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Improving provision for disaffected students: Toward a new educational model

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Improving Provision for Disaffected Students: Toward a New Educational Model

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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

A b s t r a c t

The purpose of this study is to develop and review strategies and policies to drive retentive teaching-learning environments for disaffected students, modifying their *modus operandi* sufficiently for them to qualify and retain a tertiary place or position in the workforce, or sustain a return to mainstream schooling. I employed action research methods to examine Strike Four, an educational model servicing students with severe social and/or emotional difficulties and behavioural disorders. I tested the Strike Four model during an intensive study period on two programs.

Part 1 of the thesis comprises three Chapters. An introduction to the issue of the marginalisation and exclusion of troublesome students in mainstream education is presented in Chapter 1. The review of associated literature, which follows in Chapter 2, examines: early attitudes to crime and deviant behaviour; some modern sociological and psychological attempts to diagnose, categorise, or "cure" deviance; school-based behaviour modification strategies; and various Australian states' attempts to service disaffected students with education. The theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3 includes the rationale for my choice of qualitative methods, discussion and selection of an action research model, and the position taken on the issues of anonymity and authenticity.

Part 2 of the thesis, "The Study", comprises four chapters, and a concluding chapter. A grounded autobiography that clarifies my personal position, whilst demonstrating how my *modus operandi* was transformed through personal critical moments, is offered in Chapter 4. This provides a base from which to consider the potential for personal critical moments, texts, and mentors to transform an individual's ideology and *modus operandi*. The educational theory and ideological underpinnings held to underlie the Strike Four model are presented in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 comprises a critical examination of the evolution of Strike Four policy,

in particular, how and if the educational theory and ideological underpinnings claimed to underlie the model are apparent in model policy. Chapter 7 deals with three program strategies: harnessing golden teaching moments; using curriculum as a tool to shape behaviour; and the use of positive contracting to encourage behaviour self-management skills in troublesome students. In this chapter I critically examine how and if policy and ideology is reflected in practice on the programs, and if the various policies, and the three key strategies, are proving successful in modifying the *modus operandi* of the young people sufficiently to facilitate their functioning in mainstream society. An end piece to the fieldwork is included to fill in "gaps" resulting from the reporting of selected case studies.

Chapter 8 includes the findings and recommendations for future research. The model's success in modifying students' *modus operandi* is demonstrated through the individual case studies and tables. Almost 100% of the students (on entry classified severely alienated) maintained their placement in work, technical college, or mainstream schooling for the three month post support period.

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;

(ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text or

(iii) contain any defamatory material.

Signed:

Cecilia Netolicky

Date: 29/5/98

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PART 1

BACKGROUND, LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter 1

Introduction

In this chapter I map the parameters of the study, frame the study subjects, and foreground the purpose and significance of the study. Issues of inclusion and exclusion are addressed, the plight of chronically disaffected students in education is discussed, the research question is posed, and operational definitions are presented. I also foreground central issues currently affecting educational service to disaffected students, and the factors stimulating this study.

In recent years a significant shift in the educational mandate has occurred in the Western world. Increased acceptance of human diversity has resulted in an extension of equity and human rights, giving many marginalised groups better access to mainstream education (Annual Meeting Program AERA 1998, p. 9). The issue of young peoples' rights has fuelled this initiative (Heward & Orlansky, 1992, p. 19). One group of young people, however, is still denied full access despite being in the "compulsory education" age group. Troublesome behaviour students have been largely left out of recent initiatives (Ashworth, 1997c; Ashworth, 1998). Many young people still face exclusion through internal school behaviour management policies (Ashworth, 1997a; Ashworth, 1997b; Ashworth, 1997c; Rigby, 1996, p. 15; Thewlis, 1996, p. 77). Students seen to be troublesome, whilst technically included in mainstream, have been dealt with through school behaviour management policies that see them excluded, either temporarily through time-out or suspension, or permanently through expulsion, thereby depriving them of their right to a full education.

The Inclusion/Exclusion Debate

Until very recently, in the Western world, traditional education was seen to be exclusive rather than inclusive. Many children were denied the right to be educated in the mainstream.

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Instead they were serviced in separate special centres or institutions. Young people with mental or physical difference were believed to be "unable to appropriately benefit from typical instruction" (Heward & Orlansky, 1992, p. 35), or to have different needs from other children and so were serviced separately. It was believed that by clustering students in a grouping based on their difference the education process could be stream-lined for them and a more appropriate service offered.

During the 1990s the educational benefits of this process were questioned (Heward & Orlansky, 1992; Olson & Platt, 1996; Stainback & Stainback, 1996). Through exclusion in education, exclusion from full participation in the larger society was endorsed. Many young people failed to acquire the necessary skills for independent adult living and were denied opportunities to establish friendships with non-excluded individuals, contributing to a sustained exclusion from mainstream society.

The move from exclusion to inclusion was triggered by legal battles and new laws rather than changing social attitudes (Heward & Orlansky, 1992, pp. 35- 59). Children with special needs are now perceived, at least in law, to be no different from other citizens, and hence have the right to participate in free mainstream public education. As argued by Stainback and Stainback (1996, p. 1) "exclusion in schools sows the seeds of social discontent and discrimination. Education is a human rights issue and persons with disabilities should be part of schools, which should modify their operations to include all students". Such inclusive schools would better reflect whole communities. Its students would not be denied full participation in society because they cannot see, cannot walk, are hard to look at, or are unable to cope with curriculum-driven instruction designed for the average student. Heward and Orlansky (1992, p. 9) stressed that "exceptional children are [now seen to be] more like other children than they are different". This perspective focuses on children's abilities, rather than their "disabilities". This point has been forcefully made in The Salamanca Statement and

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Framework for Action: On Special Needs Education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994). Here it was proposed that "a change in perspective is imperative. For far too long, the problems of people with disabilities have been compounded by a disabling society that has focused upon their impairments rather than their potential" (p. 7). This approach offers an empowering base both for individuals focusing on their limitations rather than their abilities, and for a society regarding these individuals as liabilities rather than assets.

This inclusive perspective is now being adopted locally by the Western Australian State Education Department in their Strategic Plan 1996 - 1998 Education Department of Western Australia (1997, p. 2), where they stated their intention to conduct "research to determine the support required for including students with disabilities in mainstream education", and to develop "strategies and processes to better focus support resources on the needs of mainstream classroom teachers of students with disabilities and students with specific learning difficulties". The need for a more compassionate approach to the "disabled" or "differently-abled" has been foregrounded by Bannister and Fransella (1971, p 142):

> If we think of people not as belonging to illness categories but as individuals who have problems, then we are irrevocably led to the position of asking people what their trouble is. We can then try to understand their way of viewing the world so that we can help them to work out an alternative way of relating to others and their environment.

This view rejects the process of labelling, categorising and excluding individuals, or groups, working rather from the perspective "that human differences are normal and that learning must accordingly be adapted to the needs of the child rather than the child fit preordained assumptions regarding the pace and nature of learning" (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994, p. 7). Ability, race, and gender are now seen to be more appropriately portrayed as continua, rather than simple dichotomies. A continuum approach discourages the division of young people into "those who can" and "those who

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cannot" simply based on ability, race, or gender. Exclusion ideologies are no longer considered an acceptable way of deciding who can study sewing or manual arts, or who can attend a mainstream school (Heward & Orlansky, 1992, p. 19).

Exclusion within Mainstream Education

Despite these recent trends to include young people previously marginalised through the labelling process, one particular group is still denied access to a full education. These young people have been denied the right to attend school through internal school behaviour management policies. Where problem behaviour children have attended mainstream school, they tend to be quickly dealt with through the time-out, suspension, and expulsion process.

While many of these young people have no measurable disorder, they may as Morgan (1994, p. 2) suggested, be "trying to cope with a major life crisis". However, they are excluded if they are perceived to be interfering with curriculum-driven instruction, thereby depriving others who want to learn of their right to an education. Many time-out, suspension, and expulsion policies merely remove the offending individual from the classroom, so that instruction can proceed for the others. These exclusion policies, unless linked to other student-centred strategies, fail to address the issues stimulating the young person's offending behaviour.

Few Western Australian schools currently offer alternate on-site (eg. BAYIP Program, Belmont Senior High School, Cannington Education District, Perth, W. Australia), or off-site (eg. Community Link, VIP and Wandarri in the Cannington Education District, Perth, W. Australia) educational opportunities where these young people can continue learning without disrupting the valued others. So these young people return to the classroom disadvantaged, having missed "chunks" of their education. This in turn has repercussions on classroom

behaviours, as regularly excluded young people tend to have learning deficits. Morgan (1994, p. 4) commented:

> unless they are diagnosed as disabled by the most stringent criteria, these children are not formally categorized with labels for which money has been earmarked to help cure. Yet they are in school, day after day, struggling with issues that would arouse the anxiety and challenge the sanity of even the strongest adults.

For the chronically troublesome student exclusion policies lead to "revolving door syndrome", resulting in ever-increasing learning deficits. These learning deficits may in turn lead to further inappropriate behaviours, as the young person gets educationally further out of line with the rest of the class. The young person becomes a "martyr", an acceptable loss, sacrificed so that curriculum-driven instruction can continue for the valued others (Netolicky, 1998a, p. 2).

Compulsory Schooling and the Troublesome Behaviour Child

Stringfield, coeditor of the American Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk, stated that the journal sees "students at risk" as "students placed at risk of academic failure as a result of poverty or being members of a disadvantaged demographic group - such as urban or rural settings" (Stringfield, 1998). In Western Australia, young people are seen to be "at risk" if they are unlikely to finish year 10, the upper limit of compulsory education. However, students with troublesome behaviours are often excluded from "compulsory" education through school behaviour management policies. For example, Western Australian state schools "have handed out 12,662 suspension notices in the 18 months to June this year and expelled 55 students for offences ranging from drug peddling to assault .... Students as young as five years of age were suspended and Years 8, 9 and 10 posed most problems" (Ashworth,

1997, p. 1). "Nine of the 55 expelled students were not allowed to return to any State school" (Ashworth, 1997a, p. 6).

Constable and Burton (1993, p. 19) suggested that a "review of programs and procedures indicates very little attention has been paid to identifying at-risk youth and instituting prevention programs at an early point in their lives". Eric Ripper, the Western Australian opposition education spokesman, advocated "more cooperation between government agencies to provide alternative arrangements for these students, otherwise what you have is 12,000 occasions where students are effectively given less supervision" (in Ashworth 1997, p. 1). Ripper stressed that, "when they are out in the community they are potential clients of the Children's Court" (in Ashworth 1997, p. 1). This issue is magnified if suspended or expelled young people have no supervision at home, as both parents/carers may be working.

The Western Australian State Education Department has addressed this issue. In <u>Strategic Plan 1996 -1998 Education Department of Western Australia</u> (1997), it stated that its intention was to fully address this problem by 1998. Strategies leading to this end are currently being put in place. This document requires schools to "plan appropriate education options and implement collaborative action plans for students with troublesome behaviours and students alienated from school" (p. 2).

Cannington Senior High School (Perth, Western Australia), "boasts a record of not expelling any student in the past 18 months" (in Ashworth, 1997a, p. 6). Principal Karen Wearn explained that they "use an intensive program incorporating a range of strategies which aims to help problem students and their families before it is too late" (in Ashworth, 1997a, p. 6). In contrast to this, Thornlie Senior High School, in the same district, is "in the unenviable position of having the biggest number of suspensions in the same period" (Ashworth, 1997a,

p. 6). This demonstrates that if appropriate strategies are put in place, expulsion of troublesome students can be minimised.

The West Australian Secondary Principals' Association and the West Australian State School Teachers' Union said "it was important schools were given adequate resources to set up programs for students at risk" (in Ashworth, 1997, p. 1).

Exclusion, Education and the At-Risk Student

Troublesome behaviour students are still denied a full education in many Western Australian schools through behaviour management policies utilising time-out, suspension and expulsion (Ashworth, 1997a, p. 6, Ashworth, 1997b, p. 7 & Ashworth, 1997c, p. 9). Yet, as stated in Western Australia's Education Act 1928, Section 13A "on and after 1 January 1966, the leaving age applicable in respect of any child shall be the age of the child at the end of the year in which [s/]he attains the age of 15 years" (Education Act 1928, under Reprints Act 1984, 1992, p. 27), so that a child cannot choose to leave school prior to the end of year they turn 15. The Act also states:

> 16. (1) The parent of any child not less than 6 years of age nor more than leaving age, who without reasonable excuse, neglects to cause such child to attend a Government or other efficient school, in accordance with this Act, may be summoned before a court of summary jurisdiction, on the complaint of a welfare officer or a superintendent of education, or any other person authorised in that behalf by the Minister, and subject to the provisions of subsection (1a), shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, punishable upon conviction before such court, and shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding $200. (Education Act 1928, under Reprints Act 1984, 1992, p. 29)

The parent is therefore held responsible for assuring the child's attendance. Section 17A addresses the child's responsibility:

(1) A child who, without a reason which is deemed a reasonable excuse under section 14, absents [her/]himself, although not habitually, from school when [s/]he should be attending school as required by this Act, commits the offence of truancy.

(2) On complaint by a welfare officer, or by a superintendent of education, or by any other person authorised by the Minister to make complaints of offences against this Act, that a child has committed the offence of truancy, the child may be summoned before the Children's Court to be charged with the offence, and the parent may be summoned to attend with the child before the court. (Education Act 1928, under Reprints Act 1984, 1992, p. 31)

It is the parent's responsibility to send the child to school. The child must be enrolled, and must attend when the school is open. What however is the school's obligation to provide a full education, and how does this fit in with school behaviour management policies that endorse suspension and expulsion? Section 20G of the Education Act 1928 states:

(1) If a person holding or acting in a prescribed class of position is of the opinion that the conduct and behaviour of a child attending a Government school is not conducive to the good order and proper management of the Government school the person may suspend the child from attendance at the Government school in accordance with and subject to the regulations. (Education Act 1928, under Reprints Act 1984, 1992, p. 39)

Mainstream education has extended integration to young people previously excluded due to physical or mental difference. It seems appropriate to devise better models and strategies to service the troublesome behaviour group. Following Evans (1994), it would be advisable to discard behaviour management policies that tend to result in these young people being excluded from education. Evans pointed out:

It is my position that current behaviour management policies implemented by schools are not in the best interest of students with behavioural difficulties. In addition, system and school policies are questioned in relation to whether they streamline suspension and expulsion of difficult to teach students, and discriminate against students' rights to a free and appropriate education. (p. 42)

Expulsion and suspension offer a sanctioned tool by which schools can select who they will educate, and whom they will refuse to service. Evans suggested that the removal of

suspension and expulsion as sanctioned tools will encourage the development of more appropriate strategies. A West Australian Education Department spokesman said that a new student behaviour management policy is to be introduced. This policy includes in the procedures "conflict resolution measures, peer mediation and different approaches to discipline" (in Ashworth, 1997a, p. 6).

Meeting the cost of providing appropriate and engaging educational programs for at-risk youth, remains the most economical choice. As Constable and Burton suggested:

> Some of those millions of dollars spent on dealing with young offenders would be better spent tackling education, unemployment, housing, health and family problems of youth. In particular, the education budget - one quarter of the State's budget - should be examined to find ways to identify at risk children at a very early age and provide appropriate educational programs in an attempt to overcome the well-documented problems of juvenile offenders' poor academic performance, early misconduct, low income family background and troubled home environments. (Constable & Burton, 1993, p. 21)

If educational solutions are not devised for the "at-risk" group, current behaviour management policies will lead to increasing numbers of teenagers alienated from mainstream education through the time-out, suspension and expulsion process, with some progressing through the juvenile justice system toward criminal careers at a significant cost to society. Tevlin (1994, p. 2), citing Axelson, who teachers an alternative program at Minneapolis State High School, stated statistics "show that at-risk kids can succeed only if in a warm, comfortable place". The traditional school environment reads as hostile to many of this group, as it is associated with their exclusion and failure.

In an article by Ashworth entitled "Problem pupils lack help", Glen Diggins, the Armadale Senior High School principal, said that "those schools which had access to off-site alternative education programs had found the centres to be beneficial for these 'hard core' alienated students" (in Ashworth, 1997c, p. 9). Diggins suggested "more off-site programs were

needed because not all schools had access to them" (in Ashworth, 1997c, p. 9). In the survey conducted by the West Australian Secondary Principals' Association and the West Australian Secondary Deputy Principals' Association, it was found that in "many cases, schools were forced to expel problem students because there were no alternative programs. The school heads said there should be urgent action taken to provide real and workable solutions" (Ashworth, 1997c, p. 9). Both the Education Department of Western Australia, and the Principals' and Deputy Principals' Associations, accept the need for urgency in finding such solutions.

The Purpose of this Study

The purpose of the study was to identify factors that may improve educational provision for disaffected students. Two Western Australian student-at-risk programs were studied: the Ocean Ridge CGEA (Certificate of General Education for Adults), and the VIP Program (Victoria Park). Both programs employed Strike Four, an educational model developed to service at risk students in retentive environments. During the intensive research period I was model developer, program coordinator, and literacy lecturer on both programs. This enabled the immediate addressing of policy, curriculum and strategy deficiencies identified, and the trialing and critical examination of implemented modifications, in order to arrive at an improved model.

The Ocean Ridge CGEA arose from a locally perceived need to address the issue of excluded, troublesome and at-risk students. In 1995 a partnership was established between the Education District Office, the local technical college, and Family and Children's Services with the intention of skilling up at-risk year 10 students for technical college, apprenticeships, traineeships, or the work force. The 1995, 1996 and 1997 programs were "pilot programs",

each running for 19 weeks, and experimenting with a range of strategies to service disaffected student populations with education. The particular Ocean Ridge program under intense study ran in the first half of 1997. No further funding was available for this program after mid 1997.

The VIP Program was initially set up in May 1997 as an inter-agency initiative of Family and Children's Services, Community Policing and Crime Prevention, the local Education District Office, and Juvenile Justice. Though the principal funding body has varied each year, the original agencies have remained involved. The VIP Program aimed to address truancy, juvenile crime and vandalism, whilst augmenting ethical codes, work ethics, lifeskills, literacy, and numeracy, thereby facilitating a return to mainstream social commitments such as education and employment. In 1997 and 1998 the VIP Program only offered service to year 10 students labelled "category 3 alienated" (that is alienated to the extent that they cannot be appropriately taught in mainstream schools). The 1997 VIP Program ran for the last 27 weeks of the school year. Funding was made available for two 19 week VIP Programs in 1998.

The central aim of these pilot programs was to address student behaviour issues as an integral part of all curricula, offering the young people the opportunity to develop strategies to address their various behaviour issues on the educational site. All program behaviour management strategies operated from a base accepting that

> whatever the precipitating factor was for the disturbed behavior in the past, the frequency, intensity and duration of such behavior in the present is definitely influenced by the kinds of consequences the behavior calls forth from its immediate surroundings. (Stoppleworth, 1973, p. 5)

Thus we acknowledged that whatever the cause, problem behaviour frequencies could be reduced through a range of policies and strategies. Problem behaviour students were retained

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on campus and strategies were put in place to address their issues and assist them in developing the necessary skills to become behaviour self-managers.

This study attempted to identify which program policies and strategies, if any, were significantly affecting the *modus operandi* (style of operating/ mode of behaving) of the young people, reducing the frequency of their socially problematic behaviours and facilitating a successful return to mainstream society. Significant interest was shown in the early successes of the pilot programs, and the texts and policy documents written for these programs have been implemented in a wide variety of contexts in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Thailand, South Africa, and Israel, as well as locally. In Western Australia strategies, policies, or the texts, have been trialed by other programs for alienated youth, Juvenile Justice, the Ministry of Justice, Aboriginal education programs, vocational education, and literacy programs. Stimulated by the response at professional development days and conferences, I decided that there was sufficient interest in the strategies, policies, and texts written for the programs, for me to document and test them.

The need for this study was also indicated by Harvey-Beavis (1996, p. 100) in "The why, what, how, when and where of doing an evaluation". He stated

> it is worth bearing in mind the chilling observation that Bruce Muirhead drew to the attention of the *1995 National Conference on the Behaviour Management and Behaviour Change of Children and Youth with Emotional and/or Behaviour Problems.* Citing the work of Polk, he noted how there were no youth programs known in Australia where it could be shown that the youth who had participated in them had also benefited from that participation.

I believed that the successes of the Ocean Ridge CGEA and VIP Program challenged this statement. This also stimulated my determination to ascertain if our young people had "benefited from that participation" and if these benefits could be documented, measured, demonstrated, repeated and improved.

The Research Question

The central question this body of research addresses is:

> What kind of strategies and policies create an effective teaching-learning environment for disaffected year 10 students and modify their *modus operandi* sufficiently for them to qualify and retain a tertiary place or position in the work force, or sustain a return to mainstream?

Operational Definitions

The definitions employed here do not claim to offer the definitive meaning of terms; rather they either elucidate local usage, or are context specific definitions.

"Disaffected", At-Risk, and "Alienated": I coordinate programs for students classified "disaffected", "at-risk", or "alienated". Evans stated that a "small, but increasing number of students do not complete even the compulsory years of school, let alone the post-compulsory schooling because they are precluded from receiving an appropriate education" (Evans, 1994, p. 42). Some young people fall into this group because their behaviours have resulted in regular suspension or expulsion, or they are chronic school refusers. In addition many are experimenting with behaviours that put their own well-being or lives at risk, or threaten the safety or property of others in the local community. I have used "disaffected" to refer to those students who are severely alienated, in particular in relation to those in authority in the teaching-learning environment.

I first asked, "Who is considered to be at risk?" and "At risk of what?" when teaching upper school Art and History (year 11 and 12) in a community school for "at-risk" youth. We had a "student-at-risk worker", but he was not concerned with my students. His interest lay in lower school. I felt most of the young people in the school were severely at-risk as they were

experimenting with illegal substances, drinking excessive amounts of alcohol, sniffing glue and petrol, chroming, carrying weapons, dealing and taking drugs, experimenting sexually, stealing, driving without a licence, and driving under the influence of alcohol. I began to wonder why the student at-risk worker was not concerned with my students. He informed me that "students are perceived to be at-risk if they are unlikely to finish year 10". Year 10 is the last year of compulsory schooling in Western Australia.

Who is considered "alienated"? On the VIP Program we are only allowed to offer service to students classified "category 3 alienated", that is students with significant social and/or emotional difficulties and behavioural disorders. Category 3 students are considered to be so severely alienated, they cannot be serviced in mainstream. We run a withdrawal program offering a retentive educational service for these young people.

For the purpose of this thesis, "at-risk" and "alienated" students will be other-defined - referring to young people local government agencies have categorised with these labels. The young people on the Ocean Ridge CGEA and VIP Program have been seen to be at-risk by various local institutions. They are perceived to be "at-risk", or "category 3 alienated", and so are referred to the programs by Education, Juvenile Justice, or Family and Children's Services.

"Behaviour Disordered" or "Troublesome Behaviour": As many of these young people are denied the right to access a full mainstream education as a result of their behaviours, it seems appropriate to examine what exactly is seen to constitute a behavioural disorder or a troublesome behaviour student. Behavioural disorder appears to defy simple definition. Rather there appears to be a continuum of behaviour disorder that is measured in terms of factors such as frequency, duration, topography, magnitude, or stimulus control. Hence, "depending on who you ask, 1% to 40% of the school-aged population is behaviorally disordered" (Morgan & Jenson, 1988, p. 10). Morgan and Jenson (p. 9), citing Apter,

suggested that the reason for this is that "most behaviors attributed to children in conflict are normal behaviors; at least they are normal if one considers that normal children will sometimes cheat, or lie, or act out aggressive feelings by hitting other children". Apter attributed the difference to the fact that these behaviours are deviant if they are "exhibited in the wrong places, at the wrong time, in the presence of the wrong people, and to an inappropriate degree" (in Morgan & Jenson, 1988, p. 9).

It is generally agreed that behaviour disordered young people are difficult to isolate as a group. Heward and Orlansky asked (1992, p. 189) "how does one determine that some behavior problems represent social maladjustment, whereas others are indicative of true emotional disturbance?". Behaviour disorder is perceived differently by different researchers and teachers. What one individual regards as a problem, another regards as acceptable. Many individuals may only be behaviour disordered for a brief time, and enhancing social skills may help these young people. Howell (1993) reinforced the notion that students with behaviour difficulties lack essential social skills. He suggested "social skills are important. Individuals who lack these skills, or who have learned a set of social skills which is incompatible with the situations in which they find themselves, have numerous problems" (p. 1). He concluded that it "follows that these skills should be taught" (p. 1).

Behaviour disordered is an isolating label. It does not successfully separate deviant behaviour, from normal behaviour. In fact as demonstrated, deviant behaviour is more common than is generally accepted; some people get caught, some do it more often, and some do it in more extreme forms. Hence, for the purpose of this thesis, behaviour disorder, or troublesome behaviour, will be seen to refer to a continuum, where normal children manifest some of the defining characteristics, but they exhibit these tendencies with less frequency and with better knowledge of appropriateness.

Ideology and *Modus Operandi*, Theory and Practice: A distinction between ideology and *modus operandi* is essential to my thesis. The theory, or ideology, espoused by a practitioner, and the practice of that teacher, or their *modus operandi* (the way they employ that ideology or theory in action), are not always one and the same. Ideology is used to signify the overall belief system of an individual or group, whilst theory is used to signify an aspect of that ideology that pertains to a particular sphere (here teaching). *Modus operandi* is used to encompass the idiosyncratic, or distinct, manner of operating perceived to be characteristic of an individual and habitually followed by her/him, whilst practice is used to refer to the actual mode of operating in a particular sphere (here teaching). So practice refers to the way a practitioner actually employs their ideological base, and their theories about teaching or learning, in the classroom.

Summative Reflection and Thesis Overview

The inclusion/exclusion debate is of some relevance to young people previously serviced off school sites; however, the troublesome student devoid of an economically earmarked label is generally supposedly serviced on-site. These young people, whilst allegedly included in mainstream schooling, miss "chunks" of their education through exclusion oriented school behaviour management policies such as time-out, suspension and expulsion. Many of these young people have learning deficits and behavioural problems that preclude functioning friction free in mainstream society. The Western Australian Education Act 1928 (Education Act 1928, under Reprints Act 1984, 1992, p. 29) compels parents of compulsory age students to send them to school, and compulsory age students to attend school. However, the Act (p. 39) permits periodic or full exclusion of troublesome young people from the teaching-learning environment.

There is a demonstrated need to derive better models to service these students in retentive environments where their behaviour issues can be addressed on-site and their education can be on-going (Evans, 1994 p. 42; Constable & Burton, 1993, p. 21; Ashworth, 1997c). This study examines Strike Four, one model currently providing educational service for disaffected young people, in an attempt to improve the service provided.

In the critical review of literature, which follows in Chapter 2, I examine early attempts to diagnose, categorise, and "cure" deviant behaviours; some psychological and sociological attempts to understand and address deviant behaviours; educational approaches to behaviour modification; and attempts by the various Australian states to address the needs of their at-risk young people. In the theoretical framework, presented in Chapter 3, I elucidate the choice of qualitative methods, a discussion of action research, and the choice of an action research model.

The field study is presented in Part 2 of the thesis. In Chapter 4 I have offered a grounded self-study to clarify personal position and demonstrate how my personal ideology and *modus operandi* were transformed through critical learning moments, texts, and mentors. This has been tied to the fieldwork, as the model under study is ultimately concerned with the potential for teaching-learning strategies to modify the *modus operandi* of troublesome students. The ideological underpinnings and educational theory underlying the model are presented in Chapter 5. A critical examination of the evolution of Strike Four policy documents, and an inquiry into how, and if, purported ideology underlies policy, is carried out in Chapter 6. Three pivotal Strike Four strategies are critically evaluated in Chapter 7. These are: using golden teaching moments to compound learning, employing curriculum as a tool to shape behaviour, and implementing positive contracting to empower students with behaviour self-management strategies. The end piece to the fieldwork has been included to fill in "gaps"

resulting from the use of selected case studies to illustrate points. In Chapter 8 findings and recommendations for future research are presented.

In this chapter I outline the historical context for the study through a review of related literature. I examine literature on crime and deviance and early attempts to "diagnose" behaviour disorders, ascertain causes of delinquency, and "cure" criminal mentalities. I then switch focus to the school context, and efforts to achieve modifications in students' modes of operating through school behaviour management policies and school rule-making. I also consider contemporary Australian policy and practice relating to students perceived to be educational at risk.

Literature on Crime and Deviance

All theory is grounded in its past and present contexts. It is based on past assumptions and on the beliefs of its time. In order to perceive the flaws in contemporary social, psychological, and educational theorising, it is necessary to examine the base from which much of this theorising sprung. Many contemporary theories on crime and deviance were seeded in Western religious ideology, literature, art, and mythology. This ideological base nourished what were often one-dimensional interpretations of social reality. These interpretations were at times objectified as fact, which in turn fed into current theory. Hence, for example, a religious base viewing human behaviours as a dichotomy of good and evil rather than a continuum of behaviours influenced many early interpretations of society, deviance, and good and bad students.

