

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001a. letter	Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page)	06/16/1996	b(6)
001b. letter	Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page)	07/14/1996	b(6)
001c. letter	Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page)	06/17/1996	b(6)
001d. letter	Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page)	03/24/1997	b(6)
001e. letter	Constituent to Dr. Titow [partial] (1 page)	02/22/1997	b(6)
001f. letter	Constituent to Mike [partial] (1 page)	07/02/1996	b(6)
001g. letter	Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page)	07/14/1996	b(6)
001h. letter	Constituent to The Education Center [partial] (1 page)	06/18/1996	b(6)
001i. letter	Constituent to Mike [partial] (1 page)	ca. 1996	b(6)
001j. letter	Constituent to Mike [partial] (1 page)	06/17/1996	b(6)
001k. letter	Constituent to Dr. Litow [partial] (1 page)	02/22/1997	b(6)
001l. letter	Constituent to Michael Litow [partial] (1 page)	03/24/1997	b(6)
002a. bio	re: Dr. Michael Litow [partial] (1 page)	n.d.	b(6)

COLLECTION:

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

FOLDER TITLE:

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1256

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]

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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002b. letter	Geo Halas to constituent (2 pages)	10/05/1982	b(6)
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Domestic Policy Council
Ann O'Leary
OA/Box Number: 19586

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2013-0436-S

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Child Welfare League of America, Inc.
440 First Street, NW, Third Floor, Washington, DC 20001-2085 • 202/638-2952 • FAX 202/638-4004

January 5, 1998

To: H. Berry, OFL Press

Re: Estela Mendoza

TO: Neera

fr: Marsha

Hey, FYI

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Estela B. Mendoza

White House Press Office

167 Old Executive Office Building

Washington, DC 20500

Dear Ms. Mendoza:

Juanita Gutierrez told me that she has talked with you and that you were expecting to hear from me regarding a new book, *Peace in the Streets: Breaking the Cycle of Gang Violence*, to be published by the Child Welfare League of America.

A copy of the galley proofs for that book is enclosed, along with a letter for the First Lady. CWLA would be eternally grateful if you could get this into the hands of someone on the First Lady's staff. Our hope is that Mrs. Clinton will be persuaded to either write a forward for the book or at least a quote for the book cover. The theme throughout this book so closely parallels that of her book—steering children away from gang involvement truly does require a “village” effort on the part of the adults in those children's lives—that she seemed a natural choice for this request.

We hope to have the book to the printer by the end of January, so time is short for us. Again, thanks very, very much for your help.

Sincerely,

Steven S. Boehm
Associate Editor
CWLA Press

Enclosures



Child Welfare League of America, Inc.
440 First Street, NW, Third Floor, Washington, DC 20001-2085 • 202/638-2952 • FAX 202/638-4004

January 6, 1998

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Hillary Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

My best wishes to you and your family for a happy and healthy new year. The Child Welfare League looks forward to working with you and the President on important initiatives that will benefit children and families.

CWLA is about to publish a powerful new book, *Peace in the Streets: Breaking the Cycle of Gang Violence*, a firsthand account of Arturo Hernandez, who, in 1982, started a school for gang members in East L.A. The portraits he paints of his students and their experiences together are both vivid and moving, and his advice for communities struggling to reclaim gang-involved youth has never been more important or more timely. The theme throughout his book—that steering a child away from gang involvement truly does require a “village” effort by all the adults involved in that child’s life—so closely parallels your book, that your voice should be added to those who are already lining up behind this book.

I am enclosing a copy of the latest proofs of *Peace in the Streets*. We would like to invite you to write a forward for the book or, as an alternative, a quote for the book cover.

Among those who have expressed an interest in endorsing *Peace in the Streets* include actor Edward James Olmos; authors Sandra Cisneros, Luis Rodriguez, and Gary Soto; L.A. Mayor Richard Riordan; and L.A. School Superintendent Ruben Zacarias. Artist Peter Tovar is illustrating the book cover.

We hope to have the book to a printer by the end of January, so time is short. Please take a few moments to look through *Peace in the Streets*, and I feel confident that you will agree this is a project worthy of your time. Thank you for your consideration and your quick response. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

David S. Liederman
Executive Director

Warm Regards

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Mgr., Mental Health Clinic
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Founders, Action America:
Murder Must End Now

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CRIME**



**INVEST
IN KIDS**

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Sanford A. Newman

Associate Directors
Amy B. Dawson
Brendan J. Fitzsimons

Communications Director
John W. Bartlett

**A CALL FOR ACTION FROM AMERICA'S
FRONT LINE AGAINST CRIME**

The following statement has been signed by:

- ◇ *over 190 of the nation's leading police chiefs, sheriffs, and prosecutors;*
- ◇ *the presidents of the Fraternal Order of Police and the International Union of Police Associations, which together represent 360,000 police officers; and*
- ◇ *the President of the National Organization of Parents of Murdered Children and many of the nation's crime survivors most active in victim advocacy.*

It has also been endorsed by more than twenty of America's leading criminologists and law enforcement, child and youth development experts.

AS POLICE, PROSECUTORS AND CRIME SURVIVORS, we struggle every day against crime and its devastating impact. We are determined to see that dangerous criminals are arrested and put behind bars. But anyone who thinks that jailing a criminal is enough to undo the agony that crime leaves in its wake hasn't seen crime up close. That is why no one knows better that we that the most important weapons against crime are the investments which keep kids from becoming criminals — investments which enable all children to get the right start they need to become contributing citizens, and which show them that as adults they will be able to meet their families' basic needs through honest hard work.

We know from scientific research and from our own experience that these investments work to reduce crime. But they can only work for the children they reach.

CRIME DOES NOT RESPECT BOUNDARIES OF NEIGHBORHOODS, cities, or even states. When any of America's children fail to get the right start, their classmates are exposed to peer pressure that may undermine even the most dedicated parenting, and all of us are endangered.

Delivering these crime prevention investments to all children often requires community partnerships of government, parents, charities and volunteers, and the private sector. But that doesn't mean that public officials can meet their obligations by wishing someone else were doing the job. Since protecting the public safety is the most fundamental government responsibility, government must provide the policies and the funding necessary to create and sustain the necessary partnerships. When public officials fail to meet that responsibility, they take away our most effective weapons in the war against crime, forcing us to fight with one hand tied behind our backs.

WE THEREFORE CALL ON ALL PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO PROTECT PUBLIC SAFETY by adopting common sense policies to:

- **Provide for all infants, toddlers and preschool children access to quality child care at a price their parents can afford;**
- **Strengthen families and reduce child abuse, neglect and delinquency by offering all parents (at their option) "parenting coaches" through proven home visiting programs, as well as access to community-based family resource centers.**
- **Provide for all of America's school-age children and teens after-school programs, and access to weekend and summer programs that offer recreation, academic support and community service experience.**

Hon. Ellen Brooks, Montgomery County District Attorneys Office, Montgomery, AL

Sheriff Dan Jones, Montgomery Co Sheriffs Dept, Montgomery, AL

Sheriff Jim Woodward, Jefferson Co Sheriffs Dept, Birmingham, AL

Sheriff Joseph M Arpaio, Maricopa County Sheriffs Office, Phoenix, AZ

Sheriff Clarence W. Dupnik, Pima County Sheriffs Dept, Tucson, AZ

Hon. Barbara LaWall, Office of the Pima County Attorney, Tuscon, AZ

Attorney General Grant Woods, Attorney General's Office, Phoenix, AZ

Sheriff Sherman Block, Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department, Monterey Park, CA

Hon. Michael D Bradbury, Ventura Co District Attorneys Office, Ventura, CA

Chief Edward J. Chavez, Stockton Police Dept, Stockton, CA

Chief Louis A. Cobarruviaz, San Jose Police Dept, San Jose, CA

Professor Sanford M. Dornbusch, Stanford University, Stanford, CA

Hon. John Gardner, School of Education, Stanford, CA

Sheriff Don Horsley, San Mateo Co Sheriffs Dept, Redwood City, CA

Chief Harold L. Hurtt, Oxnard Police Dept, Oxnard, CA

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS
1334 G STREET NW, SUITE B
WASHINGTON, DC 20005
(202) 638-0690
FAX (202) 638-0673
[HTTP://WWW.FIGHTCRIME.ORG/](http://WWW.FIGHTCRIME.ORG/)

Mr. Marc Klaas, Klaas Foundation for Children, Sausalito, CA

Mr. Donald Lacy, Crime Survivor, Tiburon, CA

J. Ronald Lally, Ed.D., Director, West Ed Center for Child and Family Studies, Sausalito, CA

Dr. Dennis Lees, El Dorado County Mental Health Clinic, Placerville, CA

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Chief Bernard Parks, Los Angeles Police Dept, Los Angeles, CA

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Chief Dean M. Esserman, Stamford Police Department, Stamford, CT

High Sheriff Walter J. Kupchunos Jr., Hartford Co Sheriffs Dept, Hartford, CT

Steve Marans, Ph.D., Director, Child Development-Community Policing Program, New Haven, CT

Chief Thomas J. Sweeney, Bridgeport Police Dept, Bridgeport, CT

Dr. Edward Zigler, Yale University Dept. of Psychology, New Haven, CT

Dr. Richard Gerber, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Dr. Lisbeth Schorr, School of Medicine, Harvard University, Washington, D.C.

Jack A. Calhoun, Executive Director, National Crime Prevention Council, Washington, DC

Craig Floyd, Executive Director, Nat'l Law Enforcement Officers Mem. Fund, Washington, DC

Mr. Tom Joe, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Washington, DC

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Sheriff Don Hunter, Collier County Sheriffs Dept, Naples, FL

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Sheriff Robert Neumann, Palm Beach Co Sheriff, West Palm Beach, FL

Mr. Darrel W. Stephens, City Hall, St. Petersburg, FL

Chief Donald H. Warshaw, Miami Police Department, Miami, FL

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 Chief Mitchell Brown, Raleigh Police Department, Raleigh, NC
 Chief Sylvester Daughtry, Jr., Greensboro Police Department, Greensboro, NC
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 Chief Ronald E. Hansen, Fayetteville Police Department, Fayetteville, NC
 Chief Chester Hill, Goldsboro Police Department, Goldsboro, NC
 Hon. Charles W. Hipps, District Attorney's Office, Waynesville, NC
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 Hon. Thomas J. Keith, Forsyth District Attorney, Winston-Salem , NC

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Chief Ronald J. Louie, Hillsboro Police Department, Hillsboro, OR

Chief Charles Moose, Portland Police Department, Portland, OR

Sheriff Dan Noelle, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, Portland, OR

Hon. Dale W. Penn, Marion County District Attorney's Office, Salem, OR

Sheriff Stan Robson, Corvallis Sheriff's Department, Corvallis, OR

Chief Pamela Roskowski, Corvallis Police Department, Corvallis, OR

Hon. Peter F. Sandrock, District Attorney's Office, Corvallis, OR

Hon. Michael D. Schrunk, Multnomah County District Attorney, Portland, OR

Chief O.R. Shipley, Medford Police Department, Medford, OR

Sheriff Jim Spinden, Washington County Sheriff's Department, Hillsboro, OR

Sheriff Lee Vasquez, Yamhil County Sheriff's Office, McMinnville, OR

Sheriff Peter Defazio, Allegheny County Sheriffs Dept, Pittsburgh, PA

Sheriff William M. Hose, York County Sheriffs Dept, York, PA

Chief Robert W. McNeilly Jr, Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, Pittsburgh, PA

Hon. John W. Peck, Westmoreland Co District Attorneys Office, Greensburg, PA

Sheriff Carl Zawatski, Luzerne County Sheriffs Dept, Wilkes Barre, PA

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Mr. Randall E. Nichols, Knox Co. District Atty General's Office, Knoxville, TN

Sheriff Gayle E Ray, Davidson County Sheriffs Office, Nashville, TN

Hon. Ronald Earle, Travis County District Attorney's Office, Austin, TX

Hon. Michael Fleming, Harris County Attorneys Office, Houston, TX

Sheriff Margo Frasier, Travis Co. Sheriffs Dept, Austin, TX

Ms. Ellen Halbert, Crime Survivor, Austin, TX

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Hon. Ray Marshall, University of Texas, Austin, TX

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Ms. Elizabeth Watson, Former Chief of Police, Austin, TX

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FYI. Give this

back when you

are done.

*That's why
I gave to
you.
You
can do
anything
w/ this
event?
Nein*

MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Findings from *The Commonwealth Fund*
1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People

Kathryn Taaffe McLearn, Diane Colasanto,
and Cathy Schoen

June 1998

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MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Findings from *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a time of risk and opportunity. During the critical transition to adulthood, youths are learning skills, attitudes, and behaviors that will affect their lifelong ability to lead productive and healthy lives. In the search for interventions that could enhance this transition, mentoring has been widely noted for its potential to provide support and guidance. Out of the hope that caring adults can provide encouragement and impart skills and values necessary for later success in school and employment, new efforts are under way in cities across the nation to expand the numbers of adults willing to volunteer as mentors.

Over the past decade, The Commonwealth Fund, along with other nonprofit and public entities, has supported efforts to develop and test the value of innovative mentoring programs. Yet, little information exists about the impact of mentoring activities, the mentoring experience, the types of youths in mentoring relationships, the extent and variety of mentoring activities, which adults are most likely to volunteer as mentors, or features of successful mentoring relationships.

To enhance the nation's understanding of the effects of mentoring youth and to learn from a broad array of mentoring relationships, The Commonwealth Fund commissioned Princeton Survey Research Associates to conduct *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*. From January through March 1998, this national telephone survey included interviews with 1,504 adults who have been mentors to youths ages 10 to 18 during the past five years.

Mentors report that they believe mentoring works, that they have helped with or prevented problems for a young person. Whether in formal, structured mentoring programs or in relationships formed through informal family, church, or neighborhood connections, the large majority of mentors believe they have had helped solve at least one problem, and many name more than one. Mentors find the relationship with youth highly satisfying and rewarding, and say they would do again.

Mentoring is reaching a high-risk group of adolescents who are likely to face multiple problems in school and at home, and to have little confidence in themselves. These young people are often growing up in difficult circumstances, with families struggling financially and/or with parents who are unavailable or unable to provide needed support. Mentors believe they have been particularly successful in helping youths overcome such problems as having negative feelings about themselves, skipping school, and poor grades.

Analysis of survey findings shows that mentoring is more likely to be successful when the relationship endures at least two years, and when the mentor engages in a wide range of activities and offers guidance for the young person.

Mentoring ranks high among adult volunteer activities with children and youth. Nearly one of three adults initially interviewed has served as a mentor during his or her lifetime, and this rate rivals other prevalent volunteer activities with youth such as sports teams and scouting. One of seven adults is currently involved in a mentoring relationship.

Most mentoring relationships have been formed through informal connections. Still, a wide variety of groups are sponsoring formal mentoring programs. Among these programs, those sponsored by schools, universities, and churches dominate. Mentors often participate through programs sponsored by their employers.

Programs seeking to expand and recruit new mentors might well look to those volunteering for other community activities with children and youth. Adults who mentor are more likely than those who have never mentored to volunteer to work with young people in a variety of community activities. In general, mentors say they are motivated by a desire to help and work with youth.

Mentors believe that mentoring makes a difference. The challenge lies in expanding programs to reach a greater portion of youth at risk and to recruit new mentors.

SURVEY FINDINGS

MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Many young people growing up in America are at risk. They face problems with negative feelings about themselves, poor performance in school, and frequently engage in risk-taking behaviors. All too often, youths are growing up in families where parents are coping with financial stress and their own personal problems, and are simply not available or able to provide guidance and support.

A key goal of mentoring programs is to provide a caring and supportive adult for youths at risk. Mentoring relationships offer these youths the potential to overcome hurdles, cope with problems, and learn basic skills necessary for a productive, healthy adulthood.

The survey finds that mentoring is succeeding in reaching a high-risk group of adolescents and making a difference in their lives. Mentors believe that their mentoring relationships have been instrumental in helping youths solve or avert problems, and that they have had a positive impact on the life of the young person they mentored.

Young people in mentoring relationships are at risk. Eight of ten young people in mentoring relationships have one or more problems out of a list of twelve problems investigated by the survey that could put their success in school, health, or development at risk.¹ Based on mentors' assessments, nearly one of four young people in mentoring relationships (23%) has five or more problems.

The five most prevalent problems faced by young people in mentoring relationships are: negative feelings about themselves (55%), poor relationships with family members (49%), poor grades (42%), hanging out with the wrong crowd (41%), and getting into trouble at school (36%). Mentors report that approximately one of four mentees has problems with substance abuse, skipping school, and getting into trouble outside of school. About one of ten young people has run away from home, been physically or sexually abused, or experienced an eating disorder.

Youths in mentoring relationships are often growing up in difficult circumstances. Nearly half the young people in mentoring relationships (45%) are growing up in families with serious financial problems: 38 percent of mentors say the youth's family

¹ The problems included: poor grades, getting into trouble at school, risky behaviors (smoking, drinking, drug use), negative feelings about himself/herself, poor relationships with family members, skipping school, getting into trouble outside of school, hanging out with the wrong crowd, eating disorders, physical or sexual abuse, sexual activity, and running away from home.

is struggling financially and 7 percent say the family is in a desperate financial situation. When asked about other problems in the youth's home, nearly one-third (32%) of mentors report that the youth's parents appear to have serious problems with alcohol and drug abuse, mental health problems, trouble with the law, or domestic violence.

Youths in mentoring relationships are often growing up without the benefit of two parents. Barely half are growing up in two-parent families. Eleven percent of mentees were not living with any parent at the time of the mentoring relationship, and 30 percent were living with only one parent.

Mentoring has a positive impact on the lives of young people. A large majority of adults who have been mentors to a youth feel they have been instrumental in helping with or preventing a life problem for the young person they mentored. Eighty-five percent—more than eight of ten mentors—name at least one problem they believe was improved due to mentoring, and many cite more than one.

- Mentors feel most effective in alleviating the youths' negative feelings about themselves. Sixty-two percent who mentored a youth with negative feelings about him/herself believe they alleviated these feelings.
- About half of mentors feel they have had a significant, positive influence in helping the youth address problems with skipping school (52%), poor grades (48%), getting into trouble at school (49%) or out of school (47%), or substance abuse (45%).
- Although mentors were less likely to cite abuse and running away from home as problems for the youths they mentored, most mentors in relationships with young people who had these problems feel that mentoring had a major, positive impact: 61 percent felt they had helped a lot with youths at risk for running away from home and 55 percent felt they helped those suffering from physical or sexual abuse.
- Mentors are relatively less successful in addressing problems with difficult family relationships or eating disorders. Only a quarter felt they had helped a lot with eating disorders (26%), and about one-third thought they had helped with poor relationships with family members (35%).

MENTORING IS A SATISFYING AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Mentoring requires a commitment of time and a willingness by mentors to volunteer with youth other than their own child. The large majority of adults who have mentored in recent years find the commitment is worth it. Mentors value their experience as mentors, stating that they are very satisfied with the experience and personally learned something through

mentoring. The majority say they would do it again and would recommend mentoring to a friend.

Mentors say they were motivated by a belief that the young person needed help and out of an interest in working with youth. Their experiences confirmed their expectation of a rewarding experience.

Mentors find mentoring a very satisfying experience. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of mentors say their experience has been very positive and nearly all say the experience was somewhat or very positive (97%). Similarly high percentages of positive and very positive ratings prevailed regardless of the length of time of the relationship, original impetus to mentor, or type of mentoring program.

Most mentors learned or gained something personally from their mentoring experiences. Four of five mentors (83%) say they learned or gained something through the experience of being a mentor, including feeling that they were a better person, increased patience, friendship, a feeling of effectiveness, new skills (such as listening and working with people). Mentors were asked what they liked best about being a mentor. Virtually all could name a positive aspect of the experience.

Less than half (46%) of mentors could mention something they disliked about mentoring. When probed about problems that arose in the relationship, nearly half said the time commitment (43%) and peer pressure on the youth were somewhat of a problem. However, only a minority thought either were big problems: time (12%) and peer pressure (17%).

Mentors would mentor again and recommend mentoring to a friend. A majority of mentors say they are very likely to mentor again (54%), and more than four of five would be somewhat or very likely to mentor again (84%). Nearly all mentors (91%) state that they are likely to recommend mentoring to a friend: the majority are very likely (59%).

Adults are motivated to mentor because they believe the young person needs help and they can make a difference. When asked what was the most important reason in their decision to mentor, 43 percent of mentors stated that the young person needed help and over a quarter of mentors (27%) stated they wanted to do good for others.

HOW PREVALENT IS MENTORING AND WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO MENTOR?

The survey finds that mentoring is a relatively prevalent community volunteer activity for adults who wish to help children or young people. Based on reports of an array of possible adult volunteer activities with youth, mentoring occurs at rates comparable to other popular

community activities such as sports teams. Adults who have mentored are more likely than adults who had never mentored to also participate in other volunteer activities with children and young people.

Many adults have volunteered to be a mentor to children and young people.

Nearly one of three adults (31%) age 18 or older has been a mentor to a child or young person at some point in his or her life. One of seven (14%) adults is currently mentoring a child of any age.

Mentoring rates are near those of other community volunteer activities with young people. About one of three adults reports he or she is a mentor. This rate is near the proportion of adults who have ever participated in organized sports such as Little League (37%) and community programs such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts (38%). Only volunteer rates for Sunday school or other religious activities (47%) were dramatically higher than mentoring rates.

Adults who have mentored tend to be involved in other community volunteer activities with children and young people. Adults who have mentored were typically involved in other volunteer activities as well. Half had participated in organized sports teams (50%) or Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts (48%), and 61 percent had volunteered for Sunday school or religious activities. Overall, adults who have mentored were 50 percent or more likely to participate in community volunteer activities than were those who have never mentored.

Mentors are more likely than adults who have never mentored to be college-educated, have higher annual family income, and to have had a mentor when they were growing up. One of three mentors (32%) is college-educated and four of ten (44%) have incomes above \$35,000. In contrast, among adults who have never mentored, only 20 percent are college-educated and one of three (31%) has an income above \$35,000. Having a mentor as a youth also appeared to foster a willingness to mentor in the future. More than two-thirds (69%) of adults who have mentored had an adult other than their parent that provided them with ongoing guidance and support. In contrast, only 42 percent of those who have never mentored had a mentor when young.

SUCCESSFUL MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS: FACTORS THAT IMPROVE SUCCESS

Overall, mentors report a positive impact on problems faced by the youths they have mentored. Mentors, in general, report high rates of success in preventing problems as well as helping youths deal with existing problems. In analyzing relatively more successful relationships, several factors led to higher success rates. Relationships that last at least two

years led to greater overall success in solving or averting problems. Success rates also improved when the mentor and young person engaged in a wide range of activities, including guidance and support. Young people in extremely difficult circumstances also benefit from having a mentor 50 years of age or older, more frequent telephone contact with the mentor, and having the mentor provide networking opportunities. In general, however, success was more difficult with young people with multiple problems.

Mentoring relationships that last at least two years are more likely to have a positive influence on the life of the youth. Compared with shorter-term relationships, mentors in relationships that last at least two years are able to help solve or avert problems in all five of the most frequent youth problem areas: negative feelings about themselves (55% vs. 45%), poor relationships with family members (34% vs. 20%), hanging out with the wrong crowd (42% vs. 27%), poor grades (42% vs. 34%), and getting into trouble out of school (41% vs. 31%). Mentors in longer-term relationships are also significantly more likely to say they helped a lot or to prevent problems with smoking, drinking, and drug use (38% vs. 27%). Very-long-term relationships, those lasting at least five years, do not seem to be any more effective in dealing with behavioral problems than relationships lasting two, three, or four years.

