and Columbia universities, 57% of teens who had attempted suicide were found to be suffering from major depression. But only 13% of the parents of suicides believed their child was depressed.

Diagnosis is critical because depressed children tend to develop increasingly severe mental disorders and in some cases psychosomatic as teens and adults. Three studies on children who were depressed before puberty show that as adults they had a higher rate of antisocial behavior, anxiety and major depression than those who experienced their first depressive episode as teens. “Prepubertal depression does occur, and those who get it are more susceptible to [the] mania [of bipolar disorder] later,” says Dr. John March, director of the program on pediatric pharmacology at Duke University. “The earlier you get it, the more likely you will develop chronic depressive and anxiety symptoms.”

So how do psychiatrists pick out kids who are depressed from those who are simply moody? In his book “Help Me, I’m Sad,” Fassler lists a number of physical symptoms in three age groups—preschoolers, young school-age children and adolescents. Among preschoolers, the signs include frequent, unexplained stomachaches, headaches and fatigue. Depressed school-age children frequently weigh 10 lbs. less than their peers, may have dramatic changes in sleep patterns and may start speaking in an affectless monotone. Adolescents go through eating disorders, dramatic weight gains or losses, femininity drug abuse, excessive picking at acne, and fingernail biting to the point of bleeding.

Fassler cautions that none of these symptoms may ever be present and a whole constellation of more subjective manifestations must be considered. Adolescents and adults share many of the same warning signs—low self-esteem, tearfulness, withdrawal and a morbid obsession with death and dying. Among adolescents, however, depression is often accompanied by episodes of irritability that, unlike mood swings, stretch for weeks rather than days.

Dr. Elizabeth Weller, professor of psychiatry and pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania, has developed techniques for detecting depression in kids. First she establishes a rapport with a child. Then she asks, for example, whether he still has fun playing softball or whether he is taking him longer to finish his homework—both of which are ways to figure out whether the child has lost motivation and concentration. Crying is another marker for depression, but Weller says boys rarely admit to it. So she asks them how often they feel like crying.

She then quizzes parents and teachers for other signs. Parents can tell her if a child no...
in younger children often appears in conjunction with other disorders. “Many depressed kids,” notes Fassler, “are initially diagnosed with ADHD or learning disabilities. We need to separate out the conditions and treat both problems.” But there’s a chicken-and-egg problem here: antisocial behavior or a learning disability can lead a child to become isolated and alienated from peers and thus can trigger depression. And depression can further interfere with learning or bring on antisocial behavior.

But does a diagnosis of depression in a child require medication? Consider Nancy Allee’s 10-month journey with ssris and other drugs. At 12, she was as bubbly as 11-year-old Megan Kellar now. She soon developed “a five-month-long headache” and started having nightmares. After about a year in counseling, things seemed to be getting better and, her mother Judith says, “we terminated it so as not to make it a way of life.” A few months later, Nancy became hostile and rebellious but nothing that Judith considered “out of the bounds for a normal teenager.” Then, “without any warning, she [took an] overdose” of her migraine medication, was hospitalized and depression was diagnosed. While Judith thought the overdose was out of the blue, Nancy says, “I’d had depression for a long time. If I’d had bad thoughts, I’d always had them and kind of grew up with them. I was always very bubbly, even when I was depressed. A lot of people didn’t notice it. To me, suicide had always been an option.”

Nancy was put on Zoloft. When that didn’t work, the doctor added Paxil and then several other drugs. But there was a panoply of side effects: her hands would shake, she would bang her head against the wall. A voracious reader, she became too withdrawn and listless to pick up a book. There were times she couldn’t sleep, but on one occasion she slept 72 hours straight.

“I was seeing five different doctors, and it was overkill,” says Nancy. “At one point, I was taking 15 pills in the morning and 15 in the evening. I wound up burying my medication in the backyard. I didn’t want to take it anymore.” Then Nancy was tested for allergies, a process that required her to be medication free. “It was like the sky was blue again,” says Nancy, who at 18 is still off drugs but sees a counselor occasionally. “The colors came back. It was a total change from the medication stupor. Everything wasn’t peachy, but I was able to appreciate doing things again.”

Most psychiatrists, despite their enthusiasm for the new antidepressants, write prescriptions for only six months to a year and taper the dosage toward the end. Even Fassler admits, “We try to use medication for the minimum amount of time possible. And with a younger child, we’re more cautious about using medication because we have less research concerning both the effectiveness and the long-term consequences and side effects.” Says Michael Faenza, president of the National Mental Health Association: “I feel very strongly that no child should be receiving medication without counseling. Medication is just one spoke in the wheel.”

HOW TO SPOT A DEPRESSED CHILD
The key thing to watch for is drastic changes in teen behavior. Other red flags to consider:

- **Difficulty maintaining relationships** May become antisocial, reject friends or refuse to take part in school and family events
- **Reduced physical activity** May suffer from lethargy or appear to drag self around
- **Morbid or suicidal thoughts** May seek out games, music, art or books with death-related themes
- **Low self-esteem** May feel that they are worthless and that their peers, teachers and family disapprove of them
- **Self-destructive behavior** May harm their body by, for example, biting fingernails to the point of bleeding
- **Problems at school** Grades may drop or classroom troubling may rise
- **Changes in sleep patterns** May either have restless nights or sleep away the day

### Preschoolers

- Frequent unexplained stomachaches, headaches, or fatigue
- Overactivity or excessive restlessness
- A sad appearance
- Low tolerance for frustration
- Irritability
- Loss of pleasure in activities
- Tendency to portray the world as bleak

The lack of science about the effects of these drugs on childhood development is the reason the FDA has required all manufacturers of ssris that treat depression to conduct studies on the subject. Says Dr. Peter Kramer, professor of psychiatry at Brown University and author of *Listening to Prozac:*

“Anyone who thinks about this problem is worried about what it means to substantially change neurotransmission in a developing brain. We don’t know if these kids would compensate on their own over time and if by giving them these medicines we are interfering with that compensatory mechanism.”