This dichotomising was often extended to male and female, where the male was associated with reason, whilst the female epitomised intuition and uncontrolled passion. In Judeo-Christian ideology this can be seen in unsophisticated interpretations of the Genesis myth

where Eve (symbolising woman) brings about the "fall" of Adam (man) or, as suggested by Brodribb this contributed to (1993, p. 17), "a religion of the sacred and the profane where male words are sacred and female flesh is profane". This worldview was extended into everything, where "theory is male and action is female" (Brodribb, 1993, p. xxv). This simplistic patriarchal standpoint linked "male" and "female" to "theory" and "action". This "masculinist repertoire of psychotic mind/body splitting" (Brodribb, 1993, p. xvi) was transposed to a ranking system for ways of knowing. Here "Plato answered the question of Being by awarding true reality to the realm of ideas; [suggesting] the sensible world possesses only the appearance of reality" (Brodribb, 1993, p. xvi). Or as stated by Ward (in Brodribb, 1993, p. xix), "if I had to name one quality as the genius of patriarchy, it would be the compartmentalization, the capacity for institutionalizing disconnection. Intellect severed from emotion. Thought separated from action. Science split from art". In this way "hard" science was constructed as pure and true, "soft" science as inferior and an "art".

This base, and the assumptions that underpin it, must be addressed in order to deconstruct the mythological base influencing much current sociological, educational, and psychological theory. Szasz (1974, p. 12) endorsed this notion regarding psychology and the classification of mental illness when he states that "this notion has outlived whatever usefulness it might have had and that it now functions merely as a convenient myth". He suggested that the reification of categories such as "mental illness", "as self-evident causes of a vast number of events", is on a par with explanatory conceptions such as deities and witches (p. 12). This approach also has relevance to modern sociological and educational theory, which are also grounded in simplistic religious dichotomies that result in labelling and exclusion, following primitive traditions of the witch-hunt, and burning at the stake of group members holding unacceptable social views. The classification, labelling and dichotomising of able/disabled, normal/hyperactive, well-behaved/troublesome, and gifted/retarded students led to off-site

service where schools are centres for inculcating the 3 Rs to able, well-behaved students, whilst excluding "bad", and "disabled" students. This view of education led us away from perceptions of schools as reflecting and servicing communities with all their inherent variations, to one endorsing dominant group hegemony at the expense of marginalised minority interests.

Physicians Early Attempts to Minimise Delinquency

Dr. Healy and his colleagues were some of the first practitioners to investigate and "treat" delinquency. They collated social, medical, and psychological data on 1,000 repeat offenders, asserting "that persistent delinquency could be traced to individual personality disorders" (Lundman, 1993, p. 28). This interpretation encouraged a medical treatment style solution as delinquency was seen as a medical rather than a social problem.

In the 1940s attempts were made to distinguish delinquent characteristics from those of the rest of the population. This was undertaken by the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). However, in 1947 Hathaway and Monachesi ran the MMPI test on 1,290 high school students to ascertain if it was a reliable predictor of delinquency. Four years later they checked up on the individuals and found "76.2 percent of the predictions would be inaccurate" (Lundman, 1993, p. 31).

In 1950 Sheldon and Glueck published a research monograph in an effort to discover "casual mechanisms of persistent delinquency" (Lundman, 1993, p. 33). They compared 500 juveniles in correctional facilities with residents in underprivileged inner-city neighbourhoods. An attempt was made to match the two groups in all respects. However, as stated by Lundman (1993, p. 37), "prediction of delinquency is a stubbornly elusive task".

Sociological Theories Explaining Crime and Deviance

Early sociological research on delinquency and criminal behaviour looked for commonalities, in the belief that discovering deviant behaviour was highly correlated with single-parent families, socioeconomic strata, family mobility or ethnic heterogeneity would mean that finding a "cure" was possible. As stated by Stoppleworth (1973, p. 6), "the traditional method of attempting to 'cure' or 'heal' emotional disturbance has been to diagnose the past cause, and then to treat the patient to help him get his inner dynamic tensions into adjustment". Analysis of key variables and attempts to measure the effect of these variables on crime and delinquency was the goal of most theorists. The result was a plethora of theories claiming to have isolated the key cause of criminal behaviours.

Social control theories focused on commitment to socially legitimate norms, attachment to conventional others (regarded as having a negative effect on crime), and socially accepted beliefs. These were regarded as measures of the individual's commitment to conform to the restraints of conventional society. "Hirschi argued that the first question is not why men break the law but why they obey it: Conformity, not deviance, is what is most in need of explanation" (Wilson, 1983, p. 3). Social control theory, first put forward by Hirschi in 1969, focused on the ability of individuals to sublimate impulsive action. This ability is measured in terms of attitude to people and things society purports deserve respect, such as teachers and parents, attitudes to school, academic achievement, educational and occupational aspirations, and attitude to criminal behaviours.

Social learning theories examined the individual's interaction with those who encourage deviant behaviours and beliefs, or model crime (Agnew, 1995). This was measured by examining association with criminal or delinquent peers, interaction with criminal models, and beliefs relating to criminal or deviant behaviours.

Strain theory, first developed by Merton in 1949, focused on the disjunction between expectations, aspirations, and achievable goals. Strain was measured in terms of aversive experiences with conventional others. Where social control theory suggested that high aspirations limit criminal behaviours, strain theory held that high aspirations might increase criminal activity if goals were unachievable. Merton purported that contemporary American culture prescribes the same goals for all social strata regardless of access to the means of attaining these gaols. Strain results due to limited access to these goals by certain groups, or social strata. This encourages the attainment of goals by illegitimate means where, "the technically most effective procedure, whether culturally legitimate or not, becomes typically preferred to institutionally prescribed conduct" (Merton, 1968, p. 189). Cohen (1966, p. 76) suggested that a number of other factors might contribute to strain, such as escalation of socially favoured goals, contraction of the legitimate ways to achieve culturally endorsed gaols, or socioeconomic changes that effect "the distribution of facilities and opportunities" resulting in an escalation of criminal or socially unacceptable behaviours.

Self-control theory asserted that the individual characteristic relevant to the commission of criminal acts is self-control. Individuals with poor self-restraint favour criminal activities as they provide immediate, easy or simple gratification of desires such as "money without work, sex without courtship and revenge without court delays" (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990, p. 89). Self-control theorists also suggested that crime requires little or no planning, has few long-term benefits and can result in pain or discomfort for the victim. From this they extrapolated that criminals tend to be "self-centered, indifferent or insensitive to the suffering and needs of others" (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990, p. 89). Self-control theory claimed that the early socialisation process needs to address the desire for immediate gratification and restraint - that self-control is taught and modelled. Self-control theory holds that little effect is achieved through the diverse social mechanisms at present in place (rehabilitation programs

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and incapacitation), other than removing the criminal from the social environment where the criminal activity occurred. Gottfredson and Hirschi claimed that "offenders normally change their behaviour in the late teens, regardless of what has happened to them" (pp. 263- 268). Gottfredson and Hirschi suggested that treatment need not derive from a theory of crime causation; they concluded attempting to teach self-control may be appropriate, though they have little faith in its effectiveness in older offenders. They suggested intervention begins around 13 to 14 years old, as crime rates peak around 20. They claimed that as crime can be predicted from behaviour in adolescence, or earlier, early intervention or incapacitation may be appropriate.

Social learning theory and social control theory on the other hand focused on the content and effectiveness of the socialisation process and the possibility of positive socialisation for deviance. As Cohen (1966, p. 109) suggested, in certain neighbourhoods "delinquency, responding to the illegitimate opportunity structure, takes on a flavor of apprenticeship for professional crime". This is supported by Berger and Luckman (1967, p. 149) who stated that the individual is not "born a member of society. He is born with a predisposition towards sociality, and he becomes a member of society". Through the primary socialisation process the individual is inducted into participation in the "societal dialectic" (Berger & Luckman, 1967, p. 149). Here the individual's significant others filter and feed him/her information on his/her cultural context. Berger and Luckman viewed the lack of choice in one's significant others, as adding power to the pivotal role of primary socialisation - these individuals define and interpret events and your world. Hence individuals socialised by criminal others, tend to adopt the ideology and worldview held by their primary socialisers.

Primary socialisation involves defining your world as "the world". Secondary socialisation was seen as "the internalization of institutional or institution-based 'sub-worlds' " (Berger & Luckman, 1967, p. 158). The individual is exposed to conflicting sub-worlds and the process

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of becoming one's own person begins. The teenage years may be seen as the climax of conflict between a matrix of sub-worlds - the world as defined by parents, teachers, grandparents, peer group, or the world of work. The teenager has to sort out the mosaic of conflicting ideologies, in the process of becoming their own person, and defining their own reality. If there is a vast discrepancy between a teenager's sub-worlds, strain results. This may manifest in questioning, challenging, or rebelling against taught social precepts.

In this way the macrosocial world impacts on the individual as the primary socialising forces (parents, family, neighbours, friends, and teachers) shape the individual's behaviours. Even if we assume a biological predisposition toward certain behaviours, the social overlay of reactions, responses, and pressures shapes the ultimate individual. Whilst this viewpoint can result in meaningful understandings and approaches for the society at large, or the primary socialisers, it can be employed as a disempowering philosophical base for the individual. Here the individual may excuse current behaviours, as they feel mere victims of their genetic make-up, and life history.

Berger and Luckman (1966, p. 89) stated that "the origins of any institutional order lie in the typification of one's own and others' performances". This implies that all social roles have intrinsic to them, a set of acceptable behaviours. Hence "by playing roles the individual participates in a social world" (Berger & Luckman, 1967, p. 91). As roles are typified, their conduct is susceptible to enforcement. Here compliance, and non-compliance, are sanctioned or endorsed with social rewards and punishments. Through social mechanisms such as laws, shunning, gossiping and exclusion, the individual's behaviours are shaped to fit the cultural context in which they live.

Merton (1968, p. 185) claimed that "the frequency of deviant behaviour varies within different social structures". A correlation may occur because law makers and journalists tend

to be from the middle class, and hence reflect middle class morality. However, a Mertonion dominant group hegemonic view reduces the relationship between social class, socialisation, and criminal activity to a simple formula:

low social class = poor socialisation = delinquent/criminal

As socialisation is the way we learn about behaving in the world and the way we learn skills to succeed in the world, an understanding of the role of socialisation is central to a Mertonion interpretation. However, family class, wealth and social status are not simple variables. The first generation may be plumbers, the second may be in business, and the third may go to university. The cycle happens just as frequently in reverse. Also primary socialisers may be affiliated with different social strata, or the primary carer may be a hired nanny with low social class. Hence, the style of socialisation taking place within the family may also cause strain, as there may be discrepancy in the socialisation of the various care-givers. When people from different classes, or ethnic groups, intermarry what type of socialisation takes place for their progeny? When one parent is in constant contact with the children, and the other is at work, which parent is determining the socialisation style? A simplistic formula seeking to tie social class to poor socialisation, resulting in delinquency and criminal behaviour fails to offer insight, as human relations are too complex to be reduced to a+b=c. One cannot state that in all/most cases:

an individual + strain = criminal
or
an individual + low socioeconomic group = delinquent

Many individuals harness strain for positive purposes, and some individuals can rise above poor socialisation. What qualifies as bad socialisation? Is it so easy to separate from "good" socialisation? As Agnew (1995) argued, association between the selected variables and crime does not provide support for any single theory, rather for all of the leading crime theories. It

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is reasonable to assume all these factors contribute to, but do not necessarily cause, criminal behaviour.

In a 1997 article, The Economist disputed commonly held beliefs about the relationship between low socioeconomic neighbourhoods and low achievement. "Moss Side Story: Inner-city schools" reported the findings of a study of two British schools servicing the same client base and "just a mile apart" (1997, p. 71), yet with vastly different results. The article argued that

> cases such as this, two neighbouring schools with the same intake but widely differing results, contradict the arguments of some pundits that poverty and class, not the quality of the school, are why some pupils do worse than others. (p. 71)

Claremont students did far better on national testing than Princess students, yet Princess school spent far more per student, and had smaller class sizes. Claremont is a school with old buildings, Princess has new buildings. The staff of both schools were found to be working hard, the significant difference was that Princess "was just not getting anywhere, mainly because it had no clear plans for what to teach, and made little attempt to monitor what, if anything, pupils were learning" (p. 71). Princess school appeared to spend a lot of energy in crisis management. Claremont on the other hand claimed to expend significant energy on designing appropriate curriculum and assuring that all students were serviced with suitable materials. The article cast doubt on the notion that merely "throwing" more money at schools in low socioeconomic areas and reducing class sizes will, of themselves, result in improved student outcomes. It also disputed the notion that young people from poor neighbourhoods fail to learn because of poverty or class ideology.

Social research often stimulates questions rather than answers. What does discovering that there is a higher rate of measurable crime in lower socioeconomic groups mean? Does it explain that in a single family one child out of five chose crime over conformity? Can we

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now predict who will choose criminal careers? If we offer the lower socioeconomic classes more money or higher social status will there be less crime? Whilst these theories may reveal social pressures associated with deviant behaviours, they fail to explain why many individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds are law abiding citizens, or why one family member from the middle class chose a criminal career, or why many criminals are from the upper socioeconomic strata. If the solution to limiting criminal behaviour was that simple, "throwing" money at lower socioeconomic groups would offer immediate rewards.

Theories Suggesting Crime is "Normal"

In Durkheim's (1964, p. 55) early attempt to come to terms with normal and pathological behaviours he defined normal as "these social conditions that are most generally distributed, and others 'morbid' or 'pathological'". Durkheim (p. 55) saw crime as "normal because a society exempt from it is utterly impossible". He defined crime as "an act that offends very strong collective sentiments" (p. 55). Durkheim suggested that definitions of criminal behaviours are relative to cultural contexts and time, and that crime is necessary for the evolution of morality and law as "nothing is good indefinitely and to an unlimited extent" (p. 71).

Durkheim suggested crime can be viewed as a positive vehicle for social change; it cannot and should not be eliminated - it reflects a flexibility in the social system that allows evolution and development. Cohen (1966, p. 6) endorsed this view to some extent when he stated "deviance may, in some circumstances, make positive contributions to the success and vitality of social systems". He suggested that normative rules that define deviant behaviour grow out of the collective wisdom and experience of the group offering solutions to typical, recurrent problems. Cohen (p. 10) claimed that the deviant "may also function as a signal light or warning, inviting attention to defects of organization". He suggested that the deviant may actually be rendering a service to the conformists who are "subject to the same strains but

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prefer to suffer them than violate the rules" (p. 10). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) are highly critical of this view. They stated that this view "valorized villains and outsiders as heroes to mainstream society" (p. 9). Even if one accepts that the Durkheimian notion romanticised the deviant and transformed him/her into a social hero, the social value of challenging existing laws and rules to meet the needs of shifting cultural contexts is apparent.

Dykehouse (1997, p. 1) suggested that even "'law abiding' persons are able to commit crimes by rationalizing and justifying their actions". He claimed that law and rule breaking is commonplace, that the "reality is that 'all' people have committed a crime and 'most' still commit crimes" (p. 2). Dykehouse disputed the stereotype of "the criminal as a misfit in society ... usually a young minority male or member of a radical group. Always locked up or should be locked up" (p. 2). Instead, like Durkheim, he suggested that criminal behaviour is so common, one really can not call it anomalous. Dykehouse (p. 3) advocated that criminality is more a matter of degrees with "certain personalities being honest most of the time and others being dishonest most of the time". He argued that "obedience of the rule varies in degree with fewer people disobeying the more extreme the act of disobedience becomes" (p. 4).

Dykehouse suggested people choose which laws/rules to obey. The law/rule breaker may ask themselves "Is it a fair or just rule?", "Does it make sense?", "What is the chance of being caught?", "Is this going to hurt others", "Is this going to hurt others significantly?", or "Is the punishment significant?". If we are to devise functional rules for schools that most students will choose to obey, and if we accept Dykehouse's assertion that rule and law breaking is commonplace, then it becomes necessary to consider what makes us choose to follow or break rules and laws.

Stoppleworth endorsed the notion of deviance and rule breaking as normal. He suggested a continuum where some of us choose to violate rules occasionally, and others choose to do this frequently. Stoppleworth (1973, p. 7) purported that if this

> view is accepted that the exceptional child's behaviour, be it social or academic, is only quantitatively different from that of the normal child rather than qualitatively so, then it stands to reason that with some extra help, many classroom teachers could adequately manage the instruction of many of these children.

This view approaches human behaviours as continua, rather than dichotomies of good and bad, normal and abnormal. Here most children exhibit problematic behaviours at some time and to some degree, problem behaviour children merely exhibit these behaviours more frequently and in less appropriate situations. The emphasis is shifted from diagnosis and classification to "How can we service these young people with education in inclusive environments?".

Theories Addressing Crime and Delinquency

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, p. 15) defined crime as "acts of force or fraud undertaken in pursuit of self-interest". They stressed that most criminal acts are trivial and result in little loss or gain. They suggested society's view of crime is distorted by the media where the focus is on the bizarre, and that most crimes are trivial, do not achieve the offender's goal, and are ill prepared. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, p. 125) stated that 15 to 17 year olds have the highest arrest rates. They proposed that most crime theories "concentrate on the adolescent and late teen years, when the crime rate is at or approaching its maximum level" (p. 130). This seems to support the need to offer intervention programs in early to mid-teens.

Wilson and Herrnstein (1985, p. 19) claimed that "the persons who frequently commit the most serious crimes typically begin their criminal careers at quite a young age". They stated that the majority of young males admit to having broken the law at least once at a young age.

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This point is reiterated by Maginnis (1996). He purported "that delinquency starts early. Ten percent of the 7-year-old boys surveyed reported having committed at least one street offence. By age 9, the figure was 20 percent and by 17 years of age, 40 percent of the boys had committed at least one crime" (p. 2). Maginnis (p. 1) quoted FBI Director, Louis Freeh, stating that "the number of juveniles arrested for weapons offences has more than doubled over the past decade". He claimed that as the average child "watches 100,000 acts of television violence and witnesses 8,000 murders before the end of elementary school" (p. 3), that watching this much violence must have an effect.

Miethe and Meiner (1994) took a more holistic approach, seeking solutions based on offenders, victims, and social context. In this way, they attempted to develop strategies to limit criminal activity. Their concern was with causation and "cure". They suggested multiple reasons for choice of criminal careers, such as the strain of acquiring high aspirations that can not be fulfilled in the marketplace, a penal system that facilitates the opportunity to learn from established criminals, and a repressive political system that disempowers lower socioeconomic groups, and provides incentives for the wealthy - thus amalgamating social control, learning, and strain theories. They suggested context is also an integral part of crime.

The relationship between cultural context and adolescent development is also dealt with in "The Effects of Neighborhood Disadvantage on Adolescent Development" by Elliott, Wilson, Huizinga, Sampson, Elliott and Rankin (1996). They found that the effects of ecological disadvantage are mediated by organisational and cultural features of the neighbourhood. The study questions the validity of employing official police, school, health, and welfare agency records for research, as they reflect agency bias. They stated that the few studies that have attempted to estimate effects of poverty on developmental behaviour have found "weak neighborhood effects" (p. 390). Their primary interest lay in how youth grow up in high-risk environments, overcome adversity, and "complete a successful course of

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adolescent development in spite of social and economic adversity that characterizes these

neighborhoods" (p. 391). They claimed that the majority of these young people manage to

make the transition into productive, responsible adult roles. The question then becomes

what aspects of the socioeconomic environment inhibit this transition, and which aspects

mitigate the negatives. The study suggested that work opportunities and income from

illegitimate pursuits competes more directly with legitimate means in disadvantaged

neighbourhoods where "the illicit economy may be one of the few viable sources of work and

income" (p. 394). The study suggested gangs and organised crime often provide networks

replacing socially endorsed alternatives.

Ferrara (1992), on the other hand, saw juvenile delinquency as defined in terms of lifestyle.

He suggested that

> if the youth's life-style is based upon consistently meeting one's needs in such
> a way that it deprives others of the ability to meet their needs, then the youth
> is a delinquent. Not all youth who commit a delinquent act are delinquents.
> Only those who base their life-style upon delinquent acts and act delinquent
> consistently in a variety of situations over a period of time are called juvenile
> delinquents. (p. 14)

Ferrara proposed a continuum of delinquency from mild to severe. He employed the "limit

and lead" (p. 12) approach for behaviour modification. Whilst he suggested it is useful to

categorise individuals in order to "prescribe treatment", he also insisted it is more important

"to avoid categorizing youth" (p. 15). This approach appears contradictory. Ferrara

suggested that delinquent youth manifest characteristics and patterns of behaviour not found

in other young people, and hence need specific styles of behaviour modification. He saw the

delinquent characteristics that help them exploit others as destructive, and the lack of

prosocial skills and behaviours, as weakness. Considering the lack of prosocial skills in many

successful adults, and the positive uses of exploitive behaviours in achieving legitimate goals,

these two criteria do not appear useful in separating delinquents from non-delinquents. Many

highly successful individuals would be classified as both lacking prosocial skills, and engaging in exploitive behaviours. As these criteria alone do not make an individual a juvenile delinquent, this forms a poor base for deriving strategies to service this target group.

Most theorists appear to support the notion of early intervention. Most believe criminal activity to be most prevalent among teenagers. Most suggest the need to address poor self-control and socialisation of regular perpetrators of crime. Here the school can play a role. Rather than ignoring the criminal activities of teenagers, these issues can be integrated into school curricula, and young people can be encouraged to develop positive, proactive strategies for addressing peer group pressure and crime.

Literature on Education

In the 1970s Toffler (1977, p. 360) stated that "what passes for education today, even in our 'best' schools and colleges, is a hopeless anachronism". He suggested that mass education was "the ingenious machine constructed by industrialism to produce the kind of adults it needed" (p. 361). Toffler saw the industrial age workplace as a highly regulated world of work, punctuated by factory whistles, and divided into neat, inflexible packages by the clock - a world requiring discipline, regulation and repetitive indoor activity. Appropriate socialisation for this work world was seen to be the responsibility of the school. Here the school's job was seen to be "assembling masses of students (raw material) to be processed by teachers (workers) in a centrally located school (factory)" (p. 362) to provide a trained and happy work force pleased to serve its new master - mass production.

Toffler saw this as a tragic "hijacking" of children's lives, to serve the purposes of a soon to be out-moded production system. According to Toffler (p. 370) it meant that "tens of millions of children today are forced by law to spend precious hours of their lives grinding

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away at material whose future utility is highly questionable". Toffler believed that education must address future needs, that schools will continue to turn out "industrial men until we teach young people the skills to identify and clarify, if not reconcile, conflicts in their own value systems" (p. 378). Toffler was already promoting the need for curriculum to contain data-oriented courses, future-relevant behavioural skills, and life know-how. He felt that the old subjects had out-lived their usefulness, and the whole education system needed reconstruction.

Young (1989, p. 2) also proposed education today is in crisis. He stated

> whether we take the original Greek meaning of the word [crisis] - as a moral dispute that has developed to the stage where it demands decisive resolution - or the classical, medical meaning - of a stage in the evolution of a disease where the fate of the patient hangs in the balance - or the more contemporary notion of a state of conflict and disturbance of some part of our normal functioning that is decisive for its continuity or change - the term of crisis is the only one that is apt.

Stoll and Fink (1996) spoke of the crisis in education when looking at contemporary British education. They stated "many of our schools are good schools 'if this were 1965'" (p. 1). They suggested that schools suffer from the same malaise as other late twentieth century institutions - departmentalisation and bureaucratisation. This has led to a school system that is "stable, predictable and comfortable for most children" (Stoll & Fink, 1996, p. 2), but unable to ask the necessary questions and make the vital decisions needed to become a dynamic force servicing the needs of its vast client-base. Stoll and Fink encouraged a total reassessment of the current school environment - times, teaching-learning strategies, holidays and goals. Like Toffler they saw the need for a total rethink of current assumptions, and an agenda driven by student needs and future social requirements, rather than by past models. Stoll and Fink suggested that the structure has come to dictate the teaching, rather than the other way around, that as "educators, we are in the business of pupil learning" (p. 129) - this should be the armature, the framework, on which the learning environment is built.

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Stoll and Fink expressed concern regarding attitudes to change. They stated that a "high proportion of school effectiveness efforts have collapsed because of resistance to change" (p. 61). This is largely due to band-aid approaches to change, or "if you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you always got" (p. 118). Stoll and Fink stressed the need for personal management skills such as positive attitudes, responsibility, adaptability, critical thinking, problem solving, using technology, and communicating effectively. Like Toffler, Stoll and Fink expressed concern regarding the preoccupation with modifying an existing anachronism, rather than "starting from scratch" with the students needs, and building an education system to empower young people with the skills to make better futures. They suggested that rather than trying to make French or Social Studies relevant, we should be asking, "Should we be teaching these subjects?", "What do these young people really need to know to be able to contribute to the future?", or "Do young people learn better in a happy friendly environment, or a power-structured discipline-oriented environment?".

School Rules and Behaviour Management

Schostak and Logan (1984, p. 99) suggested that rules "are required by teachers to enable them to exercise authority over young persons, the kind of authority they would be denied outside of school". They stated that as rules are open to interpretation inconsistencies arise. Schostak and Logan saw schools as "rule-governed organisations", and disruptive students as those that refuse to "passively acquiesce to rule-domination and thus challenge the rule-base on which teacher's authority stands" (p. 100). These young people often claim to be victims of the "scapegoat syndrome", suggesting rules are differentially applied. Schostak and Logan suggested it is the uneven distribution of power in school environments that creates unnecessary tensions. They concluded that "the relatively powerless must be taught to become institutionally literate" (p. 233) before anything but surface negotiation can take place in the school environment.

In 'You Know the Fair Rule' (Rogers, 1990), Rogers stressed the need for "fair restriction" (p. 11), stating that whilst discipline is necessary to assure the security and protection of class members and the smooth running of the class, "discipline is not merely an end in itself" (p. 12). Rogers supported discipline when appropriate and necessary. He claimed that "the teacher who believes that embarrassing students in front of their peers is okay, will act very differently from the teacher who believes in giving students their due rights, especially their due right to respectful treatment" (p. 13).

Young people in the school system today have grown up knowing that they have rights. Yet schools continue to operate on past expectations and social structures, where teachers are imbued with the power to enforce irrelevant rules, demand unearned respect, and enforce punishment without opportunity for student self-defence. Roger's approach is, if the rule is seen to be fair, has a function perceived to be significant, relates to the task at hand, and has some ownership by all members of the school community, it is less difficult to enforce and will create less resentment.

Rigby, in tackling the issue of school bullying, suggested that the best place to begin is with a well designed strategy and clearly delineated school policy, where the attitude and enforcement by the school is unambiguous, clearly stated, and consistently enforced. He proposed that the policy is more likely to receive general acceptance if it is inclusive of all members of the school community. This means that peer bullying is inappropriate, bullying of teachers is inappropriate, and teacher bullying of pupils is also unacceptable (Rigby, 1996, p. 132). This strategy eliminates the "them and us" mentality, encouraging a "we're in this together" approach. Students are less likely to feel that rules and laws are there to make only their lives more difficult, and so are more likely to feel some ownership of the rules and comply and respect them.

Rigby (1996, p. 15) also mentioned how some schools, when asked what they do about bullying, claim "the 'mechanics' are in place - in case they are needed: 'time-out suspension, exclusion, expulsion' - No worries". Rigby suggested this approach needs to be accompanied by a variety of strategies in order to be effective in combating school bullying, as exclusion alone does not change the young bully's *modus operandi.* Unless exclusion is accompanied by the development of behaviour self-management strategies the young person is likely to continue to exhibit the anti-social behaviour after the exclusion period.

Wolfgang and Glickman (1986) claimed "most experts try to force-feed their approach as the 'right' one, and in so doing, they degrade both teachers and others who espouse different approaches" (p. 7). They suggested that the formula type "how to" approach is inappropriate to the profession. Teachers are not technicians, "the technician need not speculate about consequences before acting; he or she simply needs to act" (p. 6). Wolfgang and Glickman suggested teaching requires operating as a professional "one who gathers information about a problem, has a knowledge base of possible alternative strategies, is aware of the consequences of employing each strategy, and then chooses the strategy that is most logically appropriate" (p. 6). Wolfgang and Glickman recommended empowering teachers with a "tool bag" of strategies that can be used selectively for the appropriate situation.

Like Wolfgang and Glickman, Olson and Platt (1996) were against the simplistic implementation of single learned strategies employed in isolation. They suggested that when dealing with students with special needs it is important for educators "to demonstrate a myriad of strategies as they attempt to individualize instruction" (p. 9). Through a discussion of strategies, such as the reductionist model - which views "the teacher's role as one of providing opportunities for systematic instruction, practice, feedback and active student involvement in learning" - and the social constructivist model - where "the teacher's role is more like that of a facilitator as students assume responsibility for their own learning" - Olson

and Platt (p. 9) suggested that a combination of strategies is most effective for shaping instruction to suit student needs.