Mentoring relationships are more successful when the mentor engages in a wide range of activities and offers guidance to the young person. Mentors report engaging in a variety of activities with youth and offering different forms of guidance. The survey investigated 15 different activities.² Leading activities reported by the majority of mentors include: teaching social skills (83%), standing up for the youth when in trouble (75%), providing social or cultural experiences (71%), exposing the youth to the mentor's own work (68%), career introductions (62%), and teaching job-related skills (54%). Nearly half (49%) say they spend "a lot" of time talking with the young person about personal problems or issues.

For all types of young people in mentoring, success is more likely when the mentor engages in a wide range of activities and guidance for the young person. A third of mentors who engage in at least 12 out of 15 possible activities with the young person believe they are able to have an impact on each of his or her actual or threatened problems. In contrast, only 20 percent of mentors who engage in relatively few activities (eight or fewer of the 15 investigated) believe they have the same degree of success.

² These activities included: working on academics, talking about college opportunities, going to a cultural or sports event, doing a physical activity together, talking about the youth's personal issues, eating together, just hanging out, participating in job internship, providing cultural or social opportunities, teaching social skills or manners, teaching work skills, networking, exposing to own work, standing up for youth when in trouble and helping get a job.

Mentoring relationships for young people in very difficult life circumstances benefit when mentors are older, have frequent telephone contact with the mentee, and provide networking contacts. Young people living in very difficult circumstances or with severe behavioral problems were generally at greater risk for multiple problems.³ In addition to longer mentoring relationships and scope of activities, youth in very difficult circumstances benefit from having a mentor who is 50 years of age or older, who introduces them to other people who can help them, and who spends at least four or more hours per month with them in telephone conversations.

MENTORING: TYPES OF PROGRAMS, SPONSORS, AND IMPORTANT SUPPORTS FOR MENTORS

Given the nationwide interest in expanding mentoring programs, a common image of adults mentoring a child or young person is a relationship developed through participation in a formal, structured mentoring program, typically with a nationally recognized program. The survey finds, however, that most frequently mentoring relationships develop through informal contacts between the adult and youth through neighborhood, church, or family connections. Among more formal mentoring programs, a wide variety of sponsors exists: local school, university, and church groups dominate. Employers also provide a gateway for mentors. Those in formal mentoring programs cite training and ongoing mechanisms for support to be critical factors in making the mentoring relationship successful.

The majority of mentoring relationships develop through informal connections with youth. Among all adults who have mentored a youth within the past five years, 83 percent did so through informal contact with the youth rather than a program sponsored by an organization. Only 17 percent of adults participated through formal, structured programs.

Although initial contact with youth varied, formal and informal relationships are strikingly similar. Whether formed through formal programs or informal contacts, formal and informal mentoring relationships are strikingly similar in terms of mentor reports regarding the positive impact on youth, the types of activities in the mentoring relationship, the types of guidance and support of youth provided, and the amount meeting time with youth. Key differences in the two types of programs are in the amount of support and sources support provided to mentors, and the origin and impetus for the initial contact with the young person.

Formal mentoring programs include a wide range of sponsors. Typically local organizations sponsor mentor programs. Two-thirds of mentors in formal programs say the program was sponsored either by a school, college, or university (33%) or a local church

³ In the analysis, youths classified in particularly difficult circumstances included: having a parent with serious emotional, legal, or substance abuse problems; living in a family in a desperate financial situation; not living with a biological or adoptive parent; being physically or sexually abused; or being a juvenile offender.

(31%). Government agencies accounted for another 16 percent of sponsors, and private business 10 percent.

Workplaces appear to be a major route into mentoring. More than one-quarter (27%) of mentors say they were in a program sponsored by their employer.

Formal mentoring programs typically have mechanisms for ongoing support. Mentors value this support. Eight of ten mentors (84%) have ongoing support provided by their programs. Two-thirds of formal mentors (63%) have group sessions where mentors can get together and talk about the mentoring relationship, and nearly all with such sessions available (90%) have attended at least one session.

The vast majority of formal mentors (85%) believe their program provides the right amount of support and only 14 percent would like more help. Two-thirds of mentors who have attended group sessions say the sessions were very useful. About a third of formal mentors in programs that do not provide ongoing support say this support would have been very helpful.

Mentors believe formal training or an orientation period helps. Nearly three of four formal mentoring programs (72%) provide mentors with training or an orientation. Of those with training, eight of ten mentors think they had received the right amount. Eight of ten mentors without training believe training would have been helpful (44% very helpful and 40% somewhat helpful).

On average, mentors receive about 16 hours of training. Over half of the programs cover the following topics: program rules, communication skills, how to build a relationship of trust with a young person, listening skills, adolescent development, and recognizing child abuse and neglect. Formal mentors who receive training as compared with those who did not receive formal training are much more likely to talk frequently with the young person about his or her personal problems (52% vs. 32%). However, the amount and content of training does not appear to have a significant impact on the likely success of the mentoring relationship.

A majority of mentoring programs succeed in matching mentors and young people. Eight of ten mentors report that the staff do an excellent (32%) or good job (47%) in matching them with a student who could benefit from a person with their interests, experiences, and personality. However, 11 percent say that no matching occurred.

Formal and informal mentors both report that being understanding and a good listener as well as having commitment are key ingredients to being a successful mentor. When asked the most important characteristic of a mentor, one of five mentors replies that

being understanding and patient (22%) and a good listener (22%) are important. Mentors, whether formal or informal, also show a commitment to the relationship: nearly eight of ten (77%) never or hardly ever cancel a scheduled meeting with their mentee. Similarly, the young people are committed to the relationship: nearly three-quarters (73%) never or hardly ever cancel their meeting with their mentor.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

At a time when this nation is searching for ways to reach out to youth, the survey findings indicate that mentoring makes a difference for youth at risk. Moreover, mentors value their experiences mentoring young people. These findings based on mentor reports confirm and support studies of mentoring programs that find mentoring makes a positive difference for youths at risk.⁴

The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People indicates that youths in mentoring relationships are indeed at risk. Eight of ten young people have one or more problems that could adversely affect their healthy development and school success. Confronted with these problems, mentors report a high rate of success in helping young people overcome problems of the youth's negative feelings about themselves, poor grades, substance abuse, getting into trouble in and out of school, and physical or sexual abuse.

Efforts are under way in cities across the nation to expand the numbers of adults willing to volunteer as mentors. The survey findings suggest strategies for recruiting future generations of mentors. The high rate of adults who mentor and also volunteer in other community activities indicate that recruitment efforts could reach out to adults who volunteer in community activities such as Sunday schools, organized sports such as Little League, scouting groups, and academic tutoring programs.

Increasing the rate of employer-sponsored mentoring programs also offers a recruitment strategy. Employers appear to be a major route into formal mentoring programs for their employees. Including local employers in this effort is important since most mentoring occurs at the community level.

In addition, the information about the mentors themselves provides a valuable indicator of how best to locate additional adults in mentoring. Mentors are more likely to be college-educated, to have higher annual incomes, and to have had a mentor when a child.

Current and former mentors are a recruitment resource. Mentors state they would be likely to mentor again and to recommend mentoring to a friend. Given the high rate of satisfaction with mentoring, mentors are also important ambassadors for mentoring.

Promotional efforts could emphasize the fact that adult mentors can make a difference in the lives of young people. The expectation of being able to help is likely to appeal to future mentors based on survey findings about mentor motivation. Adults who

⁴ For example, see Joseph P. Tierney, Jean Baldwin Grossman, and Nancy L. Resch, *Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters*, Public/Private Ventures, November 1995.

mentor say they were motivated to do so because they believed they could make a difference and help the young person.

For policymakers and program administrators, the survey points to factors that are likely to foster more successful mentoring relationships. These include engaging youths in a wide range of activities and offering them guidance, and maintaining relationships for at least two years. Additionally, formal training and mechanisms for ongoing support for mentors are valued components of mentoring programs.

Collectively, the voices of the mentors in this survey provide valuable information to pivotal sectors of society—policymakers, mentoring program sponsors, volunteer organizations, employers, and the public—about the value of mentoring. Expanding mentoring and building on features that make it more successful will require the concerted effort of all adults interested in helping young people become productive adults.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People* consisted of telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,504 adults who have mentored at least one person ages 10 to 18 during the past five years. The margin of error for the sample of qualified mentors is plus or minus four points.

Interviews were conducted in either English or Spanish, according to the respondent's preference. Two types of mentors were included in the sample. Formal mentors are adults serving as mentors by virtue of their participation in a structured mentoring program, either a national program such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, or a local program such as those sponsored by a church or employer. Informal mentors are adults who connected with youths through communities or family and are not sponsored by an organization. Informal relationships can include relationships among extended family members, for example an aunt mentoring her niece.

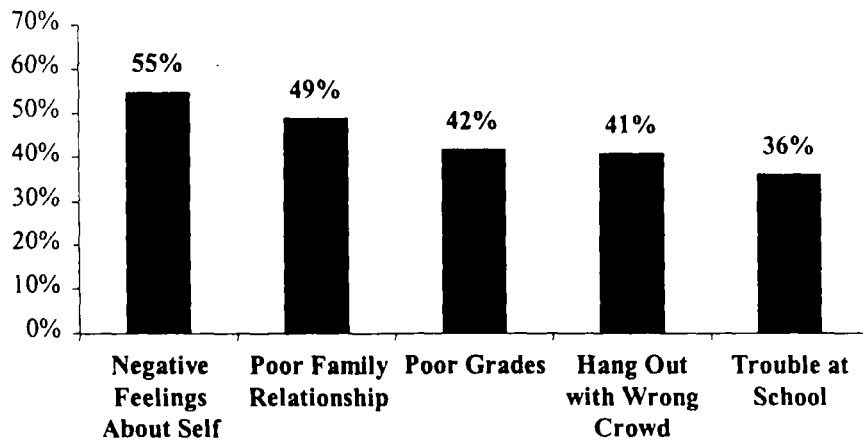
Mentors were located by screening a random sample of adults age 18 and older in telephone households and asking a series of qualifying questions. The random telephone numbers were selected disproportionately to increase the probability of selecting those likely to mentor based on previous research. Weights were used in analysis to remove the disproportionality of the sample design. After weighting, the sample is unbiased and representative of all mentors living in telephone households in the contiguous 48 states.

In the analysis of mentors' beliefs about their ability to help or prevent problems, statistical tests were used that took into account the complex survey design. Unless otherwise noted, results reported in the text were statistically significant at the 95 percent level or greater.

To analyze the impact of different factors contributing to greater success, a composite measure of the 12 problems and mentors' beliefs about their effectiveness was created. This composite ranged from 0 percent to 100 percent, where 0 percent indicated that the mentor neither helped nor prevented any problem for the youth, and 100 percent indicated that the mentor believed he or she helped "a lot" or prevented all problems confronting the youth. In the analysis of youths, the variety of activities with youths and youths in extremely difficult circumstances, regressions were run to control for characteristics of the youth, to examine the impact of the age of the mentor, phone contact, and other characteristics of the mentoring relationship. Results that were significant at the 98 percent level or greater are reported in the text.

APPENDIX A: CHARTS

Problems Faced by Youth: Young People in Mentoring Are at Risk

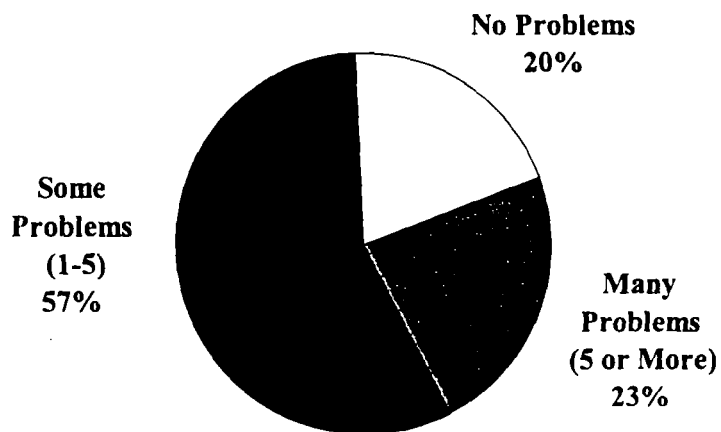


YOUTH PROBLEMS

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Most Young People in Mentoring Relationships Are at Risk for One or More Problems

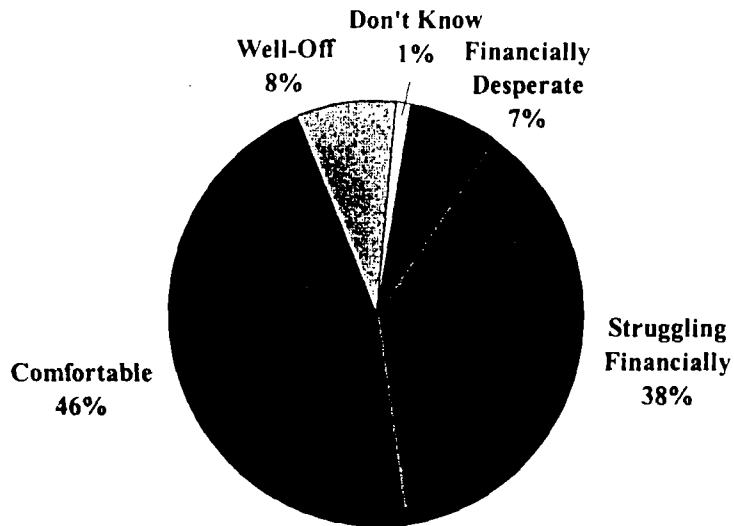


Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Youth in Mentoring: Family Income

Nearly Half Live in Low-Income Families

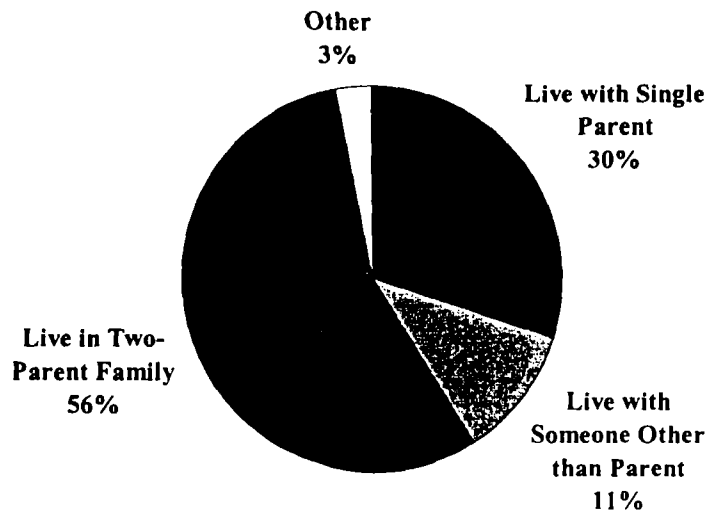


Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Youth in Mentoring: Family Structure

Barely Half Live in Two-Parent Families



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

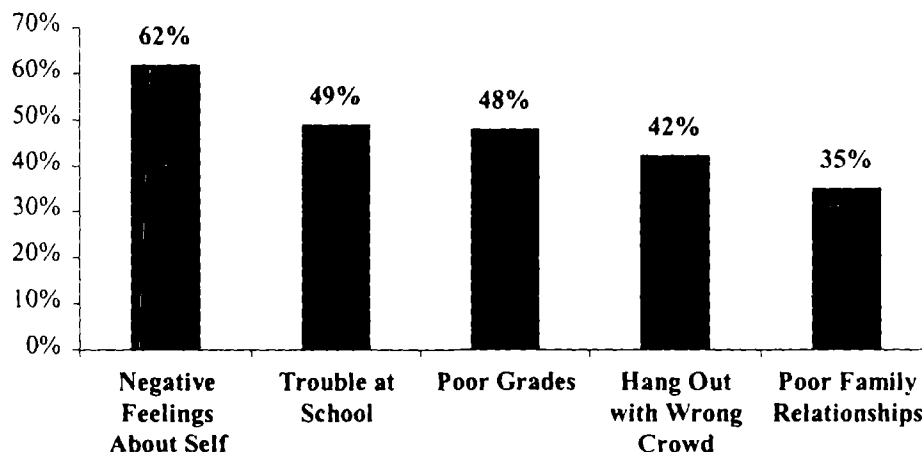
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NOTE:
Teen
preg. not
listed but
other risky
behav. are

Mentoring Impact on Youth Problems

Mentors Believe They Made a Difference

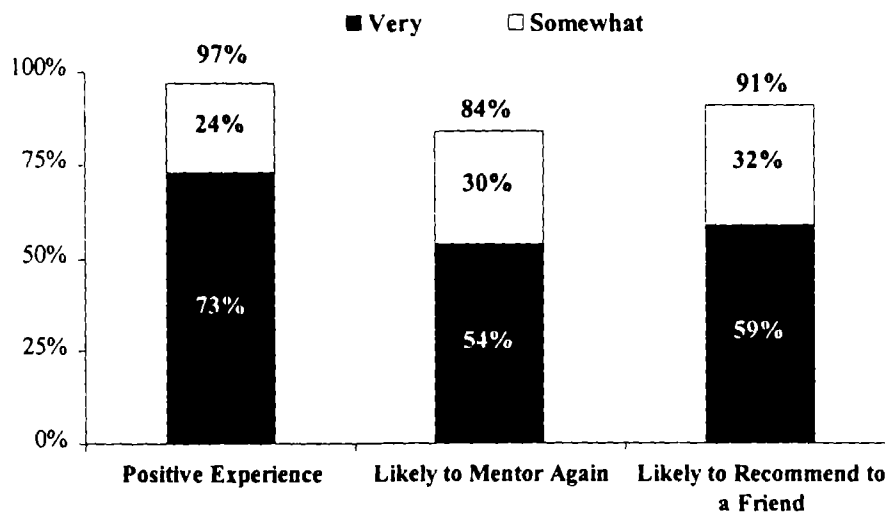
Percent of mentors who believe they "helped a lot" with the youth problem



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

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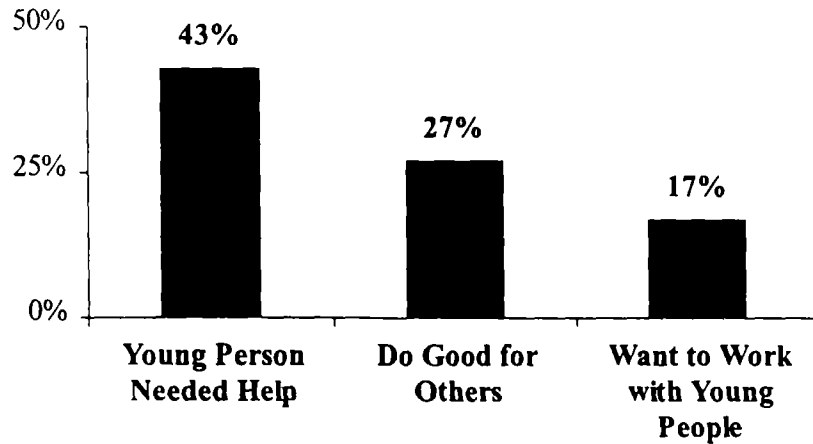
Mentors View Mentoring as a Positive Experience



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Adults Are Motivated to Mentor Because They Believe the Young Person Needs Help

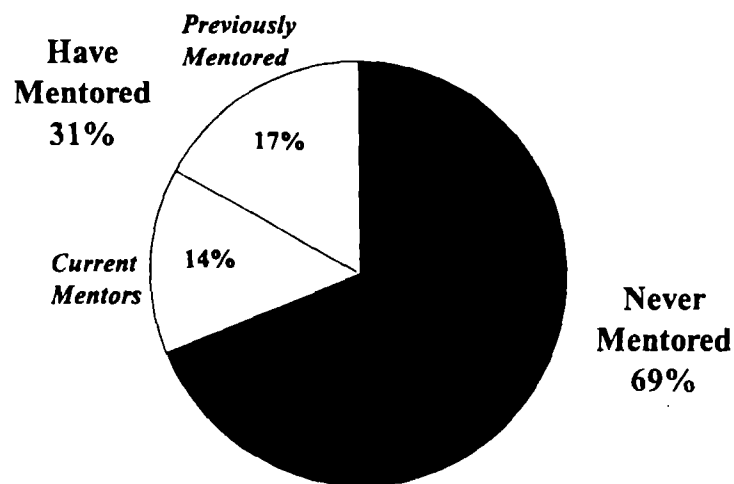


REASONS ADULTS MENTOR

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Incidence of Mentoring in the Population Nearly One of Three Adults Has Mentored

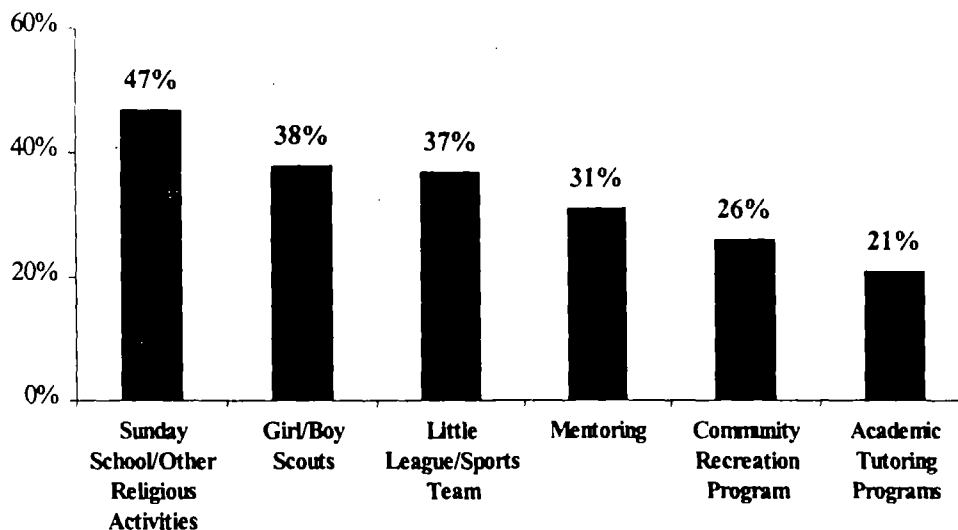


Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Adult Volunteer Activities with Youth: Mentoring Is a Prevalent Activity

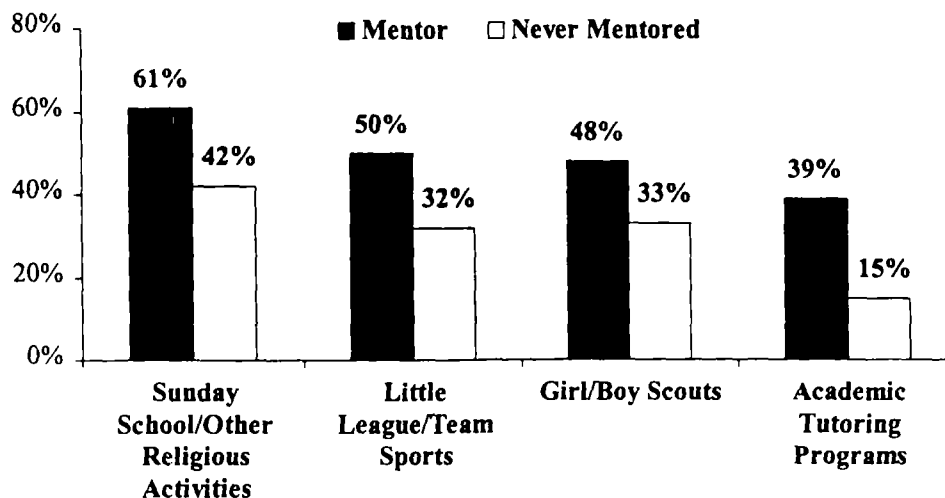
Percent of adults who have ever participated in activity