Until we know more, some argue, the risks of such medication are just too great, if only because of the message it sends to children. Says Dr. Sidney Wolfe, director of Public Citizen’s Health Research Group: “We are moving into an era where any quirk of a personality is fair game for a drug. On one hand, we are telling kids to just say no to drugs, but on the other hand, their pediatricians are saying, ‘Take this. You’ll feel good.’ ”

Teen rebellion can put a twist on even that, however. One New York couple, beleaguered by antidepressants themselves and openly concerned about the depression of their 18-year-old, were castigated by their son for being “weak” and dependence on Prozac. His argument: young drugs change who you really are. In place of their drugs, the young man argued for his “natural” remedy: marijuana.

Indeed, pot and alcohol are common forms of self-medication among depressed teens. Weller estimates that about 30% of her teen patients have used pot or alcohol after a depressive episode, most of them at the urging of friends who said smoking and drinking would make them feel better. A high school social worker in Minnesotta decided to look into the case of a troubled girl who was still a freshman at 17. The girl admitted she smoked pot as a constant habit but did not understand why she craved it so much. A psychological evaluation found the girl was suffering from clinical depression as well as ADHD. She was prescribed an antidepresant, which had striking results. It not only elevated her mood and helped her focus but also reduced her desire for pot and tobacco.

“It USED to BE SAID THAT ADOLESCENCE IS the most common form of psychosis,” says Kramer, the man who helped make Prozac famous. Then he turns serious. “But if a child has a prolonged period of depressive moods, he needs to be evaluated for depression.” Even if little is known about the long-term effects of ssris on young bodies, most doctors in the field argue that the drugs are a blessing to kids in pain. Says Duke’s March, who is doing a comparative study of the benefits of Prozac and cognitive-behavior therapy: “My clinical experience is that it’s worse to risk a major mental illness as a child than to be on medication. If you weigh the risks against the benefits, the benefits are probably going to win.”

Susan Dubuque of Richmond, Va., is convinced of the benefits. Her son Nick went through “seven years of testing hell.” At seven, ADHD was diagnosed and he was put
The Danger of Suppressing Sadness
What if Holden Caulfield had been taking Prozac?

CONSIDERING HIS WEALTH OF SYMPTOMS — lethargy, forgetfulness, loss of interest in friends and studies—can there be any doubt that Holden Caulfield, the dropout hero of J.D. Salinger's 1950s masterpiece The Catcher in the Rye, would be on Luvox, Prozac or a similar drug if he were a teenager today? No doubt whatsoever. A textbook teen depressive by current standards. Caulfield would be a natural candidate for pharmaceutical intervention, joining a rising number of adolescents whose moodiness, anxiety, and rebelliousness are being interpreted as warning signs of chemical imbalances. Indeed, if Caulfield had been a '90s teen, his incessant griping about "phonies" and general pettiness toward mainstream society might have been nipped in the neurological bud. The cultural consequences? Incalculable.

With the stroke of countless pens on thousands of prescription pads, the American coming-of-age experience — the stuff of endless novels, movies and pop songs—could gradually be rendered unrecognizable. Goodbye Salinger, Elvis and Bob Dylan; hello psychopharmacology. "The kids in my school traded Zoloft and Prozac pills the way kids used to trade baseball cards," says Stephen Morris, an Episcopal priest and former chaplain at a Texas parochial school. Of course, this school experience doesn't prove that schoolyards everywhere have turned into bustling prescription-drug bazaars. But Morris, who headed a schoolwide committee called Addressing Behaviors of Concern, recalls that "the problems we focused on were not dramatically different from my own youthful experiences." At least three-quarters of the time, says Morris, the kids in question were placed on medication in what he saw as the beginning of a vicious cycle that frequently worsened the original problem. "Challenges that teachers used to handle are being handed over to psychiatrists. Instead of dealing with kids inside the classroom, they yank them out, put them on drugs and stick them back in with glazed eyes a few days later. No wonder the kids end up as outcasts."

Such outcasts may someday form their own majority, if this trend continues. The pain and confusion of growing up, once considered the proper subject of gloomy poetry read under the blankets and angry rock songs rehearsed in the garage, can now mean a quick ticket to the doctor's office. And it doesn't take a lot of acting up for a restless teenager to attract professional attention. On a website sponsored by Channel One, a television network for school-age youth, a recent posting written with the help of the National Association for Mental Illness classified the following behaviors as possible symptoms of manic depression in teens: "increased talking—the adolescent talks too much," "distractibility," "unrealistic highs in self-esteem—for example, a teenager who feels specially connected to God." That last one is a doozy. And heartbreaking. Could it be that Cassie Bernal, who bravely confessed her religious faith while staring down the barrel of a gun at the height of the Columbine massacre, was not so much a hero and a martyr as an untreated candidate for lithium? For the education establishment to go on red alert at the first sign of spirituality in their students would be a devastating development.

What is happening here? For better or worse, an institutional drug culture has sprung up in the hallways of All American High, mimicking the one already established among depressed adults. As teens move out of the MODEL-MUSCLE-MAZDA magazine storyline of illegal drugs and amphetamines and legal mood-altering substances such as Luvox, Wellbutrin, and Effexor is a flurry one. Many of the same optimistic claims—enhanced concentration, decreased anxiety, a renewed capacity for feeling pleasure—are made for both types of magic bullets, whether they are bought on the street or in a pharmacy. A properly mixed message is being sent to teens when certain substances are demonized for promoting the same subjective states touted on the labels of other compounds. Adolescents, who are famously alert to hypocrisy among their elders, will surely be the first to catch this irony.

