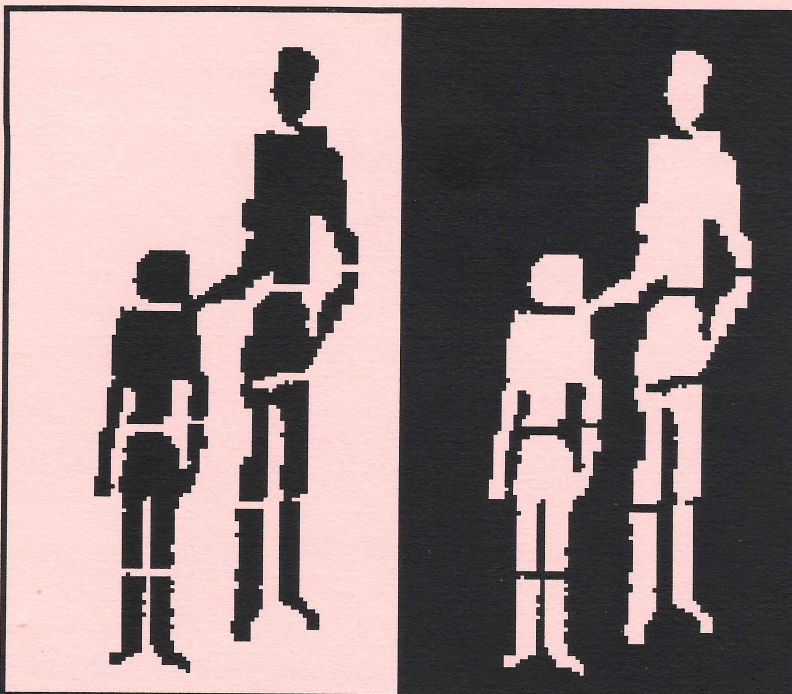
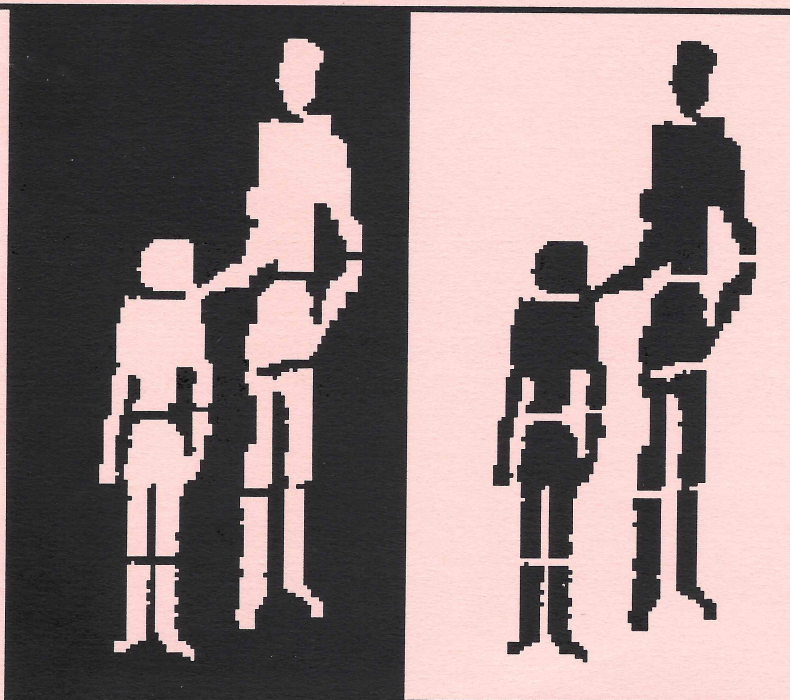


Spring 1999

Volume 11



# **THE JOURNAL** *of* **Court, Community, and Alternative Schools**



A Publication of the  
**Juvenile Court,  
Community, and  
Alternative Schools  
Administrators of California**

Serving as a Committee to the  
**California County  
Superintendents  
Educational  
Services Association**





# TWP

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For additional information, please contact *Alesia Ellis*, President of *A & W Industries*, through *The Association for Development and Management*, Project Managers for TWP.

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# The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

A Publication of the  
Juvenile Court,  
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Administrators of  
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# The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools



## SPRING 1999

## FEATURES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>The President's Message</b> • <i>Dolores Redwine</i>      | 5  |
| <b>Thoughts From The President-Elect</b> • <i>Vic Trucco</i> | 7  |
| <b>Are We Accountable?</b> • <i>Dr. Robert J. Ferrera</i>    | 8  |
| <b>The Greatest Success of All</b> • <i>Steve Nejasmich</i>  | 11 |
| <b>Elephants and Adolescents</b> • <i>Mark Kennedy</i>       | 13 |

## PROGRAM SHOWCASES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Project S.T.A.R.T.</b> • <i>Dr. Patricia Dyer</i>   | 10 |
| <b>The Adventure Classroom</b> • <i>Kathleen Focacci</i>   | 16 |
| <b>California ChalleNGe: Grizzly Youth Academy</b><br>• <i>Jeanne Dukes and Glenda Wright</i>  | 20 |
| <b>Fostering Resiliency In At-risk Teens</b><br>• <i>Judith Saeaks Gable and David Shaw</i>  | 25 |
| <b>Student-Built Computers</b> • <i>Phil Scrivano</i>  | 28 |
| <b>The Clean And Sober School; Clean and Sober And<br/>A High School Graduate!</b> • <i>Anne Evans</i>   | 30 |
| <b>Beyond Vocational Training: Kern County's Approach<br/>to Building Essential Skills</b> • <i>Sandra Phelps</i>  | 36 |
| <b>Community Collaboration Coalition: Collaboration<br/>At Its Best</b> • <i>Janet M. Addo, Margaret A. Taylor,<br/>Marilyn S. Izumita, Jerome Johnson,<br/>Delores Golston, and Mark Mrotek</i>           | 41 |
| <b>NASCAR and Court Schools Establish Motor Sports<br/>Partnership</b> • <i>Denis S. Desmond</i>   | 46 |
| <b>Preventing Delinquency in Elementary School<br/>Students: The Horizon Alternative Academy<br/>Enrichment Program</b> • <i>Dr. Mohammed Forouzesh,<br/>Dr. Veronica Acosta-Deprez, and Dr. Ted Price</i> | 48 |
| <b>A Goal-setting Writing Exercise for Court School<br/>Students</b> • <i>Dr. Judy Coffey and Toni L. Horde</i>  | 58 |

## ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>The JCCASAC Board</b>                | 4  |
| <b>Invitation to JCCASAC Membership</b> | 6  |
| <b>Program Showcase Form</b>            | 12 |
| <b>The Call For Papers</b>              | 19 |
| <b>Book Review Form</b>                 | 24 |
| <b>Advertising Invoice</b>              | 40 |



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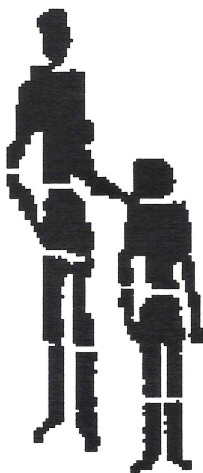
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# *The President's Message*

---

**Dolores Redwine**  
San Diego County

**W**elcome to 1999. This year will be an interesting and challenging year in education as we move toward the next millennium.

As president of JCCASAC, I challenge you to take an active role in our organization. It has been an honor serving on the executive board and networking with such a professional membership. Once you become involved, you gain a better understanding of legislative and funding issues and the various program responsibilities. You will see the accomplishments the organization has made in instructional accountability, scholarships for students, recognizing good works in our Journal and many other attributes. Probably the most important reasons to be a part of this organization are the sincere relationships and support you develop within the membership. It is a wonderful networking system for sharing ideas, concerns, and issues.

**It is our responsibility to help young people acquire knowledge, develop skills, and form positive self-esteem and attitudes.**

JCCASAC has many goals but one major goal for this year is to assist our Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Programs to be accountable for enhanced student performances through the implementation of a standards-based curriculum. Every student in our programs should be able to demonstrate measurable growth in literacy. It

is our responsibility to help young people acquire knowledge, develop skills, and form positive self-esteem and attitudes. This will

enable them

to take responsibility for shaping their lives in order to become productive leaders in our democratic society.

I challenge you to take an active role in JCCASAC and become more responsible in your own intellectual growth as educators. This should be an obligation for all of us as learners and instructional leaders. ●



# JOIN IN!

## *An Invitation for Membership*

Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative Schools Administrators of California (JCCASAC) is an organization that provides leadership, inservice, direction, and information to administrative personnel involved in juvenile court and community school education programs. JCCASAC functions as a support system to those professionals by providing activities, projects, and services in the following areas: Instructional Programs, Staff Development, Evaluation, Legislation, Special Funding, Personnel Procedures, Communications, Networking, Intragency Coordination, Pupil Personnel Service Research, and Management Development.

As a member, you will receive:

- Directory of JCCASAC Members
- Newsletter
- Journal of Court, Community and Alternative Schools
- Material Exchange
- Northern and Southern Section Meeting Notices
- Information regarding state conference
- Professional growth and support activities
- Networking
- Administrative Resource Manual (available for a small printing fee)

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**County:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

I am applying for membership in the Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative Schools Administrators of California as an: *(Please check one)*

☐

**ACTIVE MEMBER:**

Active membership shall be restricted to certificated personnel who are County Office of Education Superintendent of Schools employees and who supervise or administer programs within the Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative Schools of the various counties, or who exercise supervisory or administrative authority over the Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative Schools of various counties.

☐

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER:**

Associate (non-voting) membership shall be open to all others who wish to assist the Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative Schools Administrators of California reach its goals.

☐

**HONORARY MEMBER:**

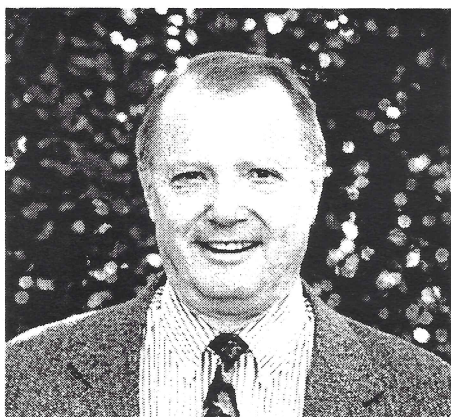
Honorary (non-voting) membership shall be open to retired personnel who previously held active memberships.

**Please mail or fax this form to:**

**Sonoma County Office of Education  
Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative Schools  
Attn: Vic Trucco, JCCASAC President-Elect  
5340 Skylane Blvd.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
Fax: (707) 524-2889**







## *Thoughts from the President Elect*

---

**Vic Trucco**  
Sonoma County

I have the opportunity and privilege to be your president-elect and president during a couple of meaningful years: the close of one century and the preparation for the long anticipated 21<sup>st</sup> century. This milestone, like a birthday or anniversary, provides an opportunity to define our challenges as we move toward improvements and successes. How significant will this time be for you, me, and our fellow staff?

Given the current popularity of "kids should be able to" statements from our communities, it seems to me that Court, Community and Alternative Education professionals should use this time to examine where we are and what we should focus upon in the next few years. Our students have not been successful in other school settings and come to our programs as a last resort, often significantly behind in basic educational skills. At the same time the community is demanding that schools increase graduation requirements and adopt more rigorous content and performance standards. How will we help legislators, parents, boards and community members to recognize the value of alterna-

tive education programs, as part of the continuum of public school programs necessary to achieve these outcomes? How will we provide our students with a program of meaningful, focused services and instruction that will allow them to experience success by meeting realistic goals, while also preparing them to become viable citizens and to enter the world of work?

Realistic goals will be equally important for us. I believe our challenges will be to resist the temptation to take on all the "problems" existing in our counties, to accept only the limited number of students allowed under the Education Code, to accurately assess their needs upon entry, and to focus our attention on delivering the quality and depth of instruction and services that will allow each student's resilience to reassert itself. When it is time to report our outcomes to the community, we should be able to rely not only on the STAR test results, but also our WASC and PQR processes and most importantly, the student's individual learning plan to provide meaningful, honest assessment of his or her progress

in academic, behavioral and vocational areas.

I hope each of you will re-dedicate yourself to the honorable choice you made some years ago to be educators, to serve students, and most of all, to serve the most at-risk students within our public school system. Yes, the next couple of years will see change in how students are measured, how success will be defined for our students and staff, and whether programs continue to be supported by our communities. In short, it is going to be a time for all JCCASAC members to become focused on their primary charge: to educate youth who are experiencing difficulties in a traditional school setting or who are exhibiting negative behavior patterns in school or in the community. I believe this time period will be filled with many challenges for all of us. Maintaining a positive outlook will be as important as continuing to progress toward our vision of providing meaningful services and education for all students. I look forward to facing these challenges and celebrating our successes during the next couple of years. ●



# Are We Accountable?

by Robert J. Ferrera, Ph.D.

The shouts for educational accountability that echo through the halls of most K-12 schools in California are also being heard in court and community schools. While all of us who work in those schools believe we are accountable to our students and our community, we often are heard to say, "Our kids are different and, therefore, their progress cannot be measured in the same way as kids in regular schools."

That lament, though seemingly reasonable, has failed to convince California legislators who mandated an annual statewide standardized test for ALL students.

What is our recourse? Do we accept the STAR results as a legitimate measurement of our students' performance? Do we argue that because our students have extraordinary needs they should be exempted from the test or have their scores ignored? Can we find an intellectually honest way to measure the performance of our students in relation to the programs we have provided?

*I believe we can. The big question, of course, is HOW?*

The Santa Clara County Office of Education's Alternative Schools Department, under the leadership of Steve Johnson from

Santa Clara University, is attempting a form of curriculum assessment and evaluation which addresses the accountability issue in a concrete, instructionally centered, research-based manner. This process includes the following steps:

### 1. Selecting the critical needs of our students.

What are the specific learning needs of our students? If they cannot read, what is the specific reason; i.e. decoding skill deficiency, comprehension problems?

### 2. Identifying best practices to meet those needs in the classroom.

Once the critical need is identified, an examination of the research provides the most successful instructional approaches teachers have used to address the learning needs.

### 3. Identifying the appropriate service delivery of those needs (general education or special education.)

Which professional is most qualified to deliver the appropriate instructional approach? Should it be the classroom teacher or a special educator?

### 4. Identifying the training needs in terms of personnel and time.

What staff development opportunities need to be made available to teachers in order to be able to address the critical learning needs that have been identified?

### 5. Establishing outcomes and identifying performances.

What kind of student performance is needed for the professional teacher to be certain that the student has reached the expected level of development?

### 6. Establishing a rubric for performance.

What multiple measures of achievement should be used in determining the effectiveness of the program?

The development of goals 5 and 6 provides an authentic way of demonstrating to our public, our students, and ourselves what our students know and are able to do as a result of their time with us. It allows us a systematic way of determining our effectiveness. Most of all, it is professionally sound because it is curriculum-based.

Steve Johnson created a matrix for one of our schools as an



| Critical Needs       | Best Practices<br>(1) (2) (3)  | Delivery<br>General<br>Education        | Delivery<br>Special<br>Education | Training | Outcomes<br>Assessment &<br>Evaluation                                 | Performance<br>Rubric                   |
|----------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|----------|--|---|
| Decode Words         | (1) Language!<br>(2) Language Experience<br>(3) Fernald VAKT   | 1, 2, 3<br>English Teachers             | 3<br>Resource Specialists        | 1998     | Able to decode and encode words on the most common use list.           | To be designed by consultant and staff. |
| Math Problem Solving | (1) Interactive Math<br>(2) Low Stress Algorithms<br>(3) Daily Living Math: Time, Measurement, Money | 1, 2, 3<br>Math Teachers                | 3<br>Resource Specialists        | 1998     | Able to use math to solve problems involving time, measurement, money. | To be designed by consultant and staff. |
| Anger Control        | (1) Anger Control Training<br>(2) Anger Control Game<br>(3) Functional Analysis                      | 1, 2<br>Teachers, Aides, Administrators | 3<br>Resource Specialists        | 1998     | Able to self mediate anger   | To be designed by consultant and staff. |

## Sample Matrix

example of the process which identifies critical needs ranging from reading comprehension and math problem solving to anger control and career preparation. See sample matrix above.

