

THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF DOMESTIC POLICY

CAROL H. RASCO
Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

To: Larry Dieringer
Ex-Ad. Director

Draft response for POTUS
and forward to CHR by: Yes

Draft response for CHR by: _____

Please reply directly to the writer
(copy to CHR) by: _____

Please advise by: Cassandra will

Let's discuss: call on 4/19/94

For your information: re: May 17~~th~~?

Reply using form code: 19

File: _____

Send copy to (original to CHR): 20

Schedule?: Accept Pending Regret

Designee to attend: _____

Remarks: I am very willing

to meet w/ you for 30

min. Should ask

once get Bell & S J-C to join

Resolving Conflict Creatively Program National Center

esr

EDUCATORS
for
SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY

APR 14 REC'D

It is possible to live in peace
- M. Gandhi

April 12, 1994

Carol Rasco
Assistant to the President
Domestic Policy Council
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Rasco,

At the suggestion of Gaynor McCown of the U.S. Office of Education, I am writing to ask if I might meet with you to discuss a new national violence prevention initiative which I direct for the Educators for Social Responsibility. The program is called the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP) and it is being disseminated to school systems throughout the United States through the newly established RCCP National Center in New York City.

The RCCP began in 1985 as a collaboration between the Educators for Social Responsibility/New York chapter and the New York City Public Schools. It shows young people that they have many choices besides passivity or aggression for dealing with conflict; gives them the skills to make those choices real in their own lives; increases their understanding and appreciation of their own and other cultures; and shows them that they can play a powerful role in creating a more peaceful world.

The RCCP's primary strategy for reaching young people is professional development of the adults in their lives - principals, teachers, and parents. We work intensively with teachers, introducing them to the concepts and skills of conflict resolution, and supporting them as they continue to teach those concepts and skills to their students. The RCCP provides teachers with in-depth training, curricula, and staff development support; establishes student peer mediation programs; offers parent workshops; and conducts leadership training for school administrators.

Linda Lantieri, Director

RCCP National Center 163 Third Avenue #103, New York, New York 10003 Telephone: (212) 387-0225 Fax: (212) 387-0510

In the past nine years, the program has developed into a highly effective partnership between a public and private agency that is now the largest program of its kind in the country. This year, the RCCP is serving 4,000 teachers and 120,000 children in 300 schools nationwide in the New York City Public Schools; the Anchorage School District, Alaska; the New Orleans Public Schools; the Vista Unified School District in Southern California; and the South Orange-Maplewood District in New Jersey.

In September of 1993, RCCP and Educators for Social Responsibility, a national organization based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, took a major step to disseminate the program by establishing the RCCP National Center in New York City. The Center supports replication efforts already underway in the four cities mentioned above and assists other school systems interested in implementing effective school-based conflict resolution and violence prevention programs.

The RCCP/New York City has just been awarded a three-year grant by the Centers for Disease Control for an extensive evaluation of the program. The National Center is working closely with the RCCP/NY to learn from the evaluation results and to create appropriate evaluation instruments for the national dissemination of the program.

We are heartened by the efforts of the Clinton Administration to develop policies and programs to address the causes of youth violence. Secretary Richard Riley and Attorney General Janet Reno have both cited the RCCP as a model program and Deputy Secretary of Education Madeline Kunin visited the RCCP/NY this past fall to learn more about our work here. Since the effective dissemination of school-based violence prevention programs such as the RCCP requires the leveraging of monies from a variety of sources - national and local foundations, all levels of government, and participating school systems - we are very interested in exploring with you how we can work together towards our common goals.

We believe we can help school systems and the localities that support these school systems, to implement cost-effective violence prevention programs that can make a significant contribution to the prevention of violence and the promotion of valuable life-long skills and attitudes in our young people. We envision this as a collaborative process that brings together federal and local government, school systems, non-profit community organizations, and parents. It is to seek your advice about how we can work with the federal government to further this process that I would like to meet with you.

I am in Washington often as I am training the staff of the Children's Defense Fund in conflict resolution skills. Please let me know when it may be convenient for you to meet.

Thank you very much for your kind attention. I will call you in a few days to see if we might schedule a meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Lantieri". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Linda Lantieri
Director
RCCP National Center

cc. Gaynor McCowan

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LEARNING PEACE



**The Resolving Conflict
Creatively Program**
in the
New York City Public Schools

By William DeJong, Ph.D.

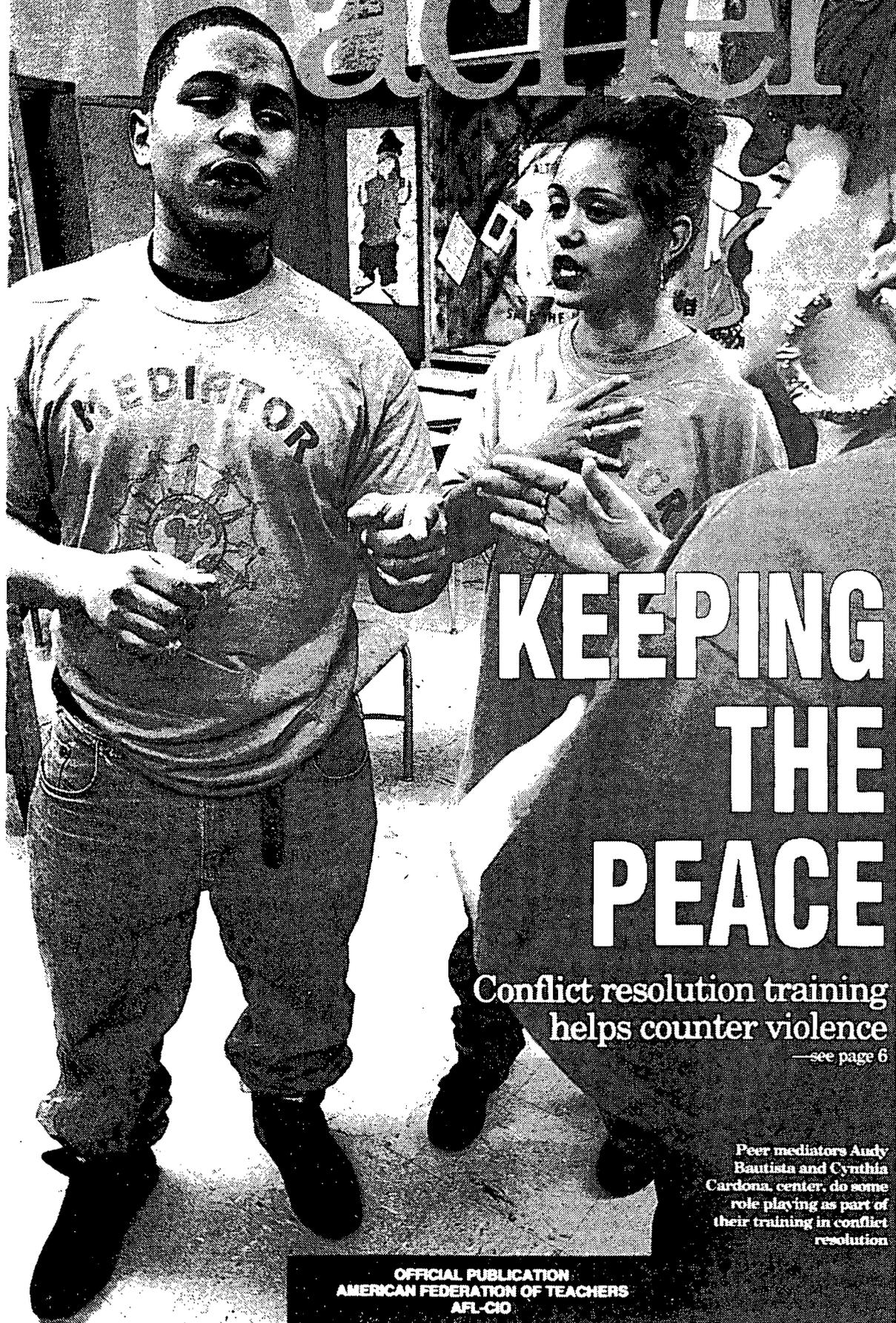
**RESOLVING CONFLICT CREATIVELY
PROGRAM**

Co-Sponsored by

EDUCATORS FOR SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY NATIONAL

AMERICAN

Teacher



KEEPING THE PEACE

Conflict resolution training
helps counter violence

—see page 6

Peer mediators Andy
Bautista and Cynthia
Cardona, center, do some
role playing as part of
their training in conflict
resolution

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
AFL-CIO

Keeping the peace

Conflict resolution training offers hope for countering the violence in our schools and communities

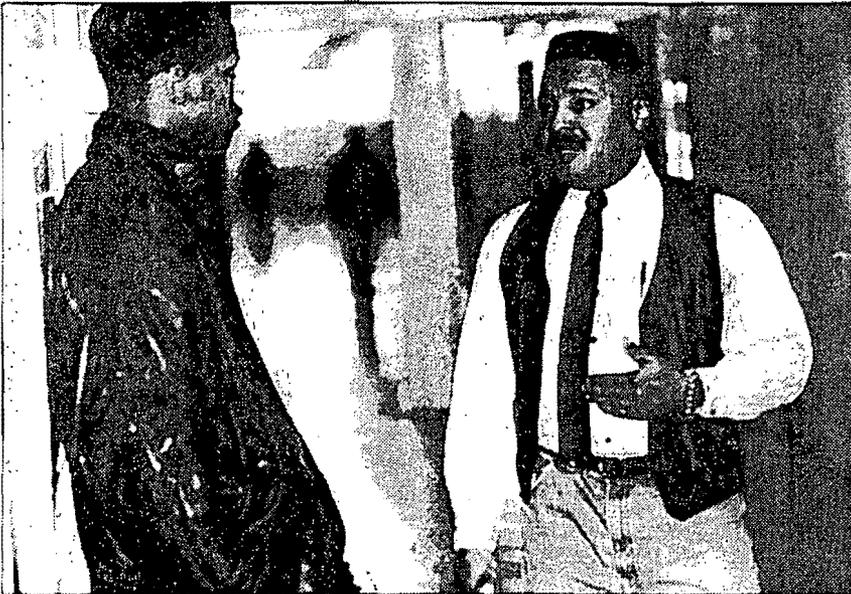
By Roger S. Glass

Can young people learn to value their diversity and resolve their differences peacefully? If taught nonviolent approaches to dealing with everyday conflicts, can today's students help to make our streets

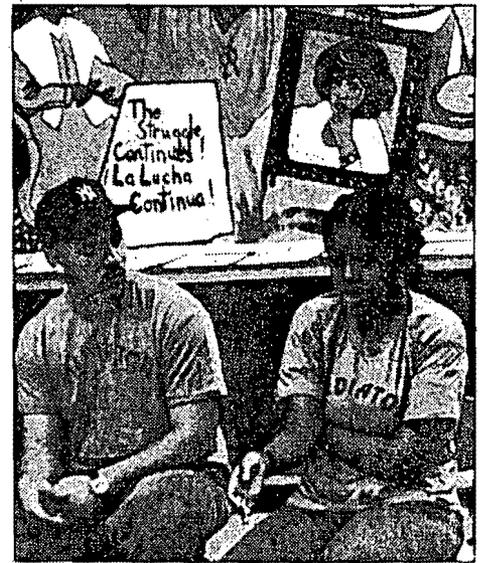
and schools safer places to live and work? A growing legion of determined people, many of them educators, want to find the answers to these questions.

While under no illusions about the ability of conflict resolution alone to prevent the kind of senseless violence that concerns us all, advocates of such programs strongly adhere to the belief that teaching students to resolve conflicts peacefully is a crucial part of a young person's education.

"In our society, we tend to limit ourselves to two options when there's a problem or confrontation—we either fight it out, often aggressively and physically; or we avoid it by walking away," says Jeff Gingerich, who coordinates a school conflict resolution program in New Orleans. "With training in conflict resolution, we give students other options."



Alfred Smith, a community coordinator at Bronx Regional High School, believes that teaching kids how to resolve their conflicts without resorting to violence is an appropriate role for schools



Peer mediators Robert Maduro and Shanti Gramby both say they've also used their training to help family and friends resolve disputes



Students at McDonogh Elementary School in New Orleans are instructed in conflict resolution by United Teachers of New Orleans member Basma Jackson



Linda Lantieri, national director of Resolving Conflicts Creatively, is a former teacher

Interest in conflict resolution and mediation programs is growing nationwide. The AFT's task force on school safety and violence recommends that more school districts consider conflict resolution training as a way to counter violence in the schools and community.

Some proponents, like Linda Lausell, school mediation and violence prevention director for New York City's Victim Services, an organization set up to help those victimized by violence, have even taken to calling conflict resolution the fourth R. Conflict resolution "is a life skill that can be learned," she insists. "It's something that can be used in all aspects of life."