At least one hopes so. Teenage skepticism—Holden Caulfield's bitter gift for discerning inconsistencies in the solemn pronouncements of adults—may be one of the troubling traits on the mediators' target list. A pill that tones down youthful b.s. detectors would certainly be a boon to parents and teachers, but how would it enrich the lives of teenagers? Even if such a pill improved their moods—helping them to stick to their studies, say, and compete in a world with close to zero tolerance for unproductive monkeying around—would it not rob them (and the rest of us) of a potent source of social criticism, political idealism and cultural change? The trials and tribulations of growing up yield wisdom for all involved, both kids and parents. The young pose a constant challenge to the old, often an uncomfortable one, almost always an unexpected one, but meeting that challenge with hastily filled prescriptions may be bad medicine for everybody. For teens who need medication just to function or lessen the real dangers they might pose to others or themselves, the new medications may truly be miraculous. I know from my own experience with clinical depression (contracted as an adult and treated with a combination of therapy and drugs) that such diseases are real and formidable, impossible to wish away. But for kids in the murky emotional borderlands described in books like The Catcher in the Rye, antidepressants, stimulants and sedatives aren't a substitute for books and records, heroes and antiochets. "I got bored sometimes," Holden Caulfield says, "when people tell me to act my age. Sometimes I act a lot older than I am. I really do—but people never notice. People never notice anything."

Maybe if people start noticing first and medicating second, more of today's confused young Caulfields will stand a chance of maturing into Salingers.

on Ritalin. "When he was 10 years old, he didn't want a birthday party because he just couldn't deal with it," she recalls. Then, his mother says, Nick "bottomed out and became suicidal, and one day I found him in a closet with a toy gun pointed at his head, and he said, 'If this was real, I'd use it.'"

The next day she saw a psychologist who had recently evaluated Nick and was told, "If you don't get him help, next time he'll be successful." Nick was found to be suffering from clinical depression and took a series of antidepressants. "I was worried about my son's killing himself," says Susan, who was called by clinicians a "histrionic mother" and a "therapy junkie," as she spent $4,000 on drugs and therapy for her son. "I would have sold my house if that was what it would have taken."

Nick is better now, and has co-authored a book with his mom: Kid Power Tactics for Dealing with Depression. Susan is happy to have her son back safe—even though there is some stress. "It's so much fun to have an obnoxious 15-year-old," she says, "and I mean normal obnoxious."

—Reported by Jodie Morse/New York, Alice Park/Washington and James Willwerth/ Los Angeles
Programs Go Beyond ‘Just Saying No’

Innovative programs teach children the skills they need to resist substance abuse.

Bridget Murray
Monitor staff

Psychologists’ new school-based approaches to drug-abuse prevention go a step beyond telling teen-agers to ‘just say no.’ They’re teaching teens how to say no.

Instead of bombarding students with antidrug dogma that they often ignore, the programs build kids’ drug-resistance skills and encourage them to get involved in their schools and communities, social scientists say.

“The programs show alienated kids that society offers better options than taking drugs and strengthen kids’ ability to take advantage of those options,” said Ronda C. Talley, PhD, APA’s assistant executive director for education and head of the APA Center for Psychology in Schools and Education.

These new drug-abuse prevention programs are better than traditional drug-education programs at targeting risk factors for drug abuse, such as boredom, lack of parental support, feelings of failure and social pressures to drink or smoke, said Talley.

Moreover, using such programs to prevent drug abuse is ultimately less expensive and probably more effective than treating it, some psychologists contend.

But there is a hitch. The programs fail to reach adolescents who have already started smoking and drinking, said substance-abuse expert John Swisher, PhD, a psychology professor at Pennsylvania State University. Those adolescents do need more intensive treatment programs, he said.

The need for effective drug-abuse prevention programs has reached new heights, according to national survey data. An ongoing, annual study of 50,000 eighth-, 10th- and 12-graders led by social psychologist Lloyd Johnston, PhD, of the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research, finds that adolescents are reporting greater use of illegal drugs,
especially marijuana, than they did in the late 1980s.

School psychologists are working to curb these rates by developing students’ social skills and fostering student support systems within and beyond the school, says Swisher.

A Social Fabric That Connects

One program that aims to substitute drug use with community responsibility is the Child Development Project, or CDP, run in elementary schools and based out of the Developmental Studies Center in Oakland, Calif. By building a social fabric that connects kids, parents and teachers with each other and the school, CDP seeks to build children’s commitment to such community values as helpfulness and responsibility. Funded in part by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention at the U.S. Department of Human Services, CDP helps kids become more responsible and academically motivated before they’re exposed to drugs.

“We try to help schools provide children with a stronger sense of autonomy, belonging and competence—a new sense of the ABCs,” said the program’s founder, social psychologist Eric Schaps, PhD, director of the Development Studies Center.

CDP revamps school climate, discipline practice and parental involvement. For example, hall monitors report on peers’ behavior, and in “buddies” programs, teachers assign each older student to a younger “buddy” to support during the school year. Families become more involved in school life through participation in events such as Family Read Aloud Nights, and in homework activities that relate family experience to what kids are learning in school.

The program also boosts the curriculum: Teachers receive intensive training in teaching methods and discipline practice over three years, and CDP staff provide them with on-site consultation and curriculum materials such as reading supplements. Longitudinal research shows that CDP significantly reduces alcohol and marijuana use relative to other schools. Students also work more collaboratively on classroom tasks, interact more with each other, and behave less violently. Since 1992, schools have gradually phased in CDP in White Plains, N.Y.; Dade County, Fla.; Louisville, Ky.; and Salinas, Cupertino and San Francisco, Calif.

A Community Approach

Project Star is another community-oriented program developed to steer kids away from alcohol and cigarettes. This program aims to stop youngsters from taking these “gateway drugs” and to prevent them from being tempted by “harder” illegal drugs.

The five-year program, partially funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and designed by school psychologist Mary Anne Pentz, PhD, has been adopted in the Indianapolis schools. Project Star is school-based but reaches out to parents and the community with prevention education.