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

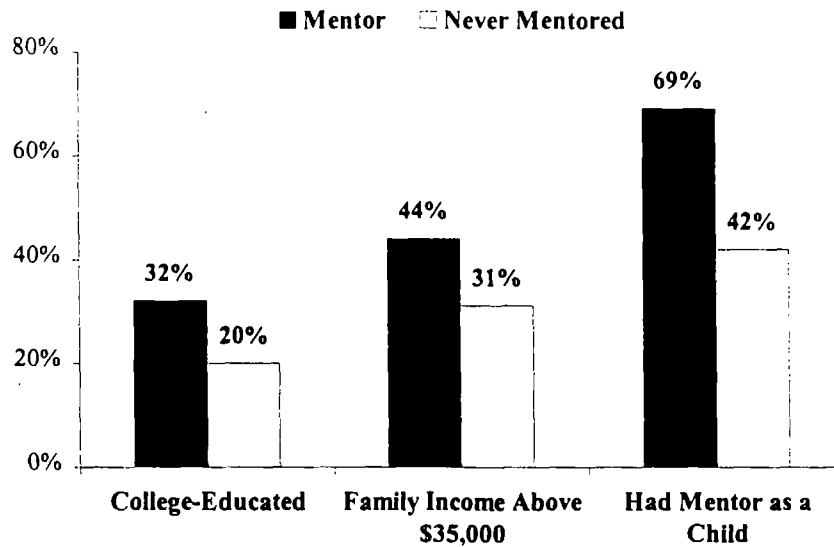
Adults Who Mentor Are Likely to Be Involved in Volunteer Activities with Children



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

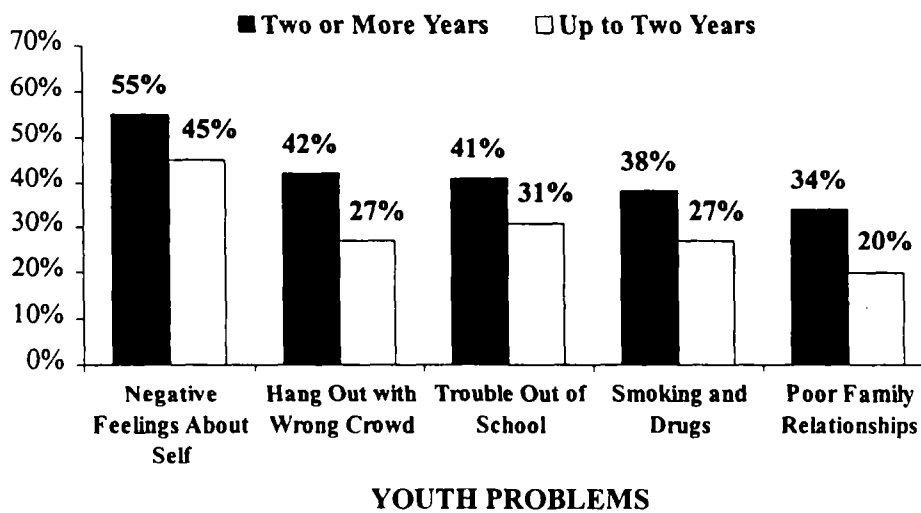
Who Is Likely to Mentor?



Source: The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

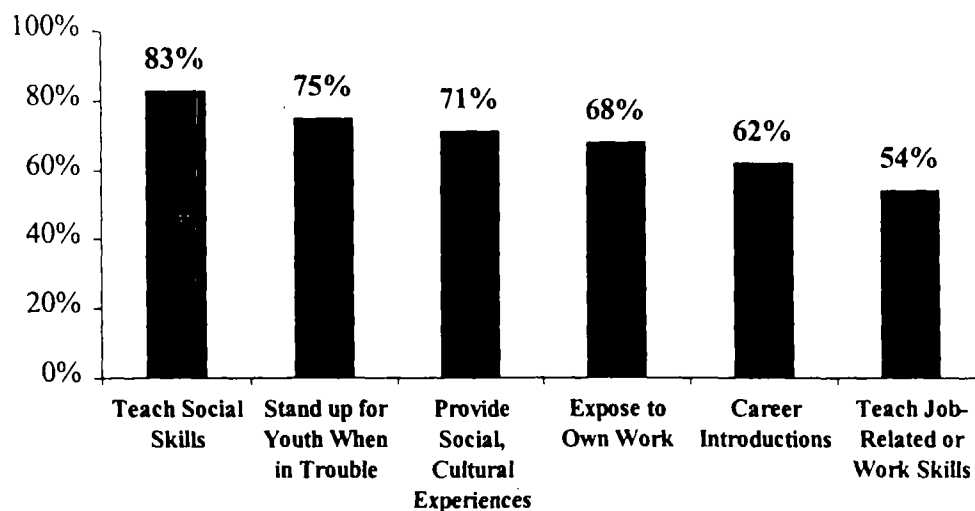
Longer Relationships Are More Likely to Help with or Prevent Problems



Source: The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

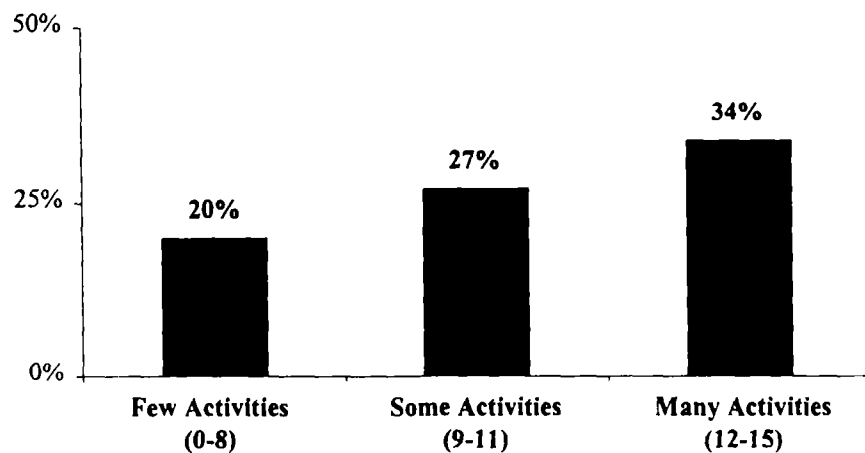
Mentors Participate in a Variety of Activities with Youths They Mentor



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Mentoring Relationships Work Best with a Wide Variety of Activities

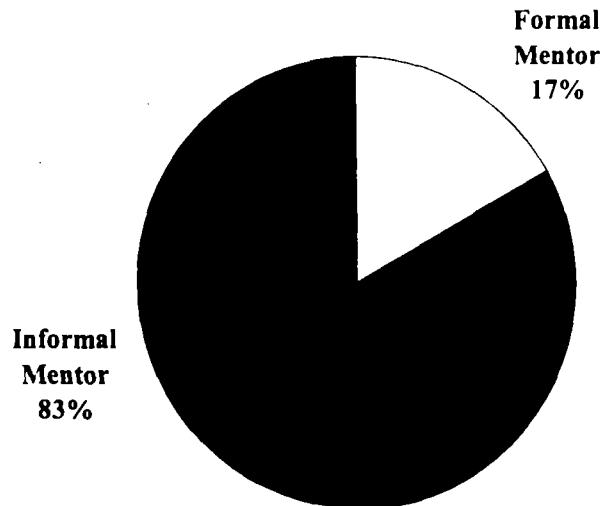


PERCENT WHO HELPED WITH OR PREVENTED
ALL IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS

Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

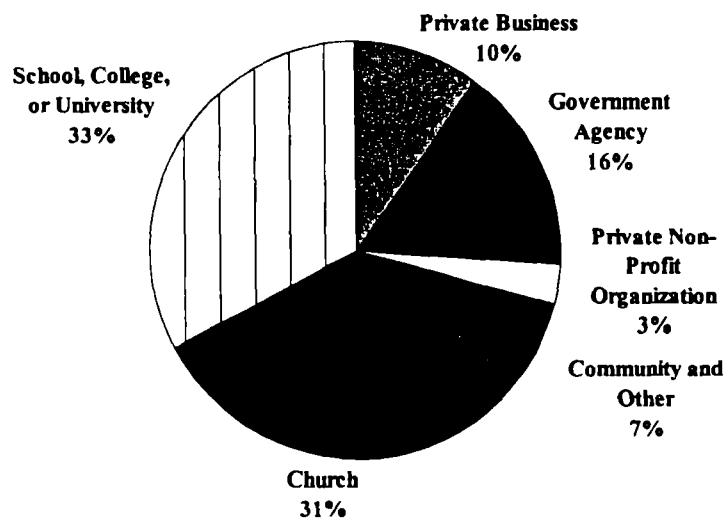
Informal Mentoring Relationships Are Most Prevalent



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

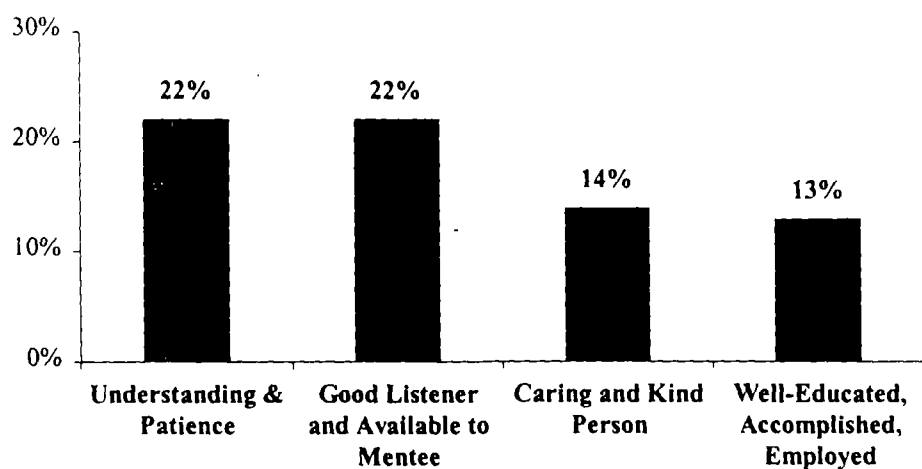
Sponsors of Formal Mentoring Programs



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

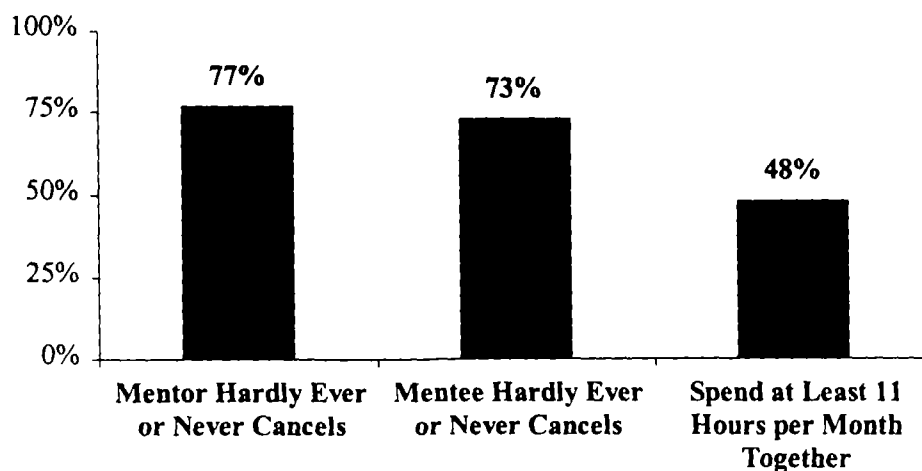
Mentors' Views of Skills and Personality Traits of a Good Mentor



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

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Both Mentors and Mentees Are Committed to the Relationship



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

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APPENDIX B: TABLES

Table 1: Incidence of Problems for Youths in Mentoring and the Impact of Mentoring

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Youth Has Problem*</u>	<u>Mentor Helped</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>"A Lot"***</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Negative feelings about himself/herself	55	62
Poor relationships with his/her family members	49	35
Poor grades	42	48
Hanging out with the wrong crowd	41	42
Getting into trouble at school	36	49
Getting into trouble outside of school	29	47
Skipping School	24	52
Smoking, drinking, or drug use	22	45
Sexual activity	14	25
Running away from home	14	62
Physical or sexual abuse	10	55
An eating disorder	9	26

* Based on mentor reports.

** Based on youth who mentor believes has/had the problem.

Table 2: Incidence of Mentors Compared to Adults Who Have Never Mentored

	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Have Mentored</u> %	<u>Never Mentored</u> %
<u>Other volunteer activities</u>			
Little league or other organized sports team	37	50	32*
Community recreation program	26	44	20*
Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts or some similar program	38	48	33*
Academic tutoring or literacy program	21	39	15*
Sunday school or other religious activities	47	61	42*
Some other program for young people	24	42	18*
<u>Respondent's sex</u>			
Female	55	54	54
Male	45	46	46
<u>Respondent's age</u>			
18-24 years of age	12	14	12
25-34	21	23	21
35-44	22	25	21
45-54	16	20	14*
55-64	11	9	10
65 and older	16	6	17*
<u>Background</u>			
Hispanic or Latino	8	8	8
White not Hispanic	76	76	76
Black not Hispanic	10	12	9
Other race	2	2	3
<u>Highest grade completed</u>			
Less than high school	16	10	17*
High school	32	27	34*
Some college or technical school	27	30	26
College or more	23	32	20*
<u>Income category</u>			
Less than \$10,000	10	8	11
\$10,000 to <\$15,000	7	6	7
\$15,000 to <\$25,000	13	13	13
\$25,000 to <\$35,000	13	15	13
\$35,000 to <\$50,000	14	16	13
\$50,000 or more	20	28	18*

* Difference between those who have and have not mentored are statistically significant at 95% level or greater.

Table 3: Mentors' Perceived Overall Impact by Length of Relationship*(% who helped or prevented problem)*

Problem	Up to Two Years	Two or More Years
	%	%
Low self-esteem	45	55*
Poor grades	34	42*
Hanging w/wrong crowd	27	42*
Trouble out of school	31	41*
Trouble at school	36	38
Smoking, drinking, drug use	27	38*
Difficult relationships in family	20	34*
Skiping school	27	30
Running away from home	20	28*
Sexual activity	19	24
Victim of abuse	14	17
Eating disorder	8	11

* Difference by length of time of relationship is significant at 95% level or greater.

Table 4: Mentoring Activities with Youths by Type of Mentoring Relationship

	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Formal</u> %	<u>Informal</u> %
<u>Skills and Social</u>			
	% of Mentors Who Spent "A Lot" or "Some" Time in Activities		
Working on academics or homework	64	68	63
Talking about or investigating college or career opportunities	62	57	63
Going to a library, museum, concert, play, movies, or sporting events	61	56	61
Participating in a sport together or going for a walk or hike	65	61	65
Talking about his/her personal issues or problems	89	87	90
Eating meals together	79	69	81*
Just hanging out	81	72	83*
Participating in a job internship or shadowing program	22	24	21
<u>Guidance and Networking</u>			
	% Who Engaged in Activity		
Provide cultural, social, or entertainment opportunities that wouldn't normally be available to him/her	71	66	72
Teach social skills or manners	83	80	84
Teach job-related or work skills	54	53	54
Introduce him/her to other people who could help him/her reach his/her academic or career goals	62	64	62
Expose him/her to your own work	68	66	68
Stand up for him/her when he/she gets/got in trouble	75	59	78*
Help him/her get a job or serve as a job reference	34	27	36*
Lower activity level: 0-8	31	40	29*
Mid-range activities: 9-11	42	37	43
Wide-range activities: 12-15	27	24	27

* Difference between formal and informal mentors are statistically significant at 95% level or greater.

Ann

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|

high level over the next decade."

The destruction of the old ways of medical practice may well cause anxiety, but it should not be a source of despair. Patients and care givers alike should celebrate better days ahead. Destruction often precedes renewal, and it is in that renewal that the future of American medicine lies. ♦

Michael L. Millenson is a member of the health care and group benefits consulting practice of William M. Mercer Inc. and a

visiting scholar at Northwestern University's Institute for Health Services Research and Policy Studies. This article was excerpted from his new book, Demanding Medical Excellence: Doctors and Accountability in the Information Age (University of Chicago Press, 1997). © 1997 by The University of Chicago. Millenson's recent report for the Progressive Policy Institute's Health Priorities Project, entitled Beyond the Managed Care Backlash: Medicine in the Information Age, is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.dlcppi.org/adobe/health/millens.pdf>.

THE FIRST LESSON

Character Education Is no Magic Bullet, But it Can Help Improve Our Public Schools

BY KATHLEEN KENNEDY TOWNSEND

Fort Foote Elementary School, which lies just outside the District of Columbia border in Fort Washington, Md., faces problems typical of urban public schools. On their way into school, students step over the shards of broken liquor bottles that neighborhood gang members tossed aside the night before. Outside the school's walls, these young children live amid chaos and violence.

Earlier this year, Principal Robyn Zgorski was having trouble with a student, so she walked him home to talk to his mother in person. The mother wasn't home when they arrived. The boy then looked the principal in the eye and said: "There's a gun in my house, I know where it is. It's in my brother's room, on the shelf in the red bag. I know where he keeps the bullets."

"I'm going to get the gun and shoot you."

The boy was seven years old.

Despite the mayhem encircling Fort Foote, there is peace within. This spring, the school went 120 days without a fight. Disciplinary referrals are down sharply. The hallways are clean and orderly. The lunchroom is about as noisy as the average restaurant. In the classroom, children are engaged and spirited, but they talk in turn and listen to their teachers.

The majority of students not only behave well, they stand up to friends who do not. When a small group of fifth-graders was asked, "Is it hard to tell your friends that you don't like the way they are acting?" one student, Ashley, didn't hesitate: "Oh no. We're leaders, and we have a responsibility to the other students and to our teachers and to our school. And we have the bravery and courage to stand up and tell them when they're acting bad." Another girl, Kelly, added, "Yeah, what's there to fear?"

Teaching Children To Be Good

Listen to the words coming out of the mouths of these children: "leaders," "responsibility," "bravery," "courage." All public schools should be teaching these values; all should be such a model of order and achievement. And they can be.

My home state, Maryland, is the first in the country to implement statewide a reform known as character education. Our goal is to get every school, in all its facets, to teach the civic virtues at the core of our culture—virtues such as courage, respect, responsibility, compassion, and integrity.

Hundreds of schools around the country have experimented with character education with results just as remarkable as Fort Foote's. The challenge now is to analyze what works and what does not. What practices are replicable? How can we systematize character education?

This is something I have worked on for many years. I saw the potential for character education during my work to make Maryland the first state to make community service a high school graduation requirement. Students facing the requirement leaped at the opportunity to do good. I realized the need for and the deep potential of a comprehensive character education initiative. When Gov. Parris Glendening asked me to spearhead Maryland's crime control and prevention efforts more than two years ago, I didn't want to simply punish kids for being bad, but to teach them to be good.

The character education initiative was based on four principles. First and most fundamentally, we insisted that schools could in fact teach good character. Second, we agreed on the need for maximum community in-

volvement. Third, we agreed that we needed a central, statewide character education office to coordinate schools' efforts and hold them accountable. Finally, we knew we would have to set standards to get schools thinking in terms of results.

Morality Isn't Programmed

Morality is not programmed into our genes, as our stratospheric crime, drug abuse, and teen pregnancy rates prove many times over. Children must be *taught* to be good, as they are being taught at Fort Foote. They learn to be good the same way they learn anything: by hearing, by seeing, and by doing. That is, they learn by being told what qualities are good, by witnessing examples of moral behavior, and by practicing these virtues themselves.

Schools can't teach these lessons simply by adding a course titled "Character." Moral questions aren't independent from our daily lives. The best way to teach morality is to integrate it into the everyday workings of the school. The whole culture of the school needs to be changed, not just the curriculum. This gets to the root of schools' educational mission. How can children learn American history and the meaning of democracy, for instance, without understanding, in the most personal and direct manner, the spirit of community service, justice, civic participation, and freedom?

It is important to describe what character education is not. No students are tested on their political or religious beliefs. There is nothing political or even controversial about the virtues our schools teach. The qualities are, simply, those that the overwhelming majority of parents want their children to practice. More to the point, they are the qualities that the nation needs its students to practice if we are to reduce disruptive behavior, delinquency, drug abuse, and teen pregnancy, and to prepare our children to participate fully in our democracy.

Small Changes Yield Big Results

At Fort Foote Elementary, the first 15 minutes of every school day are now devoted to a class discussion of the week's character topic (e.g. generosity, honesty, integrity) and behavioral topic (telephone etiquette, restaurant manners). Students read aloud essays they've written on the topic and hear comments from teachers and classmates.

There have been other changes as well. A cadre of trained student mediators arbitrate petty disputes between classmates before they spin out of control. The students vote for a "citizen of the month," who is featured with his or her family on a bulletin board in the hallway.

These are small changes, to be sure. But they have added up to something greater and have brought about an unmistakable shift in the school's culture. Students

congratulate other students who have read aloud essays on courtesy and generosity. Citizens of the month become schoolwide celebrities for being honest and brave. Peer mediators become leaders for helping others work through their problems.

This works because every child is starved for the approval of his or her peers. Sometimes students fit in because of their clothes; sometimes, because of their gun. But Fort Foote has redirected that desire toward citizenship. The students' need to belong hasn't changed, but the manner in which they do belong has. And the entire school has changed as a result.

"Why Didn't We Have This Sooner?"

Character education is not a magic bullet, but it can profoundly affect children's behavior in and outside the classroom. A survey of nearly 200 schools around the country that had instituted such programs found that 77 percent reported fewer disciplinary problems; 68 percent saw attendance increase; and 64 percent experienced less vandalism. In the first three years of a character education program at one New Haven, Conn., high school, teen pregnancies per year dropped from 16 to zero.

Of course, parents are children's best teachers of appropriate behavior. If parents treat others with concern and compassion, love their children, and respect the law, odds are their children will turn out well. However, no one is served—least of all parents—when children are sent into a moral vacuum for seven hours each day. Character education is meant to supplement, not supplant, good parenting. We should acknowledge, though, that not all children are lucky enough to have good parents. Some parents do not teach their children to respect others or to obey the law. For these children, the school may be the only teacher of moral behavior.

Maryland parents have shown near-unprecedented support for character education. Jim Sarnecki, the Baltimore City Schools character education coordinator, reports that even with about 50,000 elementary students involved in his character education programs, he has not heard a single objection from a parent. The only complaint he does hear is, "Why didn't we have this sooner?"

Alexis de Tocqueville said that America would remain great as long as it remained good. For a long time, building the character of our children fell off our collective list of priorities. It's time we put it back on top. ♦

Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland chairs the state's Cabinet Council on Criminal and Juvenile Justice.

To learn more about the state's character education initiative, call the lieutenant governor's office at 1-800-811-8336.

