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Responding to problem behaviors at school: A psychosocial approach

Christopher Don Wyatt

RESPONDING TO PROBLEM BEHAVIORS AT SCHOOL:

A PSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACH

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Social Work

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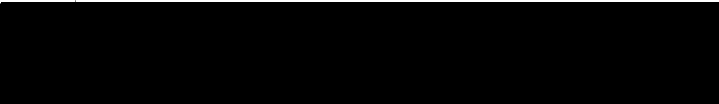
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by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines teachers' conceptualization of

students' problematic behavior as it relates to classroom

functioning. A comparison is made of behavioral versus

psychosocial conceptualizations. This study takes a qualitative

approach, using interview data to explore the association of

teachers' behavioral response and their non-clinical

conceptualization of problematic behaviors and the students who

enact them.

By approaching problem behaviors from a behavioral *qua*

disciplinary perspective, teachers place themselves in an

adversarial role, creating the expectation that problem

behaviors will elicit a punitive response. Students who may

benefit from clinical intervention are therefore likely to be

rendered punishment instead. A cycle of negative reinforcement

is established that both hinders teacher performance and fails

to extinguish the problem behaviors.

The purpose here is to educate the reader regarding the

need for clinicians in schools to address students' behavioral

difficulties. It is suggested that school clinicians qua

therapists would reduce the need for teachers to assume a

clinical or disciplinary role, thereby freeing educational

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resources to be used as they were intended. The etiology and treatment of disorders may then be dealt with by mental health professionals, and the education of our children may then be attended to by teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The sanctity of the schoolyard and the classroom has become a curiosity of history as violence and other behavioral problems increasingly plague these once hallowed havens of learning (U.S.Department of Justice, 1994; Noguera, 1995; Boothe, Flick, Kirk, Bradley & Keough, 1993). Violence and other antisocial behaviors have made education a difficult task at best. Classroom discipline is now hindered by threat of legal action. Students, teachers and administrators stand by helplessly as the disruptive behavior of the few renders arduous the task of education. (Coben, Weis, Mulvey & Dearwater, 1994; Boothe, et al., 1993). This is a trend that affects rural schools as well as those in the inner city (Bachus, 1994).

In the past ten years, adult violent crimes have decreased, while these crimes committed by youth have increased dramatically (Dohrn, 1995). Other studies have found that youth are increasingly at risk of committing or being victim to a violent crime (Kachur, et al., 1996; Hammond & Yung, 1993). The cost of these behaviors is, of course, passed on to taxpayers. For the 1995/96 school year alone, the cost to counties in California for property

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crimes committed in the schools was over twelve million

dollars, and it has increased steadily over the past decade

(California State Department of Education, 1997).

The need to find a new means of addressing this trend

has not gone unnoticed. However, as one author points out,

there is still "an overwhelming tendency to employ

unsystematic, reactive, punitive responses to aggressive

and violent behavior" (Nelson, 1997; p. 251). For those who

must deal with chronic behavior problems, patience often

succumbs to frustration, and neither teachers nor students

gain from the exchange.

In other research, it was found that the most common

approach to problem behavior is to control and suppress it,

which is not very effective (Bear, 1998). Further

complicating the ability of school officials to respond is

the decision in *Honig v. Doe* (1988, as cited by Nelson,

1997). With this ruling, the court put an end to using

suspension and expulsion as a response to behaviors that

may be considered characteristic of a disability, such as

acting out behaviors that may be due to emotional distress

or disturbance.

Teachers and administrators are thus becoming

increasingly frustrated by the influence of school violence

on the education process. School environments are increasingly perceived as unstable and therefore unpredictable. In a recent survey, schools that experienced more incidents of crime were found to also have the most discipline problems (Heaviside, Rowand, Williams & Farris, 1998).

In related research, the authors found that students, teachers, administrators and parents tend to perceive their schools as unsafe, even in the absence of supporting data (Fatum & Hoyle, 1996; Sreblaus, Schwartz, Vaughan, & Tunick, 1996). This perception helps to create a psychological environment that is conducive to the undesired behaviors, which then serves to justify the perception that schools are unsafe or unpredictable environments. Students with behavior problems are thus cast into an environment where their behavioral problems are expected as a natural course of interaction.

Sewall and Chamberlain (1997) examined this phenomenon, and found that parents, teachers and administrators were inclined to intertwine issues of safety and discipline. It is noted that safety issues are those that address the prevention of victimization, whereas discipline issues relate to the means by which control is achieved and maintained. It is not inconceivable that a

school's disciplinary problems may effectuate violence, or that campus violence is acted out in the classroom, only to a lesser degree. There is a need for research in this area.

The confusion of safety with disciplinary issues suggests that associating disciplinary problems in particular with school violence in general may hinder the treatment of both. Programs intended to address school violence may reveal some measure of success. However, unless the perpetrators of classroom misbehavior are the same students who are violent outside of the classroom, these programs will have little effect on classroom behavior and thus on teachers' ability to teach. This dilemma provides the impetus for this study.

There have been a variety of programs created to address the problem of campus violence. Many schools have employed programs for social skills training, which is considered a *universal* intervention. A recent meta-analysis of these programs reveals no significant effects (Kavale, Matthew, Forness, Rutherford, & Quinn, 1997). One of the salient problems with social skills training is that these behaviors are not easily generalized due to the effects of preexisting and more dominant behaviors (Gresham, 1997).

This was found to be a direct effect of treating behaviors that are not specific to the school domain (Nelson, 1997).

In other words, children with problem behaviors are likely to exhibit these behaviors in other life domains (O'Neill, Williams, Sprague, Horner, & Albin, 1993). The suggestion here is that the problem of classroom misbehavior is actually the case of intrapsychic difficulties manifesting in the school milieu. It would thus appear that schools are responding to mental health issues, such as personality and behavior disorders, with either disciplinary measures or with programs such as social skills training that are designed to treat the effects of behaviors rather than their underlying causal mechanisms.

Where social skills training has not had the desired effect, other universal interventions such as wraparound planning are used. This approach engages both the child and their family, and requires the support of service providers as well as individual family members (VanDenBerg & Grealish, 1996). Wraparound planning is the approach commonly used by child welfare agencies and juvenile justice systems, and it provides treatment of greater intensity than may be afforded through more traditional

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means at the school site (Eber, Nelson, & Miles, 1997). The use of wraparound planning, however, is often contingent not upon the need of the student, but on the fiscal ability of the school district to provide such an intervention.

Wraparound planning has only recently been applied as a response to school violence. The difficulty here is that using wraparound planning in the school environment places professional educators in the role of social worker or clinician insofar as they must first assess the child's needs before implementing such a resource-intensive intervention. It also places teachers in the position to make precursory assessments in lieu of a disciplinary response that may be more traditional. Where assessments are conducted by individuals trained as educators rather than clinicians, the possibility for error is quite obvious.

This imposes a burden on educational resources by holding teachers and administrators accountable for assessing and responding to their students' developmental needs. Furthermore, it presents a difficult situation wherein student's who misbehave and who are involved in treatment may not be disciplined in the same manner as other students. The task of addressing student misbehavior

thus becomes one of enacting an inconsistent and unjust disciplinary policy; both students and their parents would likely be intolerant of such a policy.

Other responses to student violence include the implementation of programs such as peer mediation and conflict resolution (Carruthers, Sweeney, Kmitta & Harris, 1996). These programs have been shown to be quite successful, with mediation success hovering around 90% and reports by parents and teachers indicating a marked improvement in the behavior of the mediating student (Carruthers, *et al.*, 1996). This research did not report if there were positive effects on student/teacher conflict, or if classroom behavior overall was positively affected. Further, since a good portion of student/student conflict is enacted *outside* of the classroom, the positive effects of peer mediation and conflict resolution may not be generalizable to behavior in the classroom.

The problem of school violence is a disparaging aspect of the educational environment. The variety of programs developed in response to this is receiving mixed reviews; researchers and educators continue to develop various means for assessing their effectiveness. Interventions are

commonly developed according to some theory that seeks to explain the phenomenon for which intervention is necessary.

In cases where a particular intervention is ineffective, it is not uncommon for new interventions to be developed, albeit emerging from a similar theoretical orientation. Where new interventions are developed from the same foundation as previous interventions that were shown to be ineffective, why is it so surprising when the new interventions are similarly ineffective? The logical approach to developing new and effective interventions calls for a new conceptualization of the problem being addressed. This endeavor has engaged many perspectives on the problem behaviors of youth.

Current theories of delinquent behavior conceptualize the behavior such that youth are perceived as freely choosing to enact the abhorrent behavior. The consistent use of discipline suggests that students are perceived as an endogenous element in a causal chain that includes student, their behavior, and the effects of their behavior, such as classroom disruption. When students act out, then, the logical response is a behavioral intervention designed to reduce or eliminate the effects of the disruptive behavior. The focus in this study is the extent to which

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teachers conceptualize problem behaviors according to this causal schema.

PERSPECTIVES ON YOUTH VIOLENCE

The problem of youth violence is not a recent phenomenon. It is primarily through the misdeeds of youthful drug-related gangs that society has begun taking notice (Burgess & Akers, 1996). As a result, several theories have been developed that seek to explain youth violence.

Differential Association looks to the influence of peers and significant individuals (Sutherland & Cressy, 1978). Social Learning theory presumes that behaviors such as violence are learned through modeling (Hirschi, 1969). And theories of Subjective Expected Utility posit that violence is chosen in the absence of acceptable means of coping and adaptation (Bauman, 1980).

Other macro theorists assert that delinquent behavior is the result of weakened ties to conventional institutions, such as family, church and school (Bailey & Hubbard, 1990). Proponents of this theory believe that the primary reason for the absence of violent behaviors is association with individuals or institutions that are

resistant to such behavior (Newcomb & Earleywine, 1996). It

is interesting to note that association with individuals

and/or institutions requires active participation on the

part of the youth; it requires that a choice be made.

Conversely, non-association with these entities suggests

that violent behavior is a choice the youth makes, and must

therefore be an inherent quality of the youth. In this

guise, problem behavior does indeed merit a disciplinary

response.

The social theories mentioned above share the notion

that behavior such as youth violence is a choice the

individual makes, which is a powerful but misleading

suggestion of personal accountability. For problem

behaviors conceptualized according to one or more of these

theories, discipline would be the common response because

youth are perceived as solely responsible for their

misbehavior. While this may justify the use of disciplinary

measures, studies have found discipline to be an

ineffective response to school violence (Nelson, 1997;

Bear, 1998).