The program, which usually starts in junior high school, involves five stages:

- **First year**—Students are taught drug awareness and resistance skills.
- **Second year**—Parents, children, teachers and principals communicate about drug abuse, and parents create stronger rules about drug use.
- **Third year**—Experts train community leaders about prevention strategies and schools sponsor community-wide prevention activities like smoke-outs and alcohol-free sporting events.
- **Fourth year**—Program participants work on policy change such as creating a tax on beer and creating drug-free school zones.
- **Fifth year**—Participants target the mass media to deliver anti-drug messages in advertisements and talk shows.

When community norms are addressed along with schools’ prevention efforts, drug-abstinence levels are higher than when school-based programs are implemented alone, says Pentz.

In-school prevention programs typically report a 15 percent to 44 percent drop in drug-use, whereas Project Star reports a 20 percent to 60 percent decline. The program has been shown to lower occasional use of gateway drugs throughout high school and to quell heavier use, such as daily drunkenness and chain-smoking, Pentz said.

Resistance Training

Still another preventive approach is Life Skills Training, which seeks to build adolescents’ ability to deal with life stress rather than escaping it through drug use. LST is one of the first school-based projects to demonstrate durable prevention effects over time.

The project was developed by developmental and clinical psychologist Gilbert Botvin, PhD, director of the Institute for Prevention Research at Cornell University Medical College in New York City. LST is funded by NIDA and is being tested in New York State.

Botvin documented the program’s success in 56 rural and suburban pub-
lic schools in upper New York State and Long Island. In this study, nearly 6,000 seventh-graders were coached in LST in 1985. Botvin surveyed 3,600 of them six years later in 1991, and found that those exposed to LST were less likely to use alcohol, drugs and cigarettes than those not exposed to the program.

To implement the program, Botvin and his colleagues train teachers to conduct 15 LST classes, lasting from 45 to 50 minutes, to seventh-graders, each focused on a specific life skill objective. Instruction includes showing students such techniques as muscle-relaxation exercises to ease the anxiety and tension that can lead them to drugs and alcohol.

LST explains how to weigh options and think about long-term consequences of behavior. The program teaches students assertiveness skills, such as building up the nerve to return defective merchandise, and, most importantly, to resist offers and advertising pressure to drink, take drugs and smoke cigarettes.

LST also strives to polish students’ conversation skills and improve their rapport with others. Kids learn how to introduce people, to sustain and gracefully end a conversation and to compliment people, said Botvin. The intention is to build supportive social networks that steer children toward academics and away from the isolation that sometimes leads them to drugs.

These classes are supported by out-of-class behavioral “homework,” such as encouraging students to introduce themselves to five new people. These skills are reinforced and expanded though a series of 15 “booster” classes in the eighth and ninth grade.

Although programs designed by research psychologists typically rely on classroom teachers and health educators to deliver lessons, school psychologists can take an active role in setting up programs and training teachers, said Botvin. He hopes to see school health professionals, including psychologists, running LST in teams as they work to bring it into more schools and communities.
The new pot culture

Marijuana is back, more available and accepted than before.
Blame blasé parents and the '60s revival.

Monika Guttman

Monika Guttman last wrote for the magazine about the increased use of Ritalin for children.

It's the kind of story that in the free-wheeling '60s would have been dismissed as "reefer madness"—an outlandish tale of the dangers of smoking marijuana, designed (like the movie of the same name) to scare kids away from evil weed. But for Kevin West this story is all too real.

"I felt I could stand out if I did crazy things," says West, of Little Rock. That's why he agreed when a friend suggested a game of Russian roulette. West removed all the bullets except one from his mother's .38. Then 17, he'd spent the earlier part of the evening moving from friend's house to friend's house, smoking joints, "getting high on top of high." He put the gun to his head. Had he been in his right mind, he says, he simply would have taken his finger off the trigger. "But on weed you can't think straight." Next thing he knew, he was on the ground in a puddle of blood, a hole in his head the size of a golf ball.

After three operations and months of therapy, West, now 19 remains paralyzed on his left side and takes a daily regimen of anti-seizure and other medications. "I only smoked for a few months. Now I'm on drugs for the rest of my life. I thought marijuana was no big deal."

West's attitude, that pot is "no big deal," reflects what experts say is at the root of a stunning resurgence of pot use among younger and younger kids. "Reefer madness" hysteria has been replaced—some quarters by a culture of complacency about pot, especially among adults who grew up around it and may still consider marijuana "no big deal."

Indeed, many teens see marijuana as a harmless, even healthful, alternative to cigarettes and alcohol. They call it dank, bo, chronic and hemp, and survey after recent survey shows that after more than a decade of decline, growing numbers of teenagers are inhaling (see chart.

Out in the open

Today, marijuana is openly promoted at concerts, on CDs, even on clothes—sending teens a message of social acceptance that alarms many experts.

- Open market. Young people look at pipes and other pot paraphernalia. Purpose of the event: to "educate the public on historical, industrial and medicinal uses of the hemp plant [and] rally in support of decriminalization of marijuana."
- Blunt message. A man sells "Phillies blunts"—cigars hollowed out and refilled with marijuana—last year in New York City. The nicotine helps increase the high.
- Paraphernalia. • Capricorn Records' Hempilation CD has songs by artists like Cypress Hill, the Black Crowes and Blues Traveler extolling pot. • A pot-themed T-shirt design. • Hats with pot emblems are big sellers among teens. • Last month, outgoing U.S. drug czar Lee Brown scolded Adidas for its new shoe, the Hemp. ("Hemp" is a term for "marijuana"; the shoe is partly made from the plant.) Adidas' president responded: "I don't believe you will encounter anyone smoking our shoes."
- Warning. Duane Garcia, 18, of Queens, N.Y., started smoking marijuana at age 12. "I wanted to be accepted, and it was cool." Later he began stealing to buy pot. Now Garcia appears in a public service TV campaign telling how the drug messed up his life.
Teen marijuana use). The government’s National Household Survey on Drug Abuse last September found that the number of teens who smoked pot nearly doubled between 1992 and 1994. In fact, so many studies show teen pot use climbing rapidly that Steve Dnistrian of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America contends “we face a possible epidemic.”