For example, if the lack of decoding skills is a critical need of a student, the first approach that the classroom teacher would use is the Jane Greene series, Language! If that proved unsuccessful, the classroom teacher would then use Language Experience. Special Education teachers will use the Fernald VAKT (Visual, Aural, Kinesthetic, Tactile) method. The Most Common Use Word List from the rubric will be used to measure student performance.

We believe this system provides the additional benefit of

allowing us to provide academic records to students and the schools they return to which could assist subsequent teachers in continuing instruction where we stopped.

Admittedly, we are at the very beginning stages of this process and will, most likely, encounter many "glitches" as we proceed. However, the staff believes that some positive results can already be seen:

1. A systematic way of addressing the academic needs of our students.
2. A recognition of our need to be publicly accountable in an authentic and meaningful way.
3. A clear process for identifying how we are going to serve special needs

students.

4. An intellectually challenging collaborative with a prominent University.

We believe going through this process allows us to join hands with our colleagues in regular education settings who are struggling to find ways to assess and evaluate student performance, and to be a real partner in developing accountability measures which accurately measure what students know and are able to do. ●

**Dr. Robert J. Ferrera is Assistant Superintendent for Student Services at the Santa Clara County Office of Education. He serves on CCSESA's Student Programs and Services Committee.**



# Project S.T.A.R.T.

(Students Tutoring As Responsible Teens)

by Patricia Dyer, Ph.D.

For several years, the Madera County Office of Education had the goal of involving community school students in meaningful volunteer activities. After much thought and consideration we found the answer right in our own county office. Why not have our students mentor in our own special education programs? Since we have two programs within easy commuting distance, we decided to focus on those two programs. One program is for disabled pre-school students and the other for severely disabled high school students.

Community school students were selected as mentors based on their current performance at

school and their interest in the programs. All students then had the opportunity to visit the sites and indicate their preference for the population they would like to mentor. Teachers from the two sites came to the community school to train students in such things as health and safety issues, appropriate language, and the proper way to interact with disabled students. Students who completed the training were then scheduled to begin volunteering.

This program, which began in the autumn of 1998, has been highly successful for both the community school students and the students enrolled in the special education programs. It gives the

community school students a chance to be positive role models for the disabled students. Comments from the teachers, students, and parents have been very positive.

The community school students have learned new skills themselves as they model for the disabled students. One student explains, "I have learned patience. Before I started, I was impatient with everyone. I now understand that you have to have patience. I have more patience with my little sister, too." Another student talked about how he has learned many new life skills and that "everyone needs help sometimes." ●

### *Currently students are doing such activities as:*

- Getting students to use verbal language by just talking with them
- Physical one-on-one activities such as throwing and catching a ball
- Singing songs with students
- Playing developmental games with individual students or groups
- Reading to students
- Painting, coloring, cutting, and pasting with students
- Teaching students to use the computer

During her career, Patricia Dyer has been a regular education teacher, a resource specialist, a middle school vice principal, an elementary principal and now an alternative education principal. She has a Ph.D. from the University of Santa Barbara in Curriculum and Instruction. Ms. Dyer can be reached at:

**Enterprise Secondary School**  
28123 Avenue 14, Madera, CA  
93638 • (559) 661-3570



# The Greatest Success of All

by Steve Nejasmich

There is a popular song that proclaims that the greatest love of all is the love that we have for ourselves. As teachers we know how difficult it is to foster that love of self in our students. To see any student grow in his or her self esteem and self love is a reward that any teacher cherishes. In our community schools these visible manifestations are far too infrequent. To grow from self hatred to self love is truly one of the greatest success stories of all.

James was the alpha wolf in our community school classroom. His powerful personality dominated the environment. He was a natural leader with the ability to set the tone of the day more clearly than any teacher or lesson plan. Unfortunately, James was going nowhere and he was bringing many other students with him.

James hated himself and the cards that life had dealt him. His lack of self love caused him to mistrust everyone else. He did not think it possible for anyone to care about someone whom he thought so unlovable. He responded to all attempts at helping him with anger and rage. Many schools had expelled James, and he was a candidate for a lifetime sentence in community school.

Within the first three days of working with James, he violently and publicly cursed our probation officer, a plethora of his fellow

students and me. Each act of rage was enough to have James suspended or expelled from many other schools. This was the response to his anger that James expected. People's response to his own self-hatred had always reinforced that self-hatred. Every time a teacher or school removed James, they reinforced his self-hatred. He felt that he was right in disliking himself; everyone else disliked him.

By refusing to give in to his self-hatred, we began to help James see that it was not he but his actions that were deplorable. Instead of removing him for his transgressions, we helped him change those patterns. More than anything else he was able to see that he was lovable despite his actions. With this knowledge he slowly began to trust, to let others help him, and to gradually accept himself. Eventually he began to lead others in a positive direction.

We no longer have this alpha wolf in our community school. We miss him. He has returned to the local high school and is doing well. He still gets angry, but now he has begun to play with the cards that life has dealt him. He even asks for help. He can do this now, because he believes that he is lovable because he loves himself. In my book this is the greatest success story of all. ●

The author, *Steve Nejasmich*, teaches at the Monterey Peninsula Community School, an alternative school of the Monterey County Office of Education. He has served as principal of several high schools and has worked for years with at risk students in the inner city.

The Monterey Peninsula Community School focuses on expelled students and probation referred students, as well as pre-delinquent youths. Like their counterparts, they offer an individualized program focusing on basic academic and independent living skills. Conflict resolution, violence prevention, career exploration, technology, and an innovative curriculum help make the program successful. This community school is in partnership with four school districts, the City of Seaside, and the probation department.

*Mr. Nejasmich can be reached at:*  
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Community School  
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Seaside, CA 93955  
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# PROGRAM SHOWCASE FORM

*You are invited to help us  
spotlight your innovative  
court, community, or  
alternative school program.*

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*The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools*

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Phone: (714 ) 836-0301, FAX: (714) 836-1920

E-mail: hedy\_kirsh@ocde.k12.ca.us

**Name of Program:**

**County:**

**Contact Person(s)** *Include name(s), phone number, address:*

**Population Served** *Include location(s), ages, grade levels, type of student:*

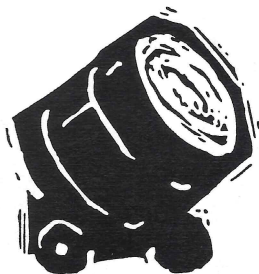
**Program Description:**

**Submitted By:**

**Position:**

**Phone Number:**

**Address:**





# Elephants and Adolescents

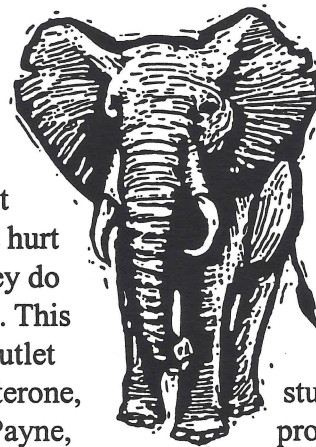
by Mark Kennedy

One evening recently I found myself still up past my normal 9:00 bedtime, unable to sleep. So it was that I came to be channel surfing when the premiere of 60 Minutes II came on. Little did I know how serendipitous this would prove to be. It happened that one of the segments was billed as an out-of-control group of adolescents who were killing rare white rhinos in Africa. This instantly grabbed my attention—after all, I work with sometimes out-of-control adolescents myself. I was anxious to glean any ideas that would apply to my situation.

Boy was I surprised when Bob Simon revealed through several interviews that the adolescent suspects in this crime were elephants. Say what? That's right, adolescent elephants were running amok and killing adult white rhinos. I didn't know such a thing could even happen. But the most interesting part is why it happened. It seems that a few years earlier, the elephant population was getting too large, so a fair number of adult bulls were culled. This did indeed cut down on herd growth. But it also did something which common sense should have—but hadn't—warned us about: it truncated the

normal enculturation of adolescent males.

To make a long story short, adolescent male elephants at times build up a large amount of testosterone. The normal cultural method for dealing with this is for them to spar with adult bulls. The adults don't hurt the youngsters, but they do put them in their place. This sparring provides an outlet for this built up testosterone, a state called *Musth* (Payne, 1998). To solve the problem of overly-aggressive adolescent males in this story, some bulls from another region were anesthetized and then shipped to the area which lacked "adult supervision." Upon arrival, the adults began "kicking butt" in the gamekeeper's words, and the rhino killings stopped. Amazing!



I had a ball writing our own curriculum (script) and "starring" in this professionally-produced videotape (Institute for Local Self Government, 1994). The project culminated in the presentation of 750 community surveys, written and administered by the students, to the City Council. After the video came out, the School Board asked me and several key students to show the product at a Board meeting.

We did so, to many Ooh's and Ahh's. It was all very gratifying, both for me and for the six student leaders involved. My principal came up to me afterward, however, and said something which seemed peculiar: "You and your girls did great," he said. "Now you just have to get some boys involved." I looked at the students and realized that five of the six were girls. At the time I thought, "Oh well, that's just how the interest fell." Maybe it had something to do with the fact that I taught all ESL classes, and perhaps girls were more confident in public. Or in middle school, maybe girls just take the lead. Or, who

## An Autobiographical Note

Several years ago, while still working at a comprehensive middle school, I was fortunate to be asked by a statewide group to make a video of kids participating in local government. The kids and



knows?

The reason I tell this, however, is that shortly thereafter, I found myself moving to a county Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School (JCCAS) setting. My new principal and I immediately agreed that I was a likely candidate to handle the "toughest" class, the formal court probation students.

And so, I ended up with a population which was 95% male (21 out of 22 students). I didn't think much about this at the time, either. That seemed to be where the need was, and I seemed to be of greatest use in that setting.

For the past three years, I have kept this same primary population, and had a rich, fulfilling experience working with these young men. I guess my former principal might say my position flip-flopped, although for me it seems the same. But when I saw this 60 Minutes II segment, I realized how much I am involved with young males. Obviously this article is not intended to be a comprehensive treatment of the role of gender in education, nor to undercut the impact of opposite genders. Rather, this is just an attempt to communicate the things from this piece which could be applied to my work with highly-at-risk male adolescents.

### **Lessons From The Elephant**

#### **Adolescents – Especially At-Risk Ones – Need Role Models**

If it takes a whole village to raise a child, maybe it takes a whole herd to raise an adolescent. As I look back on the men who influenced me as an adolescent, I see two types. The ones who were not strong I had little respect for. The ones who were never understanding I had only fear of. But there was one, a teacher as a matter of fact, who was both strong and caring. He wouldn't hesitate to call us to task on a tasteless or tactless act, and he had no tolerance for violence; he could beat us at anything we challenged him to. But he was just as fond of reading poetry to us and telling stories to little children, as he was of macho pursuits. While those who perhaps should have been my primary role models dropped the ball, this adult male was the one I most connected to.

#### **An Elephant Is An Elephant**

In the summer after my first year of teaching, I chose to attend a bilingual conference. As a white teacher of ESL students, this seemed like a good idea. After all, there was so very much

to learn. But I was very disappointed in the outlook of the organizers. I repeatedly heard this theme: White people can stand with us, but only silently. They can never be those who call primary attention to the injustices imposed because of color lines. These organizers obviously missed the irony of their committing that very offense. I get this same sense from the federal push to hire minority teachers. Sure, it would be great to have them. But does it devalue them if they make another career choice, or us who make this career choice?

During four years in the Navy, I answered to people who were probably from more than ten different ethnicities, nationalities, and territories. The ones I respected and connected with most were more often than not of a different background than I. I often think of one superior petty officer. He was from American Samoa, and seemed to hold a special place for the green kid from California, especially during a time when any of us might find ourselves in the hot zone of Viet Nam with little more than a week's notice. When the game-keepers in Africa went after adult bulls to help raise the at-risk adolescents, there was no pigmentation distinction. It seemed any healthy adult male would do, regardless of point of origin.



### Iron Sharpens Iron

*As iron sharpens iron,  
So one man sharpens another.*

So goes the ancient proverb. I have thought of this before when reflecting on working with these young men, so many of whom have been bruised by run-ins with the law. It is the nature of young men that they want to be—and to be seen as—tough. We do them a disservice in trying to tame this natural urge out of them. Paradoxically, by giving them the respect due their masculinity, we take away their need to prove it. By sparring verbally (joking, jostling, and drawing lines) and even physically (playing ball, etc.) with them, male educators can acknowledge their maleness, while reinforcing that it is OK to be what they are—adolescents.

### Males Are Nurturers, Too

For all their majesty and power, the adult elephants portrayed in this segment are still civilized. Watching the bulls spar with the adolescents, there was really no question who would win. It reminds me of the old sports comparison that a certain player is “a man among boys.” Yet the adults were not trying to win anything, except the adolescents’ proper raising. It was obvious that the adults could have easily hurt the youngsters. They not only did not do so, but by not hurting

them while still respecting their need to test their masculinity, the bulls taught the adolescents how to treat those who are weaker. Isn’t this what we want for our kids, too? (Kennedy, 1996).

### Obnoxious Behavior Is A Cry For Help

Obnoxious behavior can be as innocuous as being squirrely in class, or as serious as juvenile crime. Most likely, it is what got our students into our schools in the first place. But I and many others have found that paying attention to these cries for help can go a long way to helping youngsters outgrow this behavior. In this it seems to me JCCAS schools hold a secret: that it is

better to educate than eradicate the obnoxious adolescent.

### Not Every Wayward Adolescent Can Be Saved

For all the good that was done, tragically one adolescent elephant had to be killed—he had gone too far in committing violent acts. Such will be the case for us, too. As much as we would like to turn every life around, a few will not allow it. But in my experience, this is only a very few. Most young men want direction from a strong, caring, with-it male role model. That’s not all they need—but if we can learn any lessons from the elephant, it’s a lot of what they need. ●

**Mark Kennedy** is Lead Teacher at San Bernardino County’s West End Community School. He has also served as a frequent presenter, mentor teacher, interdisciplinary team leader, district strategic planning action team leader, and PQR focus group chair. Mark has published numerous articles, and his first book, *Lessons from the Hawk*, will be out later this year from Holistic Education Press. He can be reached at: 1135 West 4th Street, Ontario, CA 91762; phone (909) 984-0139.

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# The Adventure Classroom

Developing a "language of possibility" for alternative education students

by Kathleen Focacci

- Every 8 seconds a child drops out of school.
- Every 10 seconds a child is reported abused or neglected.
- Every 15 seconds a child is arrested.
- Every 34 seconds a child is born into poverty.
- Every 2 hours a child is a homicide victim. (Reported in *The State of America's Children*, 1997.)
- There has been an 85 percent increase in the number of children arrested for murder since 1987. (Founts, 1995)

The American public is bombarded with daily news stories and statistics that decry the crisis facing children in the United States. These stories and these statistics inform us of the growing numbers of young citizens who are disillusioned, disenfranchised, and who lack the skills necessary to fully participate in our society. Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire maintains that in order to "fully participate" in a democratic society, people must be able to "... assert their right and responsibility to not only read, understand, and transform their own experiences, but also to

reconstitute their relationship with the wider society" (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p. 7). The children whose lives are reflected in the statistics above are often not connected with the culture of the "wider society." Poverty, hunger, and the pain of violent lifestyles are a part of their daily lives. These children are confronted with representations of the comforts, mobility and safety enjoyed by those who are established members of the dominant culture or "wider society," but to which they cannot aspire. Research conducted by the American Psychological Association found that many young people who commit violent or criminal acts do so because they believe that their choices in society are seriously limited (Natale, 1994). A sense of powerlessness to change their world is transformed into behavior that removes them further from positive interaction with others. These are the youth who make up a significant portion of the enrollment in California's court and community school programs. These are the students who exit traditional education either by choice (stating they do not "fit in"), or through a system of

district and/or state mandates governing expulsion.