In "Judicious behaviour management" (1996) Cope and Stewart, following Gathercole (1991), recommended that school behaviour management policies should be grounded in the local legal system. They suggested a student-centred approach including "democratic principles, ethics, rights and responsibilities of all school personnel, individual freedom, self discipline and lawful dealings" (p. 155). Cope and Stewart stated that "using the law as the main basis for a behaviour management model means that rather than just a particular philosophical stance, there is a firm, legally reasoned starting point for how behaviour is managed in schools and classrooms" (p. 155). Employing this model means that learning the schools rules is preparation for adult life. The model is more likely to be acceptable to the young people as it mirrors the wider society's laws.

Hooks (1994, p. 12) suggested that we need to "open our minds and hearts so that we can know beyond the boundaries of what is acceptable, so that we can think and rethink, so that we can create new visions". Behaviour management models for the twenty-first century need to review anachronistic practices that permeate our schools, and come up with strategies and practices that reflect contemporary thinking and the world external to school.

Encouraging Behaviour Change in School Students

Kirsch and Hart (1997) offered a common sense perspective when looking at school disobedience and antisocial behaviours. They suggested

> one man's hyperactivity is another man's exuberance. What is impulsive to one person can be spontaneous to another. Inattentiveness can seem the normal and natural reaction to certain circumstances to one person, and inappropriate to someone in similar circumstances. (p. 2)

Kirsch and Hart suggested that labels are relative. They asked when is exuberance read as hyperactivity? Can hyperactivity be focused and then read as exuberance? Kirsch and Hart stated that it is "important to keep in mind that psychiatric diagnoses tend to reflect social concerns as well as hard science" (p. 2). They implied that labelling and negative reinforcement make aiming at legitimate goals difficult.

Stoppleworth (1973, p. 6) stated that "the label alone is cause enough for disturbed social interactions", or when citing a study by Mercer

> that the way a child is identified, labelled, grouped and routed into a career as a deviant has not so much to do with any measurable 'internal' characteristics of the individual as it has to do with 'external' socio-cultural biases which impinge upon the judgement of those professionals doing the identifying and the labelling. (p. 6)

Or as Rogers (1990, p. 175) purported, "labels are great for jars, not so helpful for people".

Kirsch and Hart (1997, p. 2) suggested that "learned behaviours can be unlearned". They claimed that ADD and ADHD individuals have made "a full and complete recovery" (p. 1). They claimed that "when you take charge of understanding the disorder, you become an important part of the solution", and that "ineffective behavior that is consistently impacting on your everyday life needs to be dealt with and eliminated" (p. 2).

When addressing the problem of young people labelled ADD in the Australian school system, Murphy (1989, p. 49) referring to Hocking, stated that these students manifest "a wide variety of traits from absenteeism, withdrawal or talkativeness to having 'criminal tendencies'.... [She stated] that the one thing these students have in common is their ability to cause teachers to spend a disproportionate amount of time interacting (usually unsuccessfully) with them". Murphy put forward a variety of strategies to address these behaviours including development of "positive, planned, preventative and educative approaches [which] could be more effective than punishment and ad-hoc, crisis-driven reactions" (p. 53). Whilst this

approach recognises the ineffectiveness of withdrawal and suspension to behaviour modification, it assumes that becoming "familiar with a range of approaches to managing student behaviour" (Murphy, 1989, p. 53) will alter the reactive response of teachers. If modifying one's *modus operandi* was this simple, creating effective teachers would merely require teaching and modelling appropriate strategies. Also it is the students who need to be taught strategies to manage their behaviours, not just the teachers. As these young people leave the school environment to enter the adult world they need the skills to self-manage their behaviours and activity levels.

In Can we Teach Children to be Good? Straughan (1982) addressed the increasing pressure on teachers to be more than mere inculcators of knowledge. He stated that teachers are expected to "teach children not only to be knowledgeable, but also to be good" (p. 1). This approach, he suggested, implies "that there is an agreed set of answers to all moral questions, and that it is the duty of teachers to ensure that children learn these answers and behave accordingly" (p. 5). Straughan recommended a more appropriate approach would invite students to grapple with the moral problems themselves, and so gain a greater understanding of the issues (p. 6). He stressed the danger of misreading the meaning of teaching children to be good as "teaching them to do as they are told; obedience to authority is strictly irrelevant to the business of making moral decisions" (p. 6). Straughan made the point that "not all forms of teaching and learning ... lead to the required pattern of behaviour" (p. 9). Endorsing Straughan's view, I believe we need to teach young people how to think, and how to resolve moral dilemmas, not what to think. As Straughan (1982, p. 105) stated, "morally educating a child cannot be as mechanical a process as house-training a puppy". Obedience to taught precepts does not assure moral behaviour, where modelling appropriate behaviours and strategy development for ethical decision making may help augment idiosyncratic ethical codes.

Anning (1993) suggested that as children generally make the transition from preconventional to conventional levels of moral reasoning between 10 and 13

> some assessment of the level of a child's moral reasoning should be made by age 13 years and those children still functioning at a preconventional level should be assisted through exposure and discussion of moral dilemmas to move on a conventional level of moral reasoning. (p. 47)

Anning remarked that all young people diagnosed "conduct disordered", or on behaviour programs, should be exposed to ethical enhancement strategies. Many of these young people fail to function successfully in mainstream schools, not because of low levels of literacy or numeracy, but as a result of poor anger management strategies, socially unacceptable ethical codes, making a choice to "read" as ineffective learners, or possessing a poor work ethic.

In The Risks of Knowing (1991), Zelan addressed the tendency in some young people to choose the path or label of "learning disabled". She suggested that for some individuals it becomes apparent that goals are more easily achieved through feigning an inability to learn, than through attempting to succeed and please significant adults. She suggested that we often make the mistake of assuming that children are incapable of making their own decisions, including decisions about learning. She claims some young people reject the role of "learner" and we endorse this choice by labelling them "incapable" or "disabled". In this way "we not only protect them by implying they are not to blame for the fact that they do not learn, but we also deny them the responsibility for their decisions" (Zelan, 1991, p. 7). The way a child's significant adults respond to various behaviours either endorses the child's social experiments, or discourages them. Zelan (p. 8) found that

> a closer look at these young people who do not learn reveals there are two types of nonlearners. Children either *cannot* learn because of a real physical deficit or children *choose* not to learn because learning activates something in them they wish to avoid.

Zelen claimed that reasons for choosing not to learn are individual rather than common, and need to be dealt with on an individual basis. In order to help the child she believes we need to understand "why a charade of stupidity serves the child" (p. 9). She claimed that labelling also endorses the child's choice and alleviates the need to devise a solution as the label itself takes the role of a reason for the behaviour. In this way the labelling process allocates blame and alleviates the need to find a way around the problem.

Zelan (p. 300) implied that most teachers perceive failure to learn as irreversible, hence a solution is not required or sought. Through counselling Zelan found that as these young people experience some learning success, and so challenged the label of "learning disabled", they can in fact create a new reality that questions the myth endorsed through the labelling process. Zelan suggested labelling is often perceived as a way of explaining why you cannot do something, it does not offer or invite solutions like "How can I do this even though ...?". The disempowering capacity of the labelling process is also apparent with youth classified "conduct disordered" and "behaviour disordered". The label itself becomes an excuse for the behaviour, rather than a point from which to derive solutions.

In "What Shall We Do With the Naughty Children?", Thewlis (1996) addressed the issue of young people excluded from mainstream due to problem behaviours. Thewlis cited the example of the

> 'Nottingham One' - 13 year old Richard Wilding, who having had an appeal against his exclusion upheld, wanted to go back to school. His teachers didn't want him to, and threatened to strike if he returned. It was a story heaven-sent, encapsulating as it did so many of the current concerns about disruptive pupils - the pupil's right under law to an education; the teachers' right to be able to work without the disturbance and distraction such pupils create; the role of the parents - and at the centre a little boy in spruce uniform who looked as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. (p. 77)

As Thewlis stated "Richard was just one of the rising number of permanent exclusions from school and versions of his story are commonplace" (p. 77). Thewlis cited the Department of

Education figures for exclusions for 1993- 4 stood at 11,181 of which 1,291 were primary aged pupils. Thewlis attributed the increase in school exclusions to the competitive educational marketplace forced onto schools by the Conservative Government. This she suggested has "put a premium on published examination results, attendance figures etc. which means many schools have a vested interest in shedding pupils who are going to interfere with their ratings" (p. 77). She stressed that the number of "informal exclusions, the quiet removal of non-attenders form (sic) school rolls, has mushroomed" (p. 77). Thewlis attributed this increase to the reduction in pastoral care positions and on-site sanctuary units. She stated that where schools do have a budget to deal with students with special needs the demands far outweigh the resources "that even the best intentioned school has at its disposal" (p. 77).

Thewlis (p. 78) observed that young people excluded from the mainstream and serviced in Pupil Referral Units "may only receive two hours tuition per week". She stated that many Pupil Referral Units are not well prepared to offer National Curriculum, which makes re-integration into mainstream difficult. She suggested that where some students have been excluded for serious issues, "most [are excluded] for the drip, drip, drip of disruptive and unacceptable behaviour which finally wears down staff to the point that it becomes intolerable" (p. 78). Thewlis insisted that off-site units "should not be seen as 'sin bins' and dumping grounds but as part of a continuum of provision for pupils with problems working closely with mainstream schools" (p. 78). Finally she recommended a move toward augmenting current teacher training in this area, and inter-agency initiatives to address the issue. She purported that "the sign of a civilised and caring society is how it behaves towards its most needy citizens and by failing to provide adequately for disturbed and disaffected pupils we are failing society" (p. 78).

In "Critical Students: breakthroughs in learning" Woods (1994, p. 123) criticised the United Kingdom's National Curriculum for "its fixation with measurable outcomes and its large

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measure of prescription" (p. 125). This assertion is reiterated by Bryce (1989, p. 7) in regard to Australia when examining how "schools can contribute to child and youth homelessness". Bryce (p. 7) saw "irrelevant curricula; poor teacher/student relationships; inflexible and alienating institutional structures; and rejection or neglect of underachievers and more directly suspension and expulsion of difficult students" as a major contribution to the alienation of students.

Servicing Disaffected Students with Education: Australian policy and practice
The 1996 National Conference on the Behaviour Management and Behaviour Change of Children and Youth with Emotional and/or Behaviour Problems (In Izard & Evans, 1996) clarified recent shifts in policy regarding disaffected youth. Each state presented a system report on current policy and initiatives for at-risk youth.

In her paper "Behaviour Management - South Australia", Harvey (1996) outlined the concerted effort by South Australia to address the diverse needs of students with challenging behaviours. She stated the "policy provides a framework for the development of safe, inclusive [environments], conducive to learning and free from harassment and bullying". She recognised a service gap exists: "whilst the majority of children and adolescents receive timely and appropriate service there is a small group of young people whose behaviour is so difficult and extreme that current interagency responses do not provide an optimal service" (Harvey, 1996, p. 13).

In their paper on the Beafield Education Centre in South Australia Raha-Lambert and Walker (1996) described the centre as "a multi-campus facility located in the north-east region of metropolitan Adelaide. The facility caters for 62 students and services 194 schools with a student population of 62,000" (p. 180). The centre mainly services students excluded from their home schools for 10- 20 weeks. The centre's strategies operate on the notion that

"there is little evidence for long term gains on behavioural outcomes by remediation of learning difficulties alone" (p. 182). Hence the centre's practice challenges "traditional views and practices of separating the learning and behavioural domains of students" (p. 182). The centre identified a need to provide students with curriculum parallels with their home school. As the young people are to be integrated back into mainstream, this prevents students missing segments of schooling during the withdrawal process.

In "Overview of behaviour management across the government school system in Western Australia", (1996) Glew stated that the Education Department of Western Australia "has developed a new draft policy and procedures document for use by schools in the management of school behaviour" (p. 25). The document entitled Behaviour Management in Schools, (Version 8) provided a framework and procedural directives for schools' policy development. Glew suggested the need for the document was stimulated by school community concerns regarding strategies for dealing with troublesome students. These concerns included: "the lack of educational provision during extended periods of suspension" (p. 16) and "the effectiveness of suspension for extended periods as a behaviour management strategy" (p. 26). The Discipline of Troublesome Students Reference Group report stimulated a response to this issue - "a key feature of the trial will be the provision of an educational 'program' for students suspended from a trial school" (p. 27). Glew explained that the aim of the new policy is "to seek alternative solutions to offending behaviour that are more timely, meaningful and effective" (p. 29). Glew stressed there is currently a strong move toward inter-agency solutions to at-risk student issues in Western Australia.

In her paper, "Victorian Department of Education: Children and youth with emotional and behavioural problems" (1996), Murphy indicated a shift to "increased flexibility ... to implement appropriate programs which will address the specific needs of students in the local community" (p. 69). She stated that "if a student is expelled, the principal is required to

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ensure that the student's educational opportunities are protected" (p. 71). Murphy recommended "early intervention is necessary to both avoid the consequences of the disruptive behaviour and deal with the underlying issues" (p. 84). She also emphasised that this approach will require inter-agency involvement.

Berengarra is an interesting, independent Victorian school. The staff see the school as a "loop out of mainstream" (Lewis & Candy, 1993, p. 247), as its goal is to return students to mainstream education after addressing their disruptive behaviours. School staff see their role as challenging student conceptions of school as a hostile environment by offering bizarre, intriguing experiences to rekindle a desire to learn and return to mainstream. The school employs some radical strategies such as "students found out of bounds have their feet painted green" (Lewis & Candy, 1993, p. 247). Lewis and Candy suggested that these young people have the system worked out - they know the routine and they know how to get suspended or expelled. By challenging their preconceptions they are made to rethink their behaviours and re-examine strategies employed.

Taylor's paper entitled "Behaviour management in the Tasmanian Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development" deals with new policy documents influencing the education of "students whose behaviour is unacceptable" (1996, p. 3). Taylor recommended early intervention, parental participation, a whole school approach, a supportive school environment, professional development and training programs, school support services and withdrawal units. Taylor recognised that "there is still sometimes a need to provide withdrawal facilities for students with very challenging behaviours" (p. 8). Taylor also stressed the need for "interagency coordination and liaison ... to ensure more efficient and effective use of resources to support students" (p. 9).

In "Northern Territory approaches to students at risk and behaviour management programs" Healey stressed the need to avoid the "'dumping ground' syndrome that has proved to be so spectacularly unsuccessful in the past" (p. 40). Healy stated that "the Northern Territory STAR [Student At-Risk] Centre operates under very strict constraints" (p. 40). Students only attend the centre four days a week. On Fridays they must attend their home school "in order to practice what they have learned during the week" (p. 40). Parent training is a mandatory component of placement at a STAR centre - "Parents must attend one session per week" (p. 40). Healey claimed "all significant players, including the students, are fully involved in placement procedures, programming, goal-setting, reviewing and assessing the duration of the placement" (p. 41).

Blue purported, in "Overview of student management programs in the Australian Capital Territory" (1996) that students in off-site facilities may attend only for prescribed terms (in primary school) or must attend a mainstream school at least one day a week (in high school) (p. 66). She stressed early intervention is preferable as "students under the age seven years have a 78 percent expectation of behaviour change compared with older students where the rate of potential behaviour change drops significantly to below 25 percent" (p. 66). She also emphasised the importance placed on preservice and inservice teacher training programs (p. 67).

Davidson, in her paper "New South Wales Department of School Education: System support for behaviour management in New South Wales government schools" (1996), stated that "no student is discriminated against, on the basis of his or her disability, sex, race, marital status, sexual preference or age" (p. 57). How is discrimination on behaviour issues appropriate within a modern context and how can this issue be addressed by schools? It is apparent that the rights of disruptive students are restricted as a result of their limiting the rights of others to a full and appropriate education. However we must still assure that young people with

troublesome disruptive and threatening behaviours are able to achieve a full and appropriate education? According to Davidson, in New South Wales these young people are serviced with education in "Conduct disorder units" (p. 60). These units tend to be off school sites and focus on "vocational and living skills preparation" (p. 60).

According to Richmond, Macqueen and Muirhead (1996) Queensland's approach to the education of troublesome students differs from the other Australian states. In "Queensland Department of Education: System support for behaviour management" they stated that under the Government's behaviour management initiative principals now have the "authority to suspend students for up to 30 days", and "to cancel the enrolment of persistently disruptive students of post-compulsory age". Here troublesome students are still missing blocks of their education, or are being deprived of their right to a full and appropriate education. The Queensland initiative also supports inter-agency involvement and early intervention.

Constable and Burton (1993) also recommended early intervention when discussing at-risk youth. They identified a need to switch the emphasis from "secondary prevention (tackling the problem at the time it happens)", to "primary prevention (tackling the problem before it occurs)" (p. 16). They suggested that "while lip service is paid to prevention, most programs tend to concentrate on rehabilitation of the individual already involved in criminal activities" (p. 16). They suggested it is in the interest of the community to address this issue prior to "the difficult and expensive rehabilitation stage" (p. 16). When citing Trapper, Constable and Burton (p. 16) stated, that in Western Australia, in "the last decade, reports of vehicle and breaking and entering offences have tripled". They stated, quoting Broadhurst, et al., that "in 1991 9,755 children appeared before the Children's Court or Panel. The number of offences brought to the Court was 39,848. A quarter of the offenders were 14 years old or less" (p.

16). This demonstrates the need to address the issue of disaffected youth as early as possible, before they become clients of the justice system.

A variety of attempts to service disaffected students are currently being implemented in Australia. Most see exclusion of students from the teaching-learning environment as a last resort. Most recognise that behavioural issues must take precedence over 3 Rs instruction. Most demonstrate flexible client-centred approaches to teaching and behaviour management. Most stress inter-agency cooperation is essential as disaffected students tend to have inter-agency involvement in their issues.

Summative Reflection

Over the past 100 years there have been numerous attempts to understand and address the issue of troublesome behaviours. Theorists have attempted to generalise causation, classify and exclude, or "cure" non-compliant individuals. The rigid dichotomising of early explanations of problem behaviours and physical, mental or psychological anomaly, resulted in a segregated educational service, where many individuals were denied full access to social benefits. The tendency to dichotomise, rather than view difference as continua resulted in the labelling and exclusion of groups of individuals.

Some theorists have suggested crime is linked to low socio-economic group or social stress, whilst others have claimed crime is normal and common. Some theorists assert that crime is a dynamic preventing social stagnation. There appears to be some agreement that crime is fairly typical, and that it is the frequency and intensity of these actions that results in labelling and exclusion. If crime is normal, troublesome behaviours are something all of us exhibit some of the time. From this perspective the educational problem becomes how to provide a full and appropriate educational service to young people who exhibit troublesome behaviours

with greater frequency, intensity or at socially inappropriate times, rather than how to label and exclude these individuals from mainstream classes and schools.

Sociologists have suggested solutions to troublesome behaviours through the differential treatment of social groups. Psychologists have tended to address the issue on an individual basis. Whilst sociological and psychological theories suggest a variety of variables contribute to the likelihood of, but not necessarily cause, criminal behaviour, the association between the variables has failed provide support for any single theory. However, there appears to be a general consensus that crime is most prevalent in teenagers, and that the earlier the intervention the better.

Educational researchers, schools and school systems have suggested or applied a plethora of strategies to reduce the number of troublesome students. Some educational theorists support a major rethink of educational policy, in particular its goals, behaviour management policies, and its grounding in past practices. Many theorists recognise that school behaviour management policies have often failed to keep pace with the recognition of the rights of the individual, including the child, and democratic principles. There is a demonstrated need to address these issues when designing future school behaviour management policies.

All states in Australia recognise the need to devise better strategies and programs to service troublesome students. Most recognise that these young people are also entitled to a full and appropriate education. There is a demonstrated need to document successful programs, so practitioners do not each have to "reinvent the wheel".

This chapter focused on past and present approaches to addressing the issue of deviance, disaffection, and behaviour modification. The following chapter presents the theoretical framework for this particular study, in particular, the choice of qualitative methods and an action research model.

Chapter 3

A Theoretical Framework

This chapter offers the theoretical base for the study: the quantitative/qualitative methods debate; inherent bias in all critical inquiry; the need to ground educational theory in real life experience and teaching practice; the rationale for employing various qualitative methods; and the choice of an action research model. Strategies for assuring study subject anonymity, yet maintaining the highest possible authenticity, are also addressed.

The Quantitative/Qualitative Methods Debate

> Most people can judge the quality of shoes or scissors, and hence nobody has made a fortune by producing shoes which immediately fall apart or scissors which do not cut. In building houses, on the other hand, the defects of the work materials can remain concealed for much longer, and consequently shoddiness often brings profit in this line of business. The merits of a therapy, to take another example, cannot easily be assessed, and for this reason medical practice has been centuries entangled with a charlatanry from which it is not entirely free even today. Nonetheless, no matter how difficult it may be to evaluate a physician's or a lawyer's services, they clearly minister to concrete needs. But what kind of service does a philosopher or student of society render, and to whom? (Andreski, 1974, p. 15)

Critical discourse on the "science" of society has resulted in attempts to address this issue through quantification and the application of "hard" scientific method, where science is seen as "the attempt at understanding through separation" (Brodribb, 1993, p. 15). This approach has not been entirely successful and has often resulted in distancing, over-simplification and an obsession to substantiate theory, rather than investigate its validity.

Bessant and Holbrook (1995, p. 233) pointed out that

for the 'scientists' in educational research it was not so easy to establish this direct relationship between research and outcomes in education. They had some success in this respect earlier in the twentieth century with widespread use of intelligence tests, but the serious questions raised about these after the Second World War were a severe blow to their 'scientific' research image.

The "'antinaturalists'... [argued] that human affairs could not be studied with scientific methods because causal connections and stability in time and space could not be applied to humans as they could be in the natural world" (Bessant & Holbrook, 1995, p. 240). Bessant and Holbrook (1995, p. 234), citing Husen, suggested that

> those who turn to social science research in order to find out about the 'best' pedagogy or the most 'efficient' methods of teaching are in a way victims of the traditional science which claimed to be able to arrive at generalizations applicable in every context.

Husen purported that "'best' pedagogy' or the "most 'efficient' methods of teaching" are context specific, resisting the general applicability of non-human research. The struggle to make meaning from social scientific data, avoiding devaluing and dehumanising, whilst recognising the context specificity of the results, is discussed by Calhoun (1995, p. 9) in Critical Social Theory. He suggested:

> this is why empirical knowledge needs to be complemented with theory and why theory cannot be a mere summation of empirical knowledge. Social scientists are familiar with the difference between an anecdote and a statistical pattern - and sometimes frustrated with students, colleagues, and politicians who insist on looking in terms of particular cases rather than over-all patterns and probabilities. But even a well-constructed statistical sample does not necessarily reach to underlying causality; it simply represents accurately the empirical pattern at one point in time.

Following Calhoun and Burns, whilst undertaking this study I operated on the understanding that an educational setting is not "a fixed and stable entity" (Burns, 1997, p. 11). As Burns (p. 13) emphasised, because "of the subjective nature of qualitative data and its origin in single contexts, it is difficult to apply conventional standards of reliability and validity". This makes replication of classroom studies difficult at best. For example, strategies described here

worked for a particular set of teachers, and required some modification for each teacher change, and each set of students. This means the results of educational research may need to be adapted prior to application in new contexts, and these results may resist simple replication as a variation in the student cohort, or teacher, would influence the outcomes.

In relation to psychology, Bannister and Fransella (1971, p. 13) asserted that "many of us behave as if 'theory' were like heaven - a fine place to go when the practical business of living is all over, but not a matter of much concern here and now". This comment was stimulated by the demand from many psychologists to make their subject more "humanistic". As Bannister and Fransella stated, "it is as if sailors suddenly decided they ought to take an interest in ships" (p. 11). This statement was a reaction against the dehumanisation of research with human subjects, a movement that took-off into quantification and "hard" scientific method, attempting to add credibility to soft science inquiry. Bessant and Holbrook pointed out that there was a

> trend away from the behaviourist approach of educational psychology ...
> which noted a growing focus in the 1980s in areas such as educational
> technology, gender issues, student outcomes, environmental issues,
> mathematics and science education, literacy, language education and
> linguistics teacher education, special education and policy studies. (Bessant &
> Holbrook, 1995, p. 235)

The trend away from the behaviourist approach, which employed "hard" science testing and quantitative methodologies, led to the scrutiny of other social scientific fields for appropriate new methodologies. This led educational researchers to adopt various qualitative methods such as ethnographies, diary-keeping, and case studies.

Carr (1995, p. 108) suggested science is often seen as "a value-free theoretical activity concerned only with disinterested pursuit of empirical knowledge", whilst education may be viewed as "a value-loaded practical activity concerned with promoting human values and social ideas". If one accepts this view it becomes apparent that the two fields require

different methods of investigation. However while I can accept that much scientific research is approached as a value-free activity, it is not devoid of value-loaded decision making and ethical issues. As McCormas (1997, p. 3) pointed out, whilst scientists purport to rely heavily on the experimental model many "noteworthy scientists have used nonexperimental techniques to advance knowledge". He mentioned Copernicus and Charles Darwin, whose investigative regimes were "frequently more similar to qualitative techniques used in the social sciences than to experimental techniques" (p. 93). Hence the supposed chasm dividing physical scientific and social scientific method is one of continuum, not dichotomy.

When promoting appropriate methods of educational critique, Carr (1995, p. 18) remarked that

> the kind of reasoning appropriate to the method of critique would not, of course, be that kind of technical reasoning which produces neutral knowledge about how to achieve a given end. It would instead be that form of ethically informed dialectical reasoning which generates practical knowledge about what ought to be done in a specific practical situation.

Carr's suggestion may be seen to facilitate the contribution of a moral perspective to all inquiry. As Crichton (1990, p. xi) stated, the lack of ethical consideration when indulging in "hard" science inquiry has been exacerbated by its recent ties to commerce, where there are now "very few research institutions without commercial affiliations"; this in turn has resulted in an increasing volume of research being conducted "in secret, and in haste, and for profit". Citing Phillips, Bessant and Holbrook (1995, p. 237) pointed out "what is crucial for the objectivity of any inquiry - whether it is qualitative or quantitative - is the critical spirit in which it has been carried out". In other words, accepting and clarifying possible inherent bias relating to commercial affiliation, or personal position, and a "critical spirit" constitute a good starting point.

Calhoun (1995, p. 65) stressed the need for a more complex cultural sociology to be informed "by critical, theoretically informed reflection, historical and cultural analysis, and the effort to make better sense of as broad a range of empirical observation as we can". In 1982 Bullivant (in Bessant & Holbrook, 1995, p. 241) noted

> after outlining how dominated the AARE [Australian Association for Research in Education] and its conferences had been by the 'positivists' that ... at least alternative approaches to obtain truth, accurate information, the facts are being explored. As a result a quite healthy dialectical tension between the research approaches is developing in Australia

Burns (1997, p. 11) supported a range of approaches whilst questioning methodological purists. He claimed an obsession with methodological purity would not necessarily elucidate truth - nor, even, provide an everyday, workable applicability. He suggested that since the 1970s scholars have begun "to agree that both approaches are needed, since no one methodology can answer all questions and provide insights on all issues" (p.11). Thompson (in Bessant & Holbrook, 1995, p. 243) referred to this as "post-paradigmatic thought", suggesting a more eclectic approach where

> the new philosophy of science rejects both the idealist assumptions of the qualitative paradigm and the positivist assumptions of the quantitative paradigm .... the new philosophy of science accommodates some of the assumptions and some of the methods of both paradigms.

As endorsed by Thompson, Bessant, Holbrook and Burns I employed tools from both quantitative and qualitative "toolboxes" where appropriate.

Selecting Methodological "Tools"

Quantitative and qualitative researchers tend to draw their tools from different "toolboxes".

Qualitative researchers use ethnographic prose, historical narratives, first person accounts, still photographs, life histories, fictionalized facts, and biographical and autobiographical materials, among others. Quantitative researchers use mathematical models, statistical tables, and graphs, and often write about their research in impersonal, third person prose. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 6)

Quantitative studies "emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. Inquiry is purported to be within a value-free framework" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 4). Early sociological research into crime and delinquency employed this model. However, due to the complexity of social institutions, the variety of social niches, the flexibility of individuals within each niche, and the fact that classification of much social material reflects the bias of the researcher, these pseudo-scientific studies failed to offer functional platforms for reform or action. This failure was augmented by the fact that early research often lacked grounding through "explicit linkage to actual research" (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 274). Also most social phenomena are best described by a continuum; most evade simple classification into good or evil; local or foreign; masculine or feminine; able or disabled; active or ADHD; low socio-economic class or middle class; or delinquent or normal. Hence, quantitative studies also carry with them inherent bias, the subjective decisions of the researcher dichotomising data. Medawar (cited in Walford, 1991, p. 1) commented,

it is now widely recognised that the careful, objective, step-by-step model of the research process is actually a fraud and that, within natural science as well as within social science, the standard way in which research methods are taught and real research is often written up for publication perpetuates what is in fact a myth of objectivity.

