FOCUS GROUPS: SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAMS

Melissa A. Bradley, P. Michael Timpane, Peter Reuter

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two focus groups of teachers and administrators, one from a suburban school district and one from an urban school district, met to discuss how violence and drugs affected schools and how schools were coping with these problems. The highlights of the discussion included the following:

1. The increased emphasis on academic achievement and testing is reducing the amount of resources available for controlling violence and drug-related problems. The argument that violence and drugs substantially impact the ability of schools to teach does not prove persuasive.

2. Violence and safety are more pressing and persuasive issues than drug use, and safety is an overriding concern in the urban district.

3. Problems are occurring at earlier ages, and programs need to respond to this.

4. The SDFSCA program is an important source of specialized funds for many programs that get little local support. Low and unstable levels of funding at the school level present serious problems for maintaining program quality.

5. The demand for research-based programs is admirable, but it ignores two aspects of school realities: (1) the need to tailor programs to the specific situation, and (2) the difficulty of gaining access to research findings and carrying out either data collection or evaluation, especially given the modest resources available.

BACKGROUND

The two focus groups were conducted as part of a study sponsored by the Department of Education to help the federal government better understand the implementation of drug-abuse and violence prevention programs at the district and school level. Two dissimilar school districts were selected for the focus groups so that comparisons could be made across different types of school systems. Focus Group 1 consisted of school and local government officials in a suburban district next to a major city; Group 2 consisted of representatives from the school system, local government, and private social service programs of a major city. Participants were asked to discuss a variety of issues concerning the funding, administration, implementation, and impact of drug-abuse and violence prevention programs.

The Group 1 school district educates almost 19,000 students in approximately 30 schools. It boasts a high graduation rate, a high percentage of students pursuing postsecondary education, and test-score averages well above state and national norms. The student body in this district has a high degree of ethnic diversity, with students speaking more than 60 different languages. Approximately 40 percent of the students are white, 32 percent are Hispanic, 17 percent are Black, and 10 percent are Asian/Pacific Islander. Approximately 40 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunches. The district is able to offer a wide variety of individualized educational programs, and technology is an integrated part of most classrooms. The average per-student spending in 1997-1998 was approximately $9,300.

The participants in Group 2 come from a school district in a large city. The district has more than 200,000 students and more than 250 schools. Class sizes in this district average 30 or more students. The school system includes a large school police force. Approximately 80 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, and 42 percent live in poverty. Average school spending for elementary and secondary students in 1997-1998 was just under $6,000.

FOCUS GROUP COMPOSITION

Participants were selected by RAND from lists provided by each district. They included school administrators, principals, teachers, counselors, and representatives of local government and private social service programs. Participants were chosen to provide a range of programs, responsibilities, and school levels.

The first focus group consisted of nine participants and two facilitators, all of whom were involved in some facet of the district's drug and violence prevention programs. Participants included one elementary school assistant principal, one elementary health and physical education teacher, three high school counselors, one high school minority-achievement counselor, two district administrators, and a coordinator for the county prevention and intervention program. The session lasted just over 2 hours.

The second focus group consisted of 14 participants and three facilitators; like the members of Group 1, all of them were involved in some facet of the district's drug and violence prevention programs. Participants included two elementary school teachers, five high school teachers, a school counselor, a high school dean, a school policeman, the director of safety for city schools, a coordinator for the city prevention and intervention program, and two directors of local private social service agencies. The second focus group lasted just over 2-1/2 hours.

RESULTS

The facilitator opened the discussion, providing a brief overview of the project and the purpose of the focus group. Participants were encouraged to offer their opinions, suggestions, and experiences on the implementation of violence and drug prevention programs and their integration into the school curriculum. Specific questions were posed by the facilitator for discussion. The protocol for the focus groups is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Focus Group Protocol: Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program

_____

Introduction

Good morning. I am NAME, the moderator of today's focus group.

Thank you for coming. We appreciate your help. We are taping this discussion today so we don't have to take notes. This discussion is anonymous--we won't be associating your names with what you say here--which means I would like everyone to use first names only today. I want to assure you that anything said here today will not be attributed to specific individuals or schools in any way effect your job.

I am with RAND in Washington D.C. RAND is a non-profit research institution. In July, RAND will be hosting a conference on the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFS). This conference will bring together prevention researchers, practitioners, and policy makers from SDFS programs and related educational and prevention programs in order to address the question: What can the federal government do to enhance the significance, appeal, and effectiveness of drug and violence prevention programs that education authorities and teachers often have difficulty fitting into an already crowded set of educational responsibilities?