For the educator, a fundamental question is posed. "Is it the purpose of education to assist the disenfranchised citizens in 'reconnecting?'" It has been said that the liberal purpose of education in the United States is the promotion of each individual's opportunity to develop a personal moral basis for living responsibly and comfortably within society, while ensuring that this pursuit does not infringe on the rights of others to do the same (Goodlad, Soder, Sorotnik, 1990, p. 94). If we accept this assumption, the answer to the question is yes. The challenge is presented in designing educational environments through which this purpose may be realized. Classrooms promoting a "critical literacy" and the development of a "language of possibility" offer promise. Embedded within a "critical literacy" are the concepts of social justice, democratic community, and individual empowerment.

Critical educators, such as Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, and Peter McLaren have centered passionate discourse on a notion



of "critical literacy." The literacy they conceptualize provides a means by which individuals become empowered to know, understand and change the world in which they live. It is a literacy framed in a language of possibility. Teachers and students engage in a two way interaction that allows validation of lived experience and critical questioning posed around socialization. The curriculum depends on the "funds of knowledge" found in the children's families, social networks and communities (McLaren p. 161). In this context students learn that "...their histories and experiences matter and that what they say and do can count as part of a wider struggle to change the world around them" (Giroux, 1992, p. 8.). Students' lived experiences become the starting point for learning. Proponents of critical literacy argue that it is only when we begin to understand that there is a connection between schooling and legitimization of the individual and his/her choice to live productively, that we will begin to meet the challenge of educating all students.

While promotion of "critical literacy" and the development of a "language of possibility" offer the promise, the adventure classroom offers the environment. Critical literacy educates students to govern; the adventure classroom nurtures the individual's leadership skills, sense of fairness, feelings of belonging to a community, ability

to effectively communicate and to trust. Play and experiential opportunities provide a framework for the subsequent learning of functional literacy which is necessary for students to find success. In the adventure classroom students are guided through games, initiatives, and when available, challenge/ropes course activities. In group settings, they discover ways to solve clearly defined problems. Students make their own choices, rejoice in their successes and accept their failures. Through well planned and expertly facilitated games they begin to develop and understand the power of each group member's voice to change her/his environment. While all of this occurs in a safe, controlled setting, students learn through reflection and careful debriefing, how this experience carries over into their lived experiences (Butler, Rhonke, 1995).

Project Adventure Inc. (PA), a non-profit organization established in 1971, developed the concept and designed the activities that make up the adventure classroom. PA's executive director, Dick Prouty, in the Winter/Spring 1993 issue of PA's Zip Lines Newsletter, validates the idea that much of their work is dedicated to the understanding that people "are

designed (hardwired?) to enjoy. When we do enjoy we learn much more efficiently." Fun is central to the adventure concept. Research indicates that play increases productivity. While engaged in fun activities people are motivated, they are focused and their energy levels are greater. In the adventure classroom, opportunities are presented for students to make meaning out of essential academic curriculum that is integrated with the students' realities, their stories, and their lives.

Fundamental to the concept of a critical literacy and firmly established in the adventure classroom is the empowerment of students to analyze and synthesize the culture

**"In the adventure classroom, opportunities are presented for students to make meaning out of essential academic curriculum that is integrated with the students' realities, their stories, and their lives."**

of the learning environment with their own personal experience. It is through this "knowing" that the language of

possibility begins to emerge (Kanpol, 1994, p. 54). Learning becomes the basis for challenging the social practices that have left so many students voiceless, powerless and struggling to "fit in."

The authors cited throughout this writing believe that a functional literacy based in the technical skills of reading and writing is crucial. They also assert that



## *The Adventure Classroom*

students must be literate not only in the language of the "state and the larger world" but also in the language of their community. The key is held in understanding the importance of knowing the limits of both languages (Giroux & Simon, 1989).

At the very least, educators of alternative education students must recognize that schools are about somebody's story and if that story is to expand the possibilities for educating students as critical participants as well as good citizens, we must recognize the

multiple narratives and histories that make up the classrooms of California's Court and Community Schools. We must offer to our students a literacy that refuses to ignore the transformative power of language formed from a base of self, a "language of possibility." ●

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- Give credit: use footnotes and reference list
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# California ChalleNGe: Grizzly Youth Academy

by Jeanne Dukes and Glenda Wright

They don't like push-ups and waking at 5 a.m., but the cadets at Grizzly Youth Academy in San Luis Obispo are glad to be here. Most of them agree the program for high school dropouts has changed their outlook on life.

One hundred and fifty at-risk teens have just joined the Grizzly Youth Academy which is located on the National Guard post at Camp San Luis Obispo; it is anticipated that the group which graduates in July of 1999 will exceed the numbers from the very first group, who graduated from the Academy in January. Seventy-three teens, out of the original 131, graduated on January 23, some of whom were the first in their families to graduate from anything.

This unique program, which is a collaboration among the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, the Paso Robles Unified School District, and the National Guard, offers at-risk teens an opportunity to take the General Education Development (G.E.D.) test or the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE), or to earn high school credits toward the achievement of a high school diploma. It is a 22-week residential program, with the

educational component provided by the County Office of Education. Credentialed teachers provide intensive classroom intervention, which can result in up to fifty high school credits earned in the 22-week period.

Students from throughout California are eligible, if they meet the criteria. Criteria include:

- voluntary enrollment
- clean and sober
- a high school drop-out
- not convicted of other than status offenses
- aged between 16-19

There are currently 21 ChalleNGe programs throughout the United States, with five having been added this year. For the first term, students were enrolled from Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and Monterey Counties. The second term has included students from all over California.

Students are referred mostly through word of mouth; the mentor coordinator and her staff have communicated with county offices, school districts, probation

departments, and agencies dealing with at-risk youth to spread the word. Parents can refer their own children, with the caveat being that students must voluntarily enroll.

### Academy Turns Teens' Lives Around

The daily program requires that students (called cadets) rise at 5 a.m. seven days a week, perform extensive physical fitness activities,

dress in military uniforms ("BDU's"), attend school every day for six hours, meet the goal of at least 80 hours of community service, and work toward a life plan upon graduation. This life plan is individually designed, under the guidance of the National Guard counseling staff and the County Office teachers, so that all cadets have a realistic and attainable goal. Some of the goals include college attendance, obtaining viable employment, returning to the traditional high school and graduating, and joining the military, California Conservation Corps (C.C.C.) or Job Corps.

Core components of the program include citizenship, attainment of a high school diploma or GED, life coping skills, community service projects, health and hygiene, skills training, leader-



ship/followership and physical training. The National Guard and education staff work together to deliver the curriculum to the students; five of the components are taught directly in the classroom, with skills training, leadership/followership and physical training delivered by the Guard staff.

Extra activities for the cadets are offered, including intermural sports, drill teams, color guard, community college courses, job shadowing, and volunteer opportunities at local schools and senior citizen centers. Cultural and educational field trips are also offered. Students design a year-book for their class and participate in fund-raising activities for designated projects. For example, one platoon in the first class held car washes in order to earn money to purchase commemorative plaques.

Community service opportunities abound. The first term's cadets performed services which included:

- Adopting a beach
- Visiting retirement homes
- Assisting with Special Olympics
- Providing food and gifts for the homeless
- Cleaning the Atascadero zoo

The service learning component is an important one for at-risk youth, since most of them have not contributed greatly to the benefit of their communities or society at large. The intrinsic rewards are tremendous, and the increase in self-esteem is noticeable.

Students are unable to earn the privilege of a home visit for at least the first six weeks of the program. As the cadet rises in rank, he/she earns more privileges. It is a tremendous incentive to "do the right thing"; the structure and self-discipline this process produces are life-changing.

There are staff available 24 hours a day to oversee and support the cadets. Health services are available through the local community college, as are extensive counseling and school psychologist services. The Guard staff and the education staff noticed in the first term that they formed close relationships with the cadets over the course of the 22 weeks. This bonding with appropriate adult role models produced dramatic changes in behavior and attitude, and was often the first time in the

cadets' lives that a trusting relationship with an adult was formed.

The year-long transition component of the program is possibly the most important. Each cadet is matched with a mentor in his/her community, who is trained during the 22 weeks by the mentor coordinator. These mentors are provided with specific directions in assisting the graduates in pursuing their life plans; they are also responsible for attending regular meetings, reporting the progress of their mentees, and submitting written reports to the program indicating success or lack of success. Based upon these reports, the graduates are provided with stipends

toward constructive activities, including college tuition, vocational school tuition, books and materials, transportation, or necessary equipment. Typically the graduates are awarded from \$750-\$1,200 for these expenses throughout the year follow-up period.

The door of Grizzly Youth Academy is never closed to its graduates. Staff expects and anticipates that they will return





## California ChalleNGe: Grizzly Youth Academy

occasionally, report in often, and keep in touch. All of the graduates are "part of the family," and treated as such.

Although this program began only in August of 1998, the statistics from the first class are impressive. 96% of the cadets took either the GED or the CHSPE; while only 12% of those who took the CHSPE passed the test, 58% passed the entire GED and another 18% passed at least half of the sub-tests. Students earned an average of 35.8 high school credits; 16 students completed a Cuesta College technology course; 42 students participated in the job shadowing program; and an average of 128 hours of community service were earned per cadet. And remember that these students were all high school dropouts!

Often the question is asked, "What is the monetary value of

saving an at-risk youth?" The Grizzly Youth Academy seems like an expensive program, particularly when state and federal funds are expended for young people who are currently not proving to be constructive citi-

zens. "Social cost" is difficult to determine; for example, costs associated with an armed robbery include stolen property, medical costs, lost wages, pain and suffering, as well as the subsequent costs of incarceration for long periods of time. Additional issues are important costs such as fear of crime, private security expenditures, and averting behavior such as taking cabs instead of walking or changing one's lifestyle due to the risk of victimization.

If an intervention program, therefore, is designed to reduce recidivism in at-risk youth, and is large enough to impact a substantial number of these youth, it might ultimately affect some of

these larger social problems.

So investing in a program that prevents a high risk youth from embarking on a life of

crime involves expenditures today, but might yield benefits over a 15-20 year time span or more. The total costs of a life of crime are estimated to range from approximately \$1.5 to \$1.8 million; it is assumed that 31% of crimes and

incarcerations occur during ages 18 and 19.

Grizzly Youth Academy costs are comparatively small. While the cost for each graduating youth is approximately

\$16,000, data have been gathered from other ChalleNGe programs indicating that 80% of ChalleNGe graduates are crime-free five years later.

We anticipate that the Grizzly Youth Academy will produce similar results, and are collecting data to substantiate that belief.



**"All of the graduates are 'part of the family,' and treated as such."**

If you can't relate to data, the following scenario might help. Frank, a young man from a generational gang family in San Luis Obispo County, had dropped out of school at age 17. He had few high school credits, no goals, no way of supporting himself, and an inability to relate appropriately with employers, adults, and even his peer group. He had been reduced to staying at home and watching television, afraid to go outside because of the violence he had experienced. A community school dropout and expelled from his district, he had no prospects for a positive future.

While at the enrollment of



Frank's younger sibling, a community school administrator noticed that Frank was present. She told him about the Grizzly program, which was to start in two weeks, and in spite of his depression he agreed to give it a try.

This young man, as you may have anticipated, graduated from the program with high scores on both the G.E.D. and the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). He was accepted by the Marines, and is currently in boot camp. He may have broken the generational chain which appeared to be wrapped around his body; the graduation ceremony was a proud moment for his family. There were tears of joy and standing room only in the huge auditorium, as the community surrounded its young people with support and love.

**There were 73 Franks at the first ceremony. We're hoping for 120 at the second. ●**

**We welcome visitors and calls for information regarding this exciting new program. It is free to referring agencies, districts, county offices, and parents. Points of contact are: Glenda Wright, Mentor Coordinator, at (805) 782-6884; or Jeanne Dukes, Area Administrator, San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, at (805) 542-0106.**

**Jeanne Dukes**  
***Area Administrator, Alternative Education, San Luis Obispo County Office of Education***

Jeanne has been a Teacher/Counselor/Administrator of at-risk youth for 17 years. With a background in special education, counseling and guidance, and administration, she has worked in a traditional district high school, community schools, and County Office alternative programs. She currently supervises five community schools, a court school, and the new Grizzly Youth Academy. She is proud to be part of a unique and creative educational option for California at-risk youth.

**Glenda Wright**  
***Mentor Coordinator, Grizzly Youth Academy***

Glenda has a background in business, and previously served as the Mentor Coordinator of Oklahoma's ChalleNGe Program, Thunderbird Youth Academy. She returned to home state of California in order to start up new Grizzly Academy in San Luis Obispo. Her recruitment efforts produced growth from 130 cadets first term to over 160 second term. She is truly excited to be here!



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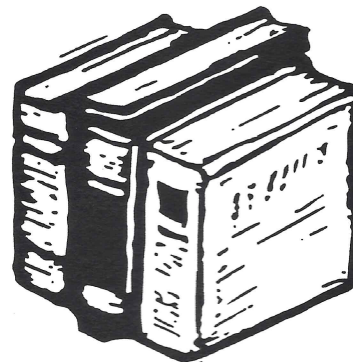
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# Fostering Resiliency In At-Risk Teens: A Collaborative Counseling Project

*by Judith Saeks Gable and David Shaw*

One of the most popular concepts in education today is collaboration: collaboration among schools and home, collaboration between schools and community based organizations, and joint efforts between schools and other government agencies.

The following narrative describes a collaborative effort between the Cleo Eulau Center and The San Mateo County Office of Education to provide counseling to community school students. This effort began some three years ago and has grown to be a viable, supportive and essential service to community school students.

## **COLLABORATORS**

The court/community schools in San Mateo County were established to provide academic and occupational intervention to high risk youth whose educational needs were not being met in conventional schools. The mission of these programs, as stated in the School Accountability Report Card, "...is to empower students to become responsible and productive members of the

community by helping them acquire: academic skills, independent life skills, positive self-concepts and effective relationships with others."

The Cleo Eulau Center is a mental health agency dedicated to helping child and adolescent victims of enduring or long term trauma. Through a continual process of study, Center personnel keep abreast of the nationwide research and interventions that offer the best hope of breaking the destructive intergenerational behavioral cycles which hold young victims of trauma captive. The clinical social workers at the center bring direct services and consultation into educational and social service settings that serve high risk children and teens.

## **RESILIENCY: WHAT IS IT?**

Social science research indicates that some "At-Risk" youth survive the experiences of a horrifically chaotic and abusive childhood and go on to forge adequate, productive lives. Why does this "resiliency," or ability to bounce back from adversity, exist

among some of our students and not others? Research studies have recently been providing some answers to this question.