As mentioned earlier, formulating a different mode of

response to student misbehavior requires redefining the

phenomena that elicits the response. A psychosocial

perspective provides an alternative means of conceptualizing and responding to problem behaviors in the school environment. The position of this author is that the most effective response to school violence and classroom misbehavior emerges not from the pen of the disciplinarian. Rather, it is found in helping troubled students to develop new mechanisms for coping with and adapting to their environment.

Children and adolescents do not develop in a vacuum. They must contend with transitions, losses and other phenomena like any other human being. In cases where youth do not have the benefit of guidance and supervision, their psychosocial development becomes a difficult task at best. The addition of abuse or neglect renders this task nearly insurmountable. Problem behaviors are but a single manifestation of these difficulties.

FACTORS AFFECTING PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN ADOLESCENCE

The means employed here for reconceptualizing students' problem behaviors involves using a psychosocial approach. In this manner, the student's behavior, its etiology, variations in each student's development, and the

effects of environmental adversity are taken into consideration.

Proponents of a disciplinary approach to problem behaviors would likely agree that discipline is fair and just when consideration is given to all of the facts. By including psychosocial data, a greater body of facts lends itself to investigation. The purpose here, then, is to expose the reader to a body of information that is perhaps overlooked in the disciplinary process.

Many researchers regard adolescence (i.e., from 12 through 18 years) as the critical period for personality development. According to Erikson ([1963], cited in Newman & Newman, 1995), children at this stage negotiate a developmental crisis, the successful outcome of which is ego identity, the unsuccessful outcome identity confusion. Youth in this stage are developing many characteristics and traits that will be enduring aspects of their personality; they are establishing who they are.

In another volume, Erikson (1968) proffers his concept of Negative Identity. This is the case where the adolescent rejects traditional values and expresses an ideal of distrust and non-conformity. The child who experiences rejection due to their behavior will likely form a negative

identity. The child's tendency to act out might then be regarded as internalized and a salient part of their self-perception.

In related research, it was found that adolescence is the developmental period wherein children are subjected to the strongest influences from the greatest number of sources (Kerns & Stevens, 1996; Noshpitz, 1994). Adolescents are inclined to seek out peers who are similarly dissociative of parents (Walsh, 1992), and who will therefore seek out similar sources for relief from the resulting dissonance, such as violence, drugs and alcohol (Lewinsohn, Gotlib & Seeley, 1995). The focus of inquiry becomes one of coping skills and adaptive ego mechanisms in the context of developmental variations. Problem behaviors can then be reconceptualized and effective responses can be developed therefrom.

According to Cashwell & Vaac (1996), family functioning is a major factor in adolescent behavior. Affected are the adolescent's interpersonal style, their inclination toward deviant peers, and their group involvements as mediated by a coercive interpersonal style (Cashwell & Vaac, 1996; p 105). This may be considered an abridged version of the Coercive Theory of juvenile

delinquency, which is somewhat removed from the psychosocial approach in that it faults juveniles for the ultimate decision to behave in a particular fashion.

While these findings are merely suggestive of developmental variations, it is difficult in the 'real world' to separate developmental variations from their outcomes. A child's present situation speaks very little to their developmental history, except in the products of that development. In this context, discipline is the rational response to problem behaviors at school because the problem behaviors are regarded as outcome measures of the child's character. The more pragmatic response, however, involves examining the many predecessors of such behavior and addressing them *as well as* the problem behavior.

A psychosocial approach to conceptualizing the problem of student violence presents a body of information that is commonly overlooked by the disciplinarian. One of the most obvious factors is the association of maltreatment and academic performance. In a study examining the association of maltreatment, academic achievement and discipline problems, Eckenrode, Laird, and Doris (1993) found that children who are abused or neglected have lower academic achievement than their non-abused counterparts. They also

found that maltreated students *consistently* showed a significantly higher rate of referrals and suspensions than non-abused students (Eckenrode, *et al.*, 1993).

Other studies have found little difference in academic achievement between children who have suffered different types of abuse or neglect and those who have not (Augoustinos 1987; Carlson, Cicchetti, Barnett & Braunwald, 1989). However, these findings have been questioned because there was no differentiation between types of maltreatment, and sample size may have produced misleading results (Eckenrode, *et al.*, 1993).

Research indicates not only that there are differences in academic achievement across maltreatment types, but also that neglect may have a more pronounced effect on achievement than any specific type of maltreatment (Eckenrode *et al.*, 1993). A study by Kendall-Tackett and Eckenrode (1996) found that neglect alone was a robust predictor of academic performance, especially in the transition from elementary school to middle school. The suggestion here is that problematic student behavior may very well be effectuated by phenomena such as emotional abuse and attachment issues that commonly go undetected by individuals who are not trained in this area.

In one study, the authors found that neither physical nor sexual abuse need be present to affect a child's self esteem or social functioning (Mullen, Martin, Anderson, Romans, & Herbison, 1996). Their data also suggests that kids who are abused are more likely to develop pathologies such as eating disorders and substance abuse, and they are at increased risk of attempting suicide (Mullen, *et al.* 1996). Given this information, one finds the plausibility of how abuse/neglect might also lead to behavioral problems in the school environment.

The literature suggests that ineffective parenting, which is a common feature of neglect, is a factor in children's antisocial behavior and conduct disorders as well as lack of social skills (Patterson, DeBaryshe, & Ramsey, 1989). And, as previously cited, neglect has been shown to be a salient factor in a child's behavior and academic performance. Some students that act out may be experiencing these difficulties. However, accountability for problem behavior remains with the student until such time as they disclose the identity of a perpetrator of abuse or neglect.

The task of obtaining any type of disclosure from the abused child is often hindered by the child's attachment to

their abuser (Blizard & Bluhm, 1994). This would likely apply to the neglected child as well. A child's apprehension of naming a perpetrator of abuse or neglect renders that child entirely responsible for their actions. These are the conditions under which children are disciplined for their behavior when more appropriate responses could be formulated in the presence of additional information.

There are certainly many more factors involved in each individual's development than have been addressed here. The point is that students' problem behaviors are perceived as a discipline problem because they are conceptualized in that manner. The manner in which problems are conceptualized, in turn, dictates the manner in which they will be addressed. One now begins to question the way such behaviors are regarded, and how this may serve to justify discipline as the normative mode of responding to kids who act out in school.

MAKING CAUSAL ATTRIBUTIONS

As recently as 1994, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) lobbied for legislation aimed at alleviating the problem of school violence (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE],

1997). Not surprisingly, the only legislation passed in response to this was a requirement for teachers to "complete appropriate training in principles of school safety as outlined by the commission" (AACTE, 1997). The message here is that we are presently unable to effectively address behavior problems in the schools. Instead, policies are aimed at reducing the effects of those behaviors.

As cited earlier, safety and discipline are two very separate issues. The conclusion here might be that the government's response to school violence has thus far been directed toward issues of preventing victimization rather than actually addressing the problem. By this legislation, the attributional style of those who deal with problem behaviors is not challenged, and by default the disciplinary approach is annealed.

A study regarding teachers' conceptualization of the problem found that teachers are inclined to relate problem behavior with issues that relate to their teacher role (Astor, Meyer, & Behre, 1997). Subjects in this study were most interested in issues relating to rates of turnover and absenteeism and teacher burnout. Their concerns were primarily in the context of their capacity of educator and disciplinarian (Astor, *et al.*, 1997).

It has been noted in the literature that teachers most commonly utilize punitive and controlling strategies for addressing behavior problems in the classroom (Bear, 1998; Brophy & McCaslin, 1992). It is proposed here that teachers' attributional style regarding problem behaviors is a product of their training as well as their professional environment, wherein disciplinary responses may be the normative way of dealing with these problems. Teachers learn to utilize classroom management skills as a *proactive* measure, and to utilize discipline as a *reactive* measure.

It is certainly not the intent of the professional educator to exacerbate behavior problems in the classroom; quite the contrary. However, research findings suggest that attention from the teacher tends "reliably to be associated with disruptive pupil behavior" (Nelson, 1997; p 254), rather than with academic issues. Furthermore, as another study points out, teachers are less inclined to have academic interactions with students who are disruptive (Carr, Taylor, & Robinson, 1991). In this situation, the attributions of both teachers and students help create the psychological environment conducive to the problem behavior.

As previously cited, students, parents, and teachers are inclined to perceive the school environment as unsafe, even when this perception is unfounded (Fatum & Hoyle, 1996; Sreblaus, *et al.*, 1996). This is another causal attribution that helps to create a psychological environment conducive to the (mis-) perceived phenomenon. Other studies have found that highly aggressive students are perceived negatively by teachers, administrators, and other students (Cairns & Cairns, 1991; Younger & Piccinin, 1989). Not surprisingly, the students toward whom others make negative attributions tend to withdraw and isolate from peers and activities associated with the school *qua* social system (Coie, Underwood, & Lochman, 1991; Cairns & Cairns, 1991). In this manner, a social pecking order is established and maintained, and negatively judged students enact their expected role in the school milieu.

The research cited above is not intended to be a comprehensive review of attributional styles or of their causal foundation. It is, rather, an overview of many of the phenomena that work against those students who enact their psychological difficulties in the school environment. It is not intended to fault or otherwise lay blame, but to

expose the reader to some of the unseen factors that contribute to problematic behaviors at school.

To further explore this phenomenon, the next section provides an overview of the psychological phenomenon known as the fundamental attribution error. This brief review will help to describe the human tendency to make erroneous causal attributions. More specifically, it will explore how each of us makes attributions regarding another's internal psychological mechanisms based upon external indicators, such as verbal and non-verbal behavior.

THE FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTION ERROR

The troublesome behavior of children commonly elicits from the observer a negative attribution of the child's character. The child's behavior is thus perceived as emerging from a character flaw. This is an example of the fundamental attribution error (FAE). This is the tendency to predict the content of a person's character according to one's own interpretation of their behavior, or, conversely, to predict their behavior based upon perceived (*qua* attributed) personality characteristics (Fiedler, Semin, & Koppetsch, 1991; Meyers, 1993).

In the case of kids who are problematic, this results in making children responsible for their behavior. The *a priori* perception of these children is one of deviance and personal accountability. Students are thus divided along lines of 'good' and 'bad,' and treated accordingly. One might regard this as attacking the messenger because the message is unfavorable.

In a recent study, Nelson (1997) found that student behavior that disrupts the classroom or schoolyard is often regarded as malicious in intent due to the effects of the behavior. This opens the way for these children to be regarded as 'bad' rather than in clinical terms that may be more accurate. Indeed, this is reflected in student/teacher interactions, where teachers are inclined to have less academic contact with problematic students (Nelson, 1997).

Less teacher involvement could very well be a factor in lower academic achievement, from which commonly emerges the student's need to act out to hide their deficiency. Where students' problematic behavior is perceived as emerging from some character flaw (i.e., the behavior is freely chosen by the student) the use of discipline is indeed the logical, if ineffective, response.