Any drug use at this age, notes John Schowalter, clinical director of the Yale Child Study Center, can have lifelong consequences. In the teen years, he says, “social, educational and physical development is taking place at the fastest rate ever, except for a child’s first year. [Pot] will completely mess up their reality testing.” Besides, regular pot use makes kids less interested in school, sports and other activities, adds Schowalter. Even NORML (the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws), in its policy statement, says it is “strongly committed to the concept that growing up should be drug-free.”

Why, then, after more than a decade of decreasing interest, are more teens toking? The most-cited explanation points to a generation of adults for whom pot was almost a rite of passage. Many parents “had an experience with marijuana and don’t consider it as serious as other drugs,” says U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala. Susie Williams Manning, director of an adolescent alcohol and drug program in Lexington, S.C., says she often sees that dynamic at work with client families: “I’ve had parents tell me they’d rather see their child smoke dope at home than go out and use alcohol.”

“One of the things we learned in the ’80s [when marijuana use declined] is when all sectors of society speak in unison, it’s heard,” says Lloyd Johnston, author of the University of Michigan’s respected annual teen drug study. “Now we’ve seen an erosion of that single voice, and [teens get] either no voice in some quarters or conflicting voices in others.”

As a result, many teens think pot is more or less endorsed by a majority of adults—and point to success stories like Vice President Al Gore and House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who have admitted trying it.

WHAT MANY ADULTS MAY NOT REALIZE is that marijuana and its use have changed in four significant ways:

■ Age is down. Users are starting younger. In the 1992 Adolescent Drug Survey, the average age of first-time users dropped to between 13 and 15, from 14–17 the year before. Treatment centers report 12- and 13-year olds enrolling, formerly a rare event.

■ The effects now are clear. Unlike the drug experimentation days of the 1960s and ’70s, the effects of pot use now have been studied extensively. Among the conclusions: Marijuana reduces coordination; slows reflexes; interferes with the ability to measure distance, speed and time; and disrupts concentration and short-term memory. According to Donald Tashkin at the UCLA Medical School, there are also cancer risks: A marijuana smoker is exposed to six times as many carcinogens as a tobacco smoker.

■ Quantity is up. Kids today smoke larger amounts than their elders did, thanks to innovations such as "blunts": short cigars hollowed out and restuffed with pot or a pot-and-tobacco mix. Marijuana is now often laced with other drugs, as in "primos" (with cocaine) and "illies" (with formaldehyde, making the smoker ill). Result: In 1994, 50 percent more 12- to 17-year olds ended up in emergency rooms for smoking pot as in 1993.

■ Potency is up. The pot teens smoke today is not their parents’ cannabis. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration says the THC, or primary psychoactive chemical, of pot on the street has double in the past decade, thanks to sophis-
ticated cloning and genetic manipulation. (Some experts, however, say pot is no stronger now.) Sample review in High Times magazine: three hits and the "absolutely, totally and righteously screwed up for hours."

"When we smoked marijuana, no one said to us it was harmful to our health," says HHS' Shalala. "Now we know it's clearly dangerous to [users'] health, that young marijuana users get hooked and smoke it for a very long time." And it's now understood that pot serves as a "gateway" drug. A 1994 study by the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse found 43 percent of teens who use pot by age 18 move on to cocaine.

A PANOPLY OF CULTURAL FACTORS draws kids to pot. Top of the list: the current glamorization of the '60s and '70s, from the Beatles revival to fashion trends and hairstyles. Media watchers also cite references on TV, such as Roseanne and Dan smoking pot in the bathroom on Roseanne; in music, such as Yo-Yo's I.B.W. ("Intelligent Black Women") video showing the hip-hop star making a blunt, or the recent Hemplation CD to raise funds for pot decriminalization; and in movies such as How to Make an American Quilt, Home for the Holidays and Dazed and Confused. Merchandise and clothing with marijuana symbols are popular items nationwide in stores frequented by teens. "Some people are influenced by images," agrees Marcus Harcus, 17, a senior at Minneapolis' Patrick Henry High School who says he has tried pot but didn't like it. "You see it on TV all the time."

Like so many other baby boomers who once experimented with pot, President Clinton has cautioned his own child against drugs. His style, says former drug czar Lee Brown: using daughter Chelsea's interest in science to help make his case.

Pot use also fits a movement that the Rhinebeck, N.Y.-based Trends Journal defines as one of the top 10 trends of 1996, "a new anti-Establishment activism simmering among teenagers and preteens." This activism aims at greed, materialism and the get-ahead-at-any-cost attitude that some teens think their parents' generation personifies. One example: Teens on Internet chat boards overwhelmingly support legalization.

Drug abuse also has taken the political and media back burner recently. A decline in news coverage may have given the public a sense that the drug problem is over, says Rick Evans of the National Family Partnership, which provides substance abuse information to families. Indeed, a White House survey found that drug coverage dropped from 518 stories on network newscasts in 1989 to 66 in 1993.

In an election year, teen drug use could turn into a political football. Republicans such as Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah and Rep. William H. Zeliff Jr. of New Hampshire criticize what they call President Clinton's lack of leadership on the issue. Others agree. Until recently, Clinton "hasn't used the bully pulpit to keep attention on this issue," says Diane Barry, communications director of Join Together, a national resource clearinghouse for more than 3,000 substance abuse organizations. But former drug czar Lee Brown charges that the same congressional leadership proposed a 60 percent cut in funding for anti-drug programs. (Clinton has named Army Gen. Barry McCaffrey to replace Brown; the White House recently held a conference to focus attention on the drug problem.)

One surprising factor in increased pot use by teens: Because of decreased use throughout the '80s, they have seen few examples of pothead burnout, which can be persuasive. "It shows how pot makes you lazy," says Harcus, the 17-year-old in Minneapolis. A neighbor "smokes all the time, and this is his third year as a senior."