In preparation for the conference we wanted to speak with school teachers, principals, administrators, and other stake-holders to hear in their own words the problems and solutions that they see in the implementation of the violence and drug prevention programs and their integration into school curriculum.

The feedback you give us today will allow us to better focus and shape the discussion at the conference to address the "real" issues in school based intervention. We will prepare a report from this meeting for the conference, but again, no specific individual or school will be identified in the report. The meeting will be taped, but only to help us report accurately on this discussion.

I also have OTHER RESEARCH STAFF here with me today and they will be participating in our discussion.

TOPICS:

I. Participant Background
Before we begin, I'd like to go around the table and have each of you tell me your first name and your current position.

- How long have you been involved with violence or drug prevention programs? In what capacity?
- Length of time in LOCATION.

II. Nature of Problem in LOCATION

I'd like to start off by talking a little bit about the nature and extent of the drug and violence problem in LOCATION.

- In general, how much of a problem do you feel exists in your school and in LOCATION in general?
- What is the nature of this problem? For example, is it serious only in high schools and only in a few of those schools or is it very widespread?
- Recent national developments (for example, Columbine High School) have shifted much of the public's attention from drug prevention to violence prevention. How does this strike you?
- How do school safety measures, such as policing and metal detectors, relate to these issues?

III. Development of Current Program
- What is the program you work in or with? What curricula do you have? How much time is devoted? Etc.
- How did this program develop?
- How has it been adapted or modified as you've worked with it?
- Who is the program targeted to?
- What is the intent of program?
- How is the program connected to other activities at the school? In the community?
- Who is served?
- What has the impact of the program been?
- How does district/school monitor and evaluate program?

IV. Resources
- What is available?
- How much does the program cost?
- How are programs funded? That is, apart from SFDSA, what other moneys are explicitly aimed at drug and/or violence prevention?
- How do you tap into it?

V. Role of the Community, Others
- How does school, community regard the program? Is there much scrutiny of, or pressure about, this area of curriculum?
- What role does the school district administration play?
- How would you go about improving, changing current program?
- What roles is played by outside organizations, community groups, etc.?
- What role is played by state Department of Education, county government, Federal government?
- Is Federal research and technical assistance literature useful to you?

VI. Improvements
- What's not working? What is?
- What would you like to see changed?

Closing

- In summing up: is there anything I haven't asked you that I should have?

    Thank you very much for helping us out today. Your feedback will help us in better understanding of how these programs are implemented and integrated into school curriculum.

- If we have any additional questions or need clarification on any point that was made today, may we contact you?

- Would you like to receive a copy of the final report?

    If you would like more information about the study, or if you would like to discuss any of these issues further, please don't hesitate to contact me at RAND: (202) 296-5000, ext. 5336.

Nature of the Problem

Each group was first asked to characterize the nature and scope of the problem within its district.

School safety. A recent parent survey rated the safety in Group 1 schools quite highly; students and parents reported that they felt fairly safe. Statistically, the schools have experienced a decrease in incidents of serious violence. However, the participants emphasized that while many in their community may think they are immune to these problems, they are not. Their schools do mirror national trends, and violence or the threat of violence is pervasive. Students are more afraid than they have ever been; they cannot remedy things on their own because they are afraid of what their peers might do after an altercation or dispute—would they come back with more friends, with weapons?

The Group 2 school system clearly experiences more problems with violence than does its suburban counterpart. Several respondents stated that safety issues are their number one concern. Group 2 reported that rape, robbery, shootings, and other serious crimes involving students and faculty had been committed in or near their schools. A significant number of students in the district are returning from prison. Problems with the physical plant, such as broken locks and fire alarms, add to

concerns. The overriding perspective is that violence is increasing.
The participants cited increased referrals to treatment programs for
younger and younger students. They felt that to some extent they were
dealing with a different breed of students, children who refused to deal
with authority figures.

Many of the schools in the Group 2 district use fairly
sophisticated safety technology, including cameras and metal detectors.
Community policing is also used within the schools, and some schools
hold town meetings to discuss school safety issues.

