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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. interview	re: Dynamics of Relationships [partial] (1 page)	03/18/1988	b(6)
002. letter	Constituent to Patricia [partial] (1 page)	04/08/1987	b(6)
003. interview	re: Dynamics of Relationships [partial] (1 page)	03/18/1988	b(6)
004. list	re: Benson High School (Alternative Ed Program) (1 page)	10/1991	b(6)
005. list	re: Training Comments (2 pages)	n.d.	b(6)
006. letter	Letters from parents re: personal (2 pages)	ca. 1986	b(6)

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Youth and Violence [1]

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RESTRICTION CODES

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THE NEW YORK TIMES OP-ED MONDAY, MAY 17, 1999

Let Teen-Agers Try Adulthood

By Leon Botstein

The national outpouring after the Littleton shootings has forced us to confront something we have suspected for a long time: the American high school is obsolete and should be abolished. In the last month, high school students present and past have come forward with stories about cliques and the artificial intensity of a world defined by insiders and outsiders, in which the insiders hold sway because of superficial definitions of good looks and attractiveness, popularity and sports prowess.

The team sports of high school dominate more than student culture. A community's loyalty to the high school system is often based on the extent to which varsity teams succeed. High school administrators and faculty members are often former coaches, and the coaches themselves are placed in a separate, untouchable category. The result is that the culture of the inside elite is not contested by the adults in the school. Individuality and dissent are discouraged.

But the rules of high school turn out not to be the rules of life. Often the high school outsider becomes the more successful and admired adult. The definitions of masculinity and femininity go through sufficient transformation to make the game of popularity in high school an embarrassment. No other group of adults young or old is confined to an age-segregated environment, much like a gang in which individuals of the same age group define each other's world. In no workplace, not even in colleges or universities, is there such a narrow segmentation by chronology.

Given the poor quality of recruitment and training for high school teachers, it is no wonder that the curriculum and the enterprise of learning hold so little sway over young people. When puberty meets education and learning in modern

Leon Botstein, the president of Bard College, is the author of "Jefferson's Children: Education and the Promise of American Culture."

America, the victory of puberty masquerading as popular culture and the tyranny of peer groups based on ludicrous values meet little resistance.

By the time those who graduate from high school go on to college and realize what really is at stake in becoming an adult, too many opportunities have been lost and too much time has been wasted. Most thoughtful young people suffer the high school environment in silence and in their junior and senior years, mark time waiting for college to begin. The Littleton killers, above and beyond the psychological demons that drove them to violence, felt trapped in the artificiality of the high school world and believed it to be real. They engineered their moment of undivided attention and importance in the absence of any confidence that life after high school could have a different meaning.

High school is a failure not worth reforming.

Adults should face the fact that they don't like adolescents and that they have used high school to isolate the pubescent and hormonally active adolescent away from both the picture-book idealized innocence of childhood and the more accountable world of adulthood. But the primary reason high school doesn't work anymore, if it ever did, is that young people mature substantially earlier in the late 20th century than they did when the high school was invented. For example, the age of first menstruation has dropped at least two years since the beginning of this century, and not surprisingly, the onset of sexual activity has dropped in proportion. An institution intended for children in transition now holds young adults back well beyond the developmental point for which high school was originally designed.

Furthermore, whatever constraints to the presumption of adulthood among young people may have existed decades ago have now fallen away. Information and images, as well as the real and virtual freedom

of movement we associate with adulthood, are now accessible to every 15- and 16-year-old.

Secondary education must be rethought. Elementary school should begin at age 4 or 5 and end with the sixth grade. We should entirely abandon the concept of the middle school and junior high school. Beginning with the seventh grade, there should be four years of secondary education that we may call high school. Young people should graduate at 16 rather than 18.

They could then enter the real world, the world of work or national service, in which they would take a place of responsibility alongside older adults in mixed company. They could stay at home and attend junior college, or they could go away to college. For all the faults of college, at least the adults who dominate the world of colleges, the faculty, were selected precisely because they were exceptional and different, not because they were popular. Despite the often cavalier attitude toward teaching in college, at least physicists know their physics, mathematicians know and love their mathematics, and music is taught by musicians, not by graduates of education schools, where the disciplines are subordinated to the study of classroom management.

For those 16-year-olds who do not want to do any of the above, we might construct new kinds of institutions, each dedicated to one activity, from science to dance, to which adolescents could devote their energies while working together with professionals in those fields.

At 16, young Americans are prepared to be taken seriously and to develop the motivations and interests that will serve them well in adult life. They need to enter a world where they are not in a lunchroom with only their peers, estranged from other age groups and cut off from the game of life as it is really played. There is nothing utopian about this idea; it is immensely practical and efficient, and its implementation is long overdue. We need to face biological and cultural facts and not prolong the life of a flawed institution that is out of date. □

Please get book from library or buy it

THE WORD emerged during the Depression to define a new kind of American adolescence—one that prevailed for half a century and may now be ending

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE TEENAGER

BY THOMAS HINE

WHEN THE ANTHROPOLOGIST Margaret Mead journeyed to the South Pacific in 1926, she was looking for something that experts of the time thought didn't exist: untroubled adolescence.

Adolescence, psychologists and educators believed, was inevitably a period of storm and stress. It debilitated young men and women. It made their actions unpredictable, their characters flighty and undependable. And if people who had lived through their teens didn't remember being that unhappy, some said, it was because it had been so traumatic that their conscious minds had suppressed what really happened.

At the age of twenty-five, Mead, who wasn't all that far beyond adolescence herself, simply couldn't believe that this picture of life's second decade expressed a necessary or universal truth. If she could find a place where social and sexual maturity could be attained without a struggle, where adolescence was so peaceful it scarcely seemed to exist, her point would be made. So she went to Samoa.

There are few places left on earth remote enough to give a contemporary observer real



perspective on how Americans think about their young people. The teenager, with all the ideas about adolescence that the word encodes, is one of our most potent cultural exports. All around the world, satellites beam down MTV with its messages of consumption, self-indulgence, alienation, angst, and hedonism. The American invention of youth

has become thoroughly international; it causes consternation and sells products everywhere.

Still, although it is extremely difficult to travel far enough across the earth to escape our culture's ideas about teenagers, one can travel in time. Youth has a history, and since the European colonization of North America, the second decade of life has offered a tremendous diversity of expectations and experiences. They haven't all been good experiences; most were back-breaking, some horrifying. One needn't be nostalgic for those lost forms of youth in order to learn from them. Nobody wants to send young people off to the coal mines, as was done a century ago, or rent them out to neighboring households as servants,

Left: A high school football star and a cheerleader embrace after a victorious game in Seattle, 1955. Right: Two classmates embrace after the mass murder at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, 1999.

as seventeenth-century New Englanders did. Nevertheless, history can be our Samoa, a window into very different ways of thinking and behaving that can throw our own attitudes into sharp relief and highlight assumptions that we don't even know we're making.

Like Mead, who freely admitted that her research in Samoa was shaped by what she viewed as a problem in the American culture of her own time, I have set out on historical explorations spurred by a suspicion that something is deeply wrong with the way we think about youth. Many members of my generation, the baby boomers, have moved seamlessly from blaming our parents for the ills of society to blaming our children. Teenage villains, unwed mothers, new smokers, reckless drivers, and criminal predators are familiar figures in the media, even when the problems they represent are more common among other age groups. Cities and suburbs enact curfews and other laws that only young people need obey, while Congress and state legislatures find new ways to punish young offenders as adults.

The way we think about teenagers is most contradic-

The teenager was a product of the Great Depression. Like other massive projects of the New Deal—the Hoover Dam, the TVA—it represented an immense channeling and re-direction of energy. Unlike such public works, however, it was a more or less inadvertent invention. It happened in several steps.

First came the country's general economic collapse and a dramatic disappearance of jobs. As in previous panics and depressions, young people were among those thrown out of work. What was different was that after 1933, when Franklin D. Roosevelt took office, virtually all young people were thrown out of work, as part of a public policy to reserve jobs for men trying to support families. Businesses could actually be fined if they kept childless young people on their payrolls. Also, for the first two years of the Depression, the Roosevelt administration essentially ignored the needs of the youths it had turned out of work, except in the effort of the Civilian Conservation

Troubled youth a century ago: Album pages bear photos and descriptions of thirteen students who escaped from the Whittier State School for Boys, a California reform school, in 1898.

After 1933 virtually all young people were thrown out of work, and for the first time a majority of high-school-age Americans were actually enrolled.

work tory. We assume that they should be somehow protected from the world of work, yet many high school students work as much as twenty hours a week. Teenagers form the core of our low-wage retail and restaurant work force, the local equivalent of the even lower-wage overseas manufacturing work force that makes the footwear and other items teens covet.

Yet at the same time as our economy depends on the young, we tend to view teenagers as less than trustworthy. This is a hangover from the attitudes Mead was trying to fight, though nowadays we're likely to ascribe young people's perceived quirks to "raging hormones." Most adults seem to view this conflicted, contradictory figure of the teenager as inevitable, part of the growth of a human being. Yet many people now living came of age before there was anything called a teenager. This creature is a mid-twentieth-century phenomenon. And almost everything has changed since the early 1940s, when it emerged. Are teenagers still necessary?

The word *teenager* initially saw print in 1941. It isn't known who thought up the word; its appearance, in an article in *Popular Science*, was not likely its first use. People had been speaking of someone in his or her teens for centuries, but that was a description of an individual. To speak of someone as a teenager is to make that person a member of a very large group, one defined only by age but presumed to have a lot in common. The word arose when it did because it described something new.

Corps (CCC), which was aimed at men in their late teens and early twenties.

There was, however, one very old and established institution available to young people who wanted to do something with their time and energy: high school. The first public high school had opened in Boston in 1821, but secondary education was very slow to win acceptance among working-class families that counted on their children's incomes for survival. Not until 112 years after that first school opened were a majority of high-school-age Americans actually enrolled.

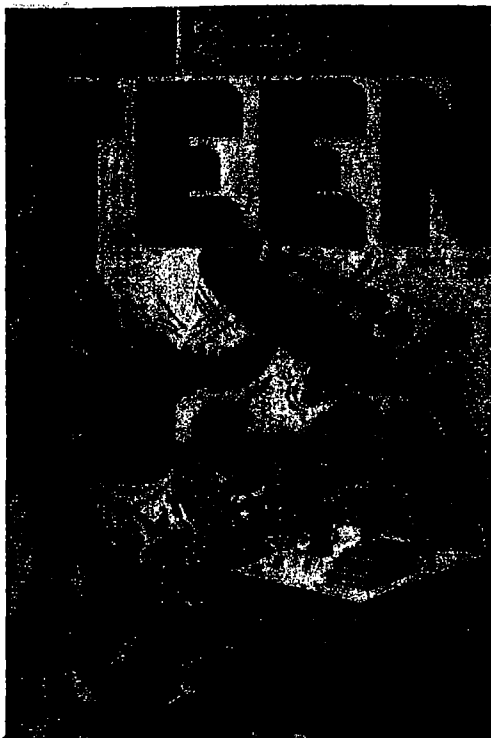
THE DEPRESSION WAS THE WORST POSSIBLE TIME FOR high school to catch on. The American public education system was, then as now, supported primarily by local real estate taxes; these had plummeted along with real estate values. Schools were laying off teachers even as they enrolled unprecedented numbers of students. They were ill equipped to deal with their new, diverse clientele.

For many of these new students, high school was a stop-gap, something one did to weather a bad time. But by 1940 an overwhelming majority of young people were enrolled, and perhaps more important, there was a new expectation that nearly everyone would go, and even graduate.

This change in standards was a radical departure in the way society imagined itself. Before the Depression finishing high school was a clear mark that a youth, particu-

larly a male, belonged to the middle class or above. Dropping out in the first or second year indicated membership in the working class. Once a large majority started going to high school, all of them, regardless of their economic or social status, began to be seen as members of a single group. The word *teenager* appeared precisely at the moment that it seemed to be needed.

Not long before, many young people in their mid-teens had been considered virtually grown up. Now that they were students rather than workers, they came to seem younger than before. During the 1920s "youth" in the movies had meant sexually mature figures, such as Joan Crawford, whom F. Scott Fitz-



and, more than likely, in every war that had ever been fought. By 1941 they had come to seem too young.

Having identified the teenager as a Frankenstein monster formed in the thirties by high school, Mickey Rooney movies, child psychology, mass manufacturing, and the New Deal, I might well have traced the story through bobbysoxers, drive-in movies, Holden Caulfield, Elvis, the

A familiar but not-quite-right foursome cuts up at the soda shop in an Archie Comics knockoff from the late 1940s.

civil rights martyr Emmett Till, top-forty radio, Gidget, the Mustang, heavy metal, Nirvana. Instead I found myself drawn farther into the past. While the teenager was a new

During the 1920s "youth" in the movies meant sexually mature figures like Joan Crawford. By the late 1930s it meant Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland.

gerald himself called the definitive flapper. Late in the 1930s a new kind of youth emerged in the movies, personified above all by the bizarre boy-man Mickey Rooney and the Andy Hardy movies he began to make in 1937. His frequent co-star Judy Garland was part of the phenomenon too. As Dorothy, in *The Wizard of Oz*, Garland was clearly a woman, not the girl everyone pretended she was. The tension between the maturity she feels and the childishness others see in her helps make the film more than a children's fantasy. It is an early, piquant expression of the predicament of the teenager.

Another less profound but amazingly enduring model for the emerging idea of the teenager was that perennial high schooler Archie, who first appeared in a comic book in 1941. He was drawn by Bob Montana, a teenager himself, who was working for a living as a staff artist at a comic book company. For the last half-century Archie, Jughead, Betty, Veronica, and their circle have appealed more to youngsters aspiring to become teenagers than to teenagers themselves.

Nevertheless, the early popularity of characters like Andy Hardy and Archie indicated that the view of high school students as essentially juvenile was catching on. A far stronger signal came when the draft was revived, shortly before the United States entered World War II. Although married men with families were eligible for induction, in many cases up to the age of forty, high school students were automatically deferred. Young men of seventeen, sixteen, and younger had been soldiers in all of America's previous wars

thing in 1940, it nevertheless was an idea with deep roots in our culture.

AT THE VERY DAWN OF ENGLISH SETTLEMENT IN NORTH America, Puritan elders were declaring that they had come to this savage continent for the sake of their children, who did not seem sufficiently grateful. (Like latter-day suburbanites, they had made the move for the sake of the kids.) They were also shocked by the sheer size of their children. Better nutrition caused Americans of European background to reach physical and sexual maturity sooner than their parents had and to grow larger than their parents. No wonder some early settlers fretted that their children were different from them and at risk of going native.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, there was a whole literature of complaint against both apprentices who affected expensive and exotic costumes and licentious young people given to nighttime "frolicks." Jonathan Edwards gave one of the most vivid descriptions of moral decline and then proceeded to deal with it by mobilizing youthful enthusiasm within the church. By the time of the American Revolution, half the population was under sixteen. Young women over eighteen were hard to marry off, as one upper-class observer noted, because their teeth were starting to rot. (Seemingly unrelated issues like dental hygiene have always played an unsung role in the way we define the ages of man and woman.)

Yet as youthful as the American population was, young people stood in the mainstream of social and economic

life. They were not the discrete group that today's teenagers are. "In America," wrote Alexis de Tocqueville in 1835, "there is in truth no adolescence. At the close of boyhood, he is a man and begins to trace out his own path."

Things were beginning to change, however. High school, the institution that would eventually define the teenager, had already been invented. By the second quarter of the nineteenth century, it was becoming clear that rapid changes in manufacturing, transport, and marketing meant that the children of merchants, skilled artisans, and professionals would live in a very different world from that of their parents. Adults could no longer rely on passing on their businesses or imparting their skills to their children, who would probably need formal schooling. Increasingly, prosperous Americans were having fewer children and investing more in their education.

At the time, most secondary schooling took place in privately operated academies. These varied widely in nature and quality, and for the most part students went to them only when they had both a need and the time. These schools didn't have fixed curricula, and students and teachers were constantly coming and going, since being a student was not yet a primary job. Students most often stayed at boarding-houses near the academies; they rarely lived at home.

The tax-supported high school, which by the 1860s had displaced the private academy, was based on a different set of assumptions. Attendance at it was a full-time activity, in which the student adjusted to the school's schedule, not vice versa. Whereas academies had been the product of a society in which most economic activity happened in the home, high school evolved in tandem with the ideal of the bourgeois home, protected from the world of work and presided over by a mother who was also the primary moral teacher. High school students, by definition, led privileged, sheltered lives.

Most academies had enrolled only males, but nearly all high schools were from the outset coeducational. There was some public consternation over mixing the sexes at so volatile an age, but most cities decided that providing separate schools was too costly. High schools were acceptable places to send one's daughter because they were close to home. Moreover, their graduates were qualified to teach elementary school, a major employment opportunity for young women. The result was that females constituted a majority of the high school population. Moreover, male graduates were likely to be upper class, since they included only those who didn't have to drop out to work, while female graduates represented a wider social range.

Some of the early high schools were conceived as more practical and accessible alternatives to college. In a relatively short time, however, high school curricula became dominated by Latin and algebra, the courses required by the most selective colleges. Parents looked to win advantage for their children, so a "good" high school became one whose students went on to top colleges.

The earliest high schools treated their students almost as adults and allowed them to make decisions about their

social lives. Students organized their own extracurricular activities and played on athletic teams with older men and workers. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, however, high schools increasingly sought to protect their charges from the dangers of the larger world. They organized dances so that their students wouldn't go to dance halls. They organized sports so that students would compete with others their own age. They created cheerleading squads, in the hope that the presence of females would make boys play less violently. They discovered and promoted that ineffable quality "school spirit," which was supposed to promote loyalty, patriotism, and social control. By the turn of the twentieth century, the football captain could escort the chief cheerleader to the senior prom.

This all sounds familiar, but this high school crowd still accounted for less than 10 percent of the secondary-school-age population. Nearly all the rest were working, most of them with their families on farms, but also in factories, mines, and department stores, in the "street trades" (as newspaper hawkers or delivery boys), in the home doing piecework, or even as prostitutes. If early high school students are obvious predecessors to today's teenagers, their working contemporaries also helped create the youth culture.

ONE THING THE WORKING-CLASS YOUNG SHARED WITH high school students and with today's teenagers is that they were emissaries of the new. Parents wanted their children to be prepared for the future. Among the working class, a substantially immigrant population, newness was America itself. Throughout the nineteenth century settlement workers and journalists repeatedly observed the way immigrant parents depended on their children to teach them the way things worked in their new country. They also noted a generation gap, as parents tried to cling to traditions and values from the old country while their children learned and invented other ways to live. Parents both applauded and deplored their children's participation in a new world. Youth became, in itself, a source of authority. When contemporary parents look to their children to fix the computer, program the VCR, or tell them what's new in the culture, they continue a long American tradition.

For laboring purposes one ceased to be a child no later than the age of ten. In many states schooling was required until twelve or thirteen, but compulsory attendance laws were rarely strictly enforced. In Philadelphia in the 1880s the standard bribe to free one's child from schooling was twenty-five cents. This was an excellent investment, considering how dependent many families were on their children. In Fall River, Massachusetts, some mill owners hired only men who had able-bodied sons who could also work. In Scranton, Pennsylvania, children's incomes usually added up to more than their fathers'.