Each researcher has to decide for her/himself where, for example, delinquent behaviour begins and normal ends. As pointed out by Morgan and Jenson (1988, p. 10), the proportion of the school aged population classed behaviourally disordered varies from 1% - 40%. It depends on the study's internal definition of the term, the questionnaire employed, and the

understandings and biases of the individuals involved in answering the questionnaire. Hence policies formed, or generalisations based on studies devoid of their internal definitions, are meaningless. For example, as illustrated by Heward and Orlansky (1992, p. 190) in regard to the behaviourally disordered, "a major player in that ballpark is teacher tolerance. A number of studies show that a student's identification as behaviorally disordered is largely a function of the teacher's notion of children's expected or acceptable behavior". Or as Heward and Orlansky suggested when citing Whelan, "emotional disturbance is a function of the perceiver …. What is disturbance to one teacher may not be to another" (p. 191). While quantitative research has an internal truth, it is not what it pretends to be, "a nomothetic or etic science based on probabilities derived from the study of randomly selected cases" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 5). It too is grounded in subjective judgements reflecting the bias of those who collect the material, the conclusions may be marginally useful, but remain highly problematic, particularly when applied to policy devoid of the research's original internal definitions. These internal definitions, out of necessity, due to the application of the scientific research model, need to be simple and limited to single variables. This results in simplistic definitions, such as a definition of poverty based solely on annual salary, or neighbourhood. While, this enables large scale quantitative studies to be undertaken, the conclusions drawn can only be related to say, crime + salary, and/or crime + neighbourhood, not extrapolated into statements about social class which involves multiple indicators, and complexities not reflected in a simple salary or neighbourhood correlation.

The very style in which research is couched means we are given "antiseptic accounts" of what happened. Measor and Woods (1991, p. 59) suggested "that what is left out is important, this kind of information is important in order for the reader to be able to scrutinize and judge research findings - and therefore assess its virtues, and its values". Hence the "End Piece to Fieldwork" (see pp. 285-297, Chapter 7) has been included to offer an overview of an entire

cohort, its entry issues, significant achievements, critical moments, and exit data. The "End Piece" fills in some silences and omissions resulting from my selection of case studies in the research reported. I accept that selection reflects personal bias, research agenda, and the pressure of rewards as a result of successful research.

Thomas (1995, pp. 2- 3) saw the shift from quantitative to qualitative methods in education as a shift from "machine to meaning" where the focus altered

> from information and data to ideas, thoughts and perceptions and, inquiry by challenging the hegemony of the objective: substituting more organic, more holistic, metaphors for mechanistic ones: contesting the notion that the principal goal for the study of persons was the prediction of their behaviour.

Burns (1997, p. 12) saw the move to qualitative studies as "directed towards context-bound conclusions that could potentially point the way to new policies and educational decisions, rather than towards 'scientific' generalisations that may be of little use at the coal face". Thomas (citing Bruner, p. 3) claimed this shift in orientation was crucial to the rebirth of narrative as "a form of thought of equal validity to that used in logical thinking and in inductive argument", leading to the growing concern "to find ways in which teachers' voices and stories could be heard and told" (Thomas, p. 4). Thomas suggested this was increasingly achieved though use of logs, journals, research journals, vignettes, critical incidents, life-histories, case histories and autobiographies. Narrative, or story-telling tools, seemed most appropriate for gathering the additional data needed for this study. I kept a journal, recorded vignettes, critical incidents, and case studies in addition to my normal duties as program coordinator/teacher.

As suggested by Thomas (1995, p. 11)

> there is strong evidence that what teachers 'know' about teaching derives from links between personal life-history and professional career. In this way, 'experience' and 'self' become key constructs and the biographic work must entail an examination of these.

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Kemmis claimed "for educational theory to have any subject matter at all ... it must be rooted in the self-understandings of educational practitioners" (in Bessant & Holbrook, 1995, p. 253). Thomas suggested that the link between personal history and professional career is intrinsic to critical reflective practice. Recognising the inherent bias in even the most "hard-edged" scientific studies, a decision was made to be overt about bias. The risk of allowing personal position - one's social class, values, ethical underpinnings, or *modus operandi* - to influence the descriptive and interpretive process was also a consideration. Like most teachers, social scientists and journalists in the Western world, I come from the white middle class. Hence I enter the arena of describing society from a central viewpoint that clouds perception and interpretation. Hence a decision was made to offer a limited self-study to expose bias and personal position. The choice was made to focus on critical events that shaped my attitudes and teaching practice, as this is both central to my thesis and reveals responses due to personal *modus operandi*.

As a researcher examining my own practice it was necessary to be perpetually conscious of the influence of additional data collection, labelling, and storytelling on my study subjects. The risk of influencing the research environment through additional interventions and through the descriptive process shaped my:

- decision to rely primarily on data collected in my role as program coordinator/teacher;

- choice from the "toolbox" of qualitative and quantitative methods; and

- method of telling, where maintaining study subject's anonymity took precedence, in all cases, over reporting identifying detail.

The role of teacher carries with it a set of obligations and responsibilities, as does the role of researcher. In all cases, where these roles came into conflict, my duty of care to the students

took precedence. Burns (1997, p. 13) declared that "the promise of anonymity, which often serves as the basis for trust, in concert with the requirement of authenticity, makes the qualitative evaluator's task particularly difficult". Here, pseudonyms and composite characters have been used, and at times, aspects of student stories have been fictionalised to maintain study subject anonymity. However all student writings have been maintained as is, spelling and grammatical errors in tact, to maintain authenticity.

The tools selected for use during the study were largely qualitative: daily diary-keeping (both 1997 programs); autoethnography; conflict resolution documents; grant applications; incident reports from staff and associated students' contracts; students' work; youth workers', work experience students', and teachers' reports; staff meeting minutes; management committee reports; funding body reports; staff performance management reports; daily discourse and interviews conducted as an integral part of program operation; work sheets produced as a result of crises and conflicts (1997); and case studies employing composite characters and pseudonyms to maintain study subject anonymity (1997 students only). Some experiential data predating the study period has been included to set policy and strategy development in its historical context. Some data collected was subjected to quantitative analysis where it was believed this added to the richness of results reported. All program participants - staff, students, parents, and work experience students - involved with the programs during the study period signed consent forms. All participants were informed that failure to do so would not exclude them from program participation.

The Choice of an Action Research Model

Bessant and Holbrook (1995, p. 253) asserted "action research educational theory is not simply to explain the source of the problem, but must bring some realisation of the actions

that must be taken to overcome the problems". In other words action research has a particular agenda: it derives solutions. Bessant and Holbrook claimed action research arose "to meet the challenge of 'irrelevancy'" (p. 251) in educational research. To answer this challenge action research provides practical strategies to test and apply in the teaching-learning environment. Burns (1990, p. 346) described action research as "the application of fact-finding to practical problem-solving in a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it, involving the collaboration of researchers, practitioners and laymen". As Burns stated, action research is not merely about fact-finding: it has a very specific agenda. It intends to improve the teaching-learning environment. These characteristics made action research particularly suitable for this study. An action research model facilitated simultaneous teaching, model development and testing. My intention was to evaluate, modify, test, and improve the model in place on the two at-risk student programs in order to augment service to disaffected students. As the model being examined was under development prior to the start of the action research project, some historical data has been included in the study to establish the base from which strategy and policy was developed. This data has been drawn from program administration materials such as management committee reports, conflict resolution documents, and staff performance management reports. The study was collaborative and responsive, as staff and students stimulated, and contributed to, many model modifications.

Action research challenges the label of "irrelevant" as the practitioner/researcher is involved in a process of critical reflection and self-reflection with the intention of immediately improving educational provision for, and with, all participants. Its "radicalism is its emphasis on research at the coal face and which involves the subjects themselves" (Bessant & Holbrook, 1995, p. 254). Action research is what Anderson, Herr, and Nihlen (1994, p.1)

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referred to as "insider" research, which is contrasted to outsider research seen to be that style

of research adopted by the ethnographer, or the "fly on the wall" approach.

As McNiff (1993, p. 1) stated in the introduction to Teaching as learning,

> this text represents my present best thinking about the nature of educational
> knowledge. It is not a final answer. It is a firm but temporary intellectual
> platform on which I am standing to create new, more mature structures.

Action research is the ongoing process of testing current knowledge and beliefs in action, in

education at the chalk-face. When explaining the inherent conflict of a mind set of continual

transformation yet the recording of "best practice" in written form McNiff (1993, p. 1) citing

Rogers explained, "I hold my concepts loosely; but at critical transitional times, such as

synthesising my ideas in written form, I narrow the focus in order to 'freeze the intellectual

action and crystallise the ideas". In other words what is finally recorded as the result of an

action research project is an articulation of the author's current thinking about best practice.

In the prologue to Carr's For Education: Towards Critical Education Inquiry (1995), Kemmis

reiterated Carr's concern for the yoking of theory and practice:

> not only does he assert that we must be as interested in the theories of
> 'practitioners' as we are in their practices, nor even that we must study the
> practices of 'theorists' just as closely as we study their theories; he also
> demonstrates how the work of educational practice and the work of
> theorizing must develop hand-in-hand. (p. 3)

Kemmis argued that teachers and theorists do not "stay neatly in role" (p. 14). As action

educational research is rooted in current professional teaching practice, "it has to build its

strategy consistently on the advantages of the integration of action and reflection" (Altrichter,

1993, p 49). Altrichter suggested that it is "precisely the fact that the practitioners' reflection

is rooted in their everyday practice [that] allows them to put a practical theory to a series of

tests, and to develop and refine it in several 'cycles of action research' " (p. 49). Or "by

relating the 'context of use (application)' and the 'context of discovery and justification' in a more coherent image of the research process, action research offers a more realistic understanding of what 'rigour in research' can sensibly mean" (p. 53). Altrichter, Posch and Somekh (1993, p. 5) saw action researchers as

> 'normal' teachers, who reflect on their practices to strengthen and develop its positive features. They are not prepared to accept blindly the problems they face from day to day, but instead they reflect upon them and search for solutions and improvements.... They wish to experiment with new ideas and strategies, rather than letting their practice petrify.

Action research is concerned with primary data encountered on-site and in the midst of perception and action. It is a state of mind about knowledge as an evolutionary process of testing, and improvement. Whitehead (in McNiff, 1993, p. 7) articulated the process as:

> 1 I identify a problem when some of my educational values are denied in my practice; 2 I imagine a solution to the problem; 3 I implement the solution; 4 I evaluate the solution; 5 I modify my ideas and my practice in the light of the evaluation.

Burns saw action research as "a total process in which a *problem situation' is diagnosed, remedial action planned and implemented, and its effects monitored,* if improvements are to get underway" (p. 346). The model I devised for policy development for this study is a variation of this. It is cyclical and on going, what McNiff (1993, p. 9) called "living enquiries": problem identified, solution developed, policy created, tested in action and so on (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Critical Inquiry/Policy Development Cycle
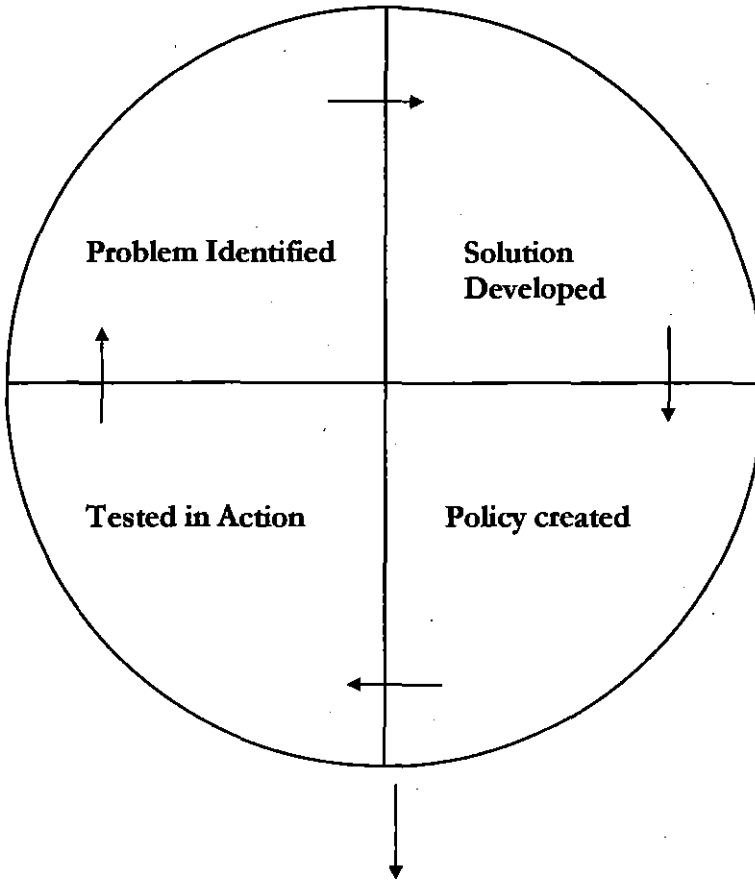
This methodological approach recognises that the model being studied is not frozen in time at the onset of the research, but is constantly evolving in response to need and the critical review process. As stated by Burns (1997, p. 346) "a 'problem situation' is diagnosed, remedial action planned and implemented, and its effects monitored". In this way the research process can continually evaluate modifications as they are put in place, no ultimate, correct model is offered as the model remains in development for the term of its natural life.

The functional validity of this style of research is stated by Bannister and Fransella: (1971, p. 9), "a theory [model, policy] is a working tool and not a sacrosanct creed - it is to be used, developed and ultimately replaced". As stressed by Young (1989, p. 1), "no one can be more aware of this risk, more surely antiutopian, even to the extent of being perceived as

pessimists, than those who, like the early critical theorists, have built and have seen their work reduced to rubble". Young outlined the dangers inherent in "absolute" theory construction:

> One could understand such people being overtaken by so pervasive a caution, that they became willing to live in mean huts constructed from broken blocks and columns of a grander possibility. In a community of this kind we would not be surprised to learn to build higher or more nobly than your forbears was a crime. Each generation would have the task of replacing the old, but never transcending it. (p. 2)

Young stated that throughout "history we have attempted to find some absolute standpoint, an Archimedean point outside the relative world of history, to provide a sure and certain method" (p. 22). In research one has to take chances and move outside the known precepts, otherwise we risk merely restating the past. Also society and culture continually build on, and react to, past and existing theories. A theory/model/policy/rule/law is there to be challenged and superseded, as human understandings increase.

Action research assumes that a model is in development, not sacrosanct. It also resolves some problems of bias and distortion. An "observation on our observation" by Mercer (1991, p. 47) encapsulated problems of outsider researchers entering the classroom to record teaching strategies or classroom dynamics:

> We disrupted proceedings by entering classrooms with a video camera, and once there we focused our attention entirely on how the teacher taught one small group of children. There is little doubt that teachers who know that their teaching is going to be recorded and analysed will be more nervous and self-conscious than usual. They may well have spent more time than usual preparing what to teach. Children, too, are not immune to the presence of the camera, and two or three extra adults.

Mercer stated that "only the most naïve researchers would not expect their visible presence as an observer to affect the behaviour of those being observed" (p.48), there are of course better and worse ways of handling outsider research.

Whilst avoiding this particular bias of outsider observation, action research carries with it the issue of role conflict. As I was working from within the model under study, other than the signing of initial consent forms, study subjects were not distracted from the daily business of teaching and learning by the data collection. Altrichter proposed "a formulation of the main quality feature of action research [as] derived from the concept of reflective professional practice" (p. 45). He stated,

> unlike traditional researchers, action researchers do not research other persons' practice but their own. It follows that by investigating a situation they themselves are deeply implicated in, they also scrutinize their own contributions to this situation and, consequently, their own competency and self-concept. (Altrichter, 1993, p. 50)

This is advantageous in that the study group is minimally affected by intervention, however role conflict involved in being teacher/researcher involves

> oppositional dilemmas that are rehearsed in action research: between the personal and the professional; between the organizational cultures of the school and the alchemy; between 'insider' and 'outsider' perspectives; between the sacred languages of science, scholarship or research, and the mundane dialects of practice and everyday experience. (Stronach & MacLure, 1997, p. 117)

Role conflict requires prioritising of roles and agendas. This conflict was experienced by Mac an Ghaill (1991, p. 104) where there "was a significant shift, involving role conflict, albeit creative, between my position as a teacher and that of researcher". Mac an Ghaill experienced conflict of obligations where, on the one hand, his job was "'getting my group of kids through the examination system' as teacher's 'private classroom problem' to researcher's 'public issue'" (p. 118). Wherever role conflict was an issue I chose to regard my role as teacher and the associated duty of care as pre-eminent. Hence specific facts that may have jeopardised study subject's anonymity (such as, revealing a student's "disability", or racial background) were not reported, even if they may have strengthened the case argued.

I must also acknowledge the danger of "authoritatively spoken words", as foregrounded by Andreski (1974, p. 33). He warned of the danger where "a few authoritatively spoken words can turn the scales". He suggested

> everyone knows that one can make a person discontented by deploring the circumstances under which [s/]he lives, encourage [her/]his endeavour by praise, or discourage it by sarcasm; that a physician's reassurance may aid recovery, and that an anxious parent can make the child timid. (p. 33)

The danger for ethnographic narrative to attain "signed statement" status, or to be seen as a "legally sanctioned form", is illustrated by Brodkey (1987, p. 68) when she stated, "I believe that the narrative that is first told to and for academics probably will function as the official narrative and thus exercise a similar kind of control over the content and the expression of content in subsequent tellings in the public sphere". This problem also permeates "hard" science teaching, as illustrated by McCormas (1997, p. 94): "the story may be apocryphal, but it is commonly repeated among science educators that when students were once asked what colour atoms were, the answer was closely linked to the textbook in use by those students". The danger of "the telling" affecting my study subject's futures made fictionalisation of some facts necessary.

I also believe theory must be grounded in lived experience. As hooks (1994, p. 61) stated "when our lived experience of theorizing is fundamentally linked to the processes of self-recovery, of collective liberation, no gap exists between theory and practice", and that "theory emerges from the concrete, from my efforts to make sense of everyday life experiences, from my efforts to intervene critically in my life and the lives of others" (p. 70). Ultimately my concern with theory is in its capacity to change practice and improve service to disaffected youth.

Summative Reflection

Following Burns, Holbrook, Bessant and Thompson, I made a decision to select from both quantitative and qualitative "toolboxes". However, most methods selected for this study were qualitative. These methods included: daily diary-keeping; autoethnography; questionnaire; conflict resolution documents, incident reports and students' contracts; students' work; youth workers', work experience students', and teachers' reports; interviews conducted as an integral part of program operation; work sheets produced as a result of crises and conflicts; and case studies employing composite characters and pseudonyms to maintain study subject anonymity. Some quantitative "tools", such as a bar graph and tables, were employed to compare results over time.

Action research was selected as an appropriate methodology as I researched my own practice, critically examined policy and strategies operating, identified modifications needed to improve equity or service, implemented these modifications, and then tested the effectiveness of these modifications in the classroom. A simple action research model was devised for the purpose of this study to further develop policy: problem perceived, strategies discussed, policy created, tested in action.

This critical inquiry comprised a largely qualitative study of my current practice, employing an action research model, where policy and practice were in continual scrutiny and review as a result of my multiple roles: researcher, model designer, program coordinator, teacher. The qualitative methods selected were chosen on the basis of minimising interference with the study subjects, and maintaining the normal operation of the programs. Priority was placed at all times on protecting the study subjects' anonymity, whilst maintaining, wherever possible, authenticity. My agenda as researcher was to reflect on the historical development of the model and critically evaluate the current model whilst implementing needed changes, thereby

improving educational service for our disaffected students. The motivation was to increase

equity in education to young people currently excluded through the time-out, suspension, and

expulsion process, developing a new educational model whereby these young people can be

maintained in the teaching-learning environment whilst their problematic behaviours are

addressed.

As I was concerned with the gaps between theory and practice, and personal ideology and

modus operandi, the following chapters will look at the ideological base I purport to be

operating from, to ascertain whether this ideology has been put into policy, and is. being

played out in practice. Or as suggested by Kahl (1971, p. 22) when investigating the "the

misery of Christianity", measuring "the phenomena to be investigated by the yardstick of its

own claims". Here too, like Kahl, I will examine the relationship "between the real content

[my practice] and its ideological veil [what I believe to be the theoretical framework of the

model]" (p. 22). The danger here, is that like Marxism, that "always insisted on the test of

action", I may find my model "a bloodstained travesty in practice" (Craig, 1975, p. 12). Yet,

as advised by Craig, if I avoid the risk of critical reflection and publication, of "throwing my

model to the wolves", my theory "is in danger of either turning into platitudes which few

would bother either to take seriously or to refute or else of being treated to the academic

Death by a Thousand Cuts" (p. 11). I am committed to putting my model on the line,

exposing it to personal attack by measuring it against its own claims, and to attack by others.

As Lenin (cited in Craig, 1975, p. 11) once remarked "without theory, action is blind; without

action, theory is barren".

PART 2

THE STUDY

Chapter 4

Grounded Autobiography

This research project is on one dimension an extended self-study, on another related

dimension an action research project conducted within the historical context of the model's

development. An autoethnography set within a research project normally aims to clarify

personal position. Self-studies in educational research also elucidate the researcher's

pedagogical practice. However, here the function is threefold. A third component of the

self-study examines how my ideology and *modus operandi* were shaped, in order to explain how

this process can be replicated in practice to support students in reassessing their entry

ideology and mode of operating.

The self-study is not exhaustive. Incidents have been selected either because they clarify

personal position and pedagogical style, or demonstrate metamorphosis of my ideology or

modus operandi. My particular focus was: can encounters with individuals, experiences, or texts

modify the way one operates; are these changes ephemeral or permanent; what factors make

one vulnerable to change; and can these factors be replicated or harnessed in the classroom to

compound learning? As the evolution of my pedagogical style, ideological base, and *modus*

operandi are grounded in the critical moments of my past history, this grounded autobiography

also forms the base from which to examine my current teaching practice and the Strike Four

educational model.

A Starting Point

What we do both as teachers, and as researchers, is governed by what we think. Our ideology

governs our *modus operandi*, which affects how we teach, what we research, and what we

choose to write up from our findings. No research project in the social sciences can

document all events, or every possible reading of those events, nor can it pretend to achieve objectivity.

Bias in the reporting process is compounded by the fact that human language is loaded. Every label carries with it a set of expectations and associations that influence readings. Each reading of a text is unique, for its silences are bombarded by the idiosyncratic understandings of the reader. Hence even the best grounded autobiography, offered as a tool to demonstrate personal stance, remains highly problematic. Writing on feminist politics, Fraser stated

> social identities are.... knit from a plurality of different descriptions arising from a plurality of different signifying practices. Thus, no one is simply a woman; one is rather, for example, a white, Jewish, middle-class woman, a philosopher, a lesbian, a socialist, and a mother. (Fraser, 1991, p. 99)

Following this style of framing the self I may be described as a 48 year old, white, heterosexual, mother of three, middle class, born in South Africa, of Jewish descent, with existential humanist leanings, and an inclination toward contemporary gendered readings of society. These labels fail to reveal if I am a devout, practising Jew or an atheist with Jewish parents, or if I am pro-Apartheid or a member of the African National Congress. For this reason, I do not find it useful to define myself as Jewish or South African, as your readings of these labels may fall anywhere within this range of possibilities.

As Fine (1994, p. 71) suggested, labels endorse the notion of otherhood and invite simplistic interpretation, where life reads as "punctuated by negotiations at the zippered borders of her [/his] gendered, raced and classed Otherhood". Those particular labels fail to reveal the ideological base of my pedagogical or research practices. Rather they result from "an audience searching relentlessly for pigeonholes" (Fine, 1994, p. 71). I am unwilling to offer you the opportunity to deconstruct my meanings merely through a string of simplistic self, or other, defined labels, as I am fully aware, that you like me, carry your own set of associations

adhering to all terminology in your vocabulary, rendering your understandings and mine significantly different, thus making this method of framing myself highly problematic.

Rather, I choose to frame myself, following Bannister and Fransella, (1971, p. 10) "not as an infantile savage nor as a just-cleverer-than-average-rat nor as the victim of this biography but as an inveterate inquirer, self-invented and shaped, sometimes wonderfully and sometimes disastrously, by the direction of his[/her] inquiries". I see myself, not as a victim of my history, nor as a post-structuralist product of my environment, but as a self-shaped individual using life experiences, critical moments and social information gathered in the course of daily experience, to deliberately shape who I am and who I will become. Rather, my history is merely the springboard for the evolution of my ideology and resultant *modus operandi*, not the cause of what I am. For, using the incidents from my past, I write and rewrite my history for myself. I create a mirror reflecting the image of past events I choose to hold up at any particular moment in time. My interpretation of my past experiences is continually being self-rewritten, in order that it makes sense to me, and is capable of integrating new elements and incidents into a logical whole.

This view of self is integral to the way I live and teach, and to many of the texts I have written. The Teenage Survival Guide (TSG, 1996) and The Teenage Survival Guide II (TSG II, 1996a) are suffused with this view of personal history. I believe that whether your past disempowers or empowers you, is not determined by what you have experienced but, rather by your style of constructing personal narrative. Personal narratives can lead you to read yourself as permanently scarred and therefore unable to attain your full potential, or as strengthened by life's trials.

This process of constructing personal narratives is, however, limited by social context. To invoke Szasz (1974, p. 1):

among the many foolish things Rousseau said, one of the most foolish, and most famous, is: 'Man is born free, and yet everywhere he is in chains.' This high-flown phrase obscures the nature of freedom. For if freedom is the ability to make uncoerced choices, then man is born in chains. And the challenge of life is liberation.

We are each born into a social group with a set of roles determined by the social ranking of our family of orientation and our gender. Each role carries with it a prescriptive set of expectations. We are coerced by the very fabric of our society, by our cultural context, to conform to these rigid expectations. Expectations such as rigid dichotomous male-female roles, limit rather than extend our potential styles.

Our early years are spent being indoctrinated into these roles; our teenage years are spent exploring the parameters of these roles and challenging or endorsing the status quo. Later adolescence and early adulthood are spent developing our own style, our own way of relating to the world.

Discussing critical theory and education Carr (1995, p. 113) stated "that the more individuals understand about the social determinants of their actions the more likely they are to escape from ideological constraints to which they were previously subject". Thus the more we understand about our inherited social chains; the more likely we are to be able to rise above them when engaging in educational critique. Understanding your social bonds is also an important part of becoming an adult. Through TSG (pp. 2, 9, 15, 21, 27, 37, 47, 55) and TSG II (pp. 5, 17, 33, 43) I have attempted to elucidate social processes operating, so that our students can enter adulthood empowered to shape their futures, rather than as the victim of these processes.

The reality of social roles and social constraint is articulated by Freire after his incarceration in 1964, when he stated the "possibilities that I had for transcending the narrow limits of a five-by-two-foot cell ... were not sufficient to change my condition as a prisoner. I was always in

the cell, deprived of freedom" (in hooks, 1994, p. 48). Here Freire acknowledged that even though at this point of his life he was caged in a real cell, from birth all humanity is restricted in action and choice by a metaphorical cell, or a set of social bonds.

When looking at social bonds, personal growth and professed ideology, I see a necessity in drawing a line between our system of beliefs and mode of operating. When claiming "we were revolutionaries, in the abstract, not in our daily lives" (in hooks, 1994, p. 48), Faundez acknowledged that the two are not always one and the same. Reading a text, or experiencing a critical moment, can modify our ideology, yet what we claim as our belief system may be totally inconsistent with our *modus operandi* - the principles governing our actions. What we believe as ideology may not be thoroughly integrated into our way of acting. There may be a discrepancy between beliefs and action. Hence we may be revolutionaries in ideology, but not in action. When teachers attempt to encourage and evaluate a modification in the *modus operandi* of students, it is critical for them to remember that purported ideology (the answers students write on work sheets) may change, but this may not reflect what the students will actually choose to do.

The transformative process, from ideology to *modus operandi*, is described by hooks (1994, p. 46) regarding her experience with an idea of Freire's:

> there was this one sentence of Freire's that became a revolutionary mantra for me: "We cannot enter the struggle as objects in order to later become subjects." Really, it is difficult to find words adequate to explain how this statement was like a locked door - and I struggled within myself to find the key - and that struggle engaged me in a process of critical thought that was transformative.

It is essential when examining personal stance, to recognise the difference between espoused ideology and personal practice. The internalisation (or integration of a new belief into one's mode of operating) of some ideas takes time, for a move from agreement to full understanding, and from understanding to actually operating on the new principle. In order

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to facilitate change in a of student's mode of operating, teachers need to allow learning to be compounded through multiple applications, and in a variety of contexts, in order to offer maximum opportunity for internalisation of new ideas.

Formative Years and Cultural Context

I was born in South Africa into a middle class practising Jewish family. We went to synagogue on Saturdays, but my brothers and I attended government schools and grew up in non-Jewish neighbourhoods. Our schools were segregated affairs. No blacks. No coloureds. Afrikaners and English speakers did not mix. Christians and Jews did not mix. Neither did Catholics and Church of England.