Additional information on K-12 education is available on the DLC-PPI World Wide Web site at

<http://www.dlcpqi.org/texts/social/school.htm>.



cc.
Keen/Kain
Edem
Please use
these people
[Signature]

Ms. Minyon Moore
Assistant to the President and
Director of Political Affairs
The White House

May 13, 1999

Dear Minyon:

It was truly a pleasure meeting with you yesterday. It is clear you have keen political and business instincts and you are a delight to deal with. You honed in immediately and succinctly on next steps that we can both take to further our mutual objectives of addressing the youth violence problem in an effective and forward-thinking manner. We certainly would appreciate a "bump", in order to be part of future discussions and summits, so that Court TV can constructively add to the dialogue and the solutions.

We are interested and available to assist in any way possible during the President's visit to New York next week. Certainly, Court TV's CEO would be honored to be able to attend the reception you mentioned at The Supper Club prior to the play the Clinton's are going to see, and I can get you any follow-up information immediately.

For future visits to New York or elsewhere in the country, Court TV would be eager to take the lead in organizing an event, for instance, at a school or community center, so that we can announce a "next step" in our mutual anti-violence efforts, including free distribution of curriculum and resource guides for teachers, students and parents.

We look forward to speaking with you soon. Do not hesitate to contact me at (917) 854-8363 (cellular) or (212) 737-0373 (direct) to follow-up. Dan is sending you additional materials from the Choices and Consequences initiative, including the tape of our curriculum.

Thank you again for meeting with us and your gracious and prompt responses to our calls and requests.

Sincerely,

Ellen J. Schned

**Christopher Columbus
High School**

925 Astor Avenue
Bronx, NY 10467
Phone: 718-231-5000
Fax: 718-519-1565

**Fax**Date 3/26/99

To:

From:

Fax Number:

202-456-2461

Pages (including this page):

2

Comments:

Celebrating our 60th AnniversaryJune 6th 1999

Call for more information



Call back
did need
ever
call?



**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL
PARENTS' COMMUNICATION CENTER
DIRECTOR: ARELENE RODRIGUEZ
925 Astor Avenue Bronx, New York 10469
Tel: 718 231-5000 Ext. 1292**

**The White House
Washington, D. C.**

Dear Neera Camden:

Our last communication was faxed on March 18, 1999. Although we have faxed all the requested information to your office, to date we have received no reply.

Violence in our high school continues to escalate with a drive by shooting occurring today at the high point of the school day. Young junior high school student (3 female students to date) has been found in dumpsters murdered. As the weather changes and temperatures rise violence will be on the upraise amongst our youth. Defunding of summer programs leaves our youth with no outlet for the summer months and for the most part sends them to the streets looking for a way out.

We continue to request a meeting with Hillary Clinton to address our concerns and delivery the petitions we have been collecting.

If any further information is needed please do not hesitate contact me.

Your timely response would be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

**Arlene Rodriguez
Director, Parents Communication Center
Christopher Columbus High School**

**Christopher Columbus
High School**

925 Astor Avenue
Bronx, NY 10467
Phone: 718-231-5000
Fax: 718-519-1565

**Fax****Date** 3-19-99

To: ^{ATTN#} Neera Camden / 1st Lady Ms H. Clinton

From: A. Rodriguez

Fax Number: 202-456-2461

Pages (including this page): 2

•Comments:

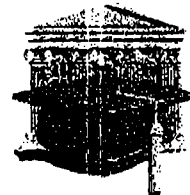
Please Call A.S.A.P.

Thank You

Celebrating our 60th Anniversary

June 6th 1999

Call for more information





**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL
PARENTS' COMMUNICATION CENTER
DIRECTOR: ARELENE RODRIGUEZ
925 Astor Avenue Bronx, New York 10469
Tel: 718 231-5000 Ext. 1292**

*The White House
Washington, D. C.*

Dear Neera Camden

As per your request here is the background information on the Bronx Federation of High School Parent Association Presidents.

The Bronx Federation of High School Parent Association Presidents was founded in 1975. The purpose of this organization is to support, assist and coordinate the ongoing efforts of the Bronx High School Parent Associations to ensure quality public education in all Bronx High Schools. Currently, the Federation represents twenty-four Bronx high schools at citywide Parent Leadership groups and at the Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council.

Due to the nature of the work, a very close working relationship must be maintained between the Federation, the Office of the Superintendent of Bronx high schools and the Chief Executive of the High School Division.

During the last ten years, the Bronx Federation has sponsored a dinner dance, which honors parents and presidents of Parents Association, outstanding teachers and principals. The proceeds from this event are utilized to a select group of Bronx high school seniors. In addition, the Federation sponsors an annual educational conference. The objective of the conference is to create, maintain and ensure a cooperative partnership between parents and school.

Violence among young adults is on the rise and as you know it continues to escalate in our high schools. Without a strong collaborative effort, intervention and appropriate goal setting is next to impossible.

We are hopeful that we will open lines of communications with your office and the First Lady.

If any further information is needed please do not hesitate to contact us

Thanking you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

*Towards a violence free society,
Arlene Rodriguez, Director
Parents Communication Center*

**Christopher Columbus
High School**

925 Astor Avenue
Bronx, NY 10467
Phone: 718-231-5000
Fax: 718-619-1565

**Fax****Date** 3-23-99**TO:** Neera Camden**FROM:** A. Rodriguez**Fax Number:** 202-456-2461 **# Pages (including this page):** 3**Comments:** Call as soon as possible
A.S. A-P-**Celebrating our 60th Anniversary****June 6th 1999****Call for more information**



**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL
PARENTS' COMMUNICATION CENTER
DIRECTOR: ARELENE RODRIGUEZ
925 Astor Avenue Bronx, New York 10469
Tel: 718 231-5000 Ext. 1292**

March 18, 1999

The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Neera Camden:

This letter is a follow-up to my letter of March 5, 1999. (Please see attached)
Although you had requested information on our Association, we have received
no response from your office to date.

We have continued our organizing efforts to formulate a coalition of concerned
parents, students, community organizations and churches to address gang
violence in our schools and surrounding communities. Our petitions to end
gang violence in our schools have been distributed to churches and other
community based programs fostering a broad base of support.

As we continue on this task, we once again ask for an appointment with First
Lady Hillary Clinton at her earliest convenience prior to the end of the '98 - '99
school year.

If any further information is needed please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Towards a violence free society,

Parents Communication Center
Arlene Rodriguez, Director
Christopher Columbus High School



**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL
PARENTS' COMMUNICATION CENTER
DIRECTOR: ARELENE RODRIGUEZ
925 Astor Avenue Bronx, New York 10469
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Washington, D. C.*

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Thanking you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

*Towards a violence free society,
Arlene Rodriguez, Director
Parents Communication Center*

Arnold Grossman

1177 Race St. #507

Denver, Colorado 80206

T. (303) 331-9190

FAX TRANSMISSION

DATE: May 25, 1999
TO: Pam Cicetti
PAGES: 10 including cover sheet)

Dear Ms. Cicetti:

Dottie Lamm asked me to fax you the attached materials on the recently formed Sane Solutions to the Firearms Epidemic (SAFE).

What appears to be a newspaper ad is a reduced layout of a full-page insertion planned for the Denver Post, the Rocky Mountain News and The New Republic, which will appear as soon as we raise the \$15,000 we need to buy the space.

Also attached are our mission statement, announcement press release and a few press clips, including a supportive editorial in the Denver Post.

Dottie also made it clear to me that your fax number is not to be given to anyone, and I will, of course, honor that request.

We will be most appreciative of any support or counsel you can give us in this effort.

Sincerely,



Arnie Grossman

*Neera -**Dottie Lamm
was Senate candidate
in Colorado
and married to
former governor.
She spoke to HRC about
this. Pam*

NEWS RELEASE**SAFE*****Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic***

For release: May 14, 1999
Contact: Arnie Grossman at 303-331-9190

New Citizens' Lobby Will Confront NRA And Support Gun Controls

Two former Colorado governors, Richard Lamm and John Love, will co-chair a bipartisan political action committee dedicated to responsible gun-control laws. SAFE (Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic), launched yesterday in Denver in the wake of the Columbine High School tragedy, will provide an opposition voice to anti-gun-control policies of the National Rifle Association.

SAFE was initially the idea of two long-time friends from opposite ends of the political spectrum, John Head, a Republican attorney, and Arnie Grossman, a Democratic political consultant and author. They have also been joined by Jim Thomas, another prominent political activist and lobbyist.

Other founding board members include Mary Estill Buchanan, Republican and former Colorado Secretary of State and J.D. MacFarland, Democrat, former Colorado Attorney General.

"The time has come to let the NRA know that people of good will in Colorado want to stop the proliferation, particularly among juveniles, of dangerous weapons whose only purpose is to kill," said Head in outlining SAFE's objectives. "We respect and support the

(more)

(cont'd)

rights of people to own and use weapons for legitimate sporting and defense purposes," he continued. "But handguns such as the TEC-9 assault pistol have no place in hunting or in self-defense. They're designed to kill and maim human beings."

All three of SAFE's founding members are military veterans and are thoroughly familiar with firearms and understand the devastation they can cause. "We're not anti-gun people. We're anti-gun violence people," said Grossman. "We're opposed to any industry lobby, like the NRA, which adamantly refuses to accept any reasonable gun controls."

Thomas and Grossman attended the silent protest of the NRA's national convention at the State Capitol, attended by more than 10,000 people. "We both had heard of John Head's interest in forming a group like SAFE, and we wanted to help," said lobbyist Thomas. "The NRA and the Gun Owners of America are totally out of step with the citizens of Colorado, and of the entire country, who want responsible laws to keep guns away from kids."

SAFE will focus on raising funds to support political candidates, of any party, who are committed to working for reasonable gun-control legislation. "We want to reach the point where we can match the money the NRA puts into campaigns in efforts to advance its agenda," said Grossman. "They have a history of finding, and funding, candidates who oppose gun controls. We will counter the NRA's efforts by finding and funding candidates who will be voices of reason and responsibility in this debate."

Head added, "We'll also support the initiative process, if the state legislature doesn't act to limit juvenile access to guns, to hold parents responsible for illegal gun use by children and to close the gun-show loopholes that allow unregulated sales of firearms."

##

SAFE

Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic

Mission Statement

Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic (SAFE) is a bipartisan political action committee formed to advocate the reasonable regulation of the manufacture and sale of handguns, automatic rifles and ammunition, while recognizing the right of Colorado citizens to own and use firearms for legitimate hunting, sport and defensive purposes.

Objectives

SAFE supports the reasonable regulation of firearms. In stark contrast to the National Rifle Association, we believe that the uncontrolled manufacture and sale of handguns and rifles, and related paraphernalia, poses a serious and continuing threat to public health and safety, particularly among our children. Such weaponry, including the kind used in the Columbine High School tragedy, is designed to kill human beings and goes far beyond a citizen's need for defense or sport. Further, any gun, of any type, in the hands of criminals, juveniles, the mentally unstable or the untrained, constitutes an unacceptable threat to society.

SAFE is committed to giving a voice to those who do not accept the NRA dogma, which opposes any gun regulation. While the NRA has the right to state its case, the majority of Americans who believe that gun ownership and use must be reasonably regulated, are not being heard over the NRA's no-compromise position. We will provide a voice and a forum for people of good will who believe that a sane alternative to the gun carnage must be achieved without delay.

SAFE recognizes that the NRA has become one of America's most powerful lobbies, financing candidates in federal, state and local political campaigns. It lobbies elected officials and opposes virtually all initiated measures that would in any way regulate firearms. SAFE will combat this powerful gun industry group, by supporting candidates who will oppose NRA-backed politicians. SAFE will also support Colorado legislative measures and ballot initiatives to make our streets, schools, homes and businesses safer places.

Although SAFE is a Colorado organization, focusing on gun control issues at the local and statewide level, we will gladly cooperate with similar organizations in other states which are working to stop the carnage of gun violence.

QUIT BELLYACHING ABOUT GUNS.

Do something about them.

Everyone seems to be complaining about all the deadly guns that find their way into the hands of the wrong people.

For good reason.

The Columbine High School tragedy was a terrible reminder of what can happen if we don't act to stop the torrent of dangerous weapons. We have become the most heavily-armed society on earth, with the highest incidence of gun violence and deaths.

If you've been wanting to speak out against the National Rifle Association and its rigid rhetoric against all gun controls, SAFE Colorado (Same Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic) is your voice.

But we can only be heard with your help.

Please, join SAFE today. Send us your check for \$40* and be a charter member.

Better still, send us \$100, \$500, \$1,000 or more, and our voice will be that much louder and more effective.

You don't have to complain about guns anymore.

Now you can do something about them.

Mission Statement
Same Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic (SAFE) is a bipartisan political action committee formed to advocate the reasonable regulation of the manufacture and sale of handguns, automatic rifles and ammunition, while recognizing the right of citizens to own and use firearms for legitimate hunting, sport and defensive purposes.



*That's \$5.00 more than the NRA's membership fee, because from now on, SAFE wants to stay ahead of them.

SAFE Colorado
Same Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic
730 17th Street, Suite 200, Denver, Colorado 80202
(303) 285-0106

Please make me a charter member of SAFE. Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____.

☐ I want to help as a volunteer. Please contact me.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Editorial May 13, 1999

THE DENVER POST

Founded 1892

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Gerald E. Grilly, *President and Publisher*

Dennis A. Britton, *Editor and Executive VP*
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Sue O'Brien, *Editor of the Editorial Page*

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Stephen R. Sparks, *VP Circulation*
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Setting sights on NRA

A new political action committee, forming to go toe-to-toe with the National Rifle Association, may be the group that finally succeeds in balancing the powerful lobbying, membership and advertising of the NRA.

But let's also be clear: No one supporting Sensible Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic (SAFE) Colorado wants to take away a shotgun from sports men. SAFE Colorado wants to balance the NRA's on, and its founding membership includes both Republicans and Democrats.

"We can get together about something so much bigger than partisan politics," said Arnie Grossman, co-founder of SAFE and a long-time Denver Democratic political consultant. The goal is to build a 100,000 membership, outweighing the NRA's Colorado membership by several thousand, and raise the type of money and power wielded by the NRA.

For example, it's very common in legislative and federal races for the NRA to send out questionnaires to candidates and incumbents on their stance on gun control. The NRA also issues report cards on gun control. State Rep. Ken Gordon, D-Denver, proudly gets an F, while state Rep. Doug Dean, R-El Paso, typically gets an A. "We are going to hold representatives accountable. We are going to rate them," Grossman added.

Another common NRA tactic is to put up, and help fund, an opponent to a sitting representative. SAFE Colo-

rado plans similar funding and support for candidates thus challenged by the NRA. In addition to campaign participation, SAFE Colorado is also hoping to raise sufficient funds to finance television commercials supporting its stance.

The potential for raising those funds and mobilizing a powerful lobby is definitely there. Currently on board with Grossman to form a PAC against the NRA is Republican activist John Hanks, former Govs. Dick Lamm, a Democrat, and John Love, Republican, have agreed to be co-chairs. Democrat J.D. MacFarlane, a former Colorado attorney general and Denver manager of safety, and Republican Mary Estill Buchanan, former secretary of state, also are planning to join SAFE Colorado.

Meanwhile, the 12-member U.S. Senate Youth Violence Task Force, chaired by Colorado Republican Wayne Allard, is looking at strengthening and enforcing existing laws, creating safer schools, and analyzing how popular culture contributes to violence.

Allard points out that a number of laws currently on the books are not being enforced. His group recommends closing several loopholes that permit youth access to guns and appropriating \$50 million to be used to beef up federal prosecution of gun crimes.

We may already have the laws on the books. Allard's recommendations would help in the firepower where it belongs — in enforcement.

Denver Post 5-15-99

SAFE's phones keep ringing

By Arnie Grossman
Staff Writer to The Denver Post

Since its inception Thursday, the phones have been ringing off the hook at SAFE Colorado.

The bipartisan group had received nearly 500 calls by Friday afternoon.

"It's just amazing; the calls have come from all over and our number isn't even published," said John Head, a Republican attorney and co-founder of SAFE Colorado, or Safe Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic.

Head, along with Arnie Grossman, a Democratic political consultant, founded the group as a political action committee that they hope will be more powerful than the National Rifle Association's PAC.

"Around the state people have been asking what they can do to help. This really validates the feeling that I've had all along — that there is a resistance to gun violence just waiting to be tapped," Head said.

In response to the Columbine High shooting, SAFE was designed as a bipartisan approach to gun control, its sponsors said Friday. As a fund-raising unit, SAFE plans

to support political candidates whose agenda includes "reasonable" ways to regulate guns.

"The NRA is trying to stop the necessities we need to prevent gun violence," said Grossman, adding that a specific goal of SAFE is to attract a larger membership than the NRA. SAFE members will pay an annual fee to support advertising; the figure hasn't been set, but organizers say they'll make it \$5 a year higher than the NRA's.

The NRA did not return phone calls by The Denver Post.

Grossman said that while the group opposes the NRA's approach to gun control, it does not oppose the Second Amendment and welcomes NRA members and other gun advocates. The group soon plans to launch its first advertising campaign and hold fund-raisers that will help it branch out to other states and eventually become a national organization dubbed SAFE America.

"Everyone just wants to help — NRA members, hunters and plenty of other citizens," Grossman said. "But first, we must respond to everyone that has called us and then work on our other plans stewing."

Denver Post May 14, 1999

Gun control goes bipartisan

By Steve Lipsher
Denver Post Staff Writer

Putting the National Rifle Association and Colorado's U.S. senators on notice, a bipartisan group launched a gun-control lobbying effort Thursday to "end the atrocious proliferation of firearms."

"People of all political stripes want something done about the epidemic of gun violence in our schools, in our streets and in our businesses. And today we begin the task, on a strictly bipartisan basis, to do something about it," said John Head, a Republican attorney and co-founder of Safe Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic.

Spawned by the Columbine High School massacre, SAFE intends to counter the NRA's political clout and support "reasonable" gun-control measures.

"The National Rifle Association is said to have 60,000 members in Colorado. . . . If they do, our goal is to have 70,000 members," said co-founder Arnie

Grossman, a Democratic political consultant. "If the National Rifle Association can raise a million dollars to support its candidates who will carry their water, we will raise \$2 million to support our candidates and to oppose those candidates who will not listen to our pleas for sensible gun regulation."

Denver state Rep. Ken Gordon, leader of the House Democrats and an outspoken gun-control proponent, applauded the effort. "Until now, there has been no political cost for going with the NRA. No one makes you pay. But if you oppose them, they make you pay."

The NRA could not be reached for comment.

With former Colorado Govs. John Love, a Republican, and Dick Lamm, a Democrat, as honorary chairmen — and board members including former Republican Secretary of State Mary Estill Buchanan and former Democratic Attorney

Please see GUNS on B8

Bipartisan group pushes gun control

GUNS from Page 1B

General J.D. MacFarlane — the group wants to avoid the traditional political divisions on gun issues, Grossman said.

"Today we are as close as any two individuals can get . . . embarking on what I feel is a genuine crusade . . . to do something to bring to an end the atrocious proliferation of firearms within Colorado," he said.

Along with Tom Mauser, the father of a 15-year-old sophomore killed at Columbine, the duo criticized the NRA and Colorado's Republican senators, Wayne Allard and Ben Nighthorse Campbell, for opposing legislation Wednesday that would have required criminal background checks at gun shows.

"When I heard the news about the vote in the Senate, I felt like I had been kicked in the stomach," Mauser said. "I could not understand how, after what happened in Columbine, that we would not remove the gun-show loophole."

Both senators said they opposed the mandatory background check as "too burdensome and too bureaucratic" at the federal level.

Senate Republicans on Thursday retreated and offered a proposal to make all gun show sales — including sales by unlicensed gun-sellers that now require no background checks — subject to instant background checks.

Allard "is someone who always believes gun control is best done at the state and local level, and not one size fits all," spokesman Sean Conway said.

Campbell spokesman Chris Changery said the senator has introduced legislation for school security grants and is on a Senate task force on youth violence.

"One of the things that can happen after a tragedy is that the government overreacts," Changery said. "He has been very vocal on how important it is to ensure that our children go to school safely. . . . The debate is how best to do that."



REGIONAL News BRIEFING

Supremors lead gun-control group

Former Govs. Dick Lamm and John Love will head a political action committee to promote gun control and check the influence of the National Rifle Association.

The group calls itself Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic. It will raise funds for political candidates committed to "reasonable gun-control legislation."

"We want to reach the point where we can match the money the NRA puts into campaigns in efforts to advance its agenda," said Arnie Grossman, a Democratic political consultant who founded the group with Republican attorney John Head.

"We're not anti-gun people," Grossman said in a statement. "We're anti-gun violence people."

ber Elaine Berman said. "It's their

Superintendent of the Columbine High School, the school

Father of victim blames NRA for shootings

Tom Mauser launches organization designed to further gun control

By Deborah Frazier

News Staff Writer

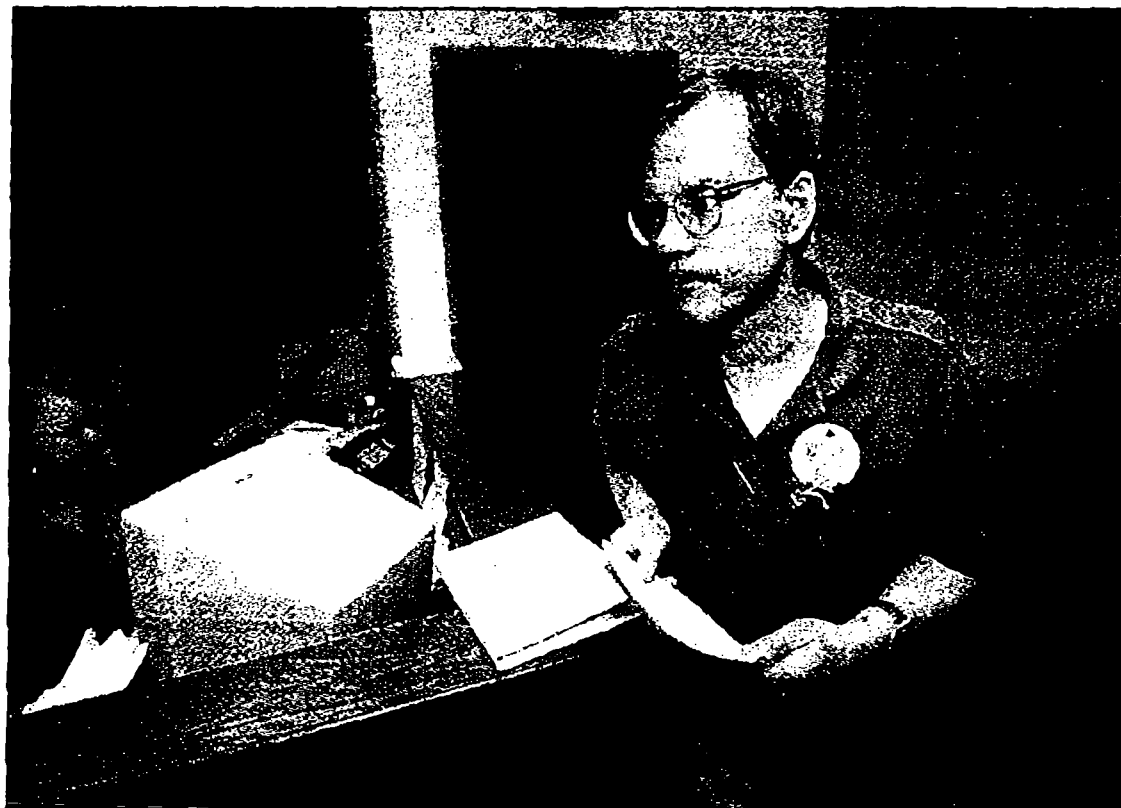
The National Rifle Association is the bully responsible for the slaughter at Columbine High School, the father of a boy who was killed in the school said Thursday.