The working teenager is, of course, hardly extinct. American high school students are far more likely to have part-time jobs than are their counterparts in other developed countries, and their work hours are on average substantially

How to grow to
children this
street

longer. The difference is that families don't often depend on their wages for their livelihood. Teenagers today spend most of what they earn on their own cars, clothing, and amusement. Indeed, they largely carry such industries as music, film, and footwear, in which the United States is a world leader. Their economic might sustains the powerful youth culture that so many find threatening, violent, and crude.

WE CAN SEE THE ORIGINS OF THIS YOUTH CULTURE and of its ability to horrify in the young urban workers of the late nineteenth century. Young people, especially the rootless entrepreneurs of the street trades, were among the chief patrons of cheap theaters featuring music and melodrama that sprang up by the hundreds in the largest cities. (In Horatio Alger's hugely popular novels, the first stage of the hero's reform is often the decision to stay away from the theater and use the admission price to open a savings account.) They also helped support public dance halls, which promoted wild new forms of dancing and, many thought, easy virtue.

Adults are perennially shocked by the sexuality and the

was not, he argued, evidence of maturity. Their body changes were merely armaments in a struggle to achieve a higher state of being. "Youth awakes to a new world," he wrote, "and understands neither it nor himself." People in their teens were, he thought, recapitulating the stage of human evolution in which people ceased to be savages and became civilized. He worried that young people were growing up too quickly, and he blamed it on "our urbanized hothouse life that tends to ripen everything before its time." He believed it was necessary to fight this growing precocity by giving young people the time, space, and guidance to help them weather the tumult and pain of adolescence.

It is hard to believe that a book so unreadable could be so influential,

The twenty-five-year period following World War II was the classic era of the teenager. At the same time, though, teenagers were provoking a lot of anxiety.

physical vitality of the young. There is nevertheless a real difference between the surprise and fear parents feel when they see their babies grow strong and independent and the mistrust of young people as a class. One is timeless. The other dates from 1904 and the publication of G. Stanley Hall's fourteen-hundred-page *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*.

With this book Hall, a psychologist and the president of Clark University, invented the field of adolescent psychology. He defined adolescence as a universal, unavoidable, and extremely precarious stage of human development. He asserted that behavior that would indicate insanity in an adult should be considered normal in an adolescent. (This has long since been proved untrue, but it is still widely believed.) He provided a basis for dealing with adolescents as neither children nor adults but as distinctive, beautiful, dangerous creatures. That people in their teens should be considered separately from others, which seems obvious to us today, was Hall's boldest, most original, and most influential idea.

The physical and sexual development of young people

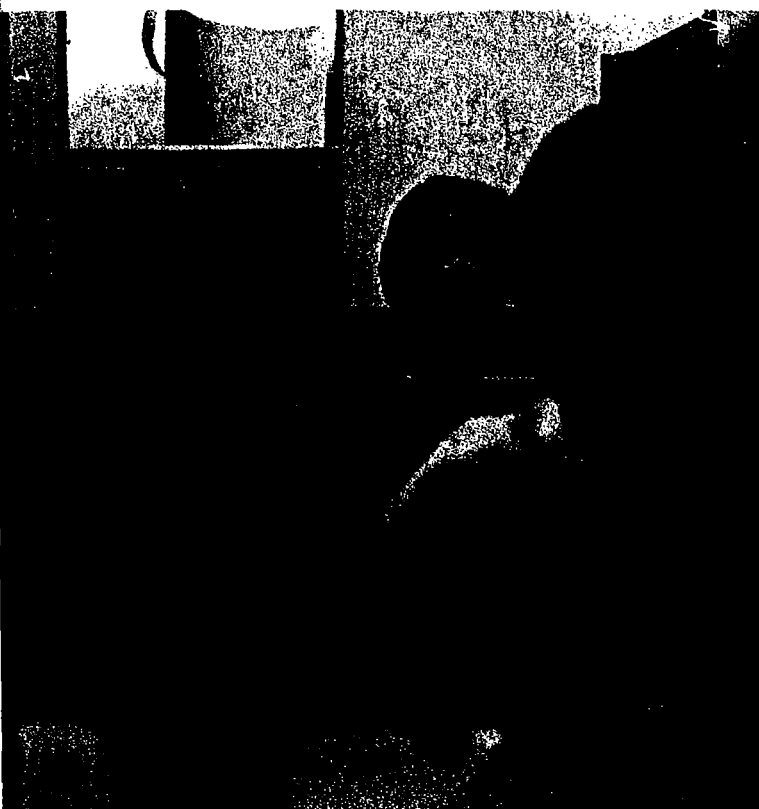


but the size and comprehensiveness of Hall's discussion of adolescents lent weight and authority to other social movements whose common aim was to treat people in their teens differently from adults and children. Among the book's supporters were secondary school educators who found in Hall's writing a justification for their new enthusiasm about moving beyond academic training to shape the whole person. They

also found in it a justification for raising the age for ending compulsory school attendance.

Hall's book coincided as well with the rise of the juvenile-court movement, whose goal was to treat youth crime as a problem of personal development rather than as a transgression against society. This view encouraged legislatures and city councils to enact laws creating curfews and other "status offenses"—acts affecting only young people. (A decade earlier women's organizations had successfully campaigned to raise the age of consent for sex in most states, which greatly increased the number of statutory-rape prosecutions.)

Hall's findings also gave ammunition to advocates of child-labor laws. Their campaigns were for the most part unsuc-



Two girls freshen up during a church supper in Virginia, 1958. Opposite: Prom night in Maryland, 1953.

thoroughly discredited. These two seminal thinkers on adolescence represented extreme views, and adolescence is of course both biological and cultural. The changes it brings are unmistakable, but countless external factors shape what it means to be a grown-up in a particular place and time.

In a dynamic society like that of the United States, the nature of adolescence must inevitably shift over time.

Indeed, Mead's research, which concentrated on young women, was a product of the sexual revolution of the 1920s, in which female sexuality was widely acknowledged for the first time. Prostitution was on the decrease, and the sexual activity of "respectable" young women was rising. In *This Side of Paradise* F. Scott Fitzgerald's young Princetonians were amazed at how easy it was to be kissed. But the protagonist in the novel gives what proved to be an accurate account of what was going on. "Just as a cooling pot gives off heat," she says, "so all through youth and adolescence we give off calories of virtue. That's what's called ingenuousness." Short skirts, bobbed hair, corset checkrooms at dances, and petting parties were seen by people at the time as symptoms of libertinism among the "flaming youth," but when Kinsey interviewed members of this generation three decades later, he learned that the heat had been more finely calibrated than it appeared. Young women had been making their chastity last as long as they needed it to. It turned out that while 40 percent of females in their teens and 50 percent of males petted to orgasm in the 1920s—nearly twice the pre-war rate—petting was most common among those who had had the most schooling. While commentators focused on the antics of the upper classes, working-class young people, who were closer to marriage, were twice as likely to have gone beyond and had sexual intercourse.

DESPITE ENDURING POPULAR INTEREST IN MEAD'S FINDINGS, Hall's notion that adolescence is an inevitable crisis of the individual has, over the years, been more potent. (Perhaps it speaks more forcefully to our individualistic culture than does Mead's emphasis on shared challenges and values.) Certainly, during the post-World War II era, when the teenager grew to be a major cultural and economic phenomenon, the psychoanalytic approach dominated. J. D. Salinger's Holden Caulfield, literature's most famous teenager, has an unforgettable voice and great charm, but it is difficult to read *Catcher in the Rye* today without feeling that Holden's problems are not, as he hopes, a phase he's going through but truly pathological. While Salinger doesn't make a judgment in the book, 1950s readers would most likely have thought Holden just another troubled adolescent, albeit an uncommonly interesting one.

When Hall was writing, at the turn of the twentieth century, he generalized about adolescents from a group that was still a small minority, middle-class youths whose main occupation was schooling. In all of his fourteen hundred pages, he never mentioned the large number of young peo-

cessful, but employment of children and teens dropped during the first two decades of the twentieth century anyway, as machines replaced unskilled manufacturing jobs in many industries. In the years after Hall's book came out, manufacturers increasingly spoke of workers in their teens as unreliable, irresponsible, and even disruptive. They had stopped thinking of fourteen-year-olds as young ordinary workers and begun to view them as adolescents.

Each of these movements was seen as a progressive attempt to reform American society, and their advocates certainly had their hearts in the right place. But the price for young people was a stigma of incompetence, instability, and even insanity. Adolescents couldn't be counted on. Hall even argued that female adolescents be "put to grass" for a few years and not allowed to work or attend school until the crisis had passed.

This was the orthodoxy Mead was trying to combat when she wrote *Coming of Age in Samoa*. She wanted to disprove Hall's psychoanalytic assertion that adolescence is inherent to all human development and replace it with the anthropological view that cultures invent the adolescence they need. Maturity, she argued, is at least as much a matter of social acceptance as it is of an individual's physical and mental development. In Samoa, she said, adolescence was relatively untroubled, because it didn't have to accomplish very much. The society changed little from generation to generation. Roles were more or less fixed. Young people knew from childhood what they should expect. American adolescence was more difficult because it had to achieve more, although she clearly didn't believe it had to be quite so horrible as Hall and his followers thought.

Serious questions have been raised about some of Mead's methods and findings in Samoa, and Hall's theories have been

ple who still had to work to help support their families. Half a century later American society was more or less as Hall had described it, and just about everyone could afford to have an adolescence.

The twenty-five-year period following the end of World War II was the classic era of the teenager. Family incomes were growing, which meant that more could be spent on each child and educational aspirations could rise. Declining industries, such as radio and the movies, both of which were threatened by television, remade themselves to appeal to the youth market. Teenage culture gave rise to rock 'n' roll. Young people acquired automobiles of their own and invented a whole new car culture.

At the same time, though, teenagers were provoking a lot

Jailed for robbery in 1945, these two Iowa boys, fourteen and seventeen, escaped with the help of girlfriends.

of anxiety. Congressional committees investigated juvenile delinquency for a decade. High schools and police forces took action against a rising wave of youth crime, a phenomenon that really didn't exist. Moreover, there were indications that not all teenagers were happy in their presumed immaturity. Many, if not most, of the pop icons of the

time, from Elvis on down, were working-class outsiders who embodied a style very different from that of the suburban teen.

And many teenagers were escaping from their status in a more substantive way, by getting married. The general prosperity meant that there were jobs available in which the high school dropout or graduate could make enough to support a family. In 1960 about half of all brides were under



Teenagers

FROM PURITAN NEW ENGLAND TO LITTLETON in 1999

...youth violence has been a fact of American life and a frequent national preoccupation

THEY ARE ARKANS. THEY ARE OHIOANS. THEY ARE CALIFORNIANS. These sentiments sound chillingly up-to-date, as current as the latest suburban high school massacre or big-city gang killing. In fact, youth crime—and especially adult fear of youth crime—has been a perennial American concern. An apprentice father his daughter's terrible old daughter in seventeenth-century Massachusetts. A son shoots his father and mother with a rifle on the Kentucky frontier. Street gangs terrorize neighborhoods in nineteenth-century New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore. Indeed, though the word *teenager* is about sixty years old, and *adolescent* has been used in its current sense for about ninety-five years, Americans have been speaking of and fretting about "juvenile delinquents" for nearly two centuries.

Throughout our history young Americans have shocked their elders by the callousness and brutality of their crimes and prompted worries that violence is an outgrowth of our national character. "Their crimes have the unrestrained and sanguinary character of a race accustomed to overcoming all obstacles," wrote the social reformer Charles Loring Brace in his celebrated 1872 book *The Dangerous Classes of New York*. "They rifle a bank, where English thieves pick a pocket; they murder where European proletaires cudgel or fight with fists." The murder of an unoffending old man is nothing to them.

Young people's bloody deeds seem perpetually unprecedented. "Younger and younger children commit more and more serious and violent acts," wrote Dr. Fredric Wertham in his sensational 1953 bestseller *The*

Reduction of the Innocent. "Even psychotic children did not act like this fifteen years ago." Wertham blamed gore, sadistic comic books. Among the criminals he cited was a fourteen-year-old who in 1950 fired a rifle from the window of a New York apartment house, shooting to death a man watching the Giants play baseball at the Polo Grounds. Such acts of apparently random violence often have a strong impact on public opinion, touching off, as they did in the 1950s, panic over juvenile crime.

IN FACT, THE POST-WORLD WAR II era was a time of declining youth crime. The same is true of the 1990s, another period in which teenage violence has been an important public issue. Statistics never galvanize attention as powerfully as do two or three horrible incidents. There

twenty. In 1959 teenage pregnancy reached its all-time peak, but nearly all the mothers were married.

This post-World War II era brought forth the third key thinker on American adolescence, the psychologist Erik Erikson. He assumed, like Hall, that adolescence was inherent to human development and that an identity crisis, a term he invented, was necessarily a part of it. But he also acknowledged that this identity must be found in the

context of a culture and of history. He argued that not only does adolescence change over the course of history but it also is the time when individuals learn to adapt themselves to their historical moment. "The identity problem changes with the historical period," he wrote. "That is, in fact, its job." While earlier thinkers on adolescence had made much of youthful idealism, Erikson argued that one of the tasks of adolescence was to be fiercely realistic about one's society and time.

He did not think that forging an identity in such a complex and confusing society as ours was easy for most people. He wanted adolescence to be what he termed "a psycho-social moratorium," to allow people the time and space to get a sense of how they would deal with the world of which they would be a part. Among the results would be an occupational identity, a sense of how one would support and express oneself.

And so ideas about the nature of adolescence have shaped our image of teenagers. When it comes to the image of New York City, the amount of attention Americans have paid to the city's problems is a testament to the power of the media. The city's problems, from the drug wars to the AIDS epidemic, have been a constant presence in the news. The city's problems have been a constant presence in the news. The city's problems have been a constant presence in the news.



Four Kansas seniors pass the time before graduation in the late 1970s.

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One such account, by Miguel Alemán, was published in the *New York Times* in 1979.



agers. Reclassifying all people of secondary school age as teenagers wasn't possible until nearly all had some period of adolescence before entering adult life. Still, *teenager* isn't just another word for *adolescent*. Indeed, the teenager may be, as Edgar Z. Friedenberg argued in a 1959 book, a failed adolescent. Being a teenager is, he said, a false identity, meant to short-circuit the quest for a real one. By giving people superficial roles to play, advertising, the mass media, and even the schools confuse young people and leave them dissatisfied and thus open to sales pitches that promise a deepening of identity.

Whether you agree with that argument or not, it does seem evident that the challenges of adolescence have been changing rapidly in the last several decades, leaving the label "teenager" as little more than a lazy way of talking about young people. The term encompasses a contradictory grab bag of beliefs, prejudices, and expectations. It can allow us to build a wall around



an age group and to assume that its members' problems can safely be ignored.

Students in Orinda, California, endure junior high school in 1958.

The generation entering its teens today will be in sheer number, if not as a percentage of the population, the largest in our history. The people in this age group have already emerged as the most significant marketing phenomenon since the baby boom. They have spurred the opening of new teen-oriented clothing stores in malls and the launching of successful

October 1, 1999

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Clinton:

On behalf of the civil rights and children's advocacy communities, we are writing to bring to your attention a matter of serious concern to us and which we believe to be a most basic issue of fundamental fairness in the justice system.

It is well documented that the racial disparities which exist in the treatment of minorities in our society are reflected in our juvenile justice system as well. We strongly believe that any final juvenile justice legislation must address the issue of the disproportionate confinement of minority youth in the juvenile justice system. While the House bill maintains this requirement, the Senate bill essentially guts the current law requirement which directs states to identify the extent to which disproportionate minority confinement (DMC) exists in their states, to assess the reason that it exists, and to develop strategies to address the disproportionate number of minority children in confinement.

We believe it is critically important to retain this core requirement in federal law. In nearly every state, minority youth are over-represented at every stage of the juvenile justice system, particularly in secure confinement. Moreover, federal and state research—ironically much of it funded through the provision which the Senate has substantially repealed—has consistently shown that minority youth are more likely than white youth to be detained for the same charges and minorities are detained at higher rates even when other factors are taken into account, such as arrest charge, prior offenses, gender and home living situation. By gutting the DMC provision, the issue of the widespread disparity in the treatment of minority youth will be minimized and current efforts underway in the states to remedy this disparate treatment of minority youth would be seriously undermined.

We applaud the Administration for taking a strong stance as shown in the Statement of Administration Policy this past August on the juvenile justice legislation, and we stand ready to work with you to ensure that this provision is not only maintained in the final juvenile justice bill, but that efforts continue to be implemented at the state and community level to ensure a fairer and more equitable juvenile justice system for all of America's children and youth.

Sincerely,

ACLU
Amnesty International
ASPIRA
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Defense Fund
Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quaker)
Human Rights Watch
Justice Policy Institute
Latino Civil Rights Center
Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
League of United Latin American Citizens
NAACP
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Council of La Raza
National Legal Aid and Defender Association
National Network for Youth
National Urban League, Inc.
The Sentencing Project
Youth Law Center

Patricia Kramer, Educational Consultant & Trainer
3371 Beaverwood Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland 20906

(301) 871-9665

August 21, 1999

Mrs. Hillary Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Hillary:

I know that you are deeply concerned about the welfare and well-being of all young people in this country. I share your concern and I too am greatly troubled by the despair that is rampant among them. Their physical and mental health are greatly at-risk as we are about to enter the new millennium. I am writing to you because I believe that you are committed to improving the quality of life that youth today are currently exposed to. And I believe that I have some workable solutions that have had enjoyed success across the world.

The forces that produce alienated young people are growing at a dangerous rate. The power of the family and school has eroded. Many students perceive school as a negative place—a place they simply don't want to be. They hear too often from teachers, *"Don't do this; Don't do that; You did it wrong."* Many students see school as a place where teachers use their power to control them. They find many of their teachers out of sync with the times and the real world. Many of their teachers still lecture in front of a room and teach material hardly relevant to their lives.

One study suggests that 80 percent of all kids enter school feeling good about themselves, but by fifth grade the figure drops to 20 percent. By the time they're ready to graduate, only 5 percent have any self-esteem left. It is not surprising if at school they receive on average the equivalent of 60 days a year of reprimanding, nagging and punishment. During 10 years of schooling, a student is subjected to 15,000 negative statements—three times the amount of positive reinforcement received. And at home much of the same pattern is followed. The little bit of time most parents spend with their children, they often end up nagging, criticizing and disciplining. Is it any wonder why so many young people turn off, tune-out, lose interest in school and academic achievement? It shouldn't surprise us that many productive, potentially successful youth simply drop out—ultimately leading to criminal or gang involvement.

If teachers and parents aren't listening they cannot hear their students. But if they cannot reach their students or children, then they cannot teach them. Just as a child who needs glasses and cannot see will not be a good learner, and a child who is hungry or homeless will have difficulty with schoolwork—if indeed attends school at all—a child who lives among drugs and violence or in a state of constant or emotional pain is ill-prepared to flourish academically or to find a place in society in which to flourish. If we only approach this economically, a child who doesn't learn today won't earn tomorrow. But if we examine this issue on a more humane level, then we must acknowledge the strong possibility that child may not be alive tomorrow.