Bonnie Bernard, a prominent clinician and spokesperson in the field of resilience, refers to "protective factors that appear to alter, or even reverse, potential negative outcomes and enable individuals to transform adversity and develop resilience despite risk." There are three broad categories describing these factors:

1. Caring relationships: Research respondents talked about at least one person in their lives who believed in them and saw past their current behavior to the human qualities that the individual possessed. This person instilled hope.
2. High expectations with realistic opportunities to meet them: Children benefit from the sense of competence they feel when they rise to a challenge or set of challenges and succeed.
3. Opportunities for meaningful participation and contribution: Giving individuals a way to be



## *Fostering Resiliency In At-Risk Teens*

productive, useful, and important in their environment, is crucial to helping them feel that they have something positive to contribute to society. (Bernard, 1991)

### **HOW WE BEGAN**

**M**s. Peg Donohue joined the Community School Central staff with a background and training in adolescent psychology which focused on work with at-risk teens. She quickly became aware that many Court/Community School students had severely traumatic life experiences that remained unresolved. She was aware of students acting out and displaying oppositional behaviors that appeared directly related to these unresolved conflicts. These behaviors often resulted in consequences leading to yet another school failure. This awareness gave substance to the link between childhood trauma, school failure, and juvenile delinquency.

It was fortuitous that in February 1995, Ms. Donohue attended a day long workshop entitled "School System's Response to

Traumas in Children." There she met Karita Hummer who was then the Executive Director of The Cleo Eulau Center. Ms. Hummer and Ms. Donohue discussed how the Cleo Eulau Center was evolving, as well as the overwhelming psycho-educational needs of the young people in the court and community schools. Out of this meeting a collaborative program emerged. This collaboration provided Community School students the counseling services they so desperately needed.

### **THE COUNSELING COLLABORATIVE**

**T**hroughout San Mateo County Office programs, the power of hope is a key element. This hope is fostered by our common knowledge of the factors that boost resilience. Through this knowledge staff have been able to offer a very specialized type of counseling program which focuses on increasing the

students' self-confidence, self-esteem, and overall competence. A variety of interventions are used which are designed to:

1. Teach adolescents to identify and to build on their special traits and existing strengths, as opposed to focusing on their limitations.
2. Offer an opportunity for the students to be heard, feel respected, and feel cared about.
3. Teach the students how to listen, respect and care about others.
4. Provide positive alternative life choices through discussion and role modeling.
5. Encourage the students to set realistic expectations and goals.
6. Promote the students' beliefs in their abilities to become productive members of society.
7. Direct the students toward skill building experiences.
8. Help the students to understand the reasons for self-destructive behaviors.
9. Teach the students strategies to break entrenched delinquent patterns.
10. Challenge the students to recognize and seek out people and places that will support their growth and development.
11. Facilitate connections to formal and informal mentors.

The program is staffed by Ph.D. psychology students from the Wright Graduate School of Psychology who are supervised by a veteran Clinical Social Worker from the Cleo Eulau Center and the staff of the Wright School of Psychology. The creative decision to use interns to staff the

#### ***How has the counseling program been useful to you?***

**"I learn lots of things."**

**"It helps me to talk about my problems."**

**"That people share their mistakes and learn from them and take the other route."**

**"It taught me ways to deal with my anger."**

**"It has helped me solve some personal problems and been a lot of fun!"**

counseling program serves a dual purpose. One is to afford graduate students clinical experience and training. The other purpose is to keep the cost of operating the counseling program within affordable parameters. Currently, this collaborative program is funded jointly by the San Mateo County Office of Education and The Cleo Eulau Center.

### ***Has counseling helped you deal with anger?***

**"A lot - talking to them, then after a while, it really helps."**

**"A little - counseling program helped me a lot with my anger! How to keep it down."**

**"A lot - they help calm my nerves."**

**"A little - because we'll talk about the consequences of exploding."**

increased when at risk students are offered the opportunity to process

the chaos and trauma in their lives. At-risk youth are capable of developing the positive belief that they are innately resilient. They can believe that they have the capacity to develop caring relationships, to solve their own problems, to feel good about who they are, and to be

optimistic about their futures.

Before they can begin to believe, however, they need at least one adult in their lives who believes in them first.

Reports from students, parents, teachers, probation officers, and the clinical interns indicate that the Collaborative Counseling Program is a valuable asset to the community school programs. Further, it not only supports the students, it supports all those striving to help them succeed.

At this writing, plans are under way to expand the collaborative counseling program to embrace the students in two of our court school programs. ●

### **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

**Judith S. Gable** is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She has been in practice since 1980. She has a private practice in Mountain View, CA where she provides psychological counseling to individuals, couples, and families. Her work at The Cleo Eulau Center in Palo Alto, CA includes supervising the Court/Community School Collaborative Counseling Program and providing consultation to the teaching staff and administration at Edison McNair Academy in East Palo Alto.

**David Shaw** has been with San Mateo County Office of Education since 1973. He has served as a Speech and Language Therapist, Special Day Class teacher, teacher, head teacher, and is currently Education Services Manager of Court and Community Schools for the San Mateo County Office of Education.

*Work Cited (by permission): - Bonnie Bernard, "Fostering Resiliency in Kids," Western Regional Center for Drug Free Schools and Communities, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, Oregon, 1991.*

Psychological counseling services are provided two days a week on site at three of the community schools. Scheduled individual and group therapy is offered weekly to many students. Therapy is also provided on an as-needed or crisis basis to others.

The counseling program supervisor also provides consultation support to the teaching/probation staff. This consultation support assists the staff in dealing with the many challenges presented by working with these teens.

Through this collaborative counseling program, there has been validation of the concept that school success can be greatly



# Student-Built Computers

by Phil Scrivano

For the past three years students at Community Learning Center have been building the school's workstations and servers. This successful program has had many benefits for students, staff, and the school. Community Learning Center, located in Kern County, is California's Charter school #77. It serves at-risk youth grades 7 through 12. This article will focus on the successes of the program and the process involved in construction of computers.

Students in groups of 2 to 4 are led through a short lecture and hands-on process of building a computer. The construction starts with an explanation of each part of the mother board and how to install cards, chips, and input parts. By the end of the process students can explain not only how each part works, but also can give an explanation of how a computer works. When the computer is completed, it is checked over by the teacher and bench tested by the students. Once the machine is operational, an image of an existing hard drive is loaded from the school server.

Several machines can be imaged at one time.

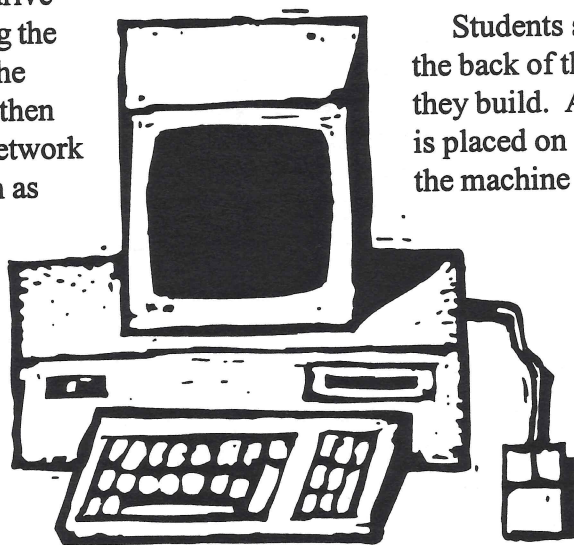
A hard drive copying system is now being purchased that will enable students to install a fully loaded hard drive when building the computer. The students will then change the network settings, such as machine name, and the machine will be complete. With a disk copier in place, the start to finish time to build and configure a machine will be less than two hours.

Students who take a greater interest in the building of these computers are given an additional

challenge to test their understanding of the process. The challenge is to clasp their hands behind their back and

explain to another group of students how to build the com-

puter. Students have particularly enjoyed teaching adults such as Dr. Kelly Blanton, Kern County Superintendent of Schools, school board member Walt Parsons, and teachers how to build a computer.



Students sign and date the back of the machines they build. An ID badge is placed on the front of the machine stating that it is a "CLC Student Built Machine." A secondary benefit to this process has been student ownership of the comput-

ers and the network. Students do not allow damage to happen to the equipment. The quality of the machines are enhanced by this student ownership.

The process of building a computer starts with the selection of parts. Each time computer parts have been purchased, the cost of the machine has remained the same. Initially, \$1,500 purchased a 486DX 100 computer with 8 MB of RAM, 800 MB hard drive, 1 MB VLB video card, and a multimedia sound card with a 4

**"A secondary benefit to this process has been student ownership of the computers and the network. Students do not allow damage to happen to the equipment."**

speed CD ROM. Today this price delivers a Pentium II 450, 32 MB of RAM, 4 GB hard drive, 8 MB AGP video card, and a multimedia sound card with a 32 speed CD ROM. A 15" monitor, keyboard, mouse, and speakers are also included in this price. The parts are not the latest and greatest on the market, but are generally less than six months old.

There are two steps in the selection of equipment. First, all parts are identified and researched to see if they are on the compatibility list supplied by the Microsoft web site. The second step is to send a quote list to local vendors in the area. Students help at this point to select the parts based on the information and prices supplied by the vendors. When all the parts arrive, building

begins.

The quote lists that are given to vendors are very specific. Power supplies must have a UL listing and in most cases only one part is listed for an item such as a network card. This ensures a quality machine and that the vendors are quoting on the exact same

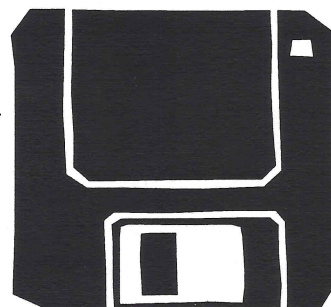
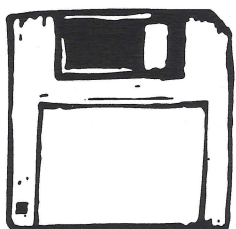
parts. It is not uncommon for the parts to come from as many as three vendors. Local vendors are used to expedite any problems that might come up. Vendors have learned that they are competing against each other and that we will be using them for more purchases in the future. The greater the quantity of machines being built, the better the prices

are. Generally discounts are better with purchases over 10, 20, or 30 units. If price is under or over the \$1,500 mark, adjustments are made to either the amount of RAM or the size of the hard drive.

There was an initial concern raised about the support of student built machines. In a show of support for the program, Dr.

Blanton stated that if the students build them, they can fix them. Most of the original machines are still in use at other schools in the program. When it came time to upgrade the

memory of the original machines for Windows 95, six students installed chips on thirty machines in less than an hour. ●



Since 1995, **Phil Scrivano's** position has been Technology Coordinator for the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. His main responsibilities include administering technology for Court, Community, and Charter Schools. From 1993 to 1995, he was a

California Technology Project (CTP) Telementor. In this capacity, he wrote curriculum based on the utilization of Internet resources and trained other educators to use the Internet in the classroom. He has been a K-6 and junior high school vice principal and taught 6<sup>th</sup> grade for 7 years.

You can get more information about Community Learning Center by visiting the school's web site at <http://clc.kcsos.k12.ca.us>. If you would like to see a quote list or have additional questions, send e-mail to [phscrivano@kern.org](mailto:phscrivano@kern.org).



# Clean and Sober and a High School Graduate!

by Anne Evans

(program overview, page 33)

A young woman speaks to a class of middle school students. She brushes back her long hair, takes a deep breath and begins her story: it is a story becoming familiar to classrooms across the county as students from the Sonoma County Clean and Sober School present their stories of drug abuse, the social problems that go along with the abuse, of their fall to the bottom and of clawing their way, inch by inch, into a recovery and a high school diploma. More often than not the young audiences have tears in their eyes as they listen in rapt attention, for the presenters are students many in the audience know well. They have brothers and sisters in these same schools; they may even be speaking at the schools they once attended. The stories differ but all are powerful. A young man with the body of a football player spoke recently to the local Rotary Club, a terrifying experience to address the parents of his friends and school mates and yet, before he was halfway through, many in the audience were crying openly.

It is a lengthy voyage that these young people have undertaken and one that, for 12 out of

44 students in the 1997-98 school year, resulted in a high school diploma. Some of the 12 return with college homework in hand asking for help with studying and ruing the lack of attention earlier to developing good study habits! Some return to speak to current students who are battling relapses and others pop in to visit their counselors. For these are role models for current Clean and Sober School students. It is also because of these students that I consider my position as a classroom teacher at Sonoma County's first Clean and Sober School the

**"Though its success hasn't been proved, the overwhelming anecdotal evidence is that this alternative works."**

- *Life Magazine, February, 1999*

most satisfying and challenging of my 30 years of teaching and administrative experience.

There are few clean and sober schools, but, according to Judi Hanson, Program Director of Sobriety High School in Minnesota, "Many school districts call and visit us." Sobriety High

School in Minnesota was founded in 1989 and is the first program of its kind. Judi Hanson heads a faculty of four academic teachers, a program assistant and a visiting special education consultant who assists with program design. Ms. Hanson runs daily 12 Step group meetings for the students, all of whom must have attended a treatment program prior to their enrollment. She also attends monthly parent meetings. The school was featured in *Life Magazine* (February, 1999) which said that, "Though its success hasn't been proved, the overwhelming anecdotal evidence is that this alternative works." Sobriety High School, a private school, receives its funding through a special state incentive law and does not charge tuition.

Marin County's Sobriety High School is a cooperative venture of the Marin County Office of Education, which provides the two teachers, Principal and instructional aide, and Marin General Hospital which funds the three counselors. The school was founded when the hospital closed its adolescent treatment facility and is a charter school. According to the on-site administrator, John Martin, "The



charter allows for a maximum of 45 students," although when I visited the program, there were 32, a number teacher Clara McNamee finds optimal. I spoke with Mr. Martin about the success of the program. He claimed a success rate of 85% with an 80% attendance rate. He defined success as being "sober and on track educationally."

Like both the Minnesota model and the Marin County model, Sonoma County's Clean and Sober School is far away from any high school campus. Clean and Sober School is located in the back of a shopping center which provides anonymity and safety to its 44 students in grades 9 through 12. The school has no sign to announce itself and the students do not want to return to district high schools until they have achieved stable sobriety because, as one young man told me, "That's my bar. I go there, I make my connections and then leave."

Clean and Sober School is also a cooperative venture. It was started in December, 1994, by Lynn Garric, then Executive Director of the Drug Abuse Alternatives Center (DAAC), a local non-profit, and Vic Trucco, Director of Alternative Education for the Sonoma County Office of Education. DAAC funds the counseling program with four on-site counselors for the school's 44 students. Sonoma County Office of Education provides the educa-

tion component with two classroom teachers and an instructional assistant. A visiting resource specialist and school psychologist

**"Students feel a strong level of support from all involved in their education... with the knowledge that each is a first name to the staff and not a number."**

provide support services, the school being only one of the 28 sites served by the Alternative Education Department. Clean and Sober School also works in partnership with Teen Treatment Court which was established in 1997 and over which Commissioner Jeanne Buckley presides. The court reserves ten seats at the school for its offenders who choose to attend the program. Through court appearances twice monthly that are attended by school staff, students are held accountable. At a recent visit to the court, I watched the charismatic Jeanne Buckley hand out tickets to the movies to a student who had received positive reports from counselors and teachers and had clean urinalyses, and then order a young man who had missed the required 12 Step meetings and had overdue school-work locked up for the weekend. Commissioner Buckley chides a student at the start for having an exposed midriff and then laughs with another whose work she just

inspected at an open house. Even handed, good humored and the person responsible for holding the bottom line for students who have

often committed multiple offenses and face serving time if they do not stay clean, Commissioner Buckley provides a tough and tender support structure for the school.