Currently a partner in Project STOP (Schools Teaching Options for Peace), Victim Services started its first school-based conflict resolution program in 1983. Project STOP, which operates in 40 of New York City's middle schools, was launched in response to increased violence among middle school students.

"We're saying to young people, 'Conflict is a normal part of life; what matters is how you react to it. Resorting to violence is not the only way to work out a problem,'" Lausell says. "That's the first time many students have heard that."

Linda Lantieri recently left her post with the New York City Public Schools conflict resolution program to set up a national Resolving Conflicts Creatively Program (RCCP). It was the only way she could keep up with the deluge of requests she was receiving from school systems throughout the country.

"We started doing this [in New York City] nine years ago, well-before the epidemic of violence that we're feeling now," says Lantieri, who is RCCP's national director. "Back then, I had a tough time convincing people that this ought to be something that young people should be learning. Now, my phone rings off the hook, and everybody wants this program."

RCCP began as a joint venture of the New York City Public Schools and Educators for Social Responsibility, a non-profit organization with a mission to educate young people about good citizenship.

Lantieri and other coordinators of conflict resolution programs will be the first to tell you that the program is no substitute for tougher student discipline codes, alternative settings for chronically disruptive and violent students, stronger gun laws, and other measures aimed at making our schools a safe haven for students and staff.

However, there are indications that people like Lantieri and Lausell might be on to something. Teachers responding to a study of New York City's Resolving Conflicts Creatively Program reported that the program's students were more coopera-

tive with other students and that there was a reduction in name-calling. Seventy-one percent of the responding teachers said they observed that children demonstrated less physical violence in the classroom.

Educators interviewed for this article say students who've been trained in conflict resolution have a better rapport with one another and with their teachers.

But is helping kids resolve their personal differences really a role for schools and educators? Alfred Smith thinks so. "It's only appropriate that schools have a hand in teaching things besides the three R's, especially social skills," says Smith, community coordinator at Bronx Regional High School in New York. "School is a very big part of students' lives. It's where they do a lot of their socializing."

New Orleans elementary school teacher Regenia Adams puts it another way: "When you teach, you teach the whole child, and learning how to resolve conflicts is part of a child's education."

A death in the family

In an effort to curb the constant arguments and fighting that frequently disrupted classes, staff at Bronx Regional and Satellite Academy High School (both are housed in the same building) turned to RCCP for help.

"We understood that, because of the environment they live in, a lot of these kids behaved this way for their own protection," explains Judith Scott, teacher-coordinator at Satellite Academy. "But we felt they should have the opportunity to let go of those attitudes while in school."

Before Scott and others could persuade students at the schools to embrace conflict resolution, they first had to overcome some of the misperceptions students, and some staff, had about the program's intent. "When we started teaching conflict resolution as a class, we got a lot of resistance from the kids," Scott recalls. "We had to convince them that it was not about changing who they are as individuals or involving them in breaking up fights, but about how they handle their own anger."

It was important that students saw the training as something that was designed to change only how they think and react in times of conflict, says Bronx Regional's Smith. "If you preach the line to students that with this training they'll never fight or argue again, they know that's very unrealistic, and they reject it."

Students began to relate to conflict resolution when it was presented to them as "a practical tool to use when and where appropriate," Smith adds.

But what really sparked the program's acceptance at Bronx Regional and Satellite Academy was the murder of one of the schools' most popular students. After

that, some of the schools' star students bought into conflict resolution, which made other students take notice, says Scott, a member of the United Federation of Teachers. "Suddenly, our kids realized they would have to keep each other alive, and they began to see this program as something that could help them do that."

One of those star students was Robert Maduro, now a senior at Satellite Academy. Currently in his second year as a peer mediator, Maduro figures he's already learned at least one lifelong lesson. "Not everything is going to be solved when you mediate a dispute. What's important is that you make the effort."

Schools that implement peer mediation programs are urged to let the students identify other students who will make good mediators. Because kids who get into conflicts relate to different types of students, "both the positive and negative leaders in a school have to be chosen as mediators in order for this to work well," says RCCP's Lantieri, adding that diversity of sex, race and academic achievement also is key.

Tom Roderick, executive director of the New York City branch of Educators for Social Responsibility, says the best peer mediators are fair, can communicate well and have the respect of their peers.

The mediators should not be judgmental or take sides when helping to resolve a dispute, adds student mediator Shanti Gramby. "You listen to what the problem is and try to help [the students in dispute] figure it out for themselves. You don't tell them what you think they should do. If they talk long enough, they'll figure it out."

Those responsible for training the peer mediators rely extensively on role playing. Usually one or two student mediators are charged with helping to resolve a dispute, and all parties vow to keep the details of a mediation confidential. An adult, usually a teacher, is there to assist students, if necessary, during mediation.

Asked what their training in conflict resolution has taught them, most students will say: self-control.

Teaching kids to think first

"Conflict resolution makes you think about the consequences of arguments and how they can easily turn violent," says 11th-grader Cynthia Cardona, noting that she's learned to think twice before reacting in anger or saying something she doesn't really mean.

Audy Bautista was recruited by his friend Robert Maduro to be a peer mediator. Armed with a quick smile and an engaging manner, Bautista was a natural,

his teachers say. "Audy was already invested in keeping things calm and peaceful around here," says Satellite Academy teacher-coordinator Scott.

Bautista says he agreed to become a mediator out of concern for his friends. He'd seen too many "he said, she said" disputes evolve into "little cold wars that eventually led to someone getting hurt. I didn't want to see people getting suspended or worse over some nonsense," Bautista adds.

Fundamental to the success of any conflict resolution/peer mediation program is the involvement of teachers. "Our primary thrust is staff development for teachers and administrators," Roderick says. "Whatever we do is done with the involvement and assistance of teachers."

RCCP's Lantieri says its critical that classroom teachers be trained in order to introduce *all* students to conflict resolution. "We find that, when students in general are taught these skills, they have more respect for their peers who become mediators."

In most cases, parents are also trained. "The ultimate goal is to have the whole school embrace the spirit and process of conflict resolution. We want teachers, principals and parents to model good conflict resolution skills," Roderick says.

Developed with the help of classroom teachers, RCCP's elementary and secondary school violence prevention curriculums are used in 225 schools nationwide. The curriculum focuses on several crucial skills, including active listening, expressing feelings, cooperation, negotiation and communication.

"Our teachers are using these skills and techniques in all of the different classes," Scott says. "These skills have become very much a part of the culture of this school."

The importance of bias awareness and teaching kids to live in a diverse society are also stressed. "Very often, conflicts arise out of misunderstandings around

cultural differences, and conflict resolution programs need to address that," says Lantieri.

Basma Jackson, who teaches at McDonogh Elementary School in New Orleans, trains other teachers in conflict resolution and how to present the RCCP curriculum. Her school has used the program for two years. "This is not an overnight fix, but it's usable and workable and can be made a part of a kid's life," insists Jackson, a building representative for the United Teachers of New Orleans.

Jeff Gingerich, who coordinates the RCCP program in New Orleans, says the program got started there at the urging of teachers who had seen it operating in other cities. "We started hearing more and more from [New Orleans] teachers who felt they were spending too much time disciplining kids and not enough time teaching."

Some teachers say they benefit from the training in conflict resolution as much as their students. "I've learned to be a lot more patient with students and to think things through before I react," says New Orleans elementary school teacher Regenia Adams.

A new standard for heroes

While clearly no panacea, proponents of conflict resolution programs, nevertheless, point proudly to what they see as concrete examples of the programs' positive impact. There's been far

less fighting and verbal put-downs, and fewer suspensions at McDonogh since training in conflict resolution was started, Jackson says.

Maybe even more important, many of the students enrolled in the program at Bronx Regional and Satellite Academy high schools say they've been able to use their training to help resolve disputes between friends and families. Robert Maduro says the guys he "hangs out with" in his Manhattan neighborhood will sometimes seek him out to mediate their differences. "They refer to me as 'The Counselor,'" he says.

One of the emerging roles of RCCP is to help financially strapped school districts find the money to fund an in-depth conflict resolution program with frequent follow-up and ongoing staff development, says national director Linda Lantieri. "RCCP," Lantieri says "is in this for the long haul."

"We're committed to going beyond simply stopping the violence to helping students see that the real heroes and sheroes are not the Rambos of the world but those people who are willing to search for nonviolent solutions to difficult and complex problems."

Resources

A number of organizations provide workshops, curriculum, and training in conflict resolution and peer mediation. Here are some of them:

Children's Creative Response to Conflict Program Fellowship of Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960; tel. 914/358-4601.

Community Board Program 1540 Market St., Suite 490, San Francisco, CA 94101; tel. 415/552-1250.

Educators for Social Responsibility School Conflict Resolution Programs, 23 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138; tel. 617/492-1764.

NAME(National Association for Mediation in Education) 425 Amith St., Amherst, MA 01002; tel. 413/545-2462.

National Center for Resolving Conflicts Creatively 163 Third Ave., #103, New York, NY 10003; tel. 212/387-0225.

Straight Talk About Risks (STAR), Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, 1225 Eye St. NW, #1150, Washington, DC 20005; tel. 202/289-7319.

Science Times

Pioneering Schools Teach Lessons of Emotional Life

Students learn to handle emotion, settle disputes and avoid violence.

By DANIEL GOLEMAN

WHILE the lagging test scores of American schoolchildren in mathematics and reading have troubled educators, a new kind of deficit, in many ways equally alarming, is becoming all too apparent: emotional illiteracy.

America's children seem desperately in need of lessons in how to handle their emotions, how to settle disagreements, in caring and just plain getting along. The signs of this deficiency are perhaps most obvious in incidents like the shooting deaths of two students at Thomas Jefferson High School in Brooklyn last week. But they can also be read in statistics showing sharp rises in the numbers of teen-age suicides, homicides and pregnancies in the last decade.

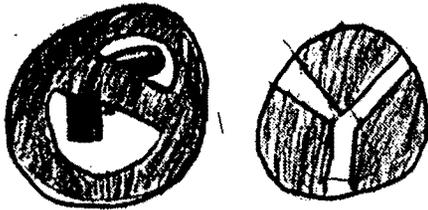
Partly in response, a handful of pioneering educators have begun to design and teach courses in what some call "emotional literacy," a basic curriculum that teaches lessons in life that ideally are taught at home. The educators see these courses as an antidote, the kind of instruction that might have led to a different outcome in the Brooklyn school, had those involved had its benefit.

"To commit that kind of violence you have to have reached a kind of emotional deadness or desperation," said Shelly Kessler, a leader of the new movement who directs a program in emotional education at the Crossroads School in Santa Monica, Calif. "This kind of education is the preventive measure."

Children have always needed this kind of emotional education, and the assumption has long been that they got it from their families. But, just as with sex education, it is becoming clear that few families do a complete job.

Continued on Page C7

This is my pledge for peace:



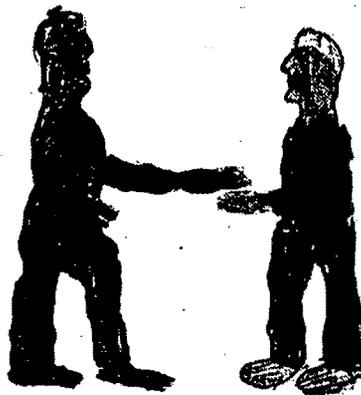
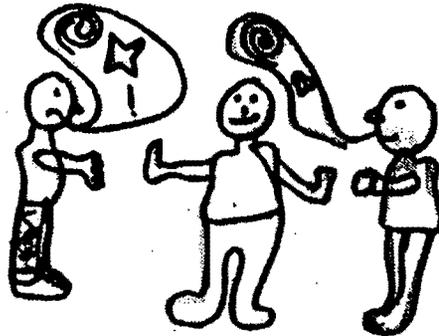
Please, no guns.
PEACE TO ALL

Early Steps Toward Peace

Students in a conflict-resolution program of the New York City Public Schools drew their own pledges of non-violence. Pupils were asked to illustrate one realistic step they might take in a situation of conflict to create peace. Scientific data on effects of such programs are lacking, but users report positive results.

My message of peace: is that all men, women, and children, can associate together, understand each other freely, and never be scared of uncontrollable things.

This is my pledge for peace: I Promise to
Stop fights and help people.



Source: Resolving Conflict Creatively Program

Eric Snyder ("Stop fights"); Michael Tozzi ("Please, no guns"); Stephen Krieger ("My message of peace")

Pioneering Schools Teach the Lessons of Emotional Life

Continued From Page C1

And the signs are that the need is growing.

The concept of emotional literacy is new to most educators, however, and has yet to gain more than a foothold in the schools. "The rest of the curriculum largely ignores this," said Linda Lantieri, who coordinates the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program in the New York Public Schools. She had planned a meeting about starting a program at Thomas Jefferson, but it was postponed because of the shootings.