"They (the NRA) represent a small minority in this country, but they are effective," Tom Mauser said at a news conference launching a group called Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic, or SAFE. The group intends to combat the NRA by matching its efforts.

In the weeks since two Columbine High School students killed 13 people and set off numerous bombs before committing suicide, people have blamed the violence on television, video games, movies and athletes who bullied gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold.

"But you can't ignore the gun issue," said Mauser, who lost his son, Dan Mauser, 15, in the barrage of bullets April 20.

Mauser was among the first to join SANE, a bipartisan group headed by former Govs. John Love and Dick Lamm and includes former Secretary of State Mary Estill Buchanan and former Colorado Attorney General J.D. MacFarland.



Steven R. Nickerson/News Staff Photographer

Tom Mauser, father of slain Columbine student Daniel Mauser, stands in the Denver office of U.S. Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell on Thursday. Mauser decried the senator's vote on a gun-control bill.

SAFE organizers said Thursday they will adopt long-practiced NRA tactics of supporting anti-gun control candidates with funding, organizing ballot initiatives and advertising in newspapers. But SANE will use these strategies to achieve

greater control of handguns and automatic and semiautomatic weapons in Colorado, said John Head, a co-founder.

"People want responsible gun regulations and they have a right to it," said Head, a Republican attorney

and Vietnam veteran. He vowed to raise more money and more members in Colorado than the NRA had.

Responsible owners of rifles, shotguns and other weapons used in hunting wildlife won't be affect-

ed, said co-founder Arnie Grossman, a Navy veteran who grew up with guns.

"Colorado is a decency state, a state where humanity and compassion and fairness prevail over arrogant rhetoric against gun controls," said Grossman, a Democratic political consultant.

"It's a state that loves its children more than you love your guns," said Grossman, directing the comment to NRA President Charlton Heston. Heston refused to cancel an NRA conference in Denver after Columbine.

Another instance of NRA arrogance, said Mauser, was the Senate's rejection Wednesday of an amendment that would have required a background check on sales at gun shows. Mauser said when he heard about the vote, "I felt like I had been kicked in the stomach."

The amendment, opposed by the NRA, failed. Colorado Sens. Ben Nighthorse Campbell and Wayne Allard, both Republicans, voted against the controls, although Allard on Thursday said he had reconsidered his opposition.

"Shame on you Campbell. Shame on you Allard," read the poster of his son that Mauser carried in front of the two senators' suburban offices later Thursday. As Mauser marched, the U.S. Senate discussed a second vote because of public outcry.

For more information on SANE, call (303) 285-0106.

Denver Rocky Mountain News May 14, 1999

A GROSSMAN

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05/20/1999



U.S. Department of Justice

SCHV10

Office of Justice Programs

Washington, D.C. 20531

APR 30 1999

→ Neera/Nicole

Dr. Michael Litow
Executive Director
The Education Center of
Developmental Resources Inc.
113 E. Van Buren
Naperville, Illinois 60540

Dear Dr. Litow:

Thank you for your letter to the Attorney General in which you share information about your program for at-risk youth. Your letter was forwarded to the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) because OJP includes the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the Justice Department agency responsible for juvenile justice issues and preventing youth violence.

I commend you for the important work you are doing with young people and their families. The Attorney General shares your view that we can make a difference in young people's lives by working together. The Attorney General and President Clinton also appreciate your participation in the recent White House Conference on School Safety. Input from experts such as you, who work daily with young people, was invaluable.

You may be interested to know that the White House will convene a national symposium on children exposed to violence, the Safe Start Summit, scheduled for June 22-24 of this year. For more information about the summit, you may wish to contact Michelle Avery of OJJDP on 202/514-5084. The summit is part of a new initiative that includes \$10 million in federal Safe Start grants that will go to 12 cities to develop comprehensive responses to children exposed to violence. I have enclosed a copy of the Safe Start grant program solicitation.

Also, Attorney General Reno, Education Secretary Riley, and Surgeon General Satcher recently announced the Safe School Initiative. Under this program, the Departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services will fund the implementation and enhancement of community-wide strategies for creating safe and drug-free schools and promoting healthy childhood development. To be funded, local comprehensive plans must address: 1) safe school environment; 2) youth alcohol and drug prevention, violence prevention, and early intervention; 3) school and community mental health and preventive treatment intervention programs; 4) early childhood psychosocial and emotional development services; 5) educational reform; and 6) safe school policies.

Marsha, Please relate to Mrs. Clinton that my wife Maria and I would like to attend the White House Conference on June 22-24. Thank you. M. Liton

More information about these and other programs is available on OJP's Website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov or by calling the National Criminal Justice Reference Service toll-free on 1-800/851-3420.

Thank you again for writing to the Attorney General. She appreciates your interest in contributing your expertise to our initiatives and for your efforts to help America's children.

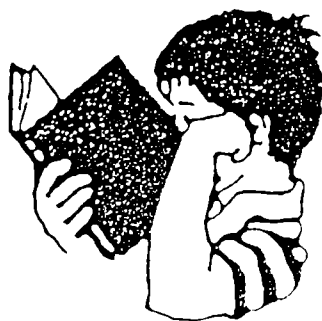
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harri J. Kramer", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Harri J. Kramer, Director
Office of Congressional and
Public Affairs

Enclosures

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Dr. Michael Litow, Executive Director

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-or-

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-or-

3. Scholarship a student to The Education Center  
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*"Helping kids succeed not only in school but in life."*

Family - Chicago Tribune 3-28-99



Tribune photo by Ed Wagner

"Once kids experience success, you see a lot of negative behavior disappear," Michael Littow says.

## Getting the message

Psychologist Michael Littow's life is connecting with teens

By Candace Purdom  
SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

**T**he cozy two-story, white frame house in downtown Naperville welcomes guests with its wide front porch. The Education Center is the kind of safe, homey place where cross-stitched "Home Sweet Home" samplers would seem appropriate.

But here, the sentiments would likely be, "Before you try to learn, you've got to learn to try," "Look ahead and prepare, or look behind and regret," or "Life can throw you a curve — but life's life!"

These are among Michael Littow's favorite messages, and the teens he counsels hear them often. Since 1987, they have made their way to Littow's office, upstairs in the old frame house, to solve problems and aim for goals.

"I see a lot of kids from [inner city neighborhoods] who basically deal with day-to-day survival: how to make it to school without getting your butt kicked, or your gym shoes ripped off, or catching a bullet," says Littow, who 20 years ago opened, and still operates, the original Education Center in Oak Park. "And then I see kids out here who are basically great kids, but many of them are overindulged and have difficulty coping with disappointment because everything's given to them."

The range keeps Littow on his toes. Because he has worked with thousands of young people, nothing surprises him. "When I think I've heard it all, something else comes up," says the psychologist, who also has been affiliated with the Chicago Board of Education for 30 years, as a teacher, coordinator, assistant principal and consultant. "Whatever I do hear, we just deal with."

From Annie (not her real name), Littow has heard plenty over the past 18 months. The 16-year-old DuPage County girl is surviving an abusive background, her parents' bitter divorce and difficult financial straits. Despite a high IQ, the girl's grades and spirits plummeted last year. Miserable, Annie dreaded school.

According to her worried mother, Annie was bent on failure. "It came on gradually and just never picked up," says the mother. "I thought it was just something she was going through emotionally. So I waited it out a little bit, but then I had her evaluated."

The medical facility recommended that Annie see Littow. Within months, there was a positive difference in Annie that has continued.

"I go to a huge high school, and we don't have one-on-one relationships with our teachers. So I didn't feel they were interested enough," Annie says. "Dr. Littow's more caring. He doesn't give advice unless you ask for it, which is nice because you go to any adult and they say, 'Well you should do this and that.'"

Annie responded to what she terms Littow's "incredibly positive attitude." Today, she has her heart set on college and a career in environmental studies and is raising her grades to get there. So grateful is Annie's mother that she says, "Mike's on my prayer list every night."

Endorsements, and support, come from the business community as well. Over the years, Littow has been a ferocious letter-writer, contacting celebrities and professionals of all kinds to serve as mentors, among them the late Bears owner George Halas; Sam Skinner, former chief of staff for President Reagan; and broadcaster Joan Esposito.

Three years ago, such a letter attracted Douglas Colbeth, president and CEO of Naperville's Spyglass Inc. "I was absolutely compelled to help Mike out," explains Colbeth, who has since hired several of Littow's young clients at his software firm. "Mike has a tremendous combination of toughness and compassion. ... He gets kids open to helping themselves."

Littow describes his process as finding and tapping each student's talents.

"You can talk about self-esteem until you're blue in the face, but once kids experience success, you see a lot of negative behavior disappear," Littow says. "For many of them, school has been a punitive experience. They're left asking, 'Why can't I get this? What's wrong with me?' And that leads to other problems."

Littow speaks from experience. He flunked 4th grade. At Chicago's Mather High School, Littow, Class of '64, wore a leather jacket and a ducktail haircut and was more or less a "Happy Days" Fonzie-type.

"I vacillated between two groups, the juvenile delinquents and the kids who were going to college," Littow notes. "But I decided I wanted to do something with my life."

Littow says the critical work is still with those kids: the ones on the fence, the ones many DuPage area schools refer to him.

For parents, Littow prescribes the tried and true: Love your children for who they are. Spend time with them. Be supportive and encouraging. Don't be too quick with judgment or advice. Listen.

It's what Littow practices at the old frame house, where he stresses to every client one last message: "Failure is not an option."

"I have always felt that we need programs for prevention. We need to spend the money to establish relationships with young people."

■ Dr. Michael Litow  
YOUTH COUNSELOR

# A KNACK FOR SAVING KIDS

*Villages resident earns  
national reputation  
for work as counselor*

By Judy Buchenot  
60504 CORRESPONDENT

Michael Litow knows what it's like to be a troubled child. He was one. For the past 30 years, he's been drawing on that experience to help kids as a youth counselor. The Fox Valley Villages resident has become nationally renowned for his work with the Chicago Board of Education. He is the coordinator of Inclusive Education for Emotionally Disturbed Behavior Disorder Students in Chicago. He also operates counseling centers for youth in Naperville and Oak Park. He has gained a reputation of being able to reach troubled children.

He was among 125 experts invited by the president to a conference on at-risk youth last month in Washington, D.C. Litow was able to speak directly with the President and Mrs. Clinton during the conference.

Part of the day was spent addressing the causes of violence in our schools," Litow said. The list of causes mentioned at the conference included changes in family structure, community problems spilling into the classrooms and abuse in homes.

"I think a major issue is that kids need someone they can go to and confide in. Kids get upset and angry and they want to show everyone how they feel. They act on

the impulse," he said, referring to the shootings that occurred last spring on school grounds.

"The bottom line at the conference was that there needs to be collaboration," Litow said. "Educators, mental health professionals, police, businesses and everyone need to collaborate."

"I have always felt that we need programs for prevention. We need to spend the money to establish relationships with young people. We can't keep building prisons to lock them up. Prevention and intervention is more cost effective than incarcerating a kid at \$53,000 a year."

At his counseling practice known as The Education Center, Litow pursues his own ideas of prevention and intervention. Among the many professionals who refer youths to Litow is DuPage County Juvenile Probation Officer Robin Blench.

"I have a number of kids on my caseload who I have referred to Mike," said Blench. "I often find that behavior and education problems are in the same package with the kids. Mike does a good job of looking at the whole picture. There are very few therapists that have the expertise to make the connection to help with both issues."

See Litow, Page 6

## Litow

From Page 5

A kid goes to school six or seven hours a day and if they aren't experiencing success, their self-esteem takes a beating, Litow said. Michelle Donovan was a student who wasn't experiencing success when she was a sophomore at Waubesa Valley High School. She went to Litow for some skill development but gained much more.

"He helped me with my test-taking skills, but he also understood what a kid goes through in high school. I had no direction in my life and he just kept working with me until I saw what I needed to do. It's been five years since I saw him and I'm working and a full-time student at COD. I never would have thought that I could have done this when I was a sophomore," Donovan said.

Jim Guleserian, a Wheaton North senior, also made a connection with Litow. "I was having big problems in school. I wasn't on track to go anywhere. When I went to Mike, I felt that he genuinely cared," Jim said. "If you do something wrong, he doesn't make you feel bad. You just want him to trust you and you wouldn't even think of lying to him. I'm applying to colleges now and I know I can do well."

One way that Litow is able to help kids feel successful is to find them a job. Although he makes the arrangements for a job, the phone call to secure the interview needs to be made by the youth.

Mrs. C., a parent of a troubled Waubesa Valley High School student, thought that no one would ever be able to reach her son. (To protect his identity, his real name will not be used.) "Jack turned from a great little kid into a delinquent," his mom said. "He got into a crowd of kids who went around giving the world the middle finger. He stopped attending school and started using drugs. I just didn't know what to do."

"The probation office sent us to

Mike and Mike talked his language. They were really able to connect. He changed Jack's attitude. Jack used to be so unhappy and angry and now, he's happy and laughing again. He's going to go to the College of DuPage in the spring. I did everything I could do. It was Mike who finally connected with Jack."

Although he has turned many lives around, Litow knows he can't save everyone. Before accepting a student into his center, Litow completes a free assessment. He does not accept students with severe depression, advanced drug habits or other situations which can't be handled in his practice. Although some students are not accepted, it is never due to monetary issues, noted Blench.

"Mike has never turned away a kid for financial reasons. He reduces the fee, finds a scholarship or does it for free and believe me, this is not done frequently in the counseling world," Blench said.

Most of Litow's clients meet with him for about nine weeks.

"This is not dance lessons," Litow said. "I want them to become independent and self-reliant." After the formal counseling ends, Litow often checks in with clients who are on their own.

Mrs. C. said he made visits to her son in the youth home when he was no longer being paid for his time.

Although Blench admires Litow's ability to connect with students, he sees a greater strength in the relationships that are formed.

"Perhaps the main reason that he is so highly effective is that he has a very clear vision that not only do these kids need emotional support but they need accountability. He shows them that they need to be accountable for their actions."

The conference in Washington was an opportunity for Litow to share his ideas about making positive connections with youth.

"Parents need to love their own children but they also need to love all children. They need to give guidance and support wherever they can. Relationships to kids are as important as location is to real estate."

# The Education Center: Creating Brighter Futures

On call 24 hours a day, Dr. Michael Litow does what most others can't: inspiring at-risk children to turn their lives around and create brighter futures. This nationally recognized and honored educator and counselor has an exceptional gift for bringing out and developing the good in kids society is all too quick to label "bad."

After earning a bachelor's degree in business, a master's in special education, and a Ph.D. in educational psychology, he worked with the Chicago Board of Education as a teacher, coordinator and assistant principal. He is also the founder and director of The Education Center, which first opened in Oak Park in 1979 and later expanded to Naperville in 1987. His success derives from his unique part-motivational part "street tough" approach. This center provides counseling services for thousands of families and young people involving issues like learning disabilities, physical and sexual abuse, drug and gang affiliation, lack of employment skills, truancy, homelessness and suicide. The

overall focus is not on the child's weaknesses, but on their strengths.

Being labeled as incorrigible and learning disabled, school was tough for Dr. Litow. Growing up, he vacillated between the tough guys and those more motivated to learn. He recalls saying to himself: "I'm not sure what I want, but I know what I don't want." He relates easily to the kids, because he is not just an expert who has researched the problems, but has experienced many of the same struggles.

"Everyone has a responsibility. I do, the parents do and so does the kid. If everyone works in a collaborative effort then we will see results," Dr. Litow explained. He is a firm believer that you have to reach the kid to teach the kid. One of the biggest challenges Dr. Litow faces includes getting the kids to become willing to change. Parents come to the Education Center frustrated from past experiences at other clinics that have failed to get their children talking. "They talk to me," Dr. Litow said.

Among the many letters of appreciation Dr. Litow receives, one mother writes: "I truly believe that when (my son) was at a crossroads in his life, you ultimately saved him from taking the wrong path." A young girl explained how the Center helped her: "I was not lectured or looked down upon. I was listened to and decisions were made according to my individual needs."

Dr. Litow describes his relationship with the kids as one built on pure respect and trust. Honest, and objective is how he answers their questions, which leads to good friendships and positive feedback. "I have a passion for what I do, I think it comes across. It is very satisfying but can also be very frustrating," Dr. Litow added. He has taken the stigma out of therapy, and kids see him as a coach not a shrink.

Devoting himself to motivate these children, Dr. Litow receives support from resources in business, politics, sports, and entertainment. Well known professionals such as Joan Esposito give kids a chance not just to be told what they can do in the

future, but learn what it takes to get there from someone who did. Scholarship funds are donated to lower or eliminate costs depending on the need and willingness of the parents and kids.

Examining the entire spectrum of the child's thoughts, feelings, and environment is not easy. It demands optimism, patience, understanding, and of course people like Dr. Michael Litow determined to turn dead ends into open doors of opportunity. Regarding learning disabilities, Dr. Litow says, "You don't fail because of them, you succeed in spite of them."

If you would like additional information or would like to speak to Dr. Litow, please call 630-420-7807.

## The Education Center, Inc.

- Oak Park
- Naperville

630-420-7807

# A kid's best friend

**■ Dr. Mike Litow does what parents should do with their children: He listens.**

Judging from responses to last week's column, a lot of people have given up on our kids.

I wrote that 14-year-old Garey Randle was expelled from Crete-Monee Middle School for an entire year for fighting. The school district, which happens to be in the throes of an economic crisis, can't pay for alternative programs. The mother, Gloria Yates, can't pay for an alternative or private school, either.

That leaves Garey on the street, heading down a path that leads straight to prison or an early grave. I argued that it would be better for our taxes to go for intervention now, rather than to pay for prisons later.

Boy, did I get an earful from readers.

"We have another example of a parent who, in my opinion, has not taken their role seriously and now wants the schools, teachers, taxpayers, etc. to FIX IT," wrote Lauren Zaubi of Itasca.

"We were all more responsible for our own children and stopped waiting for someone else to teach our kids, our society may not be facing the problem it is," said Burnard C. Taylor of Chicago.

And Mark Fearon of Chicago had this advice: "Get off your rump and take charge of your home life or a jury of your peers will do it for you."

As cold as this sounds, these sentiments accurately reflect the opinions of a lot of people. Thank goodness there are people around like Dr. Mike Litow.

Litow counsels kids like Garey and others who are deemed troublemakers or underachievers. He has been at it for 20 years, and says it is not enough to blame parents for the growing number of unruly kids.



Mary A.  
MITCHELL

He ought to know. Litow flunked fourth grade, was found to have a learning disability, and for most of his school career was a teacher's worst nightmare. He now works with learning disabled kids at Sullivan Elementary School on the South Side, and runs a nonprofit counseling service, the Education Center of Developmental Resources. The center has offices in Naperville and Oak Park.

"I think everybody wants to point the finger of blame," he said during a recent interview at his Oak Park office. "But we live in a very violent society. I'm talking about a society where violence is almost an acceptable form of behavior. Kids emulate that kind of behavior."

His clients include the children of CEOs as well as those who live

in public housing. In a lot of instances, money doesn't matter.

"I see too many people who want to phone in their parenting. They spend more time in line to buy Beanie Babies than they will spend helping their kid with homework, or talking to their kid," he said.

There are also learning disabilities that are not detected by school officials. For example, a Naperville family turned to Litow after they got tired of hearing teachers say: "He's a great kid, but..."

Litow discovered the high school junior had attention deficit disorder.

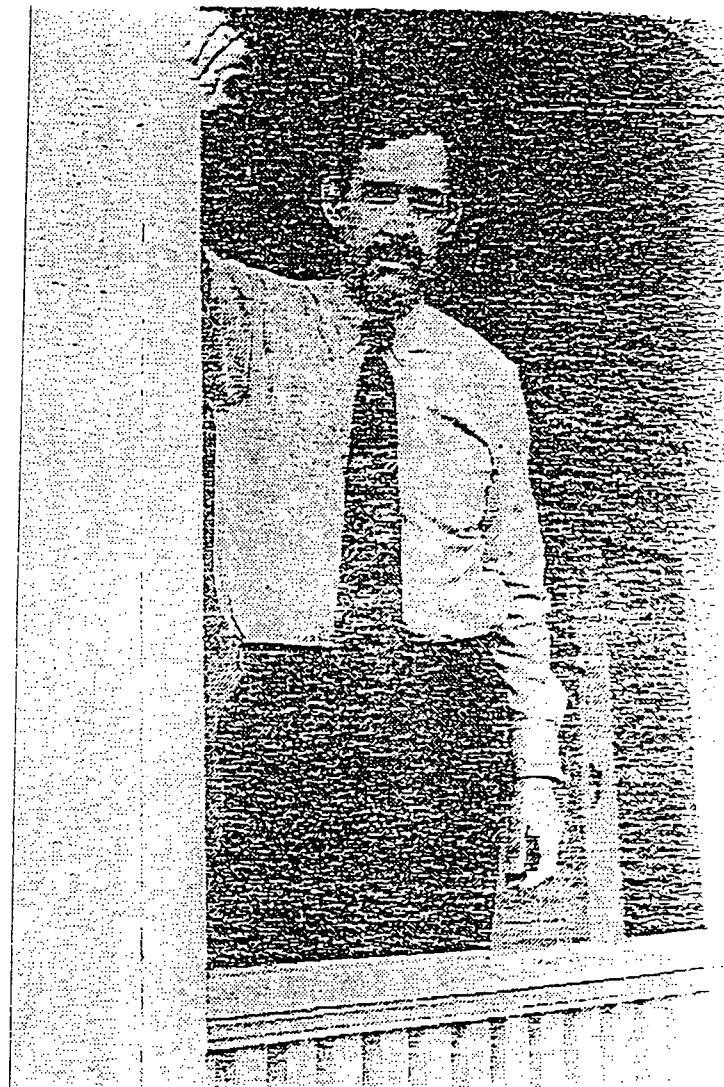
"I can't say enough about Dr. Litow," said the mother, who asked for anonymity to protect her son's confidentiality.

"My son's problems stemmed from a lack of self-esteem due to an undiscovered learning disability. Mike was instrumental in pointing that out, and following up very closely with the counselors at school."

Litow goes even further. He reaches out to businesses in the area for donations so that parents who can't afford the fees won't be turned away. He also uses his business contacts to find mentors and jobs for the young people he counsels.

"I try to establish a relationship and trust," Litow said. "The kids trust me and we talk about everything that is going on in their lives. Adults will lecture, preach and sermonize. I listen."

"Our main thrust is to help kids stay away from gangs, drugs and from dropping out of school. We feel very strongly that if you can



RICH HEINZ/STL

"Too many people... spend more time in line to buy Beanie Babies than they will spend helping their kid with homework," says Mike L.

give the kid the skills and self-confidence, that is a lot more effective than paying \$30,000 a year to lock them up."

He is absolutely right about that.

Parents seeking help, or those who want to help, can contact the

Education Center of Developmental Resources at (630) 420-7500.

Mary A. Mitchell is a member of the Sun-Times editorial staff and writes a column in Sun-Times. E-mail: marym@times.com

5-7-98

# Turned on life after school helps turn teen around

By KARI ALLEN

Daily Herald Staff Writer

3-26-98

Jim Trader epitomizes the phrase "attitude adjustment."