It is imperative, therefore, that teachers be trained or retrained to better deal with young people and their problems because—like it or not—they will be confronted with

them daily. And if not handled, these students and their problems will continue to disrupt the classroom. Then all students will suffer the consequence and no one will have the opportunity to learn. As I travel around this country, I hear teachers often cry out. Many are angry because they are being asked to do something they were not hired to do. Most are just frustrated because they feel so helpless. They want to help their students. They simply don't know how. During one of my presentations at a recent At-Risk conference, one of the teachers in the audience began to cry. When she approached me at the end of the session and I asked her why she was crying, she replied, *"I recently began teaching a class of at-risk students and you described exactly all the problems my students are having. I just don't know what to do and I feel so sad that can't help them."* I am convinced that the key to reaching students and building a more supportive school environment is to help educators find innovative ways to empower students.

How can we blame teachers—even in some cases discipline them—for doing the best they could with what they have? They must be taught not only to deal with but to help troubled students. And, unfortunately, our colleges of education are not preparing new teachers to deal with the scourge of social problems and the ensuing disruptive behaviors occurring in the classroom. I am convinced that the key to reaching students and building a more supportive school environment is to help educators find innovative ways to empower students. I believe that it is imperative that we help teachers explore their own attitudes and expectations that often get in the way of their reaching kids productively and positively. Yet with all the talk about restructuring education, we have not heard much about the teacher/student relationship.

Hillary, a few years ago I had the opportunity of reading and reviewing 14 drug-free school grants for the Department of Education. Upon completion, I do not know whether I was angrier or sadder at the thought that we are continuing to fund programs that simply will have little, if any affect on drug use or for that matter reducing any other social problem. Most of the potential programs that I read about were no more than a bandaid approach. You cannot continue to put a bandaid on a wound so deep that life is slowly oozing out and expect the person to be cured. We must stop this waste of taxpayers' money and we must stop this waste of young lives who are dying each day—physically, emotionally and spiritually. Drugs and alcohol are not killing our youth— **HOPELESSNESS** is. And it may very well be the most deadly and the most pervasive disease affecting young people this century.

Donna Shalala was quoted some years ago as saying "Reducing drug use among students requires a different kind of strategy that will be part of an overall illness prevention plan". Yet we have spent millions on "drug education" like the DARE program which has shown to have no effect on drug usage. " A few years ago, I met with Shay Bilchuk, Director of the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention to share my concerns that we mustn't make the same mistakes that we made with drug education programs that were so one dimensional. I queried about the plans to commit big bucks on conflict-resolution programs that would—in essence, be limited to teaching non-violent problem-solving skills in a vacuum. That vacuum takes away the opportunity for young people to learn the kinds of holistic social skills that will prevent them from acting out in destructive ways. We have also had enough of the crisis-intervention approach (e.g. gun cōntrōl) that simply has not worked as attested by the rising statistics of social ills plaguing young people and their families. It may very well be that the only way to stop or prevent drug abuse and violent and gang activities is to empower young people—through the development of programs that give youth the tools they need to make healthy choices and appropriate decisions about every segment of their lives.

Prevention programs should be as basic as math and science and should begin in early elementary grades and continue throughout the child's education so they can move with ease into adult responsibility. That way appropriate relationship skills for living are learned daily and come as naturally as speaking or eating. How strange that we won't hire a lawyer or accountant or even a plumber without all kinds of training or degrees, but we let young people grow up and take on the two most difficult jobs on the planet without any skills at all. Those jobs are being a parent and being a partner in some kind of relationship—whether intimate or professional.

I am the author of **"The Dynamics of Relationships: Life-Skills for Creating a Healthier & Happier Life,"** implemented in schools around the country which is one such program that would not only help to empower students, but would also give them the opportunity to talk to many friendly and supportive people while learning coping skills, social skills and survival skills. Teacher's who facilitate the course often say that kids skip other classes to be there, they are never late and Leroy Swain, a social studies teacher in Washington DC schools said **"the course was truly a bridge over some troubled waters for many of the students. I personally believe that this program was the missing ingredient that kept some of my seniors from dropping out of school. As a matter of fact it was the sole reason why they hung in there until June and graduated."**

A couple of years ago I visited a DC school where the course is being taught. The teacher mentioned a young man who occasionally came to school high on marijuana. She said the class was making some headway with him because he had cut down on his drug use since beginning the class. At the end of the session, I asked Ronald if he would stay awhile and talk with me. He seemed to be a bright and caring young man in spite of his drug use. I asked him why he gets high. He said "the pressure was is great and everyone is carrying guns". *"If you looked at them funny they would shoot you"*. I also asked him what he thought we could do about the violence—the rampant killing in Washington—especially among the youth. He first said, "get the guns off the street" and then he said ***"maybe if we could get more kids to take this course, we could stop some of the killing"***. The next day Ronald came to class "straight" and asked if he could lead the class in their lesson and discussion on anger. **EXACTLY ONE WEEK LATER, RONALD GRIFFIN WAS SHOT IN THE BACK AND KILLED BLOCKS FROM SCHOOL BY STUDENTS.** When the teacher called me crying and told me about his murder, I cannot tell you the rage and the pain that I felt at that moment. And when I saw his mother on TV that night saying, ***"It's not fair, he was a nice boy and now I will never be able to hold him again,"*** my heart cried out and my rage deepened. He was a nice boy and he deserved a chance to grow up and enjoy a productive and happy life like all our children deserve. **SOMEONE MUST LISTEN—NOT JUST TO ME BUT TO THE KIDS— BECAUSE THEY FEEL THAT NO ONE IS LISTENING—NO ONE CARES, NOTHING MATTERS. AND THAT FEELING OF HOPELESSNESS IS KILLING THEM.** (Five years ago another young man at another DC school where the course was offered said to me during a taped interview: **"If we could get every kid to take this class, we could stop the killing."** (I sent that tape to Mayor Barry and the Superintendent of DC schools at the time and no one bothered to listen then either.)

HILLARY, I BEG YOU TO HELP ME STOP THIS RAMPANT VIOLENCE—THIS NEEDLESS LOSS OF YOUNG LIVES AND THE PAIN OF SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES.

My goal is to see programs like mine offered in every school in America so that young people have a much needed arena in which to deal with the myriad of social

problems they face. That arena can offer students: a) a non-structured support system that nurtures and cares about them and really listens to what they have to say; b) a chance to see that other kids feel exactly the way they do about many of the problems confronting them (Many teen suicides are a result of the isolation and alienation that so many feel); and c) the opportunity to learn skills that can protect them and prevent them from falling prey to any one of the horrific disasters that are taking the lives of our young people everyday emotionally and physically.

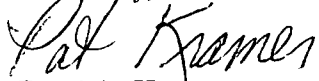
The three R's for the new millennium must become **"Respect, Responsibility and Relationships."** If the goal of education is to prepare young people for the future, we must begin to teach them how to get along with others while respecting themselves at the same time. Teaching young people how to live with one another, how to be supportive and nurturing, how to show respect for each other and to have dignity for one's self are the real **'basics'** that children must learn if they are to survive in the 21st century. If we simply teach children to read and write and they can't hold on to a job, can't stay married, abuse their spouses and/or children, become drug addicts or alcoholics feel out of control or even violent when they can't deal with feelings of anger or stress, what have we really accomplished?

We no longer have the luxury of sitting back hoping that parents or churches are helping our children to deal with the myriad of obstacles and problems confronting. We can no longer tell our children to just say **NO** without giving them the tools they need to cope with an ever-changing and dangerous society. And crisis-intervention and the typical six-week drug/conflict-resolution education programs can no longer be the appropriate or effective model. Hillary, you and I know that educators and youth workers can no longer take the same old path that they've been taking for years.

"If you always do what you've always done—you'll always get what you've always gotten." School administrators cannot continue to live in a *world that was*, while our youth continue living in a *world that is*. If we don't change our approach—which means no more sitting back and reacting to crises—we will continue to **get what we've always gotten—AND MORE OF WHAT HAPPENED AT COLUMBINE HIGH SCHOOL and other schools around the country.**

I have enclosed a copy of the secondary program for your review along with some additional background information that will let you see the diverse response and reaction to this program in schools across the country and the variety of settings in which it is being implemented. After you have had some time to review it, I would like the opportunity to meet with you and/or a member of your staff to discuss this further. Thank you for taking the time to look this over **AND THANK YOU FOR CARING.**

Sincerely,


Patricia Kramer

People to Watch

February 1986/The Washingtonian

PATRICIA KRAMER ▶

She Lives on a \$12-a-Week Food Budget While Programming Kids for Better Lives

"If young people and parents would start early to make their relationships work, we could avert many social ills," says Pat Kramer. Her book, *The Dynamics of Relationships*, is a 300-page bible for teenagers on self-esteem, sexuality, marriage, and communication. It is the text for pilot courses at Cardozo, Anacostia, Ballou, and Dunbar high schools.

"At first teachers said the kids wouldn't be able to grasp it," Kramer says, but surveys show it's working. "It helped me deal with my anger," a student said. "I learned that drugs are a one-way ticket to death," said another. When Kramer appeared recently on *The Larry King Show*, 50 long-distance book orders poured in within hours.

Kramer, 41, a native Washingtonian, is blond and fiercely determined. After graduation from Coolidge High, she married,

went through a painful divorce six years later, then, always having wanted to be a social worker, earned a psychology degree. Tuition money came from odd jobs, one as a zoo keeper, where she was clawed by a lion. After persuading DC schools to try her program, she wrote the text in six months on a borrowed Apple computer. She trains the teachers. Her aim: to get the course into every US high school. "This is what I want my life to be about," she says.

Developing the program has put Kramer into debt. She lives on a shoestring in Kensington, renting out part of her home. "I work eighteen to twenty hours a day on this. I don't spend more than \$12 a week on food. I'm burned out, and I'm tired," Kramer says. "I decided if it didn't succeed by December 31, I'd get a job. Now I think it's catching on."



Updating SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

Volume 18/Number 9/October 1987

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Schools must teach kids how to cope

by Patricia Kramer

Most people define "at-risk" students as those who are likely to drop out of school. But opting out of school is only a first step. At-risk students are at risk of dropping out of society—literally and figuratively.

Scope of problem

A recent survey found that "90 percent of high school students in the United States feel that their lives are *useless*." And a 1985 Education Commission of the States (ECS) report stated, "... at least 15 percent of Americans between the ages of 16 and 19 are unlikely to become productive adults because they are 'disconnected' from society as a result of drug abuse, delinquency, pregnancy, unemployment, and dropping out of school."

School board members may be tired of hearing statistics about the social ills plaguing young people today. But they bear repeating. Too few school systems are responding to the children's cries.

Whose responsibility?

When teenagers feel that their lives are "useless," is any one institution or group to blame?

Should parents be blamed—for getting divorced or being too busy; churches—for not being able to hold young people's spiritual interest; the judicial system—because it lets too many young people go unpunished when charged with a crime; government—for laws that are too lax and programs that are uncoordinated and inadequate; the

media—for its disregard of young viewers and its promotion of sex and violence; rock videos—for their exploitation of young women and promotion of sex?

Perhaps our educational system should be blamed for saying, "Our role is to teach students to read and write—the *basics*. Leave the job of developing the social side of young people to the family and church."

Few would disagree that teaching values, morals and appropriate behavior is a parental responsibility. Most parents attempt to do that. In a society that has such rigorous requirements for people who want to become doctors, lawyers, accountants, teachers—and plumbers and electricians, however, becoming a parent requires no similar prerequisites. Instead, people are expected to reach adulthood and take on the role of partner in all types of relationships (friendships, marriage, and business) and parent without any specific preparation.

Who will educate?

An article in a 1984 issue of *Family Life Educator* stated, "... Soviet leaders are concerned about the nation's skyrocketing divorce rate, especially among couples in their teens and twenties. So *compulsory* classes in 'hygienic and sexual education and the ethics and psychology of family life' are being inaugurated in all senior high schools."

The key to this message is that the Soviets recognized the value of taking a *preventive* approach. Most European schools have taken that same approach by implementing sex education as a part of the daily curriculum.

Within the United States, however,

where poll after poll shows that approximately 85 percent of parents want their children to participate in sex education classes, the majority of schools do not offer classes in sex education, family life, or interpersonal relationships. Those that do often squeeze them in between other "basics."

The most frequently heard excuses from school administrators about why they do not offer these courses are:

- "We have no room or time. We have rigid requirements that just don't allow for these elective courses."
- "It is not our responsibility. It is for parents or even churches to do."
- "Academic learning is the primary mission of schools. We cannot be responsible for the total child."

Yet, Ernest Boyer, President of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, wrote in the forward to *Student Service: The New Carnegie Unit*, "Students do not see formal education as having a consequential relationship to who they are, or even in a fundamental way, what they might become."

And, according to *High School and Beyond*, when seniors were asked to rate various life goals as "very important," 82 percent rated "finding the right person to marry and having a happy family life" and 81 percent rated "having strong friendships" as very important.

Young people are virtually shouting that they want help in living the lives with which they are struggling now—and are as deeply afraid of failing in the future. When asked, they will tell you how much they want help and how much they would like to have classes in

Patricia Kramer, a Maryland-based consultant, has developed a curriculum that teaches young people how to cope with social and emotional conflicts.

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which they can discuss their lives, fears, hopes, and dreams.

Still, schools resist offering programs that would address these concerns. Instead, short-term "crisis intervention" programs on such topics as substance abuse, suicide, AIDS, teen pregnancy, and sexual abuse proliferate. These programs either are incorporated into other courses or are offered for a few days or weeks with the unrealistic hope that these mini-courses will not only change attitudes, but also influence behaviors.

That response is inadequate. Schools must do more. Schools must recognize that it is not enough to make sure that students can read and write. Students who are struggling with rejection, loss, failure, or disappointment cannot be expected to open their minds to the educational "basics" that schools teach. And, where else but in school is there the opportunity to reach large masses of young people quickly and comprehensively?

Need recognized

There is evidence to support schools getting involved.

As described in "Family Problems Impact on Classroom" (*Learning* 86), a survey of teachers revealed "that teachers believe that family problems are having an impact on students in their classrooms . . ." Family problems are resulting in aggressiveness, declining grades, moodiness, withdrawal, nervousness, and physical complaints among children.

The *Miami Herald* reported a few years ago that the preliminary results of a study of more than 4,000 seven-year-olds showed declines of more than 13 percent in IQ test performance among children who came from homes where the parents were unemployed, separated, or suffering from some other stressful situation. Dr. Bernard Brown, a

psychologist with the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, said in the article, "Childhood stress can cause a striking decline in a child's performance on IQ tests." Explained Brown, "In addition to its well known effects on the body, we believe that stress also has an effect on intelligence. . . . chronic stress, like coming from an unhappy home situation, can apparently have a major impact on a child's mental abilities."

What next?

School board members and administrators must adjust their thinking about education so that basic education and teaching social skills become synonymous. The only real hope for these young people's futures lies in attempts to *prevent* some of the tragic social ills that are devastating them and their families. Approaches that treat more than symptoms must be used. If the approach is not changed, still higher incidence of suicides, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, drop outs, violence, and family abuse will result.

Many school systems are making strides in this area, and many others are making attempts. What they all have in common is their goal. They want to help kids feel so good about themselves that they no longer feel the need to self-destruct.

Establish objectives

Students need opportunities for developing a strong self-image and to learn how to cope with life's problems safely and effectively. These opportunities can be provided through programs that are designed to offer young people an arena in which to talk openly about sensitive and personal issues with which so many are struggling during their teen years.

The primary objectives for such programs should be to develop:

- a strong and secure sense of self-worth that will help teens say no to sex, drugs, alcohol, and other harmful or self-destructive behaviors;
- more effective communication skills that will help teens interact better with others and also to handle anger and conflict constructively and safely;
- the ability to cope with disappointment, rejection, and loss;
- an inherent understanding that violence is never acceptable behavior;
- clearer and more realistic expectations about their roles in all relationships, including marriage, parenting, family life, and career.

These objectives are as necessary in a rural setting as they are in a wealthy suburban community or in an inner-city ghetto. Although there certainly are differences among youth that stem from their environment and culture, low self-image, peer pressure, boredom, and lack of family unit or support are universal experiences for young people. The issues cross all barriers, and the methods for helping young people to achieve these objectives need not vary from community to community.

Promising approaches

No matter what approach is used (see box), underlying it must be a caring community of schools and parents. Although programs can be implemented outside the schools, such as in recreation centers or religious institutions, schools are the only institutions that provide the structure, setting, and discipline to reach the numbers of young people needing help.

The most successful programs are those that are a mandated part of the basic educational process—K-12, comprehensive, year-long, and taught by the best teachers. They deal with all the issues kids are struggling with and want to deal with while also addressing the primary objectives stated above.

If the optimum is not possible, however, there are some effective alternatives.

- Integrate the goals into existing courses. A math or English teacher can concentrate on communication skills, for example. A science teacher can teach conflict resolution. Every teacher can work on

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continued from page 1

which they can discuss their lives, fears, hopes, and dreams.

Still, schools resist offering programs that would address these concerns. Instead, short-term "crisis intervention" programs on such topics as substance abuse, suicide, AIDS, teen pregnancy, and sexual abuse proliferate. These programs either are incorporated into other courses or are offered for a few days or weeks with the unrealistic hope that these mini-courses will not only change attitudes, but also influence behaviors.

That response is inadequate. Schools must do more. Schools must recognize that it is not enough to make sure that students can read and write. Students who are struggling with rejection, loss, failure, or disappointment cannot be expected to open their minds to the educational "basics" that schools teach. And, where else but in school is there the opportunity to reach large masses of young people quickly and comprehensively?

Need recognized

There is evidence to support schools getting involved.

As described in "Family Problems Impact on Classroom" (*Learning* 86), a survey of teachers revealed "that teachers believe that family problems are having an impact on students in their classrooms . . ." Family problems are resulting in aggressiveness, declining grades, moodiness, withdrawal, nervousness, and physical complaints among children.

The *Miami Herald* reported a few years ago that the preliminary results of a study of more than 4,000 seven-year-olds showed declines of more than 13 percent in IQ test performance among children who came from homes where the parents were unemployed, separated, or suffering from some other stressful situation. Dr. Bernard Brown, a

psychologist with the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, said in the article, "Childhood stress can cause a striking decline in a child's performance on IQ tests." Explained Brown, "In addition to its well known effects on the body, we believe that stress also has an effect on intelligence. . . . chronic stress, like coming from an unhappy home situation, can apparently have a major impact on a child's mental abilities."

What next?

School board members and administrators must adjust their thinking about education so that basic education and teaching social skills become synonymous. The only real hope for these young people's futures lies in attempts to *prevent* some of the tragic social ills that are devastating them and their families. Approaches that treat more than symptoms must be used. If the approach is not changed, still higher incidence of suicides, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, drop outs, violence, and family abuse will result.

Many school systems are making strides in this area, and many others are making attempts. What they all have in common is their goal. They want to help kids feel so good about themselves that they no longer feel the need to self-destruct.

Establish objectives

Students need opportunities for developing a strong self-image and to learn how to cope with life's problems safely and effectively. These opportunities can be provided through programs that are designed to offer young people an arena in which to talk openly about sensitive and personal issues with which so many are struggling during their teen years.