Even advocates of the programs concede that they cannot undo the effects of chaos, poverty, fear or, as an American Psychological Association reported last week, the average child's exposure to 8,000 television murders and more than 100,000 other acts of violence before entering seventh grade.

Improvements Are Noticed

But where the courses have been tried, educators say, there has been an appreciable improvement in the tenor of school life, and they have given children a far better grasp of such basic life skills as how to settle a dispute without resorting to violence.

As yet there are no well-controlled, scientific studies of the programs' effects. But a 1990 evaluation of the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program done for the Superintendent of Community School District 15 in Brooklyn showed positive results.

In a survey of 200 teachers and school administrators who had used the program with their students, 71 percent said it had led to less physical violence in the classroom and two-thirds said there was less name-calling and fewer put-downs among their

students. Seventy-eight percent reported their students seemed more caring toward each other, 72 percent thought their students were better able to understand other people's points of view and 69 percent said the students seemed more cooperative.

The teachers also reported positive effects in themselves, particularly in their ability to deal with angry students and to help them deal with conflicts, in their sensitivity to students' problems and their ability to listen.

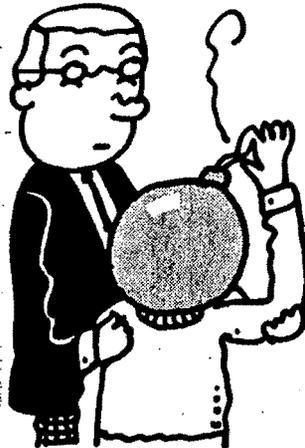
Some of the strongest praise was for student mediators, trained as part of the conflict resolution program to patrol playgrounds to cool down disputes. The evaluation included five elementary schools with student mediators. Over the year being evaluated, there were an average of 107 schoolyard incidents where students mediated, preventing arguments from escalating into fights.

The schoolyard mediators learn to handle fights, interracial incidents, taunts and threats, and the other potentially incendiary incidents of school life. Their tactics include sitting down with those involved and getting them to pledge to listen to the other person without interruptions or insults, and to phrase their own statements in ways that make both parties feel the mediator is impartial. The settlements that emerge are often in the form of a signed agreement.

Learning About Choices

"The program shows students that they have many choices for dealing with conflict besides passivity or aggression," Ms. Lantieri said. "We show them the futility of violence while replacing it with concrete skills. Kids learn to stand up for their rights without resorting to violence."

A typical experience was that of



Stuart Goldenberg

Mariana Gaston, a Brooklyn teacher who used the program. At the beginning of the year, she said, tensions were high among her students. But by January she said, confrontations and put-downs had virtually disappeared. "Kids began helping each other by taking time to talk through conflicts," she said. "The change in the climate of the classroom was palpable."

The Resolving Conflict Creatively curriculum comes in versions adapted to levels from kindergarten through high school. At the elementary level it includes lessons in communication, dealing with anger, cooperation, handling conflicts and preventing prejudice.

In the lessons on conflict, for example, students discuss times that disagreements were settled peacefully,

Brooklyn teachers say new programs reduce violence in the classroom.

and are taught about strategies like compromise, taking turns and other ways to work out conflicts so everyone feels good about the solution.

For example, in one exercise students act out a common scene from family life in which a big sister, who is studying, is angry at her younger sister, who is playing a stereo too loudly. When the older sister turns off the stereo, the younger one protests. The class is asked to suggest ways they might work out the conflict, taking the needs of both into account.

In another lesson, students are asked to think of a conflict they have experienced, and to think of one realistic step, no matter how small, that might be of help in creating peace. They then take "peace pledges," saying what they can do each day to create more harmony.

Mediation Programs' Popularity

The student mediation programs are the aspect of the emotional literacy training that has been most widely and enthusiastically endorsed by educators around the nation.

The New York City program, though the largest, is not the most comprehensive. Other programs in emotional education cover a wider range of topics and skills.

A typical example is the "mysteries program" that is led by Ms. Kessler in Santa Monica. The program at the private school involves

weekly two-hour classes, most of which are taught by psychotherapists. The children, usually fewer than 15 in a group, sit in a circle. Borrowing from American Indian practice, the group uses a "talking stick" or other object and the children pass it around to signify who has the floor. Although they are encouraged not to use profanity, typically by being asked why they need to express themselves in harsh language, they may say anything.

On Friday, the session involved the shootings in Brooklyn and the climate of violence the students held responsible.

"You see it on TV, you see it in the movies," a seventh-grader said. "People make you feel like it's O.K."

The mysteries program includes "helping students articulate and feel good about their identity, learn how to listen well, learn to express their feelings — especially anger — in ways that don't hurt other people, and manage their own emotions," Ms. Kessler said.

Peggy O'Brien, director of the program, said the need for such efforts had grown because children's communication skills had deteriorated.

"In seventh grade, what you see is how much work needs to be done on listening skills," she said. "By 12th grade, you can really see how it's borne fruit. This is a process, a six-year process. It's not going to happen overnight."

The key to the program is the small groups in which the students meet. "It creates a safe place in the school where kids feel free to be real, without being judged, and are listened to and respected," Ms. Kessler said. The classes are confidential, so students can speak freely.

While this more complete kind of curriculum in emotional literacy has

yet to reach most schools, Ms. Kessler said she was getting many requests to teach the approach to teachers around the country.

The emotional literacy programs have yet to find their niche within the American school curriculum. They are sometimes called "human development" courses, and taught as part of health classes.

The courses in emotional literacy are part of a larger movement in education to define more broadly the kinds of intelligence. In an influential model put forth by Dr. Howard Gardner at Harvard University, mathematics and verbal abilities are seen as but two of seven crucial abilities in life, though these are the two traditionally most heavily emphasized and rewarded in the schools.

Among these other "intelligences" he lists "intrapersonal," knowing and managing one's own feelings, and "interpersonal," understanding and getting along with others. Dr. Gardner argues that an education that ignores these intelligences is incomplete.

Still, the vast majority of schools pay little or no attention to emotional literacy, though many teachers see the need for a systematic curriculum.

"When teachers hear about this program, they say thank goodness someone's talking about the realm of emotions," Ms. Lantieri said.

Even so, some supporters of the emotional literacy programs recognize their limitations. "We need programs like this," said Mark Weiss, an administrator with the Alternative High Schools Program in New York City who previously was principal of South Bronx Regional High School for 13 years. "But what's also behind those shootings is a society that has problems bigger than conflict resolution: poverty, the decimation of families, drugs and crime."

THE NEW YORK NEWSDAY INTERVIEW WITH LINDA LANTIERI

Peer Pressure Can Increase the Peace

Q. Your group, Resolving Conflict Creatively, has been working in the public school system for seven years. What is your role?

A. We're a collaboration of the New York City public schools and Educators for Social Responsibility. We began with pre-schools in Kensington, Park Slope and Red Hook. A number of us — teachers, parents and principals — felt something needed to be done about the growing epidemic of violence, but at the time we didn't know what to do. Kids tend to respond to conflict in a very narrow way. Either they're going to get their way through aggression or they're just going to run away. They often don't see that third choice, which is having the skills to de-escalate conflict.

Q. Last November, a 14-year-old boy at Brooklyn's Thomas Jefferson High was fatally shot when he intervened in a fight. What did you do there?

A. I had a wonderful conversation there with 14 young people, several of whom actually witnessed this young person dying. In the first hour, I heard a lot from them about the futility of living any other way. But they had nothing else to put in its place.

Then I began asking them whether, from the beginning to the end of this dispute, there was anything anyone could have done differently. They began to identify eight or nine things that actually escalated the conflict. What I was helping them see was that the act that became violent escalated in many small acts. They think these are things that no one has any control over, and that makes them feel helpless. When they can step back, they begin to feel very empowered.

Q. You've said in the past that we're all racists in recovery. What do you mean?

A. We have grown up in a society that has literally institutionalized bias toward people of color, people who are not as able as others, people who choose to have a different orientation. We grow up with a great deal of misinformation about various groups of people. I see it on a daily basis. Kids have lots of stereotypes and they will remain until there is a decided attempt, either on the part of the parents, schools or society at large to correct it.

Q. What have you been doing to put a damper on the racial incidents among youth that have inflamed the city recently?

A. First, we try and get kids in touch with their own roots, their background, what they celebrate and love about it, and what's been hard about it. Other people in the room hear these stories and see a commonality, in that many of us have been discriminated against for a variety of reasons. It's very painful.

I'm reminded of a young eighth grader I saw recently. Her teachers described her as terribly shy, the kind of girl who'd never speak up in a workshop such as the one I was running. After I shared the story of my own Italian-American roots and discrimination, [she] began to share. A recent immigrant from Korea, she was excited that she was becoming friends with kids from other cultures. But the kids didn't have a sense that she

understood English very well, because she wasn't able to speak back to them yet. So she happened to overhear a conversation among them where they were deciding whether she should be invited to go skating. It was something like, "I don't know if we should ask Susan because she's Chinese, and Chinese people don't know how to skate." As she told the story, she started to sob. The class reacted incredibly empathetically. Then the others began to share some of the stereotypes they had about Asians.

Q. But kids aren't just hurting each other's feelings. We've seen white kids spray black children with paint and beat them up. Are those kids unreachable?

A. No, I don't think there's ever an age when a



Newspaper / Alan Rain

CONFLICT QUELLER

Linda Lantieri is the coordinator of Resolving Conflict Creatively, an organization that each year trains more than 35,000 students in 120 public schools how to deal with bias and violence. Shaun Assael spoke to her for New York Newsday.

child is lost. I feel the earlier we get them the better because our concepts of conflict are set at three or four years old. By the time kids come to kindergarten they've begun to get a sense that conflict equals violence, or conflict equals running away from a situation, or conflict equals talking.

I was with a class and I wrote the word *discrimination* on the blackboard and talked about all the different groups we sometimes see being discriminated against. One of the groups I highlighted was people with disabilities. Then I said, "Well, what do people do to these groups?" and we made a list: physically abuse them, ignore them. And I'm wondering if this is going to change anything when a young man named Paul raises his hand and says,

"I'm looking at this list, and this is what I've been doing for two years to the kid on my block who has cerebral palsy." He says, "I've called him names. I've pushed him, I've taunted him." Paul is sitting there coming to some kind of intellectual realization that, "My God, this is what I've been doing." But he's also experiencing stories of how painful it is to go through that.

The next day Paul comes back to the workshop and I say, "Has anything happened since yesterday that you'd like to share?" He raises his hand and said he talked to [the boy with cerebral palsy] and told him that he realized what he was doing to him for two years was horrible, had caused him a lot of pain, and although he couldn't ever take away what he did, he also couldn't keep doing it. There aren't too many adults who would have done that.

Q. Can some of the motivation behind bias incidents be attributed to kids' boredom and copycatting what others do?

A. I think it's more than boredom. An act of hate isn't an isolated thing. It's a combination of society at large not putting out clear guidelines that this is not okay. I think kids have been lost because of that.

Q. Might not a child who goes through your program feel overwhelmed going back into his community and trying to apply it?

A. Positive peer pressure works equally as wonderfully as negative peer pressure, which most people don't realize. I have kids who ask, how do you interrupt prejudice? What do you do if someone tells a racist joke? For the most part we tend to become very aggressive or say nothing. In either of those cases, you're not changing the behavior of the person telling the joke. So what we talk a lot about in intervention is engaging the other person to take a look at what they're doing. We talk about trying to change the subject, asking questions about why they're doing what they're doing. We hear lots of kids tell heroic stories about being the only one to stand up.

Q. So much of this comes back to parents. What advice can you give them?

A. Keep talking to kids about these issues, because teaching bias awareness must be a part of the basics of a child's education. One parent recently told me that her 5-year-old girl was looking at a book that had pictures of children of color and the girl said, "Those kids have dirty faces, Mom." It was a wonderful, teachable opportunity, but if that parent wasn't sitting with that child, that opportunity would not arise and that parent probably wouldn't have imagined that her child was having those thoughts.

Another parent who just went through our program told me that before the training her daughter came home one day and said all white people are part of the Ku Klux Klan. She got so upset she screamed at the poor kid. After the training, she realized what she really should have done was engage in a conversation: What led you to think that? What do you know about the KKK? Now she realizes the next time her kid says something like that she has to enter into a dialogue.

Schools Try to Tame Violent Pupils, One Punch and One Taunt at a Time

By DANIEL GOLEMAN

At the John Muir Elementary School in Seattle, children who have complaints about their peers write them down and put them into mailboxes in the classrooms. Later, the whole class talks about a grievance and tries to think of ways to deal with it.