He remembers being a freshman at Naperville North High School just four years ago, thinking he knew everything.

Adults, of course, knew nothing.

He was always in the dean's office, always the class clown. And he always talked about dropping out so he could work full time.

Those who knew him back then barely recognize him now.

He's energetic, respectful to adults and dead-set on graduating from high school, going to college and getting a good job.

To get there, he's giving up his own cubicle, computer and name plate at Spyglass Inc. in Naperville.

For the time being, at least.

Michael Litow, founder and director of the Education Center of Developmental Resources Inc. in Naperville and Oak Park, helped Trader turn his life around.

"He talked to me like a normal person," Trader said. "The first day I met him, he gave me a business card; I still have it in my wallet now."

"It had his home number on it, too. How many counselors give out their home number?"

Trader doesn't think of Litow as a counselor any longer, but as his best friend.

A best friend who set up an interview for Trader with Douglas Colbeth, president and CEO of Spyglass, a company that provides Internet expertise, software and services to various companies.

Colbeth met with Trader and offered him a job as a clerk. Trader accepted and has been shipping, filing and faxing at Spyglass for about a year.

He's not alone. Litow meets with many troubled teens and tries to help them.

These teens often are termed "trouble-makers," "slackers" or potential "gang-bangers." Many do poorly in school.

They frequently are viewed by society as having little value or potential. Litow, however, sees something in these teens many others ignore: their strengths.

He discovers their interests, whether it be business, journalism or art, and finds mentors in these fields. These leaders talk to or even interview and hire teens referred to the Education Center.

## TEEN: Center helps him get back on track

Continued from Page 1

do," Litow said. "We try to develop their strengths, to get them excited about life, about themselves."

The workplace often does just that, Litow said. When young people think they can't achieve anything, he said, they tend to not care about school, themselves or life. Until, that is, they find they can be successful.

Now, Trader jokes with Colbeth that he'll be back, after college, to take the CEO position. "I'd like to take Doug's chair," Trader said. "He's keeping it warm for me."

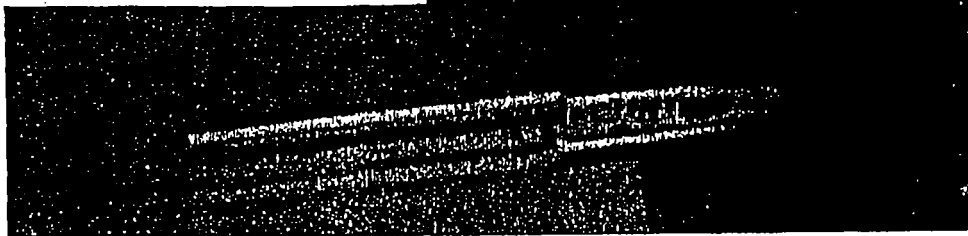
That wasn't how he felt when he first walked through the doors of Spyglass. He thought his co-workers would view him as an inexperienced kid who didn't know what he was doing. "The first couple days, I was scared ... But everyone has gone above and beyond to be nice to me," Trader said.

In return, Trader has simply blossomed, Colbeth said. "He's a wonderful kid and has so much positive energy," he said.

"Jim's one of the most favorite employees in the company."

And Trader doesn't want to stop at just doing his job well. He wants to give back, both to Litow and Colbeth.

He'd like to be on the volunteer board of the Education Center. He wants to come back and talk to teenagers who are struggling, letting them know they can change.



Above, Jim Trader, a senior at Naperville North High School, and Douglas Colbeth, CEO of Spyglass Inc., an Internet specialty company. At left, Michael Litow, 18-year-old Trader, who is one of the company's most productive employees, according to Litow and CEO Douglas Colbeth.

# The Education Center of Developmental Resources Inc.

113 E. Van Buren • Naperville, Illinois 60540 • (630) 420-7807

1100 W. Lake Street • Suite 250 • Oak Park, Illinois 60301 • (630) 420-7807



## HISTORY AND PURPOSE

Many community services are aimed at alleviating the problems of underachieving youth, including vocational schools, drug treatment centers and juvenile correctional facilities. The Education Center offers a unique alternative that offers young people the chance to visualize and attain goals that will help ensure their success in life.

In 1979, The Education Center was founded as a not for profit Illinois agency with the mission of providing counseling services for young people in need, that could not afford standard fees for help. The staff has worked tirelessly with thousands of children, youth and families around issues that deal with learning disabilities, physical and sexual abuse, drug and gang affiliation, unemployment and lack of employment skills, truancy and running away, homelessness and suicide.

The at-risk students that enter the doors of both the Chicago and suburban centers are offered a second change for success in school and in life. The Education Center, and its Executive Director have been honored nationally for the work of changing the lives of many of our communities "lost" children. We are asking for your help to join us in our effort to help inner city and suburban young people gain skills that may save their lives.

## PROGRAMS

1. One on One Counseling Program.  
( no individual or family turned away)
2. Motivational group counseling program for students and family members to provide comprehensive help.
3. Structured time of homework tutoring.
4. Mentor ship Program: connects student with community leader who serves as a role model and inspirational mentor.
5. Employment Training, Interviewing and Placement Program.
6. Social Activities Program offering communities activities.
7. Follow up and evaluation.

# Images

NEIGHBORS, FAMILY HEALTH

AND BETTER LIVING

25

Pioneer Press  
OAK LEAVES  
Jan. 20, 1998

## Education

Continued from page 25

about yourself, you will get better results. Our job is to enable people."

But reassuring pep talks alone may not turnaround a failing student, so Litow evaluates why a youth is not performing well in school, in family life and in the community. Forming a fuller picture, he meets with parents and teachers, then sets about aiding the child with skills required to function better in school and at home.

## Results

Normally, after eight weeks of sessions, Litow knows if he can help a person. He sees about 20 kids a week by school and family referrals and through probation programs. He charges on a sliding scale based on a family's income.

"I've helped many, but I can't help and do it all for everyone. I do think they've all benefited somehow by coming here," says Litow, 52.

"The important thing here is people helping people do well in school, get along with their families, get off drugs, stay out of gangs, whatever. You can reach these goals by developing organizational skills and self-confidence."

In recruiting high-profile adults to inspire struggling teens, he recalls the late George Halas, owner of the Chicago Bears, writing a letter to a Melrose Park teen-ager in 1982. The teen, says Litow, had no interest in education, just football.

"Ability is not the only requisite in this life for any profession," wrote Halas.

"During all my years in professional football, and they now add up to 62, I have insisted that anyone interested in football must have a career. Football is just an interim in one's life."

At Litow's urging, Sam Skinner, who was chief of staff for President George Bush, found a job for one of his teens in a law firm. She later became a lawyer.

Other people who have helped Litow's students with letters and visits have been former Illinois Sen. Paul Simon, newspaper columnist Irv Kupcinet, Judge Eugene Pincham and sportscaster Tim Weigel.

Sherlynn Reid, director of Oak Park Community Relations, said she refers three to five teen-agers a year to the Education Center.

"Michael's main premise is that everyone can learn. He believes in children and that they can achieve. I've been sending parents and their kids to him for 20 years," Reid says.

# A different kind of education

By TODD SHIELDS  
STAFF WRITER

The Rev. Jesse Jackson and retired U.S. Army Gen. Colin Powell, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, are advocates of motivating young people by pairing them with accomplished adults.

But Michael Litow, an Oak Park educator recognized in Illinois and Chicago for his youth counseling programs, says he was promoting teen-adult mentoring more than 20 years ago, long before those two notables.

That's an assertive statement from a former West Chicago kid who flunked fourth grade, who teachers considered incorrigible, who was a street tough and who was learning disabled.

"I utilize resources in the community. Business people, athletes, politicians and anyone taking the time to talk to them. They tell troubled kids, 'This is how I got to where I'm at.'"

On a gloomy Monday morning in downtown Oak Park, Litow could be home enjoying the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, but he is eager to talk about his talent — helping troubled children and teen-agers.

"Many, many professionals I have met over the years overcame great adversity to arrive at success. These people don't lecture these kids, but show by example."

## A choice

The mentors, especially those in business who hire teens, receive something solid in return, explains Litow.

"Business people see what they

are getting for their money; they can put a pulse on their efforts. Would you rather help kids become productive, tax-paying citizens or pay \$33,000 a year to keep one in jail?"

In 1978, Litow founded and remains executive director of the Education Center, a non-profit, referral agency that offers counseling to young people ages 4 to 20 years old with problems with family or in school.

## Extra help

Special attention is given to underachieving students who may have emotional problems or special education needs. Failing grades, lack of classroom organization and poor peer relations also are symptoms that Litow handles.

Litow's offices are in Oak Park and Naperville, and he has two youth counselors on staff. The Education Center also provides diagnostic testing, preventative drug and alcohol abuse counseling, academic tutoring and group sessions for youths and their families.

Litow, who has a doctorate's degree in educational psychology and a master's in special education, says establishing trust with at-risk teens is his main strategy.

"The Education Center's uniqueness comes in building trust and respect with kids. Yet, once they get here, they must try things they may not normally try, like doing homework and jobs. A lot of these young people are not risk takers," he says.

"We get them to feel self-confident in school and in holding down jobs. If you're feeling good about yourself, you will get better

(Continued on page 26)



Michael Litow counsels troubled teen-agers from his Education Center offices in Oak Park.

Would you rather help kids become productive, tax-paying citizens or pay \$33,000 a year to keep one in jail?

## Letter to thank Morris for mentoring at-risk children

GLE DUDA  
Herald Correspondent

no flashing news that young-  
kholize athletic stars. But when  
if those stars slips down from  
heavens and becomes a real per-  
son, a real friend to a youngster,  
something to grab your atten-

tioner Chicago Bears football  
and retired WBBM-TV sports  
host Johnny Morris will be hon-  
ored Friday for his work with trou-

bled Chicago-area youngsters.

The Education Center of  
Developmental  
Resources Inc., a  
Naperville-based,  
not-for-profit  
provider of coun-  
seling services for  
at-risk children  
and their families,  
is hosting the  
musical recogni-  
tion banquet at 6  
p.m. at the Hyatt



Johnny  
Morris

Regency Hotel, Chicago. Tickets to  
"Jazz Extraordinaire" are available  
by calling (708) 420-7807.

Proceeds from the event will go to  
a scholarship fund, one of several  
programs the education center has  
designed to give children the help  
they need to stay in school. In addi-  
tion to scholarships, the center  
offers counseling, junior high and  
high school employment programs  
and mentoring.

It is for his participation in the  
Youth Mentoring Program that Mor-

ris is being honored Friday.

"Johnny has always been there  
when I needed him," said education  
center's founder and director  
Michael Litow. "No matter how busy  
he is, he finds time to talk with our  
kids."

Litow recalled one time when  
Morris took a failing student to visit  
the Bears in Lake Forest for a dose  
of reality.

The student, who was about to  
flunk out of school, dreamed of being  
a football star. But when he heard

from the horses' mouths at training  
camp that the average football  
career spans just five years and that  
an education is needed to make it in  
this world, the student put on his  
thinking helmet, went back to school  
and eventually graduated from col-  
lege.

"I've been doing this for a long  
time," Litow said. "It makes more  
sense to give kids the skills they  
need to make it in life than to lock  
them up and pay \$30,000 a year for  
their maintenance. Some people

would sooner build more and more  
prisons than help these kids make a  
go of it."

The agency, founded in 1979, also  
has offices in Chicago and Oak Park.  
But Litow said the problems such as  
drug abuse, gangs and dropping out  
of school, once associated with in-  
ner-city children, now plague subur-  
ban middle class youngsters too.

Anyone interested in volunteering  
or donating to the education cen-  
ter, can call (708) 420-7807.

Friday, July 26, 1996 Chicago Sun-Times



## KUP'S COLUMN

By Irv Kupcinet

Johnny Morris, the former Bear  
and Channel 2 star, will be hon-  
ored tonight by the Education  
Center, headed by Michael Li-  
tow, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.  
Morris is being recognized for his  
assistance to inner-city youths.

## Educator instills mental toughness in 'problem' kids

"Why would a kid listen to me if I say the same thing as Mom and Dad? They want to know why I think I understand them."

*Michael Litow  
founder/director of The  
Education Center of  
Developmental Resources*

By Lisa Leland

**M**ichael Litow actually had a parent call him for an appointment and say, "I'll drop my kid off so you can fix him."

He quickly responded, "I'm not a mechanic, you know."

Another thing he is not is a disciplinarian.

"I tell parents that I don't lecture, I don't preach, I don't sermonize — but I do listen," he said. "One thing Michael Litow will do for a kid is listen to him."

As founder and director of The Education Center of Developmental Resources Inc. in Naperville and a nationally acclaimed educator and counselor, Litow has been listening for 25 years to kids, ages 4 to 20, who suffer from learning disabilities, including physical and emotional problems, social maladjustment, hyperactivity, drug or alcohol dependence, failing grades, lack of motivation and poor peer relationships.

What he hears these children conveying to him in different ways is an inherent need for better communication with their parents.

"You can describe some of these kids I see as spoiled and over-indulged, but the truth is there is not a lot of meaningful dialogue and interaction with their family members," said Litow, 48, a Naperville parent of two.

"In our world today, there's really no time for people to sit down at a supper table and ask, 'How was your day?' or 'How was school?' A lot of parents are so involved with their careers, there's a lack of closeness with their kids. That creates a sense of loneliness and feeling of not being supported."

Through its unique mentoring program, Litow's non-profit agency, also with an office in Forest Park, has helped hundreds of inner-city and suburban kids find the incentive and tools to make it through school and to make it in life. He regularly sees clients from all three of Naperville's high schools.

Last Thursday, Litow was honored by dozens of former clients — now successful adults — along with their grateful parents, at a benefit auction



(Photo by James C. Sverha)

Longtime educator and counselor Michael Litow (right) with sons Vinnie, 17, and David, 11, encourages communication and self-esteem.

for the Education Center on its 15th anniversary.

"There's nothing greater than the satisfaction of a parent, or especially a kid, saying, 'You know you've really helped me and I really appreciate it,'" said Litow. "When I hear that, it's like I'm walking on air. To help a kid, to me that's the greatest thing in the world. I can't express what it does for me."

With his part-motivational, part "street-tough" style, Litow wins kids and helps them to win by establishing rapport.

He knows their language, he knows their sensitivities, he knows their pressures. Most of all, he knows through personal experience their learning struggles.

"I don't sit across from them and do the old clinical thing where I say, 'What's your problem, kid?'"

explained Litow. "It doesn't work and why would a kid listen to me if I say the same thing as Mom and Dad? They want to know why I think I understand them."

Born in Chicago's Logan Square neighborhood, Litow was considered a "problem" child, also classified by teachers as "uncoachable" and "learning disabled." He flunked the fourth grade.

In high school, he went through a "Foster" stage, when he wore a leather jacket, preened his hair back and didn't study.

But he did graduate from Mathur High School and then went to University of Miami to study marketing. Absolutely flunking past the

"I tell parents that I don't lecture, I don't preach, I don't sermonize — but I do listen."

*Michael Litow*

teachers who gave him little hope.

It was in college that Litow began working with troubled youths and found he had a knack for helping them. He studied to become a qualified psychologist in emotional disorders.

Upon graduation in 1968, Litow got a teaching job at Melody Elementary School on Chicago's West Side.

From there, he went to another West Side elementary school, but couldn't adjust to the public school system's bureaucracy.

And the school system didn't easily adjust to his unorthodox teaching methods, including his incredibly successful idea of offering students "pay" credit points for excelling that could be later redeemed for toys and electronic items at an auction he set up.

Litow was an assistant principal at a Chicago elementary school in the late '70s and studying for his doctorate degree when he decided to start his own educational clinic.

His center, first opened in Oak Park, made headlines soon after it opened when Litow began calling on local celebrities in sports, politics,

business and entertainment to help motivate his young clients to succeed at home and school.

One example is when he commissioned a stern letter sent from the late Chicago Bears' owner George Halas and a phone call from former Bears player Johnny Morris, both delivered to one suburban teenaged client aspiring to play professional football but failing in school.

"You do what you need to do to help a youngster," said Litow, repeating one of his favorite mottoes. "I tell kids, 'You've got to work with what you have and make it work for you.' It's a question of getting them to hang in and develop a mental toughness. I try to get them to deal with reality the way it is and not the way they want it to be. My philosophy is, 'Before you get a kid to try to learn, you've got to get a kid to learn to try.'"

As for kids' parents, Litow said it is crucial for them to take an active role in their child's day-to-day progression.

"Parents need to really listen and spend time with their kids all the time and not just when things don't go right and everybody tends to go ballistic," said Litow. "Also, you've got to love your kid for who he or she is and not for the number of trophies and plaques on the mantle or As on the report card. Too many times kids are thinking, 'Well, geez, I'm letting my parents down. I just can't measure up.'"

For more information on The Education Center of Developmental Resources and to schedule a free consultation with Michael Litow, call (708) 421-5821.

### WHAT IS THE EDUCATION CENTER?

Operating since, 1979, *THE EDUCATION CENTER* is a counseling and referral center open to all young people ages four through twenty with problems, both family and school related, with particular emphasis on the student who underachieves, has emotional problems or has special education needs.

### WHAT MAKES THE EDUCATION CENTER UNIQUE?

Dr. Michael Litow, Director, not only relies on his own creative skills to motivate young people to succeed at home and school but calls upon resources in sports, politics, business and entertainment to work with these young people. By talking with professionals in these areas, young people can learn what skills they will need to develop to attain their goals in life.

### WHO CAN THE EDUCATION CENTER HELP?

Young people who have one or more of the following problems:

- Failing grades
- Lack of organization
- Inability to complete assignments
- Lack of motivation
- Poor peer relationships

### WHO IS THE EDUCATION CENTER?

Dr. Michael Litow, Director of *THE EDUCATION CENTER* is a nationally recognized and acclaimed educator and counselor who helps troubled adolescents. He is a 24 year teaching veteran, a former assistant principal and currently an education specialist with the Chicago Public School System. His unique, part motivational, part "street-tough" style with youth has won him awards from the Chicago Field Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa as the "Educator of the Year, 1986", the Illinois Office of Education, the Illinois House of Representatives, the Chicago Jaycees, the Chicago Area Law Enforcement Agencies, the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs. Dr. Litow is also available for radio and television appearances and presentations before groups. Dr. Litow hosts a cable television show entitled, "TEEN CONCERNS". Several special education teachers also work with *THE EDUCATION CENTER*.

Curt Johnson, M.A., has specialized in working with problem students for the past nine years of his private practice. He has cultivated hundreds of thinking and learning exercises, drawing from his many hobbies such as juggling, magic, cartooning, science fiction writing, woodworking, and computer programming. Employing the whole brain in learning is the key to Mr. Johnson's success in teaching children not only to master their subjects but to enjoy the process. Mr. Johnson is a certified practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming and author of the book, "Turning On to Learning."

Shirley Johnson, M.S., has specialized in working with teenage girls for the past eight years of private practice. Mrs. Johnson has developed an effective program for training students to overcome test anxiety and school phobia and to develop confidence and self-esteem.



### WHAT SERVICES DOES THE EDUCATION CENTER OFFER?

- Diagnostic testing and referrals to determine specific learning problems
- Preventative alcohol and drug abuse counseling
- Academic tutoring
- Teaching auditory and comprehensive skills
- Individual and group counseling for youths and their families

### HOW DO YOU REFER SOMEONE?

Call 420-7807, 24 hours a day to set up an appointment.

A good way to learn more about the approaches taken in developing students at *THE EDUCATION CENTER* is to order a copy of the book, "Turning On to Learning". This book is packed with hundreds of ideas parents can use in working with their children. Just contact us for more information. Appointments are made for evenings and Saturdays.

Fees are determined by the nature and duration of the assistance.

## THE EDUCATION CENTER

### A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS WHO ENCOUNTER THOSE WHO ARE LIKELY TO BE MEMBERS OF A DELINQUENT GANG

#### PARENTS

1. Don't Panic..
2. Establish whether activity is normal adolescent parental conflict or part of serious criminal drug or sexual abuse.
3. Get to know your children's friends.
4. Get to know the parents of your children's friends.
5. Let kids be kids. Don't share parental concerns about finance or spouse.
6. Get to know your child and share a little about yourself, include the bad parts and the difficult times.
7. Despite the size or economic level of your family make sure each child gets time with both parents and is both told and shown he is loved frequently.
8. Work with child to plan his free time with community, church or constructive activities. A hobby or musical instrument will help.
9. Assume control of your family. Don't defer any parental responsibilities. If you lose control, seek help from a minister, community agency or psychologist.

#### TEACHERS

1. Create an identity and respect for authority. Call the students by name and maintain control of the class.
2. Be flexible, learn the child's learning style. Many children are diagnosed as learning disabled because they don't have the conventional learning patterns.
3. Have the family meet with the school counselor and if there is no response, urge the family to seek therapy with a minister, community organization or psychologist.
4. Create a sense of optimism and hope for both parent and child. This can be done by helping both establish meaningful recognizable goals that can begin with school, providing opportunities for success.
5. Draw your limits. Don't take on the responsibilities of the family. If you care too much or try too hard, you limit the child's opportunity for growth.
6. Try not to internalize the child or family's failures as your own. Do your best, but allow the child and his family to succeed or fail.
7. Maintain the posture, "I care" and "I'm available as a resource," but "you, (the child and family) are ultimately responsible for your lives."

Remember. The most effective gang deterrent is the individual child's belief in himself and his future. If the child feels he can get the skills he needs to compete in life, at home or school, he will provide his own positive solutions to any gang recruitment and peer pressure.

Among adolescents, delinquent behavior is directly related to positive adult input. The more positive the input the less the likelihood for disaster. And vice versa.

## City suburbs

# A street-wise educator wins the kids' respect

By George Papajohn

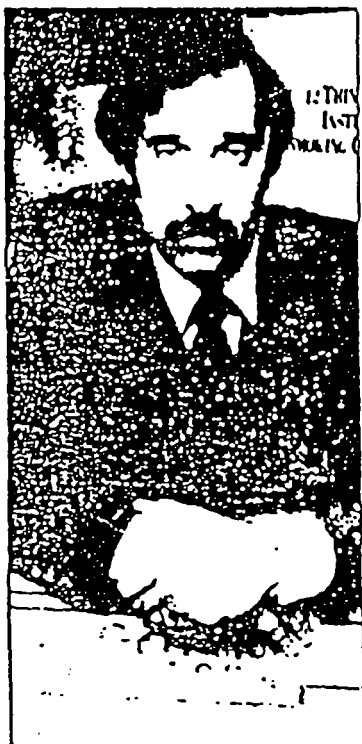


Photo by Chris Remer

Michael Litow in his Oak Park office. A kid should feel good about what he can do, not anxious about what he can't do.

TO PARENTS at Westcott Elementary School on Chicago's South Side, the names of the neighborhood streets—Harvard, Yale, Princeton—are rarely associated with their children's future.

More real are the gang symbols on the school, faded from scrubbing but still permanent reminders of the forces that can influence their children.

But thanks to Michael Litow, Westcott's assistant principal, they worry a little less about gangs these days. According to parents at the school, because they know Litow is always willing to sit and listen, they feel a little better about their children's futures.

"I've come in to his office feeling low as a roach and come out feeling like a queen," said one Westcott mother who is raising three children alone. Her 4th grade son, after counseling from Litow, is fighting less and improving his grades.