The primary objectives for such programs should be to develop:

- a strong and secure sense of self-worth that will help teens say no to sex, drugs, alcohol, and other harmful or self-destructive behaviors;
- more effective communication skills that will help teens interact better with others and also to handle anger and conflict constructively and safely;
- the ability to cope with disappointment, rejection, and loss;
- an inherent understanding that violence is never acceptable behavior;
- clearer and more realistic expectations about their roles in all relationships, including marriage, parenting, family life, and career.

These objectives are as necessary in a rural setting as they are in a wealthy suburban community or in an inner-city ghetto. Although there certainly are differences among youth that stem from their environment and culture, low self-image, peer pressure, boredom, and lack of family unit or support are universal experiences for young people. The issues cross all barriers, and the methods for helping young people to achieve these objectives need not vary from community to community.

Promising approaches

No matter what approach is used (see box), underlying it must be a caring community of schools and parents. Although programs can be implemented outside the schools, such as in recreation centers or religious institutions, schools are the only institutions that provide the structure, setting, and discipline to reach the numbers of young people needing help.

The most successful programs are those that are a mandated part of the basic educational process—K-12, comprehensive, year-long, and taught by the best teachers. They deal with all the issues kids are struggling with and want to deal with while also addressing the primary objectives stated above.

If the optimum is not possible, however, there are some effective alternatives.

- Integrate the goals into existing courses. A math or English teacher can concentrate on communication skills, for example. A science teacher can teach conflict resolution. Every teacher can work on

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the crucial areas of self-esteem, communication, conflict resolution, and sex roles and expectations.

Program Design

The Dynamics of Relationships offers young people an arena to talk openly about sensitive personal issues. A year-long, five-days-a-week, one-credit elective, the course seeks to develop in students:

- a strong and secure sense of self-worth to help them say "no" to drugs, alcohol, irresponsible sex, and other harmful or self-destructive behaviors;
- communication skills to help them interact better with others and handle anger and conflict safely;
- ability to cope with disappointment, rejection, and loss;
- the understanding that violence is never acceptable and that it never solves problems, it simply makes them worse;
- clear and realistic expectations about their roles in all relationships—friendship, love, marriage, parenting, and the career world.

In *The Dynamics of Relationships* classes, the "dynamics" are different from class to class depending on the teacher's approach and personality; but most teachers use at least one of the following strategies and methods daily:

- modeling cognitive skills such as ways to handle anger, rejection, and conflict;
- facilitating in-depth group discussions on topics chosen by students;
- conducting exercises and activities to help students explore new ways of relating and conducting themselves;
- supervising experiential activities such as role playing to allow students to "try on" new behaviors as alternatives to their old destructive behaviors;
- assigning readings to help students explore their beliefs and their understanding of human behavior;
- helping students become peer facilitators;
- listening to guest speakers such as ex-addicts, recovered alcoholics, and disabled veterans tell about their experiences, and to experts on such topics as suicide and teen pregnancy;

- taking field trips to visit sites such as drug rehabilitation centers or homes for pregnant teens to see the consequences of choices others have made.

Staff Development

Probably the most important part of the program is the intensive teacher training, which can take up to 45 hours. Teachers are selected because of certain personal qualities and not because of any specific discipline. They find the training beneficial even when they do not teach the formal course. In the training they are prepared to help adolescents better understand their own attitudes and behavior and make healthier decisions about themselves and others with whom they relate. They learn to facilitate in-depth discussions in which students share viewpoints and reactions; and they practice conducting activities to help students clarify their own feelings and responsibilities.

They learn to help students use decision-making skills without making the decisions for them. They also learn to help students build and maintain a strong sense of pride and self-esteem. Finally, they are sensitized to the behavior changes associated with abuse, suicide plans, or other indications of students' inability to cope.

Initial Implementations

In 1985 *The Dynamics of Relationships* was piloted in four Washington, D.C., secondary schools. In the 86-87 school year, 18 classes were offered in 12 schools, including junior high and elementary schools. The Washington, D.C., program has continued to expand and to be the most active program.

In 1986-87, a number of school districts around the country offered the course, including a very affluent school district, Barrington, Illinois; small rural districts such as Woodstown, New Jersey; Lincoln Hills, Indiana; Allendale, New Jersey; Kent, Washington; large rural districts like Manassas, Virginia; and schools for specific populations like the Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon. The course was attached to different disci-

plines and adapted to fit different schedules and school requirements. Other school districts, such as Charles County, Maryland; Vancouver, British Columbia; and Yonkers, New York, incorporated it into their counseling, human relations, or home economics departments, or used it as a resource.

Testimony to Success

Teachers have reported quite positive results and dramatic impact on students' self-esteem. They noticed a high rate of attendance and a level of involvement and participation not commonly found in their classrooms.

Students reported that the text helped them solve day-to-day problems while helping them become more aware of their own and others' feelings. For example, Felicia Heath, a senior at Ballou High School, wrote, "I think this course should be offered to kids all across America, not just high school, but elementary students, too. If they start understanding young, then maybe they won't have as many problems as teens today."

One young man was asked by a visitor what he was getting out of the class. He said rather proudly, "I'm learning how to handle my anger better." Another young man said, "I feel like I'm getting to know and understand myself better than I ever have and for the first time I'm really beginning to like myself."

Reaching Adulthood with Hope and Optimism

One of my favorite slogans is "if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten." We cannot afford to continue to get what we've always gotten. Too many children are dying figuratively from drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, and dropping out. Others are dying literally from overdoses, drunk driving, and suicide. We must take a new approach so that our children can reach adulthood with hope and optimism and look forward to a life of success and happiness. □



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A Preventive Approach to Adolescent Problems

To resolve the serious social problems of youth, we must look beyond the symptoms and provide guidance and support to help them develop self-respect and take responsibility for their choices.

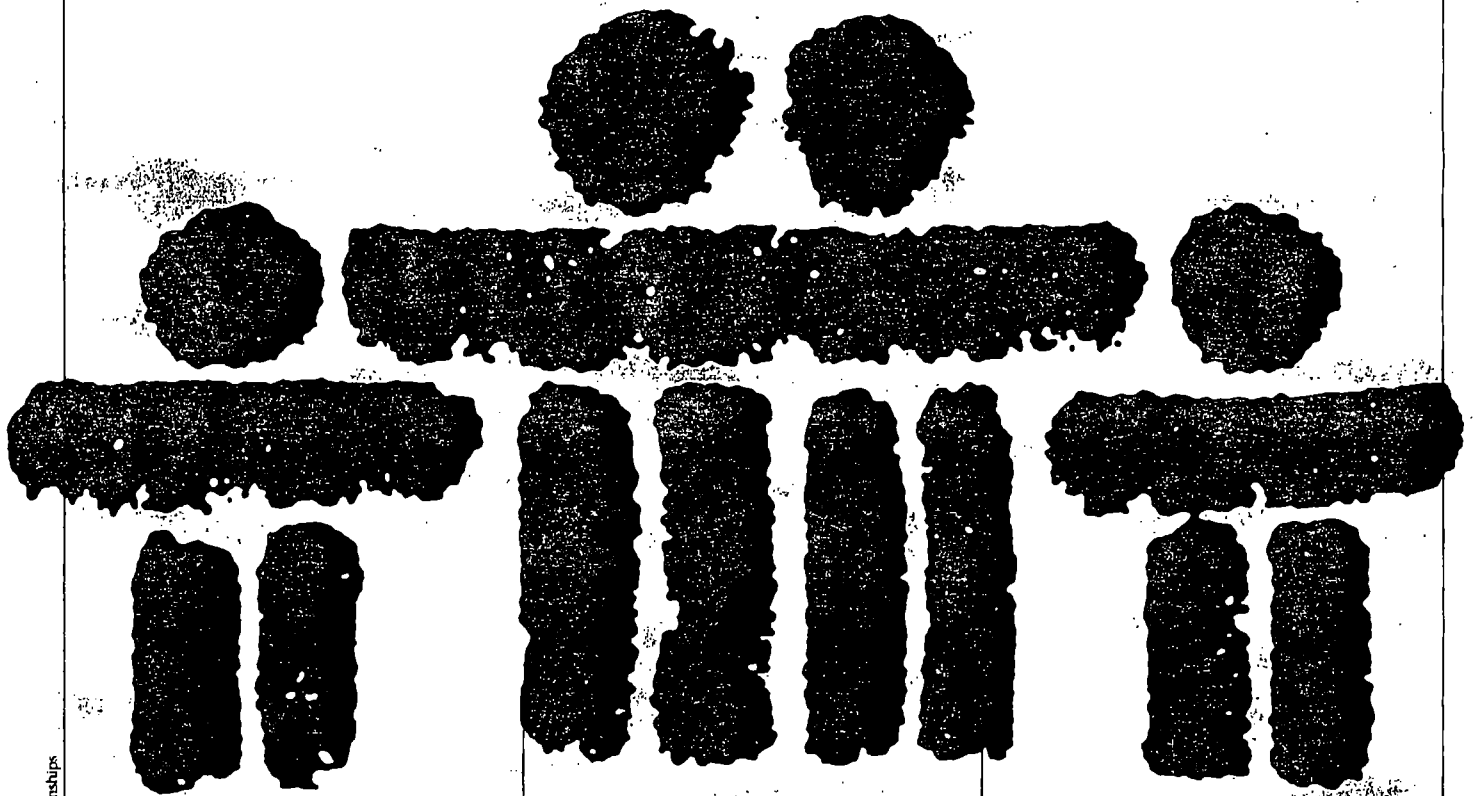


Illustration from the cover of *The Dynamics of Relationships*

When I set out to design and develop *The Dynamics of Relationships*, my intent was to create a curriculum with a preventive approach to adolescent problems. Existing programs approached substance abuse, teen pregnancy, suicide, violence, and dropping out as if they were the real issues. I saw them as only symptoms.

In my prior work as a divorce coun-

selor, I had discovered five major conditions to be the roots of the problems: (1) lack of self-esteem and self-respect; (2) inability to communicate thoughts and feelings on an intimate and genuine level; (3) few, if any, conflict resolution or decision-making skills; (4) unrealistic expectations about how life was supposed to be; and (5) a complete misunderstanding between men and women who, as a

result of quite different upbringings, had different ideas about how to approach life and how to live it.

At first I had thought these were adult problems. But the more I learned about the social dilemmas of youth, the more I recognized that the real issues were the same and that they start when we are very young. It became clear that the only way to prevent the symptoms is to help youth in

Fostering self-esteem can keep kids safe and sound

A few months ago, my alma mater in Washington, DC, installed metal detectors at its entrance. It would be bad enough if they were put there to protect students from outside assailants, but sadly many of the assailants are inside the school walls. Today, schools across the country have security guards, police officers, guard dogs and now metal detectors in the name of safety and protection.

What have our schools become? And what will become of our schools—and our students? It is not only our children's physical well-being that is in jeopardy. Our children's psychological well-being is equally being threatened by the many social ills plaguing children and their families today. Protecting their bodies is not enough if their emotional side shuts down or is destroyed? Students are total beings—not minds and bodies operating independently of each other.

Our society often seems to adopt quick fixes in response to crises when it is usually too little, or too late to have any impact. Education in America has become a crisis-oriented response to problems. Could it be that the ills that have been identified as problems are actually just symptoms of far greater wounds which cannot be healed because somebody decides to put a bandage on them?

Studies indicate that when children enter school 80 percent feel good about who they are; by fifth grade the number drops to 20 percent; by the time students are ready to graduate—if they're still in school—only 5 percent feel they are worthwhile or have potential for success. The feelings of worthlessness that so many of our young people currently experience are a result of the previous decade when children's pleas for help went unheeded. Apparently, no one was listening!

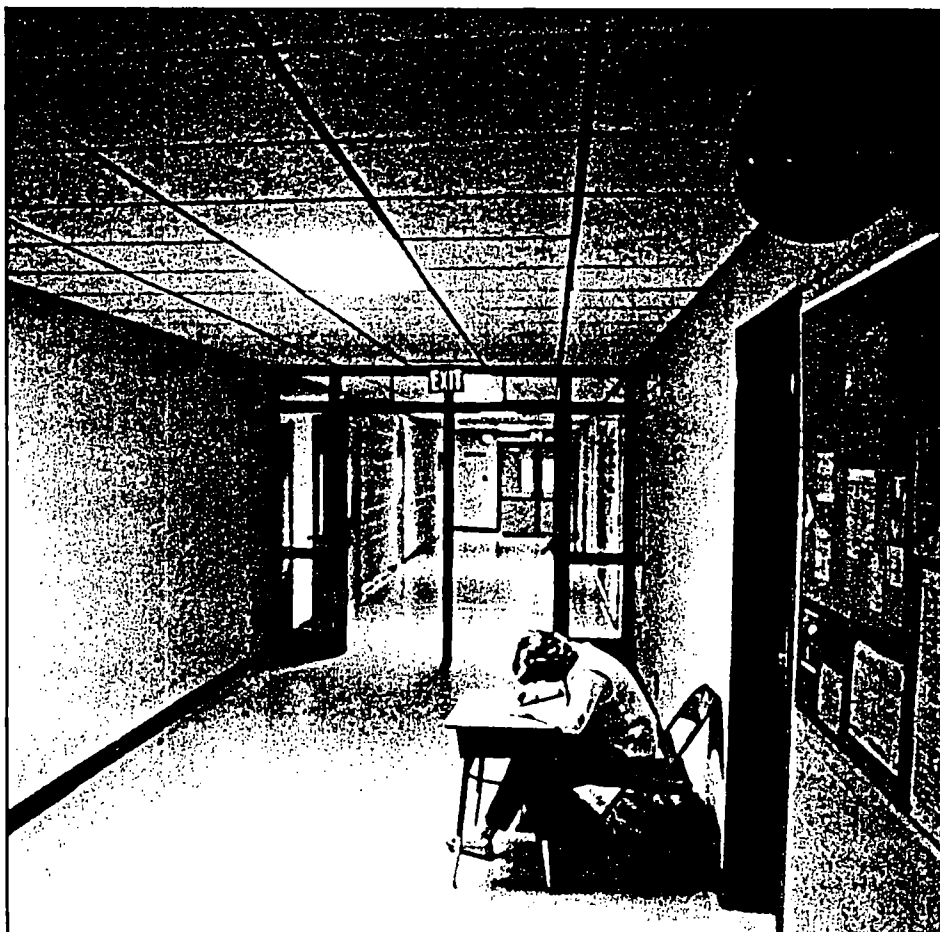
More young people may be dying

from the pervasive disease called hopelessness than from guns, knives, overdoses, drug- and alcohol-related deaths or suicide. Clearly, physical safety is important. Students have the right to expect to be protected. We must do whatever is necessary to assure that when students enter the halls of learning, they're safe and well cared for. But shouldn't we be doing more to make our schools a safe haven where students feel supported, nurtured and welcome?

Several years ago, Mary Futrell, former president of the National Education Association, wrote that she was convinced that a large problem within

our schools is "the problem of emotional neglect, a problem as potentially devastating as physical neglect or even physical abuse." She went on to say "that just as a child who is hungry cannot learn, so too a child who is wracked with anxiety or mired in depression or burdened with self-hatred cannot learn Students striving to cope in an often icy and impersonal world need help. And providing that help demands reevaluating—then strengthening—the counseling services our schools offer."

Although school personnel agree that students are struggling more and more with personal and family prob-



lems, budget cuts have reduced some guidance staffs by half. Often, those counselors who remain are so overwhelmed by paper work and career counseling that they literally don't have time to deal with students' personal problems. School psychologists are often too busy administering tests and one social worker may be assigned to handle the problems of students in three, four and even five schools. This condition persists despite studies that continually reveal that young people consumed by personal problems have difficulty concentrating and absorbing material, which in many cases result in low academic scores. Chronic stress such as that caused by an unhappy home situation can have a major impact not only on children's intellectual abilities, but also may increase the likelihood that they will act out in destructive ways.

Whose responsibility is it?

Some believe that it is the parents' responsibility – not the school's – to handle these problems. Few would disagree that teaching values, morals and appropriate behavior is the parents' responsibility. And many parents do. But in a society that has such rigorous training requirements for doctors, lawyers, plumbers and electricians, how can we continue to expect people to successfully reach adulthood without help? Why do we expect teens to take on the most difficult, challenging and long-term job of being partners in all types of relationships – friendships, marriage, business or parents – without one moment of training?

Noted psychologist David Elkind says that parents who truly care about their children are "so involved in reordering their own lives, managing a career, marriage, parenting and leisure that they have no time to give their teenagers. Other parents simply cannot train a teenager for an adulthood they themselves have yet to attain fully." Parents can't teach what they never learned themselves! Parents often want and need help to restore direction and discipline to their children's lives.

Educators no longer can take the same path that they've been traveling for years. School administrators cannot continue to live in a world that *was*, while our youth continue to live in a world that *is*: a world full of free sex, substance abuse, violence and

**Educators no longer
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record numbers of young people living in single-parent families.

Prevention is the key

For years, school administrators have come up with more and more of what seems to be solutions – suicide-prevention programs, watered-down sex education classes, drug and alcohol-treatment programs – and still the problems live on. We need to provide students with an overall approach to a more productive lifestyle. *Prevention* is the key – not intervention a day late and a dollar short!

Creating that approach starts with the quality of the time students spend in the school and classroom. Quality means standards of respect, courtesy, care and concern, involvement, acceptance of others, cooperation, etc. A positive environment will add to academic, social and emotional growth and will decrease negative behavior while increasing learning.

How teachers relate to and respond to students often determines the quality of the classroom environment. Students need teachers who:

- are secure and hold themselves in high self-esteem. Studies show that adults with high self-esteem develop children who are confident, trusting and motivated. Simply put, teachers with high self-esteem bring out the best in children.

- can establish a forum in which students will listen to each other and will share their own experiences so that they each can see that he or she is not alone in their feelings or dilemmas.

- can show them that there are options and alternatives that work – that they do indeed have choices about the way they act and respond.

- are able to talk and teach about

real issues relevant to their everyday lives.

- are empathic listeners and sensitive to their students' feelings without judging or condemning them.

If schools really want to keep children "safe," here are some things they can do:

- Implement life-skills programs that will help students find ways to handle problems in constructive ways. These need not be programs that infringe on parental roles. Learning self-esteem, communication and coping skills and universal issues from which everyone – no matter what their color, religion or ideology – can benefit. One such program is "The Dynamics of Relationships" (see end of article for more information).

- Adopt a new set of 3R's. The new ones should be: Respect, Responsibility and Relationships.

- Take students seriously; trust them; listen to them; accept them unconditionally and make them feel that they belong.

- Invite students to learn. Young people must recognize that their success is tied to their education.

- Be attractive, clean and well-kept so students can enjoy and be proud of their environment.

- Allow students to help establish rules and share in the responsibility of seeing them followed. Students must become part of the solution, not thought of as the problem.

The bottom-line message that students should get from their institutions of learning is that not only is their education important, but so are they.