Support, in fact, appears to be the critical piece in providing for the success of students within

the program. With four counselors, two teachers and an instructional aide on site at all times, staff form a united front, acting together to support each other and the students in ensuring that not one slips through the cracks. At weekly "case management meetings," staff devotes more time to discussion of individual students than to any other business, for it is the individual students that are important. It is the stated goal of the Sonoma County Court and Community Schools to "provide alternative pathways for each student" and, says Vic Trucco, Director of Alternative Education, "multiple approaches for kids." A student who has had many relapses and is in danger of being asked to leave may be held accountable at "case management" or another who dropped out, returned to his/her habit and now wishes to try again may need to convince staff at these meetings that s/he deserves to return. Students who deserve positive feedback for progress, academic



## ***Clean and Sober and a High School Graduate!***

kudos (in the form of Kudos bars handed out monthly for good schoolwork), sobriety birthdays or speaking engagements performed as community service are elected at these meetings and then acknowledged publicly at the weekly student meeting. Students feel a strong level of support from all involved in their education, as well as a united front; this encourages them to feel safe, with clear boundaries and consequences, with a strong reward system and with the knowledge that each is a first name to the staff and not a number.

Support is also important for the staff. This happens only when all feel empowered, supported, respected and valued members of a healthy team.

Counselors drop in on classes, observing students in an instructional milieu, and even take turns as guest teachers. On-site counselors, present for the entire school day, participate in the life of the school and each

component backs up the other; counseling is not separate from education although counseling sessions and group meetings are, of course, confidential.

As the English/social studies block teacher, I incorporate the students' experiences into an instructional program integrated

with the science/math teaching wherever possible. In this way, team members back each other up, contributing to an integrated whole. Students create posters of their personal and academic goals at the start of the school year as active, present tense statements. Some of the goals that decorate my walls are:

- *"I am staying clean and sober all year."*
- *"I am graduating this June."*
- *"I am working hard at a better relationship with my parents."*

In a history of the 20th Century course, students learn about the work of Freud and Dewey and the paradigm shift in thought in the early years of the century. Students focus on their own recovery

a field trip to the Superior Court, not as a defendant, but as an impartial observer of the process. Students were most impressed with the severity of punishments meted out in adult court!

I asked Judi Hanson what she thought were the special needs of students in recovery. She said they needed, "To feel safe, to admit they need help in catching up on missed credits; they need to feel respect, not shamed. They need life skills and to be affirmed and held accountable." Participation in our speakers program, a highly coveted and earned distinction, is perhaps where students really first begin to feel the respect of the most important group, their peers. One young man who had

struggled long and hard to become one of our speakers wrote afterwards in his journal, "Why I got to speak is I stayed true to my recovery and to myself. I have shown a lot of pride and valor and I have also helped a lot of other addicts. I feel very special.... and very

proud of myself. I had this warm, protruding glow coming from my soul." And it is the turnaround within these young men and women in such a few short years, their courage, their valor and their compassion that makes me proud to teach at the Clean and Sober School. ●

**"[Students need] to feel safe, to admit they need help in catching up on missed credits; they need to feel respected, not shamed. They need life skills and to be affirmed and held accountable."**

*- Judi Hanson, Program Director, MN Sobriety High School*

in creative writing assignments, documenting how they came to Clean and Sober School and, before each vacation, writing about their plans for staying clean and sober and still having fun during vacation. Perhaps my favorite unit, part of the U.S. Government component, included



The Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) and the Drug Abuse Alternatives Center (DAAC) are pleased to announce our continuing collaboration in the establishment of the *Clean & Sober School*, grades 9-12.

## The Clean and Sober School

575 Summerfield Road • Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
(707) 539-2071 Counseling • (707) 537-3753 Classroom

### Purpose

The *Clean & Sober School* concept is a merging of therapeutic and academic efforts for the adolescent who has abused or been dependent upon alcohol and/or other drugs and who chooses to make a commitment to sobriety. The school program has been designed to meet the needs of high risk youth who:

- have been in residential treatment or relapsed from recovery
- self-identify as being chemically dependent and who are motivated to stop using
- have not been able to achieve abstinence through other treatment services
- have been expelled
- are on juvenile probation
- display behavior problems related to drugs and/or alcohol abuse
- have experienced a medical crisis related to drugs and/or alcohol abuse

### Theory

The *Clean & Sober School* will utilize the principles of 12-step programs and a family systems approach to provide a safe, reinforcing educational environment and the opportunity to develop a fellowship with other recovering teens.

### Goals

The goals of the *Clean & Sober School* are to help the adolescent:

- achieve and maintain stability in sobriety
- develop a positive sober self image
- take responsibility for his or her personal recovery and educational success
- have a responsible and positive role in his or her family and community
- develop positive educational goals
- re-identify with learning behaviors in a reinforcing and drug-free setting
- become academically motivated
- graduate or mainstream into his or her district school
- assess his or her needs and recommit to the recovery process in the event of a relapse

### Contract

Each student in the *Clean & Sober School* will be expected to commit to a five hour school day of academic subject instruction, counseling, 12-step meetings, random urinalysis testing, family program participation, and an individualized treatment plan with goals and objectives.

### Staff

**Suzanne Sackett**, Ed.D., MFCC, Program Coordinator, is a licensed professional specializing in adolescent psychology, addiction and family therapy and a ten year employee of the DAAC. **Roz Sherbert**, classroom teacher, has a degree in education, and seven years teaching experience. **Anne Evans**, classroom teacher, is a doctoral candidate in alternative education with 28 years of teaching experience on three different continents, the last 17 years as director/teacher of a private alternative school. Other staff include **Paul Glassmaker**, MFCCI, counselor, with adolescent addiction and recovery experience; **Ken Kennemer**, prevention and recovery counselor; **Midge Ost**, MCCCCI, counselor, with knowledge of group dynamics and recovery; **Bob Klahr**, teaching assistant with seven years experience in education and knowledge of recovery.

### Referrals

Please call **Christina Bursby** at SCOE, (707) 524-2875 to make referrals and initiate paperwork. Call **Suzanne Sackett**, (707) 539-2017, for information on the Clean & Sober School program and to schedule an interview.





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# SPiRiT AWAKENiNG

## FOUNDATIOn

### Purpose Statement

*Spirit Awakening Foundation* is a non profit arts organization whose purpose is to assist individuals in the realization of their own spiritual identity through contemplative meditation, inner reflection and the written and spoken word.

*Founder and executive director Akuyoe Graham is a writer and actor currently touring her critically acclaimed one woman show, Spirit Awakening. Akuyoe is available as a consultant and program trainer.*

"I am writing in support and appreciation of the outstanding work done by Akuyoe Graham and the *Spirit Awakening Foundation*. I am a therapist at Camps Scott and Scudder; my first awareness of the program came as camp residents began to mention it during our counseling sessions. It is a uniquely positive and powerful program that is, I believe, of great benefit within the walls of a juvenile justice facility."

- Cheryl Morris, LCSW

### Vision and Philosophy

The foundation believes in the dignity of an omnipresent life and in a beauty of the soul. We believe that love is the governing force of life which enables all people to transcend the difficulties in their lives and expand into their greatest potential. While recognizing the power and majesty of each unique person, the foundation ultimately seeks to illumine and celebrate the healing, guiding spirit of love within all people.

**Working successfully  
with youth and juveniles  
in the detention system  
for over 6 years.**

"The program and your performance were outstanding. Thank you again from the very bottom of my heart for the wonderful rays of hope and confidence you have instilled in the heart of my daughter and for all the other cadets at Camp Scott."

- Blanche Flowers, Parent

*Please call us and allow Spirit Awakening to serve your constituents.*

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P. O. Box 3722 • Santa Monica, CA 90408  
Phone: (310) 712-5654 • Fax: (310) 396-7249



# Beyond Vocational Training - Kern County's Approach to Building Essential Skills

by Sandra Phelps

*"We need to prepare students for their future, not for our past."*

This quote from Dr. David Thornburg (2020 Visions for the Future of Education – ed. 1997) is a provocative mantra for educational reform. Yet, even as the term "educational reform" is trivialized through over-use and over-analysis, throughout our national school system there is growing evidence of the results of the education reform initiative. The reinstitution of career education is one evidence of the educational reform challenge.

This new career education framework has evolved from the offering of isolated vocational training courses to a limited number of students to providing career pathway development options to the majority of students. Job training or career education, as a stand-alone or add-on activity, stands as a single source approach that educates students for "our past, not their future." Career education and job training, locally and nationally, are restructuring to meet the demands

of the ever-changing, increasingly more technological and multi-skilled labor market. Students will transition between a multitude of jobs and careers throughout their lifetime. As educators, we must provide them with the ability to build a variety of different "skill sets" so that they can compete for existing jobs as well as successfully transition into jobs that do not yet exist. Regardless of the industry or profession, an employee who is dependable, arrives to work on time, effectively communicates, follows directions, works well with others and adapts well to continual change is valued. (National Alliance of Business – publication "What Employers' Want Schools to Know" – 1997). These "skill sets" students can learn while in school, and they are now considered essential job skills. Employers state that these

**"The intent was for students to connect 'school work' with 'real work.'"**

employers report that the lack of a strong work ethic (or these essential "skill sets") is a direct reflection on our current educational system's lack of job training and

career preparation courses. Of course, we know this to be a much larger societal issue. Regardless, educators certainly stand on the frontline of these issues and are being held accountable for their end product – the competent and productive 21<sup>st</sup> century worker.

### Our Plan for Integrating Curriculum

Kern County Superintendent of Schools – Court, Community and Charter Schools is in the process of building a career pathway development system with a foundation of essential skills building for all students. The beginning point for this process was the establishment of JobsPlus! '98. During the summer of 1998, 200 students were employed to work in community companies. Overall, 26 adult staff members (teachers and teacher assistants) were involved. Under the direction of a project manager (and assistant) 12 community companies were formed. The community companies replicated a business while maintaining an academic base. The intent was for students to connect "school work" with "real work" as they accomplished meaningful work assignments. While earning a

salary and high school credit, student employees were responsible for developing a product or projects. Each company member wrote a vision statement and business plan. The academic linkage between school and work was accomplished for all community companies by establishing competency "learning links." "Learning links" included seven areas: research, planning, budgeting, marketing, implementation, quality control and service to others. To foster teambuilding, student employees were divided into task groups. Each community company employed a student public relations coordinator. The public relations coordinator attended marketing workshops and wrote press releases. At the closing celebration titled "What a Difference a Job Makes," hosted on August 13, 1998 at the Boys and Girls Club, approximately 700 people gathered to view the products or projects displayed in individual community company booths. Each public relations coordinator formally addressed the audience, relating the accomplishments of their company.

While students learned about work by working, teachers also learned to develop curriculum that included career education strategies. Teachers exited this summer experience with new materials and strategies for their year-round classrooms. The community company strategy is easy to

replicate and does not require paying students to operate. Teachers can use this business model across all subject areas and age levels in a year-round classroom. This includes segmenting workers into task-oriented teams around a project or product, conducting student-led staff meetings, and involving local business and community members in the classroom. In this manner, career education becomes integrated as a natural part of the learning environment, versus an isolated unit or program. For us, JobsPlus! launched our two-year career integration strategic plan.

To garner innovative community companies, we used a bidder's conference approach.

- Flyers announcing two bidder's conferences for teachers and assistants were distributed to those who might be interested in working during the summer.
- Interested applicants then reserved a slot at the bidder's conference that best met their schedule.
- During the bidder's conference(s), a proposal template was distributed.
- Applicants were provided with examples of community companies and asked to follow the template to write a proposal.
- Proposals were reviewed and

**As one student employee stated, "This job means a lot to me. Before I was locked up, there was a time that my family was homeless too. I feel good about getting to help this way."**

rated by a team of students, educators and business partners.

- Top rated proposal writers were granted an interview.
- Teachers were selected accordingly to serve as company managers.

Previously, vocational education generally focused on building carpentry skills in isolation. For example, students would be exposed to specific skills (carpentry) with essential skill sets (work ethic) as a secondary focus. After the completion of carpentry training, a student might get a job as a carpenter helper and then begin building a work ethic.

In community companies the work-based learning focus is broader, incorporating as many trades as possible so that students gain better perspective and can make better long-range career choices. Essential skills (work ethic) are integrated into the learning process.



### Our Next Steps

**D**uring JobsPlus! '99, our next step is to develop five summer academies (Technology and Media Academy, Culinary Arts Academy, Construction and Trades Academy, Public Service Academy, and Health & Science Academy). Under the summer academy cluster, it is estimated that twenty community companies will operate as we expand services to 350 students. Each community company will have interactions with 3-5 business partners and a career council will be formalized for school year 1999-2000. The career council will devise a career cluster calendar of events for the school year so that each month features a different career cluster. In this manner, career awareness and exposure will be highlighted for all teaching staff and students.

Whether they transition to other schools or directly to work, our students will take with them a combination of essential skills to use as they journey throughout their chosen career pathways. ●

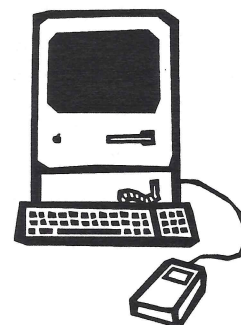
### JTPA Funding Information

Funds for student and a portion of staff salaries were provided through Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). To obtain a listing of the JTPA provider in your area or to obtain a complete listing of community companies and receive a summary report, contact our office – CareerPlus! Center – 307 E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Bakersfield, CA 93305 – 805-328-0212.

**Sandra Phelps**, Career Development Specialist has twenty-four years of experience in the career education field. Most recently, she was appointed for a one year term as Career Advisor for National Youth Employment Coalition representing the western region.

## Program Showcase: Kern County's Community Companies

### Digitize It

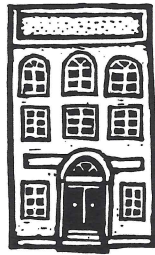


**A**n example of a community company that strengthened academic, technical and essential job skills was *Digitize It*. This company worked at the Kern County Museum. At the close of the summer work, over 1,000 historic photographs were digitally input into computers. Student employees learned to research local history while using digital cameras, scanners and computers. They interacted with senior citizens, local historical groups, museum staff and business members as they authenticated the historical photographs and documents. Written and oral communication skills were enhanced as they worked in teams with stringent deadlines to accomplish their work. They gained a new appreciation of our local history as museum curators taught them how to properly handle historical documents and photographs. Along with their paycheck, (funded by Job Training Partnership Act), they exited the summer work experience with a variety of skills to add to their essential skill arsenal.

## **Teens for Seniors**

This community company focused on construction skills development. Student employees learned about electrical wiring, plumbing, plastering and basic carpentry as they renovated a condemned motel. The motel was then converted into mini-apartments for homeless families which provided the service element of the company. Multitudes of occupational skills were being developed so students could learn the connection between various occupations.

Academic skills were also integrated, employees in *Teens for Seniors* were in training as they researched and recreated. Student employees had to determine the amount of work they could complete within a given budget. For implementation, they created task teams to do the work in stages. Quality control was maintained as they created inspector teams of students and local builders working together to ensure that the work was accomplished according to code. Service to others made this work meaningful as students met with several homeless families and agencies to determine their needs and gain input. A student employee stated, "This job means a lot to me. Before I was locked up, there was a time that my family was homeless too. I feel good about getting to help this way."



as student  
involved in plan-  
blueprints.  
amount of work

## **Lifelong Learning**

This is a community company that integrated language arts and history. Student employees interviewed senior citizens, wrote their life stories and published the results in composite journals. Then student employees imagined themselves back in time to the era of the person or persons they interviewed. They re-wrote their interviewee's life history with themselves as the central character. Using the same learning links (research, planning, marketing, budgeting, implementation, quality control and service to others), this community company provides an excellent, low cost example of integrating career education that a language arts or history teacher can easily incorporate. Student learners researched the labor market of the 1900's, compared it to today and gained a much better understanding of work by humanizing the process through interviewing a person who lived in the early 1900's. This strategy is one of many that the project manager (teacher) learned and employed during JobsPlus! '98.