This approach is part of a course on emotional skills. "We don't focus on the particular kids involved in the incident but point out that all kids have such problems, and everyone needs to learn how to handle them," said one of the program's designers, Dr. Mark Greenberg, a psychologist at the University of Washington.

In the case of a child who complained that her friend did not want to play with her, for example, the teacher and students "might talk about how it feels to be left out, or what they might say or do to be included, or what she could do instead that she would enjoy," Dr. Greenberg said. "The point is to get kids used to trying out many solutions until they find one that works for them."

That simple lesson is a direct antidote to the one-track thinking that leads some children and teen-agers to see fighting as the only way to resolve grievances.

Teaching Peaceful Behavior

The mailboxes are emblematic of a new approach to preventing violence that teaches children peaceful alternatives to handling conflicts and upsetting episodes. The propensity toward violence in response to life's frustrations and grievances is learned early, psychologists say. By teaching children ways to handle their emotions more positively and to get along better with their peers, the psychologists add, the sharp increase in violence among the young can be slowed and perhaps even reversed.

The John Muir program is one of many nationwide that teach children a range of basic emotional skills beginning in the early grades. The children

learn how to resolve disagreements without fighting, how to build friendships with other children and bonds with teachers, and how to handle not just anger but also jealousy, fear and grief.

Another basic lesson of the curriculum, Dr. Greenberg said, is that "all your feelings are O.K. but not all your actions, and that you have to calm down so you can think clearly."

For the children in the program, that means using the "traffic signal" strategy when feelings are getting out of hand. Dr. Greenberg explained: "First you go to the red light, which signals you to tell yourself to stop, then the yellow, which tells you to wait and take a long, deep breath, and then the green, when you can go ahead and say the problem and how you feel."

He added: "We spend a lot of time teaching kids to use language to identify how they're feeling. When young kids put their feelings into words, they're much less likely to act it out."

Such lessons are particularly important for the children who, even in these

Teaching at-risk children to choose peaceful solutions to their problems.

early grades, are already showing signs of being at risk for trouble by being continually disruptive or having a hard time getting along with other children. These children are tutored in small groups two hours every week.

No one claims that such an approach is by itself enough to roll back the tide of violence. But "classroom education is an essential piece of violence prevention," said Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, an assistant dean at the Harvard

School of Public Health and author of "Deadly Consequences" (HarperCollins, 1991), a book about preventing violence.

Programs Are Endorsed

Because of a pressing need to counter violence at school, such programs are spreading throughout the country, even before all the evidence is in on which ones are the most effective. Only some foster the spectrum of skills thought to be most promising, and few of these have been carried out long enough to be evaluated objectively.

Nevertheless, the classroom programs were endorsed this month in a report by the American Psychological Association on youth violence. In addition to promoting measures like restricting gun ownership by teen-agers and reducing television violence, the report urged Congress to finance school programs in violence prevention from early childhood through the teenage years.

Last month, a meeting on violence prevention was convened in Washington by Attorney General Janet Reno and Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. One promising approach cited by Mr. Riley is a violence-prevention curriculum, called "Resolving Conflict Creatively," that is used in nearly 100 public schools in New York City.

Preliminary evaluations of the New York program by 200 teachers using it have shown that over a year it reduced the number of fights in 71 percent of the classrooms and reduced the incidence of verbal put-downs and name-calling in 66 percent.

Linda Lantieri, coordinator of the program in the New York City schools, said, "Even more exciting than the decrease in physical violence is the increase in caring among kids." That was found in 78 percent of the classrooms, she said.

In Chicago's inner-city schools and in Urbana, Ill., 4,000 students in 16 elementary schools are being given a violence-prevention course while their teachers are being coached in how to

handle classroom misbehavior in a more positive, yet effective, way. Parents are being taught how to avoid an atmosphere of threats and violence in the family.

"This three-tier approach will let us see what's the most effective way to intervene in the trajectory toward violence," said a designer of the program, Dr. Leonard Eron, a psychologist at the University of Michigan.

Like the Chicago program, the one in Seattle includes weekly sessions for parents on topics like how to discipline children effectively and how to spend more enjoyable time with them, as well as how to help children with the challenges of school. The program is also being tried in Nashville, Durham, N.C., and three rural districts in Pennsylvania.

The Seattle curriculum was produced by a consortium of researchers who have examined the childhood path that is typical of violent youths. It is already showing signs of paying off, although the program, which is meant to continue through middle school, now extends only up to third grade.

Children in the program who had been disruptive when they entered first grade showed improved behavior by the end of that grade. When compared with similar children who did not go through the program, those children had 20 percent fewer fights on the playground, were more aware of their feelings and how to handle them, and were evaluated as 25 percent better at handling aggression and 32 percent more popular among their playmates.

Children who are at risk of violence typically come from families where parents are poor at disciplining because they are indifferent, neglectful or too coercive or they use harsh physical punishment. Sometimes children at risk of violence come from chaotic homes or from families where the parents fight or abuse the children.

When children at risk of violence enter school, they are often already disruptive and disobedient, and they have trouble getting along with play-

mates, even in first grade. By second or third grade, many do poorly in school; they frequently have difficulty with reading and get labeled — and rejected — as "dumb" by other children.

Often these children make few friends, misinterpret social cues, pick fights and end up as social outcasts by the fourth or fifth grade. In the middle-school years, they typically gravitate to others like themselves, forming a defiant band on the rim of schoolyard society. It is a short distance from there to violence and arrests.

By intervening early and giving those children more positive experiences, social skills and expertise in handling troubling feelings, the classroom programs seek to put them on a track toward a more peaceful future.

Education Life

Section 4A / November 7, 1993

Children are taught to understand and cope with emotions to improve their overall self-control

Managing Your Feelings 101

By Daniel Goleman

ROLL-CALL. Fifteen students sit in a circle on the floor. Jo-An Vargo, the teacher, calls their names: "Rachel, Oliver, Patrick, Nicole, Sean..." Instead of the vacant "Here" response typical of school roll-calls, the students answer with an index of how they are feeling on a scale of 1 to 10; "1" is low energy and spirits, and "10" is flying high. Today morale soars: "Ten, excited about this weekend..." "Nine, excited, tired, a little nervous..." "Ten, calm, tired, happy..."

'Self Science' Class

It's a fifth-grade class in "Self Science" at the Nueva Learning Center, a private school in Hillsborough, Calif., near San Francisco. And the subject is feelings: managing your own and those that erupt in relationships. Today's topic is on cooperation: in small groups the students try to solve jigsaw puzzles without speaking a word. The effort sparks tension between two boys, and that tension becomes the actual topic of the day.

Instead of abstract lessons on emotions and getting along, teachers speak to real issues — hurt feelings over being left out of a game, jealousies, conflicts that might otherwise escalate into fights.

"Learning doesn't take place in isolation from kids' feelings," said Karen Stone McCown, developer of the Self Science curriculum and director of the Nueva Learning Center. "Being emotionally literate is as important for learning as instruction in math and reading."

The Self Science class is a pioneer in a movement that is spreading to schools throughout the country. The names for it range from "social development" to "life skills" to "personal intelligences," the last referring to the influential model of multiple intelligences put forth by Howard Gardner of the Harvard School of Education. The approach has gained widespread interest in part be-



Second graders at the Lincoln Bassett Community School in New Haven roll a "feeling cube" to determine what emotions to discuss.

cause of increasingly difficult problems that confront young people. The number of teenagers having babies, for example, has risen for the fifth year in a row, to 62 births for every 1,000 girls between the ages of 15 and 19. For that same range of teen-age years, the suicide rate among boys grew by more than a third and doubled for girls during the 1980's, and the death rate from murder has doubled for boys and risen 15 percent for girls.

Data from some programs suggest that when children are helped to feel more bonded to their classmates, teachers and schools, and when they can handle their disruptive feelings better, they also absorb more of what they are taught.

Perhaps the most extensive program is the one designed by Roger Weissberg, a psychologist at the University of Illinois who was formerly at Yale; it is offered to all the New Haven

public schools' 18,000 students.

"Six years ago," said Tim Shriver, the director, "we had a series of task forces in New Haven to confront what to do about some of the highest rates in the country of problems like teen violence, drug use, drop-outs and schools where teachers and students can't even feel safe. Every task force said the same thing: 'We're focusing too much on crisis intervention and not enough on prevention.'"

Program Starts Early

The program starts in the earliest grades and continues through high school, teaching skills like recognizing and controlling emotions and solving personal problems like feeling jealous or left out. "The only way to have a lasting effect on kids' behavior is to give this enough time through enough grades," said Mr. Shriver. Thus first graders might sit in a cir-

cle and roll large dice called "feeling cubes," with words that describe feelings on each side. After rolling "sad" or "excited," for example, a child would describe a time when she or he had that feeling. "It gets kids comfortable talking about feelings, and helps with empathy when they hear other kids having the same feelings they do," he said.

Emotional Strategy

The first graders learn to manage anger or conflict with a strategy by which they stop themselves before reacting, calm down, tell themselves what the problem is and how they feel about it, think of solutions and then try the best one. By ninth grade, multiple perspectives are emphasized; that is, yours as well as those of others. "If a kid is mad because he saw his girlfriend talking with another guy, he'd be encouraged to consider what might be going on from their point of view, too, before starting an argument," Mr. Shriver said.

The larger design is to help students turn moments of personal crises into lessons in emotional competence. "If some kids get into a beef in the cafeteria," he said, "they'll be sent to a peer mediator, who sits down with them and works through their conflict with the same perspective-taking technique they learned in class. Coaches will use it to handle conflicts on the playing field. We've held classes for parents in using these methods with kids at home."

The program's effectiveness was shown in studies that used comparable students who had not taken the program. Teachers rated sixth- and seventh-grade students who had taken the training as being markedly better at resolving classroom conflicts, controlling impulsiveness and being more liked by their fellow students.

Among the New Haven statistics was a sharp decline in the rate of suspensions among students as their time in the program increased. For a ninth-grade class that had tak-

en only a year of social development training, the suspension rate in 1991 was 22 out of 100. For ninth graders this year who were in their fourth year of the program, the rate was 14 out of 100, a drop of 34 percent.

Perhaps the most urgent calls for training have been in reaction to school violence. "Resolving Conflict Creatively" is what many consider a model violence-prevention course; taught now in nearly 100 New York City schools, it has also spread to 100 more as far away as Anchorage, Alaska, and Vista, Calif.

'Lifelong Skills'

Linda Lantieri, the founder of "Resolving Conflict Creatively," sees it as having uses far beyond preventing fights. "These are lifelong skills," Ms. Lantieri said, "not just for those most at risk for being violent." In her program, for example, there is also emphasis on learning to empathize with what other children are feeling. "We do a lot to expand kids' verbal repertoire for recognizing their own and others' feelings," she said.

Because these subjects cannot simply be tacked on to the curriculum, they require a different way of teaching; to begin with, teachers need to be comfortable talking to students about feelings. Teachers of "Resolving Conflict Creatively" are given a 25-hour training course. They learn to impart, for example, the idea that all feelings are O.K., but not all the actions they might trigger; or that instead of acting on impulse, walking around the block might help one calm down.

The lessons sometimes offer a surprisingly sophisticated understanding. Said Ms. McCown, the Nueva director, "When we teach about anger, we help kids understand that it is almost always a secondary reaction and to look for what's underneath — are you hurt? jealous?"

"Our kids learn that you always have choices about how you respond to emotion," she added, "and the more ways you know to respond to an emotion, the richer your life can be."

Back at Nueva, Ms. Vargo has just spent 15 minutes with Rahman and Tucker, who were upset with each other about the jigsaw puzzle. It turned out that Tucker thought Rahman was disruptive; Rahman thought he was only relieving tension and helping by joking. She coached them in working things out, praising them when they grudgingly conceded that the other's point of view might have merit.

At the bell, did they feel better? "Yeah, I feel O.K.," said Rahman softly. Tucker nodded, smiling, and they ran out the door together. ■

PROBLEMS WITH PROZAC • THE RECOVERING ECONOMY, STATE BY STATE

U.S. NEWS

NOVEMBER 8, 1993

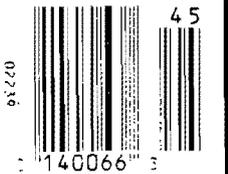
WORLD REPORT

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GUNS IN THE SCHOOLS

WHEN KILLERS COME TO CLASS

Even suburban parents now fear the rising tide of violence.