FINALLY, MORE KIDS may be smoking simply because pot is cheap and easy to find. According to the DEA, prices are down—loose joints sell for $3-$5; ounces that sold for $200 in 1990 now sell for $125—and supply is up—marijuana currently is the USA's largest cash crop. New technology, particularly hydroponics (growing plants in super-nutrient-rich solutions), means pot can be grown indoors in any neighborhood. More than 20 teens from around the nation interviewed for this article said the average time it would take them to find and buy pot was 3 minutes. "That's 3 minutes here in the inner city. I hear it takes only a minute out in the suburbs," says 15-year-old Amy Lawler of...
How to talk about pot

Norman and Janet Dill of Charlottesville, Va., don’t want their two kids—four in their teens—to use pot. Problem is, the Dills are among the many baby boomers who experimented with the drug in the 1960s and ’70s. Here’s what the Dills and several experts recommend.

- **Don’t avoid the topic:** Make it clear you don’t want your kids to use pot, and listen to what they have to say, advises the new book *Keeping Youth Drug-Free*, from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. (For a free copy, call 1-800-729-6686.) It includes a section for parents who are past drug users, says the center’s George Marcelle. Those parents “felt hypocritical talking to their kids about pot, although they felt very strongly that they didn’t want their kids using it.”

- **Reveal the past:** “If you did use marijuana when you were young, it’s useful to admit that,” says Victor Strasburger, author of *Getting Your Kids to Say No in the ’90s When You Said Yes in the ’60s*. “But you have to say, ‘If I had it to do over again, I’d do it differently.’ Parents can admit that they did things foolishly.”

- **Don’t demonize pot:** “That makes it more alluring,” says Norman Dill. “I put [pot] in the same category as watching horror films. It’s a waste of time and doesn’t do you any good.”

- **Appeal to their interests:** This is President Clinton’s approach. “Chelsea is interested in science, so he has long talks with her using this interest to explain the dangers of drugs,” says former drug czar Lee Brown.

- **Don’t glamorize the past:** “The mistake I see people making is saying, ‘Wow! It was so cool when we got really stoned and went to the Frank Zappa concert. But don’t you do it,’” says Dill. “It’s like a lot of things [I did] when I was young, and it was probably a little dumb.”

By Richard Vega

Minneapolis, who doesn’t smoke pot. “It’s easier to get than alcohol.”

“Parents aren’t paying attention,” says Bill Van Ost, a pediatrician and co-director, with his wife Elaine, of a family drug treatment center in affluent Englewood, N.J. The Van Osts recently gave a free lecture about dealing with drugs at a private school for girls where a drug problem was developing.

“Nine parents showed up,” says Bill Van Ost. “It’s the ‘not my kid’ syndrome in spades.”

Kevin West’s mother, Elise, said she had no idea he was smoking pot before he shot himself. “I didn’t smell anything out of the ordinary. He’d wait until I’d gone to sleep, then he’d go out.”

Because so many factors have contributed to the upswing in teen marijuana use, the search for solutions is scattered. Suggestions range from putting prevention back on the national agenda to focus community action.

The most persuasive messages, for now, seem to come from teens themselves. A program in San Antonio called Fighting Back claims a 16 percent drop in teen pot use since 1993 with youth-initiated anti-drug projects emphasizing respect. The message teens tell one another: “If anything lowers your inhibitions so you take risks you wouldn’t normally take, then you’re disrespecting your community,” says executive director Bever Watts Davis. The Partnership for a Drug-free America, which produced such notable campaigns as the “This is your brain on drugs” ads, now has teenagers telling first-person stories about pot messing up their lives.

What if the message doesn’t get through? “The alternative to educating our kids,” says the University of Michigan’s Lloyd Johnston, “is to let them have their own drug epidemic and learn the hard way. And that’s not particularly desirable.”
Being a Single Parent

Myths

Although the number of single-parent families has increased in recent years, many inaccurate beliefs persist. Some of the myths include:

**MYTH:** Children who grow up in a single-parent household are more likely to struggle in school, get into trouble with the law and develop serious social problems.

**FACT:** Single parents have raised many well-rounded, successful people. Many negative predictions for children raised by a single parent have more to do with economic hardship than the lack of one parent. With hard work, love, positive discipline and good parenting skills, single parents can raise capable, content, successful children.

**MYTH:** Children from single parent homes will never have healthy relationships themselves.

**FACT:** Children of divorced parents seem to put more energy into maintaining their relationships. A recent study of more than 6,000 adults found that 43 percent of adult children of divorced parents are happily married—about the same percentage as those who grew up in two-parent homes.

**MYTH:** Children of single parents need role models. The sooner the parent remarries the better.

**FACT:** Children benefit from the presence of both men and women in their family life provided those men and women are emotionally healthy. Children actually suffer more harms by living with conflict and unhealthy role models than by having one healthy, effective parent. A single parent with good parenting skills can raise children successfully without a partner by building a good support system—a circle of friends, relatives and neighbors.

**MYTH:** Children of single parents have lower self-esteem.

**FACT:** Children of single parents are no more likely to suffer from low self-esteem than their peers from a two-parent home. Studies indicate that income level can be a deciding factor relating to a child’s self-esteem. Parents need to emphasize to their children that who they are is not based on what they have. A strong sense of self-esteem helps children resist negative peer pressure and gives them the confidence to face challenges and try new things.

**MYTH:** Single-parent homes are “broken” homes.

**FACT:** Most parents who divorce or decide not to marry do so because they want to create a stable home for their family. If there is a great deal of conflict in a marriage or relationship, a change to a single-parent family can result in a reduction in tension, hostility and discord and an increase in family solidarity and consistency. It is the children of parents who remain together despite constant conflict who often encounter problems. When anxiety is high between parents, children’s emotional needs are often ignored, rules are not consistently
Being a Single Parent

Strengths of Single Parent Families

While different than a nuclear family, single-parent families have their own strengths from which to build. If there is conflict between two parents before a divorce, changing to a single-parent family can result in less hostility and an increase in solidarity.