There were five Jews in the primary school: two boys, a girl, my older brother and myself. We were excluded from all groups. The boys were beaten up almost daily. We were all spat at and called "bloody Jews". Primary school has no pleasant memories for me. This feeling of isolation is noted by Henry (1995) in her case study of Ese, a black school teacher retelling her childhood experiences. Ese explained "unfortunately for me, in Leeds at that time, there wasn't many black kids, and I went through a tough time ... I was the *only* black kid, the first one they had in the school. And *life was sheer hell.* I used to go home every night and cry. I hated school" (p. 283).

I can also identify with Ese's perception of her teacher's corroboration in her exclusion as a type of betrayal. She stated that "to me that has always symbolized that, yes, teachers can do something about things like that. You know, and it's true. They did nothing" (p. 284).

Primary school carries no pleasant memories. It was a hostile environment. The solution offered by my parents was, "be proud you're a Jew", or "sticks and stones can break your bones, but words can never hurt you". "Bloody Jew" was a label I wore all through primary

school in South Africa. But, like Gordon Bennett, an Australian Aboriginal artist, I believe words do hurt. He told how words like

> Abo, Boong, Koon, Darkie, Heathen, [and] Nigger .... [have] derogatory associations attached to them. Some people say oh it's just a word - but it's always more than just a word. I mean, language is very important ... because it's the way we construct our view of the world. Without 'just words' you wouldn't have culture, you wouldn't be able to determine the reality around you or determine your place within it. (Bennett, 1990, p. 148- 152)

On our programs our policy states "language [use should be] appropriate to situation". Here the young people are not expected to speak in formal English at all times. If they drop a brick on their toe, it is acceptable to swear. This incurs no punishment. However, language must be appropriate to situation, and swearing is not tolerated in formal English lessons, simulated job interviews, or when we have visitors in the centre. Students are also warned that neither is using language as a weapon to belittle others. From personal experience I know the power of language used as a weapon and, like Ese, I question our teachers' complicity in our marginalisation through anti-Semitism. I cannot endorse the notion that "words can never hurt you", since labels have been used to strip a race of its rights, or justify genocide.

Our ethnic/religious isolation was extended to the neighbourhood. My parents did not believe in Apartheid or living in Jewish suburbs. We lived in a largely white Christian area, yet were isolated by our religious beliefs and ethnicity. As children we were always excluded, always read as "other" in our local school and neighbourhood. I have always fought with the under-dog and offered support where none was forthcoming; perhaps this passion is grounded in the betrayals of my past. Perhaps my passion for minimising the marginalisation of troublesome students springs from my identification with their plight.

It would be simplistic to attribute my childhood marginalisation to anti-Semitic feelings at the end of World War II. Like Jimmy Chi, an Asian-Scottish-Aboriginal Australian playwright, I

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have found that even Jews are uncomfortable accepting me, as I do not fit neatly into their pigeonholes. I consider myself Jewish by birth, not faith. I have little interaction with the Jewish community as a result. At my cousin's son's barmitzvah the local Jewish community were trying to "put me in a box". They wanted to figure out where I fitted into the local Jewish social hierarchy. Through the interrogation process their prejudices became apparent. Like Jimmy Chi (1990, p. 24), I found that the "whole thing about prejudice like that is that it runs through all levels of society and that Aboriginal people are as guilty of it as anybody else". Jimmy Chi identifies as Aboriginal. He chose to make his contribution to Australia as an Aboriginal, yet he recognises his multi-racial genetic make-up complicates the issue. He said, "I can't say I'm Asian, I can't say I'm Chinese, I can't say I'm Scottish. I *can* say I'm Aboriginal; but will the Aboriginal people themselves look on me as Aboriginal?" (p. 25). My family of orientation is Jewish. According to Talmudic law I am a Jew because my mother is Jewish. By commitment I am an atheist with a strong belief in the value of humanistic ethical codes where every individual is responsible for who s/he is and what s/he does. Like Jimmy Chi, I do not fit neatly into local labelling, or the local social hierarchy.

I was the middle child, a girl between two boys. My older brother was described as "the angel". He had a wonderful nature. "You could get an extra tub of butter during the depression if you put him on the counter". He was a hard act to follow. I was an extremely active baby, so I was told, seldom slept and lacked his placid disposition. If I were a child today I would be classified ADHD and medicated to normalcy. As an adult I learned to harness my excessive energy in positive ways. My younger brother was "the genius". He excelled at everything from academics to sport. In retrospect, I believe I always felt parental approval was just out of my grasp. I believe this worked as a positive force spurring me on to achieve.

In childhood my high energy level created problems for my parents and teachers. As an adult this has been my strength. For instance, in 1996 I wrote five books in three different subject areas, taught a program for at-risk teenagers and had an exhibition of paintings. I worked from 3am every morning. If I was a child today I would probably be medicated so I would sleep "normal" hours. Instead I am a productive functional adult. Out of necessity I developed strategies to harness my excessive energy and make it work for me. Many ADD and ADHD students are referred to our programs. My approach, wherever possible, is to encourage these young people to develop strategies to harness their excessive energy in positive ways.

Non-compliance in High School

In my first term at high school I was a typical, compliant student. However a critical moment in high school triggered permanent change in my *modus operandi*. In year seven I broke my arm. The cast was so thick I could not put on my summer school dress. The principal informed me that I must wear full winter uniform, or not attend until the cast was removed. It was mid-summer in Sydney. It was hot and humid. I attended school in my woollen uniform, woollen blazer, beret, tie, long sleeved shirt, gloves and thick black tights. I felt the principal's decision was irrational. This triggered my testing of rules and authority, resulting in almost daily detention, and the label "rebellious". I was not stealing, vandalising property, smoking, having sexual relations, experimenting with drugs, or drinking alcohol. I was an active class member, and did reasonably well at school, but I was classified rebellious because I would not do up my top button if it was over a 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or wear gloves and a blazer on a hot day. School became my personal battleground. But I was lucky. In the 1960s girls were punished by after school detention. I was not sent to time-out or suspended. I was not deprived of an education because of my rebellious actions. As a result, despite four years of constant conflict with school authority figures, I successfully completed year 10.

Developing Personal Style

I had just completed year 10 when my family moved to the United States. After six traumatic weeks in an American high school, suffering chronic culture shock, I was encouraged to sit the college entrance examination (SAT). I was admitted to the University of Wisconsin at 16 years of age having only completed year 10. I majored in Art.

The conflicting pressure from my parents' expectations (as I was only 16), and my university lifestyle, resulted in me striking out on my own. I moved into an apartment building in the student slum. The small apartment was shared by a variety of itinerants, prostitutes, addicts, and student radicals. Rent was cheap as the property was dilapidated, and 10 of us shared a two bedroom apartment. The apartment was the headquarters of the Student Democratic Society. The Society was run by extreme left-wing radicals. Wisconsin in the 1960s was a politically active campus and the Student Democratic Society was the centre of the action.

In mid-winter, when the weather dropped below freezing, our landlord turned off the heating. It was 20 degrees Fahrenheit below freezing, inside and out. There was little point in trying to sleep or study, so I joined the others on the street with a banner. At intervals we went off together to have coffee and got into long discussions on the Vietnam war. This moment was repeated on campuses all over America. It was recorded by Alan Ginsberg (1968, p. 7) in his poem, "Who Will Take Over the Universe?", "A bitter cold winter night/ conspirators at café tables/ discussing mystic jails/ The Revolution in America/ already begun not bombs but sit/ down strikes on top submarines/ on sidewalks nearby City Hall". This time was for me what hooks (1994, p. 47) described as "that historical moment when one begins to think critically about self and identity in relation to one's political circumstance". During coffee shop discussions I was introduced to the writings of the existentialists, in particular, Jean Paul Sartre's Existentialism and Humanism (1975). These

writings played a significant role in shaping my ideology and teaching style. As suggested by

Mairet in the introduction to Existentialism and Humanism,

> philosophical variations can never be wholly explained by reference to
> surrounding social and historical conditions, important as these are to the full
> understanding of them, for ideas often spread across geographical boundaries
> and periods of time; they germinate anew wherever they find individuals with
> the mentality and sensibility favourable to their growth. (in Sartre, 1975, p. 10)

The first English edition of Existentialism and Humanism was published in 1948. Yet as

Mairet suggested, ideas will germinate "wherever they find individuals with the mentality and

sensibility favourable to their growth". In 1966 I was on my own, having broken with the

precepts of my past (the Judeo-Christian tradition), and in search of an ideology that made

sense, an ideology that was reinforced through my life experience. Sartre's existentialism

filled the gap. I read his treatise many times. I annotated it and discussed it with friends. My

ideology and mode of operating began to diverge from the Judeo-Christian tradition of

heaven and hell, praise and blame. I came to believe, as Heidegger (cited by Mairet in Sartre,

1975, p. 12) suggests, "that there is nothing beyond [wo/]man [her/]himself that can solve

the problems of [wo/]man's existence". I believe that we are what we make ourselves and

that we have the power to shape who we will become, or as Sartre states, "the first effect of

existentialism is that it puts every [wo/]man in possession of [her/]himself as [s/]he is, and

places the entire responsibility for [her/]his existence squarely upon [her/]his own shoulders"

(p. 29). Each confirming life experience strengthened my belief that ultimately we must all

take our actions and choices seriously, that we are responsible for what we do and who we

become, and that, as individuals, we have the power to make a difference. I believe I can

make a difference through research, art, poetry, and education. I am a critical theorist, bent

on addressing the power of social institutions to perpetuate inequalities by denying access to

social, economic, and political power, and access to "high" knowledge, to the disempowered.

The way I used Sartre's teachings in forming my ideology has much in common with hook's description of her internalisation of Freire's work. She stated, "I find that, much like weaving a tapestry, I have taken threads of Paulo's work and woven it into that version of feminist pedagogy I believe my work as writer and teacher involves" (hooks, 1994, p. 52). In much the same way, I took the threads of Sartre's work with which I could make meaning of my life choices, and incorporated these fragments into my existing ideology. Whether these fragments retained the function originally intended by Sartre was unimportant to me. It is the idiosyncratic use I made of his teachings, that was relevant to the forming of my *modus operandi*, not his personal agenda. In attempting to influence young people's ethical codes and mode of operating, we can never be certain what meanings they will make from our teachings, nor what lessons they will apply in action. This makes it even more necessary to compound learning through multiple contexts, and from a variety of angles.

The potential for critical texts to modify our *modus operandi* is discussed by hooks regarding her experience with Freire's work. She stated,

> when I came to Freire's work, just at that moment in my life when I was beginning to question deeply and profoundly the politics of domination, the impact of racism, sexism, class exploitation, and the kind of domestic colonization that takes places in the United States, I felt myself to be deeply identified with the marginalized peasants he speaks about, or with my black brothers and sisters, my comrades in Guinea-Bissau. (hooks, 1994, p. 46)

In this same way, I came upon existentialism and Sartre in particular, at a moment when I was "ripe for change", a golden learning moment. Mairet declared, in the introduction to Existentialism and Humanism, that where Kierkegaarde believed "neither the Kantian analysis of mind nor the Hegelian evolution of thought and history was of any help when it came to the making of one of those individual human decisions upon which the real course of events depends" (in Sartre, 1975, p. 6), Sartre's existentialism was functional.

I first read this text in the 1960s. At that time I underlined this passage and marked it "key". At this point I doubt I realised the pivotal role Sartre's philosophy would play in my life. At the time, existential humanism offered an ideological alternative to Judeo-Christian philosophy. Sartre's existentialism and humanism proved a functional tool. It could be applied in action. In the intervening thirty years, Sartre's philosophy moved from an ideological adoption to being integral to my style of operating. It shapes what I do, it is the basis of the ethics I taught my own children, and it is the ideological base for some Strike Four policies and the TSG and TSG II.

This adoption of aspects of Sartre's existentialism and the move from it being mere ideology to *modus operandi*, is central to my thesis. My thesis evolved from exploring the notion - can the mode of operating of year 10 students be changed? If so, how? My style of operating was changed by reading, and verification through living. This metamorphosis was also experienced by hooks (1994). Einstein explained how his transformation from "a deep religiosity" to "a sceptical attitude" developed:

> Through the reading of popular scientific books I soon reached the conviction that much in the stories of the Bible could not be true. The consequence was a positively fanatic [orgy of] freethinking coupled with the impression that youth is being deceived...Suspicion against every kind of authority grew out of this experience, a sceptical attitude...which has never left me. (Gilmore citing Einstein, 1997, p. 62)

By reading popular science, Einstein claimed his ideological base was shattered and his *modus operandi* transformed. Through his exposure to scientific texts, Einstein claimed he became a critical thinker, suspicious of all authority. It would seem that a text read at a vulnerable time, and whose ideas are reinforced or confirmed through life experience, have the potential to promote a move in one's ideology.

When writing TSG and TSG II, I included detailed tables of contents listing all key issues to facilitate the incorporation of relevant-to-the-moment curriculum, for introduction at critical

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moments. In this way, golden learning moments could be harnessed, offering maximum opportunity to shape the students' *modus operandi* by introducing issues at significant times.

Adult Years

In 1966 I met my first husband. I was working to support myself and attending university full time. I had little idea what he did with his days. We led very separate lives and shared few common friends. He seldom worked and became involved in the drug scene. It was not until three months after our marriage, in 1968, that I realised how deeply he was immersed in the drug culture, and what influence those drugs would have on his temperament.

He had been classified manic-depressive at eight. I saw no sign of it prior to our marriage. However, as he became increasingly involved with stronger and more addictive drugs, his behaviour swung out of his control. I watched him get trapped into using heroin. A colleague offered him heroin free for a few weeks. Once hooked, he had to pay. He had to find ways to support his habit. His life and behaviour spun further out of control. He became involved in a world of violence and crime. His life touched mine only occasionally, but always brought with it violence and fear.

He vacillated between sweet, apologetic, and concerned, and violent and physically and verbally abusive. I left him for the first time three months after we were married. He arrived looking for me with a gun. The following two and a half years were a nightmare. I never felt safe. I could not predict when he would turn up and begin to blow my life apart again. Every time I re-established a rational, predictable life, he would reappear and throw it into chaos.

In 1971, after many months of absence, he turned up again, supposedly "dried-out". The next day he shot-up heroin with a friend and beat me. My face was black and blue and I had damage to my vertebral column. I realised I was lucky to be alive. I decided it was time to leave America. Wherever I went he had managed to track me down. I contacted my parents and joined them in Australia.

It took me time to recover, to rework and rewrite the nightmare into an acceptable format for positive action. In many ways, this rewriting process resembled what Luke (1991) referred to in "Touring Hyperreality: Critical Theory Confronts Informational Society". Here "the terrain is framed by television screens. Its topography is fluid not fixed, flowing in continuously shifting images. The maps are constantly under revision, changing with every new voiceover and scan of the images" (p. 3). In this way, a fixed set of events is rewritten; new voiceovers are created, as we explain the events to ourselves, and others, in new ways. A new set of meanings evolve, that can render a past empowering or disempowering. The choice is ours. We control the rewrite. We choose to interpret these events as the cataclysm that renders us victims, or the crisis that stimulates growth, strength and rebirth.

I had no regrets, even in the early days. I never felt anger, resentment or hate. I like what Jimmy Chi (1990, p. 25), a local Aboriginal musician and songwriter said about hate, I can believe it, because I have seen it in others: "with hate you only kill yourself". I have always looked at this marriage as an intense learning time. It made me strong. It made me what I am today. It was a type of "trial by fire", a *rite de passage*, and I survived.

Feminism

Reading hooks I was led to ask myself why the feminism of the 1960s had failed to ignite my psyche. I was committed to the anti-war movement, equal rights for all ethnic and religious

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groups, and the environmental movement, yet I failed to feel a commonality with the women's movement of the time.

Readings hooks and Fraser I began to see the answer. My perception of male/female relations was rooted in my childhood, in my known experience. I did not see my mother or grandmother as oppressed by the patriarchy. If anything, my father and grandfathers appeared oppressed by matriarchy. Jewish society may be patrilineal but I believe it is largely matriarchal. As Fraser (1991, p. 99) suggested, "to have a social identity, to be a woman or a man, for example, just is to live and to act under a set of descriptions. These descriptions ....
are drawn from the fund of interpretive possibilities available to agents in specific societies".
She elaborated through example suggesting "the fund of interpretive possibilities available" to her as "a late twentieth-century American" female, overlaps very little with that available to "the thirteenth-century Chinese woman". She stated, "yet in both cases, hers and mine, the interpretive possibilities are established in the medium of social discourse .... As well as a menu of possible descriptions specifying what the particular person is to be" (p. 114). Hence the menu available to each of us when selecting an identity, can only include our known experiences.

In 1966 I was at university. I failed to see anything that would stop me achieving my goals because I was female. I had no shared experience of oppression with my "sisters", no personal history that validated their claims. Where Sartre's ideology bore out through my personal history and experience, feminist claims made no sense within the context of my personal realities. This alienation from a cause, that perhaps should have impacted on me, was experienced by hooks in relation to the feminist works of "white bourgeois sensibility".
She suggested, "this work did not touch many black women deeply; not because we did not recognize the common experiences women shared, but because those commonalities were mediated by profound differences in our realities created by the politics of race and class"

(hooks, 1994, p. 52). Where the violence, like that of my first marriage, may have led some to identify with the feminist cause, I read my ex-husband's behaviour as idiosyncratic, related to his manic depression, rather than a reflection of an oppressive patriarchy.

I believe the fundamental change in options for women came with control of our reproductive capacity. It was woman's biological nature, and the necessity of societies to provide for children that led to the restriction of female roles, rather than deliberate oppression by the patriarchy. I see men's choices as also restricted by social constraints. My sympathies tend to lie in the hegemony of the oppressed in a more general way. I cannot read society through radical feminist eyes, as I see all humanity as "born in chains", chains both social and biological.

I do however identify with contemporary gender movements. I hold that gender needs to be read as a continuum, not a dichotomy. The current menu of acceptable roles, associated expectations, and behaviours, for men and women, needs to be addressed. Greater flexibility will lead to more options for all people. I believe education has a fundamental part to play here.

In Reveille for Radicals Alinsky (1969, p. 10) asked readers if they could only recognise the oppression and pain of those with whom they share a past, or could they see oppression on the wider stage:

> So you're a Jew.... You bitterly resent anti-Semitism and regard prejudiced people as uncivilized, irreligious, and definitely not American. Let's take a look at you. How do you feel about the frock-coated Jews...the German Jew, or .... the Russian and Polish Jew. Maybe you're so intent on social prestige.... That you reject all Jews. On the other hand, many of you may be fighting valiantly the prejudice in parts of the American system that is centered against you and your fellows Jews. While you are fighting are you thinking of the same un-American hatred that is aimed at Negroes, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and other minorities?.... the few who fought on the picket line, through the printed page, before the crumbling walls of Madrid, and in the South against lynch mobs and for the sharecroppers. They fight for all. They, as radicals, resent injustice to any man.

As I see Alinsky's message, if I can merely identify with the crises of other females, born in South Africa, from Jewish parents not living in the Jewish neighbourhood, who were not beaten or molested by their fathers, and who went to high school in Sydney and studied in America, were married twice and had three children, my understandings, causes and friendships would be extremely limited.

Cultural Rebirth

As a teenager I had been encouraged by my father to express my angst in poetry. At a "be-in" in the 1960s I met Alan Ginsberg and heard him read his poetry. This was a critical moment in my ideological development, as it demonstrated the power of poetry and art to transform attitudes. I saw a vehicle empowered to fuel young minds, a powerful vehicle with the potential to give voice to the passions of my generation. I began writing and performing poetry, and reading contemporary poets. I became fascinated with the works of Roger McGogh, Richard Brautigan, and Alan Ginsberg. In my painting I moved from abstract expressionist, to writing messages in visual form. I began to believe in the power of poetry and art to change the world.

Research and Growth

In 1972, when I came across Saul Alinsky's book <u>Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals</u> (1972), I was ready for a mentor. Having been active in the protest

movement of the 1960s, I was disgusted at the hypocrisy of many of its leaders. Protests

against the Vietnam War had become increasingly violent. Student radicals on Madison

campus, where I was studying, blew-up the Mathematics Research building killing a student.

I was disenchanted with the strategies being employed, but remained committed to the cause.

Alinsky offered a make-sense solution. He appealed to my generation by giving voice to our

concerns. He asked "What sense does it make for men to walk on the moon while other men

are waiting on welfare lines, or in Vietnam killing and dying for a corrupt dictatorship in the

name of freedom?" (Alinsky, 1972, p. xv). He offered a new approach, by illuminating where

we had gone wrong. He wrote,

> this failure of many of our younger activists to understand the art of
> communication has been disastrous. Even the most elementary grasp the
> fundamental idea that one communicates within the experience of his[/her]
> audience - and gives full respect to the other's values. (p. xviii)

The hippies and radicals of the 1960s wanted to change the thinking of the middle class, but

had failed. Alinsky decried the alienation of their target audience through dress, hairstyle, and

vocabulary. He demonstrated the need to work within the system - "We will start with the

system because there is no other place to start except from political lunacy" (p. xxi). Alinsky

offered a new make-sense base from which to operate. He demonstrated the need for the

committed radical to leave behind symbols of group identity and work within the system to

bring about significant change. I see education as a forum with massive potential to shape

humanity's future.

A Fresh Start

In 1971 I moved to Western Australia to join my parents and younger brother and escape my

first husband's violent episodes. The last violent event had culminated in damage to my

vertebral column.

In the 1970s I taught Art in high school and primary school for Christian Brothers and the Speech and Hearing Centre. I taught language to a brain damaged child. I tutored anthropology at the West Australian Institute of Technology (now Curtin University), Currie Hall, and the University of Western Australia.

In 1973 I made the decision to return to university. I wanted to study Literature and Anthropology. The University of Western Australia gave me two unspecified units credit for my years at the University of Wisconsin. I had been close to graduating, but I had to begin again in first year. In second year I was offered honours in Anthropology and English. I chose Anthropology as it offered the opportunity to bridge both fields. My thesis was on Balinese shadow theatre and Balinese cosmology. I graduated top of the Arts Faculty, with a first class honours, and was awarded a doctoral scholarship. I began studying the move from polytheism to monotheism in Bali, and how this move was facilitated by, and depicted in, the art and literature.

I remarried in 1978. I spent the next 18 months trying to get a research visa to return to Bali, whilst trying to fit my research into the structuralist model dictated by my supervisor. Eighteen months into the doctorate I had my first child. When she was five weeks old our visas arrived. I was granted a nine month visa. My husband and daughter were given six week visas. Having previously attempted to get visas renewed in Bali I knew what this meant. Living off minimal funds from my scholarship, we would never have enough money to facilitate the visa renewals. My husband was offered a position in Melbourne. We moved to Melbourne.

At Monash University I was granted permission to complete my thesis from material collected on my previous trip to Bali. My new supervisor insisted I rewrite my thesis adopting a functionalist format. Yet this model did not do my data justice. I was disgusted.

This defied everything I had been taught by local informants. This "other" imposed framework devalued data collected in the field and endorsed the notion of us (university scholars) as knowing the real truth hidden from those immersed and integral to the culture. This endorsed a notion later foregrounded by hooks (in Fine, 1994, p. 71):

> no need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own. Re-writing you, I write myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still the coloniser, the speak, subject, and you are now the centre of my talk.

I struggled on. I was five months from finishing my doctorate when my husband was offered a position in Papua New Guinea. I was disappointed with academia and pregnant with our second child. We left for New Guinea.

In Papua I returned to teaching art to adults. However concern over a number of local issues led me into the area of creating books for Papua New Guinean children. The young boy next door was learning "Baa Baa Black Sheep" at school. He had never seen a sheep. The shops only carried Caucasian dolls. Colouring-in books available locally featured industrialised societies. This material was irrelevant to the local children. It fed the reading of themselves as "other". It decontextualised learning and set local learners at a disadvantage. I became involved in illustrating and creating texts for local children. We began with readers about local issues. I became concerned with basic literacy and numeracy materials and began working up a line of books to service this need. This series came to include alphabet and numbers books using local objects and incorporating rhymes using Papua New Guinean fauna, a colouring-in book with indigenous people focusing on Papua New Guinean issues, and a cut-out doll book with local characters wearing a variety of outfits from traditional through to missionary-designed-modern and thoroughly western. This was the beginning of

my concern with the perpetuation of disadvantage by culturally and contextually irrelevant teaching materials. This concern was applied locally when writing TSG and TSG II.

My third child was conceived in Papua New Guinea. Health problems became a concern. We decided to return to Perth.

From Ideology to *Modus Operandi*

When my first child was born there was family pressure to bring her up with a religious ideology. My family was Jewish, my husband's were Catholic. I believed it was possible to offer a solid ethical base devoid of a religious ideology. Our three children were brought up on my interpretation of Sartre's Existentialism and Humanism (1975). They were held responsible for their choices. I encouraged them to believe they were in control of their choices and actions and as a result were both responsible for the repercussions of their actions, and able to shape their futures. They were brought up to believe they had to do the right thing the first time, just because it was better, not because of future repercussions in heaven or hell. I endorse the notion that "we are responsible to ourselves, to our peers, and to future generations for the consequences of our actions, insofar as we can foresee them" (Leikind, 1997, p. 69). When I began designing shaping documents for Strike Four I operated with this as a base. This ideological stance is also central to a number of poems in angry emus: a collection of poetry and paintings by cecilia netolicky (Netolicky, 1994). These poems were also inspired by the novel Jurassic Park (Crichton, 1990). Here Crichton (1990, p. ix) foregrounded a current dilemma of scientific research - the "late twentieth century has witnessed a scientific gold rush of astonishing proportions .... This enterprise has proceeded so rapidly - with so little outside commentary - that its dimensions and implications are hardly understood at all". Crichton asked the scientific community to begin asking, not what can be done, but what should be done. I transformed this message into a type of mantra in the poem " 'should we' not 'can we' ". The poem foregrounded the issue of "new generation far

more concerned/ with 'should we' not 'can we' from what we have heard/ hold out hope that they'll learn from the past/ maralinga chernobyl make this their last" (Netolicky, 1994, p. 15).

With the birth of my children I began to apply Sartre's teachings in action. My children are now 19, 16, and 14. Even conventionally devout Christians have remarked on their excellent ethical codes. These three children were brought up without a fear of hell, with no promise of reward in heaven. They were taught to do the right thing because ultimately you are responsible for what you do, and who you are. The success with my own children reinforced my belief in the possibilities for ethics education devoid of a religious base. If we are to augment students' ethical codes in a multi-racial, ethnically diverse classroom, a truly non-denominational approach is essential.

Disability and Modification of my *Modus Operandi*

1984 brought significant change to my style of operating. I developed severe rheumatoid symptoms and was told my spinal column was collapsing. We were living in double-story company accommodation in Port Hedland, Western Australia. Getting up and down the stairs was difficult. I often had to crawl. It sometimes took 20 minutes to get the paint brush out of my hand. The doctor predicted I would be in a wheelchair by the year end. We decided to move back to Perth away from the concrete floors and air conditioning.

By 1987 I was regularly in a neck and body brace, and on occasions an arm brace. But I was still walking, though often with a stick. I decided that whilst I was capable I would volunteer to teach oil painting at the paraplegic and quadriplegic centre. If the doctor was correct, if this was my future, I wanted to contribute whilst I was still able.

At the paraplegic and quadriplegic centre I met a man who changed my mode of operating, and the way I read my disability. Peter signed up for my class in first term. He failed to attend as he had to have a leg amputated. He signed up in second term. He had to have his

other leg amputated. He came in third term. He was paralysed down his right side and had one useable limb, his left arm. As I got to know him I remembered a related incident from my past. My maternal grandfather had died on the operating table as they were amputating his leg. I remember my mother trying to soothe me saying "it's best he died. He couldn't have coped living with one leg". I watched Peter. He painted, tiled tables, and travelled. He had a *joie de vivre*. I realised *joie de vivre* had nothing to do with health and well being. It was a state of mind. He gave me a healthy attitude toward my disability.

My disability had not stopped me working. I was painting furiously. I diverted my pain into painting and writing. But as time passed, my meeting with Peter did affect how I saw many things. I began to read people's obsession with physical appearance and health as bizarre. I could see that beauty and good health do not affect quality of life. I had quality of life and *joie de vivre* despite my health problems. Movie stars and princesses had beauty, wealth, health and fame, yet were miserable.

This philosophy suffuses TSG and TSG II stories and work sheets. I believe it is crucial that young people today begin to consider that life is possible with "imperfections". For instance, our genetic predisposition may mean our size and shape are at the extreme of "normal". This can be viewed as difference. It does not have to carry value. We are not fundamentally better people because we are thinner or fatter, taller or shorter. We are merely different. What makes us better is what kind of choices we make, what kind of friendships we form, what contribution we make to better futures for ourselves and others.