There are numerous studies that describe the FAE in terms of negative attribution. A body of research suggests that commission of the FAE is likely a means of reducing cognitive dissonance, which is the psychological stress created in the presence of conflicting thoughts or ideas. In other words, it is a means for self-justification (Myers, 1993). When a student's problem behavior is uncontrollable, it creates considerable stress by violating the role expectations and boundaries of others present.

When classroom behavior gets out of hand, the boundaries of all present are being violated. It would be the observer's inclination to direct their negative attribution to the errant youth, rather than to make a negative self-attribution regarding one's own inability to negotiate the problem behavior. The difficult student is thus regarded as ill motivated and their misbehavior is considered in terms of extinguishing the behavior (rather than addressing predicating factors) with disciplinary measures.

A psychological phenomenon that plays a major role in the FAE is belief perseverance. This is the "persistence of one's initial conceptions, as when the basis for one's belief is discredited but an explanation of why the belief

<u>might</u> be true survives" (Meyers, 1991; p 44; emphasis added). In other words, misperceptions tend to be resistant to change, even with supportive evidence that is contrary to the belief.

This is possibly one factor in the chronic nature of problem behaviors at school. Where a student has developed a track record of being difficult, the perception of teachers and others is likely one that will reinforce the manner in which the particular student and their behavior is conceptualized. This, in turn, serves to justify the use of discipline or other behavioral strategies in response to the acting out student.

A cycle of negative reinforcement is thus created and maintained that will serve to justify the erroneous attributions. The 'bad' student's behavior can therefore be perceived in a manner that allows the attributing individual to maintain their own positive self-image. This presents an obstacle to the student's ability to change, move forward, and enact a different range of behaviors.

It may be a little difficult to imagine a professional environment wherein a selected few clientele are denied services or resources based upon benefactors' misperception of those clientele. However, because school officials must

deal with such a wide variety of clientele and their difficulties, there are scant resources availed to the individual who is prejudged as being unresponsive to *any* treatment (qua discipline) afforded them.

Once a student (or teacher, for that matter) has been labeled, and a means for justifying the endurance of that label has been established, it becomes extremely resistant to change. The difficult student thus enters the school environment each day with two strikes: the expectation that they will be problematic, and a regimen of ineffective disciplinary measures in response. This, in turn, may very well contribute to the child's internalization of a Negative Identity, as discussed earlier.

The careless use of disciplinary measures effectively punishes the child for behaving in the manner of their conditioning. The child that strives to make sense of such treatment is forced to choose between making negative attributions toward their persecutors (quite the uphill battle, student against school or school district policy) or, conversely, to make negative self-attributions. The choice to make negative self-attributions then serves to justify, to the child, both the rendering of discipline and the enactment of the problem behavior. Once this has been

internalized by the child, they have indeed formed a negative identity.

As mentioned earlier, erroneous attributions are resistant to change, especially when they serve the purpose of self-justification. And it seems that humans have the tendency, the need, to arrive at justification any time there is conflict. Either the source of conflict, the response to conflict, or the outcome need to be justified. In this manner, we are able to organize information and make sense of our world.

Looking at the problem of school violence through a psychosocial lens, we find that children with problems in other arenas of their life are likely to have difficulties at school also. The school environment is possibly the most populated social arena in which the child participates. In other words, the child that has difficulty at home, a relatively small social arena, will commonly have difficulty in their neighborhood, a somewhat larger social arena. It is not unfathomable that such a child would also have difficulty at school.

Relational hardships that students have in other arenas will likely be enhanced in the broader school social setting. And, it is a common trait that people act out when

they think they are in a hostile environment. This raises the possibility that some problem behaviors are reactive rather than intentional. A reactive posture may be a signal of emotional distress. And the effects of emotional stress on cognitive ability have been well documented in the research literature.

From a behavioral standpoint, problem students are punished for their disorderly behaviors. From a psychosocial perspective, developmental difficulties are implicated, which do not warrant punishment. Clinicians in schools would help students to overcome their difficulties rather than be disciplined for acting them out.

CLINICIANS IN SCHOOLS

The need to address problematic student behavior, for the benefit of actor and observer alike, has been well documented in the literature. Children and youth whose behavior is perceived such that disciplinary action is warranted will likely be subject to other measures that are similarly reactive or punitive, such as incarceration and hospitalization (Nelson, 1997). This cycle begins early in the child's life. By the time a child is in third grade, their aggressive behavior becomes a salient factor in their

selection of peers (Astor, Pitner, & Duncan, 1998; Bear, 1998). This may remain an active schema for many years.

Utilizing mental health professionals in the schools would benefit not only the troubled youth but also those with whom the child interacts. This may be especially true for schools in low-income areas, where community standards and lack of resources were found to be conducive to delinquent behavior (Stumphauser, Aiken, & Veloz, 1977; Kern, Childs, Dunlap, Clarke, & Falk, 1994). Schools in low-income districts are thus more likely to experience a greater degree of violence than their more affluent counterparts (Kern, *et al.,* 1994). This introduces a dilemma, whereby those schools that may stand to benefit the most from professional clinicians are least able to afford hiring them.

Considerable resources are expended in response to school violence. The focus, however, has thus far been the behavioral rather than intrapsychic component of the student. In one study, the authors found that children who act out in school receive attention in some form, while those who come to school with emotional problems, albeit unaccompanied by problem behavior, are quite often overlooked (McCarthy, Brack, Lambert, Brack, & Orr, 1996).

Students that are emotionally at risk stand to benefit the most from clinical intervention (McCarthy, *et al.*, 1996). However, because resources are so limited, their problems often go unattended, while these same resources are utilized for those students who are found to be at risk behaviorally.

Mental health professionals in schools is not a new idea. As early as 1928, researchers and educators had recognized the need to develop new strategies for dealing with problem behaviors at school (Garber & Newton, 1989). Current strategies have thus far been largely ineffective. In one study, 83% of teachers surveyed felt that they were not provided adequate resources for addressing the many difficulties in their profession (O'Neill, Williams, Sprague, Horner, & Albin, 1993).

Other research has found responses such as zero tolerance, suspension, and expulsion have failed to eliminate or reduce the undesired behaviors (Nelson, 1997). This speaks to the ineffectiveness of both the behavioral/disciplinary approach and the interventions designed as an alternative to discipline. The time to re-examine the phenomenon is upon us.

METHODS

Data for this study were gathered by personal interview with thirty teachers, selected according to availability. Thirty subjects from one public middle school (i.e., 6th, 7th and 8th grades) in Riverside County, California were interviewed. Interviews were conducted in the teachers' lounge area, or in classrooms when there were no students present.

The instrument consisted of five open-ended questions designed to capture the essence of teachers' conceptualization of problem behaviors and the students that exhibit them. The questions were based upon thematic concerns found in the literature. Each item addressed some aspect of the problem behaviors with which teachers, administrators, and other students are confronted. Teachers' responses were presumably a product of how they conceptualized the phenomenon.

Before each interview, subjects were provided with a statement of confidentiality and informed consent; they were debriefed upon completion of the interview (See Appendices VII & VIII). Responses to each question were categorized according to key words and explicit meanings,

dependent upon the collective content of the responses.
Responses are referred to here as R1A, R1B, etc., denoting
question 1, response category A, question 1, response
category B, and so on. The data were examined according to
frequency of response relative to subject totals, as well
as the association between response categories.

INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

Prior to conducting the interviews, 44 randomly
selected teachers were given a list of fifteen questions
and asked to rank-order the five questions most relevant to
the topic. The results of this initial survey are described
in Appendices I and II. Not surprisingly, only one of the
44 teachers found any of the clinical questions relevant to
the study of problem behaviors. This may be an effect of
question wording, whereby teachers did not choose these
questions because they were not understood.

The top 5 questions picked by teachers each dealt with
behavior problems in the context of the academic role or
the role of disciplinarian, as follows.

7. How would you describe the connection between
classroom behavior and poor academic performance?
This question received 17 total votes, 2# for #1.

This item ranked 1st overall.

1. In what ways do you feel students who misbehave in the classroom affect your ability to teach?

This question received 15 total votes, 4# votes for #1.

This item ranked 2nd overall.

14. Can you describe how you feel when dealing with a student who regularly misbehaves?

This question received 15 total votes, 3# for #1.

This item ranked 3rd overall.

3. Is punishment/discipline the best way to deal with students who misbehave in the classroom?

This question received 14 total votes, 1# vote for #1.

This item ranked 4th overall.

8. Does problematic behavior affect you or your students in ways other than disrupting the teaching/learning process?

This question received 13 total votes, 1# vote for #1.

This item ranked 5th overall.

The two questions least chosen by teachers made direct reference to development. Many respondents inquired about the meaning of the term 'psychosocial,' although no elaboration was provided.

6. Are you familiar with theories of psychosocial development as they pertain to a child's normal and pathological development?

This question received 1 total vote, it was for #1. It ranked 15th (last) overall.

11. Have you ever used a psychosocial assessment as a factor in disciplinary action?

This question received 2 total votes, 0 for #1.

It ranked 14th overall.

The instrument was pre-tested by ten teachers at the research site for relevance, content and wording (see Appendix II). The results of this survey and the actual interview questions are in Appendix III. The purpose of the initial surveys was to develop a sense of where teachers' stand conceptually in this area. Survey results reflect an orientation toward behavioral conceptualization.

RESULTS

Responses were categorized according to their collective content. Each question may have responses in more than one category because the questions were open-ended (See Appendix IV for a complete list of responses). Responses to question one (Q1) ("What ways are most

effective for dealing with students who present problem behaviors in class?) fell into four categories with a total of 55 responses.

Responses in category 'A' (Behavioral Cynosure) are indicative of teachers' preference for behavioral interventions to deal with problem students. This category had the highest frequency of responses for question 1, and the highest frequency of responses overall, with 70% of teachers choosing the behavioral approach as most effective. Responses in this category comprise 38% of the total responses for Q1. These subjects reported behavioral responses such as "moving the student," "taking away privileges," "consistent discipline policy," and "suspension" as most effective for addressing problem behaviors in the classroom. Responses in category 'A' are considered here to be reactive.

Responses in category 'B' (Conference with Student/Parents) include "one-on-one" with the student and "contacting parents." Fifty percent of teachers (15) chose category 'B' as a most effective means of dealing with problem behaviors. This accounts for 27% of the total responses to Q1. Responses in this category are also considered to be reactive.

Category 'C' (Educational Strategies) responses include strategies regarded as aspects of classroom management. Forty-three percent of teachers (13) chose educational strategies as effective responses, comprising 24% of the total responses for Q1. Classroom management strategies are regarded here as proactive.