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better understanding of work by humanizing the process through  
interviewing a person who lived in the early 1900's. This strategy is  
one of many that the project manager (teacher) learned and employed  
during JobsPlus! '98.

## **Team Action Sports Web**

This community company served as the electronic way station for the bicycle "Race Across America". While bicycle teams participated in a week-long race, a staff member rode in the van behind the racers and



transmitted information via a laptop computer to *Team Action Sports Web*. Student employees input this data and tracked all the racers' progress. Incidentally, the team from Bakersfield won this race and credits the existence and enthusiasm of the way station employees for keeping them motivated and well informed! Student employees were ever alert as they communicated via computer the various needs of the racers. From tracking bicycle parts stores to locating a hospital for a medical emergency, *Team Action Sports Web* served as an integral service provider for the overall race.

We invite you to visit  
our webpage designed by  
***Team Action Sports Web***.  
Our address is  
**clc.kcsos.k12.ca.us**.  
Simply click on ***JobsPlus!***  
to get more information!



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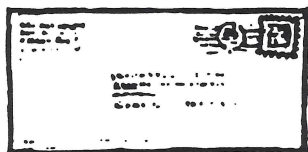
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# Community Collaboration Coalition: Collaboration At Its Best

*by Janet M. Addo, Margaret A. Taylor, Marilyn S. Izumita,  
Jerome Johnson, Delores Golston, and Mark Mrotek*

### BACKGROUND

In 1993 Los Angeles County was divided into eight Service Planning Areas (SPAs) by the County Supervisors to facilitate coordination of available services for children, youth and families. SPA 6 is comprised of four distinct communities (Sub-Regions):

- Paramount, Lynwood & Compton
- Watts, South Central & Willowbrook
- Exposition & Jefferson Park
- Crenshaw, Laimert Park, View Park, Baldwin Park & Lower Ladera.

SPA 6 Sub-Regions of Compton/ Lynwood/ Paramount and Watts/ South Central have a high concentration of at-risk youth and families. For some time the needs of these

youth and their families have been either unmet or only partially met. In some cases the services offered by the school, community, or

governmental agencies have been inaccessible. When these services were accessible, they were frequently uncoordinated, leading both to the targeting of same populations and ignoring of others and to the squandering of resources through duplicated services. Monitoring of the service delivery system – educational agencies, Probation Office, Social Services, community based organizations (CBOs) – was fragmented and ineffective.

In 1996, the service providers – educational agencies, Probation Department, Social Services, and

CBOs – of SPA 6 Sub-Regions of Compton/ Lynwood/ Paramount and Watts/ South Central met to discuss the issues and the needs unique to their communities. The meeting advanced a

proactive process for the systematic coordination of efforts and resources and efficient delivery of services to meet all needs of the targeted population.

**"Comprehensive and competency based programs are designed to help youth at risk to succeed in the classroom and community."**

At the same time, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, Division of Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS), initiated the development of a comprehensive collaborative education and service center, a "one-stop shop" school serving as a center for the community from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. During the planning sessions of the Sub-Region, both processes – that for systematic coordination and an efficient delivery system and that of the school as center of community – coalesced into the Community Collaborative Coalition (CCC).

### THE COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

The Community Collaborative Coalition (CCC) provides a service delivery system through the collaboration and coordination of public/private organizations and governmental agencies. The goal of the CCC is to strengthen and preserve at-risk families and heal those that are already experiencing family dysfunction. The strategy of the CCC is to ensure the physi-



cal, emotional, social, educational, cultural and spiritual development of children and family, and eventually the entire community, in a safe and nurturing environment.

The CCC solicited Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to address various service area needs, including:

- food
- clothing
- health care
- job training
- parent education/support
- spiritual needs
- recreation
- problem solving
- counseling
- service learning
- academics
- mentoring
- fine/performing arts
- self-defense
- athletics
- technology
- college-bound programs
- transportation

### THE SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: HOW IT WORKS

#### • New Transitions

Founders-Hope Centre is a prototype Comprehensive Collaborative Education and Service Center (CCESC). Designed, constructed and sustained in the City of Compton through a partnership with Founders Na-

tional Bank, it provides a “brokerage” service for those students returning from camp or juvenile hall to the Compton, Lynwood and Paramount Sub-Region. Students transitioning from camp or juvenile hall to the Sub-Region South Central/Watts enter the returnee program maintained by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

During the term of a youth’s detention in camp or

hall, the students, teachers, probation officers, parents (legal guardians or caregivers) and school age family members work as a multi-disciplin-

**“Educators, parents, and community stakeholders need to be partners in the development of a clear and common focus.”**

ary team to develop an individual learning plan with specific academic and behavioral goals. In transitioning out of the camp or hall, the youth receives intensive preparatory assessment and planning activity documents. The Youth Services Specialists (YSS) and the Transition Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA) from SouthEast Principal Administrative Unit (PAU - JCCS) are part of the camp Multi-disciplinary Team and facilitate pre-release voucher

services for the family. The YSS and the TSA monitor the student’s transition, transfer the pertinent records to Hope Centre, I-PAC, or LAUSD Transition counselors, and direct subsequent placement.

The Multi-disciplinary Team structure in the community is the Inter-Agency Placement and Advisory Committee (I-PAC). I-PAC includes representatives from school districts in the area, Probation, LACOE Education Programs, Charter School Programs, Youth Services Specialists, Mental Health Counselor(s), Special Education, parents and Community-Based Organizations. I-PAC participates in case management documentation which includes risk and needs assessment, evaluation of data, and consistent assessment. The I-PAC refers students and their families to community-based aftercare services and educational options.

#### • New Beginnings

The WAVE Middle Community Education Center is a model designed to address the special developmental needs of at-risk middle school students.

Students enrolled are first time offenders, ages 15 years and younger (WIC 602 and 654), who have been referred by the surrounding public school districts’

School Attendance Review Boards (SARB), [Compton] Inter-Agency Placement and Advisory Committee (CI-PAC) or the Probation Department.

Each student's progress is reviewed every six months by the Student Planning Team (SPT) to determine readiness to transition to the home school district. The

participants of the Student Planning Team (SPT) are site administrator, teachers, behavior management assistants,

probation officers, parents, students, and a school district representative. If the student has not met the criteria for transition, the SPT then recommends additional attendance and intervention strategy requirements at WAVE Middle Community Education Center (CEC).

The WAVE Middle Community Education Center program provides a continuum of care that spans prevention, early intervention, treatment, positive attitudinal/behavioral change, study, core subjects, listening skills and eventual re-entry into the system of the "home" school.

### **WAVE 2000**

*The WAVE acronym means...*

**WORK ACHIEVEMENT,  
VALUES & EDUCATION**

**W**AVE Middle (CEC), located in the "hub" city of Compton, California within the Salvation Army Compton Community Corps building, was opened to accommodate the large

numbers of students that fit the entrance criteria.

WAVE Middle CEC is the only program

specifically geared to the middle school population in Los Angeles County. Because of its focus, WAVE Middle CEC was purposely named after the national program.

The JCCS division was awarded an incentive grant from Prudential Foundation/WAVE, Inc. in 1997, to pilot the program (middle and high school), give feedback and infuse the strategies in the adopted attitudinal training and social skills curricula in SouthEast PAU. The SouthEast PAU JCCS is one of 50 schools nationwide to pilot the program and help to tailor curriculum specifically addressing the student

"in crisis" or "at risk" of entering the juvenile court or children's court system.

The program provides curriculum emphasizing social skills, easing the transition between middle grades and high school. Integrated Core (language arts, social science, mathematics, health, science, school-to-career) curriculum and WAVE curriculum activities have assisted students in correlating academic disciplines and "real" world productivity and success. Comprehensive competency based programs are designed to help youth at risk to succeed in the classroom and community. WAVE in middle grades includes an extensive program of teacher training and support, implementation of the Leadership Association for students and "Breaking Down the Boundaries," a program utilizing business and community volunteers in the classroom.

Lessons incorporate age-appropriate content and strategies while focusing on the connection between behaviors and expectations in the middle school and in the workplaces. Through interactive activities, more than 160 curriculum lessons introduce important concepts of:

- responsibility
- decision making
- problem solving

**"Students are engaging in service learning and leadership activities in the community as a result of participating in the WAVE program."**



## Collaboration At Its Best

- life skills
- self-esteem building
- team work

Attitudinal change is "key". SouthEast PAU (SEPAU) believes that the formula to success is Attitude adjustment first, then acquired Skills, and finally a quest for Knowledge (ASK).

WAVE Middle CEC provides an environment where students and their families can:

- find a measure of success that will impact their lives in a positive way
- find resources for change, growth, and empowerment when at risk of academic and social failure
- learn to compete in the global economy utilizing information systems and internet related technologies

SouthEast PAU's vision slogan "SCHOOLS AS CENTER OF COMMUNITY... Reaching the Vision Together" expresses the philosophical intent. The belief is to move toward creating an ethos for transformational schools—educators, parents, and community stakeholders need to be partners in the development of a clear and common focus. The continuum of educational services

and resources available include but are not limited to:

- real world curriculum linked to global technology systems
- culturally diverse social activities that positively and critically engage students
- leadership and self-empowerment activities
- school-linked counseling services available to students and their families
- collaborative community partnerships that ensure a continuance

**"This collaborative educational approach will assist minors in staying out of the juvenile justice system."**

of program support services

- active parent involvement and empowerment

WAVE activities are exploding at other community education centers within SouthEast PAU. Students are engaging in service learning and leadership activities in the community as a result of participating in the WAVE program at their site. Over 60 students ages 12-18, representing the ten community education centers, participated in a very successful two day student Leadership Training Seminar in March of 1998. Contracted national professional facilitators coordinated their activities. During the same week, SEPAU staff were also provided with a two day sharing, problem-solving, and strategizing inservice.

The Salvation Army-Compton Community Corps, WAVE Middle CEC's partner, has recently applied for extended day activity funds under Senate Bill 1095, the High-Risk Youth Education and Public Safety Program (New Beginnings). The program includes a minimum of four hours of academic instruction and at least three hours of tutoring, enhanced studies, character building seminars, visual & performing arts, and recreation daily. Subsequently, students attending WAVE Middle CEC will experience eight hours of direct supervision from one or more participating agencies every day except Sundays.

### SUMMARY

The Community Collaborative Coalition (CCC) is an accountable, comprehensive, family-focused locally controlled body. CCC built and wove existing regional and local relationships resulting in a multi-disciplinary service delivery system with the key components of assessment, intervention, transition, and evaluation. The CCC demonstrates the capacity to coordinate multi-agency local action plans that meet minimum standards, have measurable outcomes, contribute to modifying anti-social behavior, and provide early intervention for identified youth.

Coordinated services within the service planning area will

**COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE COALITION MEMBERS:**

provide an appropriate education, learning experiences, and emotional/physical services that are accessible to students and their families. This collaborative educational approach will assist minors in staying out of the juvenile justice system and in lowering the recidivism rate for those who have already entered the system. ●

*This article was written by these staff members from the SouthEast PAU (SEPAU), Los Angeles County Office of Education, Division of Juvenile Court & Community Schools:*

**Janet M. Addo**  
Principal

**Margaret A. Taylor**  
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Founders-Hope Centre Comprehensive Collaborative Education and Service Center (CCESC)

**Jerome Johnson**  
Teacher-on-Special Assignment (TSA) Manual Arts Transition Community Education Center

**Delores Golston**  
Teacher, WAVE Middle Community Education Center

*edited by*  
**Mark Mrotek**

**Community-Based Organizations:**

- Positive Image'
- Project IMPACT
- Girls and Gangs
- Drive-By Agony
- A&W Industries
- International Association of Black Yoga Teachers
- The Salvation Army Compton Corps Community Center
- Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Incorporated (YOU, Inc.)
- Constitutional Rights Foundation, Sports and the Law Program
- Institute for Human Maximizing Potential Incorporated (IHMP, Inc.)
- Globetrotters Affiliate: Smooth and Special Day Camp Incorporated
- CSU, San Bernardino: Center for the Study of Correctional Education
- UCLA: Office of Instructional Development
  - Community-Based Learning Programs
  - Videoconference and Distance Learning
- Azusa Pacific University: Mentor America

**Governmental Agencies**

- Compton Police Department
- Los Angeles Police Department
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- Los Angeles County Probation Department
- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Services

**Participating Educational Agencies and School Sites**

- YOU Alternative High School
- Lynwood Unified School District
- Compton Community Day School
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Paramount Community Day School
- John Hope Continuation High School
- Institute for Human Maximizing Potential Incorporated (IHMP, Inc.)
- Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), Juvenile Court and Community School Division,
  - SouthEast Principal's Administrative Unit (SEPAU):
    - Founders - Hope Center (CCESC)
    - Compton/Lynwood Community Education Center (CEC)
    - South Central Community Education Center (CEC)
    - H. Randall Moore Community Education Center (CEC)
    - WAVE Middle Community Education Center (CEC)
  - Division of Alternative Education
  - Tri-Community Alternative Education Center (AEC)
  - Division of Special Education
  - Avalon Principal's Administrative Unit (PAU)
    - SEA Charter School



# NASCAR and Court Schools Establish Motor Sports Partnership

*By Denis S. Desmond*

The word is getting out and things are beginning to happen for the 1999 "911 Race for Youth Series."

This is a NASCAR racing program initiated by Marion Collins from the Mesa Marin Raceway, Bakersfield. Students from the Erwin Owen High School auto shop at Camp Owen in Kern County are reconstructing six stock cars in an 'IROC' format (identically prepared cars) for the spring racing season. In an October meeting of Kern County law enforcement, fire department and educators it was proposed to develop a NASCAR racing series with the racecars fabricated by "wards of the court" and driven by law enforcement and fire department personnel. The cars were to be evenly matched with identical engines and carburetors. There would be twenty races during the season. Each of the six departments would be responsible for raising \$6000 to cover the expenses to refurbish 'their' car. Sponsors would be given space on the cars for advertising. The cars would be painted to resemble the logos and colors of each department.

As the meeting concluded, there was a frenzy of smiles and friendly challenges thrown back and forth across the table. The sheriff, police chief, CHP captain, probation director, fire captains, all seemed to feel that once put on a level playing field, their department would shine. The glimmers of challenges and implied vindication shot back and forth across the table. No one seemed to feel that his or her department would be lacking when it came to the racing asphalt.

The camp school auto shop proposal was to attend to the mechanics for the racecars and the public agencies would raise the money, supply the drivers and pit crews.

### Goals Laid Out

The students of Erwin Owen High School auto shop, operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools, were to be given six evenly matched cars. It would be the teacher's job to motivate his students to re-fit

the cars by the March/April deadline. The cars were to have similar or same engines and body styles, to be stripped down and refitted with roll cages, fuel cells, safety harnesses, and whatever NASCAR regulations demanded.



The public agencies needed to develop an environment of competition and cooperation. The Kern

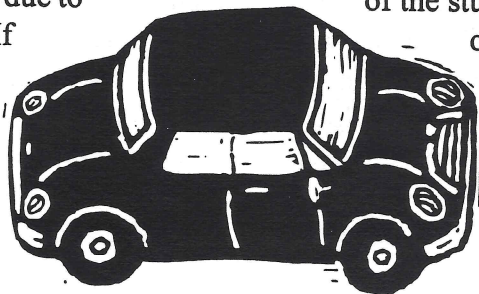
County Probation Department, Bakersfield Police Department, Kern County Sheriff's Department, Bakersfield Fire Department, Kern County Fire Department, California Highway Patrol, and Kern County Superintendent of Schools would be involved.