The Art Scene in the 1990s

1991 was a hard year for artists. The stock market crash had repercussions on the art market. I began painting miniatures in an attempt to survive artistically in the new market. I also began putting the sad part of my message in poetry books, whilst highlighting the beauty in

the paintings. This worked well. My first painting and poetry book, History from under the Mat: A Collection of Paintings and Poetry by Cecilia Netolicky (Netolicky, 1991), sold out the 100 limited print in eight weeks. A publisher asked to take it over. He said the price would have to double. I declined his offer. I wanted the book to be accessible to everyone. It was an adjunct to my paintings, and I wanted to remain in total control of my product. If I wanted to make a difference through art and poetry, pricing was crucial. I wanted everyone to be able to afford the book. I was determined not to merely communicate with an artistic or financial elite. The book sold out twice again before the year end. The State Art Gallery bookshop asked me to launch another book.

The new book evolved in a fury. I attended an assembly at my son's primary school. The young girl opened the assembly by stating "people have been in Australia for two hundred years". I looked at the young Aboriginal boy on stage, and his mother sitting next to me. I was enraged. I wondered how they felt about this. I went home and wrote The Fires of Prehistory are Burning: A Collection of Paintings and Poetry by Cecilia Netolicky (Netolicky, 1991a). The book was concerned with the problem of rewriting Australian history devoid cultural bias.

Later I came across local playwright and activist for social change, Jimmy Chi. He stated "I think things will change as history is being rewritten". He also felt the need to rewrite human history, rather than just offer a single view of events, a white-man history. He went on to say,

> I think that writing and theatre and music have a lot to do with changing
> people's attitudes. We need a lot more people - not just Aboriginal people
> but also other people - who are willing - to work not only for Australia but
> for the world so as to change opinion. There needs to be white writers
> writing about it too, and white artists and white activists. (Chi, 1990, p. 29)

Chi made his mark rewriting Australian history through songs such as "Nothing I would Rather Be". Here through irony he made his point: "Nothing I would rather be/ than to be

an Aborigine/ and watch you take my precious land away/ For nothing gives me greater joy than to/ watch you fill each girl and boy/ with superficial existential shit" (Chi, 1990, p. 27).

Jimmy Chi appeared in my next poetry book. I saw him as a role model for all Australians. He featured in poem "The poetic platform for the pithed-off people's party". The poem was published in <u>As it was in the Dreaming: A Collection of Paintings and Poetry by Cecilia Netolicky</u> (Netolicky, 1991b). Here my concern focused on ecological piracy and on offering a political alternative, I wrote:

> As an artist/ I can recreate this place/ As it was in the Dreaming./ I can "paint out" the iron bridge at your crown and base,/ The steps cut at your sides,/ The signposts that litter the area,/ The photographers look-out./.... This land has been lacerated,/ Butchered? And barbarized? In the name of tourism, As if Tourism was some great god? To whom we build monuments. (p. 14)

I was angry at the continuing colonial attitude to indigenous population land ownership. The fact that indigenous populations did not fence off sacred land, or build churches on sacred sites, was taken as an indication of *terra nullus*. Indigenous populations tended to cherish these sites as they were "in the Dreaming". Colonial governments, on the other hand, were obsessed with building on beautiful sites and making them "effortlessly accessible" (Netolicky, 1991b, p. 14).

In 1994, whilst writing <u>angry emus: a collection of poetry and paintings by cecilia netolicky</u>, I saw Alan Ginsberg on television. He was now a professor of English, not a rebel. He was teaching at a mainstream university. My daughter was studying his poetry in high school. In reaction I wrote "urban sprawl". I felt this marked the end, "an age past/ embalmed in academic respectability/ urban sprawl/ and the museum of the human mind" (Netolicky, 1994, p. 17). Ginsberg's poetry was now "elevated to the status of textbooks/ dissected daily/ line by line/ no longer firing the minds/ and hearts/ of a generation" (Netolicky, 1994, p. 17).

In 1996 one of my own poems, a type of tribute to Ginsberg was placed on the curriculum in New South Wales. It came out in a text for year 10- 12 students called Australian Visions: paintings and poems (Bryant, 1997). The poem was called "mrs fellini mrs ginsberg and mr aldridge and the search for meaning" (Netolicky, 1994, p. 21 & Bryant, 1997, p. 72). The poem was designed to disturb through its yoking of first and third world images. It was now published in a textbook, alongside people like Bruce Dawe and Gwen Harwood, whom I revered. I had become part of mainstream. This was ironic. I felt the circle close. My poetry was now "elevated to the status of textbooks", destined to be "dissected daily/ line by line". My intention as a poet was to change the world. I often compromised the poetry to beat home the message. I was afraid that as a selection in a textbook, my work would be analysed for style and metre, rather than what I had to say. Alan Ginsberg died while I was writing this thesis.

A Return to Teaching and Education Research

In 1993 I returned to university to get a Postgraduate Diploma in Education. I wanted to teach young people who could not afford my private rates.

The TEE Survival Guide

My oldest daughter was about to enter the Tertiary Entrance Examination (TEE) process. I was concurrently reading the Secondary Education Authority material on the TEE and Jurassic Park (Crichton, 1990). This was my first exposure to applied chaos theory. It is irrelevant whether chaos theory, as portrayed in Jurassic Park, is accurate or not, but the reading of it led me to question the mathematical procedures involved in arriving at a mark for tertiary entrance. The Secondary Education Authority material appeared to be based on a scientific approach to fair and safe grading. However, marks in the humanities, in particular,

were highly subjective and open to error of personal judgement. Also certain subjects were scaled up, and others down, based on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). On calling the Secondary Education Authority my husband was told "if all those students doing Physics chose to do Art, they'd get the top marks". My husband argued "would a Nobel prize for Literature, History, or Art be worth less than the prize for Physics or Chemistry? Do Art teachers get paid less than Physics teachers? Why is the top Art student scaled down, but not the top Physics student?"

I spent days in the State library going through microfiche. Our daughter wanted to do mostly "scaled down subjects". As she was very bright the school strongly recommended against it. We wanted her to be able to study the subjects that interested her, without affecting her chance of getting to university. Once we understood the scaling system we endorsed her choice of subjects, but stressed how important it was to reach the minimal scaling zones. She did exceptionally well and scored well above what she needed for the course she wanted to access.

When we began to feel we had a grasp on the system and could help our child make safe choices, a number of friends asked us to publish the results so they could benefit from our research. We came to feel that the system probably got the brightest kids into university, but as a parent you are only concerned with one young person, your own, and all parents deserve a chance to make the best decisions for their children. We decided to publish our findings. The result was <u>The TEE Survival Guide</u>s (Netolicky & Netolicky, 1993; Netolicky & Netolicky, 1994).

<div align="center">A Comedy Transforms my Modus Operandi</div>

In 1993 I wanted to teach in the government school system, so I applied to return to university to do a Postgraduate Diploma in Education. The day I received my university

place, my youngest daughter was awarded a music scholarship and my son was offered a place in the academic extension program. How was I going to get them to and from their programs and go to university full time? It all looked too hard. A critical moment occurred. A very corny, "right thing at the right time".

That night What About Bob? (Ziskin & Oz, 1991) was showing on television. I watched the movie with my children. The philosophy put forward through the film offered a solution. That solution got me through the year of the Postgraduate Diploma. One of the protagonists had written a book called Baby Steps. The philosophy was simple. Approach problems in bits, rather than looking at the whole. Through this film, I developed a strategy to cope with conflicting demands. It was the beginning of a problem solving approach I use now - don't say you can't, rather look at how can you achieve your goal.

This ideology permeates my present approach to life. It is apparent in TSG and TSG II, and it is an integral part of my pedagogical practice. From the perspective of my thesis, it is significant because it demonstrates that even a comedy, viewed at a critical moment in time, can transform one's *modus operandi*.

Teacher Training

I had been teaching on and off for 25 years when I got my Postgraduate Diploma in Education. I was brought up to approach all problems employing critical thinking. My father questioned every decision we made. He always took the other side. This I believe made us into critical thinkers. However, it also made the teacher training year difficult, as it led me to question the validity of all behaviour management policies.

Half way through the diploma we were informed there were no government jobs teaching Art. I accepted a post at an alternative private school for at-risk teenagers. I was employed to teach Art and History to senior school students.

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The Alternative Community School Experience

The initial week was spent at camp. Students vandalising camp property were not discouraged. Intimidation of fellow students or staff was tolerated. I found this unacceptable. I see schooling as an integral part of the socialisation process. Duty of care as a teacher involves maintaining a learning environment where young people feel safe, the property of others is protected, and the young people are prepared for socially endorsed roles in the adult world. I suggested designing shaping tools (such as student contracts) to encourage socially acceptable behaviours. The suggestion was not acceptable to other staff.

There were two sides to the first three weeks prior to my resignation. The teaching was terrific, but lower school students continually disturbed classes, tipped our paint down the walls, used our dye to colour their hair, and smashed glass palettes on the carpet. The condition of the premises deteriorated. We were threatened with eviction. Some students were scared to come to school. Still no action was taken to shape behaviour.

At assembly the day I resigned, three of the young people who were causing most of the damage and were responsible for the intimidation of other students, were throwing large flick knives in the carpet. I suggested it was time to take action. We had a responsibility to all the students. Duty of care made it intolerable for us to condone intimidation of young people by others carrying weapons. I suggested the young people were looking for boundaries. I asked at what point action would be taken. It was decided no action would be taken. I resigned.

Later that day I was on lunch duty. I was on my own. One of the boys carrying a knife blocked my exit from a room. He was testing me. I worked out the final six weeks of my contract in fear.

I believe the idea behind the school was well intentioned, but young people need boundaries and guidance. Duty of care as a teacher involves, wherever possible, assuring the

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environment is safe and conducive to learning. I believe this was not possible without shaping tools.

This experience did not diminish my desire to work with at-risk students. It did however consolidate my interpretation of duty of care and my approach to working with at-risk young people. I sought work in the priority school system (schools servicing large numbers of at-risk students).

Return to Mainstream

I started working as a relief teacher in government schools. I noticed there was a direct relationship between school behaviour management policies, student attitudes, and school atmosphere. Schools with harsh reactive policies were unpleasant places to work. I began refusing relief in these schools.

I enjoyed working with at-risk students. In regular classes I could teach eager students a new painting technique; with the at-risk young people I could make real changes in their attitudes to life and their chances of accessing legitimate employment. Most teachers voiced a dislike for working with the "tough cases"; I found it extremely rewarding and challenging. I continued looking for a position working with at-risk students.

Putting Theory to the Test

In 1995 I accepted a lecturing position in literacy on the Ocean Ridge CGEA. It was a pilot program providing educational service to at-risk year 10 students, skilling them up for work or technical college. I was struggling to find texts to capture their interest. They had negative attitudes to school, textbooks, and teachers. Many of the students had short attention spans. I wanted to teach lifeskills and literacy together. These young people were to leave school shortly, and were unlikely to succeed in the adult world with their present lifeskills, or work ethic.

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"Top Dog" (Appendix B) was the first story and associated work sheet I wrote. They were written in an attempt to deal with issues arising from a bullying incident. The style of analysis encouraged was based on ideas from Sartre's Existentialism and Humanism (1975) - we are all responsible for what we choose to do. The work sheet encouraged the young people to examine the actions and choices of each participant in the event. The text encouraged a sociological interpretation of events, that is, all involved share responsibility for the outcome - the bully, the henchmen, the victim, and the audience. The work sheet was evaluated, not on ethics expressed, but on a one point scored for one point made, basis. There was no upper limit. This was a literacy task, and the further you pushed your literacy, the more you scored. Students were baffled by this at first, but as I explained the marking system, they learned how to operate it. They gradually pushed themselves to write more, and so score more. This extended their literacy, whilst allowing them opportunity to review their ethical codes, without being judged.

The next night I wrote "Big Butt Betty" (Netolicky, 1996, p. 38). This was the beginning of The Teenage Survival Guide: For Teenagers, Parents, Teachers and Youth Workers (Netolicky, 1996). It was apparent that these young people were eager to learn, but they wanted easy-to-read materials, that related to their daily experiences.

In 1996 I agreed to coordinate the Ocean Ridge program, but I was unhappy running it without shaping tools. In 1995 we had run blind. I began designing a set of shaping tools. These included the ethos document and the behaviour management policy (Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 63- 67). Through professional development days and conferences, I was encouraged to document empowering strategies offered on the program. This led to the documentation of the truancy policy, and job-getting and job-keeping scenarios in TSG II.

In 1996 we achieved 100% attendance employing the new shaping tools, and behaviours were greatly improved. All young people on this program were placed in technical college or the workplace. All were still succeeding three months later. Inexplicably the program failed to achieve funding for the second half of 1996.

A New Beginning

During 1996 and 1997 TSG and TSG II took off. I had written the texts for local students. I was concerned with the irrelevance of available teaching materials for my target group. I wanted to write in local, teenage, conversational English, so the base-line literacy students did not have the added problem of decoding American English, or formal English. I was surprised when the texts were taken up in the United Kingdom, United States, and Canada. The stories appeared to have transportability. They had "hit a common chord" and apparently filled a niche as yet not serviced.

In 1996 I was "head-hunted" by Monika Jolly. She was education officer for Family and Children's Services in Canning (Western Australia). She had heard me speak about the Ocean Ridge CGEA at a conference, and believed a similar program was needed in the Southern suburbs. We naively assumed that with a successful model, and a number of successful programs as a starting point, a client group desperately in need of service, and a community concerned about crime related to truancy and excluded students, that funding would be readily accessible. The battle for funding for the first VIP Program took 10 months.

In this time we did get funding for a 19 week program in 1997 for Ocean Ridge. All students were once again placed in technical college or work, and a single student truanted on two days early in the program, yet that program once again failed to gain ongoing funding.

The battle for funding for the VIP Program was fought in committee meetings and in Parliament. Lack of success on both fronts led me to respond to media requests for

interviews. There was extensive radio, newspaper, and television coverage. This resulted in significant public support. The marketing of the VIP Program was a learning experience. I had naively believed that the program would automatically be funded because it had proved beneficial, both for the young people and society. I was angry and frustrated. I wrote a poem. Writing often helps me focus my thoughts. The poem was designed to shock through juxtaposition of "their" world and "ours". The poem was published in <u>The Conspiracy of Birds and Other Bipeds to Save the Planet</u>:

the honourables

honourable premier lives in a prime leafy suburb
and isn't worried about an increase of crime in his area
honourable minister for education rushes his son off to a prestigious private school
most honourable police minister smiles contentedly as he leaves his safe suburb
for the downtown lock-up
while mario's breaking into a pensioner's house and stealing her life savings
and peter's sniffing glue down at the local school
and clarey's beating a service station attendant over the head with a baseball bat

honourable premier's wife's off to the beauty shop to have her hair blonded
education minister's wife's off to morning tea as katrina cleans her kitchen
police minister's wife's off for a weekend shopping in sydney
while mario's buying heroin in a nearby park
and peter's running senseless through the streets
and clarey's drinking himself silly behind the garden shed

when will they realise the problem won't go away?
when will they realise these small problems
will grow up to be big problems?
when will they realise these kids are acquiring skills
even if they're truanting from school?
can't they see *their* children and grand-children won't be safe on the streets?

the problem must be addressed
we won't accept the notion of *"acceptable losses"*
this is their *future* we're talking about
this is *your* future we're talking about!
write to your minister
now

before it's too late for these kids
before it's too late for society

before it's too late

(Netolicky, 1996b, p. 7)

Through the use of black comedy the point was made in the first two verses. But my agenda was not perfect poetry. This was a vehicle for my anger and frustration. Writing for me is cathartic. It is also about communication. I wanted to make sure the message was clear. The poetry was compromised as a result. I had focused on alienated students creating the greatest social harm. I recognised our cause would not be facilitated by focusing on young people who merely do not attend school because of chronic victimisation, conflict with a teacher, or boredom, yet these young people were also desperately in need of education. I saw my agenda as focusing on the young people posing the greatest threat to society, in order to inspire politicians and bureaucrats to allocate funding to these desperately needy young people.

Writing the poem was cathartic. It released my feelings of frustration. It also made me realise where we had gone wrong. We began identifying the key figures' political agendas and began addressing these issues. In May 1997 funding was allocated for one VIP Program. Gaining funding for 1998 was also a battle, despite our success rate.

The Significance of the Self-Study to my Thesis

This extended self-study serves a number of distinct purposes. It offers an opportunity for assessing personal bias by demonstrating the ideological base from which I operate. It also demonstrates critical moments in my life, where modification of my ideology and *modus operandi* occurred. Through this inquiry, it became apparent, that books, films, and individuals transformed my ideological stance and manner of operating. Even the comedy What about Bob? (Ziskin & Oz, 1991) had the ability to alter my reading of, and reaction to, events. At various times in my life poetry changed my perception of the world. Science fiction novels influenced the way I read human history, and my past. Stranger in a Strange Land (1965) by

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Robert Heinlein influenced my attitude to natural "beauty". I read the text at 16, yet the significance of this theme of the novel became integral to my views on youthful beauty. This text, however trivial, initiated my current views on aging physically and growing mentally. Asimov's Foundation (Asimov, 1960), Foundation and Empire (Asimov, 1962), and Second Foundation (Asimov, 1964) affected the way I read human history. I began to perceive the cyclical nature of human history that I had failed to grasp in history class. Michael Crichton's Jurassic Park (1990) was the springboard for The TEE Survival Guide (Netolicky & Netolicky 1993). Reading the text at the same time as Secondary Education Authority documents on the Tertiary Entrance Examination led me to begin to question the evaluation system currently in place. Individuals or authors became mentors. I learned, changed and grew when I encountered these teachings at critical times.

This self-study has affirmed my belief that it is possible to shape individuals through texts. I had been employing these tools in my practice, now through this self-study I observed that these critical moments made long lasting changes to both my ideology and *modus operandi*. Einstein and hooks confirmed this potential. This is vital to an understanding of the success of these programs. Why are the young people choosing to make the move to access legitimate paths to success? Have these changes any permanence? The self-study demonstrates that in my case, as in the case of Einstein and hooks, texts introduced at critical times can change personal ideology and mode of operating. The self-study reinforced my belief that curriculum can be used as a tool to shape behaviour, ethics and attitudes, but the curriculum must be introduced at significant moments, when student life experience can be linked to curriculum content.

For educational theory to contribute to mainstream practice, it must articulate from a classroom/real-life base. Some educational theory needs to be tested in the classroom. This is the "laboratory" of educational research. If educational theory is to change the way

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educational practitioners teach, it must be grounded in classroom experience and tested in action. All theories expounded in this thesis are grounded in life experience, tested in the classroom and modified as need arose. The way is now clear for the following chapters to examine the ideological underpinnings of the Strike Four model, and how this ideology is carried through in policy and practice.

Strike Four: The Ideological Underpinnings

This chapter is brief, elucidating only the central tenets that underlie the <u>Strike Four</u> policy and practice. These tenets include: provision of a full and pertinent education for all young people; client-centred education; resistance to class-based hegemony in education; the use of democratic principles as a base for school behaviour management; education for student empowerment and self-management; clarity in staff agendas relating to client-employer relations; and a commitment to minimising the use of power as a tool to manage schools and classrooms. Prior to evaluating the model's policies and strategies and their effectiveness in modifying the *modus operandi* of our clients, using an action research approach, it is necessary to establish its supposed ideological base. This sets ground rules from which to investigate whether policy and practice reflect purported ideology. Prior to ascertaining if particular strategies are proving effective in practice, I examine the educational theory upon which relevant policy was built, the extent to which this ideology is applied in practice, whether policy and practice are contributing to changes in students' modes of operating, and whether these modifications are fleeting, or have some degree of permanence.

As the model evolved in an attempt to offer a full and appropriate educational service to young people alienated from school, practice generated policy, which was largely designed to address crises and conflicts. Strategies were developed to solve problems, tested in action, and modified where necessary, in order to offer both a refined model, and better service to our clients. Whilst establishing <u>Strike Four</u>'s ideological base is essential to strategy and model evaluation, it is of course what is put into practice that counts. The potential for this type of educational theory to modify teaching practice is demonstrated only to the extent that it can be effectively applied in the classroom.

It is necessary to note that our purported ideology, and what we actually put into policy and practice, may not be one and the same. How we act at critical moments does not always reflect what we believe we hold sacred. It is often only through our failures that theory and policy short-comings become apparent, and that new solutions emerge for the problems that are exposed.

A Full and Appropriate Education for All

In Freedom to Learn for the 80's, Rogers (1983, p. 1) foregrounded the need to "help all of our young people - the despairing, alienated youth of the ghetto, the aimless, affluent youth, the serious, thoughtful children, the whole great mass of our young people - if we are to preserve this fragile planet and build a future world worthy of persons". As educators we need to aim at providing a complete and pertinent service to all youth not just the easy-to-teach, motivated, compliant student who sits, listens and behaves, even if the lesson is for them, meaningless. If we embrace the notion of "acceptable losses", we contribute to an ever-increasing under-class, unable to access legitimate employment. This has negative spin-offs, not just for the young people, but for the community as a whole, as the community will ultimately bear the burden of the unemployed, and those accessing illegitimate employment.

In his Nobel Prize lecture in 1950, Russell suggested that "the main thing needed to make the world happy is intelligence. And this, after all, is an optimistic conclusion, because intelligence is a thing that can be fostered by known methods of education" (in Chomsky, 1972, p. 49). In designing the model, I took as a starting point the augmentation of intelligence, ethics, work ethic, and lifeskills as integral to whole person education. If we begin from this position the challenge of education becomes fostering intelligence in those reluctant to learn by deriving a model and educational environment where these young

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people are willing to participate and can grow at their own pace. The model was designed to operate from the perspective that intelligence is not improved by force-fed content, but can be fostered through augmentation of problem solving, conflict resolution (see TSG & TSG II) and research skills, and where the young person is empowered to manage his/her own learning and behaviours (through positive contracting see Chapter 7, III). This approach also minimises the possibility for education to be restricted to formal schooling, as the young people leave school with skills to manage their future learning needs.

Russell, speaking on this issue, stated that if people "had to be tempted to work instead of driven to it, the obvious interest of the community would be to make work pleasant" (in Chomsky, 1972, p. 48). Following Russells's idea, the onus is on the teacher to provide relevant, engaging material appropriate to his/her students. The policy documents constructed for Strike Four programs state that the young people are also to accept some responsibility for their failure to engage with the curriculum. The model's truancy policy encourages the young people to participate in shaping the school environment and curriculum through negotiation. By truanting the young people are self-disadvantaged, and their learning deficits increase. The programs' literacy curriculum offers a variety of empowering strategies for shaping environments where young people lack full power (for example "Negotiating a Deal", Appendix C, & "Making Education Work for You", Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 34- 35).

The model's policies acknowledge that at present troublesome behaviour students are often excluded from education so that learning can continue for the other students. The model attempts to address this issue by implementing strategies for managing troublesome students in the classroom. Here crises are treated as golden teaching moments (see Chapter 7, I), rather than as a justification for exclusion, and relevant-to-the-moment curriculum is introduced to address immediate issues or crises.

If we are to provide a full and appropriate service to all young people in the compulsory age group, we need to either begin developing strategies to maintain these difficult young people in the teaching-learning environment, or alternatively providing appropriate off-site units where they can receive educational service, whilst developing strategies to self-manage socially problematic behaviours.

Education: Who is the Service-Client?

Integral to an understanding of the issue of appropriate service for all youth is an understanding of whom teachers are employed to serve - that is the students and then through them, the community to which they belong. On the one hand, as teachers, we have an obligation to provide all young people with a full and appropriate education. On the other, teachers are generally paid by society, making society the service-client. If society is the first client, then the prime objective of education should be perpetuation of the status quo. In this case, the individual student's needs are subordinate to whatever norm happens to prevail as the social good, and the troublesome student may be excluded to facilitate providing service to the motivated student.

When discussing Dewey, Marshall reflected on the teacher as a tool of the status quo. He saw the teacher as the perpetuator of tradition, with society as master. Marshall (1996, p. 74) suggested that "teaching and learning are ... necessary for the transmission of social life and the school is necessary for this transmission". This stands in stark contrast to the view put forward by Harrison, Godfrey, and Partington (1997, p. 1), where the learner is seen as the service-client. Today's teachers are trapped in the dichotomy of service to the individual, or service to society, contributing to problematic readings of who is client, and who is master. Whom are we employed to serve, and to whom is our obligation of appropriate service? Do

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we merely function as tools of the society that pays the bills, or should we have the student's best interests in mind? To operate from an informed base, teachers need to be conscious of who employs them, for what purpose, and how this fits with their personal beliefs regarding appropriate service to the students. Accepting that a conflict exists, and taking a personal position on the issue, helps teachers prioritise goals and address role conflict in the teaching-learning environment.

Ashley (1991, p. 78) argued that, "once upon a time human subjects located themselves in terms of the philosophico-political referents of the 'grand narratives' or 'metanarratives' of post- Enlightenment modernity". Ashley suggested that in the past teachers functioned as mere tools of the status quo and our mission was the communication of the grand narratives and elucidation of the individual's role in the liberation of humanity as it "struggled blindly against the barriers it had erected against its own self-understanding" (Ashley, 1991, p. 79). Ashley saw the historical teacher's mission as a "struggle toward the light", as humanity fought to "reconcile technology with democracy" (Ashley, 1991, p. 79).

Langman (1991, p. 165), on the other hand, made the point that "the socialized and legitimated nature of ordinary life practices, discourses and typical character that well serve hegemonic stabilization, may, however, provide the individual personal malaise". Langman foregrounded the danger of stabilisation resulting in stagnation. He feared stabilisation may be achieved only at the expense of innovation and personal motivation. Langman (p. 167) also suggested "Freud would argue that the progress of civilization and its veneer of rationality were based on increasing requirements for the repression of biological drives. Behind the prudery of the bourgeoisie lay powerful impulses that required social constraints". Teachers functioning as tools of the status quo are often representatives of the prudery of the bourgeoisie, or in other contexts the prudery of Stalinist or other repressive regimes, thereby perpetuating dominant social myths without deliberate intent. Most of us, as teachers, are so

successfully indoctrinated in the myths of our time, that we often slip into disseminating dominant dogma unconsciously.

There is another inherent danger in teachers operating as a tool of the political economy, further contributing to the alienation of young people from the power structures, thereby creating opportunity for their abuse by power wielders. As suggested by Baudrillard, "the system of political economy does not produce only the individual as labor power that is sold and exchanged: it produces the very conception of labor power as fundamental human potential" (cited by Ashley, 1991, p. 75). As a tool of the status quo, teachers are responsible for encouraging conformity and perpetuation of current ideas and values. This is particularly problematic when servicing young people at odds with local law and mainstream social values. The young people we service are often accessing socially discouraged avenues of success. They may be contributing to the crime economy, have poor social skills, or may have opted to exclude themselves altogether from mainstream education. By encouraging a positive work ethic are we as teachers functioning as a tool of the political economy, colluding in the young people's future subjugation, contributing to their alienation as labor power, or are we liberating them from the limited paths currently available to them, and opening up greater choice for future career paths? Teachers need to be aware of the dangers inherent in role conflict as service provider for the students, and employee of the society.

Vandenberg (1990) saw conflict as inherent in the very definition of education as a phenomenon. He demonstrated that depending on the definition of education adopted, education has different functions and masters. Educators need to decide from what base they are operating if they are to provide a consistent service. Vandenberg suggested that "historically, education is the transmission of the human heritage in order to maintain and enhance the level of civilization a given society has attained" (p. 3). Here the society is master. The individual, or student, is insignificant. It is the ultimate goal that counts - the

augmentation of civilisation - the individual is a mere tool, not a client. Anthropologically speaking, Vandenberg suggested "education is the humanization of the young that occurs in the dialogue between the generations and that enables the young to attain adulthood and a place in the adult society" (p. 3). Here the function of education is to serve the student and provide her/him with the necessary skills to participate in, and contribute to, the wider society. In this way both the individual and society are served. Sociologically, on the other hand, Vandenberg purported that "education is the socialization of the young into societal roles and values believed necessary and desirable for a society's continued existence" (p. 3). In this case, the society is master and the educator's role is one of hegemonic stabilisation. Politically, Vandenberg held that "education is the preparation for citizenship in the state or nation" (p. 3). In serving this function, the teacher is a mere tool of the state. The role of teacher becomes the preparation of compliant citizens, and perpetuation of the status quo. Vandenberg suggested that "economically, education is the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for gainful employment and for training the workforce" (p. 3). So economically the educator is working both for the individual and the state. The educator's role is perceived as entailing both perpetuation of the status quo, and facilitation of growth and development of the individual. These diverse readings of the function of education have contributed to the confusion of role expectations for teachers. Teachers need to take a stand. They must decide what their function is, in order to offer consistent service.