However, regardless of the actual amount of violence, most
participants in both groups conveyed the important point that the
seriousness of the violence has changed. One participant commented that
while there used to be fist fights, fights now involve weapons. Some
participants in Group 1 felt that their schools are actually less
violent overall now than they were years ago but that the students who
are causing trouble are more likely than before to cause serious injury
with guns and other weapons.

Drug abuse. Group 1 perceived their experience with alcohol and
other drugs as falling within the national range. Like the rest of the
nation, they are seeing children involved with alcohol and drugs at a
younger age and are now focusing many of their programs on younger
children. Although drugs were clearly mentioned as a problem by Group 2
participants, most of the discussion focused on violence.

Where should the emphasis be? Both groups felt that drug abuse
and violence are symptomatic of a number of different issues. Group 1
pointed out that people who abuse drugs are violent and that the two
problems are very much linked; the underlying characteristics are the
same. They must be dealt with together, energetically and repeatedly.

**What effect has the Columbine High School incident had on your
school?** Group 1 felt that after Columbine some students finally began
to report incidents. The perception of the group was that you can hear
and learn more from students about what is happening than you can from
anyone else, that they know about problems before adults do. If you
have built rapport with students, they will keep you informed. To build
rapport, one must know students personally—know their names. "That's a

big prevention right there," said one participant. Part of the training
that children need is referral skills. There must be a category for
those who report problems besides that of "squealer." Children must let
school staff know which students are having problems. Students feel
good knowing that school authorities will take charge if they know about
problems, that they can and will act on problems.

Group 2 commented that the media had reported a great deal about
Columbine but had long downplayed the increasing levels of violence,
including killings, in their schools. One participant felt that an
incident like that at Columbine would not have happened in 90 percent of
their schools because the schools have small buildings and small
campuses. They know their students and they notice the changes. They
too felt that school staff must discuss these issues with students, and
that students need to know that the teachers and staff care about them.

Roots of the Problems and Assigning Responsibility for Change

Participants were asked to reflect on the roots of these problems
and the responsibility of parents, schools, communities, and others for
violence and drug prevention.

The roots of problems. Members of Group 2 offered many reasons for
the increase in drug abuse, violence, and other social problems:

- Students do not have enough positive things to do with their
  time.
- There are not enough programs and activities that students
  enjoy and not enough jobs.
- Many students no longer have opportunities to dream about their
  futures, as job training and other specialized programs have
  been cut from budgets; many students can no longer get jobs
  with which they can support families after graduation.
- Many students are already significantly lagging academically by
  the time they get to first grade, and they are still illiterate
  in high school; these students are frustrated and cause many of
  the problems.

- Schools pass students along because it's easier than dealing
  with them; students who are on the fence see this and
  subsequently cease to struggle through the learning process.
- There are no alternative programs for these students.

Group 2 expressed the belief that the consequences for negative
behavior are not severe enough to have an impact on children, nor are
they consistent. The participants indicated that administrators are
reluctant to treat offenses severely and swiftly. In many cases,
children are being raised without monitoring, bonding, or caring and by
parents who themselves are children who lack the maturity to instill
values. One Group 2 participant expressed the view that the drug
culture has educated children better than the rest of society has. The
drug culture gives them what they want, and it provides them with the
only opportunities they can see.

Group 1 noted that parents seem to be overly concerned with
academics and that they ignore social problems their children are
experiencing. They also discussed the prevalence of violence in society
as a whole and the role the media plays in promoting violence and other
negative images. They felt that allowing children access to guns was a
serious issue. Like Group 2, they also saw students without a sense of
vision for the future.

Whose is responsible for what? Group 1 felt strongly that schools
should not carry the brunt of all that happens, as students spend only
six hours a day in school, fewer than 200 days a year. They said that a
community effort is needed, with businesses, neighborhoods, schools, and
parents all working together. Group 1 noted that some parents put too
much responsibility on schools and are not present in their children's
lives.

One Group 2 participant remarked that teachers now have to teach
children the difference between right and wrong. A school policeman
said that truant officers bring students back to school every day, but
if there is no accountability for the parents, no warrants going out
against the parents when they refuse to take an active role in their
children's lives, the schools' efforts are meaningless. Another

participant expressed the view that the educators should be allowed to educate and that social programs should be handled in after-school programs by individuals who are trained to deal with these issues. Yet another remarked that teachers are educated to teach—you cannot place them in a class and expect them to deal with gangsters. School personnel can react only so far, because they are inundated. Participants expressed concerns over shrinking school budgets, lack of manpower to deal with all the problems, and large class sizes.