- A single parent may have the flexibility to spend more time with his or her children without the demands of another adult. Single parents don't have to concern themselves with a spouse's needs or schedule.
- Single parent families become more interdependent, finding that working together helps solve problems. Because single parents rely heavily on the voluntary cooperation of their children, it is a good idea to involve them with the decision-making and problem-solving processes. Young people tend to feel more needed and valued as contributing members of the household and are more likely to carry out decisions they played a part in making. In single-parent families, each child's help and cooperation is needed on a daily basis.
- Single parenting presents challenges that often require new skills and further education. Single parents may discover new strengths they didn't know they had as they take on new responsibilities.
- Single-parent families can provide support to each other. Groups can be a valuable resource for activities, sharing, personal growth and new relationships.
Being a Single Parent

Balancing Work and Family

However you got here, by choice or circumstance, single parenting can be a challenging, often stressful way of life. Finding the delicate balance between work, home, children and time for oneself can be difficult. There is no simple solution. In fact, the balance for each adult and every family may be different. Any single parent trying to balance work with a happy and stable family life should consider some of the following suggestions:

- **Determine your financial priorities.** Managing money wisely will help relieve the financial strain that forces so many single parents to work long hours or excessive overtime. Work out a budget for living expenses and stick to it. Try to spend time with your children instead of giving them money for entertainment purposes. Weigh the benefits of your job (salary, insurance, etc.) with what it costs you in time spent away from your children. Sometimes a less demanding job can provide a better way of life for your family.

- **Identify community resources.** More and more communities are providing services to assist single and working parents. Hospitals and family clinics now offer “sick-child” care, where health-care professionals take care of sick children so a parent is able to go to work. The cost varies but it can be worth the peace of mind.

- **Explore employment options.** Keep your resume updated and utilize the Internet as a resource when job hunting. Libraries provide free Internet access. Running your own business may allow you more flexibility to be with your children. If self-employment is not for you, then look into companies that allow people to work at home or offer flex-time schedules.

- **Coordinate with friends and family members.** Full-time employment often means missing out on important after-school athletic events, school functions and dance recitals. Meet other single parents through your child’s school or day-care—you may be able to create a babysitting co-op. Rather than trying to make it to every event and blaming yourself when you can’t, invite members of your family and close friends to attend.

- **Communicate.** As a single-parent family, you and your children must learn to cooperate and communicate. Keep in mind that while you go to work and fulfill other parental obligations, your children are busy with their own activities. Make sure your children know how to reach you and that you know where to find them. Be sure you all agree on schedules, transportation and all the details relating to a planned activity. It may help to post a calendar that lists the activities, drop-off times, pick-up times, etc. Be sure your workplace allows your children to contact you when necessary.

- **Take Time for Yourself.** At least once a month make a point of doing something just for you. It can be nothing more than going to a matinee.
Being a Single Parent

Potential Problems

- Single-parent families are faced with many pressures and problems that the nuclear family does not encounter. Some of these may include:
  - Visitation and custody arrangements
  - Effects upon the children of continued conflict between parents
  - Decrease in the amount of time parents and children can spend together
  - Effects of a divorce on children's performance in school and peer relations
  - Disruptions in extended family relationships
  - Adverse reactions to parents dating and entering new relationships

The single parent can help children and extended family cope with these problems by talking about their feelings and working together to overcome them. Additional support can come from friends, family members, and your church or synagogue. Once you have made the best choices possible and done your best to provide for your children, focus your energy on helping your family adjust to the changes in their lives. If family members continue to have problems, it may be time to consult a counselor.
Unit VIII

Teen Issues


10. Programs Go Beyond Just Saying No, APA, Monitor, November 1995, Pg 41


*** There are no manual readings for this unit ***
Appendix A
APPENDIX A

Log Book, Weekly Goal Sheets, & Termination Pack

Log Books

Your log book is the primary record of your intervention. This book will provide a detailed accounting of everything you do during your eighteen weeks with your youth. Your log book is more than a reminder log, it is a record of the intervention. Your log book also is considered a research tool. The information you provide may be used to conduct research on the Adolescent Diversion Project. As such, you should err on the side of putting in too much information rather than too little information.

We recommend strongly that you update your log book immediately after each contact (or attempted contact). As humans we tend to forget important details as the time between the event and our attempt to recall the event increases.

Your log book should have at least 5-10 pages saved, in the front of the book, to use as a table of contents. You will record every contact made or attempted, including the date, in the table of contents. The body of your log book will include all of the detailed notes associated with each entry in the table of contents.

Please see the example log book in class.
Weekly Goal Sheets

Each week you, with your classmates and instructors, will set a number of goals for your intervention. These goals will be recorded on your weekly goal sheet. These sheets should function a brief overview of the week. As indicated on the forms, you should provide a synopsis of the efforts made toward accomplishing your goals. Don’t forget that there are two sides to this form.

A blank copy of the report is provided on the next two pages. Please use this master to make copies for each week.
WEEKLY PROGRESS REPORT

Student’s Name: ___________________________  Week #: ___________________________
Youth’s Initials: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________

Goals:  Was goal achieved?  Efforts to achieve?

Days and times with youth:

Other efforts to meet with youth (Include where you looked for youth, how long you stayed, who you called, etc.):

Total hours on case:

Total hours of one-on-one time with youth:

Total hours with youth's significant others:
Behavioral agreement activities:
1 = not applicable
2 = Engaged in general assessment activities
3 = Discussed behavioral agreement with youth
4 = Discussed behavioral agreement with mediator(s)
5 = Discussed behavioral agreement with youth & mediator(s)
6 = Negotiated behavioral agreement with youth & mediator(s)
7 = Negotiated and implemented behavioral agreement
8 = Monitored a behavioral agreement

Total number of behavioral agreement activities:

Please indicate the number of hours during the past week you worked in the following advocacy areas. If you have not worked in a listed area, please write “0.0”.