Educational reform is the buzz word of the 90s, but the most important educational reform is about saving our children's lives. It is our responsibility to equip students with the necessary life skills that will ultimately keep them safe from harm. □

Patricia Kramer is the author of "The Dynamics of Relationships" A Guide to Developing Self-Esteem and Social Skills, a K-12 program currently being implemented in schools across the country that takes a preventive approach to crises. She is also the author of "Discovering," a four-part high-interest, low-level series for at-risk and special education students. Kramer also conducts staff-development and parent workshops for schools around the country. For further information:



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WHAT ARE THE REAL PROBLEMS?

Most high schools in the United States acknowledge the problems of teenagers and set up programs to help them. These include

drug/alcohol abuse programs, tutoring, and sex education. While these are appropriate and necessary programs, or what is popularly

called "crisis intervention," I see them as nothing more than bandages on an open wound. The infection goes much deeper

Our young people are an educated group. They know it is wrong to drink and drive, they know what causes AIDS, they know that if they don't stay in school their future is not a bright one. But many of them still do things they know could be destructive to themselves and others. Why?

The Real Problems

Here are the real problems that, until they are under control, will continue to drive teenagers to make poor choices.

■ **Low Self-Esteem.** Two of three Americans suffer from low self-esteem. Studies indicate that when children enter school, 80 percent feel good about themselves. By the fifth grade this number begins to drop, and by the time they graduate only 5 percent feel no self-doubt. What happens during those years? What changes a wholesome self-image to one that isn't?

Could it be that we live in a negative society? How often do children hear:
"No, you did it wrong."
"Can't you ever do anything right?"
"You've got to do better."

On the other hand, how often do they hear:
"I love you."
"Thank you."
"You did a great job."
"I'm really proud of you."

Unfortunately, many young people receive continual negative conditioning and the end result is a poor self-image. This can lead to the abuse of drugs, teen pregnancy, suicide, violence, academic failure, and many other destructive behaviors.

■ **Poor Communication.** When people don't communicate clearly, they aren't heard or understood. When we hold in our feelings, the result can be deadly. Heart attacks, ulcers, and even mental breakdowns can all be attributed to an inability to share our feelings.

■ **Inability To Cope.** Stress and pressure are normal, daily occurrences. Some people let stress get the best of them—both at home and at school.

■ **Anger.** Many youngsters feel anger at the treatment they receive either from their family or from society in general. If they aren't taught to cope with their anger and channel it in positive directions, they could turn to violence as a way to vent their anger.

■ **Poor Choices.** When do young people learn that life offers choices—that we have options about how to conduct our lives? We learn by making decisions. Unfortunately, many young people don't have that opportunity often because adults continually tell them what to do. Parents rarely give their children a chance to learn from their own mistakes. They do this in the name of love, expediency, and pre-knowledge.

■ **Consequences.** One thing many young people don't learn until it is too late is that their behavior has consequences. We learn what works and what doesn't by experimenting and making decisions. But to protect their children, parents try to spare them from negative consequences. In the end, they diminish the child's judgment about what is right or wrong.

Division of Student Activities
 National Association of
 Secondary School Principals

5 Offer students an arena to deal with social and emotional issues. Create a regular forum where students can come together to share experiences, gain support from each other, learn to solve problems, and communicate effectively. To be successful, the forum must allow students to feel free and safe enough to openly explore their thoughts and feelings.

Now Is the Time

We can no longer take the path of reacting to crises instead of looking deeper to see what caused them in the first place. Remember, if you always do what you've always done—you'll always get what you've always gotten. That means more suicides, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, dropouts, and violence. Instead, we must give our young people what they need: respect, responsibility, and relationships that are meaningful and fulfilling. ▲

*Patricia Kramer is the author of **The Dynamics of Relationships: A Guide for Developing Self-Esteem and Social Skills**, a K-12 program, which takes a preventive approach to crises. She also conducts staff development for teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents. For more information, contact: Patricia Kramer,*



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► **By inviting students to come together to share their feelings and experiences, you provide a valuable outlet.**

▼ **Ask students what they would do to solve on-campus problems. Then, if at all feasible, put their ideas into action. Their self esteem will soar.**



BOARD OF EDUCATION

Unified School District No. 402

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September 28, 1988

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Schools for Achievement

Ms. Patricia Kramer
Equal Partners
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20985

Dear Pat,

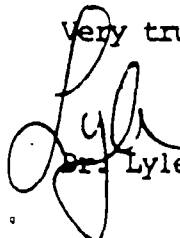
The Augusta school year is into the fourth week. Usually, it takes some amount of time before the impact of a new program can actually be noticed. Not so with the seven sections of Dynamics of Relationships class commenced at the Senior High School this year! Commencing with the six days of in-service work that you handled the first week of August, the forceful and positive effects of the material in "Dynamics" has just continued to grow and expand.

I want you to know that some of the teachers that were in the in-service work have really established much stronger relationships with their students. They demonstrate a better understanding of the real sensitive nature involved in the learning/teaching relationship. They seem to better understand that their real role of assisting the student in his/her learning is more desirable than constantly directing the student in all of his/her classroom work.

After four weeks, the 140 students in "Dynamics" are showing significantly more interest in school. They are coming to believe that they are important people in the school environment. They are learning how to make a positive difference for themselves in their associations with others.

Pat, I believe that "Dynamics" is a program that all schools should seriously consider. As you know, we had been searching for a program like "Dynamics" for the past couple of years. I am certainly glad that we commenced the program this year. Your on site, professional assistance in getting the program off to a good start was a great plus. The six days of in-service were well developed. Your unique approach to keeping people involved all the time was the "icing on the cake."

Very truly yours,



Dr. Lyle E. Boyles, Supt.

LEB:alb

October 5, 1986

Dr. Clyde Slocum, Superintendent
Barrington Community Schools
310 James Street
Barrington, Illinois 60010

Clyde:

Perhaps my rationalization for keeping this book (**"The Dynamics of Relationships: A Prevention Program for Teens"**) so long was because there was so much in it that could be used at all grade levels.

I could see good discussions at teacher's meetings that would help us all rethink some of our biases, rethink our approaches to teaching and understanding children. There were excellent usable activities that could give us some insight into ourselves.

In addition, there were adaptable units for kindergartners as well as sixth graders. There would be no invasion of their privacy, just new techniques to employ for helping them think through some of their problems in more interesting ways.

I liked the language it was written in —clear, concise and "right-on."

Certainly much was beyond elementary schools, but the initial chapters 1-3, parts of 5, even parts of 21 could be used along with selective teacher activities.

I plan on purchasing the book if only as a stimulant for teachers. Thanks for lending the book to me.

Jean Mason, Principal
Barrington Elementary



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES • 310 JAMES STREET
BARRINGTON, ILLINOIS 60010 • 312/381-6300

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

November 30, 1989

The Honorable Donald W. Schaefer
The State House
Annapolis, MD. 21404

Dear Governor Schaefer:

I am writing to endorse a person to serve as a member of the Task Force on Self-Esteem which I understand is to be selected soon by your office.

Pat Kramer is an author, writer, and a lecturer, whose focus is the problems of children and the need to develop communication strategies to cope successfully with them. Inherent in her strategy is the necessity for children to develop a positive and "can do" image of themselves, and she has committed her last five years to spreading that word throughout the country. In my judgment as a superintendent of schools and as a parent, I believe she is right on target.

I have heard Ms. Kramer speak on several occasions, and our school district has been offering a course based on her published book and materials, *"Dynamics of Relationships."* Her increasing national prominence is testimony to the success that her message is having with students, school officials, and various human resource agencies.

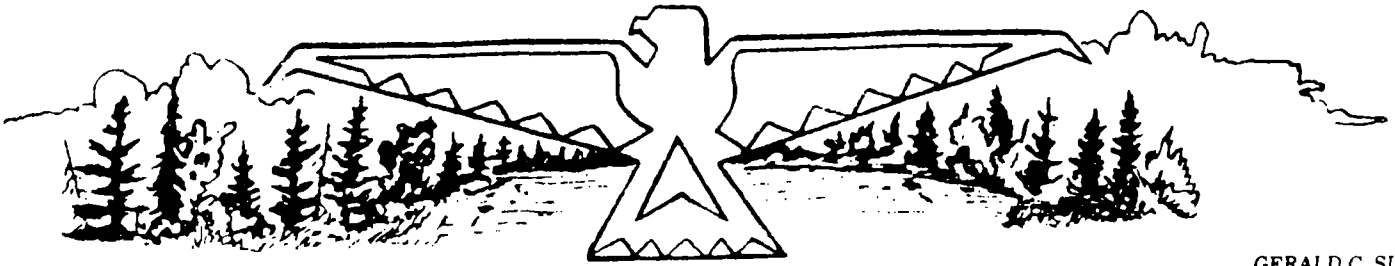
If appointed as a member of the Task Force, I believe Pat Kramer would provide an extensive background of personal experience in seeking to build self-esteem among all children of a multi-cultural society, and she would do it in an enthusiastic and cooperative manner. She would make an important contribution to the deliberations and work of the task force, and I urge you to seriously consider her as a member of that group.

Sincerely,

Clyde W. Slocum
Superintendent of Schools

CWS:jh

LAKE LAND HIGH SCHOOL



8669 OLD HIGHWAY 70 WEST
MINOCQUA, WISCONSIN 54548
715-356-5252

GERALD C. SISLO
District Administrator

•
BRUCE E. LaROSE
Principal

•
JAMES NORSEN
Assistant Principal

October 7, 1988

Ms. Pat Kramer
Equal Partners
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20895

Dear Pat:

I would like to follow up on our conversations and the program that you provided for some of our staff this past June. I can sum up your presentations and program as "terrific and realistic".

When I say realistic I mean it was an opportunity for the members of our staff that took part to become sensitive to the needs of our youth today. In today's society our youth have a most difficult time finding and being able to cope with reality. Hopefully, some of the techniques that were provided to our staff will be most useful for a course yet to be finalized.

In today's world, if we are going to be successful in education, our students have to be in the right mind set when they are in the classes. Your program helped our staff be able to help the students reach that mind set, so they are able to learn how to learn.

Pat, I think your sensitivity to the needs of our staff, the ability to be straight forward with them and bring out the best in all, so that they were sensitive to not only to the needs of youth but their own needs, was tremendous. I would, without any doubt, recommend your program to other school people.

In summary, I would like to say that even though my schedule was extremely busy and I was only going to sit in on a couple of sessions, I could not pry myself loose from your program. I did take part in all 5 days and, even though it meant some long hours playing catch-up, it was worthwhile.

Good luck to all that take part in this program.

Sincerely,

Gerald C. Sislo
District Administrator

PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

RICHARD C. WALLACE, JR., SUPERINTENDENT

PITTSBURGH, PA. 15213

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
BELLEFIELD AVENUE AT FORBES AVENUE

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

February 24, 1987

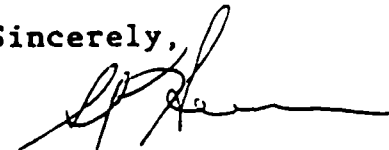
Ms. Patricia Kramer
Equal Partners
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895

Dear Patricia:

Thank you for providing the opportunity for a team of Pittsburgh Public Schools staff to visit the Washington D.C. Schools and observe the Dynamics of Relationships curriculum firsthand. All of us felt that the student discussions dealt with student problems in a most professional manner.

Currently a team of Pittsburgh staff are meeting to develop a wellness curriculum for the district. Although many published curricula have been submitted to the team for consideration, the Dynamics of Relationships has generated the most discussion and enthusiasm. At your earliest convenience, please send a copy of your newest publication designed for elementary grades.

Sincerely,



Stanley J. Herman
Associate Superintendent

SJH/kal

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BELOIT - TURNER

1231 Inman Parkway, Beloit, WI 53511

DR. CHARLES A. MELVIN III, Ph.D.
District Administrator
(608) 364-6372

October 4, 1993

MARY ANNE T. WHEELER, Ph.D.
Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum
(608) 364-6372

Dear Patricia,

KAREN NEAS
Director of Special Education
(608) 362-9104

BETTY CABANOWSKI
Principal
F.J. Turner High School
1231 Inman Parkway
(608) 364-6370

ANDREW J. TOUTLOFF
Principal
Turner Middle School
1237 Inman Parkway
(608) 364-6367

KAREN NEAS
Principal
Townview Elementary School
2442 Newark Road
(608) 365-6365

ANITA K. HUSBY, Ed.S.
Principal
Powers Elementary School
Hillside Drive
(608) 364-6360

I was so pleased to have the opportunity to talk to you yesterday. I have always respected your expertise in the human relation field. Your textbook has been a part of my curriculum for several years.

I have had students who have told me while they were enrolled in the course or after they completed the course that they have used the Dynamics of Relationship text for a reference whenever they were experiencing a personal crisis in their life. The students feel this text is one of the best books they have in their possession to help them through daily living.

I hope you will continue to write teaching materials. You are a very positive influence in the human relationship area of study which is definitely needed today. You also present the issues very realistically. This is important when you are working with classes which have a variety of backgrounds as well as capabilities. If I can be of any help in your ventures, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Willard

Mary Ann Willard
Family and Consumer
Education Teacher

Enclosed: one student response

After just reading a few chapter in this book, I have learned a lot. Anything from friends and family to love and anger. If I have had any problems with friends or different relationships, I have looked in this book and it has really helped me. I think this is an excellent book. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who has problems with relationships and family or just anyone because I can guarantee you will learn a lot. I know I sure did!!

Stephanie Williams

Date: May 8, 1986

Subject: Dynamics of Relationships

From: Beverly Cunningham, Teacher/Home Economics
Cardozo Senior High

I began working with the Dynamics of Relationships curriculum in February of this year. There are two classes scheduled with 15 students in each class. From the very beginning the students were impressed with the text itself. It addressed issues that most of the students had never talked about and in some cases never thought about before. The students were particularly enthralled by the drawing on one of the first pages-"I know I'm somebody because God didn't make no junk". They seemed to feel that this very positive statement might be the beginning of a course that could really mean something.

The chapter on self esteem was of particular interest to all the students because it broached subjects that went below the superficial veneer so many students arm themselves everyday with. One particularly cocky, man of the world student was all but amazed to find out that his classmates thought he was conceited. He had truly never seen himself in that light.

There is a good deal of personal experience writing called for from the students. I found that the students didn't seem to mind, in fact they rather enjoyed writing down their personal feelings and experiences in the non-threatening way suggested in the text. Several of the academically weaker students would seek help in writing their assignments from other teachers so it would be "just right".

Other students, parents, brothers and sisters enjoyed reading this informative and enlightening text.

Few adaptations have had to be made to tailor the text to my particular group of students needs. I find it fills a void in subjects heretofore not addressed in other textbooks.

My students and I have enjoyed working with the "Dynamics of Relationships" text and I look forward to teaching the course again in September.

Prince William County
Public Schools

P.O. Box 389
Manassas, Virginia 22110
(703) 791-7200

October 3, 1991

Ms. Marla Coleman
Department of Education
Youth Risk Prevention
P. O. Box 6Q
Richmond, Virginia 23216

Dear Ms. Coleman:

The home economics program with Prince William County Public Schools has been involved in "The Dynamics of Relationships" program for the past five years. Ms. Kramer's program was used by the home economics teachers as a prime resource for developing the curriculum for the course Peer Relationships.

Our school division offers this class to eleventh and twelfth grade students. The course uses a preventive approach to the many social problems and crises issues to which teens are subjected. Broad course objectives include development of a strong sense of self worth; effective communication skills; ability to handle disappointment and rejection; realistic expectations of marriage, parenting, and family life.

Peer Relationships was first offered as a semester class. After the second year of its inception, and at the request of students completing the course, it was developed into a year long program. It now has the highest enrollment of all of the home economics course offerings.

The relationships program has been a definite assist to our students and our home economics curriculum. If you would like to discuss this program with any of our teachers or visit the class itself, please give me a call at 703-791-7412.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Weatherholt
Administrative Coordinator
Home Economics

SSW/jsh

BENSON SECONDARY SCHOOL
4515 CAMPBELL AIRSTRIP ROAD
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99504
2 OCTOBER 1991
(907) 345-6686 Home
(907) 337-0016 Benson

Pat Krammer
3371 Beaverwood Lane
Silver Springs, MD. 20906

Dear Ms. Krammer:

What a wonderful news to hear that you called Benson S.A.V.E. and spoke with my principal, Barbara Garrison yesterday. I do wish that I could have spoken with you as well. I have used the Dynamics of Relationships so extensively, I feel that you and I are old friends.

I want to tell you the story about how I "discovered your book". Barbara had asked me to teach a relationship class in the spring of 1989. I worried over it all summer and put together a number of tentative lesson plans, but did not have a text. I had planned to use a number of different sources, because that was all that I could think of to use. Two days before school was to open in the fall of 1989, I was reviewing all the material I had and my eye fell upon your text. I'm not even sure where I got it or how long it had been sitting on the shelf behind my desk. I looked at for the very first time and said, "WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!"

"This is perfect!!!!!!!!!!!!"

And, it has been perfect ever since. I have been able to use it as the core text of the class and develop my lessons around it. In the course of teaching Social Issues, I have been able to share it with my friend Claudia Douglas, who teaches a similar class at the alternative high school in Fairbanks and Candice McKinsey, at McLaughlin Youth Center, in Anchorage. And, from your reports, the text has spread around the state and is being used in the bush.

In my class, I lecture, have films, guest speakers, games and a lot of group activities and the students supplement their credit by doing all of the work in the book. When the class is evaluated by the students, at the end of the twelve week session, The Dynamics of Relationships always draws rave reviews. In fact, I often have students return and tell me that they lost their copy and they are having difficulty with a certain relationship in their life and please, may they buy another copy. This is quite a recommendation!

Sincerely,



Sally Bauer
Teacher, Benson S.A.V.E. Secondary School
4515 Campbell Airstrip Road
Anchorage, Alaska

WOODSTOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL

LINCOLN AVENUE

WOODSTOWN, NEW JERSEY 08098

Wm. E. Stanwood: Principal

(609) 769-0144

October 4, 1988

Ms. Patricia Kramer
Equal Partners
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895

Dear Pat:

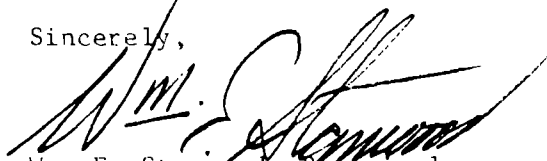
I enjoyed working with you again this summer as, for the second summer in a row, you provided training for our staff in the Dynamics of Relationships program. Nearly fifty of our teachers have now been exposed to the program. We feel that we have a very sensitive and caring staff and the training that you provided for us certainly added to that sensitive and caring attitude.

During the 1987-88 school year we offered the Dynamics program on a pilot basis to thirty eighth graders. The feedback that we received from students, staff, and parents was very positive. This year we have expanded the program so that all seventh graders take the Dynamics of Relationships program. As you know, the program is being evaluated by a graduate student from the University of Maryland. We're looking forward to the results of the evaluation.

The Dynamics program is just part of our own program that we provide with the purpose of building the confidence of our students. Self-esteem and positive attitudes are what we're promoting. These things lead to academic success, and success in general.

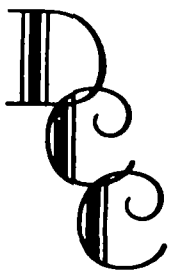
Thanks for all your help, and we're looking forward to your visit to Woodstown. Our students and staff will make you feel very welcome.