In the office of Litow's Education Center in Oak Park, an hour's drive

from his day job at Westcott, the youngster waiting for help in the evening is just as likely to be from the North Shore as the South Side.

IN WHAT IS often seen as the comfortable setting of suburbia, the problems seem as likely to come from too much luxury as too much hardship.

"There are some vast differences, but there are some similarities—they don't get enough attention, they don't get enough love," said the 36-year-old Litow, comparing his two jobs.

Litow opened the clinic in 1979 to moonlight with his own brand of counseling, a style that he says is part motivational and part street tough. The clinic helps youngsters from 4 to 20 with learning, family and other problems.

Litow refers youngsters to specialists for such problems as a reading disability or drug or alcohol abuse. But, in essence, the clinic is a one-man operation, and it is Litow's creativity and drive that account for its success.

A stern letter from the late Chicago Bears owner George Halas and a phone call from former Bear Johnny Morris—both arranged by Litow—convinced one suburban teenager struggling in school to worry about more than football.

"YOU DO WHAT you need to do" to help a youngster, says Litow, who has a law degree and a master's in special education.

"The thing is, a kid should feel good about what he can do, not anxious about what he can't do. . . I tell a kid, 'Don't even concentrate on grades. Approach school like you approach life—put your best foot forward.'"

The center always has a waiting list, with Litow limiting his personal counseling to 20 youngsters at a time.

When one teenager, a troublemaker at home and in school but timid in front of other adults, went looking for a part-time job, Litow drove him to interviews and encouraged him.

"His companions weren't always the best," the teen's mother said. Litow, never one to fall back on educational jargon, described the teen's problems as "smokin' and ditchin'."

SINCE SHE brought her son to Litow, though, the mother has witnessed a minor miracle, she said. She reports that her son is attending classes and will graduate if he can pass English.

Says Litow, "I'll go to the wall for a kid."

"He knows their language. He knows the street lingo. He's a peer as opposed to a teacher," said Willean Lashie, a county corrections official who works with juveniles, who refers some parolees to the Education Center. Often, she said, Litow "is our last hope."

At Westcott, 409 W. 80th St., teachers as well as parents rely on Litow, and students know there is someone they can talk to who cares.

As Litow patrols the playground during the lunch hour, little girls hang on his arm and vie to carry his umbrella. Tissues in his coat pocket are available for any child with a runny nose or teary eyes.

He ignores the students wrestling playfully on mats beneath vandalized swing sets.

"There are gang members in this neighborhood, but they know not to come around," Litow says.

The school is Litow's turf. He is not afraid to confront trespassers or to call local police. In addition, as Litow's reputation in the neighborhood has spread, a grudging respect has developed.

THAT WASN'T always the case. Bob Martin, Westcott's security guard, remembers when he and Litow broke up a fight on the hardtop after school, only to find 40 gang members running toward them.

Martin and Litow found safety in the school and called police, who scared off some of the gang members and made a couple of arrests.

"If he left," Martin says, "I think I'd put in for a transfer, too."

Litow, a 15 year veteran of the Chicago school system on the West and South Sides, has no such intentions.

LITOW'S WORK with troubled youth has earned him recognition from the Illinois Board of Education and praise from U.S. District Judge Abraham Marovitz.

Lawrence Tero, who found fame as Mr. T, also is among Litow's friends, having worked with him in the early 1970s in Operation Impact, a Chicago Board of Education program for dropouts on the South Side.

The Education Center, in a way, is an expanded version of Operation Impact. Only Litow does not have to worry about the loss of funding that doomed that project or about the red tape of the educational bureaucracy. He says clients pay what they can afford for his services.

"It's a way to do my thing without being restricted," Litow says. "I'm accountable to myself."

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|

|              |                                              |            |      |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|------|
| 001a. letter | Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page) | 06/16/1996 | b(6) |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|------|

### COLLECTION:

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

### FOLDER TITLE:

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### 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]

June 16, 1996

Mr. Mike Litow  
The Education Center  
113 Van Buren Street  
Naperville, Illinois 60540

Dear Mike:

I am writing to thank you for helping my sons Brian and Sean through a very difficult time in their lives. The sessions they had with you at the Education Center had a great impact on their level of trust when their parents were going through a very difficult divorce and I continue to see positive results from their counseling sessions with you. They both have a great amount of respect for you and learned a lot from you as well.

Thank you for all of the help you have given to my family. We will always be grateful.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

[001a]

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE                                | DATE       | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 001b. letter             | Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page) | 07/14/1996 | b(6)        |

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1256

### **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]
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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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July 14, 1996

Michael Litow  
The Education Center of Development Resources, Inc.  
113 E. Van Buren  
Naperville, Illinois 60540

Dear Mike,

Please accept our thanks for your help with Ross. We have seen a significant improvement in two important areas. For the first time in several years Ross has expressed a desire to perform well at school. He now acknowledges his tendency to procrastinate and has asked for help. Second, Ross' attitude has improved significantly. He still has a problem with his temper, but he is more willing to discuss his response and more importantly, he is acknowledging that his actions will have natural consequences that he must deal with.

We attribute improvements in both areas to the time Ross spent with you. On several occasions Ross expressed (1) a belief that his parents were trying to do something to help him, (2) in his words "Mike is cool. He listens and doesn't tell me what to do", (3) it was nice to talk to someone who didn't have a vested interest in Ross' performance at school. Previously, he has expressed his belief that his teachers, counselors and parents were all simply "telling him what to do" because it was what we wanted.

Thank you again for your help. You have made a real difference in our family and we greatly appreciate it. If we were not moving we would definitely schedule Ross for additional time with you next year. Please feel free to use our story if it will help some other young people.

With highest regards,

(b)(6)

[0016]

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE                                | DATE       | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 001c. letter             | Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page) | 06/17/1996 | b(6)        |

**COLLECTION:**

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

**FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

**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]
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- 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]

The Education Center  
113 E. VanBuren  
Naperville, Il. 60540  
Dr. Mike Litow

Date: June 17, 1996

Dear Mike:

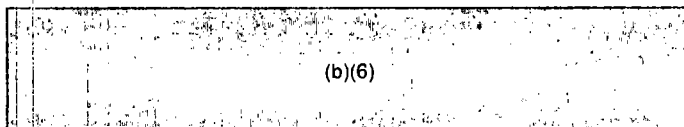
I appreciate the opportunity to express our thoughts regarding the benefits our child has received through The Education Center.

We have two (2) teenage sons in which we felt had greater potential than currently demonstrated. The one-to-one approach used by The Education Center was perceived by each teenager as sincere, genuine and personable.

We soon realized, that children will often listen to the advise from others rather than from their parents. Teenagers are very quick to detect when we adults are merely going thru the motions and when we actually believe in what is being said.

We felt the sessions offered by The Education Center were very beneficial for our oldest son as we noticed improvements in his personal outlook and attitude. So much so that we introduced our second son to the same program.

Once we recognized that change was necessary, we were not willing to take the risk of allowing nature to take its course. We feel we made the right decision toward helping our sons succeed through the utilization of The Education Center.



000103

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|
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|              |                                              |            |      |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|------|
| 001d. letter | Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page) | 03/24/1997 | b(6) |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|------|

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### **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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- 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(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]

March 24, 1997

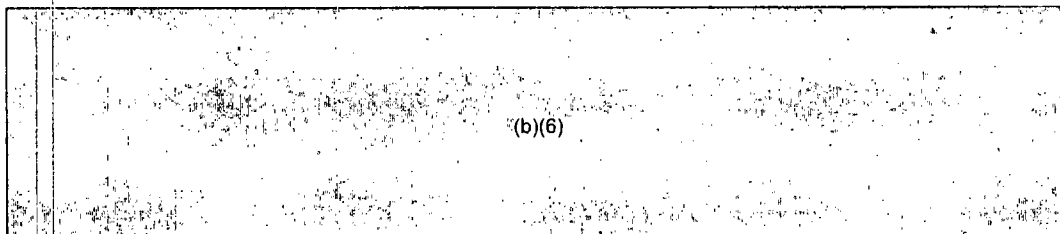
Dr. Michael Litow  
The Education Center  
113 E. Van Buren  
Naperville, IL 60540

Dear Dr. Litow:

We would like to extend to you our appreciation for the help that you have provided for our entire family. Due to our son's problems at school, our family environment was becoming one of constant mistrust and tension. Since the school's social worker recommended your counseling, we have seen major positive changes in our son and in the environment at home.

His schoolwork has improved, our trust factor in him has increased, and he handles daily responsibilities in a much more mature manner. From our discussions with our son and with you, it is very obvious that you have a special gift for communicating with young adults.

We would not hesitate to recommend your services to any young adult who may be struggling at school or at home.



000103

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|
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|              |                                             |            |      |
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| 001e. letter | Constituent to Dr. Titow [partial] (1 page) | 02/22/1997 | b(6) |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------|------------|------|

### COLLECTION:

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

### FOLDER TITLE:

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### RESTRICTION CODES

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

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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)]

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- 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]

February 22, 1997

The Education Center  
113 E. Van Buren  
Naperville, IL 60540

Dear Dr. Litow:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all the time and effort you have spent on behalf of my son Jim.

At a time when I had exhausted all resources known to both me and the school, I was fortunate enough to hear about The Education Center. As was usually the case, I had to force Jim to see you that first time, however, on the way home from that appointment he begrudgingly informed me that he would be coming to see you every Wednesday. I could hardly believe my ears and was afraid to get my hopes up that maybe I had finally found Jim the help he needed. Thankfully, within 4 to 5 weeks there was a noticeable difference in Jim's behavior—no more talk about quitting school, better grades, positive, instead of negative, calls from teachers and best of all, I was no longer getting my dreaded call from the dean each week.

Even though Jim was doing much better, he did have the unfortunate experience of attending an underage party and being arrested. Upon hearing this, you immediately made contact with the Naperville Police and his probation officer to insure Jim's best welfare was being considered. When Jim was ultimately placed on a 3 month "unofficial" probation and advised he could not get into any more trouble, you were instrumental in getting him his first job so that he would be able to occupy his time in a better manner.

It is now 3 years later and Jim will be 18 this summer. He has not been in any more trouble and I am now in the enviable position of discussing college with a son that I thought was surely destined to be a high school drop out. If it were not for your help and ongoing support of Jim and his efforts, I'm sure that life would have taken a downhill turn for Jim. I truly believe that at a time when Jim was at a crossroads in his life, you ultimately saved him from taking the wrong path. I want to thank you for all your time and effort on behalf of my son.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Cooley

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
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|--------------|----------------------------------------|------------|------|
| 001f. letter | Constituent to Mike [partial] (1 page) | 07/02/1996 | b(6) |
|--------------|----------------------------------------|------------|------|

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1256

### **RESTRICTION CODES**

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

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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

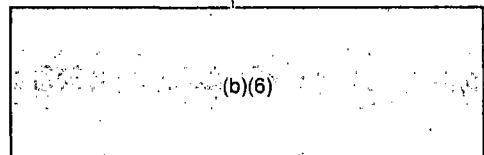
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Dear Mike,

Thanks for your help with Dan. He finished the school year in a very positive note. His summer has been busy - working as a counselor at Camp Scout Camp, planning and getting in shape for the back packing adventure in New Mexico and Jazzy Camp.

Thanks again. We'll keep in touch and talk to you again after the start of the new school year.

Sincerely



[601F]

7-2-96

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
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|--------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|------|
| 001g. letter | Constituent to Mike Litow [partial] (1 page) | 07/14/1996 | b(6) |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|------|

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1256

### **RESTRICTION CODES**

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

July 14, 1996

Michael Litow  
The Education Center of Development Resources, Inc.  
113 E. Van Buren  
Naperville, Illinois 60540

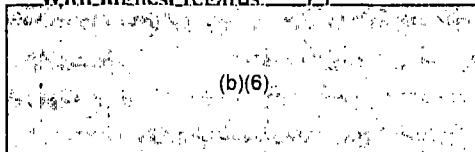
Dear Mike,

Please accept our thanks for your help with Ross. We have seen a significant improvement in two important areas. For the first time in several years Ross has expressed a desire to perform well at school. He now acknowledges his tendency to procrastinate and has asked for help. Second, Ross' attitude has improved significantly. He still has a problem with his temper, but he is more willing to discuss his response and more importantly, he is acknowledging that his actions will have natural consequences that he must deal with.

We attribute improvements in both areas to the time Ross spent with you. On several occasions Ross expressed (1) a belief that his parents were trying to do something to help him, (2) in his words "Mike is cool. He listens and doesn't tell me what to do", (3) it was nice to talk to someone who didn't have a vested interest in Ross' performance at school. Previously, he has expressed his belief that his teachers, counselors and parents were all simply "telling him what to do" because it was what we wanted.

Thank you again for your help. You have made a real difference in our family and we greatly appreciate it. If we were not moving we would definitely schedule Ross for additional time with you next year. Please feel free to use our story if it will help some other young people.

With highest regards,



[Coolg]

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE                                          | DATE       | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 001h. letter             | Constituent to The Education Center [partial] (1 page) | 06/18/1996 | b(6)        |

### COLLECTION:

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

### FOLDER TITLE:

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### 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]
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- 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]

June 18, 1996

(b)(6)

RE: The Education Center, Naperville, IL.

Dear Sirs,

School was always difficult for me. There were many issues distracting me from my full potential. From kindergarten on I had feelings of inadequacy, lacked self-confidence, and above all frustration. These feelings of inferiority in conjunction with family difficulties limited my progress in education.

My family relocated many times. I attended three high schools. It was not until my final year that I realized my hardest efforts were a C at best. It was devastating and I felt that I would never get accepted to college.

My parents suggested that I try some sort of tutoring. Tutoring alone was not enough. I needed more so I began sessions at The Education Center. I do admit I was reluctant at first. I thought that it would just be another adult lecturing me on how I need to be more attentive and dedicated to my studies. Thankfully, I was wrong.

Dr. Littow and The Education Center taught me that my troubles in school were not consequences of my study habits, rather my motivation superseded my focus. This of course, was accomplished over time and to my surprise, listening.

I was not lectured or looked down upon. I was listened to and decisions were made according to my individual needs. Listening was the key. Listening is the quality which stands out and was most beneficial to me.

I am thankful that I am now a college graduate entering a career with prospects of advancement and graduate education. I am thankful because they listened to me.

Sincerely,

[001h]

(b)(6)

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE                          | DATE     | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| 001i. letter             | Constituent to Mike [partial] (1 page) | ca. 1996 | b(6)        |

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### **RESTRICTION CODES**

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

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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)]**

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

DEAR MIKE,  
THIS LETTER IS LONG OVERDUE.  
I FINNALLY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY  
TO PUT DOWN MY FEELINGS ON  
PAPER. FIRST OF ALL I WANT TO  
THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR  
HELP, SUPPORT, AND LOVE. YOU  
HAVE HELPED ME QUITE A BIT  
OVER THE YEARS. I WAS HEADING  
DOWNWARD, AND YOU HELPED ME  
GET RID OF MOST OF MY RAGE.  
I FEEL THAT YOU HAD A BIG  
EFFECT IN MY LIFE. YOU ALWAYS  
SEEMED TO HAVE ALL OF THE ANSWER  
AND SOLUTIONS FOR MY PROBLEMS.  
I WENT TO OTHER COUNSELERS, BUT  
NEVER DID I GET THE SAME HELP.  
I THINK IT WOULD BE GREAT IF YOU  
COULD GET HELP FROM OUTSIDE  
SOURCES. I HOPE OTHER KIDS HAVE  
THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE YOU ALSO.  
I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH  
I APPRECIATE WHAT YOU'VE DONE FOR ME.  
I'VE LOOKED UP TO YOU AS A FATHER  
BECAUSE OF THE GUIDANCE, WISDOM, AND  
HELP YOU HAVE GIVEN MY FAMILY AND-  
I WISH YOU THE BEST!

YOUR FRIEND ALWAYS

7-7-96

[0011]

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|

|              |                                        |            |      |
|--------------|----------------------------------------|------------|------|
| 001j. letter | Constituent to Mike [partial] (1 page) | 06/17/1996 | b(6) |
|--------------|----------------------------------------|------------|------|

### COLLECTION:

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

### FOLDER TITLE:

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### RESTRICTION CODES

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

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

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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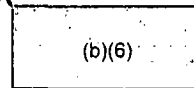
Peter Distel

Mike,

Thanks for everything  
you have done for me.

I hope we stay friends  
for life.

Love —



[001j]

6-17-96

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE                               | DATE       | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 001k. letter             | Constituent to Dr. Litow [partial] (1 page) | 02/22/1997 | b(6)        |

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### **RESTRICTION CODES**

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

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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

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February 22, 1997

The Education Center  
113 E. Van Buren  
Naperville, IL 60540

Dear Dr. Litow:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all the time and effort you have spent on behalf of my son Jim.

At a time when I had exhausted all resources known to both me and the school, I was fortunate enough to hear about The Education Center. As was usually the case, I had to force Jim to see you that first time, however, on the way home from that appointment he begrudgingly informed me that he would be coming to see you every Wednesday. I could hardly believe my ears and was afraid to get my hopes up that maybe I had finally found Jim the help he needed. Thankfully, within 4 to 5 weeks there was a noticeable difference in Jim's behavior—no more talk about quitting school, better grades, positive, instead of negative, calls from teachers and best of all, I was no longer getting my dreaded call from the dean each week.

Even though Jim was doing much better, he did have the unfortunate experience of attending an underage party and being arrested. Upon hearing this, you immediately made contact with the Naperville Police and his probation officer to insure Jim's best welfare was being considered. When Jim was ultimately placed on a 3 month "unofficial" probation and advised he could not get into any more trouble, you were instrumental in getting him his first job so that he would be able to occupy his time in a better manner.

It is now 3 years later and Jim will be 18 this summer. He has not been in any more trouble and I am now in the enviable position of discussing college with a son that I thought was surely destined to be a high school drop out. If it were not for your help and ongoing support of Jim and his efforts, I'm sure that life would have taken a downhill turn for Jim. I truly believe that at a time when Jim was at a crossroads in his life, you ultimately saved him from taking the wrong path. I want to thank you for all your time and effort on behalf of my son.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

[00115]

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|

|              |                                                 |            |      |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------|------|
| 0011. letter | Constituent to Michael Litow [partial] (1 page) | 03/24/1997 | b(6) |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------|------|

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### **RESTRICTION CODES**

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

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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

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March 24, 1997

Dr. Michael Litow  
The Education Center  
113 E. Van Buren  
Naperville, IL 60540

Dear Dr. Litow:

We would like to extend to you our appreciation for the help that you have provided for our entire family. Due to our son's problems at school, our family environment was becoming one of constant mistrust and tension. Since the school's social worker recommended your counseling, we have seen major positive changes in our son and in the environment at home.

His schoolwork has improved, our trust factor in him has increased, and he handles daily responsibilities in a much more mature manner. From our discussions with our son and with you, it is very obvious that you have a special gift for communicating with young adults.

We would not hesitate to recommend your services to any young adult who may be struggling at school or at home.

(b)(6)

[0011]

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|
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|           |                                          |      |      |
|-----------|------------------------------------------|------|------|
| 002a. bio | re: Dr. Michael Litow [partial] (1 page) | n.d. | b(6) |
|-----------|------------------------------------------|------|------|

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S

rc1256

### **RESTRICTION CODES**

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

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Make  
Changes

rough  
draft #1

## DR. MICHAEL LITOW

*Armed with street smarts and a Ph.D.*



Dr. Litow is a nationally recognized and nationally acclaimed educator and counselor. His unique teaching style, part motivational part "street tough" style, has earned him awards from the Chicago Jaycees, Chicago area law enforcement agencies, Illinois House of Representatives' Office of Education, Professional Women's Club and "Educator of the Year" from the Chicago Field Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa.

Since 1968, Dr. Litow has worked for the Chicago Board of Education as a teacher, coordinator and assistant principal. Early on in his 30-plus year career, he gravitated toward troubled children. He quickly gained a reputation as a rebel for employing whatever tactics necessary to hammer home the importance of education. In fact, he often found himself battling the Chicago public school system in the process.

Dr. Litow founded The Education Center in Oak Park in 1979 to provide counseling services for young people ages 4 to 20 who could not afford standard fees. A second Center was opened in Naperville in 1987. Over the years, he has worked with thousands of young people and families on issues such as learning disabilities, physical and sexual abuse, violence, drugs and gangs, unemployment, truancy and running away, homelessness and suicide.

What makes the Center so unique is that Dr. Litow not only relies on his own creative skills to motivate students, but he calls on an astounding variety of resources in the fields of sports, politics, business and entertainment. By talking with these

professionals, kids learn what it takes to attain their goals. For example, Dr. Litow recruited the late George Halas to write a letter to a young man from Melrose Park who was interested in football, but not his education. Halas wrote that he has always insisted that anyone interested in football must have a career and added that football is just an interim in one's life.

Dr. Litow also uses his business contacts to find mentorships and jobs for his teen clients, and he seeks donations for parents who can't afford counseling sessions.

Good communication and establishing trust are vital keys to Dr. Litow's success in reaching troubled kids. He knows their language, sensitivities and pressures. Most of all, he knows their learning struggles through personal experience.

A graduate of Mather High School in Chicago, Dr. Litow received a bachelor's degree in business from the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Fla. He earned a master's degree in special education from Chicago State University and a Ph.D. in educational psychology.

Dr. Litow and his wife, Marva, have two sons, ages 15 and 20. Marva, a former model, is a school bus driver with Naperville School District 203. She has worked with many young people on, particularly girls, on self-esteem issues.

###



CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Robert E. Esenberg  
Elementary School Principal

W. K. Sullivan Elementary School • 3255 South Houston Avenue • Chicago, Illinois 60617 • Telephone: 312-343-5343

Robert E. Esenberg  
Principal

Donald Butler  
Assistant Principal

April 1, 1996

Chicago State University  
College of Education  
Office of the Dean  
9501 South King Drive  
Chicago, IL 60628

THANKS TO DEAN BUTLER

Dear Dean:

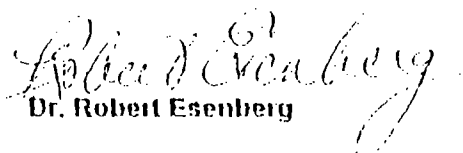
During the past six years, Sullivan Elementary School and Buckingham Special Education Center have cooperated in a unique program to include severely emotionally disturbed and/or behaviorally disordered students into a regular public school setting. Up to 16 of these tuition-eligible students are carefully screened, selected, and monitored and provided an opportunity duplicated nowhere else. They are completely included in Sullivan's regular program for the entire school day. Up to now, the program has been a resounding success.

Although some of the credit for the success must go to the principals of both schools, the cooperating teachers at Sullivan, the strict intake process, and the participating students themselves, the performance of the coordinating teacher is the key factor. Fortunately, the Sullivan-Buckingham Program has Dr. Michael Litow performing in this role. Without him, continuing success (only one student has been unsuccessful in six years) would be impossible.

Dr. Litow's role is very multifaceted. He administers the entire program, counsels and supports inclusion students and their parents, monitors student progress, instructs students with learning disabilities, and draws up and implements individual behavioral management plans. In addition, he counsels Sullivan students in need of his behavioral management expertise. An additional, but equally important, task that he has is to support and work with the teachers accepting exceptional students. His expertise in the latter has convinced previously skeptical regular education teachers that inclusion does work and is nothing to fear.