Responses in category 'D' (Miscellaneous) include strategies such as "ignoring" and "positive affirmations." Many of these responses address personal qualities of the teacher, such as "humor," sensitivity," and "honesty." Twenty percent of teachers (6) chose this category as the means for addressing problem behaviors. Responses in this category account for 11% of the total responses to Q1.

Taking a closer look at the data reveals that responses R1A and R1B (reactive strategies) comprise 93% of teachers and 65% of the total responses for Q1. Subjects who chose R1C (proactive) account for 43% of teachers and 24% of the total responses, which suggests that teachers are twice as likely to use reactive strategies as they are proactive ones. Responses in Q1D account for a mere 11% of responses and 20% of teachers. Most of these responses addressed personalized styles of responding to problem behaviors.

It is interesting to note that categories 'A' and 'B' comprise 65% of the total responses for Q1, compared to 24% in category 'C' and 11% in category 'D'. The point here is that 70% of teachers chose reactive measures, while only 30% chose proactive measures, and 10% chose personal qualities.

The second question was intended to assess teachers' knowledge in the area of child development. Since it was feasible that there would be differences in the amount of training or education possessed by each subject, this question was asked in two parts. Question 2A inquired "Have you had any training regarding child development?," and Question 2B asked "What can you tell me about a child's abnormal or pathological development?" Responses to this question fell into five categories, with a total of 44 responses.

Negative responses to either 2A or 2B comprise response category 'A' (or R2A), indicating no training or education in the area of child development. Seven teachers, or 23%, answered question 2 in this category. Response R2A comprises 16% of the total responses to question 2.

The four remaining response categories for question 2 (i.e., 'B,' 'C,' 'D,' and 'E') reflect teachers' training

in the area of child development. Three teachers responded

in category 'B,' "General statements about a specific

pathology." These responses include "dyslexia," "SED," and

"ADHD," although with no elaboration from the respondent.

Ten percent of teachers (3) responded in this category,

which comprises 7% of the responses to Q2.

Response category 'C' (or R2C) involves "Global

statements regarding causation." Answers in this category

reflect a general knowledge of factors relevant to the

topic of child development, such as "product of

environment," "liberalization of community standards," and

"peri-natal drug use." Fifty percent of teachers (15)

responded in this category, comprising 34% of the total

responses for Q2. This category had the highest frequency

of responses for Q2.

Category 'D' responses are "General references to

developmental phenomenon" and include statements such as

"fine and gross motor development," "our choices have

consequences," and "dysfunctional background effectuates

abnormal development." These responses are similar to

category 'C' responses in that they indicate a general

knowledge in the area of child development. Eleven teachers

(37%) responded in this category, comprising 25% of the total responses.

Twenty-seven percent of teachers (8) responded to Q2 with "General statements regarding the association of development and academic ability" (response category 2E), which accounts for 18% of the responses to Q2. This is an indication that many teachers equate pathological development to students' ability to perform academically. This may also suggest that some teachers possess some understanding of the link between child pathology and academic performance, because these responses do not include behavior as a causal mechanism but rather as a component of other phenomenon.

It is interesting to note that the majority of responses to Q2 are causal statements (52%, or 23/44, which is the combination of R2C and R2E). Sixty percent of teachers (18) answered these two questions with causal statements. This suggests an inclination to overlook intervening factors, such as psychosocial and ecological variables. The psychosocial approach regards pathological development as both process and outcome, and problem behavior as merely one possible manifestation of a pathology.

Six subjects reported having no training in the area of child pathology. Half of the subjects (15 of 30) stated that they had some training in this area. Seventy-three percent of these responded with global statements regarding causation, such as "product of environment," "problems at home," "social economics", and "peri-natal drug exposure." This suggests a general knowledge of developmental issues.

The association of problem behavior and academic performance was the focus of question three, which asked "What is the connection between classroom behavior and poor academic performance?" This question was intended to explore the extent to which teachers conceptualize problem behaviors to the exclusion of developmental phenomena in the causal chain. Responses to this question fell into six categories with a total of 44 responses.

Seven teachers (23%) thought that "Low academic performance is causal of behavior problems" (response 3A). Their statements include "acting out results from lack of academic skills," and "poor academics leads to behavior problems." This category accounts for 16% of the responses to question three. This perception tends to cast problem students as cognitively low functioning, which is a diagnosis arrived at through extensive testing.

Respondents in category 'B' thought "Behavior problems [were] causal of low academic performance" (response category 3B). These teachers referred to phenomena such as "non-conforming behavior [that] takes kids out of the academic loop," and "behavior problems lower student productivity." Twenty-three percent of teachers chose this category, accounting for 16% of question three responses.

As the label implies, category 'C' responses (No causal direction specified) were non-committal insofar as stating a causal direction. Forty-three percent of teachers (13) agreed that there was an association between behavior and performance, evidenced by statements such as "inattention is suggestive of academic ability," and "acting out is often associated with poor performance." Category 'C' responses accounted for 30% of the responses to Q3.

A minority of teachers (13%) responded in category 'D,' stating that the association of behavior and performance is bi-directional. Their views include "acting out leads to poor performance, or poor performance results from lack of skills or laziness," and "some acting out is associated with poor performance." And only one teacher (3%) thought that the two phenomenon were unrelated.

Categories 'D' and 'E' combine to account for 11% of the total responses to Q3.

The category "Other causal factors" (response 3F) had the highest response frequency for question three, with 40% of teachers (12) choosing other factors to create the causal link between behavior and performance. These factors include "possibly due to boredom," "negative behavior is counter-productive," and "kids are complacent." These responses are suggestive of an indirect association between behavior and performance, and they account for 27% of the responses to Q3.

The responses to question three were mostly statements regarding causal direction. However, 47% of subjects chose 'Other Factors' to make the causal connection between poor academic performance and problem behaviors. This category includes responses such as "kids think it's better to be bad than stupid," "possibly due to boredom," and "good students seldom have behavior problems." These subjects overwhelmingly (79%) chose student characteristics as their primary consideration in response formulation. Only two subjects felt there was no causal connection between low academic performance and behavioral problems.

The intent of question four was to explore teachers'
attributions regarding students that act out. Teachers were
asked "What factors do you take into consideration when
deciding how to respond to a student's problem behavior in
the classroom?" Their responses fell into four categories,
comprised of 54 total responses.

Sixty-six percent of teachers (20) stated that they
consider student-specific factors (response category 4A)
when responding to their behavior. These include "student's
social skills," "home environment," "student's
personality," and "home/family situation." Category 4A
responses accounted for 37% of all responses to this
question. This category had the highest frequency of
responses for Q4. This suggests that many teachers are
inclined to respond to problem behaviors on an individual
basis, which leans toward the psychosocial perspective.

Other teachers responded that a primary consideration
is the nature of the behavior in question. Twelve teachers
(40%) made "Reference to the behavior" (response category
4B) when arriving at a response to problem behaviors in
their classroom. They considered phenomena such as the
"severity of the behavior," the "extent to which the
behavior is ongoing or repetitive," and "will [the

teacher's response] escalate the situation." This category comprised 22% of the total responses to Q4.

For some teachers, factors pertaining to the response itself were important in the formulation of a response to the problem behaviors (response category R4C). A total of nine teachers (30%) considered things such as "what has worked in the past," and thought that "each case is individual." Responses in this category accounted for 17% of the responses to Q4.

The final category for Q4 responses, "Reference to structure," (R4D) deals with the manner in which the behavior and/or the response effect the classroom structure. Thirteen teachers (43%) thought that their response to problem behaviors should take into account "classroom rules and expectations," as well as the "degree of possible danger." These responses accounted for 24% of the responses to question 4. This suggests that many teachers look to the status of classroom stability as an indication of how they should respond to problem behaviors.

Subjects were asked what factors they consider when responding to problem behaviors. Sixty-seven percent (20) reported that they consider characteristics of the student when responding to problem behaviors. Of this group, 65%

(13) also feel that behavioral responses are most effective for addressing these difficulties. This suggests that discipline is used independent of consideration for student factors. This is likely a preeminent obstacle to the success of the disciplinary approach.

Upon closer examination, the responses to question 4 reveal that, while 66% of teachers (20) used student-specific factors when formulating a response, only 25% (5) of these individuals used only student factors. This means that 83% of teachers consider factors that are not student-specific when responding to problem behaviors. The suggestion here is that students who act out are being responded to with interventions that are not student-specific, such as disciplinary measures that are traditionally 'across-the-board.' This may be a factor in the chronic nature of problem behaviors.

The focus of question five was the perception teachers have of how problem behaviors affect their role as a teacher. The assumption here is that a greater perceived effect will be experienced by those teachers most inclined to use behavioral responses. Responses to this question fell into five categories with a total of 46 responses.

Twenty-seven percent of teachers (8) thought that problem behaviors had no effect on their role as a teacher (response category 5A). They stated reasons for this such as "discipline is part of the role," and "it is my duty to create and maintain the learning environment." Several of these subjects stated only that there was "no effect" with no further elaboration. This category accounted for 17% of the responses to this question.

Eleven teachers (37%) thought that dealing with problem behaviors placed them in "Another role" (response category 5B). The majority of these responses centered around the teacher being placed in the role of disciplinarian, as evidenced by statements like "I spend time as a policeman rather than an educator," "sometimes I'm a babysitter" and "I do not like the role of disciplinarian." Category 5B responses comprised 24% of the responses to this question, sharing the highest response frequency with response category R5D.

Many teachers thought that the salient effect of problem behaviors is that they are placed in the position to be judged by the other students in their classroom (response category R5C). Ten teachers (33%) responded in this category, which accounted for 22% of the responses to

Q5. These subjects thought that dealing with problem students "diminishes the teacher in the eyes of the students," it "affects student perception of teacher as the authority figure," and "poor handling [of a situation] loses the respect of the class."

Teachers who thought that dealing with problem behaviors compromises classroom integrity chose response category R5D. Eleven teachers (37%) stated that dealing with problem behaviors "takes away from other students," "reduces the teacher's control of the classroom" and it "challenges the structure and stability of the classroom." These subjects accounted for 24% of the responses to this question.

Six teachers (20%) thought that dealing with problem students had "other affects" (category R5E), such as "behavior problems brought into the classroom affect other kids," and that "defiance brings to bear issues of safety." Subjects in this category constituted the minority for question 5, accounting for a mere 13% of the total responses.

When asked if problem behaviors affected their role as teacher, 37% of subjects (11) thought that they were placed in another role. Ninety-two percent of these

respondents also thought that the behavioral approach is most effective. It would appear, then, that problem behaviors are of concern insofar as they threaten the structural stability of the learning environment. The psychosocial context is left out of the equation when considering a behavioral or disciplinary response.