In October 1998, agencies went to work getting support from the community. Marion Collins began searching for racecars. By October 15<sup>th</sup>, the auto shop at Camp Owen had their first two cars, a '79 Oldsmobile Cutlass and an '80 Monte Carlo. Both had 305 cubic inch engines. The class began tearing down the cars. The engines needed to be checked and

## NASCAR and Court Schools Establish Motor Sports Partnership

rebuilt as well as the transmissions. Roll cages needed to be ordered along with fuel cells. The seats all came out along with the dashes and the consoles. By December 16, 1998, all six cars were at the shop and in some stage of being torn apart and rebuilt.

The original plan called for students at Camp Owen to build and maintain six evenly matched racecars. There was a proposal to have these same students crew in the pits during the races, but the immediate problem of insurance developed and the proposal was rejected mainly due to liability issues. If there was a mechanical problem at the race track, then the vehicle would be loaded on a trailer and trucked back to Camp Owen for the auto shop class to work on during the regular school week. Hopefully, the problem could be resolved and the car would be returned to race on the following Saturday night.



### Auto Shop Enthusiasm

The idea of having students working with law enforcement agencies on a common project seemed to have no downside. The agencies involved were as anxious as the auto shop students. They both wanted to tackle a meaningful project to demonstrate their capabilities. Dan Gates, the auto shop instructor, felt that the students would benefit from the direct hands-on relationship of tearing the cars down, rebuilding them to specifications and then getting the opportunity to see the cars run in a race. Most of the students who work on the cars will have earned their release before the April race schedule.

The energy level at the Erwin Owen High School auto shop has definitely been given a jump-start. The program in the auto shop follows the Regional Occupation Program guidelines – working on projects in a systematic fashion. Having six vehicles to work on simultaneously seems to have piqued everyone's interest.

The 24 students in the auto shop will have had the invaluable experience of learning how a racecar is put together. When talking with the students, there is a level of excitement and energy that is contagious. They are doing something important. They are learning how to do something that they want to do. If you ask, "What did you learn in school today?" they want to take you to their project area and show you what they are doing. I believe that this obvious sense of pride is a motivator, the lever that will pry them out of their bad habits and propel them to new choices. These are students who have found the encouragement and motivation they need to go to school. These are the students who have found one answer. ●

Denis S. Desmond has been with the Kern County Superintendent of Schools at Erwin Owen High School since 1987. He has served as a teacher, head-teacher and currently as the principal of the school at the forestry camp. Previously, he has served as a teacher, mentor, and department chair for South Fork School District and as a part-time instructor for Cerro Coso Community College.



# Preventing Delinquency in Elementary School Students: The Horizon Alternative Academy Enrichment Program

by *Mohammed Forouzesh, Ph.D.,  
Veronica Acosta-Deprez, Ph.D., and Ted Price, Ph.D.*

### CASE STUDY

Adam is nine years old and has attended the Academy for one year. He lives with his grandparents, two cousins, an older brother, and an older sister. His father remarried, and his mother lives in a motel with her younger children and boyfriend. Adam was taught by his mother to shoplift at Target. He was expelled from the district for acting out, not listening, and stealing from peers and the teacher. He reported being physically abused (whipped with a hanger and bitten), but was unclear on who abused him. He reported having observed his father kiss a 15 year-old girl and wanted to tell his stepmother. He hated his father and wanted him to get into trouble. He reported his grandparents and father being drunk all the time. His father was arrested for drinking and driving and spent time in jail. His mother's boyfriend is African-American and their children were darker-skinned than Adam, making Adam stand out. Adam wanted to have a new bed because he shared a bed with his 10 year-old female cousin. Upon asking his grandmother, she just laughed and said they couldn't afford it. He does not receive an allowance and was told to expect this only when he reaches fourteen years of age. During his attendance at the Academy, Adam's father lost his job and Adam blamed himself for this. His behavior in the Academy was very disruptive; he was in some fights, and was suspended for three days due to his behavior.

The preceding case study depicts a real example of one of the innumerable situations that plague the lives of many very young children. Unfortunately, these circumstances put them at increased risk for delinquency. Delinquency, particularly gang and drug-related violence, is escalating among our youth at an alarming rate (Garbarino, 1992). Children are killing each other. Crimes are being committed in schools, homes, neighborhoods and other public places. Some children are even involved in drug-trafficking and other major violent crimes. This increase in delinquency will have a serious impact on the ability of our youth to develop as responsible, productive adults.

Currently, there are numerous programs and projects geared toward delinquency prevention among our teenage and young adult populations. Various social services have been available to cater to their needs. However, very little has been done to address the needs of much younger, elementary-age children (under twelve). It is well accepted that the early years are critical for setting the stage for future devel-

opment (Perry, 1995). The experiences of the school years are also important to children's healthy growth. During the school years, children develop the social and academic skills necessary to function as responsible adults and citizens. When many of the essential ingredients for children to succeed academically in school (i.e., family support, safe home and school environments, community recreational and sports opportunities, counseling, peer support, conflict resolution skills, mentoring, etc.) are missing in their daily lives, they are more likely to experience higher absenteeism and tardiness rates, health and behavioral problems, inability to concentrate, and higher dropout and expulsion rates (Craig, 1992; Eron, et. al., 1994; Scuster, L.A., 1995). Accordingly, it becomes difficult for regular schools to effectively serve and teach children with these problems.

Since regular school activities do not often support children with uncommon or special needs, it is imperative that programs to prevent the onset and further proliferation of delinquent behaviors be developed and imple-

mented (Zigler et al, 1992). Through a federally funded Safe and Drug-Free Schools grant, the Horizon Alternative Academy Elementary Enrichment Program was developed by the Orange County Department of Education to provide comprehensive academics, case management, student and family counseling and community support services to elementary school children expelled from public schools. The development of these additional services and supports was seen as a mechanism to help students succeed in school and to successfully reintegrate into their local schools with new strategies for conflict resolution, social skills, study skills, and decision making.

In this article, a description of the program, its organizational components, and staff develop-

ment activities are specified. Program evaluation methods and results which include student, teacher, and parent interviews are then described, followed by the conclusion and recommendations.

### **Program Description**

Upon receipt of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools grant, three Alternative Elementary School Academy programs were opened by the Orange County Department of Education to meet the increasing referrals of elementary school children expelled from local district schools. The Academy team consisted of the principal, the teachers, instructional

assistants, parents, a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), and Masters in Social Work (MSW) program interns. An initial psychological assessment

was completed by the LCSW or MSW intern for each student. This allowed the social worker an opportunity to develop a working relationship with the student and family. Once needs were identified, a comprehensive counseling program was developed for each student which included individual and small group classroom guidance activities and consultation with teachers, parents and administrators. This comprehensive counseling program was combined with identified academic needs which were then used to develop an individualized education plan (IEP) for each student.

### **Organizational Components**

Students were referred to the Alternative Academy by their local school district due to a history of behavioral problems which led to expulsion; special provisions for special education students were implemented. An IEP meeting was held for those students identified as needing special education. The Alternative Academy principal received a written referral and an intake session was scheduled with the

**"The first line of defense against further delinquency in elementary school children is the establishment of comprehensive services and programs for at-risk children and their families."**



## ***Preventing Delinquency in Elementary School Students***

social worker, teacher, and enrollment technician. The social worker interviewed the parent(s) and completed a psychosocial history and assessment of his/her family. During the interview, the student visited the Academy classroom and met with the teacher and instructional assistant.

During the first week of enrollment, the student completed academic assessments. The student was then assigned an MSW intern

who began individual and group counseling. The student was observed by the teacher, instructional assistant, and MSW intern for behavioral indicators in a variety of classroom situations.

Within ten days of enrollment, the interdisciplinary team met to develop a student plan that identified academic, behavioral, and social goals. This set the basis for the individual objectives to be achieved by the student, family, and interdisciplinary team while the student was in the Academy. Issues were also identified for counseling based upon initial assessments and behavioral observation. In addition, counseling

also focused on day-to-day problems and conflicts identified in the classroom.

Parent involvement was crucial to the overall success of students in the Academy. A family-school relationship was built and

strengthened throughout the program. There were monthly parent meetings which focused on topics identified by teachers, social workers, and parents. Ongoing communication between

the family and school was maintained in written weekly progress reports and quarterly parent conferences. Parents were encouraged to participate in field trips, class parties, and help with classroom operations. At the end of the academic year, parents organized and provided a closing celebration.

Transition was another important component of the Academy program. Academy staff worked with the receiving district staff to facilitate a smooth and successful transition back into district schools. Most Academy graduates were to be moved from elementary (6<sup>th</sup> grade) to a new

junior high or middle school. The very nature of this academic promotion created adjustment issues for the student. Academy staff provided transitioning skills to assist the student and family with system changes. In addition, receiving district school personnel met with Academy staff to gain insights about the student and utilize resources to assist the student and family with strategies for success.

### **Staff Development**

The success of the Academy was based upon a strong staff development component. Academy staff held weekly team meetings to discuss individual students and various program needs. Ongoing workshops were offered in academic areas and in the management of unacceptable behavior. Annually, a full week of in-service was provided by national trainers covering a variety of subjects such as:

- **Stress-Free Discipline in the Classroom**
- **Strategies for Working with Angry and Aggressive Youth**
- **Rejuvenation and Renewal to Prevent Teacher Burnout**
- **Teaching Self-Control**
- **Teaching Respect and Responsibility**
- **Management of Assaultive Behavior**

- **Conflict Resolution**
- **Anger Management**
- **Thinking to Learn: A Cognitive Approach**
- **Reclaiming Youth-at-Risk**
- **Riggs Institute - Language Arts and Phonetics Training**

### **Project Components**

#### • **Academic:**

The academic component consisted of a) a comprehensive academic course of study to develop and maintain grade level knowledge and skills commensurate with the local school of residence; b) assessment of student learning modalities; and c) a course of study built upon student academic strengths using multiple intelligence information.

#### • **Course of Study:**

An IEP was developed for each student utilizing academic assessment based on skill level, multiple intelligence, and learning modalities. The curriculum reflected the state framework and standards. Teachers provided a course of study (age, skill, and grade appropriate) aligned with that of their school of residence, including language, reading, writing, mathematics, social science, science, and computer skills. The language arts program was structured to teach phonics

and vocabulary through spelling and applied learned knowledge in all language arts strands. Authentic assessment and mastery skill testing were used as tools for evaluation of academic performance.

Physical activity was integrated into the Academy program daily. Interactive, hands-on lessons were planned to meet student learning styles. Computer assisted learning was used to enhance academic development. Attained skills were practiced and applied through activities within the community, such as going to restaurants, using public transportation, and attending cultural and recreational events.

#### • **Social Needs:**

The social needs of students were met through the following:

- **Development of internal locus of control**
- **Development of positive age-appropriate interpersonal relationships**
- **Development of positive relationships and communication patterns in the family**
- **Understanding and commitment to responsible behavior**
- **Structured, consistent, and safe school, child care and**

home environments

- **Development of resiliency and protective factors to foster successful social relationships**
- **Staff support for successful reintegration into a school in the district of residence**
- **Coordination (case management) of education, criminal justice, and social services:**
  - **Some academy students were on formal or informal probation, or awaiting placement**
  - **Some Academy students were assigned County Social Service social workers**

#### • **Behavioral Needs:**

To address their behavioral needs, students in the academy were taught skills related to the appropriate use of communication, anger management, conflict resolution, decision making, and other positive social competencies. They were provided with a structured environment that promoted classroom behaviors through cooperative learning and the development of self-directed study skills. Students were taught appropriate behavioral skills in the classroom and more positive attitudes for the successful reintegration into their district of residence. Moreover, students were



## Preventing Delinquency in Elementary School Students

taught refusal skills and positive attitudes to foster drug-free living.

Throughout the day, behaviors related to appropriate language, class movement, reaction to conflict, decision making and anger management were monitored. A behavior modification system was utilized to acknowledge and reinforce appropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior was further discussed between the social worker and the teacher, student and parent. For students whose behaviors were not easily refocused, a plan and written contract were developed.

### Evaluation Methods

In order to carry out evaluation activities, comprehensive interview instruments were developed to collect appropriate information on the profile of the students, and their parents' and teachers' perceptions about the program. The data collection instrument for students was divided into psychosocial data, family profile, academic assessment, and health issues. The data was collected by the teacher and the on-site social worker. Parts of the students' files were kept confidential. The social worker interns and the instructor provided entries into students' files at each meeting with the students or their parents. A complete record of the students' progress while in the

program was maintained. Upon completion of the project, all files were reviewed and the entries were coded for the purpose of data collection. In addition to student files, teachers and parents were interviewed to better understand the effectiveness of the program.

### Findings

#### • Student Interviews:

##### *Demographic and Family Background*

Most of the students reported English as their home language, with some reporting a combination of English and Spanish spoken. Forty-one remained in the program for the duration of at least two semesters. Of these students, 23 returned to their district, four of whom needed special education, two families had moved, and 12 remained in the alternative academy program. At the end of the program, only 3% were referred back to the Academy.

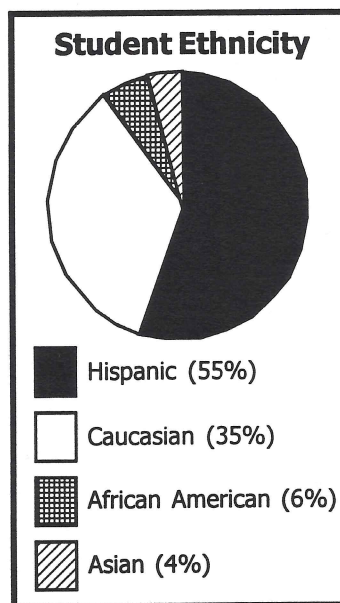
Fifty percent of the families were characterized as having absent fathers, 34 % having

received inconsistent parenting, 18% witnessed family violence, 14% had mothers who were absent, and 12% of families reported being somewhat isolated with little or no social support.

##### *Family Dynamics*

Over one third of the students reported having witnessed intra-family violence some time in their lives. Most families reported having strong family support and cohesiveness, with the mother being the only person concerned about the child's welfare. However, such support was mainly provided by the mother's family including the grandparents and aunts. The level of family isolation seemed to be directly related to the proximity of the mother to her parent's residence. The closer they lived to the mother's family, the less isolated they felt. It was reported that children are often the ones that the blame is placed on for family problems.

Most families reported experiencing sudden "disruptions." These disruptions, especially in single head families, often were



enough to push the family beyond their ability to cope. Having a family member in jail was the most common disruption reported. Others reported family histories of drug and alcohol abuse, family violence, unemployment, changes in the household composition, or sudden illness.

Over one half of the students reported experiencing some form of health problems, the most common being headaches. Other health problems included visual difficulty, head injury, birth trauma, or the possession of some form of unique physical feature. Children in the Academy were not considered a significant problem. Once the home environment was stabilized the child seemed to resume normal academic progress with little or no difficulty. In most cases, the students reported not having any apparent mental or emotional difficulties. The primary problem cited was impaired functioning in daily activities.

Students were easily divided into two groups in relation to psychological behavior - those who were extremely angry, and those who were totally shy and withdrawn. The most common behavior manifested by over 80%

of the students was anger. Display of aggression was often seen in frequent fighting, disruptive behaviors, and difficulty with authority. About 13% engaged in assaultive behavior, 11% had low self-esteem and were unable to focus, 6% had difficulty with authority and displayed self injurious behavior, and about 5% were shy and withdrawn.

### • Parent Interviews:

Seventeen parents were interviewed by telephone to obtain their perceptions of the value of the program. Parents believed that the program helped their children improve their grades, their attention span, and their attendance. They perceived the program to have also helped in improving their children's relationship with other students. However, several parents were concerned that when their children left the program, their children would experience difficulty in handling the transition to the new schools. Concern was also expressed that students would not have the same level of support at the district schools.