I truly feel that the program design is very strong. I also feel that the program would not be the resounding success that it is without the superior work of Dr. Litow. I am very proud to have him working at Sullivan.

Sincerely,

  
Dr. Robert Esenberg

Our Children . . . Our Future

# Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|
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|              |                                    |            |      |
|--------------|------------------------------------|------------|------|
| 002b. letter | Geo Halas to constituent (2 pages) | 10/05/1982 | b(6) |
|--------------|------------------------------------|------------|------|

### **COLLECTION:**

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

### **FOLDER TITLE:**

Youth Violence - Neera [Tanden] File [1]

2013-0436-S  
rc1256

### **RESTRICTION CODES**

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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

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# Why local teacher passed up a \$10,000-a-month job

By Chip Magnus

"Being my own man" is important to Mike Litow, so important that it cost him \$240,000 and a job with the Ford administration.

Litow recently turned down \$10,000 a month offered by a group of Saudi Arabian businessmen to teach their children for two years, as reported in Kup's column in Monday's Sun-Times. Litow said he preferred to earn his doctorate degree and establish a diagnostic clinic in Chicago to help emotionally disturbed and socially maladjusted children.

In 1975, he declined a Ford administration offer to become an educational consultant in favor of a position with Northeastern Illinois University's School for Boys.

**HE REGRETS** neither decision, nor does he regret others that would have led him from the path he has followed since his college years: Working with children who need help.

His methods have sometimes been unorthodox. While teaching a special education class in the Jefferson Elementary School, he encouraged his students by "paying" them, at



Sun-Times Photo

MIKE LITOW

*No regrets, says teacher*

least on paper. Periodically, he held auctions, and the children could "spend" their credits to attend sporting events or "save" them at 10-per cent interest toward buying a bicycle or some other cherished item.

Litow won recognition. The Illinois Office of Education problems. "I became so enthusiastic, it became my life."

**ONCE HE HAD** decided on his career, Litow earned a master's degree in special education, honored him, and Chicago

Schools Supt. Joseph P. Han-non incorporated some of his ideas into the Access to Excellence plan. He testified before Senate subcommittee hearings on juvenile delinquency and City Council hearings on violent television.

**HE ALSO** stepped on some toes.

"I've been in trouble for a long time," he laughed. "Many people think some of my ideas, such as the 'pay' plan at Jefferson, were too unusual. And I've always spoken my mind, won a lot of battles but usually lost the war."

Teaching as a career never occurred to the Chicago-born Litow when he attended Mather High School and the University of Miami (Fla.). His field was marketing and finance, and he picked up a law degree as well.

But while in college, he began working with schoolchildren who had learning difficulties, emotional problems, drinking problems and drug addiction and became a qualified psychologist in emotional disorders. He taught in Chicago at the Melody School, Jeffer-

son University boys' school and in 1972 served as director of Operation Impact, a program to cut the dropout rate.

Since September, the 32-year-old Litow has been assistant principal of Westcott School, at 8023 S. Normal. As with all his assignments, it's a long drive from his Oak Park home, his wife, Marva, and their 13-month-old son, Vincent.

His doctoral work involves research on different educational systems around the

world. When he sent a request to Saudi Arabia for information, including his own experience and credentials, the Saudi businessmen were impressed to the point of offering him the teaching job.

**"THE MONEY** would have come in handy," Litow said, "but it would have delayed my getting the doctorate and opening the educational clinic, and it would have disrupted my family."

The clinic, which he hopes to open in six months on the

West Side or in Oak Park, is something worth more than \$240,000 to Litow. It represents what he's been able to accomplish in helping children who need help.

"When people hear about the Saudis' offer," he said, "they ask me why I turned it down. I'd rather they ask 'Who are you that they would offer you \$10,000 a month?' It's sufficient reward that they thought enough of me as a teacher to offer me that much."

## References

Fred Hess

Alb. Patrick O'Connor

Tee Gallery

Michael Batalis

Joseph Kellman

Sid Part - Lysons Products

Tom O'Donnell - Mayor's office

Fred Le Bed - Cook County Bd - President's office

Mayor Richard Daley

Jesse White

Rg

Michael Madigan

Sen. Carl Masely Braun

Sen. Paul Simon

U.S. Judge Abraham L. Marovitz

Gov. Kucinski

Mr. Morris - attorney at law

Johnny Morris - ex Bear

Paul Hartigan

Maria Collins

Joseph P. Lomardi - U.S. Marshall's office

Judge Earl Stuykman

Judge Eugene Pirskahn

Manda Wells - Box 32 WFLD

Jan Esposto - WMAQ - NBC-TV

## THE EDUCATION CENTER HELPS KIDS BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES

*Getting kids to believe in themselves and helping them to achieve realistic goals is the philosophy behind The Education Center, according to its founder and director Dr. Michael Litow.*

Who Is The Education Center? Dr. Michael Litow is a nationally recognized and acclaimed educator and counselor who helps troubled adolescents. He is a 20-year teaching veteran, a former assistant principal and currently an education specialist with the Chicago Public School System. His unique, part motivational, part "street-tough" style with youth has won him numerous awards. Operating since 1979, The Education Center, with offices in Naperville and Oak Park, is a counseling and referral center open to all young people ages four through twenty with problems, both family and school related, with particular emphasis on the student who underachieves, has emotional problems or has special education needs.

What makes the center so unique is that Dr. Litow not only relies on his own creative skills to motivate young people to succeed at home and school but calls upon resources in sports, politics, business and entertainment to work with these young people. By talking with professionals in these areas, young people can learn what skills they will need to develop to attain their goals in life. His interaction

with the young people who come to the center stresses building on their strengths and interests and using as many community resources as possible. Litow arranged for one student who had an interest in the stock market to have lunch with the president of the Chicago Board of Trade and see it in action. Another student was interested in athletics and Litow had him meet with a professional athlete to learn the reality behind the lifestyle.

Litow looks at a total picture of the child, why he is not functioning well in school, family life, and in the community. He talks with parents and teachers as well. He then works in a supportive capacity to aid the child in developing skills needed to go back and function in school and in life.

The services at the center help the underachiever, the special education student, or the problem teenager, with individual and group counseling, diagnostic testing and referrals, and academic tutoring. For further information on services offered by Litow and his staff, call the center at 420-7807. Free Consultation Session.

spots, working through the Greater Kansas City Mental Health Foundation, ing the capacity for intimacy with women. seem to need to worship something."

# Clinic puts troubled youths on right track

By Curtis Austin

Fumbling in school and in life, the troubled teenager was sent to Michael Litow's clinic as a last resort. But the 13-year-old cared only about football. So Litow brought out the Chicago Bears.

"He wanted to be a football star but he didn't want to study," recalled Litow, director of the Education Center Inc. He got Bears' owner George Halas to write the youth and former player Johnny Morris to telephone him.

Halas and Morris told the youngster that success meant hard work. They told him he needed an education. And the youngster's grades perked up.

Litow has applied his offbeat tactics to help children with severe learning problems since the clinic, at 6525 W. North Ave., Oak Park, opened about four years ago.

"I work everybody," Litow said, recalling how he enlisted the aid of Halas and Morris to help the 13-year-old fan.

But Litow's efforts to touch hard-to-reach kids aren't limited to celebrities' letters and phone calls. Using what

he calls "reality therapy," he tries to build a support system for his clients.

"We want the students to be able to function in their own environment," said Litow, who has a doctorate in child psychology. "We try to develop self-confidence."

Litow, an assistant principal at Wescott Elementary Center on the South Side, puts in about 20 hours a week at the center after school.

He said he has practiced his reality therapy on about 300 youths, ages 4 to 20, with problems such as drug abuse and gang membership.

He said no client is turned away. "They pay what they're able to afford."

Harvette Grey, clinical psychologist and executive director of Chicago's STEP School, or School for the Treatment of Emotional Problems in Children, 6740 S. South Shore Dr., says Litow's unusual methods seem to be successful.

"We're both mavericks, because it works," Grey said. He said Litow's approach with the disinterested youth worked because it gave him "something to hold on to."

*Chicago Sun-Times*

10-26-83

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FILE NUMBER

October 22, 1988

Mr. Irving Harris  
120 S. LaSalle  
Suite 1330  
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Irving:

I have run across an individual who I think you should meet. Mike Litow is more than a teacher. He started the Education Center to address the problems of youth (ages 4 through 20) who are underachievers, or who have special emotional problems. His success rate is phenomenal.

I know that you have made great strides in the education of our youth, especially inner-city youngsters. I think it would be good for Mike to know about your efforts and for you to know about his. I took the liberty of giving your name and number to Mike knowing that you will be happy to meet him. He should be calling you.

Sincerely,

George Munoz

GM/mc

enclosures

bcc: Dr. Mike Litow

# One himself, teacher backs school rebels

By Cynthia Dagnal

Michael Litow, assistant principal of Westcott Elementary School, is accustomed to rebels in Chicago Public Schools. He has been one for 10 years.

"I don't want to leave the system. I just try to do it my way," he said. "Unfortunately, the system calls anything different, any alternative, an indictment of the system. You rock the boat, you hear about it. To err is human, to forgive is not school policy. But that's never bothered me."

Litow, 33, handles "disciplinary problems"—he grimaces at the words—at Westcott, 409 W. 80th St. His success with teaching and communicating with young people has earned him awards from the Illinois Office of Education, and requests for help from the City Council, the U.S. Senate, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the Chicago Police Department, the Juvenile Court of Cook County and the



MICHAEL LITOW

Cook County Sheriff's Department.

From 1972 to 1975 he ran a successful dropout prevention program—Operation Impact—on the South Side.

**HIS FAME SPREAD** so wide that a rich Arab industrialist offered him a \$10,000-a-week job to teach his children. Litow said. But he didn't want to leave his work in Chicago.

He is dedicated to the less fortunate students in the system. And his teaching style is radical. Operation Impact students address teachers by their first names. In some classes, students work for points with which they can "buy" tickets to school games or for desired items.

Litow tailors curriculum to fit the student. "Lessons should be individualized, so that students can work at their own rate," he insists.

But he discovered early in his career that in the Chicago schools, "you just cannot do it. The numbers are overwhelming." He was criticized by administrators and his peers, he says, because he often sided with students against the school.

"If I feel a kid is getting the short end of the stick, I speak my mind. I'll go to the wall with that kid. And they know that," he said.

**YET, HE DECIDED** to stay in the system. And

this week he opened an after-school "Education Center" for children and teachers with problems.

His center, at 6525 W. North Av., Oak Park (open from 4 to 9 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays) provides learning-improvement programs for students and job-stress counseling for teachers.

Young people aged 4 to 20 are tested and counseled for learning disabilities, social maladjustments, hyperactivity and physical disabilities, including autism, drug dependence, mental retardation and alcohol abuse. Gifted students also can find specialized programs. Young people who just want to talk are welcome, too. And parents must participate.

"I have always become totally involved—with the community, with parents," he said. "I get those parents involved. I call them, they call me. I make home visits. I go over to their house to eat."

He funded the center with money he raised himself, refusing help from the School Board. "The freedom that I have now is to be as flexible and creative as I want and to recruit exceptional people who really want to work at this center," he said.

But he hopes that in the future there will be greater co-operation from parents, teachers, students and others interested in education. Litow says: "We're all in this together. We all want to help our kids learn."

# Staying put is looking better to employees

Jane Gregory

Moving up often means moving on in the world of work. A record as a job hopper, once a serious liability for a man or woman of ambition and drive, has become not only acceptable but a valued credential. In many businesses, staying in the same job or in the same place is regarded as a severe handicap.

Today, according to the U.S. Census, about 50 per cent of the households moving across state lines pull up stakes because of job transfers and looking for employment.

There are, however, signs that mobility is losing some of its charm. The Wall Street Journal recently reported a poll revealing that 70 per cent of 641 companies questioned said they were experiencing resistance to transfers.

THE INCREASING number of working women is one important factor in reluctance to follow the hopscotch path to bigger and better job opportunities. Problems in buying another home and disparity in the cost of living in various parts of the nation also are cited as reasons for hanging in rather than moving on. Finally, more and more men and women appear to be putting more value on continuity and stability in their personal lives.

"I just won't leave Chicago," says one executive. "In my business, relocation is routine, but I love it here. I've passed up a couple of offers that would have meant more money. My feeling is that if you can't make it here you can't make it."

Money was simply not enough for Michael Litow, either. A doctor of educational psychology and a nationally recognized authority on helping children with problems in school, Litow is an assistant principal of a Chicago public grammar school. Last year a



MICHAEL LITOW

wealthy Arabian industrialist heard of his reputation and offered him \$10,000 a month to teach children of various Arabian businessmen.

"I was tempted," Litow admits. "I declined the offer for the same reasons I've turned down other job offers I have had from private industry and on the federal level in government. Opening a clinic with counseling and therapy for children with severe problems of learning and social adjustment has always been my dream. If I had taken the job in Saudi Arabia it would have been two years out of my life. There are so many children in Chicago who need help."

ALTHOUGH \$240,000 for two years' work would have helped finance his dream project, he preferred to stay in Chicago. His dream is coming true this fall when he opens the Education Center, in Oak Park on Sept. 4. Litow will continue in his regular job and work at his clinic after regular school hours.

"Basically I'll be on a 12-to-16-hour-a-day schedule six days a week," he says cheerfully, "but I will be doing my own thing. I can work anywhere there are children but I have been working in Chicago for 10 years and I have learned the mechanics and the people here."

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## City suburbs

# A street-wise educator wins the kids' respect

By George Papajohn



Photo by Chuck Bertram.  
Michael Litow in his Oak Park office. "A kid should feel good about what he can do, not anxious about what he can't do."

TO PARENTS at Westcott Elementary School on Chicago's South Side, the names of the neighborhood streets—Harvard, Yale, Princeton—are rarely associated with their children's future.

More real are the gang symbols on the school, faded from scrubbing but still permanent reminders of the forces that can influence their children.

But thanks to Michael Litow, Westcott's assistant principal, they worry a little less about gangs these days. According to parents at the school, because they know Litow is always willing to sit and listen, they feel a little better about their children's futures.

"I've come in to his office feeling low as a roach and come out feeling like a queen," said one Westcott mother who is raising three children alone. Her 4th grade son, after counseling from Litow, is fighting less and improving his grades.

In the office of Litow's Education Center in Oak Park, an hour's drive

from his day job at Westcott, the youngster waiting for help in the evening is just as likely to be from the North Shore as the South Side.

IN WHAT IS often seen as the comfortable setting of suburbia, the problems seem as likely to come from too much luxury as too much hardship.

"There are some vast differences, but there are some similarities—they don't get enough attention, they don't get enough love," said the 36-year-old Litow, comparing his two jobs.

Litow opened the clinic in 1979 to moonlight with his own brand of counseling, a style that he says is part motivational and part street tough. The clinic helps youngsters from 4 to 20 with learning, family and other problems.

Litow refers youngsters to specialists for such problems as a reading disability or drug or alcohol abuse. But, in essence, the clinic is a one man operation, and it is Litow's creativity and drive that account for its success.

A stern letter from the late Chicago Bears owner George Halas and a phone call from former Bear Johnny Morris—both arranged by Litow—convinced one suburban teenager struggling in school to worry about more than football.

"YOU DO WHAT you need to do" to help a youngster, says Litow, who has a law degree and a master's in special education.

"The thing is, a kid should feel good about what he can do, not anxious about what he can't do. . . . I tell a kid, 'Don't even concentrate on grades. Approach school like you approach life—put your best foot forward.'"

The center always has a waiting list, with Litow limiting his personal counseling to 20 youngsters at a time.

When one teenager, a troublemaker at home and in school but timid in front of other adults, went looking for a part-time job, Litow drove him to interviews and encouraged him.

"His companions weren't always the best," the teen's mother said. Litow, never one to fall back on educational jargon, described the teen's problems as "smokin' and ditchin'."

SINCE SHE brought her son to Litow, though, the mother has witnessed a minor miracle, she said. She reports that her son is attending classes and will graduate if he can pass English.

Says Litow, "I'll go to the wall for a kid."

He knows their language. He knows the street lingo. He's a peer as opposed to a teacher," said Wil Jean Leslie, a county corrections official who works with juveniles, who refers some parolees to the Education Center. Often, she said, Litow "is our last hope."

At Westcott, 409 W. 80th St., teachers as well as parents rely on Litow, and students know there is someone they can talk to who cares.

As Litow patrols the playground during the lunch hour, little girls hang on his arm and vie to carry his umbrella. Tissues in his coat pocket are available for any child with a runny nose or teary eyes.

He ignores the students wrestling playfully on mats beneath vandalized swing sets.

"There are gang members in this neighborhood, but they know not to come around," Litow says.

The school is Litow's turf. He is not afraid to confront trespassers, or to call local police. In addition, as Litow's reputation in the neighborhood has spread, a grudging respect has developed.

THAT WASN'T always the case. Bob Martin, Westcott's security guard, remembers when he and Litow broke up a fight on the hardtop after school, only to find 40 gang members running toward them.

Martin and Litow found safety in the school and called police, who scared off some of the gang members and made a couple of arrests.

"If he left," Martin says, "I think I'd put in for a transfer, too."

Litow, a 15-year veteran of the Chicago school system on the West and South Sides, has no such intentions.

LITOW'S WORK with troubled youth has earned him recognition from the Illinois Board of Education and praise from U.S. District Judge Abraham Marovitz.

Lawrence Tero, who found fame as Mr. T, also is among Litow's friends, having worked with him in the early 1970s in Operation Impact, a Chicago Board of Education program for dropouts on the South Side.

The Education Center, in a way, is an expanded version of Operation Impact, only Litow does not have to worry about the loss of funding that doomed that project or about the red tape of the educational bureaucracy. He says clients pay what they can afford for his services.

"It's a way to do my thing without being restricted," Litow says. "I'm accountable to myself."

## Oak Park teacher uses offbeat tactics on problem students

By Pan Demetrakakes

Michael Litow has been dealing with troubled children who did poorly in school all his life — going back to the days when he was a problem student.

In 1978, 26 years after flunking fourth grade, Litow turned down a \$10,000-a-month offer to teach in Saudi Arabia in favor of starting the Education Center, an Oak Park-based counseling service. Previous to that, he rejected an offer to be a consultant to the Ford administration.

Litow, who also is an assistant principal of an elementary school on Chicago's West Side, has been interviewed at least half-a-dozen times, appearing on A.M. Chicago, Noonbreak and several radio talk shows. A television network has expressed interest in doing a TV movie of his life, he said.

"I guess I'm the white Marva Collins," Litow said with a grin, referring to the celebrated Chicago teacher.

Similarities exist between Litow and Collins, a black woman who runs Westside Prep, a much-acclaimed private elementary school in Chicago — and whose life will soon be portrayed in a TV movie. Both specialize in getting results out of students who couldn't make it in the public-school system. Both break rules, and both are less than fond of some school-system administrators.

However, while Collins left the system in disgust, Litow chose to remain. Collins is a classroom teacher, while Litow does more one-on-one counseling. And while Collins works almost exclusively with inner-city black children, Litow sees children from all economic strata.

The Education Center recently celebrated its second anniversary. Litow sees about 20 children a week, and currently has a three-week waiting list. The Oak Park resident specializes in helping children who, for whatever reason, aren't doing as well as they should in school.

The parents of children Litow has helped sing his praises. "Personally, I think the guy's great," said Ron Damato of Melrose Park, whose son — Ron Jr., now 11 — saw Litow for 1½ years. "Professionally, I think he's one of the great untapped resources of the Chicago school system."

Ron Jr. was hyperactive. He couldn't concentrate in school and talked back to his parents. "You'd tell him to do something, and he'd give you 50 reasons why it couldn't be done," his father said.

Damato decided Litow might be the ticket after hearing him on a radio talk show. Litow, talking to the boy, determined that he was insecure, in part because he was better in the classroom than in sports.

He also had the parents visit the Oak Park center and got them to modify the way they treated their son. "Basically now, instead of being the tyrannical parent saying, 'You do this because I told you,' I don't let small things bother me," Damato said. "I see that it's his way of trying to tell me something (when he acts up)."

Litow insists that parents participate in therapy. "I've had people say to me, 'I'll drop my kid off so you can fix him,'" he said. "I tell them, 'What do you think I am, a mechanic?'"

He works longer hours than most mechanics do. The mother of a 13-year-old girl who was caught breaking into a neighbor's home, stealing two boxes of cake mix and some change, praised Litow for the extra time he put in with her daughter and son.

"He was very different from school counselors," said the mother, an Oak Park resident who asked to remain anonymous. "He'd take them out for a cup of hot chocolate and talk to them over the table. Once he took her horseback riding. He didn't just sit there and say, 'Why did you do this and why did you do that?'"

Students and parents praise Litow for his ability of making pupils see things his way. Ron DeAngelis Jr. of Melrose Park, who turned 17 earlier this month, was sent to Litow after missing most of one year of high school.

"I used to think of ways to make him look wrong, and he'd



Michael Litow says he turned down a \$120,000-a-year offer to teach in Saudi Arabia so he could counsel children in Oak Park. Litow has drawn praise from the parents of troubled children he has helped at the Education Center, now going on its third year.

Photography: Swinden

always come up being right," DeAngelis said. "He'd say, 'School is good for you,' and I'd say, 'Why? It's boring and I don't like the people there.' But he'd talk about responsibility. He'd stick it in my head and it started to make sense." DeAngelis now is making progress in PROVE, a school for behavior-disordered students in Northlake.

Litow remembers that he once was a "problem" child who found school boring. Born in Chicago's Logan Square neighborhood, he was classified incorrigible and learning-disabled. He flunked the fourth grade.

"I grew up between two groups," Litow said. "I went through that Fonzie stage, where I wore a leather jacket and had grease in my hair."

In the end, the influence of the other group, composed of more serious children, won out. After graduating from Mather High School, Litow studied marketing in Florida at the University of Miami. While in college, he began working with youth groups and found that he liked the experienced. When he graduated in 1968, he got a job at Melody Elementary School on the West Side.

During his four years at Melody, and subsequently at another West Side elementary school named Jefferson, Litow became disillusioned with the public-school system.

"You go in there with very altruistic ideas that you're going to save humanity, educate all the youngsters, and you have to deal with bureaucracy," he said. "You have to deal with teachers who are not there for the same reason you are."

Litow quickly got a reputation for being unorthodox. One of his methods was to "pay" his students with credits that could be redeemed for toys at an auction.

Early on, Litow gravitated toward troubled children. He served as academic director of Operation Impact, a counseling program to get dropouts back in school, from 1970 to 1974. The loss of funding for Impact still rankles him. He also worked for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, counseling children who had been made wards of the state.

A few years after Impact was shut down, Litow got two interesting job offers: one from the Ford administration, as a consultant to the Department of Education, and another from Northeastern Illinois University. The university wanted him to be assistant superintendent at the Residential School for Boys, a live-in school for chronic truants. He chose the Northeastern job, but one week before he was to start work he again was the victim of a funds cutoff.

He continued his career in the Chicago public schools, becoming assistant principal of Wexcott Elementary School in 1978. Meanwhile, he was getting his doctorate in education, writing his thesis on school systems around the world. Litow sent a request for information to a group of Saudi Arabian businessmen, and they tried to hire him for two years at \$120,000 a year, he said.

Although he said he "had to think about it" before turning the Arab offer down, it came at about the time when he was starting the Education Center. He doesn't regret the decision.

"The independence that I have here, to do what I want and do it my way, is priceless," he said.