Bivariate analysis of the data is limited to those responses with a frequency of seven or greater (i.e., the upper three quartiles; see Appendix VI). Looking at question one, all categories except R1D (Miscellaneous) were selected with notable frequency. Category R1A (Behavioral Cynosure) shows an association with several variables, as follows.

Twenty-one teachers (70%) thought that a behavioral response was an effective means for dealing with problem behaviors (R1A). These individuals were likely to regard child development in terms of global phenomena (38%), and they were also inclined to see the connection between behavior and academic performance as having no specific causal direction (48%), or as being effectuated by other factors (33%). Those who use behavioral strategies also claim to consider student-specific factors before responding (62%). These teachers thought that behavioral

factors (38%) and the effects on the class (52%) were also important. These teachers thought that discipline problems remove them from the role of teacher (48%) and threaten classroom integrity (43%).

As stated earlier, conference with students/parents is also a behavioral response. Fifteen teachers (50%) chose this category. Of this number, 71% made either general references to developmental phenomenon or general causal statements regarding the connection between performance and behavior. Similar to those in category R1A (a reactive approach), teachers that chose conference as an effective response (R1B, also a reactive approach) thought that student-specific factors (48%), the nature of the behavior (33%) and the effects on classroom structure (33%) should be considered before responding to problem behaviors.

Interestingly, individuals who chose classroom management (a proactive response) thought to consider only student factors and the degree of threat to classroom structure. Neither the behavior nor the effect on classroom integrity were considered by this group. Teachers in this category were also less inclined to perceive disruptive behavior as a threat to their teacher status than were teachers who chose reactive responses.

The highest frequency for question number two, which inquired about teachers' knowledge regarding pathological development, were teachers' global statements regarding causation (R2C, 73% of teachers). These subjects showed a tendency to perceive problem behaviors according to their numerous possible causes, such as student factors (41%), the nature of the behavior (32%), and the response of the student (32%). Further, these subjects thought that behavioral approaches (36%), conferences (45%) and classroom management (32%) were effective means for addressing the problems in their classrooms.

In response to question two, a smaller proportion of teachers (64%) made general reference to developmental phenomena. These individuals looked to conferences as their primary response (50%), and considered student-specific factors (32%) and the nature of the behavior (32%) in formulating a response.

When asked about the connection between behavior and academics, "no causal direction" was the modal answer (43%). Of these, 85% looked to student factors when formulating a response. These teachers thought that classroom misbehavior placed them in another role (54%),

and that behavioral responses were most effective for
addressing this problem (77%).

DISCUSSION

The findings in the present study are congruent with
the research literature. Teachers strongly support a
behavioral approach to problem behaviors; 70% of teachers
named one or more behavioral responses as most effective.
It is interesting to note that the majority of subjects
(67%) claim to consider student-specific factors when
responding to misbehavior.

The incongruence here is that most teachers also
believe in implementing a behavioral or disciplinary
response to problem behaviors. This effectively reduces the
mitigation that student factors would provide if they were
in fact taken into consideration. One possible explanation
is that student-specific factors are considered only for
the purpose of delegating a degree of behavioral (*qua*
disciplinary) response.

The data suggest that teachers take many factors into
consideration when responding to problem behaviors. The
extent to which teachers use factors that are not student-
specific appears to be associated with the extent to which

they approach their profession from a behavioral cynosure. The suggestion here is that students are being dealt with in a manner that emerges more from tradition than from knowledge in the area of child development.

This is by no means a surprising piece of information. The process of education is behaviorally oriented, and therefore the response to problems in this arena are also behaviorally oriented (Moore, 1999). Teachers impart information to students, who are expected to regurgitate this back to the teacher as an indication that learning has taken place; grades are given as a measure of students' ability to do so.

The disruptive student is perceived in the context of their behavior and its effect on the educational process. The disruption of the behavioral processes of education are thus responded to with behavioral measures. Student-specific factors are relevant only insofar as they serve to explain the behavior and justify the response.

There are no studies yet regarding the extent to which classroom behaviors or more generally campus behaviors are the primary observable behavioral phenomena by students, teachers and administrators. However, there is evidence that children who observe or experience violence are more

prone to post-traumatic stress, depression, sleep and

conduct disorders (Astor, Pitner, & Duncan, 1998). Research

has yet to examine the extent to which these observations

shape the perceptions of those that witness or are

victimized by such behavior, and how this may affect the

treatment afforded the difficult student.

Researchers have been looking at differences between

teachers and clinicians regarding the conceptualization of

problem behaviors since the turn of the century (Garber &

Newton, 1989). In their study, Garber and Newton (1989)

examined the effects of instruction type (i.e.,

instructions given to subjects) on ratings by teachers and

mental health professionals regarding problem behaviors at

school. They found that teachers were consistently and

significantly inclined to regard problem behaviors in terms

of the behavior, whereas clinicians tended to conceptualize

the behavior in terms of causation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK

According to a recent newspaper article, legislation

is currently being reviewed that would raise the

student/counselor ratio from the current average of 1 to

2,381 up to 1 to 450 (The Press Enterprise, January 28th,

1999; p. B1). Passage of Assembly Bill 166 (AB166) would require hiring 7000 clinicians for schools in the state of California alone.

The difficulty here is that school budgets are allocated for educational resources, so passage of AB166 would require new funding that is separate from educational allotments. While this would be very effective in the battle against campus violence, it would be difficult to justify such expenditure without some type of proof that school clinicians are in fact effective in this endeavor.

The Social Work profession would gain considerably with the passage of this bill. If only a few districts were to implement a clinical strategy in the battle against campus violence, then a longitudinal study might be conducted regarding the effectiveness of such an approach. Given the ineffectiveness of present approaches, this is indeed a sound idea.

Placing clinical social workers in schools would give the profession more visibility, and in a positive light. This could serve to alter the public's perception of social workers and the many tasks they are capable of performing. Given the function of social workers in the Child Welfare system, the profession would most definitely benefit from

such widespread positive public exposure that passage of
AB166 would bring about.

CONCLUSION

As the problem of school violence becomes more visible
on the American landscape, educators, researchers and
policymakers are increasingly at a loss to explain their
ongoing indifference. When difficult children transition
from one level of education to the next, it is presumed
they take their problems with them; they are no longer a
problem for the school they are leaving.

This is a strong argument against spending the
enormous amount of funds it would require to place
clinicians in schools. However, the unattended problems of
youth become society's problem as these children emerge
into adulthood with a poor education and very few skills.
The difference between a wasted life and a productive one
might very well be clinical intervention while the child is
still young.

The problem child that is availed clinical services in
elementary school will likely present fewer problems in
middle school. This equates to not only a savings of
educational resources, but also a better chance of the
child entering into adulthood with the tools necessary to

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succeed. Furthermore, society in general will benefit, because fewer resources will be expended on this individual to address pathologies that may have been correctable in youth. Using clinicians in schools just makes good sense all the way around.

There is an overwhelming body of literature that supports the need for clinicians in schools. The task of education has devolved into one of keeping the schools safe. As one author succinctly states

"[S]chool discipline in America has changed little since the time of Jefferson. The ideal that educators should focus on developing self-discipline and social responsibility in children remains an ideal, with reality dictating that educators focus primarily on the more pressing and short-term goal of managing and controlling behavior problems" (Bear, 1998; p.28).

The need for clinicians in schools is a pressing concern, and the resources are at hand. It will be interesting to see if a body of research is developed as a means of justifying the ongoing negligence of this matter. As literacy rates continue to decline and youth violence continues to flourish, the cost in human lives,

productivity and squandered resources demands that

policymakers and administrators rise to the challenge and

deal effectively with the problem of youth violence in our

schools.

APPENDIX I

Summary of Initial Survey Rank Ordering of Questions.

1. In what ways do you feel students who misbehave in the classroom affect your ability to teach?

This question received 15 total votes, 4# votes for most important (#1). It ranked 2nd overall.

2. Do you feel your credentialing program included adequate training to deal effectively with the diversity of students' classroom behaviors?

This question received 8 total votes, 3# votes for #1. It ranked 8th overall.

3. Is punishment/discipline the best way to deal with students who misbehave in the classroom?

This question received 14 total votes, only 1# vote for #1. It ranked 4th overall.

4. Do students who misbehave in the classroom present a discipline problem or a safety problem?

This question received 7 total votes, only 1# vote for #1. It ranked 11th overall.

5. From your experience, is a student's poor academic performance is most often just another aspect of their problematic behavior?

This question received 13 total votes, 0 votes for #1.

It ranked 6th overall.

6. Are you familiar with theories of psychosocial development as they pertain to a child's normal and pathological development?

This question received 1 total vote, it was for #1.

It ranked 15th (last) overall.

7. How would you describe the connection between classroom behavior and poor academic performance?

This question received 17 total votes, 2# for #1.

It ranked 1st overall.

8. Does problematic behavior affect you or your students in ways other than disrupting the teaching/learning process?

This question received 13 total votes, 1# for #1.

It ranked 5th overall.

9. Do you think programs intended to address campus violence have an effect on problematic behavior in the classroom?

This question received 4 total votes, o for #1.

It ranked 13th overall.

10. Do you have any suggestions for dealing with problem classroom behavior?

This question received 8 total votes, 1# for #1.

It ranked 9th overall.

11. Have you ever used a psychosocial assessment as a factor in disciplinary action?

This question received 2 total votes, 0 for #1.

It ranked 14th overall.

12.Teachers occasionally have students in their classroom that tend to stand out due to their behavior. If you have any such students in your classroom, what words would you use to describe them (e.g., bad, noisy, smart aleck, dirty, etc., etc.).

This question received 5 total votes, 1# for #1.

It ranked 12th overall.

13. Do you feel that students who display problem behaviors in the classroom are less interested in learning than students who don't present behavior problems?

This question received 9 total votes, 1# for #1.

It ranked 7th overall.

14. Can you describe the feelings you experience when dealing with a student who regularly misbehaves? This question received 15 total votes, 3# for #1. It ranked 3rd overall.

15. What effect have you found parent/teacher conferences to have on students' poor classroom behavior?

This question received 7 total votes, 1# for #1.

It ranked 10th overall.

APPENDIX II

Round Two of Initial Survey

1. Reworded from question #3

   What ways are most and least effective for dealing with

   students who present behavior problems in class?

2. Reworded from question #6

   A. Have you had any training regarding child development?

   >> If Yes, go to B.   If No, go to next question.

   B. What can you tell me about a child's pathological

      development?

3. Reworded from question #7

   What is the connection between classroom behavior and

   poor academic performance?

4. Reworded from question #11

   What factors do you take into consideration when

   deciding how to respond to a student's problem behavior

   in the classroom?