Conflicting demands—education or social programs? Participants were asked about the seemingly conflicting demands of educating students and providing help in dealing with social issues. Group 1 participants pointed out that a child in trouble will not learn the academics, no matter what.

Both groups expressed concerns that current performance standards have put so much added strain on teachers and administrators that many of the important social programs are being pushed aside. The Group 1 participants said that in their experience violence prevention and drug education become important only when something explodes. The pressure caused by testing is great. While parents and their community may say that they understand the need to balance the academic and social programs, when push comes to shove, it's all about academics. Furthermore, with the increased emphasis on testing, teachers want their students in class all of the time, regardless of whether or not they are learning. There is no time to address other problems.

Group 2 participants noted that in their district, each school is now rated primarily on educational achievement and attendance, and the principal's raise is affected by the rating. Consequently, in the past year, everything the schools have done is instruction-based, and other programs have been pushed aside. The participants also indicated that incidents of violence often go unpunished because schools are fearful of negative press or the resulting feedback from parents and the community.

Both groups expressed strong concerns about the children who are not successful academically. Group 1 participants are concerned that children who really need special programs will have self-image problems when they fail, and then everyone will have dynamite waiting to explode.

They cautioned that as more pressure is put on teachers for testing, they will have less time to get personally involved with the students. A Group 1 participant cautioned that we are losing the personal side of education because the teachers are under so much stress. The overemphasis on academic excellence—the goal that parent, community, and business leaders support so strongly—may eventually backfire.

One participant in Group 2 said that every principal in the district was directed by the district to identify a safety and crisis team and to meet with staff to develop a school safety plan. However, teachers participating in the focus group had heard nothing about this and said that it was not being done at their schools. The district may tell principals to take safety seriously, but it clearly does not go any further in many schools. Participants said that this happened because the schools have so much to deal with, they are overwhelmed and safety is just one of the things that get pushed aside.

What can be done? Group 1 participants believe that teachers can do a lot to help. Some said that the educators have been remiss in at least one area: They can do a better job of reaching out to students. They need to find moments to teach students what is right. Both focus groups emphasized the personal relationships and rapport that teachers build with students as key features in effecting change. This rapport-building would go a long way toward stopping the violence. One participant in Group 2 noted that although her school has security cameras, she feels safe because of rapport with the students and their families.

Both groups said that parents need help in dealing with the issues they confront today. One participant noted that problems often start because of the environment in which the child is raised. Many parents are not equipped to recognize—let alone deal with—the kinds of issues their children face, and more parent education is needed.

Identification of risk factors in children was a key element for both groups. Participants feel that all parents, teachers, and communities should know about these developmental risk factors. One Group 2 respondent was struck by how early the warning signs appear in the children who get in trouble. However, these signs are often

completely ignored until the situation gets so bad that it is difficult
to save the child.

According to Group 2, the school administration should provide more
support and manpower for discipline within the schools. The district
should make safety and discipline top priorities. Moreover, follow-up
with truant and problem children needs to be more rapid and consistent.
The school district should include many safety and discipline programs
as part of the basic educational process, thereby eliminating the need
for outside funding with restricted purposes.

Programs and Funding

Program funding. Group 1 reported that without the Safe and Drug-
Free Schools funding, many of their programs would never have been
started. This group also expressed concerns about the variability of
funding from year to year. Schools are often left in limbo waiting to
see how much money they will have, not knowing whether they will be able
to continue programs that are already in existence. Participants also
said that if funding is tied to research-based programs, government
should increase the amount of funds to cover the added work. Losing
funds because of reallocation by the state was also a concern.

Group 2's district receives program funding from the Safe and Drug-
Free Schools program, state government, the district, and private
foundations. Where possible, the district uses other sources of funding
creatively. For instance, Title 1 funds can be used to train teachers
in classroom discipline and conflict resolution. Group 2 participants
all believe that funding is fragmented, unstable, and inadequate. They
mentioned a peer-mediation/conflict-resolution program that they used
previously but have not used in the past few years because there is not
enough funding to train anyone to run it. Given the current funding
available, funds need to be spent more effectively and efficiently. One
way to increase efficiency is to lessen administrative components. One
participant described a program that was ready to start in October, but
the actual funding did not filter through until March. Inconsistency in
funding is also a problem. A program is implemented for a year and then
there is no further funding; this simply increases the cynicism of the

people who need to buy in to the programs. When the government sends
out Requests for Proposals (RFPs), rather than asking for in-kind
services, it should fund the program for three years and require
recipients to fund the program for the next three.