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WHEN KILLERS COME TO CLASS

VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

School violence is on the rise—and not just in inner cities. Behind it lies a chilling shift in adolescent attitudes: a sharp drop in respect for life

Security guards were unnecessary at 1,100-student Dartmouth High School, in a pretty university town 50 miles south of Boston, where the sons and daughters of professors studied alongside the sons and daughters of yacht owners and fishermen. The federal government honored the school for excellence in 1985. So it was a shock when two Dartmouth students and a third teenager burst into James Murphy's government class on April 12 armed with a bat, a billy club and a hunting knife. Police say they attacked freshman Jason Robinson, 16; one went after him with the bat, and as Murphy wrestled with the assailant, a second plunged the knife into Robinson's abdomen, killing him. Robinson's friend Shawn Pina, 15, had fought with one of the accused attackers earlier. A student in Murphy's class, Pina had been suspended after the

fight and was not present when the three arrived allegedly looking for revenge. So, officials say, they killed Robinson, who had asked what they wanted with Pina.

Until recently, schools were largely immune to the violence that has spread through American society. No longer. Today, more than 3 million crimes a year are committed in or near the 85,000 U.S. public schools, and school violence is a key issue in state and local elections. Two weeks ago, New York Mayor David Dinkins announced plans to station city cops in all 1,069 New York public schools—at a potential cost of \$60 million.

The terrifying thing is that the nature of school crimes has grown more violent, the perpetrators steadily younger. A University of Michigan study reports that 9 percent of eighth graders carry a gun, knife or club to school at least once a month. In all, an estimated 270,000

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guns go to school every day. Inner-city schools have started adding "drive-by-shooting drills" to traditional fire drills. Others have fenced in campuses, installed metal detectors and started locker searches and student shakedowns. And the Los Angeles school board last month voted to put its armed, plain-clothes security officers in uniforms and to add nightsticks to their weaponry.

Spreading fear. These days, attending school represents an act of courage for many students. Sixteen percent of eighth graders, 14 percent of 10th graders and 12 percent of 12th graders told University of Michigan researchers that they fear for their safety. There were 5,761 violent incidents in the New York City schools last year, up 16 percent from a year earlier. And school violence is not confined to inner cities. Researchers at Cincinnati's Xavier University interviewed principals in 1,216 school systems last year. Sixty-four percent of urban principals said violence has increased in their schools in the past five years; so did 54 percent of suburban principals and 43 percent of those in rural areas.

Eleven percent of the high school students in suburban Jefferson Parish outside New Orleans surveyed this year by Tulane University researchers said they had been threatened with a knife on school grounds.

With students fearing literally for their lives, learning has become next to impossible in some schools. Violence, says Secretary of Education Richard Riley, "has turned many of our classrooms into war zones." Among this fall's casualties:

■ August 27: A 15-year-old girl at suburban Lake Brantley High School near Orlando, Fla., allegedly gashed a classmate repeatedly. Affluent Lake Brantley had 21 National Merit finalists last year.

■ August 31: A ninth grader was killed and a 10th grader wounded when another student allegedly opened fire in the crowded cafeteria of Atlanta's Harper High School. The murdered student had had a fistfight with the suspected killer the previous day, off school grounds.

■ September 7: A 15-year-old was shot at Los Angeles's Dorsey High School while waiting in line for a permit to transfer into the school. He was hit in

the chest and back as he turned to see an argument between other students.

■ September 8: A 14-year-old student at rural South Iredell High School, north of Charlotte, N.C., was arrested for shooting a classmate on the sidewalk in the back and chest as school was dismissed.

■ September 9: Two students at Shaw Junior High School in Washington, D.C.,

gunned down at Downers Grove South High School near Chicago after a football game, where he had served as his school's mascot, a hornet. He was in a car when a Hinsdale South High School student, 15, walked over, purportedly put a gun to his head and pulled the trigger. Friction between the two had begun days earlier, when the suspected assailant re-



A rising toll. One of two students killed in a 1992 shooting at New York's Thomas Jefferson High

were charged with spraying the school grounds with semiautomatic weapon fire, sending students diving for cover.

■ September 16: A 17-year-old at Immaculata High School in Somerville, N.J., was charged with attempted murder after allegedly shooting another student.

■ September 17: A 17-year-old was

portedly blew smoke in the face of the victim's 12-year-old brother.

New attitudes. Behind the rash of violence is a startling shift in adolescent attitudes. Suddenly—chillingly—respect for life has ebbed sharply among teenagers—and not just in embattled inner cities. Twenty percent of the suburban high schoolers surveyed by Tulane researchers Joseph Sheley and M. Dwayne Smith, endorsed shooting someone "who has stolen something from you." Eight percent believed that it is all right to shoot a person "who had done something to offend or insult you." Concluded the researchers: "One is struck less by the armament [among today's teenagers] than by the evident willingness to pull the trigger."

Experts point to several sources of this troubling new code of conduct. One is the hopelessness of poverty. Often intensified by discrimination, it lays "a foundation of anger, discontent and violence," says the American Psychological Association in a recent report. Then there's the fraying of the fabric of the family. About a third of all American babies—and fully

What students have to fear



Twelfth graders who reported they were victimized at school during the previous year:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Injured with a weapon | 5% |
| Threatened with a weapon | 14% |
| Injured without a weapon | 13% |
| Threatened without a weapon | 25% |
| Theft of student's property | 37% |
| Vandalism of student's property | 26% |

Note: Figures from survey conducted in 1992.
USN&WR—Basic data: University of Michigan

U.S. NEWS

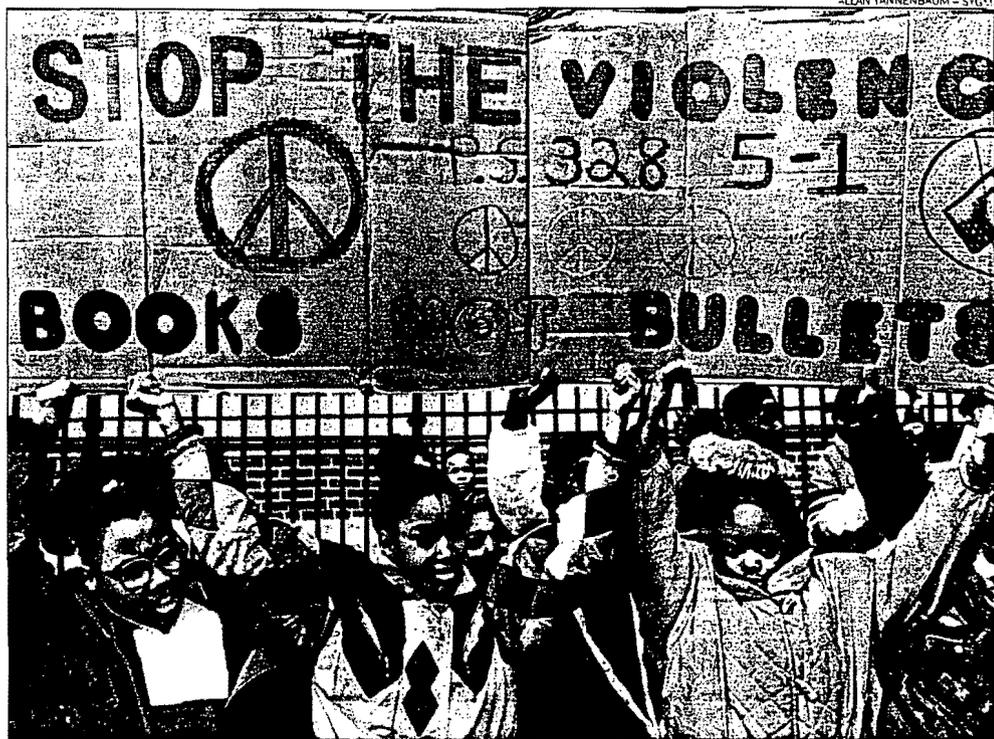
68 percent of African-American infants—are born to unwed mothers. Broken homes and two-income families leave an estimated 1 in 5 students home alone after school. Too often, such statistics translate into neglect, abuse and troubled kids: Fully 70 percent of juvenile court cases involve children from single-parent families.

Numbing statistics. Meanwhile, many youths are surrounded by violence. Ten percent of the children visiting Boston City Hospital's pediatric clinic last year had witnessed a shooting or a stabbing before age 6. Children watch an average of 8,000 murders and 100,000 other violent acts on television before finishing elementary school, says the American Psychological Association. All that violence is numbing—and signals that violence is normal.

Not surprisingly, a surfeit of violence also increases children's fear of becoming victims, making them more likely to interpret others' intentions as threatening and to respond aggressively. "When they believe the world is a dangerous place, many children take the offensive," says Carolyn Newberger of Boston Children's Hospital. In suburban Jefferson Parish, La., where 21 percent of high schoolers say they have carried a gun in the past year, 73 percent said they did so for protection.

The ready availability of guns has made the new ethos of aggression an increasingly deadly gambit. Thirty-five percent of the inner-city youths in Shelley's surveys said they carried guns at least occasionally; 70 percent said family members owned guns. The situation is similar in the suburbs; 18 percent of Jefferson Parish's students owned handguns, and 66 percent told Shelley they would have only "a little trouble" obtaining a gun. Many of the weapons that end up in kids' hands are stolen, available on the street for as little as \$50.

Shelley and other researchers believe that the youth gun culture is rooted in the drug violence of the 1980s. The many teenagers drawn into the distribution of drugs armed themselves. Out of fear of those in the drug trade, other teenagers did the same. "It's like a stain that keeps spreading," says Shelley. "At first it was drug driven, then fear driven. I don't think the av-



Signs of the times. For many students, going to school is an act of courage.

erage kid with a gun today has anything to do with drugs." The result is a shocking increase in violent juvenile crime. According to the FBI, juvenile arrests for murder, robbery and assault all increased by 50 percent between 1988 and 1992.

The threat of fights, stabbings or shootings leaves many students less than engrossed in science or history. "Kids didn't want to go to class, they couldn't eat or sleep, they burst out crying," says Jettie Tisdale, principal of Longfellow Elementary School in Bridgeport, Conn., of the days after two students were gunned down outside the school last January—one in full view of fellow students and teachers. So many bullets were flying at Longfellow from

the P. T. Barnum housing project next door that bulletproof windows were installed on one side of the school. Says Tisdale: "We couldn't think about teaching reading, writing and arithmetic until we dealt with these problems."

Seeking solutions. The first issue on many policy makers' agendas is antigun measures, but none has cut the mayhem. Congress passed a Gun Free School Zones Act in 1990, barring the possession of guns in or near a school. One court has declared it unconstitutional, but the federal appeals court in San Francisco hears arguments this week in the case of a man arrested with a loaded rifle on the parking lot of a Sacramento high school. Separately, 18 states have enacted laws prohibiting gun possession by juveniles, and Congress soon will consider a federal law that would make the ban nationwide.

As school violence intensifies, so does the response to it. The Colorado legislature, meeting in a five-day special session in September, established a separate penal system for juvenile weapons offenders and ordered that some juvenile records be made public. California this year required that the records of violent students moved to new schools under a second-chance program be shared with their new teachers, after one such student nearly killed his eighth-grade history teacher. And Connecticut's chief state's attorney last month assigned two special prosecutors to cope with a surge of violence in Hartford-area schools.

Schools, too, are cracking down. At

How times have changed

Public school teachers rate the top disciplinary problems



1940

Talking out of turn
Chewing gum
Making noise
Running in the halls
Cutting in line
Dress-code violations
Littering

1990

Drug abuse
Alcohol abuse
Pregnancy
Suicide
Rape
Robbery
Assault

USN&WR—Basic data: Congressional Quarterly Researcher



Protective clothing. These days, bulletproof vests come in kids' sizes.

least 45 urban systems now screen students with metal detectors. Even elementary schools are using them. The less-than-aptly named Green Pastures Center in Oklahoma City started screening students last year after the principal confiscated guns from fifth graders on three occasions. School officials also are removing student lockers and prohibiting the carrying of overcoats and large bags during school hours. In Concord, N.H., police lectured junior high school teachers on guns and violence, telling them what to do if a student pulls a gun in class (don't make any fast moves and follow the student's orders).

But such steps are far from foolproof. Consider metal detectors. Most schools use hand-held "wands" rather than walk-through detectors because they are less expensive (on average, \$115 versus \$2,500). But they are also less effective. And because it would take hours to screen every student, many schools don't: In New York, only about 1 in 9 is checked. Ultimately, it is virtually impossible to secure a school: Large buildings have as many as 50 exits that must remain unlocked from the inside to allow for quick escape in case of fire. Despite tougher security and a new closed-cam-

pus lunch policy, violent incidents rose 20 percent last year in District of Columbia public schools.

Getting tough. Education Secretary Riley has sent Congress two bills that would help educators in their get-tough crusade. The first, a stopgap Safe Schools Act that cleared its first congressional hurdle last week, would provide \$175 million to school systems trying to beef up security. The second would launch long-term funding, beginning in 1995. Significantly, the Riley bills earmark much of their funding for promising "softer" solutions to the crisis, including violence-prevention curricula and training in peer mediation and conflict resolution.