5. Reworded from question #14

   How do you perceive your role during/after a

   confrontation with a student who refuses to follow your

   directives?

APPENDIX III

Interview Questions

1. What ways are most effective for dealing with students who present problem behaviors in class?

2A. Have you had any training regarding child development?

>> If YES, go to 2B; If NO, go to question #3.

2B. What can you tell me about a child's abnormal or pathological development?

3. What is the connection between classroom behavior and poor academic performance?

4. What factors do you take into consideration when deciding how to respond to a student's problem behavior in the classroom?

5. When confronted with a student who refuses to follow your directives, how do you perceive this affects your role as a teacher?

APPENDIX IV

Coding

Question 1: What are the most effective ways for dealing with students who present problem behaviors in class?

<u>Response Categories</u>

A = Behavioral Cynosure (29 responses)

B = Conference with student/parent (21 responses)

C = Educational Strategies (23 responses)

D = Miscellaneous (10 responses)

A. Consistent discipline policy……**A**

B. Corporal punishment……**A**

C. One on one; Not embarassing student……**B,C**

D. One on one; teachers brainstorming solutions……**B,C**

E. One on one; confront student outside of classroom……**B, B**

F. Consistency; One on one……**A, B**

G. Consistent discipline plan……**A**

H. ignoring; One on one; remove or re-place student……**D, B, A**

I. Classroom management; consistency; positivity……**C, A, D**

J. Consistency; Straight-forwardness; sensitivity; honesty……**A, D, D, D**

K. Have students respond to teachers' verbalizations……**A**

L. Peer pressure; grading behaviors; individual and team accountability; cooperative learning……**C, C, C, C**

M. Structured environment; contact with parent; consistent discipline procedures……**C, B, A**

N. One-on-one talk after initial warning……**B**

O. maintain physical proximity; separate the conflicting kids; move The student……**C, A, A**

P. remove student to another classroom……**A**

Q. one on one; move student; contact parents; take away classroom privileges; lunch detention; stay after class……**B, A, B, A, A, A**

R. keeping problem contained in the classroom; prevent cycle of exiting the classroom; consistency, humor, parenting skills; friendship skills……**C, C, A, D, D, D**

S. one on one……**B**

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T.   one on one; calling home;; remove the student......**B, B, A**

U.   remove student; parent contact; isolation from other students; suspension......**A, B, A, A**

V.   make student aware of their conduct and the associated consequences......**C**

W.   strike system; standards; seating change......**C, C, A**

X.   taking away privileges......**A**

Z.   call parents; time-outs; move student; one on one; behavior contracts......**B, A, A, B, A**   Y.   warnings; removing the student......**C, A**

AA.   one on one; positive affirmations; questioning the behavior; praise in the presence of other students; repeat instructions; never criticize in the presence of other students......**B, D, C, C, C, C**

BB.   one on one; parent contact......**B, B**

CC.   clear guidelines/rules; consistent enforcement......**C, A**

DD.   consistency; rules; don't embarrass the student; don't be too confrontational; one on one; parent contact; go to the source of the problem......**A, C, C, C, B, B, D**

Question 1 Responses Categorically

Category A: Behavioral Cynosure (29 responses)

A consistent discipline policy   B corporal punishment

G consistent discipline plan   F consistency

H remove or re-place student   I consistency

J consistency   K have students respond to teacher's verbalizations

M consistent discipline procedures   R consistency

O separate conflicting kids; move the student

P remove student to another classroom   Z time-outs

Q move student; take away privileges;lunch detention; stay after class

T remove the student   W seating change   X taking away privileges

U remove student; isolation from other students; suspension

Y removing the student   Z move student; behavior contracts

CC consistent enforcement of rules   DD consistency

Category B: Conference with student and/or parent (21 responses)

C   one on one   D   one on one   F   one on one
E   one on one; confront student outside of classroom
H   one on one   M   contact parent   N   one on one after initial warning
Q   one on one; contact parents   S   one on one
T   one on one; calling home   U   contact parent
Z   call parents; one on one   AA   one on one
BB   one on one; parent contact   DD   one on one; parent contact

Category C: Educational Strategies (23 responses)

C   not embarrassing the student   D   teachers brainstorming solutions
I   classroom management   CC   clear guidelines/rules
L   peer pressure; grading behaviors; individual and team
    accountability; cooperative learning
M   structured environment   O   maintain physical proximity
R   containing problem in classroom; prevent cycle of exiting classroom
V   make student aware of their conduct and the associated consequences
W   strike system; standards   Y   warnings
AA   questioning the behavior; praise in the presence of other students;
     repeat instructions; never criticize in presence of other students
DD   rules; don't embarrass the student; don't be too confrontational

Category D: Miscellaneous (10 responses)

H   ignoring
I   positivity
J   straight-forwardness; sensitivity; honesty
R   humor; parenting skills; friendship skills
AA positive affirmations
DD go to the source of the problem

Question 2A: Have you had any training regarding child development? (Yes or No)

2B: If so, what can you tell me about a child's abnormal or pathological development?

<u>Response Categories</u>

A = Negative response on 2A or 2B (7 responses)

B = General statements about specific pathology (4 responses)

C = Global statements regarding causation (22 responses)

D = General references to developmental phenomena (14 responses)

E = Statements regarding association of development/academic ability (14 responses)

A. **YES**......Nothing......**A**   B. **NO**....**A**   C. **YES**......product of environment......**C**

D. **YES**......don't understand question; kids can be diagnosed early in life or later......**D**   I. **YES**......ADHD, behavior problems......**B, D**

E. **YES**......IQ; social economics; crack babies......**D, C, D**

F. **YES**......needs not met = behavior problems; kids enact abusive behaviors that were perpetrated upon them......**C, C**

G. **YES**......Nothing......**A**   H. **YES**......product of heredity and environment......**C**

J. **YES**......dysfunctional families = bad behavior; end of nuclear family; liberalization of community standards......**C, C, C**

K. **YES**......only through experience with own child, who is SED....**B**

L. **YES**......problems at home; problems within the child; hormones......**C, D, D**

M. **YES**....peri-natal drug abuse; IQ can increase slightly in the right environment; Low cognitive = shift from academics to life skills training......**C, D, E**

N. **YES**......abnormal development equates to academic deficiency; there is a relation between abuse, self-esteem, goals and cognitive ability......**E, C**

O. **NO**....**A**   P. **NO**....**A**   S. **NO**....**A**   W. **YES**......nothing......**A**

Q. **YES**......fine and gross motor skill development; dyslexia; speech pathologies; response to stimuli.....**D, B, B, D**

R. **YES**......cognitive ability, home life and safety issues effect academic performance......**E, E, E**

T. **YES**......children develop in stages and have changing needs.....**D**

U. **YES**......we are products of our past; our choices have consequences; people operate according to the pleasure principle......**C, D, C**

V. **YES**......drug exposed kids; the effects of drug on academic ability......**C, E**

X. **YES**......child's environment, dysfunctional background equals abnormal

development……**C, D**

Y.   **YES**……impoverished environment is a factor; IQ can be raised, from birth, with stimuli flooding……**C, D**

Z.   **YES**……problems with development and immaturity present obstacles to academic performance……**E**

AA.   **YES**….the connection is evidenced by classroom behavior; child pathology is usually "out of reach" to the teacher; product of home/parents; psychological problems……**E, E, C, D**

BB.   **YES**…..many causes; may result from a history of trauma; present circumstances that are harmful to the child……**C, C, C**

CC.   **YES**…..defiance, lack of social skills, all types of acting out, affect academic performance……**E, E, E**

DD.   **YES**…..learning disabilities not recognized; behavioral problems result from academic deficiencies; lack of parental support; home life either too strict or too lenient……**E, E, C, C**

Question 2 Responses Categorically

Category A: Negative response on either 2A or 2B (7 responses)

A. YES……Nothing   B. NO   G. YES……Nothing   O. NO   P. NO   S. NO
W. YES……Nothing

Category B: General statements about specific pathology (4 responses)

I. ADHD   K. only through experience with own child, who is SED
Q. dyslexia; speech pathologies

Category C: Global statements regarding causation (22 responses)

C. product of environment

E. social economics   H. product of heredity and environment

F. needs not met = behavior problems; kids enact abusive behaviors that were perpetrated upon them

J. dysfunctional families = bad behavior; end of nuclear family; liberalization of community standards

L. problems at home   M. peri-natal drug use

X. child's environment affects abnormal development

DD. lack of parental support; home life either too strict or toolenient

N. there is a relation between abuse, self-esteem, goals, and cognitive ability   V. drug-exposed kids

U. we are products of our past; people operate by the pleasure principle

Y. impoverished environment is a factor

AA. product of home/parents

BB. many causes; may result from a history of trauma; present circumstances that are harmful to the child

Category D: General references to developmental phenomena (14 responses)

D. a kid can be diagnosed early (e.g., 3 years) or later

E. IQ; crack babies   I. behavior problems

L. problems within the child; hormones

M. IQ can increase slightly in the right environment

Q. fine and gross motor skill development; response to stimuli

T. children develop in stages and have changing needs

U. our choices have consequences

X. dysfunctional background effectuates abnormal development

Y. IQ can be raised from birth with stimuli flooding

AA. psychological problems

Category E: Statements regarding association of development and academic ability (14 responses)

M. low cognitive = shift from academics to life skills training

N. different types of abnormal development equate to academic deficiency

R. cognitive ability, home life and safety issues affect academic performance

V. the effects of drugs on academic ability

Z. problems with development and immaturity present obstacles to academic performance

AA. evidenced by classroom behavior; child pathology is usually "out-of-reach" to the teacher

CC. defiance, lack of social skills, all types of acting out affect academic performance

DD. learning disabilities not recognized; behavioral problems result from academic deficiencies

Question 3: What is the connection between classroom behavior and poor academic
performance?