The Strike Four model was primarily designed to offer educational service to disaffected youth. However, its policies and practices claim to recognise its obligation to the funding body and society, the employers. Strike Four program curriculum has been designed to encourage the young people to reassess their current ethical codes. This involves examining the long-term prospects of participating in the criminal economy. Working with disaffected youth we have to take particular care, as many of our students come from homes where

crime is considered an acceptable way to make a living. We do not want to drive a wedge between parent and child. We see our role as facilitating proactive consideration of various life choices - legal and illegal - rather than the imposition of our middle class values on the young people. By encouraging the young people to think before they act and to consider the pros and cons of various lifestyle choices, we also fulfil our obligation to our employer by encouraging proactive decision making by empowered citizens, able to resolve conflicts and self-manage their problem behaviours whilst making informed choices.

The Hidden Middle Class Agenda

When constructing Strike Four policies I was concerned with the hidden agenda of education - the propagation of middle class morality, ethics, and lifestyles - or what Kneller (1958, p. 4) called evoking "thought-conformity". As a result model policies and strategies do not propose the imposition of a middle class ethos and work ethic, rather these policies and strategies facilitate opportunity for reassessment of the young people's personal ethical code and mode of operating, thereby encouraging proactive decision making and consideration of the repercussions of possible choices and actions. So, the young people may consider crime as an employment option. By looking at the pros and cons of various lifestyles, the young people are encouraged to make their own life choices from an informed base.

Kneller believed that "truth is not a collection of subjective impressions common to all men. Existential truth represents what is unique in a particular man's[/woman's] existence" (p. 3). Operating from this perspective, the programs encourage the young people to critically examine their current ethical code, take ownership of it, and become conscious of the repercussions resulting from taking action based on this code. This is accomplished through TSG and TSG II stories and work sheets (in particular "Ethical Codes" & "Your Code of

Ethics", Netolicky, 1996, pp. 2- 3). <u>Strike Four</u> strategies and policies are constructed to endorse the notion that rather than attempting to impose a class specific set of values for all young people in education, educators should foster problem solving skills needed for intelligent decision making and personal ethical code review (see mission statement Chapter 6, I).

Fraser (1991, p. 100) stated that societies "contain a plurality of positions and perspectives from which to speak". Staff employed on <u>Strike Four</u> programs are expected to accept that our clients come from a wide variety of home backgrounds and may not be comfortable with middle class morality, language, or behaviours. This has been put into policy in the mission statement and ethos document (see Chapter 6, I & II). As educators, or researchers, we need to be aware of the inherent danger of speaking exclusively from the socio-cultural hegemonic perspective of the dominant group.

On the Ocean Ridge CGEA and VIP Programs we recognise our multiple function as service provider for alienated youth, with an obligation to the funding body, and to the society who pays the bills. The programs are designed to offer empowering skills to the young people so they can make informed decisions, and self-manage their behaviour issues. It may seem safer just to tell young people what to think, rather than empowering them with skills to make their own informed decisions. However, attempting to enforce thought-conformity has proved, in the long term, to be ineffective. As discussed in the literature review, individuals will still choose which laws to obey, and which to violate. By encouraging proactive decision making, the young people are invited to consider all options prior to making significant life choices. They are encouraged to see themselves as empowered to make important decisions. We invite them to see themselves as responsible for their choices and actions. We believe our approach makes better citizens who are: less likely to feel disempowered or alienated from mainstream society as the young people are skilled-up to shape their local environments;

empowered to make well thought-out decisions; more likely to be able to contribute to mainstream society by accessing legitimate employment; are empowered to shape, and contribute to, the local and larger community; and, as a result, are less likely to access illegitimate employment or unemployment benefits.

Education and Power

Even the best intentions are rendered ineffective if we cannot get these young people to attend school. In order to encourage alienated students to attend regularly it is crucial to establish a learning environment where they feel welcome and safe. Most of these young people have come to view school as a hostile environment, where power has been employed as a tool of oppression. They tend to be on the wrong side of behaviour management policies, and see policy and rules as disempowering, limiting their freedom, and reinforcing their alienation. In order to create a pleasant working environment, where these students are willing participants, the issues of power use, and abuse, must be addressed.

Power is a formidable "tool". In schools it is often employed without considering the consequences for the young people in care. Policies for managing students' behaviours are often more concerned with facilitating the teaching process, than with the wellbeing of all young people in the classroom. Strike Four strategies and policies were designed to promote the implementation of an idea seeded by Dewey in 1916 and subsequently developed by others, "to detect and state the ideas implied in a democratic society and to apply these ideas to the enterprise of education" (in Marshall, 1996, p. 73). Following Australian authors Cope and Stewart (1996, p. 155), the model was constructed so as to encourage, "appropriate use of democratic principles, ethics, rights and responsibilities of all school personnel, individual freedom, self-discipline and lawful dealings", in preference to a model where people in

positions of power, dictate and control behaviours of those disempowered in the particular environment. Schools are a workplace and need to be governed by the same understandings as other workplaces. Cope and Stewart suggested "using the law as the main basis for a behaviour management model means that, rather than just a particular philosophical stance, there is a firm, legally reasoned starting point for how behaviour is managed in schools and classrooms" (p. 155). In this way, learning the behaviour appropriate to school, is a preparation for life, and teaches citizenship skills. This approach has been adopted for use on Strike Four programs. Wherever possible the behaviour management policy mirrors local law.

The way power is employed in the Strike Four teaching-learning environment is encapsulated by Brodeth (1997) in her paper "' Powerspeak' and the Search for an Ethical Framework in Educational Leadership: A Feminist Perspective". She suggested that inherent in the reconstruction of power (in her case, women's reconstruction) are the considerations of "enabling , empowering, sharing, liberating, tapping others' potentials, giving freedom or autonomy to the powerless or the oppressed', in the workplace (or in our case in the classroom)" (p. 2). Here Brodeth's concern, like ours, is not in maintaining control, but in empowering others, thereby liberating their potential to shape their own futures. Brodeth noted that this "vision of power as 'the empowerment of others' is not always an easy formula to follow in the daily conundrums of administrative work" (p. 3). As pointed out by a school principal at a professional development day for teachers, "it can be frightening". The principal's concern was that if young people are "more empowered, teachers would not be in control of the classroom". We work from the position that it is dissatisfaction with powerlessness and curriculum content, which often make students hard to manage in the classroom. We empower the young people with skills to manage these aspects of their environment (see the truancy policy Chapter 6) whilst employing legitimate, socially endorsed

skills (taught through the literacy curriculum), thereby augmenting the teaching-learning environment for all parties, and diminishing the need for the use of power as a tool for classroom control. This liberates the teacher from duties of behaviour management, making his/her prime goal the delivery of a relevant and engaging curriculum, whilst gradually handing over responsibility, as students demonstrate the capability to manage their own learning and behaviours.

Freedom and Responsibility

Students on Strike Four programs are encouraged to operate on the notion of - responsibility demonstrated, freedom gained. The young people are encouraged to take more responsibility, for instance in shaping curriculum and in behaviour management, and if they demonstrate responsible decision making, their power in the teaching-learning environment is increased. If they make irresponsible decisions, their power may be decreased. The process of gradually handing over power from the adults in the classroom, to the young people, is managed in a controlled manner. In this way, teaching becomes an integral part of the socialisation process. As the young people near graduation they take on increasing responsibility to shape and manage their own futures.

Strike Four was designed to operate on fundamental existentialist philosophical principles. The model strategies, curriculum and policies encourage the young people to accept personal responsibility for their choices and actions or, as Sartre (1975, p. 29) said, "it puts every [wo/]man in possession of [herself/]himself as [s/]he is, and places the entire responsibility for [her/]his existence squarely upon [her/]his own shoulders", thereby making the point that "[wo/]man is nothing other than what [s/]he makes [herself/]himself" (Kneller citing Sartre, 1958, p. 3). In this way, the young people are encouraged to see that their future is in their

own hands, their choice of action or inaction shapes their future opportunities and realities. This is facilitated through program curricula, where TSG and TSG II stories and work sheets are used to address issues.

Summative Reflection

I have argued that the central values underlying the <u>Strike Four</u> model are: a commitment to provide a full and appropriate education for all young people, even those reluctant to participate in mainstream education; acknowledgment of human diversity relating to class, ethnic group and genetic predisposition, thereby addressing dominant group hegemonic imperialism; clarity in staff agenda relating to service provision and obligations; commitment to the application of democratic principles in the educational environment, where all participants are empowered with skills to shape the environment and their futures; commitment to diffusing the potential for abuse of power in the educational environment through the application of democratic principles; and a commitment to educational practice as emancipatory, empowering and liberating for all participants. In constructing <u>Strike Four</u> policy we concerned ourselves with the danger of creating merely a new set of alienating rules. Or as suggested by Chomsky (1972, p. 47) in relation to the radical reconstruction of society there is a need to "search for ways to liberate the creative impulse, not to establish new forms of authority". Having outlined the central precepts underlying the model, I will ascertain whether purported ideology is reflected in <u>Strike Four</u> policy. In order to this it is necessary to examine the development of various policy documents and their inherent logic.

Although this chapter addresses policy and operational issues, it does not pretend to be a handbook for program creation. Its purpose is to elucidate how and why policy evolved, how policy was tested in practice, modified and tested again. This required a critical examination of early and current model policy. The chapter deals with the process of putting ideology into policy, trialing policy in practice, the rationale for modifications resulting from classroom testing, and the presentation of new models derived through the testing process. Policies created for the Ocean Ridge CGEA and the VIP Program include: a mission statement, ethos document, behaviour management policy, truancy policy, exclusion policy, and participants' rights and responsibilities. These documents have been embedded in the text to facilitate reading as they are brief, rarely more than a single page, and are referred to extensively only where embedded.

When I took over the position of program coordinator on the Ocean Ridge CGEA in 1996 there was no policy in place. On the 1995 program, student behaviour had been wild, but there was no policy to call into play to shape behaviour. I believe teachers are employed by the community to further the socialisation process by facilitating the acquisition of skills for self-empowerment and legitimate employment. These skills include enhancing student knowledge of behaviour, dress and language appropriate to the adult workplace, skills to acquire, retrieve and transmit knowledge, and socially endorsed skills for negotiation and managing one's behaviours.

I oppose mainstream policies maintaining control of much of this kind of knowledge, and the potential for development of these skills, in the hands of school bureaucrats and teachers. In mainstream, school rules often preclude the potential for learning the social dynamics

operating, by dictating appropriate and inappropriate dress, language and behaviour common to all school situations. This results in a sudden, rather than a gradual, letting go of responsibility. The potential for a controlled transference of responsibility from teacher to pupil, as the learner demonstrates increased responsibility, is rendered impracticable by archaic schools rules better suited to a nineteenth century model, where the teacher was an empowered dictator and the student a disempowered object. I suggest in the TSG, that the "process of 'letting go' needs to be done in a **knowledge driven, thoughtful and controlled manner**, rather than a chaotic, action-reaction process .... [operating on] the principle of **'responsibility demonstrated - freedom gained'** ". (Netolicky, 1996, p. 9). This formed the base of the Strike Four behaviour management policy, where the young people can demonstrate increased responsibility in order to gain freedoms. If they violate our trust, freedoms are subtracted. In this way, parameters are set, and a mechanism is put in place where participants can negotiate. The young people are taught how to negotiate for increased freedoms through stories such as "Negotiating a Deal" (see Appendix C). This style of behaviour management is a logical extension of the socialisation process into the classroom. It can be put in place from kindergarten, enabling the slow relinquishing of power by teachers and the bureaucracy, to the student, as responsibility is demonstrated. Following our 19 week programs these young people enter the adult world. This approach facilitates the controlled handing over of responsibility for self-management to the young people.

Schools need to examine the ideological underpinnings of their current policies. Much current policy remains firmly grounded in past thinking, when young people were regarded as the objects of education, not our service-clients. School rules, an anachronism from object-based education, often preclude the opportunity for an appropriate client-centred service. Returning to Brodeth's (1997, p. 2) assertion, I agree education and leadership should be, "enabling, empowering, sharing, liberating, tapping others' potentials, [and] giving freedom or

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autonomy to the powerless or the oppressed', in the workplace (or in our case in the classroom)". As stated by Marsh (1988, p. 4), "major changes are often initiated by state education systems and by federal government agencies", rather than school-initiated with a local client focus. Many of these top-down changes employ a band-aid approach, by attempting to fix up current policy with add-ons, such as "new subject matter and modes of instruction" (Marsh, 1988, p. 5). As there was no policy in place on the Ocean Ridge CGEA, I had the unique opportunity to construct a model from scratch, to take a green field/clean slate approach. It would have been easy to look around for a local model and run with it, or to resurrect some archaic mentally idealised model from "the good old days", but I wanted to construct a model I believed best serviced the funding body, the society, and the students. I wanted to devise a model grounded in democratic processes and justice.

Policies in place in mainstream schools to manage student behaviour are usually not based on democratic principles, and are exclusion based. Exclusion based policies result in troublesome students missing chunks of their education whilst in time-out, suspension, or expulsion. Behaviour management policies need to do more than exclude troublesome students. They need to address inappropriate behaviours by empowering the young people with skills to minimise conflict in the future. Young people entering the adult world without the appropriate skill base enter disempowered. I believe it is skills acquired, rather than content taught, that are the key to success. As our programs service young people already disaffected and excluded from mainstream, I wanted to establish a behaviour management policy that used democratic principles as a base, and empowered the troublesome students, on site, with strategies to manage their inappropriate behaviours in the future.

In 1995 I was employed only as a literacy lecturer. When I became Program Coordinator in February 1996, there was little time to put an ideological base in place. Confirmation of program funding came only a few days before we had to start teaching. Based on my

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alternative education experience and 1995 Ocean Ridge experience, I put my initial energy into designing a set of shaping tools including the ethos document, a truancy policy, and a behaviour management policy. So, it was not until mid 1996, whilst writing TSG II, that I began constructing an unambiguous statement of the program's ideological underpinnings.

I. The Mission Statement

In 1996, at staff induction, I discussed the program's ideological base with each new lecturer and youth work student. I believed that staff now understood what I expected of them. The ideological base I presented at these induction interviews was probably much like the first hard copy mission statement. I now realise that this should have been put down on paper, at the start, to assure there was no misunderstanding of program ideology and that there was consistency in curriculum content.

My leadership style evolved whilst coordinating these programs. My strategies and policy developed largely out of necessity to address immediate needs. At the outset I assumed too much. Over time I learned the necessity of having everything in writing. On the first program I assumed that having discussed my ideological base with prospective teachers, and having employed teachers on the basis of general agreement with this ideological base, that they too would shape their curriculum using this ideology as a base.

The mission statement was a step in the right direction. It was an attempt to assure consistency of focus. I am now aware that having a hard copy mission statement was just a beginning. In future, all teaching staff will be given a copy of the program mission statement with their introductory package. All staff will sign a document stating they accept the ideological base of the program and believe they can operate competently from this base. This offers a tool for shaping teaching styles at odds with program ideology.

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The first hard copy mission statement was designed to shape curriculum, not behaviour. It offered a base from which all curriculum could be generated. When writing the mission statement, I operated on the belief that if curriculum was interesting to the service-clients, and perceived by them to be relevant, behaviour problems would be minimised. I was also motivated by a commitment to prepare these young people for the adult world; hence the focus was on skills necessary for adult life. The first mission statement read:

MISSION STATEMENT #1

Education is for life. It recognises that individuals will fill a variety of niches in society, not necessarily the niche occupied by parents or teachers. Hence education must provide:

- skills for **self-empowerment, negotiation and conflict-resolution** necessary for *any* chosen niche in society.
- skills for **critical assessment and inquiry** necessary for responsible decision-making.
- a framework and understanding of **ethical codes** and a methodology for reassessment and growth of one's personal chosen ethical code.
- **tools to recognise coercion** and abuse of power-relationships, and techniques to re-negotiate these relationships for personal empowerment.
- a basis for both **acknowledging and accepting responsibility** for who and what one is and skills to change and modify one's behaviour and enhance one's choices. Inherent in this is the notion that one must accept the consequences of one's choices and that all action or inaction is choice.
- skills for **remembering and learning new data** necessary for one's chosen path. This may involve techniques such as mnemonics, note-taking, association of ideas - ways of learning and remembering.
- **research skills** necessary for any enterprise, be it house-hunting or academic essay writing - but tailored to the interest group.

(Netolicky, 1996a, p. 69)

The following discussion offers the rationale behind the original mission statement. A full critique of the document's shortcomings is offered through modifications put in place for mission statements II and III. The opening statement, "Education is for life" was an attempt to direct program staff to the significance of their role as secondary socialisers. It

acknowledged that education has a specific purpose. School is not merely a matter of keeping young people off the streets for six hours a day. It is a type of *rite de passage*.

In creating this first mission statement I tried to be brief. I wanted to capture our goals "in a nutshell". Through brevity I often left myself open to misinterpretation. Subsequent mission statements addressed this.

The second sentence "recognises that individuals will fill a variety of niches in society, not necessarily the niche occupied by parents or teachers". The intent was to acknowledge that the program should not merely mirror the middle class morality of much of the teaching profession. It stressed the need for teachers to recognise that the young people come from the full range of social niches, and as adults they will enter a wide variety of social niches with varied expectations. The sentence was intended to foreground the need for teachers to invite students to explore the various possible lifestyles available to adults, thereby empowering them to make informed decisions in the future when we are no longer there to guide them. It was an initial attempt to direct teachers away from teaching the young people what to think, to teaching them how to think. By the second 1997 program I realised sample curriculum was needed to demonstrate how this could be applied in action. I wrote the work sheet "Making a Living" (Appendix E). Here the young people are invited to consider the pros and cons of various lifestyle choices (working at <u>Chicken Treat</u>, dealing drugs, or prostitution), thereby making their own decision as to the best lifestyle choice. Many of our students come from home backgrounds where these professions are perceived to be appropriate life choices. When work sheets are marked, students are judged on literacy not their ethical choices, but their choices may indicate a need to prepare other work sheets addressing the issue from various angles.

Working from this base the mission statement delineated specific expectations of curriculum content:

- "skills for **self-empowerment, negotiation and conflict-resolution** necessary for any chosen niche in society". Here I focused on the need for teaching styles to be empowering. Students need to learn skills of negotiation needed for any chosen life path. They also need to develop conflict resolution skills. These skills are developed in various ways in the classroom using the TSG and TSG II stories as a base (for example "Negotiating a Deal" Appendix C; "Off his Face", Netolicky, 1996, pp. 6- 7).

- "skills for **critical assessment and inquiry** necessary for responsible decision-making". Here the emphasis is on empowering students to make informed decisions. The TSG and TSG II stories and work sheets are one way in which decision making skills are honed (for example "It's Okay to Say "No", Netolicky, 1996, pp. 61- 62).

- "a framework and understanding of **ethical codes** and a methodology for reassessment and growth of one's personal chosen ethical code". This emphasised the need to recognise that there is no single correct ethical code. Ethical codes are personal and need to be modified continually so individuals can come to terms with, and interpret, new experiences. The work sheet, "Your Code of Ethics" (Netolicky, 1996, p. 3), is the base from which we work. By ranking the statements on the work sheet, students are able to see that they already have an ethical code. For instance, by deciding that they would prefer to get rich by "winning Lotto", rather than "earning it myself", and that they would prefer "earn it myself" to "stealing", is their current ethical code. We begin from this base, and then through a variety of scenarios from the TSG and TSG II we invite them to reassess their current ethical code. We usually begin with "Best Mates Don't Do That" (Netolicky, 1996, p. 4). This story begins from a base most students can accept - we don't

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steal from best friends. From here we go on to discuss other kinds of stealing that are more problematic for the young people, such as, photocopying on the work photocopier. Is it okay to photocopy one page, 10 pages, 100 hundred pages, at what point is it stealing? Is it okay to steal from a shop that over charges? Is it okay to steal a pen from a bank? Is it okay to cheat on your taxes?

- "tools to **recognise coercion** and abuse of power-relationships, and techniques to re-negotiate these relationships for personal empowerment." This is accomplished through tasks such as "Negotiating a Deal" (Appendix C). Students are also encouraged to recognise abuse of power relationships through stories like "Off his Face" (Netolicky, 1996, pp. 6- 7) and "Mom can we Talk" (Netolicky, 1996, pp. 12- 13).

- "a basis for both **acknowledging and accepting responsibility** for who and what one is and skills to change and modify one's behaviour and enhance one's choices. Inherent in this is the notion that one must accept the consequences of one's choices and that all action or inaction is choice." This is based on Sartre's Existentialism and Humanism (1975). This approach to problem solving and self-empowerment is encouraged through stories and work sheets in the TSG and TSG II (for example see "A Big Deal Out of Nothing", Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 38- 39; "Just you Dare!", Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 44- 45).

- "skills for **remembering and learning new data** necessary for one's chosen path. This may involve techniques such as mnemonics, note-taking, association of ideas - ways of learning and remembering." On past programs this has been accomplished through a variety of tasks, such as, note-taking from a video on the drug ecstasy, writing a speech or article demonstrating that you can make meaning from your notes, and memorising key points of the speech so it can be delivered in class. Here the emphasis is placed on the skill learned, not the content of the task. Topics tend to be largely student determined.

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- **"research skills** necessary for any enterprise, be it house-hunting or academic essay writing - but tailored to the interest group." This may be accomplished by low literacy students by combining information from two Health Department pamphlets on say drugs, rental accommodation, or sexually transmitted diseases, and offering a personal introduction and conclusion. A strong literacy student may use a variety of other texts in addition, such as encyclopedias and other expository texts. What is stressed is the acquisition of research skills and the ability to present information in an appropriate format and genre, rather than the particular subject matter.

This first mission statement was an attempt to assure that curriculum had a single focus - the empowerment of the young people to manage and negotiate their futures. Most of the young people referred to in these programs lack skills necessary for functioning friction free in the wider society. This contributes to their alienation. It is not so much their poor literacy or numeracy skills that result in their alienation, as their lack of ability to negotiate their path through the school environment without regular conflict. Hence the aim here is one of socialisation - offering socially acceptable skills to avoid friction with the larger society, whilst augmenting skills to navigate life empowered.

Mission Statement II

When applying for initial funding for the VIP Program, we operated on the assumption that if the funding body could see exactly what we were trying to do, it would facilitate endorsement of our funding request. We included the above mission statement in our funding application (Netolicky & Jolly, 1996).

When funding finally came through, after a 10 month battle, I revised the mission statement. I wanted to post it on the bulletin board so that all lecturers and students were aware, and constantly reminded, of the ideological underpinnings of the program. I believed that as the

mission statement was framed in positive and empowering terminology, it would have a positive influence on student attitudes.

The first mission statement's positive approach was reinforced through staff and student posters. Staff and students were encouraged to create a poster stating their personal ideology and beliefs in a few positive points. The intention was to get all program participants to frame their view of life in positive and empowering ways. I believe benefit was gained from these posters. They were colourful and attractive and cheered up the place. They included well thought out statements from staff and students, and they provided a base from which to augment student attitudes.

In 1998, in conjunction with the introduction of the second mission statement, this exercise has been taken further. It has become an integral part of week one curriculum. Students were encouraged to develop a short talk on their poster for their first Oral Communication assessment. This expanded the exercise in a positive way, as it required students to develop a justification for their positive points, whilst consolidating the ideology expressed. It also lent the task assessment value.

The positive points on the posters generated interesting discussions on ideological issues. This opportunity was not taken in the past, and I believe a valuable learning moment was missed. The following work sheet was designed, as a part of this study, for inclusion on the first 1998 program. It has now been applied once.

Oral Communication 1

Creating a Poster: Having a Positive Self Image

1. Do "Your Code of Ethics" (TSG , p. 3).
2. Whist doing "Your Code of Ethics" you all had to decide what was most important to you - your family, your friends, or getting rich. Now I want you to design a poster stating what you believe to be important. Each year we put these up at the front desk so visitors and new students to the program can learn who we are.

Make a rough copy on scrap paper first. Have your spelling checked. Part of all CGEA assessment tasks is a **rough draft plus a good copy**. This is to be assessed as an Oral Communication and Writing task.

(Square one Photo) (Square two "name" and "student") (Square three "I believe......". State **at least three positive things that are important to you.** Past students said things like:
I believe:
- education will help me get what I want out of life.
- friends are the most important thing in the world.
- family is the most important to me because I have none.
- getting a job is important. I don't want to land up on the dole like my Dad.
- self respect and liking yourself is important.
- being rich gives you the freedom to do whatever you want.
- love is better than war. There's too much hate in the world.
- all drugs should be legal so there's not so much crime.
- we should be able to smoke at 15 because we do anyway.
- this program will help me achieve my goals. I don't want to go on the dole or steal to live.
- there should be no war. I hate seeing children suffer because of adults fighting.
- all guns should be banned. There's already too much violence.
- we should be able to drive at 15 as we're responsible enough now.

3. Oral discussion based on your poster. **Prepare a short talk for the group on why you believe these things are important to you.** On this basis the teacher will begin to decide what level oral communication you will attempt.

Assessment criteria:
Has the student used appropriate language for the class group? _____
Has the student expressed their ideas clearly? _____
Has the student responded to other student's questions and feedback? _____
This student appears to be functioning at:
Level 1: _____ because _____
Level 2: _____ because _____
Level 3: _____ because _____
(Remember, you need to be doing at least three units at Level three to get into TAFE)

Signed lecturer: _____ Date: _____
(Unpublished work sheet, Netolicky, 1997)

The results of the first application of the work sheet were exhilarating. Student enthusiasm was startling. Student responses included: "the most important thing is to be happy; that all people should be respected; that all people are in control of their own actions", "I beleve You should respect other people; You should listen to people when they speak to You; If You do the write thing you should get rewarded", "that if you respect others, they will respect you back; Dope should be legalized; self respect is very important; Good education goes far in life; love & respect prevents war" and "In friendship you need trust; I need an education; In freedom; families are important". I believe this was a healthy activity. The young people had begun framing their view of life in a positive way. As the group included two chronic victims and one regular self-harmer, I saw this as a good base to work from when deriving strategies to help the young people develop empowering life-views.

In retrospect, by offering too extensive a choice, the work sheet may have led some young people to avoid deriving their own solutions. Some students merely selected from the list provided. This may have been the result of lack of confidence with a new group of people, and not wanting to "put themselves on the line". With other students it may have been related to a fear of demonstrating poor literacy. In the future, the task may be augmented if the list was cut down to three, and the other ideas merely offered for discussion prior to students constructing their own models. This would encourage students to frame their beliefs in their own words. In this case, they need to be assured adequate help will be provided with spelling. However, even students who merely selected items from the list provided still had to justify their choices in their Oral Communication presentation, so the lesson had value even for them.

Returning to Mission Statement #2, the intention was to frame our educational aims in positive statements, thereby encouraging positive attitudes, presenting yet another experience of positive goals to the young people. The second mission statement read:

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MISSION STATEMENT #2

This program intends to:
- provide a **safe, stimulating environment** for all young people on the program.
- **augment social responsibility** through respect for the effort of others.
- **augment lifeskills, ethics and self-control** as an integral part of all curricula.
- **broaden the cultural experience** of the young people.
- **introduce healthy, socially endorsed recreational alternatives** to risk-taking activities.
- **augment literacy and numeracy skills** necessary for the workplace or further studies.
- service these young people with **materials shaped to their interests and at their academic entry level.**
- provide **skills for self-empowerment, negotiation and conflict-resolution.**
- offer a **framework for ethical code review** and a **methodology for reassessment of one's personal ethical code.**
- offer a **format for acceptance of responsibility** for who one is, and offer skills to control who one will become.
- provide **skills for critical assessment and inquiry** necessary for responsible decision-making.
- enhance **skills for remembering and learning** new data.
- provide **research skills** necessary for any enterprise.
- enhance **social skills** such as working in teams, cooperating with others and negotiating compromise.
- **encourage legitimate, socially endorsed choices and actions.**

The VIP Program attempts to provide a positive, retentive, learning environment where all participants and visitors feel valued, safe and welcome at all times.

(Netolicky, 1997)

Here I edited out the first few lines of the earlier mission statement. In retrospect, this was probably because I was angling this mission statement at students, rather than specifically at the funding body or staff. However, during the 1997 VIP Program, it became apparent that posting the mission statement can serve as a reminder to staff of our ideological base. Some staff had drifted from the original focus. There are times when all staff members "lose the plot". We all get "stressed out", and at times are merely surviving in the classroom, not shaping the environment. I now believe this mission statement is as important to keeping staff on track, as it is to shaping student attitudes. I also noticed that the mission statement was read by most visitors to the centre. So, in the future, I will reintroduce the introductory statements.

The focal points of this second mission statement were to:

- "provide a **safe, stimulating environment** for all young people on the program". This offered a base for environment construction and behaviour management. This indicated that behaviour threatening the wellbeing of any person on the program would have to be addressed. In future this point will include all program participants. I believe staff also have the right to feel they are working in a safe and stimulating environment. The issue of a safe environment is also addressed through the behaviour management policy. Here at the start of each program students vote for what will be considered major or minor violations of other's rights. The results of the vote are posted on the centre walls so that all students are aware of what their group considers appropriate repercussions for specific actions. Students do not have the right to vote on issues of law. This is also stated on the posted document. Illegal actions are a matter for police, not teachers. In this way, students are given a say in the behaviour management policy put in place for their particular program, however local law dictates the parameters of the decision making process.