Sincerely,



Wm. E. Stanwood, Principal
Woodstown Middle School

WES:dt



DISTRICT CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Santa Fe Trail School District 434, Rt. 1, Box 434, Carbondale, KS 66414 (913) 665-7161

May 29, 1990

Ms. Patricia Kramer
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895

Dear Pat

Thank you for being that special person to help us end our school year in an "up-beat" manner. I would evaluate the day as being quite SUCCESSFUL!

When our teachers open your books next school year, they will immediately be able to create a mental picture of you with your zest for building positive relationships. I am confident that even the reluctant teachers will soon warm to the material especially when they see how the students respond so positively. We will continue to support their efforts. I will keep you informed on our progress.

It was an honor for my family to share a meal with you. My children, immediately, were charmed by your open, friendly manner. I hope their barrage of questions did not drain the last level of energy that you had reserved for the flight home. We enjoyed standing out on the sidewalk to watch you board and then fly away. Travis and Janelle truly feel that "Pat" is their friend.

Sincerely

Shirley P. Arnold
District Curriculum Coordinator

I hope that you found your car in the airport parking lot easily.



To Whom It May Concern:

The Department of Home Economics strongly endorses the implementation of the course "Dynamics of Relationships" into the curriculum of District of Columbia Public Schools beginning school year 1985-1986. This course will be introduced in four (4) comprehensive senior high schools and offered to male and female students on a pilot basis.

The course is extremely viable and appropriate, surfacing at a time when national focus is concentrated on major concerns of teenage pregnancy, suicide, child abuse, drug/substance abuse, and other social concerns. It will have a tremendous impact on positive growth and development of the teenage population within the schools in which it will be piloted.

I highly recommend support for this course.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Emma L. King".

Mrs. Emma L. King
Supervising Director
Home Economics Education
D. C. Public Schools

ELK/jhr

WALTER PERRY JUNIOR PUBLIC SCHOOL

45 FALMOUTH AVE., SCARBOROUGH, ONTARIO M1K 4M7 TEL: (416) 396-6620

February 21, 1991.

Ms Patricia Kramer
President,
Equal Partners,
3371 Beaverwood Lane,
Silver Springs, MD 20906
U.S.A.

Dear Pat:-

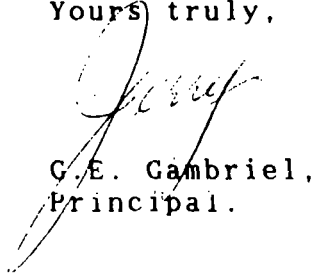
Your presentations on February 14th to parents and February 15th to teachers associated with the Scarborough Board of Education were an over whelming success. The number of parents that attended on such a stormy night is testament to the importance we all place in the subject of relationships and self-esteem.

Your ability to involve and hold such a diverse audience was marvelous to behold. I have had many, many comments from colleagues complimenting your work with the teachers.

You had a significant impact on the thinking of over 475 Scarborough teachers, administrators and trustees. Your extra effort in working with the grade seven and eight teachers during the second part of the morning was most appreciated.

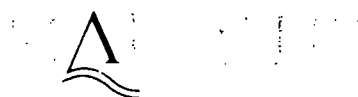
Pat, I wish you continued success and hope that you will be able to come back soon.

Yours truly,



G. E. Gambriel,
Principal.

GEG;H



July 9, 1991

Dear Patricia Kramer:

As a special education teacher in a psychiatric hospital setting, I have had the privilege of utilizing the book developed by you entitled, "The Dynamics of Relationships." Over the past four years, it has been a valuable resource while working with an adolescent population plagued with problems at the social and personal level.

While teaching sex education classes, the book was used as a supplemental resource tool, providing me with numerous activities and valuable information. It is currently being utilized as the primary source of information for a class I have developed called Self Development. Your chapters on self-esteem, anger and conflict, communication and friendship have proven to be thorough and comprehensive in content. It structures information in a progressive fashion with each concept building on each other. The activities certainly assist in reinforcing the subject matter and gives more impact to the concept being taught. Yet, more importantly, it gives credibility to advice and direction given by therapist, teachers, counselors and parents.

The book is presented with pertinent and relevant issues encountered by today's youth. Having observed the students' use of this book, it is obvious that the content is of a high interest level which stimulates discussion, participation, and challenges their thinking. It has helped in developing an awareness and insight for adolescents who are desperately in search of understanding themselves and their relationship to others.

I sincerely appreciate the tremendous energy and effort put into creating this book. I strongly recommend school systems, youth organizations or other facilities working with youth or young adults, to obtain this book and discover for themselves how valuable a resource this book will prove to be.

Sincerely,

Brunetta Soward
Special Education Teacher

BS/mn



District of Columbia Board of Education

415 12th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004
202-724-4284

R. David Hall
Ward 2
President

December 30, 1985

Patricia Kramer
EQUAL PARTNERS
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895

Dear Pat:

Attached is a copy of the letter I sent to Ms. Emma King recommending your textbook for use in D.C. Public Schools. In addition to the strong recommendation I made to her, I would like to make one comment.

My concern when reviewing your textbook is this: Because most, if not all of the students have never been asked to consider their feelings and reactions in a number of different situations, would they find it difficult to analyze and articulate their feelings, reactions and emotions, both verbally and in writing as is required in many of the exercises?

I am at a disadvantage in not having observed the teacher training or the classroom instruction and interaction, and this concern may therefore be unfounded. From what you have told me about the results of the courses now being taught, it would seem that students are developing a strong sense of self worth and learning to communicate with others.

I wish you well in your project, and will do whatever I can to help. I think The Dynamics of Relationships is a most important and essential course and should be continued in all senior high schools next year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Suzanne Benda".

Suzanne Benda
Special Assistant to the President



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WILLIAM MCKINLEY HIGH SCHOOL

2nd AND T STREETS, N.E.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002

Office of the Principal

February 20, 1987

Mrs. Patricia Kramer
Author and Curriculum Developer
Equal Partners
1148 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20895

Dear Mrs. Kramer:

The purpose of this letter is to express to you my enthusiastic support for the Dynamics of Relationship Program being implemented at McKinley Senior High School this year. The well rounded scope of topics that this program covers provides an excellent opportunity for our students to explore and express their feelings about the intriguing, and sometimes elusive, realm of human relationships.

The students enrolled in the Dynamics of Relationships course are ecstatic about having the opportunity to discuss in a class everyday topics concerning human relationships. They are pleased that they have a forum in which they can discuss subjects that have puzzled them or that have posed serious problems for them. Many students have stated that this course has helped them relate better with their peers, their parents, their teachers, and with others in general.

It is hoped that it will be possible to expand this program and make it accessible to a greater number of students. The Dynamics of Relationships course, is surely viable asset to any high school curriculum.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Bettye W. Topps
Principal



Office of Instruction

415 12th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear School Administrator:

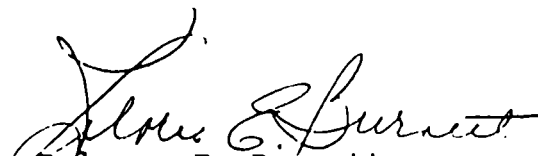
I have been working for some time now with Patricia Kramer and "The Dynamics of Relationships" program that was piloted in our school system in 1985. I also have had the opportunity to observe the classes that are offered at several local secondary schools. As an administrator with the District of Columbia Public Schools, I feel compelled to write to you to tell you about some of the rather remarkable results that we have observed, particularly in the progress of the students who participated.

Because these classes became an arena for these young people, they took every advantage of their opportunity to speak out on any and every issue with which they may have been concerned. They often shared their fears and dreams - their goals, their losses and successes. Too many have no other forums for this kind of openness. Some of the important things we noted were that most students never missed or were late for these classes. At some schools where the classes were offered twice a day, some students with flexible schedules expressed their strong interest by actually attending the class twice in one day.

District of Columbia Public Schools are fortunate to have had the opportunity to pilot "The Dynamics of Relationships" course and are taking necessary steps that should lead to offering it as a year long elective. We think that with the right teachers, properly trained, it can assist us in our battle against teen pregnancy, suicide, substance abuse, violence and drop outs.

I personally recommend and suggest that you take a serious look at this program. The potential for prevention is extremely strong. It may be just one of the answers that you're looking for. If I can be of any help to you please feel free to contact me. Our doors are also open to you if you wish to visit any of these classes. Last year we did have interested visitors from a number of school districts around the country.

Best wishes for a successful and rewarding school year in terms of providing the best possible educational experiences for our children.


Delores E. Burnett
Executive Assistant

Mary Ann White, S.S.J.
129 Maple Drive
Edinboro, PA 16412

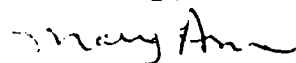
Dear Ms. Kramer,

I am writing in regard to your fine book, *THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONSHIPS*, which I have had the privilege of using in my ministry as campus minister in a residential school for troubled girls. I have found the exercises and the information presented in the sections on self-esteem, communication, and anger extremely helpful in inviting the girls to take a look at the patterns in their own short lives and to apply the skills presented in situations in which they found themselves while on our campus. Many times when they would successfully resolve a problem they would say, "What you said in class does work! I've never tried that before, but it really does work!" They would be excited and amazed that they were successful and did not end up on separation (time out from group activities) because of inappropriate behavior, etc. This helped them to gain confidence and their self-esteem would go up a few notches. It was wonderful to watch the change in their demeanor because of what they learned and now knew how to use. There were always a few skeptics. However, when a classmate would share her successes, they always backed down. Hopefully they will carry what you have taught us out into the world and help to turn this world in which we live into a safer, kinder place for them and their children.

Most recently I have used portions of the section on self-esteem to teach an Interchurch Ministries class called SST! (Sexual Sanity for Teens) and found the exercises to be just as effective with these youngsters as they were with the delinquent/dependent girls. They have proven to be quite enjoyable for the teachers as well as the students.

Thank you for sharing so much with us and continue with your fine work!

Sincerely,



Sister Mary Ann White



Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church

September 24, 1986

Pat Kramer
c/o Equal Partners Press
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20895

Dear Pat,

WHY have you waited so long to get something like The Dynamics Of Relationships into my hands!? This is wonderful!

I just got my youth and adult copies in the mail today and my head is already spinning with all the ready-made youth programs and parenting programs and retreats and self inventories I can take from these. You have pulled together some of the best stuff and put it into some of the tidiest order I have ever seen.

I congratulate you for the creativity, the perseverance, and the broad-mindedness you have exhibited in producing such a work. And I thank Today Reader Service at Atcom Publishing and Equal Partners for making the likes of this available to folks like me who search diligently for meaty stuff to help their kids process such awesome issues as sexuality, self-esteem, and family living.

If your reward hasn't come yet, there's always eternity!
Carry on.

Sincerely,



Laurie Hays Coffman
Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

cc: Today Reader Service
Atcom Publishing
2315 Broadway
New York, NY 10024

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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001. interview	re: Dynamics of Relationships [partial] (1 page)	03/18/1988	b(6)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Ann O'Leary
OA/Box Number: 19586

FOLDER TITLE:

Youth and Violence [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1263

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONSHIPS
CLASS

Student Interview at McKinley H.S.
Wash. DC. March 18, 1988.

What is your name please? (001)

My name is (b)(6). My friends refer to me as "Mousie."

O.K. Mousie. Mousie, how long have you been taking "The Dynamics of Relationships" class?

This is my first year, I've been taking it for a few months now.

I want you to tell me your experience with the class, if anything has happened for you as a result of the class, what you think about the class, o.k.?

O.K. I think this is a terrific class, I think you benefit a lot when you come here. I know I have. In past experiences, I resorted to violence a lot to solve a lot of problems that could have been solved by talking. I know this class kind of shows me that's not the way to go. You can talk your problems out or just like speaking to someone anyway, you get the problems off your chest, you don't have too much to worry about.

How did it specifically stop you from or help you to be less violent?

I had no reason to be violent after I found out how violence show ignorance. I've been trying ignorance and it led me nowhere and I just kind of feel real silly, being the only one talking about fighting all day long. And I used to have my little journey on drugs. I wasn't using, I was selling.

Why did this class help you to stop doing it?

Because by being in drugs all these things that I read in your book has been involved. I can see killing, murders anything you can name that had to do with drugs.

Didn't you know that before?

I knew that but the fast money was so good. And really just by showing off in front of your friends is really, really tough, you know?

I would think fast money still looks good and it's kind of fun to show off, why is it any different now?

Because I learned something when I was in it, I had a little job and I was still hustling, and when I would get my hustling money I would blow it just like that and I when I would get my job money I would save the check and treasure it, even though it wasn't nothing but \$115-120 dollars.

What were you earning when you were hustling?

A thousand. But it wasn't a problem. But I really like this class, it really helped me a lot, it kind of showed me the light that working for something better than taking from somebody any day.

How about with your family has this changed anything with your family?

Yes, it is been a way to deal with my little brother

hollering all day long, screaming all day.

That's what you were doing?

Yes, I was hollering and screaming at him all day long but hollering and screaming and punching people it just doesn't help. You know they're not animals.

It sounds like a lot that you have gotten out of this. Do you think a program like this could help to lower some of the rates of suicide, teen pregnancy, drugs, alcohol or even dropouts,

Yes, because most of the people come to this class would skip other classes just to come.

Why?

Because you just want to sit down and let loose.

But the other classes-reading and writing are important, why is this more important?

Because this hits home, this is where everything is. School hits with the books. When your talking here, it stays in your mind all day long, everyday.

Does it stay in you mind afterwards?

Yes. People look forward to coming to this class just so they can get that extra edge on their problems.

Do you think if we had more programs like this kids would enjoy being in school and maybe we would have less dropouts?

Yes, I really do believe that.

Is there anything else you might want to share about the program? Tell me what grade it should start in.

I believe the program should start early, very early, maybe in junior high school, because a lot of your suicide is in junior high school, entering high school is even harder.

But that means that you would have to give up some other course.

Yes, to me you have a lot of course that are unnecessary, really.

Like what?

Like, Math.

Lots of people would think that math is real important.

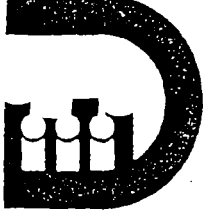
We have little jive classes like, sometimes Driver's Ed. Stuff like that, things you really don't need. You don't need Driver's Ed—not to me though. And then there are other little jive classes I can't think about at the moment.

But this has more to do with your life than some of your other classes.

This covers everything.

Do you think a program like this would be important in other schools?

Yes, this program would really help a lot of people. It would really save a lot of lives, save a lot



State of Delaware
The Department of Services
for Children, Youth, and
Their Families

Ms. Patricia Kramer
=Equal Partners
14526 Banquo Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20906
August 24, 1993

Office of Education

633-2536

Dear Pat,

My apology for the delay in responding to your request. Our Summer School program has been rewarding, however, extremely time consuming.

I am excited about the opportunity to comment on The Dynamics of Relationships. I have used this resource as a primary supplement to our Life Skills curriculum.

Working with incarcerated males, ages 14-19, presents the double challenge of motivating students who are not in this environment voluntarily, and not having the benefit of females presenting a different perspective.

In my effort to give you an unbiased response to your book, I asked students for their impressions of their experience in my class. The following are some of their comments:

I learned about self realization ... I learned more things about myself.

I improved my vocabulary. Now I know better words to express how I am feeling and how I see myself and how others see me.

I liked the part about anger control ... I learned that anger can be positive and negative. I think that I am controlling my anger better.

Decision making was good. I want to remember those steps when I am in a real life situation.

I learned about how females think.

I learned appropriate names for certain parts of the body.

I learned more about alternative life styles.

This class helped me with my maturity.

I realized my role as a man.

I am more open minded.

Fun class!

From the responses received and the high level of participation of the same students, we plan to continue using this material in more creative ways.

Thank you for your contribution to our class and your interest in our reaction to it.

Best Regards,

Julia Morgan

J Morgan

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION



July 9, 1991

Dear Patricia Kramer:

As a special education teacher in a psychiatric hospital setting, I have had the privilege of utilizing the book developed by you entitled, "The Dynamics of Relationships." Over the past four years, it has been a valuable resource while working with an adolescent population plagued with problems at the social and personal level.

While teaching sex education classes, the book was used as a supplemental resource tool, providing me with numerous activities and valuable information. It is currently being utilized as the primary source of information for a class I have developed called Self Development. Your chapters on self-esteem, anger and conflict, communication and friendship have proven to be thorough and comprehensive in content. It structures information in a progressive fashion with each concept building on each other. The activities certainly assist in reinforcing the subject matter and gives more impact to the concept being taught. Yet, more importantly, it gives credibility to advice and direction given by therapist, teachers, counselors and parents.

The book is presented with pertinent and relevant issues encountered by today's youth. Having observed the students' use of this book, it is obvious that the content is of a high interest level which stimulates discussion, participation, and challenges their thinking. It has helped in developing an awareness and insight for adolescents who are desperately in search of understanding themselves and their relationship to others.

I sincerely appreciate the tremendous energy and effort put into creating this book. I strongly recommend school systems, youth organizations or other facilities working with youth or young adults, to obtain this book and discover for themselves how valuable a resource this book will prove to be.

Sincerely,

Brunetta Soward
Special Education Teacher

BS/mn



District of Columbia Board of Education
415 12th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004
202-724-4284

R. David Hall
Ward 2
President

December 30, 1985

Patricia Kramer
EQUAL PARTNERS
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895

Dear Pat:

Attached is a copy of the letter I sent to Ms. Emma King recommending your textbook for use in D.C. Public Schools. In addition to the strong recommendation I made to her, I would like to make one comment.

My concern when reviewing your textbook is this: Because most, if not all of the students have never been asked to consider their feelings and reactions in a number of different situations, would they find it difficult to analyze and articulate their feelings, reactions and emotions, both verbally and in writing as is required in many of the exercises?

I am at a disadvantage in not having observed the teacher training or the classroom instruction and interaction, and this concern may therefore be unfounded. From what you have told me about the results of the courses now being taught, it would seem that students are developing a strong sense of self worth and learning to communicate with others.

I wish you well in your project, and will do whatever I can to help. I think The Dynamics of Relationships is a most important and essential course and should be continued in all senior high schools next year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Suzanne Benda".

Suzanne Benda
Special Assistant to the President

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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002. letter	Constituent to Patricia [partial] (1 page)	04/08/1987	b(6)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Ann O'Leary
OA/Box Number: 19586

FOLDER TITLE:

Youth and Violence [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1263

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]



MULBERRY CENTER

Hi Patricia,

4-8-87

My name is [REDACTED] (b)(6) I called and talked to you on the 8th of April, about ordering two of your books. I felt very honored to be able to talk to you in person. The thing that excited me the most was your enthusiasm you place in your work! You seemed to be very concern of the help and guidance teenagers need. Even though I am not a teenager, I have greatly used your book "The Dynamics of Relationships". It has helped me alot. As we agreed on phone, "It would be nice had I had used it when I was a teenager." I think you have been working on a great needed area.