<u>Response Categories</u>

LP = Low Academic Performance   BP = Behavior Problems

A = LP is causal of BP (9 responses)   B = BP is causal of LP (9 responses)

C = no causal direction (16 responses)   D = bi-directional (4 responses)

E = no association (2 responses)   F = other factors (14 responses)

A.   acting out results from lack of academic skills..**A**

B.   academic difficulty is positively correlated with extent of behavior
problem; also, possible psychological problems..**C, F**

C.   problem behavior serves to mask or hide academic difficulties..**A**

D.   they go hand-in-hand; kids think it's better to be bad than stupid..**C, F**

E.   poor academics leads to behavior problems..**A**

F.   acting out is a response to academic difficulties; lack of focus; chronic
behavior problems = missing class time due to disciplinary measures..**D, F**

H.   positive correlation; acting out is sometimes associated with poor
academics..**C, C**   G.   hand-in-hand..**C**

I.   low functioning may cause some acting out, but some acting out is
Associated with poor performance..**D**

J.   there is a direct correlation, however, it is mostly up to the teacher..**C, F**

K.   negative behavior is counterproductive; non-conforming behavior takes kids
out of the academic loop..**B, B**

L.   performance and ability have a negative correlation with anxiety and poor
performance..**C**

M.   Student who doesn't know something will act out; if curriculum is
frustrating, kids will act out..**A, A**

N.   Poor behavior = student not on task; self control is needed for good
academic performance..**B, B**

O.   Inattention equates to academic inability..**C**

P.   Inattention and disruption equate to poor performance..**C**

Q.   acting out leads to poor performance or poor performance results from lack
of skills or laziness..**D**

R.   time misbehaving = time without instruction or help; regular teacher
intervention affects student self esteem..**C, F**

S.   No correlation...**E**

T.   Behavior hinders performance and academic development...**B**

U.   About 80% correlation; good students seldom have behavior problems; acting out may be due to academic inability...**C, C, A**

V.   time spent acting out lowers performance, possibly due to boredom...**B, F**

W.   No correlation; kids are complacent; they are OK with low achievement...**E, F, F**

X.   behavior problems lower student productivity...**B**

Y.   there may be a connection, but it is not absolute; high cognitive may lead to boredom; the association is causal in both directions with both high and low cognitive students...**C, F, D**

Z.   short attention span means low achievement; behavior problems brought into classroom affect other kids; low skills leads to acting out; usually boredom is a factor...**B, F, A, F**

AA. fooling around, not listening, disrupting leads to poor performance...**B**

BB. direct connection; bad behavior means not attending to work...**C, C**

CC. inattention/lack of focus is directly correlated with poor performance; defiance brings to bear safety issues...**C, F**

DD. bad behavior masks learning disabilities; teacher may not call on these students as often; behavior may be a cry for help...**A, F, F**

Question 3 Responses Categorically

Category A: Low Academic Performance is causal of Behavior Problems
          (9 responses)

A   acting out results from lack of academic skills

C   problem behavior serves to mask or hide academic difficulties

E   poor academics leads to behavior problems

F   acting out is a response to academic difficulties

M   student who doesn't know something will act out; if curriculum is frustrating, kids will act out

U   acting out may be due to academic inability

Z   low skills leads to acting out

DD bad behavior masks learning disabilities

Category B: Behavior Problems are causal of Low Academic Performance
                    (9 responses)

K negative behavior is counter-productive; non-conforming behavior takes
   kids out of the academic loop
N poor behavior means the student is not on task; self control is needed for
   good academic performance
T behavior hinders performance and academic development
V time spent acting out lowers performance
X behavior problems lower student productivity
Z short attention span leads to low achievement
AA fooling around, not listening, disrupting lead to poor academic performance

              Category C: no causal direction specified (16 responses)

B academic difficulty is positively correlated with extent of behavior problem
D they go hand in hand   G hand in hand   J there is a direct correlation
H positive correlation; acting out is often associated with poor performance
L conduct and ability have a negative correlation with anxiety and poor
   academic performance   O inattention is suggestive of academic inability
P inattention and disruption equal poor performance
R time misbehaving equals time without instruction or help
U about 80% correlation; good students seldom have behavior problems
Y there may be a connection, but it is not absolute
BB there's a direct connection; bad behavior means not attending to work
CC inattention/lack of focus is directly correlated with poor performance

              Category D: causation is bi-directional (4 responses)

I low functioning may cause some acting out but some acting out is associated
   with poor performance
Q acting out leads to poor performance, or poor performance results from lack
   of skills or laziness
Y association is causal in both directions w/both high and low cogn. students

              Category E: no causal association (2 responses)

S no correlation   W no correlation

Category F: other causal factors (14 responses)

B   possible psychological problems   J it's mostly up to the teacher

D   kids think it's better to be bad than stupid

F   lack of focus; chronic behavior problems = missing much class time due to
    disciplinary measures   Y high cognitive may lead to boredom

R   regular teacher intervention affects student self esteem

W   kids are complacent; they are OK with low achievement

Z   behavior problems brought into the classroom affects other kids

CC defiance brings to bear safety issues

DD teacher may not call on these students as often; problem behavior may be a
    cry for help   V possibly due to boredom

Question 4: What factors do you take into consideration when deciding
           how to respond to a student's problem behavior in the classroom?

<u>Response Categories</u>

        A = reference to the student (39 responses)
        B = reference to the behavior (13 responses)
        C = reference to the response (12 responses)
        D = reference to the structure (13 responses)

A. observations of the student; prior knowledge of the student......**A, A**
B. student's personal school history; severity of behavior......**A, B**
C. severity and commonality of the behavior; what has worked in the past......**B, C**
D. what will be the child's response; extent to which behavior is repetitive
    or ongoing......**A, B**
E. will it escalate the situation; extent of problems presented by the
    student......**C, B**
F. past behavior of the student; classroom rules and expectations......**B, D**
G. student response to teacher; impact of behavior on classroom; particular
    needs of student (e.g., ADHD)**A, D, A**
H. past involvement w/student, student's personality; individual basis......**A, A, C**
I. frequency and pattern of behavior; know the student's background; ask
    myself "why are they doing this?"; does child have other problems, such as
    abuse/neglect......**B, A, B, A**

J. how long I have known the student; knowledge of family; knowledge from co-workers……**A, A, A**

L. who is the child; compensate for child's home environment with increased activities; one-on-one; deal with each child on individual basis…..**A, D, C, C**

O. is student amenable to my confronting them…..**A**

M. severity of problem; extent of classroom disruption…..**B, D**

K. degree of possible danger……**D**

N. each case is individual; factors vary depending upon the kid's cognitive ability and their tolerance of the consequences……**C, A**

P. frequency of the behavior and the nature of the circumstances…..**B**

Q. None; bad behavior is dealt with "across the board"…..**D**

R. years teaching = more tolerance of behaviors; academic ability; home/family situation; health; school social ability; safety issues……**C, A, A, A, A, D**

X. frequency/recurrence of problem…..**B**

S. students' social skills; home environment; where might I have been at fault?…..**A, A, D**

T. are they on task; is the teacher effecting them academically; is it something I can deal with…..**A, D, B**

U. student's background; what is going on in the kids life…..**A, A**

V. Personal circumstances; social ability; various factors that are student-specific…..**A, A, A**

W. Number of prior warnings; level of disturbance the student is creating…..**C, D**

Y. the student's background; the situation; other students present; myself; the expected behavior; mood of the student and myself; I do not deal in absolutes…..**A, B, D, C, D, C, C, C**

Z. home environment; student's background…..**A, A**

CC. the established rules and consequences……**D**

AA. student's history; how does student usually behave; some kids need kindness rather than discipline..**A, A, C**

BB. circumstances surrounding the behavior; the student's behavior in general; student's background and their history of involvement with me; what is normal for kids their age to be going through……**B, A, A, A**

DD. student's personality; is the student reactionary?; what will be their response; what is the effect on the class……**A, A, A, D**

Question 4 Responses Categorically

Category A: Reference to the student (39 responses)

A. observations of the student; prior knowledge of student

B. student's personal school history   D. what will be the child's response

G. student response to the teacher; particular needs of the student

H. past involvement with the student; student's personality

I. know the student's background; does child have other problems, such as abuse or neglect

J. how long have I known the student; knowledge of family; coworkers' knowledge

N. factors vary depending upon the kid's cognitive ability and their tolerance of the consequences   L. who is the child

O. is student amenable to my confronting them

R. academic ability; home/family situation; health; school social ability

S. student's social skills; home environment   T. are they on task

U. student's background; what is going on in the kid's life

V. personal circumstances; social ability; various factors that are student specific

Y. the student's background   Z. home environment; student's background

AA. student's history; how does the student usually behave

BB. student's behavior in general; student's background/history of involvement with me; what is normal for kids their age to be going through

DD. student's personality; is student reactionary; what will be their response

Category B: Reference to the behavior (13 responses)

B. severity of the behavior

C. severity and commonality of the behavior

D. extent to which behavior is repetitive or ongoing

E. will it escalate the situation; extent of problems presented by the student

I. frequency and pattern of behavior

M. severity of problem

P. frequency of behavior, nature of the circumstances

X. frequency/recurrence of the problem

BB. circumstances surrounding the behavior; the student's behavior in general

Category C: Reference to the response (12 responses)

C. what has worked in the past

E. extent of problems presented by the student

H. on an individual basis

L. must deal with child one-on-one; deal with each child on an individual basis

N. each case is individual

R. years teaching = more teacher tolerance of behaviors

W. number of prior warnings

Y. myself; I do not deal in absolutes; mood of the student and myself

AA. some kids need kindness rather than discipline

Category D: Reference to structure (13 responses)

F. classroom rules and expectations

G. impact of behavior on classroom

K. degree of possible danger

L. compensate for child's home environment with increased activities

M. extent of classroom disruption

Q. bad behavior is dealt with across the board

R. safety issues   S. where might I have been at fault

T. is the teacher affecting them academically

W. level of disturbance the student is creating

Y. other students present; the expected behavior; I do not deal in absolutes

CC. the established rules and consequences

DD. what is the effect on the class

Question 5: When confronted with a student who refuses to follow your directives, how does this affects your role as a teacher?