Group 2 also reported that the change in the focus from drugs to
safe and drug-free schools caused problems with programs already in
effect. When the funding stream changed, successful drug prevention
programs had to be changed to add violence issues, and the programs were
"destroyed."

In both districts, the current funding is inadequate. Teachers and
other program personnel often need to look for other grants, without
having the time for grant writing. Many of the costs to run school
safety programs come out of the staff's own pockets.

Program development. In Group 1's district, there is no mandatory
push for programs in the schools, although the district does target some
schools and provides resources to start programs. Group 1 participants
saw programs as evolving to fill needs as the needs were identified.
Programs emerge out of a creative moment—an identified need and
availability of funding. One program began as substance-abuse-treatment
outreach, but over the years, program coordinators saw a growing need to
address these issues earlier—before they became treatment issues—and
began to focus on younger children. At one high school, programs are
student driven. Students themselves decide where they want to put their
focus (drugs and alcohol this year, eating disorders last year).
Districtwide, with so much diversity and different cultures, ages, and
problems, there can be no cookie-cutter approach. Whatever program is
used, adjustments will be necessary to fit different groups. Generally,
the more people who know and can get the information out, the better.
Students need to hear the messages from many different people.

Group 2 participants also believe that children need to receive the
message many times, from many sources, and over time. Given the
fundamental social problems underlying drugs, violence, and safety in
schools, any specific program is probably too narrow and small to deal
with the issue completely. Programs must focus on many components
including life skills, mentoring, academics, and parenting, and they

must begin with preschool children. At the same time, programs must be
systematic and coordinated to make sure each step builds on other
programs. The lack of coverage and consistency is a general problem.

Programs. A variety of programs were described by both groups.
Group 1 focused heavily on mediation and other peer-centered activities.
One participant noted that when you empower children, they take over and
become responsible for themselves and their peers. She was particularly
enthusiastic about programs that were developed by the students.

Group 2 participants provided a long list of programs with which
they were involved, including Outward Bound, Beacon Schools, programs to
"take back" entire neighborhoods, "scared-straight"-type programs, and
programs that involve the entire family. They were all enthusiastic
about these programs because the programs addressed issues at the
community level, used intensive case management, and were well
evaluated.

Accountability

The groups were asked about the accountability for programs. Both
groups recognized the value of using effective programs and said that it
would be better to have no program than a poorly run one that can
actually cause harm. There was general support for research-based
models, and both groups reported that the programs being adopted are
those whose success is documented, either by external research or by
local program data used to convince administrators and parents that
programs are worthwhile.

It is important to address the nay-sayers. A participant in Group
1 related that not long ago there was move to get rid of counselors in
elementary schools; the lack of data and accountability has opened the
door for the politicians to come in and attack these positions.

What accountability currently exists? In the Group 1 district,
accountability for programs at the school level is very basic. The
schools are accountable to the district in only the following ways:
Schools must verify that they have the programs, that they have been
trained to run them, that teachers and coordinators say they work, and
that students appear to be participating and benefiting. It is not

always possible to put an effectiveness rating on these programs. Some
individual educators and schools keep statistics on their programs, but
nothing is mandated. Next year, the district plans to implement a new
research-based program in the middle schools. However, participants
emphasized that they already do things based on the literature and that
they did their homework before picking these programs. They already use
many components of research-based programs, but they may not use all
components or they may not use them in the order the program suggests.
They also were concerned about the lack of data available on problems.
They asked, "How can you be accountable for preventing something if you
have no numbers to know what you are preventing?" Only limited data are
available to help them assess what they are doing.

The Group 2 district office tells individual schools to identify
their own needs and to contract with an agency to provide services. The
agency is then supposed to provide a report to the district. Since the
system is decentralized, if the agencies do not send reports, the
district does not know what is going on in the schools. To provide more
accountability, the district has adopted a new policy that prohibits
schools from applying for grants individually. The district also has
coordinators in school clusters who are supposed to prepare and share
school profiles and lists of school programs with other schools in the
cluster. While the district asks that the reports be prepared,
mandating them is difficult. At the school level, accountability has
loopholes. The general perception is that, with all its other concerns
and crises, the administration does not follow up on social programs.
Often it comes down to meeting requirements for these types of programs
in the simplest way possible, perhaps just paying lip service to them at
a staff meeting and reporting back that the task was completed. The
Group 2 participants from private and government social service agencies
reported that some of their programs do have evaluation or reporting
components.