Riley's hopes for such programs spring from places like Roosevelt Middle School in Oceanside, Calif. Four years ago, most of the school's 1,500 sixth, seventh and eighth graders lived in fear as gangs "mad dogged" each other—deliberately provoking fights. Today, the school is a placid oasis thanks to a plan called "Resolving Conflict Creatively." First, the curriculum was infused with instruction on listening attentively, dealing with anger and overcoming racial stereotypes. Then a system of peer media-

Weapons:

Students who reported carrying a weapon (a gun or a knife or a club) to school:



| | |
|-----------|-----|
| Grade 8: | 9% |
| Grade 10: | 10% |
| Grade 12: | 6% |

Note: Figures from survey conducted in 1992.
USN&WR—Basic data;
University of Michigan.

TAKING ACTION

How kids can respond

This month, ABC-TV and the Disney Channel are giving youngsters a chance to speak out. On ABC's "Kids in the Crossfire: Violence in America" (November 6, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. EST), 8-to-15-year-olds will probe the topic. Disney's "Children's Day Forum" (November 20, 4-5 p.m. EST), features children grilling experts. It's too late to join the shows, but there are other ways for kids to weigh in:

■ **Make school safer.** School Crime Stoppers encourages students to share information about campus crime. Tipsters are promised anonymity—and rewards if tips pan out. For details, call School Crime Stoppers at (800) 245-0009. WeTip is a national crime hot line (800-782-7463) for students and adults.

■ **Write to Congress.** Politicians love to quote letters from children. A letter carries particular clout if it tackles a violence-related topic with legislation pending in Congress: gun control, media violence, community and school programs to keep kids out of trouble. Lobbyists advise personal, detailed letters: "I am afraid because... I wish I had a safe place to play after school." Write senators c/o the U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510 and representatives c/o the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. Kids might also invite a congressperson to school for a forum on violence.

■ **Talk back to TV.** Children's television crusader Peggy Charren advises kids to "make the press your partner." Write local stations to complain about violent shows or ads, telling them what you would like to see (programs about how kids can solve disputes nonviolently, for example); send a copy of the letter to local newspapers.

■ **Learn more.** KIDSNET, a clearinghouse for children's media, has a guide to publications and groups concerned about violence. For a free copy, write KIDSNET, Box 56642, Washington, DC 20011.

BY MARC SILVER



Peer pressure. Student mediators on the job in Oceanside, Calif.

tion was started. When a problem develops, it usually is settled within a day by student mediators who are trained to sit classmates down and resolve arguments with words rather than fists. Typically, one student threatens another, but they agree to avoid a confrontation until their anger passes. It seems to work. Two years ago, "I was afraid I'd get beat up by the eighth graders," says Lea Gattoni, 13, now an eighth grader. "Now, I haven't seen a fight in a while."

No force. Roosevelt typifies a rapidly spreading trend. The idea is to show students that force is not the way to settle disputes. "We want to weave conflict resolution into the fabric of everyone's educational experience," says Larry Dieringer of Educators for Social Responsibility, which helps run Resolving Conflict Creatively in 225 schools nationwide. Despite the program's popularity, there isn't much proof yet that it significantly reduces school crime. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is spending \$2.4 million to study its effects.

While schools search for ways to halt the violence, of course, many violent kids end up in the largely ineffective juvenile-justice system. A recent federal study of juvenile courts showed that fewer than one third of youths accused of violent acts remain in custody; the rest are put on probation or set free. Only 3 percent are sent to trial in adult courts, a popular tactic sought by get-tough advocates. But even offenders who are tried as adults sometimes get off easy when judges put them on pro-

bation after comparing them with older, more dangerous defendants.

Even those who end up in the best rehabilitation programs still stand a good chance of continuing their criminal careers. One of the most successful rehab efforts is Associated Marine Institutes, a Florida-based organization that runs 35 programs in eight states, many involving youths in marine environmental projects. Its graduates' repeat-arrest rates in serious and violent cases are under 50 percent, well below the typical recidivism rate of 70 percent or higher, but still astoundingly high. Yet the program has demonstrated better success than another policy fad: "boot camps" that concentrate on military discipline.

White House officials are hoping to throw the influence of the presidential bully pulpit into the fight against violence this winter. The Clinton campaign will promote a wide-ranging antiviolence plan that includes urging Hollywood to lose its penchant for shoot'em-up productions and beseeching the country to fight violence at school, work and home. The president himself was amazed when a North Carolina audience recently stood to applaud his call for gun control. Like many others, Clinton is convinced that violence reflects a cultural illness that won't be solved simply through public policy. Getting weapons out of the hands of juveniles is one thing. Reducing their motivation to arm themselves in the first place is quite another. ■

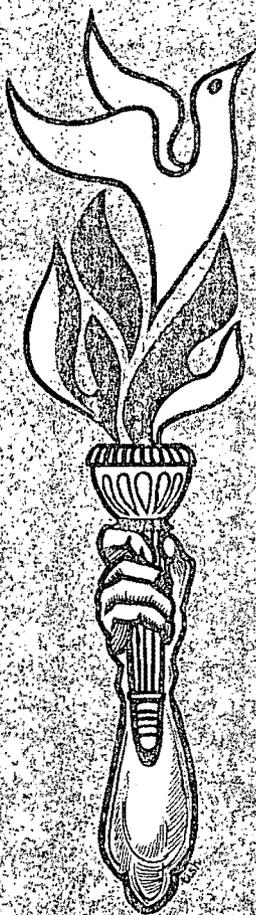
BY THOMAS TOCH WITH TED GEST
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BLUEPRINT for Social Justice

Volume XLVI, No. 3

December 1992

Creating Non-Violent Schools: Beginning with the Children

Linda Lantieri

*If we are to reach real peace in this world...
we shall have to begin with the children*

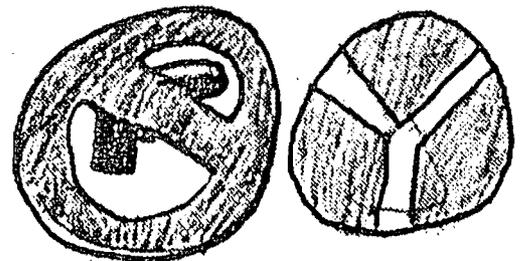
— Mahatma Ghandi

Recent events in our country have begun to shake us as they never have before. This year has been a pivotal one for us in terms of the realization that we as a society are in the midst of an epidemic of violence.

In 1992 we witnessed the killing of several students in the hallways of what was once a sacred place—the school. In Thomas Jefferson High School in New York City, one student shot and killed another and critically wounded a teacher. This kind of incident was repeated in other schools throughout the country. We also experienced the Rodney King verdict and its violent aftermath. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at least 2.5 million US teens carry guns, knives, razors and clubs—and some inevitably bring these weapons to school. At least 65 students and six school workers were killed by gunfire at schools in the last five years.

Young people in the US are dying in the prime of their lives. Statistics show that the leading causes of death for youths ages 14-

This is my pledge for peace:



Please, no guns.
PEACE TO ALL

New York City Public School student Michael Tozzi's pledge for peace.

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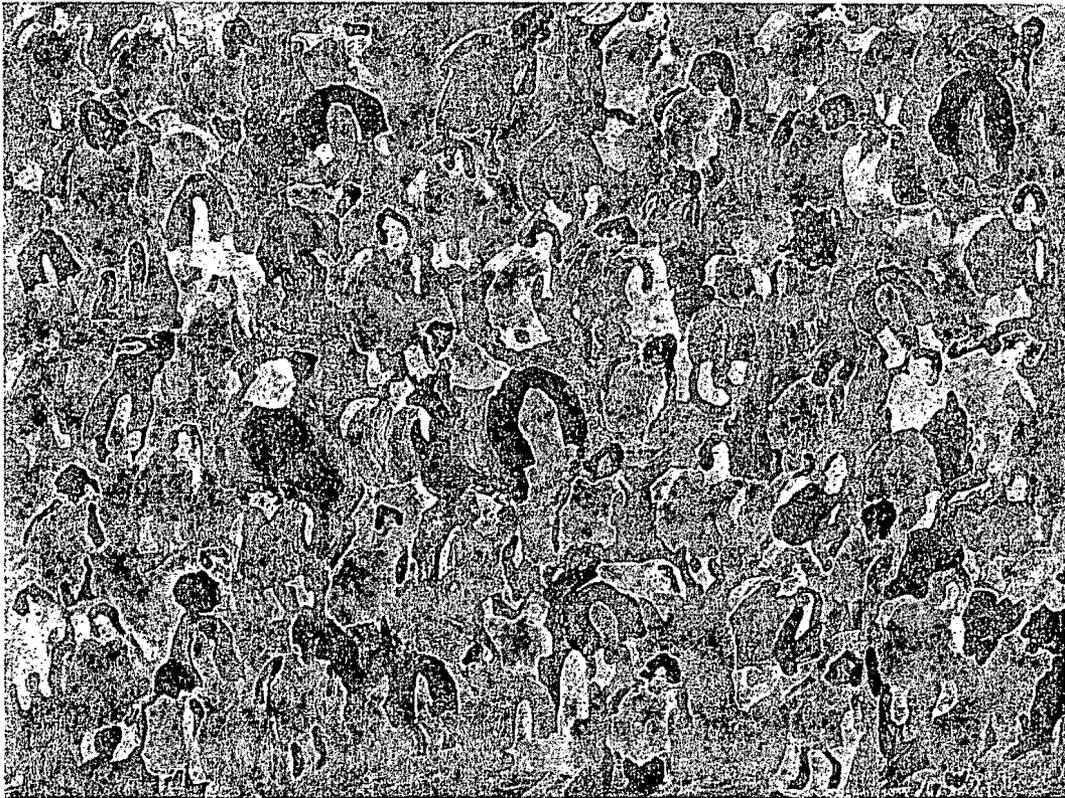
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T E A C H I N G

T O L E R A N C E



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Resolving Conflict Creatively Program National Center

esr
EDUCATORS
for
SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY

*It is possible to live in peace
— M. Gandhi*

...You know as I do that it is shameful that our children are murdered. A child is murdered every three hours, and 32 children—a classroom full — is murdered every 4 days. This is unacceptable in a nation that pretends to be decent and moral and to offer fair opportunity...I hope that we can begin to deal with violence through trying to teach our children that violence is not the way to resolve conflicts. The kind of anti-violence curriculum that Linda Lantieri and others have been working on in our schools is so crucial. I hope the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program can be put into every classroom in America because we are not going to deal with the violence in our communities, in our homes, in our nation, until we begin to deal with our basic ethic of how we resolve disputes and begin to place an emphasis on peace as the way in which we relate to each other.

Marian Wright Edelman
President, Children's Defense Fund
National Violence Prevention
Teleconference, March 22, 1993

The Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP), is a pioneering school-based program in conflict resolution and intergroup relations that provides a model for preventing violence and creating caring, learning communities. The RCCP shows young people that they have many choices besides passivity or aggression for dealing with conflict; gives them the skills to make those choices real in their own lives; increases their understanding and appreciation of their own and other cultures; and shows them that they can play a powerful role in creating a more peaceful world.

RCCP began in 1985 as a collaboration between Educators for Social Responsibility/New York chapter and the New York City Public Schools. In the past eight years, the program has developed into a highly effective partnership between a public and private agency. It is now the largest program of its kind in the country. This year the RCCP will serve 4,000 teachers and 120,000 children in 250 schools nationwide, including New York City and four diverse school systems which are in various stages of replication: the Anchorage School District; the New Orleans Public Schools; the Vista Unified School District in Southern California; and the South Orange-Maplewood District in New Jersey.

The overall goals of the RCCP National Center are:

- to prepare educators to provide high quality instruction and effective school programs in conflict resolution and intergroup relations in a variety of settings across the country.
- to transform the culture of participating schools so that they model values and principles of creative, non-violent conflict resolution.

Linda Lantieri, Director

The program's primary strategy for reaching young people is professional development of the adults in their lives —principals, teachers, and parents. Through the RCCP, we work intensively with teachers, introducing them to concepts and skills of conflict resolution, and continue supporting them as they teach those concepts and skills in an ongoing way to their students. The RCCP provides teachers with in-depth training, curricula, and staff development support; establishes student peer mediation programs; offers parent workshops; and conducts leadership training for school administrators.

An independent evaluation of the RCCP released in May 1990 by Metis Associates found the program to be exemplary. Over 98% of the teachers agreed that mediation gave children who were trained as mediators an important tool for dealing with everyday conflicts between students and 71% of the teachers surveyed said the program led to less physical violence in the classroom.

The New York City RCCP has just been awarded a three year grant by the Centers for Disease Control to conduct an extensive evaluation of the program. This evaluation will look at the impact of the program on young people, the readiness of teachers, and the levels of importance of each program component. The National Center will work closely with the RCCP New York to learn from the evaluation results and to create appropriate evaluation instruments for the national dissemination of the program.