I am 29 and this is my 3rd time in the hospital. All 3 times with depression, also the second time including including bringing on the 3rd time in. I seem to have found as my outlet for dealing with my emotions. [This is where your book has come into my life.] It has helped me to understand more about my hidden anger and other feelings I have experienced. It has shown me more constructive ways of using these emotions to help myself, rather than harm myself.

I am so grateful for all your study and time placed into making "The Dynamics of Relationships" come true. I know it will help others as much as it has helped me. I look forward to the time they (the hospital) start teaching class, using your material. The Eating Disorder Unit is working now on training the staff for that purpose. I know it will help many more people in the future to come.

I Thank you very much for all your hard work and your quick response in placing my order. It has helped me understand some of myself so much better.

I will be honored if I could write again after completing the material at hand. Thank you again.

From a new friend.

(002)



600 NE 92nd Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98664
(206) 256-2170

March 8, 1988

Patricia Kramer
Equal Partners
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20895

Dear Ms. Kramer:

We are an adolescent chemical dependency treatment program in Vancouver, Washington. We are a 12 Step, Reality Therapy and group dynamic treatment program. We believe that recovering adolescents need work in socio-cultural, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and physical areas of their life.

We would like to use your book The Dynamics Of Relationships for contact groups, parent-teen workshops, mens/womens groups and staff inservice training. We feel that family relationships are a cornerstone of recovery from chemical dependency for adolescents. It will help young people gain knowledge and change attitudes which will help them in their recovery process.

We are going to use the book because it was recommended by a student from the Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon.

Thank you very much for offering to share your book with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. Ryan".

Robert A. Ryan, EdD
Adolescent Services Coordinator

Enclosure

RR/ml

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22331-05 21

10 June 1986

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Family Support Division

Ms. Patricia Kramer
Equal Partners
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895

Dear Ms. Kramer:

Your book, The Dynamics of Relationships, is the best item of its kind I have ever seen. Thank you so much for giving me a copy (Teacher's Manual) to review.

Nancy Condes, my Deputy Director for Youth Activities, was also very favorably impressed. When Mr. Steve Pratt, the Director, returns, he will also review the book. I don't know yet, specifically, how we can make use of the book but Nancy has some ideas, and we can certainly give you other leads, such as people to contact within DODDS (The Department of Defense Dependents Schools). Both Ms. Condes and Mr. Pratt are at 325-9390.

Again, your book is a masterpiece and I'll do everything I can to help it find its way to young people, their parents, their counselors, their teachers and others interested in the well-being of our youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ann O'Keefe", is positioned above the typed name.

Ann O'Keefe
Chief, Family Support Division

Workshops teach self-esteem, communication

By Spec. Susan Bouchard
Living editor

Fort Rucker and surrounding community residents will give self-esteem, decision making, communication and coping skills, a closer look in October.

Fort Rucker Army Community Service-sponsored workshops, "Helping Kids Cope Is Helping Kids Learn," "If I Don't Love Me Who Will" and "The Nurturing Classroom," will be taught Oct. 5-9.

Patricia Kramer, an education consultant and trainer and the author of "The Dynamics of Relationships," will facilitate the workshops.

Kramer's curriculum has been used in Washington, D.C. schools for the past five years and is now being used worldwide.

The workshops will tackle the

responsibility and relationships, according to Kramer.

The "Dynamics of Relationships" program, building and maintaining self-esteem, learning effective communication skills, decision-making and coping skills and learning how to handle anger and conflict safely will all be discussed.

The free workshops are part of the ongoing installation family violence prevention program, according to Genevieve Normand, Director of Army Community Service.

The workshop, "Helping Kids Cope Is Helping Kids Learn," is designed to help teach young people ways of building and maintaining self-esteem and learning effective communication and coping skills.

"If I Don't Love Me Who Will" will be offered to both adults and teens. Kramer will teach these skills to post

or teen-to-teen programs.

Educators and counselors will learn how to apply Kramer's teachings to their classrooms, in the workshop, "The Nurturing Classroom."

According to Kramer, "people with high self-esteem tend to make positive decisions about what they do, where they go, with whom they spend time and what they put into their bodies. Issues such as teen suicide, pregnancy, substance abuse, drop-outs and violence, can no longer be considered the real problems and treated as such, when they are merely symptoms of far greater and more serious problems."

Kramer said, "the real crises facing our young people are low self-worth, poor communication styles, virtually no coping skills for handling feelings of anger, sadness, fear or disappointment, conflict resolution,

the options, alternatives or choices available to them."

She said, "when youth are in emotional pain, struggling to cope with conflict, anger and general feelings of inadequacy, they have a difficult time with their learning skills."

According to Kramer, participants will be taught to build self-esteem, empower youth to create their own successes, teach students to cope with problems, and help students to handle and recognize their feelings and emotions.

"Helping Kids Cope Is Helping Kids Learn," will be Oct. 5, 6-9 p.m. in the ACS classroom, bldg. 4108; and "If I Don't Love Me Who Will," will be Oct. 8, 9 a.m. - noon, in the Family Life Center, bldg. 8939. Both workshops are free and open to the public.

For more information, or to register, call Kathy Martin or Janna Ann

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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003. interview	re: Dynamics of Relationships [partial] (1 page)	03/18/1988	b(6)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Ann O'Leary
OA/Box Number: 19586

FOLDER TITLE:

Youth and Violence [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1263

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
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PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONSHIPS
CLASS

Student Interview at McKinley H.S.
Wash. DC. March 18, 1988.

What is your name please? (003)

My name is (b)(6). My friends refer to me as "Mousie."

O.K. Mousie. Mousie, how long have you been taking 'The Dynamics of Relationships' class?

This is my first year, I've been taking it for a few months now.

I want you to tell me your experience with the class, if anything has happened for you as a result of the class, what you think about the class, o.k.?

O.K. I think this is a terrific class, I think you benefit a lot when you come here. I know I have. In past experiences, I resorted to violence a lot to solve a lot of problems that could have been solved by talking. I know this class kind of shows me that's not the way to go. You can talk your problems out or just like speaking to someone anyway, you get the problems off your chest, you don't have too much to worry about.

How did it specifically stop you from or help you to be less violent?

I had no reason to be violent after I found out how violence show ignorance. I've been trying ignorance and it led me nowhere and I just kind of feel real silly, being the only one talking about fighting all day long. And I used to have my little journey on drugs. I wasn't using, I was selling.

Why did this class help you to stop doing it?

Because by being in drugs all these things that I read in your book has been involved. I can see killing, murders anything you can name that had to do with drugs.

Didn't you know that before?

I knew that but the fast money was so good. And really just by showing off in front of your friends is really, really tough, you know?

I would think fast money still looks good and it's kind of fun to show off, why is it any different now?

Because I learned something when I was in it, I had a little job and I was still hustling, and when I would get my hustling money I would blow it just like that and I when I would get my job money I would save the check and treasure it, even though it wasn't nothing but \$115-120 dollars.

What were you earning when you were hustling?

A thousand. But it wasn't a problem. But I really like this class, it really helped me a lot, it kind of showed me the light that working for something better than taking from somebody any day.

How about with your family has this changed anything with your family?

Yes, it is been a way to deal with my little brother

hollering all day long, screaming all day.

That's what you were doing?

Yes, I was hollering and screaming at him all day long but hollering and screaming and punching people it just doesn't help. You know they're not animals.

It sounds like a lot that you have gotten out of this. Do you think a program like this could help to lower some of the rates of suicide, teen pregnancy, drugs, alcohol or even dropouts,

Yes, because most of the people come to this class would skip other classes just to come.

Why?

Because you just want to sit down and let loose.

But the other classes-reading and writing are important, why is this more important?

Because this hits home, this is where everything is. School hits with the books. When your talking here, it stays in your mind all day long, everyday.

Does it stay in you mind afterwards?

Yes. People look forward to coming to this class just so they can get that extra edge on their problems.

Do you think if we had more programs like this kids would enjoy being in school and maybe we would have less dropouts?

Yes, I really do believe that.

Is there anything else you might want to share about the program? Tell me what grade it should start in.

I believe the program should start early, very early, maybe in junior high school, because a lot of your suicide is in junior high school, entering high school is even harder.

But that means that you would have to give up some other course.

Yes, to me you have a lot of course that are unnecessary, really.

Like what?

Like, Math.

Lots of people would think that math is real important.

We have little jive classes like, sometimes Driver's Ed. Stuff like that, things you really don't need. You don't need Driver's Ed—not to me though. And then there are other little jive classes I can't think about at the moment.

But this has more to do with your life than some of your other classes.

This covers everything.

Do you think a program like this would be important in other schools?

Yes, this program would really help a lot of people. It would really save a lot of lives, save a lot

Patricia Kramer, Educational Consultant & Trainer

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

STUDENTS COMMENTS ON SUICIDE

This course is very helpful because some things that you have in mind you try to find friends to talk with and talking to some one can help you, if you are thinking about suicide. Why are kids committing suicide because this thing called peer pressure, relationships and problems. And low self esteem and it hurt when you lose somebody you really love.

The course is very helpful for people that has problems that they can not handle. It helps them to think and learn more things they need to know about how to handle life such as suicide.

This course is helpful in preventing suicide because there are people in this class who have had some experience with suicide whether they've tried it or someone close to them either committed suicide or just tried it. These people can relate to someone elses dilemma about suicide. If there should be someone thinking about suicide, they could come to class and talk about their problem and that class discussion you could bring up many things that could cause this person contemplating suicide reason to think.

I feel that this course is somewhat helpful to preventing suicide. Dynamics of Relationships deals with every aspect of human emotion--depression, jealousy, happiness, etc. Since it is a discussion class we are able to let out all of our problems and help each other work through something that might otherwise remain to oneself. We are taught to recognize signs of a potential suicide victim.

I feel this course is very helpful in preventing suicide because when it comes to problems most people feel they're the only ones with that particular problem, and they resort to suicide as the answer. However, in this class you can open up to people, you can laugh and cry and everyone understands you and your problems. As a result you will find out there are other people who are going through the same thing(s) and you really don't feel as bad and alone anymore. Also, you would have made a new friend or friends who you know will always be there to listen to you, not only to give suggestions and help, but to simply just listen.

I think this course can be really helpful in preventing suicide. I'm not saying that if you pull a suicidal patient off the streets into one session you can talk them out of it. But give them something to look forward to on the next day and they'll make sure that they are here. I feel that if I was thinking about committing suicide, as long as I'm coming to this class I can be talked out of it. Because the way the course is designed if I had a problem I'd read the book and then someone would discuss it with me to help me understand a little more.

I think that this course helpful in preventing teen suicide, because the person who has a problem will know that he is not the only one with a problem. There will be a lot of other students who may have a much more serious problem and the student who was thinking about committing suicide will look at it as if he's not alone or his problem is much bigger than mine. As the student progresses he may lose interest in attempting suicide because he or she may be trying to help others in so many different ways that he may not have time to attend to his own problem. If the student expresses his own situation I am quite sure that there will be so many people helping him or her that he will think that I really do have something to live for, and there are people who really love and care for me.

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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004. list	re: Benson High School (Alternative Ed Program) (1 page)	10/1991	b(6)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Ann O'Leary
OA/Box Number: 19586

FOLDER TITLE:

Youth and Violence [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1263

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
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PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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005. list	re: Training Comments (2 pages)	n.d.	b(6)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Ann O'Leary
OA/Box Number: . 19586

FOLDER TITLE:

Youth and Violence [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1263

RESTRICTION CODES

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
006. letter	Letters from parents re: personal (2 pages)	ca. 1986	b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Ann O'Leary
OA/Box Number: 19586

FOLDER TITLE:

Youth and Violence [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1263

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

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'Dynamics' class draws positive reaction from BOE

By MIKE BOUCHER
Gazette Staff Writer

Augusta High School students enrolled in the new Dynamics of Relationships classes should not be surprised to see local board of education members strolling into their classes to observe.

At least that was the impression left to

those attending Monday night's Unified School District 402's September Board of Education meeting at the Education Center 301 W. Kelly.

Following the presentation made by high school counselor Gail McKinzie and AHS teachers Linda Ralston and Eileen Dreiling, board members and staff each had

words of praise for the teachers, the program and the class.

"That was a super program," BOE president Lowell Peterson stated exuberantly. "I honestly didn't know exactly what the class was about. As a businessman I have spent countless amounts of money to attend courses like Carnegie and the kids will get

all this for the entire year."

"This kind of presentation and program is not only good for us to see, I think it would be great for other teachers and even could be used to recruit teachers to the profession," board member Dr. Les Nesmith said.

"It is hard to just say 'Thank you,'" Superintendent Dr. Lyle E. Boyles told the three. "This will have a pretty massive, substantial impact on our children for years to come. I guess I would say 'Please continue on'."

And as McKinzie informed the board, the program will continue. It is the pilot program for the state of Kansas.

McKinzie began the presentation noting they discussed wanting to put high risk students with computers to help them find ways to get help and get back into the mainstream.

The school set out feelers at pre-enrollment last spring to see what kind of response the students would have to such a class. With only a one paragraph course description listed, 140 Augusta High School students said they would enroll in the course if offered the chance. This fall there are 149 students in the course, with seven sections being taught, one each hour for the entire school day.

It was not just the students who were excited by the class. During the summer,

the school brought in Pat Kramer, who founded the program in the Washington D.C. public schools four years ago.

Augusta has four instructors teaching the course this year. There were 20 local teachers enrolled in the course, which was an intensive 45 hours of learning crushed into a short period of time.

Of the 20, 18 were from the high school, one middle school educator and one elementary educator.

"We want to continue to use the quote that Pat Kramer left with us," McKinzie told the BOE. "It sums up how we look at the program."

"If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you have always gotten."

In Washington the program was started as prevention instead of intervention.

McKinzie noted they don't want to put band-aids on the problems, they want to prevent them from happening.

"Two of our goals are to allow the students to discuss, explain and share their feelings in an arena and two, to open their eyes to all options, to raise their awareness," she stated.

As primary objectives, McKinzie listed building a strong self-image, to effectively use communication skills, strong coping skills and realistic expectations of adults roles and the relationships the students develop.

Besides McKinzie and Ralston, the class is also taught by Liana Torkelson and Jeff Regier.

Ralston told the group the textbook has 21 chapters, but she wanted to mention just three, which deal with the goals of self-esteem, communications and conflict management.

"The chapter on self-esteem is first and is 60 pages long," she explained. "There are many things everyone can do. Simple things like eye contact, saying 'hi' and taking time to listen. Not just what we do in class. These techniques are for all teachers in all subjects."

Ralston then gave several examples of class exercises. She noted that substance abuse is a direct relationship to self-esteem and that the Just Say No slogan is actually elevated in the class.

"Instead of just telling students to say no," Ralston explained. "We practice having them actually say 'No'."

Ralston has several other examples of classroom activities dealing with communication.

"Conflict management is how we manage our anger," she told the board. "The student is in charge of their anger. They make conscious choices of what to do. No one makes them mad, they get mad on their own."

Dreiling finished the presentation with several overhead slides and background music.

"I am not teaching the class this year," she told the BOE. "I use many of the techniques in my Health classes and with my own children at home. It was a very intense workshop. We laughed and we cried at times. I was glad I was there."

Many of the thoughts printed on the overhead screen brought positive comments from board member and administrators.

McKinzie noted following the presentation that they had provided an inservice for the high school teachers and plans had been made to provide inservice presentations at the middle school and the elementary buildings.



Learning about teenagers...

Several AHS teachers gathered together this week for a inservice workshop titled "Dynamics of Relationships." Speaking at the week long workshop included Julie Good, far left, of CPG Great Plains Hospital, in Wichita. Heading the program was Patricia Kramer, second from left, who is a consultant, among other things with the "Dynamics of Relationships" program.

AUGUSTA DAILY
Gazette

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Unified School District No. 402

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Schools for Achievement

Ms. Patricia Kramer
Equal Partners
11348 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20985

Dear Pat,

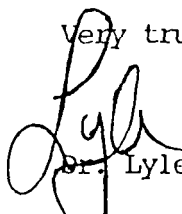
The Augusta school year is into the fourth week. Usually, it takes some amount of time before the impact of a new program can actually be noticed. Not so with the seven sections of Dynamics of Relationships class commenced at the Senior High School this year! Commencing with the six days of in-service work that you handled the first week of August, the forceful and positive effects of the material in "Dynamics" has just continued to grow and expand.

I want you to know that some of the teachers that were in the in-service work have really established much stronger relationships with their students. They demonstrate a better understanding of the real sensitive nature involved in the learning/teaching relationship. They seem to better understand that their real role of assisting the student in his/her learning is more desirable than constantly directing the student in all of his/her classroom work.

After four weeks, the 140 students in "Dynamics" are showing significantly more interest in school. They are coming to believe that they are important people in the school environment. They are learning how to make a positive difference for themselves in their associations with others.

Pat, I believe that "Dynamics" is a program that all schools should seriously consider. As you know, we had been searching for a program like "Dynamics" for the past couple of years. I am certainly glad that we commenced the program this year. Your on site, professional assistance in getting the program off to a good start was a great plus. The six days of in-service were well developed. Your unique approach to keeping people involved all the time was the "icing on the cake."

Very truly yours,



Dr. Lyle E. Boyles, Supt.

Rose Hill

Thursday, Aug. 2, 1990

KANSAS



'Dynamic' Teachers

Patricia Kramer, (far right) founder of the "Dynamics of Relationships" program, is teaching the course to Rose Hill teachers and other teachers in surrounding school districts, in two 45 hour courses held this week and next week. The course instills techniques teachers can use to give students more self esteem.

For Students

Staff Learning About Building Self-Esteem

A special in service course was introduced to the Rose Hill USD 394 this week. The "Dynamics of Relationships" is headed by Patricia Kramer, who founded the course introduced in Washington D.C. schools five years ago.

This 45-hour course is being held in the library of Rose Hill High School for two weeks, and is being offered to approximately 21 teachers from Rose Hill and other teachers from school districts including Andover, Augusta, Derby, Clearwater, El Dorado, Chase County and Valley Center.

Kramer has gone around the country with her program instilling techniques on teachers, parents and students to build self esteem in the students.

"Everyone I knew was struggling with relationships, and I decided to do something about it," explained Kramer.

What Kramer did was design a program aimed at adolescents to help deal with the many social and personal problems they face daily.

The program has gained attention from as far as Israel with officials expressing an interest in her book as a part of a teen pregnancy program. The text has also been translated into Spanish and Greek.

The course was designed to let students develop a sense of self-worth and to facilitate better interaction with their peers.

According to Kramer, the "Dynamics" material can be used as a resource for counselors involved with teenagers within the school or in the community. In addition, the course can be taught under any number of different disciplines including health, home economics, psychology or sex education.

"We have got to help our young people so they can grow up healthy, happy and more productive," Kramer said.

The issues of drug usage, suicide and pregnancy are identified as problems of today's youth. But Kramer said drug programs, suicide programs and teenage pregnancy prevention programs are not the answer.

"These are not prevention, but intervention," she said. "Real problems causing the young people to react in a negative or destructive way stem from low self esteem. Poor communication skill, the inability to handle conflict and anger, the lack of knowledge about alternatives, options and choices are what students need to learn to cope with," Kramer added.

Thursday, August 9, the Dynamics course will be opened to parents in the Rose Hill school district to help them better understand the many pressures their children are facing these days. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m., in the Stoll Media Center.