<u>Response Categories</u>

A = It has no effect (9 responses)

B = Places teacher in another role (11 responses)

C = Elicits student judgement of teacher (12 responses)

D = Compromises classroom integrity in general (15 responses)

E = Other (6 responses)

A. does not affect my role as a teacher; discipline is part of the role......**A, A**

B. not at all......**A**   C. puts teacher in position to be judged by other kids......**C**

D. diminishes teacher in the eyes of the other students......**C**

E. student is questioning my role as authority figure; he has no respect for authority......**C, C**   G. I do not like the role of disciplinarian......**B**

F. my role is to stay calm, not take it personally; afterwards, discuss the situation with the student......**A, E**

H. student has no respect for the position; places teacher in position of dictator; takes away from other students..**C, B, D**

I. compromises teacher effectiveness; the role of disciplinarian is a time-stealer from the role of teacher......**D, B**

J. demeans/destroys the role of teacher; I must remove the troublesome student immediately to keep from infecting others......**B, D**

K. it is my duty to create and maintain the learning environment......**A**

L. the bad apple is going to ruin the rest of the apples; challenges my authority; challenges structure/stability of the classroom......**D, D, D**

M. impedes teaching ability; now I'm a counselor, truant officer,etc.; depends on reason for students refusal......**D, B, E**

N. it affects it a lot; students will begin to think that the teacher cannot control the class; they will lose respect for him/her......**E, C, C**

O. sometimes I'm a babysitter......**B**

P. I become a negotiator, and that's not my role......**B**

Q. does not affect it......**A**   S. No affect (after many years of teaching)......**A**

R. affects student perception of teacher as authority figure; successful interventions yield student respect; spend time as policeman rather than educator......**C, E, B**

T. it disempowers the teacher; affects other students' perception of teacher; teacher is less in control……**D, C, D**

U. undermines the teacher's authority figure role; time spent on discipline problems takes away from teaching and learning……**D, D**

V. Not at all; the behavior reflects on student, not on the teacher.**A, E**

W. turns the teacher into a babysitter……**B**   Y.   not at all…….**A**

X. this reduces the teacher's control of their classroom……**D**

Z. a distraction to my ability to teach; puts me in the role of mediator……**D, B**

AA. I must prove to the class that my authority in the classroom is not reproachable; other students need to know that the teacher says what she means and means what she says……**C, E**

BB. teacher is forced to set aside the task of teaching; teacher becomes the disciplinarian……**D, B**

CC. undermines the authority of teacher to other students……**C**

DD. poor handling loses respect of class; it becomes difficult to maintain classroom rules……**C, D**

Question 5 Responses Categorically

Category A: It has no effect (9 responses)

A. does not affect my role as a teacher; discipline is part of the role

B. not at all   F. my role is to stay calm, to not take it personally

K. it is my duty to create and maintain the learning environment

Q. does not affect it   S. no effect (after many years of teaching)

V. not at all   Y. not at all

Category B: Places teacher in another role (11 responses)

G. I do not like the role of disciplinarian

H. places teacher in the position of dictator

I. the role of disciplinarian is a time-stealer from the role of teacher

J. demeans/destroys the role of teacher

M. now I'm a counselor, truant officer, etc.   O. sometimes I'm a babysitter

P. I become a negotiator, and that's not my role

R. spend time as policeman rather than educator

W. turns the teacher into a babysitter

Z. puts me in the role of mediator

BB. teacher becomes the disciplinarian

Category C: Elicits student judgement of teacher (12 responses)

C. places teacher in position to be judged by other kids

D. diminishes teacher in the eyes of the other students

E. student questions my role as authority figure; he has no respect for authority   H. student has no respect for the position

N. students will think that the teacher cannot control the class; they will lose respect for the teacher   DD. poor handling loses respect of class

R. affects student perception of teacher as authority figure

T. affects other student's perception of teacher

AA. I must prove to class that my authority is not reproachable

CC. undermines the authority of teacher to other students

Category D: Compromises classroom integrity in general (15 responses)

H. takes away from other students

I. compromises teacher effectiveness

J. I must remove the troublesome student immediately to keep from infecting other students

L. the bad apple is going to ruin the rest of the apples; challenges my authority; challenges the structure and stability of the classroom

M. impedes teaching ability

T. it disempowers the teacher; teacher is less in control

U. undermines the teacher's authority figure role; time spent on discipline problems takes away from teaching and learning

X. this reduces the teacher's control of the classroom

Z. a distraction to my ability to teach

BB. teacher is forced to set aside the task of teaching

DD. it becomes difficult to maintain classroom rules

Category E: Other (6 responses)

F. afterwards, discuss the situation with the student

M. depends on reason for student refusal   N. it affects it a lot

R. successful interventions yield student respect

V. the behavior reflects on the student, not on the teacher

AA. other students need to know that the teacher says what she means and means what she says

APPENDIX V

Response Totals by Subject

SUBJECTS	Q1 A Behavioral	Q1 B Conference	Q1 C Management	Q1 D Miscellaneous	Q2 A Negative	Q2 B Pathology	Q2 C P. Causation	Q2 D Development	Q2 E Association	Q3 A JP causes BP	Q3 B BP causes JP	Q3 C No Direction	Q3 D Bi-directional	Q3 E No Association	Q3 F Other Factors	Q4 A Student	Q4 B Behavior	Q4 C Response	Q4 D Structure	Q5 A No Effect	Q5 B Another Role	Q5 C Judgement	Q5 D Integrity	Q5 E Other Effects
1	X				X					X						X	X			X				
2	X				X							X			X	X	X	X		X		X		
3		X	X				X	X									X					X		
4		X	X					X				X			X		X	X	X		X	X		
5		X					X	X					X			X	X				X	X		X
6	X	X			X		X			X		X	X		X		X		X	X				X
7	X		X									X				X		X	X		X	X		
8	X	X	X	X			X					X				X	X		X		X		X	
9	X			X		X										X					X		X	
10	X			X		X		X			X		X		X	X			X	X				
11										X		X									X			
12	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X		X	X	X
13	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X				X	X			X		X	X	X	X
14															X	X			X					
15	X				X		X	X	X		X	X	X				X	X	X	X		X		
16	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X					X	X			X	X	X	X		X
17	X			X		X			X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X				
18	X		X				X	X					X		X	X			X		X	X		X
19										X							X							
20	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
21	X	X					X	X			X				X	X	X				X	X		X
22					X				X	X		X				X							X	
23			X													X								
24	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			X		X	X	X		X		X	
25	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X				X
26	X			X								X				X					X			
27	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
28							X	X			X	X				X		X						
29	X	X	X						X		X				X	X	X		X			X		X
30	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X			X	X			X	X		X	X	X
RESPONSE TOTALS	21	15	13	6	7	3	15	11	8	7	7	13	4	1	12	20	12	9	13	8	11	10	11	6

	5E	5D	5C	5B	5A	4D	4C	4B	4A	3F	3E	3D	3C	3B	3A	2E	2D	2C	2B	2A	1D	1C	1B	1A
1A-Behavioral																								
1B-Conference																								
1C-Management																								
1D-Miscellaneous																								
2A-Negative																					0	3	1	6
2B-Pathology																					1	2	1	3
2C-Causation																					4	7	10	8
2D-Development																					2	6	7	6
2E-Association																					3	6	5	5
3A-LP Causes BP																3	3	5	0	1	1	3	6	5
3B-BP Causes LP																4	3	4	1	0	1	2	4	4
3C-No Direction																2	4	6	0	4	3	6	4	10
3D-Bi-Directional																0	3	2	2	0	1	2	2	4
3E-No Association																0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
3F-Other Factors																5	2	5	0	3	3	7	5	7
4A-Student										9	0	2	11	5	4	6	7	9	1	5	6	9	10	13
4B-Behavior										4	0	3	5	2	3	1	7	7	1	2	1	5	7	8
4C-Response										3	1	1	4	2	2	2	4	7	0	0	3	6	5	4
4D-Structure										7	1	3	6	2	2	4	4	4	2	3	2	7	7	11
5A-No Effect						5	1	3	5	5	0	3	2	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	0	2	3	6
5B-Another Role						5	3	4	8	4	1	1	7	1	2	3	2	4	1	4	4	5	3	10
5C-Judgement						4	6	4	7	4	0	0	4	2	3	5	4	6	0	0	4	6	8	5
5D-Integrity						4	2	5	2	3	0	1	5	3	4	3	6	8	1	0	4	4	7	9
5E-Other Effects						3	3	2	4	3	0	1	1	3	1	5	2	5	0	0	2	4	5	3

Table of Response Ratios

APPENDIX VII

Statement of Confidentiality and Informed Consent

The study you are participating in is designed to assess teachers' conceptualization of student problem behavior. This study is being conducted by Christopher Wyatt under the supervision of Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, Professor of Social Work (909 880 5507). This study has been approved by the Social Work Department Subcommittee of the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino. The university requires that you give your consent prior to participating in the study.

Any information that you impart to me will be held in the strictest of confidence. This interview does not ask any questions regarding mandated reporting. There are no names, numbers or other identifying symbols used in this survey to identify participants. It is by no means the intent of this research to judge or classify the participants in any way. The purpose of this study is to examine how teachers conceptualize the reality of student misbehavior.

The results of this interview will be compiled with all other completed interviews. You are under no obligation whatsoever to participate in this study, and you may withdraw at any time. If you choose to participate, please keep in mind that you are not required to answer any question that you feel is too sensitive or otherwise too personal.

By placing a mark in the space below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study. I acknowledge participating in this study of my own free will, without coercion or promise of payment of any kind.

By this mark I further acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age. Give your consent to participate by making a check or 'X' in the space:_____   Today's date is:_____

APPENDIX VIII

Debriefing Statement

This study was conducted by Christopher Wyatt, MSW Intern, under the supervision of Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, Professor of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). The intent here was to assess teachers' conceptualization of problem student behaviors.

If any of the questions on the survey or any aspect of the study have caused you concern, please feel free to contact Professor McCaslin, Department of Social Work, CSUSB at (909) 880 5507.

A brief summary of the research will be available after June 14th, 1999, and can be obtained by calling the above number and making your request.

Thank you again for participating in this study.

APPENDIX IX

Request for Agency Approval

Christopher Wyatt
Department of Social Work
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, CA 92407

C. Fred Workman, Superintendent
Val Verde Unified School District
975 West Morgan Street
Perris, CA 92571   February 2nd, 1999

Dear Dr. Workman,

As you may already know, I am a second year MSW student at Cal State

San Bernardino, and I am serving an internship with the G.R.I.P under

the supervision of Larry Payne. As part of the requirements for the

Master's Degree, I am required to conduct a research project. I have

come to you for assistance in this matter.

I am currently assigned to Tomas Rivera Middle School as a School

Therapist. The literature regarding problem behaviors in the school

milieu indicates there is a growing need for clinicians to address

student difficulties. The research I am proposing involves personal

interviews with teachers regarding their conceptualization of problem

behaviors and the students who enact them. I am seeking your approval

to conduct this study in your district.

If you have any questions regarding this research, please contact my

project supervisor, Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, Department of Social Work,

CSUSB, at (909) 880 5507, or Mr. Larry Payne, G.R.I.P. Coordinator, at

(909) 940 6477.

Thank you, sir, for your time.

Respectfully,   Christopher Wyatt

VAL VERDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

975 West Morgan Street • Perris, California 92571 • (909) 940-6100 • FAX (909) 940-6120
C. Fred Workman, Ed.D., Superintendent

Christopher Wyatt
Department of Social Work
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, CA 92407

February 3rd, 1999

Dear Mr. Wyatt,

I have reviewed your request to conduct research in the Val Verde Unified School District. You have my permission to conduct the research you have described. I would be interested in learning of the results of your study.

Sincerely,

C. Fred Workman, Superintendent
Val Verde Unified School District

"No Excuses"

BOARD OF EDUCATION: Robert E. Givens, Ed.D. • Virginia (Wyatt) Denney • Janice A. Dotson • Marla D. Kirkland • Jo Ann S. McAulis

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