The RCCP National Center provides leadership and support for those local agencies who wish to replicate RCCP's work and to provide the kind of assistance schools need to shape successful violence prevention programs. It also helps train local staff to implement the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program as well as ensure its quality at all sites and strengthen and support other existing efforts.

As with the RCCP in New York City, a multi-year process is envisioned in which the school systems involved in replicating the RCCP assume increased responsibility for funding it each year. Foundations and individual philanthropy continue to play a key role in leveraging these public sector commitments. They also provide the program the financial security to foster a standard of excellence that from the beginning has characterized the attention given to the teachers, administrators, parents, and students involved in the program.

RCCP has been recognized by such national leaders as Marian Wright Edelman and Secretary of Education Richard Riley. Many local leaders— teachers, administrators, and parents — recognize the need for the program as well. Eight years after its inception as a small pilot in Community School District 15 in Brooklyn, the RCCP National Center is striving to contribute significantly to the prevention of violence and the creation of more peaceful classrooms, schools and communities.

For more information, contact:

Linda Lantieri, Director
RCCP National Center
163 Third Avenue, #103
New York, NY 10003
(212) 387-0025
Fax: (212) 387-0510

**METIS
ASSOCIATES,
INC.**

**26 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10004
TEL (212) 425-8833 • FAX (212) 480-2176**

**The Resolving Conflict Creatively Program: 1988-1989
Summary of Significant Findings**

Submitted to:

**William P. Casey, Superintendent
Community School District 15
Brooklyn, New York**

**Tom Roderick, Executive Director
New York Educators for Social Responsibility**

**Linda Lantieri, Coordinator
Resolving Conflict Creatively Program
New York City Board of Education
Office of Health, Physical Education and School Sports**

Submitted by:

**Metis Associates, Inc.
May 1990**

The Resolving Conflict Creatively Program: 1988-1989 Summary of Significant Findings

I. Introduction

Metis Associates, Inc. was contracted by Community School District 15 and by the New York City Chapter of Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR) in cooperation with Community School Districts 2, 27 and District 75 (Citywide Special Education) to evaluate the 1988-89 implementation of the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP). Specifically, the focus of the work was to assess the implementation of the various components of the RCCP and to appraise the impact of the program on participating students, staff, and administrators. This report contains a synthesis of significant findings from the evaluation.

A. Background of the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program

Started in Community School District 15 in 1985, the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program has developed as a collaborative effort of the New York City Central Board of Education's Office of Health, Physical Education and School Sports, Educators for Social Responsibility, and a number of individual community school districts. During the 1988-89 school year the program was implemented in Districts 2 (Manhattan), 15 (Brooklyn), 27 (Queens) and District 75 (Citywide Special Education). The program focuses on conflict resolution and intergroup relations. The objectives of the program include:

- showing young people nonviolent alternatives for dealing with conflict;
- teaching children skills to make nonviolent alternatives to conflict real in their own lives;
- increasing students' understanding of and appreciation of their own culture and of cultures different from their own; and
- showing children that they can play a powerful role in creating a more peaceful world.

The components of the RCCP program include: a 20-hour training course for teachers new to the program, regular classroom instruction in creative conflict resolution based on a ten-unit curriculum, and classroom visits by expert staff development consultants. The staff development consultants assist teachers in curriculum implementation by providing classroom demonstrations and other support services. During the 1988-89 school year, approximately 200 teachers and administrators participated in the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program.

During the 1987-88 school year, a student mediation component of the RCCP was established in Community School District 15. This component trains carefully selected groups of students in the skills of mediation so that they can serve as school mediators, helping to resolve disputes that arise among their peers. School-wide mediation programs were established in five elementary schools in Community School District 15.

B. Methodology

After collaboration with RCCP program developers and administrators, Metis Associates formulated an evaluation plan designed to assess the following:

- program implementation, including a description of how participants evaluate each of the components of the program - staff training, support provided by staff development consultants, the curriculum and the mediation component for students;
- the impact of the program on students, teachers, and classroom and school climate;
- the impact of the mediation component on students and school climate; and
- how to improve the program.

Information about the implementation and impact of the RCCP was obtained primarily through the administration of surveys to participating teachers, school-based program personnel, and administrators. The assessment instruments included surveys of teachers and administrators, and student achievement tests. These instruments were revised after their use during the 1987-1988 evaluation. Each of the instruments is described briefly below.

Teacher Survey. All 200 teachers who had participated in the program in 1988-89 were asked to complete a survey form. The instrument included questions about the effectiveness of the training sessions and of the staff development consultants, the usefulness of the curriculum, the extent to which the teacher has implemented the program, the perceived impact of the program on teachers, students, class/school climate, and ways in which the program might be improved. Approximately two thirds (65%) of the participating teachers returned completed surveys.

Administrator Survey. Administrators from each of the participating schools were asked to complete a brief questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on examining administrators' goals and expectations for the project and their perceptions of the impact of the program.

Student Achievement Test. A student achievement test was developed in order to assess the extent to which participating students increased their knowledge of concepts related to the RCCP curriculum. During June, 1989 a representative sample of 176 participating fourth, fifth and sixth grade students from District 15 were administered this twenty item written test. The instrument also contained questions designed to measure students' conflict resolution behaviors prior to and following their participation in the program. For comparison purposes, the test was also administered to matched control groups of 219 fourth through sixth graders who had not participated in the program.

Peer Mediation Instruments. As indicated earlier, during 1988-89, peer mediation programs were implemented at five schools in District 15 as part of the RCCP. At these sites, information related to the impact of the mediation component was obtained from several additional sources. Approximately 150 classroom teachers in the five schools with mediation programs and 11 school-based program personnel acting as special advisors to the student mediators were asked to complete brief surveys, as were their students. Finally, 143 student mediators completed surveys about their experiences with the mediation component and the extent to which they believed the program had affected their class/school climate.

Data collected from the various study instruments were subjected to a wide array of analyses - response frequency distributions, cross tabulations and, in the case of the achievement test results, to inferential statistical inquiry.

II. Findings

As indicated earlier, evaluation efforts focused on the implementation of the RCCP, staff training, support provided by staff development consultants and the curriculum itself. A discussion of the findings related to each of these areas follows.

A. Implementation of Core Components of the RCCP (Teacher Training and Classroom Curriculum Implementation)

Information about the implementation of the RCCP was gained primarily from the teacher survey. This section contains a discussion of how participants evaluated the implementation of each of the components of the program - staff training, the support provided by staff development consultants, and the curriculum. Data are included for the 129 participants who completed the teacher questionnaire.

Overall, 45.7 percent of the teacher respondents were from Community School District 15, 21.7 percent were from District 27, 16.3 percent from District 2 and 16.3 percent were from District 75 (Special Education). Nearly 82 percent of the responding sample was female; 18.1 percent were male. The majority of the respondents were elementary school teachers; 40.2 percent in kindergarten through grade three and 38.5 percent in grades four through six. In the aggregate, 32.6 percent of the respondents had one to five years of experience teaching; 29.5 percent had six to ten years of experience; 14 percent of the respondents had 11 to 15 years of experience; 10.9 percent had between 16 and 20 years; and 13.2 percent had more than 20 years of experience as a teacher. For approximately three quarters of the respondents, 1988-89 was their first year with the RCCP.

When asked which of the three components of the program they found to be the most important, equal proportions of the respondents (37.4 percent) cited the introductory training sessions and work with staff developers; 25.2 percent found curriculum implementation to be the most important aspect.

Various issues related to program implementation were addressed in the teacher and administrator surveys. In general, the data from both instruments reflect a program which was well received and implemented in accordance with its stated objectives. All responding administrators reported that they provided support and guidance in order to facilitate implementation of the program at their schools. Administrators reported monitoring project meetings for staff, assisting teachers to schedule time with staff developers and coordinating communication between project personnel and school-based staff. Administrators' surveys revealed that their initial goals and expectations about the project were in keeping with the program objectives: to teach children to solve conflicts, to learn to use mediation skills and to train teachers in conflict resolution in order to improve school climate. Having participated in the RCCP, most administrators would like to see the program expanded, and they appeared optimistic about the future of the RCCP in their own schools. The only problem regarding implementation reported by administrators was of a logistical nature - several respondents indicated that there simply weren't sufficient hours in the day to facilitate adequate scheduling and programming for the RCCP.

1. **Staff Training:** Approximately twenty hours of training were provided to each participating teacher new to the program. Teachers in each district typically attended a series of eight after-school sessions which were each roughly two and a half hours in length. Thirty to forty participants attended each session. Training addressed program philosophy, introduced teachers to the curriculum, taught creative conflict resolution skills, and showed teachers strategies for imparting these concepts and skills to students in their classes. Specific skills taught to teachers included such effective communication skills as active listening and the mediation process. Teachers who had participated in the program in prior years received support from RCCP staff developers upon request.

Overall, 88.5 percent of the teacher respondents rated the training sessions as very good or excellent. For example, participants' general satisfaction with this component of the RCCP may be seen in the following:

"The training sessions were always lively, informative and interesting. I left each session with a feeling of hope, support and peace knowing that there are others who care. Education takes place when barriers are broken and trust is fostered."

Participants particularly noted that the trainers generally knew their material and provided sufficient opportunities for audience participation. In addition, participants agreed that the trainers responded appropriately to questions and communicated the content effectively. Participants indicated that the training sessions were well planned. Further, the respondents reported that the sessions were stimulating and motivating and included relevant examples and

activities. Respondents' comments about the training sessions revealed that for the most part, participants had extremely positive evaluations of the content and implementation of the sessions.

A few respondents indicated areas in which training could be strengthened; most comments indicated the desire for more RCCP services. Although the training sessions were highly praised, a small proportion of respondents recommended that sessions have fewer attendees. In this way, more individual attention could be given to participants and more areas could be covered. For example, as one participant noted, "I feel the training sessions should have had fewer people in attendance. If the group was smaller I think more material could have been covered." There was some evidence to suggest that the trainers did not allocate sufficient time to all content areas. For example, as one participant noted, "I would have liked to have a longer session devoted to cooperative learning. Other than that I thought the sessions were well organized." Approximately 12 percent of the respondents who provided additional written comments indicated that the introductory training sessions should cover areas in more depth. Similarly, approximately 12 percent indicated that they sometimes found it difficult to transfer concepts presented in the sessions to their work in the classroom. This may support the need for additional support from the staff development consultants.

2. Support Provided by Staff Development Consultants. As indicated earlier, staff development consultants guided teachers' efforts to implement the RCCP curriculum. During the 1988-89 school year, there were ten staff development consultants available to assist program participants; each participating teacher received ten days of visits from their staff developer. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the respondents described their work with the staff development consultants as very good or excellent. Generally, respondents agreed that the staff developers helped to plan conflict resolution lessons, helped to improve their teaching of the conflict resolution curriculum and gave useful feedback about teaching the conflict resolution curriculum. Participants particularly noted that staff developers provided appropriate demonstration lessons and that the staff developer established good rapport with their classes.

The majority of teachers' comments praised the staff developers. Teachers characterized staff development consultants as supportive, organized, cooperative and flexible. Data from teachers' surveys indicate that scheduling more time with staff developers would be a priority among program participants. Respondents felt the staff developers were not available enough for planning and preparing lessons. This may be attributable to the great demands already made on staff developers' time. Notably, participants indicated that they needed more support from staff developers in two important areas: helping teachers to integrate conflict resolution concepts into other classroom lessons and facilitating monthly school meetings.

3. **Curriculum.** The heart of the RCCP is contained within its curriculum. The RCCP curriculum is comprehensive, and includes the following units: Peace and Conflict, Communication, Dealing Appropriately with Anger, Solving Conflicts Creatively, Cooperation, Affirmation, Preventing Prejudice/Celebrating Differences, Equality, Peacemakers, and The Future: A Positive Vision. The majority of respondents (67.2%) indicated that the overall implementation of the project curriculum was good or very good. According to teacher respondents, the curriculum units most frequently used were Communication (80.6%), Peace and Conflict (79.8%) and Cooperation (75.8%).

In the survey instrument, teachers were asked the extent to which they were providing conflict resolution instruction before and after receiving the curriculum, training, and project support services. Approximately 73 percent of the respondents indicated that before receiving the conflict resolution curriculum, training and support services, they were never or only sometimes providing conflict resolution instruction in their classes. Since the training, more than 51 percent of the teacher participants reported that they devoted approximately four to five classroom periods per month to teaching the conflict resolution curriculum; 20.9 percent indicated that they devote between six and eight lessons per month.

It was anticipated that teachers trained in the use of the RCCP curriculum would be able to incorporate conflict resolution ideas into other areas of instruction. Indeed, to some extent, nearly 85 percent of the teacher respondents indicated that they were able to infuse conflict resolution education into the rest of the curriculum.