Introduced in Kansas three years ago, the course has been taught in Augusta schools since 1988, and was introduced in Andover schools last year.

The course will be offered as an elective class this year to high school students.



NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Harvey Garner, Ph.D.
Interim Chancellor

9/93

Patricia Kramer, Educational Consultant & Trainer
Equal Partners
3371 Beaverwood Lane,
Silver Spring, Maryland 20906

Dear Ms. Kramer:

My apologies for missing the last workshop of the series that you conducted for our special education paraprofessionals. I would have liked to have been there to hear all the wonderful stories that people told about how much they were impacted by your workshop--both personally and professionally. Many participants contacted me and told me of the touching responses and that many of them even brought you gifts to express their gratitude. I also heard comments like: "Initially, I came for the money, but I would have come for free." "I was planning to retire this year, but now I've decided to stay because I know that I can reach these kids now." Pat, you should be very proud of yourself. It is quite a gift to be able to touch peoples' lives that way. Considering that these workshops were held on Saturday and Sunday, and no one missed any of the three days is a tribute to you.

Your ability to involve and hold such a diverse audience was unique. From all the evaluations, I believe that our students will ultimately reap the benefits of your workshops. When the "paras" go back into the classroom and begin to implement some of your ideas, I am certain that our students will know that they are cared about and how special they are and, consequently, they will strive harder to succeed.

We would like to have you repeat both of the series again for the 93-94 school year. My staff will be in touch with you shortly to schedule dates and coordinate the workshops. Again thank you for the marvelous job you did and for caring so much about our students.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Regina Zacker", is written over a horizontal line.

Regina Zacker, Deputy Director
DHS/Special Education Operations

Style Plus

Education

Teaching Kids to Relate as Adults

By Desson Howe
Washington Post Staff Writer

After her painful divorce 15 years ago, Patricia Kramer was determined—and came up with a high school course plan—to help prevent young people from heading down the same path.

"No one knows how to make relationships work," says Kramer, 41, whose "Dynamics of Relationships" is taught in three District of Columbia schools. "We can't expect people just to know it. We have to teach them."

As it has evolved, Kramer's two-semester course deals not only with relationships and marriage, but also touches on issues such as drugs, pregnancy and homosexuality. The one-hour, five-day-a-week course, currently in a "pilot" stage at Anacostia, Ballou and Dunbar high schools, draws heavily on discussion sessions and role-playing. If approved, the course could be adopted as an elective in all District high schools. Kramer is also talking with public school officials in Virginia and Maryland and other systems around the country.

At a recent visit to Anacostia High School, a "Dynamics" class is in progress; today's subject is based on chapter seven's sexuality section. Teacher Thomas Held, who is fulfilling a 40-hour teacher training requirement, leads the class of 19.

"Did anybody remember to hug some people at home?" he asks.

Some did, some didn't.

Held asks the 12th-grade class if parents should impose curfews on teen-agers. Again, a mixed response. One student says children should be allowed out late when they are 16. "Sometimes," protests another, "when parents keep you in the house all the time and then you get out, you just go wild."

"Are more teen-agers having sex than before?" asks Held.

"Yes," replies the class firmly.

"What's the evidence?" asks the teacher.

"Pregnancies," say a few voices.

"Are teen-agers being given more freedom or less?"

"More."

"What goes with that freedom?"

"Responsibilities."

"How many people here have a curfew?"

Only one hand goes up.

After class, student Dathan Edwards talks about the program. Before he took the class, "I wanted to get more respect from my parents," he says. "I got frustrated easily with my father." He also had a problem with peers who criticized him for keeping to himself and "not going out all the time." But after studying such subtopics of "Dynamics" as self-esteem, "I have a better relationship with [my father]," he says, and associates "don't bother me any more."

"Inside Your Schools," an educational TV series, recently highlighted a "Dynamics" class at Ballou High School, where students were role-playing with obvious enjoyment. A young man asked his partner why she would not have sex with him. She wasn't ready yet, she replied. He



PATRICIA KRAMER

said he was being pressured by his friends to have sex with her.

"If you're being pressured by your friends," she retorted, "why don't you have sex with *them*?"

Kramer's course, however, "is not a sex-education program," she stresses. "It's a program to build self-esteem." (In answer to some schools' concerns, she is preparing a second edition of the book—published by Kramer's own Equal Partners Co.—that pulls out some of the more sensitive material, such as birth control, sexual diseases and teen-age pregnancy to be put under a separate cover for teachers.)

Ozetta Boseman, who teaches "Dynamics" at Ballou, says the course is worthwhile because it "deals with so many scenes [teen-agers] come in contact with daily . . . We discuss things openly. All their opinions are accepted, no one is wrong because they feel a certain way. The students feel comfortable talking about issues they may not be comfortable with discussing in other classes."

Emma King, the home economics supervisor who is overseeing and critiquing the progress of "Dynamics" for District Public Schools, has commented that most public school students come from broken homes. "I don't know if [the course] will solve the problems, but it will create a greater awareness."

The "Dynamics of Relationships" is in some ways the story of Kramer's relentless lobbying of teachers, educational systems and anyone else who would listen. Since 1983, when she developed the course, Kramer says her life has consisted of "walking around and talking and calling and begging and pushing and convincing people we have a desperate need for this."

Her credentials: a B.A. in psychology from Biscayne (Fla.) College and a stint as a divorce counselor. After her divorce in 1971, Kramer became "truly driven from a personal standpoint." Realizing that "everyone was getting divorced and in a lot of pain, and there's a lot of anger between men and women," she went back to college to become a divorce counselor.

"No one knows how to make relationships work. We can't expect people just to know it. We have to teach them."

—Patricia Kramer

But after listening to one tragic story after another, she decided teen-agers should be her target for solving human social problems: "I've kind of given up on adults."

Acting on the suggestions of some Florida school officials, she attempted to introduce the course at community-education programs for adults and children. But, in spite of a barrage of publicity, "No one would sign up for the classes . . . I got disgusted. People were hurting and didn't seem to care . . ."

She "sort of stopped," and then decided to start anew in Washington, where she was born and raised. "All the national organizations are here and if I were to get funding, here was the place." Kramer spent "a lot of time reviewing lots of material—college textbooks, high school textbooks, every single book on relationships that existed and every sociological paper, which of course I never understood—and I drew my own conclusions."

Her initial applications to private foundations for development money were rejected, but in 1984, working with the American Family's Youth Policy Institute, she received some grants.

"We adults never got taught any of this," says Kramer. "Someone has to break this chain so we'll be better marriage partners, better role models, better parents, happier, more well-adjusted, so individuals won't be so destructive to themselves, and so . . . people will be more loving and nurturing . . . things we were all meant to do."

Kramer's own relationships?

"I'm not in a relationship right now," she says, "primarily because I'm spending 18-24 hours a day" developing the course. "In my commitment to do this I put my personal life apart."

The second reason for putting relationships on hold for the moment: "I have an understanding of what it takes to make a relationship work. And I find it difficult to find a partner who's receptive to that . . ."

Trouble Spots

Patricia Kramer lists these four major problem areas she wants to see addressed in schools, at the teen-age level:

■ **Self-esteem.** "Knowing you're okay and that, if you feel good about yourself, you can accomplish a great deal."

■ **Communication and Dealing With Conflict.** "To learn how to communicate effectively with people about your feelings, and not attack people and put them on the defensive. It's also dealing with anger: If you've learned how to express your feelings they

don't get so bottled up inside that you feel you have to explode."

■ **Unrealistic Expectations.** "We grow up with a lot of fantasies—fairy tales, TV shows, which even today have more fantasy than reality; books, love stories when we're young. Even parents train girls that 'When you get married you'll be taken care of.' Girls fantasize that they won't have to go out into the real world on their own."

"[Men] dream of their wife being supportive—being at home, taking care of them, etcetera . . . People's expectations are unrealistic."

■ **Gender Roles.** "Men are wrapped in blue and women wrapped in pink. From that day forward, the world begins to treat them in a different way."

Even nurses and parents treat the newborns differently. You hold the child softly" if it's a girl. If the child is a boy, says Kramer, "You hold it rougher and say, 'Isn't he a handsome brute?' The process begins then."

Girls, she says, are believed to need more attention, are given less freedom and expected to stay closer to home. All these roles foisted upon the genders "affect the way we are as adults . . . Adults are really angry at each other. The bottom line is, they don't understand each other."

For more information on the "Dynamics of Relationships": Patricia Kramer, *Equal Partners*, 11348 Connecticut Ave., Kensington, Md. 20895. 301-933-1489.

Bucking the basics, D.C. students 'adapt'

By Bill Allegar
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Relaxing in a living-room-like setting complete with couches and chairs in a home economics classroom, students talk about their struggles growing up.

No topics are taboo: Conflicts with parents, sexuality and pregnancy are discussed openly.

Bucking the back-to-basics and career-development trends of the

nation's classrooms, the pilot course in District classrooms was designed to convey realistic expectations about marriage and adult life.

But it also has helped District high school students deal with crises they face as adolescents.

"The students talk about everything," said Ballou High School teacher Ozetta Bozeman, who leads discussions in this experimental class. The class is geared to help stu-

see CLASS, page 8A

School system offers course on relationships

WASHINGTON (AP) — As school systems around the country work on back-to-basics curricula, a Washington resident convinced the District of Columbia public schools that lessons on good relationships could be part of a basic education.

When schools opened Tuesday, 11th graders at three high schools were offered a pilot course, "Dynamics of Relationships," which Patricia Kramer designed to teach realistic expectations about marriage and other adult experiences.

Kramer, 40, has a bachelor's degree in psychology and is not a professional educator. Ever since her own divorce 16 years ago, she said, she has felt people ought to know more about what they are getting into before they marry.

Her course is designed to help teenagers develop:

- A strong and secure sense of self-worth

- A clearer, more realistic expectation of marriage, parenting and family life.

- New and effective communication skills.

- A deeper understanding of the commitment needed to have lasting, loving relationships.

She maintains that the schools should provide this kind of instruction because children can't get it at home.

"How can you expect parents to teach something they never learned?" she asked, pointing to current high divorce rates.

According to provisional figures from the National Bureau on Health Statistics, 1,135,000 couples in the United States were divorced in 1984, while 2,487,000 got married. In the District of Columbia, the latest figures available are for 1983 when 2,731 couples were divorced and 5,488 got married.

Emma King, of the Washington city

"How can you expect parents to teach something they never learned?"

— Patricia Kramer

schools, said the majority of the 88,381 students in the public system come from broken homes.

"I don't know if it (the course) will solve the problems, but it will create a greater awareness," said King, whose home economics department is overseeing the program.

After evaluation, the course might be expanded to all 15 secondary schools in the system next year, said Delores Burnett, assistant superintendent for instruction.

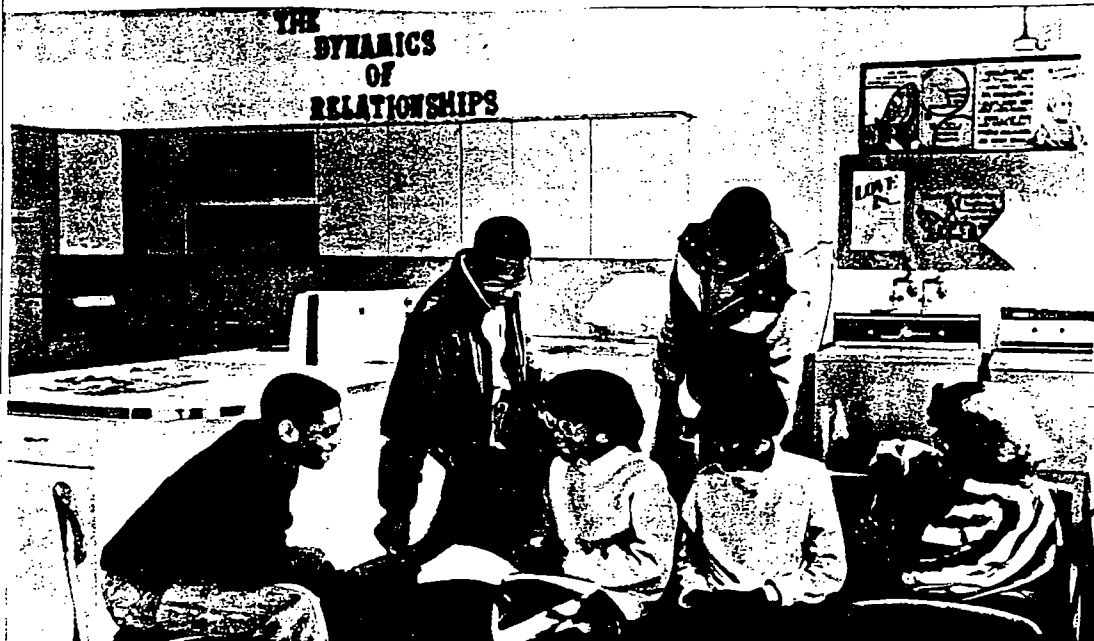
"It was fascinating. It was different," Burnett said of the course. "It goes a step further than anything we've had before."

"I'm anxious to see the outcome. Our society has changed. The kids are ready."

The year-long, daily course is divided into four parts. It will require homework, include exams and be graded.

The first section is called "Formation." In it, discussion will cover self-esteem, what it means to be a man or woman, friendship, dating, courtship, engagement, sexuality, marital expectations, selecting a partner, interfaith and interracial marriages, living together and being single.

Under the section called "Maintenance," students will talk about communication, sharing, jealousy, making love work, separate but equal identities, marriage counseling.



These students at Ballou High School seem to be enjoying a class called "Dynamics of Relationships," which also could be called Coping with Youth

Crises. Three D.C. senior high schools offer the popular course this semester, and a fourth is scheduled to begin a class in the spring term.

CLASS

From page 1A

dents develop self-esteem, skills in communication and conflict-resolution, ways to sort out and expressing feelings — and cope in general.

"What do you think of when you hear the word fight?" students were asked in a recent class on how to "fight fair" and resolve conflicts constructively.

Answers ranged from street fights to football games to arguments.

One student answered "mental pain." Another mentioned that someone she knew was occasionally "beaten by a parent. The discussion then turned to relationships with siblings and parents, and ways to express differences of opinion.

"When I'm talking to my parents or brothers and sisters at home, I think about the class," said Ballou senior Vincent White. "It's helped me to express my feelings to them and to listen to what they're saying. We talk about things in class we don't

talk about any place else," Mr. White said.

"For some [students], it's their most meaningful class," said Mrs. Bozeman, who has taught for 17 years in the city's public schools. Her class will be the subject of a public television program to be shown in January.

Class activities often include role-playing in which, for example, students learn to refuse offers of drugs or unwanted sexual advances. Other role-playing situations involve improving a relationship with a parent and styles of communications.

Schools should provide this training because students can't or don't get it at home, says Patricia Kramer, 41, a former divorce counselor who wrote the "Dynamics of Relationships" course.

"How can parents teach what they themselves have never learned?" said Ms. Kramer, referring to handling divorce and other family problems.

"We spend a lot of time and pain learning that certain things make or destroy a relationship and self-esteem," said Miss Kramer.

The course also is taught at Anacostia High in Southeast and Dunbar in Northwest, and will be offered at Cardozo High in Northwest next semester.

"It's like a course in life. These are interpersonal skills the kids need to have," said teacher Thomas Held of Anacostia High. He said he took the textbook home to his two teen-age daughters, who liked it so much they wouldn't return it.

In the year-long, hour-a-day course, students spend a lot of time talking and listening, and are encouraged to do so openly and honestly. They are taught that feelings are neither good nor bad, but learn to evaluate the consequences of their ideas and actions.

"There's no attendance problem," Mr. Held said. "Students come eager to participate. It's a chance for them to talk about what's really on their minds."

Students receive academic credit and have homework assignments such as keeping a journal, workbook exercises and writing essays that reinforce lessons.

For example, in the chapter on stress, workbook questions ask stu-

dents to list what produces stress in their lives, what their stress symptoms are and how they cope with stress.

In Mr. Held's class, desks are placed in a circle to encourage "a lot of round-table discussion and role playing."

Discussion topics include problems of latchkey children, drugs, depression, isolation, frustration, suicide, abuse, peer pressure, conflicts, pregnancy, marriage and self-esteem.

Whether the course will be continued next year has not been determined, because school officials have not yet evaluated it.

"We have to look at results and see the impact on student behavior and how they feel about themselves," said Delores Burnett, an administrator for instructional programs.

"But we have received a lot of positive feedback from students. Even some parents have requested the textbook," Mrs. Burnett said.

"Hopefully these kids will have a better shot at happiness and personal fulfillment than most of my peers did," said Miss Kramer.

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PAROCHIAL NO MORE

Faith-Based Youth Work Wins More Converts

BY MARTHA SHIRK

GAINESVILLE, Tex.

It's an hour until dawn, but the 36 youths who live in Dorm 56 of the Gainesville State School are already groomed, dressed and down on their knees in prayer.

"In the name of Jesus, I ask that our hearts be fertile ground," prays Bernard Roberson, 17, who frequently assists at the 6 a.m. daily devotional service.

For the next 45 minutes, the 13- to 19-year-old inmates engage in heartfelt discussion on the topic of "Is God Real?" led by a volunteer from a nearby Baptist church with a decidedly creationist view of the world. Some give personal testimonies about how God shows himself in their daily lives. Others talk about prayers that have been answered. At the end of the service, they all link arms and sing, "Jesus Loves Me."

Welcome to the Faith-Based Dorm at the Texas Youth Commission's Gainesville State School, which houses 340 of the state's most serious and chronic male juvenile offenders. For many, this is the last chance to turn their lives around before the legal system

continued on page 21



Photo by Cynthia Martinez
San Antonio College/Urban Journalism Workshop

'THE ULTIMATE GOAL IN LIFE' for many Latinas is being a good mother, a dream that this 16-year-old from Texas is on the road to fulfilling. But experts say that dream can be an impediment to reducing the Hispanic teen birthrate, the highest in the nation.

Latinas' Perplexing Lead in Teen Births

A 'condom lady' on the front lines

BY PATRICK BOYLE

PHILADELPHIA

Every Hispanic girl in America thought like Sheila, it seems, perhaps they wouldn't have the highest teen birthrate of any ethnic group in the nation.

Sheila preaches the use of condoms. She dreams of a military career and knows that dream can be shattered by having a baby. She regularly visits her high school's health resource center, where youth worker Maureen Comber dispenses sex information, advice and free condoms.

But at 19, Sheila has been pregnant three times.

This strong-willed, outgoing girl epitomizes the struggle facing youth workers like Comber, whose one-room health center on the second floor of Edison High School marks the front line in a battle over one of the nation's most stubborn teen health problems.

Federal officials recently hailed another drop in the teen birthrate, which has declined 18 percent since 1991. The news isn't so great here at Edison and in other Latino communities around the country, where the decline has

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HANDSNET

HandNet is a network of young professionals who are passionate about social change. They are a mix of artists, writers, designers, and activists who are committed to making a difference in the world.

WEBCRAWLER: ONLINE NETWORKING

TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

YOUTH WORKER WEB DIRECTORY: 100 top sites that help youth workers do research, fight for causes, swap information and find money. Page 28.