1. General assessment
2. School
3. Employment/Jobs
4. Advocacy for Parents/Significant Others
5. Legal System
6. Recreational Activities

Any issues?
Termination Packet

The termination pack should provide information that allows your youth to review the varied techniques used throughout the intervention. The pack should reflect your youth’s current interests and desires. It should also anticipate the youth’s future goals, needs, and skills. Below is an example of a termination packet. For this example, assume your youth to be a fifteen-year-old boy, named Chris, with interests in mechanics (small engine repair), electronics, and basketball (he wants to play for the school team this year). He is in the ninth grade, but has a number of ninth grade credits from the previous academic year. He is skilled in mathematics and science. He would like to go to a two year, technical school to study electronic engineering. He might want to attend a four-year, technical school near his family. He has difficulty with Language Arts, particularly with reading. Currently, he has a fifteen-year-old girlfriend. He believes that he is in love. He states that they are sexually active. The family has limited resources. His mom and dad recently divorced. He lives with the mother but sees his father frequently. He wishes to get a job so that he can help with the finances around the house and do fun things with his girlfriend.

Example Termination Pack Outline

School

Plan of study to assure graduation with his class
Resources available to assist with Language Arts tutoring
Study skills-Techniques for improving reading skills
Resources to capitalize on his skills and interest in math and science (e.g. math/science camps)
Adults (in school and community) identified as daily supports
Assertive communication techniques

Recreation

List of free and/or inexpensive activities local to Chris’ home/school
List of community centers (e.g. Boy’s Club)
List of basketball camp’s and sources of funding assistance
Practice techniques and workout routines
Do’s and don’ts of “making the team”
List of new activities (newspapers, community calendars, etc.)
How to beat “teen boredom”

Vocation

Information on technical education
Steps to getting into post-secondary institutions
Funding sources for college
Local employment resources
Job shadow/apprenticeship opportunities
Interview skills

**Life Skills**

Relationships
Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior
Banking and Investing
Appendix B
APPENDIX B

Reports

Mid-Intervention Report

The mid-intervention report is a document intended for Court personnel. The mid-intervention should accomplish the following:

Update the case
Outline unmet needs
Review advocacy strategies
Discuss efficacy of implemented strategies
Introduce your youth’s strengths
Outline goals for the rest of the intervention.

This document should be written using a professional voice. Think about your audience and remember that you are presenting a case review. Further, you should emphasize the positive without hiding important facts and situations.

Please head the document with:

Your name
Your youth’s name
Date assigned, and
Date of the report.

Prior to its due date, you should bring an initial draft of your mid-intervention report to class. Your colleagues will provide feedback and over revision ideas.

Mid-intervention reports are due, in class, at the halfway point in your intervention. For most situations, this will be week 9. Please see the sample report format on the next page.
Advocate Name: [your name here]
Youth Initials: [initials here]
Dates of Intervention: [date assigned]-[present date]

[The first paragraph should describe ADP briefly and your role as an advocate (i.e. in one sentence). Then you should state when you were assigned the case, when you had your initial meeting, how many times you have met, the total number of hours you have spent with your youth, what week you are in, and how many weeks are left.]

[The second paragraph should describe the strengths you identified in your youth, focusing on those around which you developed your goals.]

[The third paragraph should discuss the specific goals you and your youth have set for the intervention and what has been done thus far to work toward these goals.]

[The fourth paragraph should discuss your plans for the remainder of the intervention, particularly what you plan to do to meet any unmet goals, any new goals you and your youth have added, and how you plan to meet any new goals.]

[your name], MSU ADP Advocate [instructor name], MSU ADP Instructor

DUE AT THE END OF THE NINTH WEEK. REVISIONS DUE ONE WEEK AFTER REPORT IS HANDED BACK (TYPICALLY WEEK ELEVEN).
Termination Report

This report is similar to the mid-intervention report. You need to write for the same audience and in a professional voice. In addition to all of the elements included in a mid-intervention report, you should include projected goals and needs for your youth. These can be offered as recommendations for the people and systems involved with your youth.

The termination report is due on the last week of your intervention. As with the mid-intervention report, you will bring an initial draft to class the week prior to its due date. Please see the sample termination report format on the next page.
MSU ADOLESCENT DIVERSION PROJECT
Termination Report
[date]

Advocate Name: [your name here]
Youth Initials: [initials here]
Dates of Intervention: [date assigned]-[termination date]

[The first paragraph will be similar to the beginning of your mid-intervention report. You should describe ADP and your role as an advocate briefly (i.e. in one sentence). Then you should state when you were assigned the case, when you had your initial meeting, how many times you have met, and the total number of hours you have spent with your youth.]

[The second paragraph should provide a summary of your impressions of your youth’s strengths. It is especially nice to include anecdotal evidence from your time together to support this (e.g. I was especially struck by the maturity and responsibility X. Y. displayed when caring for his younger siblings.).]

[The third paragraph should explain how you used these strengths to set the goals for you intervention. You should then list the goals you and your youth set for the intervention.]

[The fourth paragraph should discuss how you and your youth worked toward the goals. You should include things you did alone (e.g. meetings with teachers, researching resources), things your youth did alone (e.g. working on coursework, following through on a behavioral agreement, filling out job applications, going to work), and things you did together. If any goals were not met, you should explain this here.]

[The fifth paragraph should discuss how your youth will continue to work on the goals you set. You should also mention any activities your youth became involved with as a part of the intervention that he/she will continue to do. (e.g. If you volunteered with your youth and they plan to continue volunteering at the same place.).]

[your name], MSU ADP Advocate
[instructor name], MSU ADP Instructor

DUE ONE WEEK AFTER YOU FINISH YOUR INTERVENTION OR AT THE LAST CLASS, WHICHEVER IS SOONER. REVISIONS DUE BY THE END OF THE SEMESTER.