### • Teacher Interviews:

All the teachers in the program participated in an interview. When asked to discuss the program strengths and challenges, as well as comments and suggestions, many viewed the program as positive. They commented on:

- the individual attention provided
- the opportunity to work closely with the social worker and parents as a team
- flexibility within the program
- the use of positive reinforcement and behavioral consequences to deal with students
- the low student to teacher ratio
- the value of extensive family involvement

When asked about areas of improvement, teachers perceived:

- difficulty in maintaining consistency and structured program for students
- the variety of teaching styles and philosophies that at times did not fit the objectives
- the inadequate size of the classroom areas

**"The presence of highly trained, committed and empathetic teachers and staff is an excellent resource for children."**

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Overall, the program was very effective. It validated the research base that when parental and community involvement in children's activities are sought and carried out, school programs are



## *Preventing Delinquency in Elementary School Students*

more successful and children fare better. Additionally, the utilization of multi-level and multi-dimensional strategies to deal with at-risk youth are more effective in decreasing delinquency and improving school performance than a single-level strategy.

Academy staff's collective experience suggests that in order for future programs to increase effectiveness, focus should be on several elements both at the beginning and during the program implementation.

1. The intake procedure should be revised so that the teacher will have complete knowledge of the student's academic, behavior, and social history prior to the start date at the Academy.
2. A program needs to be in place that anticipates potential problems in order to increase the probability of a successful beginning Academy experience.
3. In order to assure successful transition into their respective district of residence, a meeting between the Academy staff and the district school staff should be set at least one month in advance

to ensure that all applicable information about the student is presented. Records must be accessible to all schools prior to such meeting. Concordant assessment tools should be utilized by both the Academy and the school of residence.

**"With time, effort, and skill, caregivers can provide children with an opportunity to challenge the odds and turn their lives and their school experience in a more positive direction."**

4. Since parents have been an important constituent in the success of the child, it is essential that they be involved more actively in all phases of the students' lives. This has been the most challenging task in the program, especially since many parents participated only partially in their children's endeavors. Perhaps a more comprehensive community referral system for parents is needed. Moreover, a support

group consisting of parents who are dealing with similar problems and issues with their child must be developed.

The first line of defense against further delinquency in elementary school children is the establishment of comprehensive services and programs for at-risk children and their families. Success in school and life requires that children be prepared for regular schooling. For the children in the Academy, more extensive and holistic services and strategies that focus on collaborative efforts between the staff, students and parents are valuable in enabling a healthy transition to regular schooling. The presence of highly trained, committed and empathetic teachers and staff is an excellent resource for children. Most important of all, the presence of active parental involvement in children's school activities offers students alternative perceptions of themselves, a strong support base, and a heightened self-esteem level. With time, effort, and skill, caregivers can provide children with an opportunity to challenge the odds and turn their lives and their school experience in a more positive direction.●

## About the Authors

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**Ted Price, Ph.D.** is currently serving as the Director of the Alternative, Charter, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) division of the Orange County Department of Education. He is responsible for the programs and services for at-risk, delinquent, incarcerated, and home-schooled youth and adults. These programs serve students from twenty-nine school districts in Orange County. Prior to his work with the Department of Education, Dr. Price served as an educational consultant, Superintendent of Schools for the Department of Correctional Education in Richmond, Virginia, and as Director of Juvenile Court and Community Schools for the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

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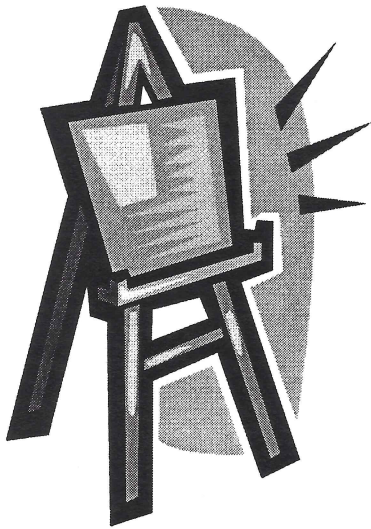
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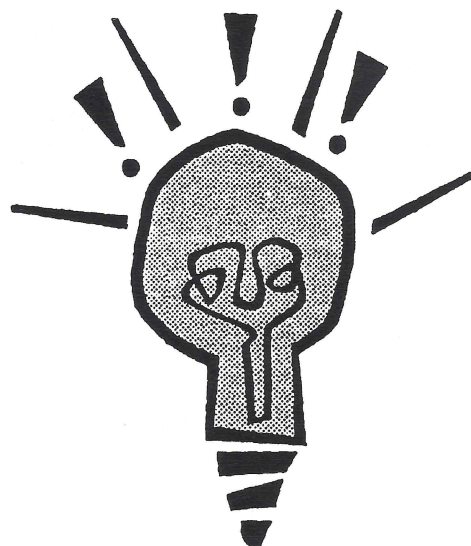


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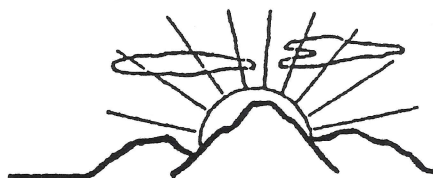
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# A Goal-setting Writing Exercise for Court School Students

by Judy Coffey, Ph.D. and Toni L. Horde

### Statement of the Problem

Like many students in other settings, when asked what they have learned in school recently, students in the court school system often answer that they have learned nothing. With prompting, they are often able to list a large number of facts, skills and concepts that they have, in fact, learned, but this knowledge lies outside their immediate conscious awareness. When asked to describe their long term goals, court school students often reply that their only goal is to be out of juvenile hall. When questioned further, they often indicate that no one has ever asked them about nor have they formulated long term goals; many students reply "I just try to live day to day." Observations such as these have led teachers to employ a weekly writing exercise which helps students develop metacognitive awareness of their own learning and progress while also encouraging them to think about, formulate and refine positive long term goals for

themselves. This paper will describe the exercise and Bandura's self-efficacy theory upon which it is based. Excerpts from student responses will be included to support our observation that the use of this exercise helps students increase metacognition and develop appropriate short and long term goals.

### The Three Elements of Self-efficacy

Effective personal functioning requires more than simply knowing what to do, how to do it, and being motivated to get it done. Bandura (1977, 1986, 1997) proposes that the self-efficacy concept is central to human action. Bandura has identified three separate components of self-efficacy which interact to affect a person's internal assessment of his or her ability to perform a particular action to obtain a desired outcome as well as his or her willingness to act in a given environment. The first element of self-efficacy requires that the person actually have the skill in

question. The second element, metacognition, requires that the person be aware that he or she in fact possesses the target skill. The third element of self-efficacy requires that the person believe that his or her execution of the target skill in a particular setting will be responded to without bias in that environment.

### Description of the Writing Exercise

In the intake unit of a juvenile detention center, we work with up to thirty male students daily. Most students fall within the junior high to high school age range; students remain in the unit for periods varying from several days to several months. Classes meet Monday through Friday in the unit dayroom which is equipped with eight round tables which seat four students each.

Each Friday, in place of their usual language arts assignment, students are given an assignment sheet which guides them through a writing exercise which is referred to as the "Friday English Assignment" (see page 61 for a copy of the assignment). There is space on the assignment sheet for

**"Helping students review their weekly academic accomplishments ... contributes to an increase in their self-efficacy."**



students to respond to the prompts "What I learned in class this week: 1, 2, 3," "My short term goals for next week," "My long term goals," and "How my short term goals support my long term goals." The directions for the exercise are also given verbally and the teacher and assistant circulate through the classroom and give students individual feedback and assistance throughout the exercise.

Students are instructed to go through their folders and organize and review all the written assignments they have done in all their subjects that week. They are also asked to reflect on the week's instructional videos and class discussions. They are then instructed to write down at least three concepts and/or skills they have learned in school during the past week. They are reminded that individual facts such as "Boston is the capitol of Massachusetts" are not sufficient, but "I learned how to reduce fractions" is fine. Students who have been assigned to our unit late in the week or who have not been in class for the entire week for other reasons may be excused from this part of the assignment only. When students sometimes state that they have learned nothing during the week, they are reminded of the consequence of an additional assignment during the Friday movie. In the eight months that this assignment has been in weekly

use, this prompting has always resulted in students recalling several things they had learned. We always point out to students that this indicates they know more than they at first give themselves credit for.

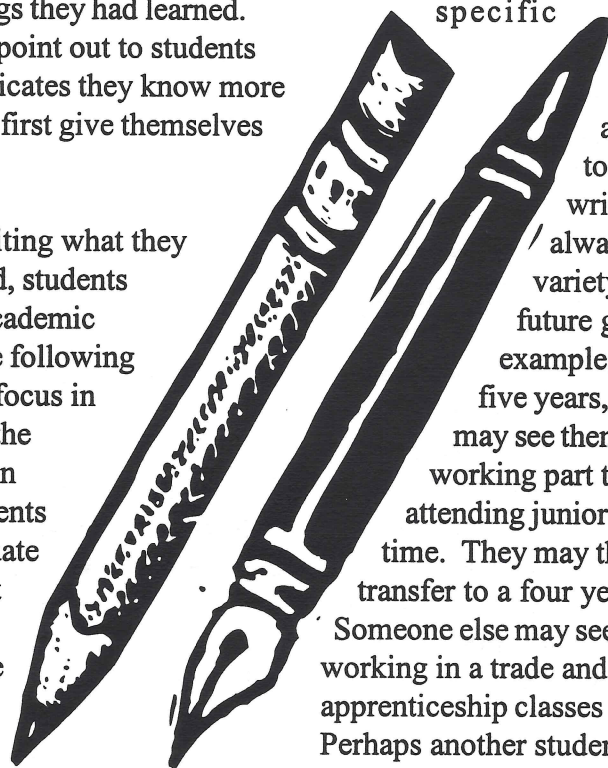
After writing what they have learned, students formulate academic goals for the following week. The focus in this part of the exercise is on getting students to self-evaluate their current levels of performance and to focus on areas of need and/or interest for future learning. A student who has learned to add fractions during the week might have the goal of learning to subtract fractions for the next week. A student who has learned how to copy a quotation accurately might plan to learn to paraphrase a quotation.

Students then reflect on and write down their long term goals. We remind students that "long term" means at least four or five years in the future. We also explain that getting and staying out of juvenile hall is a laudable but negative or "empty" goal; what do students plan to do instead? We encourage students

to state their goals in the positive and to make them as detailed and specific as possible.

Before we ask students to begin writing, we always suggest a variety of possible future goals. For example, in four or five years, students may see themselves working part time and attending junior college part time. They may then plan to transfer to a four year school.

Someone else may see himself working in a trade and taking apprenticeship classes at night. Perhaps another student plans to go straight into a four year college after high school—what would he like his major to be? We affirm the feasibility of realistic goals to students, pointing out possible school and community resources and mentioning former students who have successfully pursued similar interests. Students who express the intention to pursue careers in such fields as rock music, acting and professional sports are never discouraged, but we do suggest the importance of having back-up plans to help students support themselves until they achieve success in those fields. Several students have formulated plans to attend college in response to the observation that professional sports teams do most





## *A Goal-setting Writing Exercise*

of their recruiting from college teams.

In the final part of the exercise, students are asked to think about the connection between their short term and their long term goals. We discuss different hypothetical examples every week such as a student who wants to be a carpenter and plans to work on finding areas in geometry, or a future baker who needs to master fractions in order to cut down or increase recipes. The exercise is complete when the student has finished the writing assignment and received individual feedback from the teacher or assistant. The completed assignment sheet is stapled on top of the student's written work for the week and kept in the student's folder.

### **Examples of Student Responses**

The quality of student responses suggests that this exercise is beneficial to students both as a means to increase their metacognitive awareness of their own learning and as a way to encourage them to think about their future plans in a positive and concrete way.

One student listed the things he had learned during the week: "I learned that black and white films are not that bad, that there are consequences for my actions, and I learned what the Magna Carta

is." A student who had not attended school for several years and initially took the teacher aside to inform her that he "can't read much" wrote after several weeks that he wants to be a mechanic and he needs to learn more math and "to read engine books."

Another student saw that his short term goals support his long term goals: "Even

though it is very annoying, I have to learn all this math because one day it just might help me get a job." Another student sees that "School might help me out maybe. If I study harder." A student who wants to become "a photographer and a professional skateboarder" plans to "excel at geometry" because "I need to know how to do geometry to be a photographer." An especially volatile student's short term goal is to have self control of his temper. His short term goal supports his long term goal of becoming a mechanic: "to be kind and polite to serve in the workplace."

Over the course of several months, we have seen a student move from stating his long term goal as "to be a pimp" to "I don't know" to "Maybe if I start doing good the next placement will want to take me because they will see I'm motivated to do something and I will leave faster and stop

wasting my time in here." Another student writes: "I learned that a review in math for me was well needed and beneficial for my future.... The most important long term goal I have is to be financially ready to have and keep a family going. My short term goals

must first be accomplished in order to achieve my long term goals because I must take one step at a time. Getting out of juvenile is

step one and that's a positive start. Finishing my community service is another big step towards my bigger goals making the future easier." We do not propose that this assignment is solely responsible for the positive student responses to it, but we do suggest that helping students review their weekly academic accomplishments and articulate their goals in a supportive environment contributes to an increase in their self-efficacy.

### **Conclusion**

This writing exercise is an easily implemented, cost-effective means of raising students' metacognition and guiding them in the process of setting appropriate, attainable long term goals. This exercise thereby increases students' self-efficacy in the academic environment.

In the intake unit, there is not

**"Students are provided a safe and supportive environment in which to reflect on, explore and articulate their goals."**

## A Goal-setting Writing Exercise

much time for skill instruction, so the focus is on increasing students' metacognition and providing them a safe, supportive academic environment. The writing assignment described helps students reflect on and appreciate their own academic success. It also helps them see the connection between their current schooling and the eventual achievement of

their long term goals. Students are provided a safe and supportive environment in which to reflect on, explore and articulate their goals. For some students, this may be the first time in a long while that adults have asked about their futures and shown any concern for or validation of their plans for a successful adult life.●

### About the Authors

**Judy Coffey** has a masters in curriculum and a doctorate in clinical hypnotherapy. She is interested in applying self-efficacy theory to education and habit control. **Toni L. Horde** is a teacher's assistant with extensive special education experience. She is now applying those skills to her career in the juvenile justice system.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Judy Coffey, Court School Teacher, DeForest Hamilton School, Los Guilucos Juvenile Detention Center, 155 Pythian Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95409.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### FRIDAY ENGLISH ASSIGNMENT

Go through your folder and remove all the classwork you have done this week. Assemble your papers according to subject, placing the oldest date on the bottom and the others in order with Thursday's papers on top.

Review all the assignments you have completed this week. Also think about the videos we have seen and all our class discussions. Then write at least three statements (in complete sentences) about positive skills and/or ideas you have learned in class this week.

When you have completed these statements, think about where you need and want to go from here. Then write down your school goals for yourself for next week. Next, take a few minutes to reflect on and write down your long term goals. Finally, state how your short term goals will eventually help you achieve your long term goals.

#### WHAT I LEARNED IN CLASS THIS WEEK

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

#### MY SHORT TERM GOALS FOR SCHOOL NEXT WEEK

#### MY LONG TERM GOALS

#### HOW MY SHORT TERM GOALS SUPPORT MY LONG TERM GOALS

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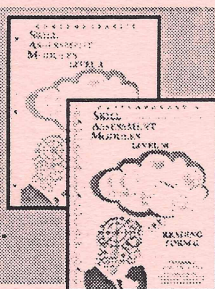
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