Feasibility of reporting and evaluation. Group 1 expressed a
strong conviction that the issue of accountability and research gets
back to the issue of their job descriptions. Are they educators,
therapists, drug-prevention specialists, or something else? While they

may know a program works because they see the results, they have no concrete research—they are not researchers, and they do not have that expertise. Participants emphasized that they all go above and beyond their jobs and spend an enormous amount of extra time with these programs. They feel that it is not possible to find even more time to justify the programs with research. One participant suggested that at the elementary level, the schools would probably abandon these programs if they had to do all the research and documentation. With such a small amount of money available, developing a research-based program is ridiculous. Moreover, a research-based approach would require long-term follow-up. While there is some possibility of combining information from participant reports and other records to track the longer-term results, it will be very difficult to go much further.

Group 2 echoed many of these concerns. They also do not have the time or the manpower to collect data or evaluate programs. Within their schools there is always some more-pressing obligation that takes time away from what is available to review programs and determine how they are working.

One participant in Group 2 noted that while funding agencies may tell schools to use programs that are research-based, they do not actually force them to do so. Some groups take the funding for the program and still do their own thing. Just as the children need limits, those who receive funding need limits: If you say that a program is proven effective, you should require the practitioners to replicate it or deny them funding.

What criteria should be used to evaluate? Group 1 expressed many concerns over the criteria used for evaluating programs. They believe that there is research to prove both sides of every story. Participants emphasized that evaluators must be sure they are using the right criteria to evaluate a program. For example, DARE was designed as a communication program and evolved into a drug-prevention program. Evaluators did not look at the original purpose of the program; they considered only what it eventually became.

The participants also cautioned that evaluators must watch what they are actually evaluating to make sure the program is really well

implemented and has some substance. The mere existence of a program does not mean that the program is well run or properly implemented. Intentions are wonderful, but it takes skill, knowledge, and dedication to run these programs. Moreover, improper evaluation might eliminate a potentially beneficial program.

Another Group 1 participant wanted to know the level at which research is needed and how intense the requirements would be for documentation and evaluation. Participants wanted clarification on whether programs should simply be research-based or whether ongoing evaluation was required.

Group 2 participants believe that what people want to see are statistics showing changes in behavior. However, they feel that this is a problem, since a single program will not show much change. The coordination of many programs together is needed to effect change.

Wish Lists

Both groups concluded with a discussion of what they would do with more money.

The wish list for Group 1 included quality control to standardize and tailor programs, to make them more consistent across schools; incentives for administrators to support drug-abuse and violence prevention programs and for parents to be more involved; incentives for the total community to take responsibility; more alternative opportunities for children so they can see that they need not be involved with drugs and violence; and alternative activities that involve parents.

Group 2 would spend additional funds on improving physical safety, providing more intervention in middle schools, improving discipline and conduct, early intervention, increasing youth leadership programs, literacy, and mandated alternative programs. At earlier points in the discussions, Group 2 participants expressed a desire to see such things as smaller class sizes, making school voluntary, closing private schools, elections of the superintendent and school board members, and reinstitution of truant officers and individuals who go to the homes of students to check on problems.

CONCLUSIONS

Participants in both groups believe that the effort they put into these program is worthwhile. Many indicated that they would not still be doing these programs if they did not feel strongly that they were helping children. However, they feel that the problems they are addressing with these programs are larger than just drug abuse or violence, that drug abuse and violence are only symptoms.

One participant commented that schools today are developing a part of the child that schools have not addressed historically. Schools are now responsible for emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills, not just academic intelligence. The participant attributed this to the decline in the nuclear family. Many programs allow educators to build relationships with students, something that both groups feel is critical. It was said many times that programs need to be continuous and intensive and must include both prevention and intervention measures.

Finally, participants expressed a great deal of frustration at having their hands tied by a lack of funding, a lack of consistency, administrative requirements, and legislation. Participants expressed the following sentiments:

"We can give you a sundry of things that are going wrong, but unless someone comes in and says, 'We're going to do that,' then we'll all be back here next year."

"We could put [together] an amalgamation of all our ideas today . . . but it doesn't go anywhere."