B. Impact of the Core Components of the RCCP on Participating Students

This section contains a discussion of program outcomes related to changes in students' attitudes and behaviors and to students' improved mastery of program material.

1. Attitudinal and Behavioral Changes Among Participating Students

Some of the data related to students' attitudinal and behavioral changes are derived from teachers' perceptions included in the responses to the teacher survey. Table 1 summarizes the percentages of teachers who, to a moderate or a great extent observed particular attitudinal changes in students as a result of their participation in the RCCP. It can be seen in Table 1 that teachers perceived a number of positive attitudinal changes in their students as a result of their experience with the RCCP. The information contained in Table 1 clearly indicates that the program is having an overwhelmingly positive impact on participants. It can be seen in the table that:

- 70.9 percent of responding teachers have observed that to a moderate or a great extent, children are demonstrating less physical violence in the classroom;
- 66.3 percent of responding teachers have observed less name-calling and fewer verbal put-downs among children;

- 77.8 percent of responding teachers have observed more caring behavior among their children;
- 69.1 percent of respondents have observed an increased willingness to cooperate among children; and
- 71.5 percent of respondents have noticed that children have increased skills in understanding others' points of view.

Table 1

| Attitude or Behavior | A great deal | Moderately | Total |
|---|--------------|------------|-------|
| less physical violence in the classroom | 14.5% | 56.4% | 70.9% |
| less name-calling/fewer verbal put-downs | 13.0% | 53.7% | 66.7% |
| increased use of put-ups/supportive comments | 24.1% | 38.9% | 63.0% |
| increased willingness to cooperate | 23.6% | 45.5% | 69.1% |
| more caring behavior | 25.9% | 51.9% | 77.8% |
| increased skill in understanding other points of view | 17.9% | 53.6% | 71.5% |

Comments provided by many of the participating teachers confirm these perceptions. According to one teacher, "the children seem less aggressive, more willing to step back and hear the other person's view. One student has changed so much that he is no longer a 'hard to handle' child."

The student instrument (administered to students in District 15) contained questions designed to measure changes in students' behavior. Program participants were asked to describe the extent to which they performed certain behaviors (e.g., getting into fist fights, calling others names, using put ups, helping to solve a conflict, cooperating with others) prior to and following their participation in the RCCP. Preliminary evidence from this instrument reveals that, following their participation in the RCCP, substantial numbers of students report engaging in fewer fist fights and participating less in name calling. In addition, following participation in the RCCP, respondents report an increased use of put ups, and that they have helped to resolve more conflicts.

2. Students' Mastery of Concepts Related to Conflict Resolution

The achievement test was given to fourth, fifth and sixth grade students participating in the program and, as a comparison, to matched groups of students not involved with the program. The test was designed to measure students' understanding of basic conflict resolution concepts, skills, and the language associated with the theory. The test contained two subtests, each containing ten questions related to skills and concepts (the third section was designed to assess previously described attitudinal and behavioral changes). Students could attain a maximum total score of 20 points on the two subtests.

Table 2, below, summarizes for all students (grades four through six - control and experimental groups), the mean number of items correct on each of the two subtests and a mean total score. Statistically significant differences between scores for the control and experimental groups are denoted with an asterisk. Overall, program participants in grades four through six scored a mean of 15.03 on the exam, while control group students at these grade levels scored a mean of 12.38. The mean difference between the two groups' performance (2.65 items, or 13.25%) was statistically significant (i.e., the probability that as large a difference would occur by chance is extremely low). The most notable differences between the control and program students' performance were on Subtest I, which contained definitions of conflict resolution terms.

Table 2

| Group | Subtest I | Subtest II | Total |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|---------|
| Program (all grades) | 7.12 * | 7.91 * | 15.03 * |
| Control (all grades) | 5.29 | 7.09 | 12.38 |

Through their experience with the program, participants learned the meanings of words like conflict, active listening, mediator, and put-up. Students' ability to master these concepts were assessed by the multiple choice questions in Subtest I of the survey. It can be seen in Table 1 that, overall, program participants answered a mean of 7.12 items in the desired direction; control group students responded appropriately to a mean of 5.29 items.

An analysis of students' responses to the questions on Subtest I revealed that 80 percent of program participants correctly defined the word "conflict" as a disagreement as compared with 65 percent of the control group. Overall, two thirds of program participants were able to identify a key part of "active listening" as "keeping eye contact with the other person", as compared with only 32 percent of the control group students. More than 88 percent of program participants correctly defined a "mediator" as someone who helps people to solve conflicts; only 45 percent of the control group could identify the role of a mediator. Seventy-one percent of program participants were able to define "put-up" versus 49 percent of control group students.

The second part of the test consisted of ten true or false items related to conflict situations and conflict resolution. On most items in Subtest II, a greater proportion of program participants than control group students chose the desired answer. For example, overall, 67 percent of program students agreed that when a conflict arises, it is possible for everyone to win; only 35 percent of the control group students responded in this manner.

C. Impact of the Program on Participating Teachers

In one section of the teacher survey, participants were asked to describe the extent to which they have experienced changes in their attitudes and behaviors since their participation in the RCCP. Table 3 shows the percentages of respondents who reported that as a result of their participation in the RCCP, they have experienced positive attitudinal and behavioral changes to a moderate or to a great extent. It can be seen in Table 3 that the strongest program effects on teachers could be observed in three areas: improved attitudes about conflict and conflict resolution; an increased willingness to let young people take responsibility for solving their own conflicts; and increased understanding of individual children's needs and concerns.

Respondents offered comments about additional attitudinal or behavioral changes. These clustered in four major areas: improved active listening, improved ability to help students to solve conflicts, increased knowledge of conflict resolution strategies, and increased use of such techniques in their personal lives. Respondents indicated that, since their participation in the RCCP, they have noticed improvements in their active listening and communication skills. As one teacher noted, "(I am) a better listener because of the course and have personally tried not to guess what people will say, but instead to listen to them." Similarly, several respondents reported an increased ability to help students to solve conflicts using mediation skills. As one teacher described:

Table 3

| Attitude or Behavior | A great deal | Moderately | Total |
|--|--------------|------------|-------|
| my listening skills have improved | 32.1% | 51.8% | 83.9% |
| I have increased my understanding of individual children's needs and concerns | 30.4% | 58.9% | 89.3% |
| I have increased my use of specific conflict resolution techniques in the classroom | 38.6% | 49.1% | 87.7% |
| my attitudes about conflict and conflict resolution are more positive | 51.8% | 41.1% | 92.9% |
| my sensitivity to children whose backgrounds are different from my own has increased | 25.0% | 53.6% | 78.6% |
| my willingness to let young people take responsibility for solving their own conflicts has increased | 39.3% | 50.0% | 89.3% |

" In the past I have felt frustrated and incapable of helping those with a great deal of anger. As a result of the RCCP training, I can clearly see that with the tools and insight I've gained, I can facilitate a solution."

Respondents indicated that, through their experience with the RCCP they have learned valuable conflict resolution techniques and strategies, thereby gaining confidence in their teaching styles. Many volunteered that they are using the techniques they learned through their RCCP training in their personal lives. Examples of these changes may be seen in the following: "I have more tools and methods with which to deal with classroom conflicts. I can use certain specific words which the entire class understands when a simple reference is made," and, "I now view conflict as something positive and not something which must be avoided at all costs."

Teachers, having completed their training, were asked what their next steps would be with regard to the goals of the RCCP. Forty-two percent of the responding teachers plan to continue to integrate the curriculum into daily classroom instruction and to improve upon their current techniques. Forty-two percent of the respondents indicated that in the next program year they plan to explore the curriculum with their students in a more in-depth manner. A small proportion of teachers (11.6 percent) indicated a desire for future

reinforcement from staff developers in order to learn additional strategies for infusing the curriculum. In addition to these plans, respondents expressed an interest in more involvement with the mediation component and with teaching mediation skills, expansion of the program to include other parents as well as additional grades and schools and in incorporating program concepts more into their personal lives.

D. Impact of the Program on Class/School Climate

More than 84 percent of the respondents reported that they noticed positive changes in their class climate attributable to the teaching of the conflict resolution curriculum. Respondents particularly noted that students are demonstrating an increased understanding of and sensitivity toward others and are using mediation skills. Teachers have observed that children in their classes appear to be increasingly aware of alternative ways to solve conflicts.

The most prominent examples of the positive impact that the program has had on class climate are seen in the following statements from teachers: "One student will usually remind students involved in a dispute that peaceful resolution of their conflict is possible. After that, the students are asked to leave the room and they mediate their dispute," "They respond to my 'I messages' in a more cooperative way. I feel more comfortable with letting my students see my feelings. They also feel they can express their own feelings freely, being accepted for doing so," and finally, "Students are much more mindful of not using put-downs. Also, students are much more in touch with their feelings and their reasons for getting angry."

Nearly 60 percent of the respondents reported that they had noticed positive changes in the school climate attributable to the RCCP. Many of the respondents who provided comments about changes in school climate indicated that the change was largely due to students using mediation skills. Teachers also experienced a sense of unity with other teachers as a result of their work with the RCCP. For example, in the words of one teacher:

"The teachers and administration involved in the program are connected in a special integrated way which promotes and encourages a peaceful and amiable atmosphere in the school. There is a 'ripple effect' felt throughout the school community which is fostered through our conflict resolution program."

E. Implementation and Impact of the Student Mediation Program

As indicated earlier, during 1988-89, the RCCP offered student mediation training in five schools in District 15. In addition to their introductory training sessions, most faculty advisors to student mediators received two days of training in mediation techniques and in implementing the student mediation component. Further, a RCCP Mediation Coordinator provided ongoing support to faculty advisors at all schools with mediation components.

Groups of teachers, advisors, students and mediators were surveyed for their perceptions of whether and how the mediation component has made a difference in their school. The following highlights significant findings from survey analyses:

- there were 535 successful student mediations - an average of 107 per school;
- 85.4 percent of the teacher respondents agreed that students in their classes have been helped through their contact with mediators;
- 85.2 percent of the teacher respondents agreed that mediators' participation in the mediation component has contributed to increasing the mediators' self-esteem;
- 98.2 percent of the teacher respondents agreed that the mediation component has given children an important tool for dealing with the every day conflicts that surface among students;
- 88.7 percent of the teacher respondents agreed that the mediation component has helped students take more responsibility for solving their own problems;
- of the surveyed students who have used a mediator, 84.5 percent indicated that mediation was helpful to them;
- 83.8 percent of the surveyed student mediators agreed that being a mediator has helped them to understand people with different views; and
- 83.7 percent of the surveyed student mediators agreed that being a mediator has given them skills they can use their whole life.

Advisors to the student mediators identified two major successes of the program: teaching children the valuable skills of the mediation process; and uniting children across cultures, grades and programs. Advisors to the mediators noted that there is a more peaceful atmosphere in the school and that students are aware that there are alternatives for conflict resolution. This idea was generally reinforced by participating teachers. According to one teacher, "because of the program and the efforts of the mediators, the school lunchroom is definitely a more peaceful place to be."

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

This report has summarized the major findings from the 1988-89 evaluation of the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program. Based on all data sources, it is apparent that the RCCP continues to provide exemplary services to program participants in District 15 and has

had a positive initial implementation in Districts 2, 27 and 75. Some noteworthy achievements of the 1988-89 program year include:

- participants' assessment of their program training, the curriculum, the support provided by school-based staff development consultants, and the various program-related special projects were extremely positive;
- there continues to be an observable and quantifiable positive impact on students, participating staff, and classroom and school climate;
- data from teachers' surveys reveal that children's attitudes and behaviors appear to have changed in positive ways as a result of their participation in the RCCP.
- the mediation component has been successfully implemented and has fostered more peaceful class and school environments.

The evaluation has provided a great deal of valuable information detailing the specific strengths and weaknesses of the various program elements. The data are intended to provide specific guidelines to program personnel for enhancing and shaping the program as it seeks further development and dissemination. Information from participating teachers' evaluations of and comments about the RCCP have helped to target areas in need of improvement. The following suggestions are offered in order to make this very successful program even stronger:

- There appears to be a need for more staff development time and more training sessions. Training additional staff developers would provide participating teachers with more support. Participating teachers indicated that they would like to receive more support from staff developers in two important areas: helping teachers to integrate conflict resolution concepts into other classroom lessons and facilitating monthly school meetings;
- An overwhelming proportion of respondents suggested that there be parental involvement with the program. It is important that children receive consistent reinforcement of the conflict resolution and relational skills they are learning and practicing in school.

Finally, many participants have requested that the program be expanded within each participating school and to other schools. Teachers stress that each school participating in the RCCP should engage a greater number of classes in the curriculum and training. In this way, the ideas of peace and cooperation would be encouraged at a school-wide level.