- "**augment social responsibility** through respect for the effort of others". This was included in the mission statement to address the issues of theft, vandalism and graffiti. There are always a number of thieves and chronic graffiti artists referred to the program. The intention here was to develop curriculum to increase respect and appreciation for the effort of others. To address this issue we took on painting and renovating the house in which we worked. The young people became involved in sanding walls in preparation for painting, rebuilding damaged doors, selecting colours, and priming surfaces. The students experienced how much work went into the job. The outdoor toilet was covered in graffiti when we inherited the premises. The students renovated it in the first week of the VIP Program as part of the Independent Living project. It was still totally free of graffiti at the

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program end (27 weeks later). I regard this as an indication that the students were proud of what they had achieved, and had developed some understanding of the effort required to remove graffiti. We made it clear there was only one place graffiti was allowed, a generous lecturer supplied a park bench for that purpose. The rest of the premises remained graffiti free for the entire program.

- **"augment lifeskills, ethics and self-control** as an integral part of all curricula". We recognise that many of these young people are continually in trouble due to poor self-control - if they are angry they hit out, if cornered they hit out or swear, if they want something badly enough they may steal. We help them develop strategies to increase their reflective time and reduce reactive practices that land them in trouble. Here, for example, Peter was asked to count to three before hitting, swearing, or stealing. He was asked to take a few seconds to consider if this was the best choice of action. In this way many young people managed to decrease their reactive behaviours. For one student the strategy was so successful that his Juvenile Justice case worker decided he did not need to see him any more.

- **"broaden the cultural experience** of the young people". Our intention here was to broaden the young people's cultural experience in the hope they would learn new safe, legal ways to have fun. This was also the intention of the following statement to **"introduce healthy, socially endorsed recreational alternatives to risk-taking activities"**. We realise that the recreational activities these young people are indulging in, are heavily loaded toward risk taking and law breaking. Our intention, through the Recreation unit, was to offer healthier, legally sanctioned ways to get an adrenalin rush and have fun. The young people were taken on an excursion each week to rock climbing, the zoo, horse riding, Internet coffee shops, surfing, and other stimulating venues appropriate for their age group. Excursion venues are often selected by the students.

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- **"augment literacy and numeracy skills** necessary for the workplace or further studies." Here literacy and numeracy tasks must have a specific future oriented goal, no "busy work". The time many of these young people have to brush up literacy and numeracy skills needed for the world of work, is drawing to a close. They graduate at the end of the (19 or 27 week) program, so literacy and numeracy tasks need to have immediate relevance. This meant literacy could be augmented by working through health claim forms, filling out unemployment forms, and applying for work, whilst numeracy tasks may involve understanding bank statements, filling in invoices, or working out how much paint is needed to paint a room.

- "service these young people with **materials shaped to their interests and at their academic entry level**". This foregrounds the issue that students are free to enter into negotiation for a relevant curriculum. No student is to be deprived of appropriate service if their abilities are outside those of the group. All students are to be offered service appropriate for their needs.

- "provide **skills for self-empowerment, negotiation and conflict-resolution**" (as in the first mission statement).

- "offer a **framework for ethical code review** and a **methodology for reassessment of one's personal ethical code**" (as in the first mission statement).

- "offer a **format for acceptance of responsibility** for who one is, and offer skills to control who one will become" (as in the first mission statement).

- "provide **skills for critical assessment and inquiry** necessary for responsible decision-making" (as in the first mission statement).

- "enhance **skills for remembering and learning** new data" (as in the first mission statement).

- "provide **research skills** necessary for any enterprise" (as in the first mission statement).

- "enhance **social skills** such as working in teams, cooperating with others and negotiating compromise". This was not included in the initial mission statement. As the model developed, it became apparent that this issue needed to be addressed in order to skill these young people up for the workplace. Many of these young people had particular problems with working in groups. This was addressed through project work, peer teaching, and recreational activities. Here students had to accept pairing or teamwork to participate - for example in rock climbing, simulated job interviews, or negotiating for curriculum or increased rights.

- "**encourage legitimate, socially endorsed choices and actions**". Our funding on this program was provided by the Community Policing and Crime Prevention Council. This point was included to reinforce the need for the teachers, as employees of the Council, to encourage the young people to assess the benefits and disadvantages of legal and illegal activities. This is undertaken through various stories in the TSG and TSG II (for example "We're in this one Together", Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 48- 49 or "She'd be Dead Now", Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 58- 59).

Revisiting the mission statement, and the rationale behind it, in order to write this thesis, has been enlightening. It demonstrated the need to return to the earlier version and retrieve deleted sections. It also elucidated how we have put this mission into practice in the classroom. I was pleased to discover that this was not just a policy posted on the wall to

make us feel good, but a policy manifested in daily practice in our classroom and in curriculum content.

Mission Statement III

Before moving on, I felt it was necessary to construct a mission statement for future programs. Here I hope to have clarified problematic points, whilst reintroducing those deleted but functional items:

MISSION STATEMENT #3

Education is for life. **The VIP Program attempts to provide a positive, inclusive, learning environment where all participants and visitors feel valued, safe and welcome at all times.** Young people excluded from the classroom are missing chunks of their education. **Staff and students should work together to avoid the exclusion option,** as young people with learning deficits are disadvantaged for life. Choosing to not attend, or choosing to exclude a student has life-long repercussions, these actions need serious consideration. Staff and students are encouraged to be **reflective rather than reactive - consider the repercussions of your choice, to exclude or not attend, as these repercussions are for life.**

The young people will fill a variety of niches in society, not necessarily the niche occupied by their parents or teachers. Hence the aim is to empower the young people with skills necessary for **their** chosen futures. **Dress, language and behaviour must be appropriate to the workplace.** There is no set code. Expectations are dictated by the task at hand. The young people need to develop the ability to recognise appropriate-to-situation language, dress and behaviour. These are skills for life.

The program intends to:
- provide a **safe, stimulating environment** for all program participants.
- **augment lifeskills, ethics and self-control** as an integral part of all curricula.
- **enhance social responsibility** through respect for the effort of others.
- **augment literacy and numeracy skills** necessary for the work place or further studies.
- **broaden the cultural experience** of the young people.
- introduce **healthy, socially endorsed recreational alternatives** to risk-taking activities.
- service these young people with **materials shaped to their interests and at their academic entry level.**
- provide **skills for self-empowerment, negotiation and conflict-resolution.**
- offer a **framework for ethical code review** and a **methodology for reassessment of one's personal ethical code.**
- offer a format for **acceptance of responsibility** for who one is, and offer skills to control who one will become.
- develop the ability **to recognise coercion and abuse of power-relationships,** and techniques to re-negotiate these relationships for personal empowerment.
- provide **skills for critical assessment and inquiry** necessary for responsible decision-making .
- enhance **skills for remembering and learning** new data.
- provide **research skills** necessary for any enterprise.
- enhance **social skills** such as working in teams, cooperating with others and negotiating.
- encourage **legitimate, socially endorsed choices and actions.**

The VIP Program provides an inclusive educational service where numeracy, literacy, ethics and lifeskills are tailored to the needs of the client and where participants, staff and visitors feel valued, safe and welcome at all times.

(Netolicky, 1998, p. 1)

"Education is for life." This statement was reintroduced as previously suggested. **"The VIP Program attempts to provide a positive, retentive, learning environment where all participants and visitors feel valued, safe and welcome at all times**" has been introduced to address a regular conflict on the second 1997 program, where a single staff member regularly sought solutions to problems through the exclusion process, despite this being diametrically opposed to program ideology. Hence I felt it best to state this unequivocally in the new mission statement. We run inclusive programs, where crises and problem behaviours are addressed as an integral part of curriculum content; exclusion is not considered a real option. The young people we teach have been regularly excluded for problem behaviours. This has not solved their problems. They are referred to the program as they are still exhibiting these behaviours. Our solution is to address these issues on site. Hence this statement has been introduced to remind staff of our mission.

"Young people excluded from the classroom are missing chunks of their education." This statement is intended to remind staff of the serious repercussions from choosing to exclude a student. Behaviour management is not merely a matter of facilitating the teaching of others.

"Staff and students should work together to avoid this exclusion option as young people with learning deficits are disadvantaged for life." This clarifies the intentions of the previous statement and puts the responsibility on both students and staff. Students are often excluded for an action arising from the social group, or class. This is a whole group problem, not merely an individual problem, and needs to be addressed as such. Hence integrating the conflict into curriculum content, rather than excluding the young person, offers a better solution. Here stories from the TSG and TSG II are introduced as issues arise. The tables of contents of these two texts list all major issues in the stories. This facilitates use of the texts at the appropriate "golden" teaching moment. Curriculum content is not prescriptive; it is responsive to student wants and needs, and conflict resolution needs.

"Choosing to not attend, or choosing to exclude a student has life-long repercussions; these actions need serious consideration." Here I have chosen to lump together truancy and exclusion policies to emphasise that the repercussions of both actions are identical; both are matters of choice and both have serious negative spin-offs for the excluded young person.

"Staff and students are encouraged to be reflective rather than reactive - consider the repercussions of your choice to exclude or not attend as these repercussions are for life". Here attention is focused on a practice encouraged in both staff and students: that it is better to be reflective than reactive. Encouraging staff and students to think before they act minimises crises and conflicts. The point is linked to the truancy policy emphasising that self-exclusion and teacher-generated exclusion both result in student knowledge deficits.

"The young people will fill a variety of niches in society, not necessarily the niche occupied by their parents or teachers." This statement has been reintroduced from the original document to discourage dominant group hegemony.

"Hence the aim is to empower the young people with skills necessary for their chosen futures. **Dress, language and behaviour must be appropriate to the workplace.** There is no set code. Expectations are dictated by the task at hand. The young people need to develop the ability to recognise appropriate-to-the-situation language, dress and behaviour. These are skills for life." These statements offer a shaping tool to address inappropriate dress, language, and behaviour and encourage appropriate choice. These young people often lack the skills to select behaviour and dress appropriate to situation. These statements aim at improvement, not perfection, at encouraging, not dictating.

I believe these additions to the mission statement will resolve some staff problems encountered on the second 1997 program, whilst offering increased potential for honing the young people's skills for managing their own futures. This mission statement has been

included in all staff packages for 1998 and is also posted on the bulletin board at the VIP centre.

The Mission Statement: An Overview

The first mission statement was not produced for a particular program. It was written for TSG II, and hence was directed generally at teachers employing the text. I believe it stated the basis on which the Ocean Ridge CGEA was operating. The same mission statement was included with our funding application in 1996. This demonstrated to the funding body that we had a tight focus. However, when it came time to apply the statement on the first program, changes needed to be made as students would read this document. My aim here was to offer a positive view of goals and curriculum focus. By deleting the opening lines of the earlier version, I made a poor decision. This was addressed in the 1998 version.

During the 1997 program it became apparent that the mission statement had the potential to shape staff teaching styles at odds with program ideology. The statement was also read by the numerous visitors to the centre. Here it had the potential to facilitate support for the program and to help further funding drives. People responsible for this type of program need to be continually aware of the necessity to retain financial backing. As disaffected students move from the political agenda, we tend to lose funding. A new mission statement was needed to address this issue. Also, as a result of this study it became apparent that other changes were necessary. Some basic model underpinnings had not been included. This could result in future conflict. A new mission statement evolved to address these issues. It is being tested in action on the first 1998 VIP Program. A summary of the evolution of the mission statement has been depicted diagrammatically (see Figure 2).

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Figure 2   The Mission Statement

**Problem
Perceived 1996**

- need to state pivotal precepts to assure consistency in curriculum focus

**Result:
Mission Statement I**

- Published in TSG II
- also used to facilitate grant applications

Difference between I & II

- deleted opening lines
- addressed behaviour as well as curriculum issues
  - addressed social skills

Perceived need for Change

- post mission statement for staff & students
- offer positive empowering base from which to operate

**Result:
Mission Statement II**

- modifications incorporated
- produced for use in second half of 1997

Perceived need for change

- some staff drifted from original focus
- noted statement was read by visitors, funding body and management personnel

**Result:
Mission Statement III**

- Produced for use in first half 1998
- currently testing

Modifications for new model

- reintroduce opening statements
- include model attitude to truancy & exclusion
- address middle class imperialism

II. The Ethos Document: A "Toolbox" for Shaping Student Outcomes

Creating a set of contracts for shaping student behaviours was the first major task I took on as coordinator of the Ocean Ridge CGEA. Whilst teaching in a variety of contexts, from unstructured to authoritarian, I came to believe that the assumptions underlying the style of contracting employed had significant repercussions on student behaviours. Lack of a judicious base, and poorly constructed documents, result in weak tools for shaping behaviour. Strict policies, applied to the letter, result in negative spin-off behaviours that impact on group cohesion and teacher credibility.

A Brief Historical Perspective

Behaviour problems in schools are not merely a contemporary phenomenon. Austin (1965, p. 238) reported that in Australia in the late 1800s teachers

> came to dread the hours they were forced to spend in the midst of bedlam while their pupils abused and assaulted them, smashed windows and furniture, insulted passers-by and fought blasphemously amongst themselves.

At the end of the nineteenth century, behaviour management in schools was in crisis, compulsory education was introduced, and truancy became an issue. However, Austin (p. 185) stressed that "no colony could be said to have an effective, compulsory system until the twentieth century".

At the onset of the twentieth century children had limited rights. Non-compliant individuals could be caned, excluded, subjected to belittling, or detained after school hours. The mid-twentieth century brought the recognition of children's rights. This necessitated reconsideration of the right to an education and use of appropriate tools for discipline. The cane (banned in Western Australian Government Schools in 1987) and detention were discarded. Despite their propensity for abuse, and the blatant disregard for humane methods

and children's rights, the discarded teacher's "toolbox " of the cane and detention were somewhat more effective in modifying inappropriate behaviours than many current practices. Pain and recreational deprivation did function as a deterrent for some repetitive unacceptable behaviours.

New behaviour management policies were introduced to replace the cane and detention. "By 1988, the Education Department [of Western Australia], or 'Ministry' as it was then termed, required each of its schools to develop, implement and maintain a Discipline Policy" (Moore, 1997, p. 10). Time-out, suspension and expulsion were employed to facilitate the smooth running of curriculum-driven instruction. These policies may work to shape behaviour for the occasional offender; however, like the cane and detention, for the consistently troublesome student, these policies proved largely ineffective. They merely offered time-out to the teacher and class coping with the troublesome young person and resulted in a variety of negative spin-offs including learning deficits for the excluded student.

These policies were not only ineffective as a means of instigating positive behaviour change, as suggested by Moore (1997, p. 1), many very young pupils learned to manipulate the system for their own purposes. Moore cited one particular example where

> a twelve year old male primary student also talks about control in classrooms. When asked about his behavioural attitude and actions, he indicated that he had learned what to do to push each teacher's boundary of acceptance of particular behaviours. He knew how far he could go in order to avoid being placed in the next step of the school's behaviour management plan. He challenges teachers to take control by enforcing the management plan.

It is apparent that the behaviour management policy was not effective in shaping the 12 year old student's behaviours in a positive way, nor was it providing him with strategies to self-manage his problematic behaviours in the future. Rather, he was putting his "creative" energy into deriving new ways to manipulate the system for his own purposes.

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Linked to these exclusion-based behaviour management policies was the notion of contracting to address behaviour issues. Here the young people were required to sign a contract in order to be able to remain in mainstream, or to return to mainstream after the exclusion period. These contracts tended to be negatively constructed such as, "If Johnny hits another student or staff member he will be suspended", or "If Peter is caught lighting fires again, he will be expelled". This type of contract offered Johnny and Peter no positive strategies to address their behaviour problems. They merely warned them that if they cannot exert the necessary self control to stop these behaviours, they will be removed from class and/or school. This approach assumes that all young people can control their delinquent behaviours, that these behaviours are merely a result of choice, rather than poor anger management skills, an over-powering desire to get noticed, or a physiological or psychological disorder. These behaviour management policies seldom addressed the young person's reasons for inappropriate behaviour, hence the student returns to the classroom with his/her problems intact, disadvantaged, having missed "chunks" of his/her education.

Ethos Document I

In 1996 I took on the job of Program Coordinator of the Ocean Ridge CGEA. I believed it was necessary to put some basic shaping tools in place. I was unhappy running the program without shaping tools. In 1995 we had no tools to call into play when student behaviour was spinning out of control. I believe, as Stoppleworth (1974, p. 5) suggested, that "most disturbing behavior in the classroom is learned behavior; that it is maintained in existence by the consequences that it receives from its immediate environment" and that processes can be put in place to address these behaviours and encourage appropriate socially endorsed behaviours. I used this as a starting point. I operated from a base accepting that inappropriate behaviours are the result of a variety of causes, and regardless of cause, good shaping tools can help modify behaviours. I was determined to come up with a functional

model that would do more than facilitate teaching of the valued others; I wanted to offer the struggling troublesome student empowering positive strategies for life.

This did not mean we were not concerned with the causes of these behaviours. It merely meant that shaping tools would be put in place to address all inappropriate behaviours. I began designing a contract for signing at the onset of the program. I wanted a document that stated clearly and unambiguously what was expected of the young people. This contract was to be signed by the student, parent, and program coordinator on admission of the young person to the program. It was to form the base for behaviour management. It was to be called into play if the student was failing to improve. The document made clear that our goals were not purely academic. All students were required to improve "in all areas - skills, social and in attitude". They were not required to be perfect, merely make an effort to improve. Ethos Document I read as follows:

ETHOS OF THE COURSE #1

The Ethos of the course is best expressed in expected outcomes.

Students enter the programme from a variety of backgrounds. By course end they must demonstrate they are functioning at an adequate level to operate responsibly in the adult world.

This may involve entering the work force, taking up an apprenticeship or entering a TAFE programme or other such tertiary institution. All these avenues require certain behaviours, skills and attitudes.

- Students must demonstrate a capability to interact with people on the premises and within the course in a responsible manner.
- Students must demonstrate a respect for the property of others.
- Students need to make progress toward work place skills and attitudes.
- Effort must be exerted to achieve improved literacy and numeracy levels appropriate to future work place and lifestyle requirements.
- In compliance with workplace requirements, regular attendance is expected and students are expected to arrive and leave as specified.
- Students agree to comply with conventions and requirements of the premises.
- Students will do work experience to demonstrate ability to function within an adult environment. Students will make their way to and from the work place - arriving promptly and conducting themselves appropriately.
- Students agree to find their way to and from the Wednesday programme.

To remain on the programme students must demonstrate that they are making an effort to move in the right direction. Students are not expected to enter or leave with identical skill levels. But all are required to make personal progress in **all** areas - skills, socially and in attitude.

I agree to make an effort to meet the programme requirements.

SIGNED (student): _____ DATE:___/___/1996
SIGHTED BY PARENT: _____ DATE:___/___/1996

(Netolicky, 1996)

The contract opened with the statement "Students enter the programme from a variety of backgrounds. By course end they must demonstrate they are functioning at an adequate level to operate responsibly in the adult world". Here the intention was to establish that the young person was acceptable whatever their entry behaviour, academic level or attitude, but they must improve to remain on the program. They must also aim at behaviours acceptable in the

world of work. This gave us a real goal, a basis for shaping behaviour I believed would be acceptable to the young people, as they all wanted to be employed at the program end.

The contract then stated what behaviours, skills and attitudes would be encouraged:

- "Students must demonstrate a capability to interact with people on the premises and within the course in a responsible manner." This point was designed to deal with problem behaviours affecting other users of the centre. We were operating in a community centre. We could not afford the risk of the program being shut down due to conflict with the community. This meant students needed to deal with other members of the public appropriately. We had been offered the opportunity to move to an isolated run-down building. I felt this would mean student behaviours could deteriorate. I wanted the young people to have to make some effort to interact with a wide variety of people. I wanted to have a logical reason for encouraging appropriate behaviours.

- "Students must demonstrate a respect for the property of others". This statement was designed to address problems we had experienced in 1995. I was determined that the rented property should not deteriorate due to our presence. The young people needed to understand that damage to the property would put their program at risk. This would mean not getting a year 10 pass, as most of the young people were not welcome back in mainstream. They had to realise they too were stakeholders. This made an excellent shaping tool for behaviours relating to theft, vandalism and graffiti.

- "Students need to make progress toward work place skills and attitudes". This program was only 19 weeks long. This is a short time to improve behaviour and skill-up the young people for the world of work.

- "Effort must be exerted to achieve improved literacy and numeracy levels appropriate to future workplace and lifestyle requirements". It is accepted that each young person is aiming to occupy a different niche in the adult world. The young person must aim to achieve levels appropriate to this niche. Hence expectations were different for each young person.

- "In compliance with workplace requirements, regular attendance is expected and students are expected to arrive and leave as specified". This formed the basis of our truancy policy. The young people were told that non-attendance was not acceptable. The program was to be treated like a job and they were required to demonstrate the ability to turn up at work regularly and on time. I set all requirements in keeping with those of the adult world of work, rather than treating school as a separate workplace. The young people needed to understand that they were here to acquire behaviours appropriate to the world of work; no employer would tolerate 50% attendance, or regular lateness. This became a tool to shape attendance and punctuality.

- "Students agree to comply with conventions and requirements of the premises". This gave us the rationale to augment socially acceptable behaviours. It also gave us a tool to shape behaviour that the young people could recognise was in their best interest. We needed to comply with the rules of the centre to remain here. It encouraged policing of each other and freeing staff up for dealing with other duties and more serious infringements.

- "Students will do work experience to demonstrate ability to function within an adult environment. Students will make their way to and from the work place - arriving promptly and conducting themselves appropriately". This tool was designed to both offer

a rationale for work experience, and shape behaviour on work experience, where we had minimal presence.

- "Students agree to find their way to and from the Wednesday programme". On Wednesdays these young people attended Balga Technical College to learn building trade skills. The program managers wanted to bus the young people to college. I felt they needed to take on this responsibility themselves, as in 19 weeks they would graduate from the program and enter technical college or gain employment. They needed to acquire these skills now, under guidance. This statement was included to make the students realise that excuses would not be acceptable; they had to demonstrate maturity by managing their transport issues themselves. In this way, we were able to wean them of their dependence on adults, and encourage them to deal with their own transport problems.

The final statements said " To remain on the programme students must demonstrate that they are making an effort to move in the right direction. Students are not expected to enter or leave with identical skill levels. But all are required to make personal progress in **all** areas - skills, social and attitudes". This made it possible to explain to the young people that what was considered appropriate behaviour for one person was not appropriate for another. Each of them came on the program with different skills and behaviours. They are merely asked to make an effort to improve. Hence the young man who could only sit down for five minutes at a time was allowed to walk around the room after that as long as he did not disturb other students. But by the second week he must sit for ten minutes at a time. By the course end he could sit for an hour at a time. He slowly managed to develop strategies that worked for him, to manage his high activity level. The young man was given opportunity to develop functional strategies to address his problem, and the rest of the class could continue operating normally while the young man's behaviour was modified.

Ethos Document I formed a base from which to shape student behaviours. It took as a starting point the student's entry behaviour and academic level. This gave an opportunity for a client-focused learning model to address individual student's needs. The document clearly stated what was expected of the students. This facilitated nudging students toward their goals. All students had expressed an interest to get a job or place in technical college at the initial interview; all students achieved their goals.

At one point, about halfway through the program, one student was asked, in accordance with the ethos document, to forfeit his place, as he was making no visible progress. Within 24 hours he called and asked for another chance. He returned and worked extremely hard. He was offered an apprenticeship as a result of his performance on work experience and was offered a place in technical college. In most cases, a mere reminder of the signed ethos document was effective in pulling student behaviours into line.

Ethos Document II

The first Ethos Document was written at the beginning of 1996 when I was offered the coordinator's position. I had only a week to prepare entry materials for the program. The document was a good beginning, but lacked some essential characteristics of functional contracts. Some of these were identified by Dr Leonard Freedman, a proof reader for TSG II. He suggested that the original document failed to address the responsibility of staff on the program to meet student needs. I included staff commitment as a part of the new version of the contract. Dr Freedman suggested that the initial version read as a list of expectations of the student, rather than as an agreement between the program and the students. This problem was addressed in Ethos Document II, published in TSG II:

THE ETHOS DOCUMENT #2

The ethos of the course is best expressed in expected outcomes.

All teaching materials will relate to student needs. Curriculum is flexible and can meet each young person's needs. Truancy is regarded as an immature reaction to dissatisfaction with curriculum. Curriculum is negotiable and students can negotiate for appropriate and interesting materials. All teachers agree to attempt to meet these needs.

All teachers and students on the programme have a right to be treated with respect. All involved in the programme have a right to feel safe in the learning environment.

All students are acceptable at their entry level. It is expected that entry levels will differ greatly. It is acknowledged that students enter the programme from a wide variety of backgrounds and with a broad spectrum of end goals and social niches. All students are required to continually move toward more acceptable behaviours. Individuals are only expected to improve, not be perfect.

By the end of the course students must demonstrate that they are functioning at an adequate level to operate responsibly in the adult world. This may involve returning to school, entering the work force, taking up an apprenticeship or entering a TAFE programme or other post secondary institution.

All these avenues require certain behaviours, skills and attitudes. Students on the programme are asked to demonstrate an attempt to achieve these behaviours, skills and attitudes during the programme:
- a capability to interact with people on the premises and within the course in a responsible manner.
- a respect for the property of others.
- an attempt to make progress toward workplace skills and attitudes.
- exert an effort to achieve improved literacy and numeracy levels appropriate to their future work place and lifestyle requirements.
- comply with work place requirements - such as regular attendance and arriving and leaving as specified.
- comply with conventions and requirements of the premises.
- do work experience to demonstrate ability to function within an adult environment.
- make their way to and from the workplace, arriving promptly and conducting themselves appropriately.

To remain on the programme:

Students must demonstrate that they are making an effort to move in the right direction.

Students are not expected to enter or leave with identical skill levels, but all are required to make personal progress in all areas - academic, social and attitudes.

The co-ordinator and staff agree to attempt to make curriculum interesting and relevant to you.

I _____ agree to make an effort to meet the programme requirements.

Signed by the Student: _____ Date: ___/___/

Sighted by Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: ___/___/

Signed by Co-ordinator: _____ Date: ___/___/

(Netolicky, 1996a, p. 64.)

When constructing Ethos Document II, it became apparent that a variety of issues had not been adequately addressed in the original document. These were dealt with in the new version: curriculum was to be tailored to target group and individual student's needs; the truancy policy was included in brief; the right to a safe working environment was established as essential to program functioning; acceptance of varied student entry and exit levels was established as an expectation; and a stand was taken against dominant group hegemony. These improvements required greater staff commitment to student needs. They required recognition of the students as service-clients, reinforcing a client-centred approach to curriculum content. They also required greater involvement for the students regarding curriculum content, as students had the potential to shape their own learning. As a result, the document proved more effective in addressing both teaching styles at odds with Strike Four ideology, and students claiming school is boring; as students were partners in the teaching-learning environment, not victims of it, they "wore" some of the blame if they were bored.

Ethos Document III

At the selection interview students were asked to make a commitment to the program. Entry to the program was framed as a privilege, not a right. The ethos document was read to the students and their carers or parents. This is necessary as many of our students' parents and carers have marginal literacy skills. It is explained at the initial interview that "all parties have to be willing to make a commitment to the program. This is not a baby-sitting club. We are here to work." Most of the young people referred to our programs have exhausted all other education options, they come to their interview knowing that this is a final chance to achieve a year 10 pass. In 1997 we could not offer all applicants places as our funding restricted us to 15 students per program. Students were selected on the basis of being most at need; compulsory school age; unable to be serviced in mainstream schools or other alternative situations; residing in the catchment area as determined by the funding body; and

demonstrating a willingness to make a commitment to the program. In 1997 a number of exceptions were made. We accepted one student out of the catchment area and one post-compulsory student on the basis of demonstrated need and the inability to access alternative programs. A number of student applicants were not offered places as they were eligible for other services. These students were all post-compulsory and were assisted in locating and enrolling in suitable programs. No student expressed a reluctance to sign the ethos document or make a commitment to the program.

The version of the ethos document published in TSG II was used on both programs run in 1997. However, the research and critical review undertaken for this thesis indicated the need for further modifications. These modifications have been put in place for the 1998 programs. The new document once again states the course ethos, but is now a contract between all program staff and the young people. In future all teachers will be asked to enter into the contract with the students, not merely the program coordinator as staff representative. I hope that this will alleviate problems of staff non-compliance with the basic precepts of the program. One staff member continually demanded that students be excluded no matter how often it was explained that the program regarded exclusion as a last resort. This made the contract a shaping document for both staff and students.

Whilst reviewing Student Behaviour: Policies, Interventions & Evaluations (Izard & Evans, 1996) for Issues in Educational Research (Netolicky, 1997, pp.80- 90), I realised I was "on the right track". When designing the first ethos document, I was disenchanted with behaviour management policies that only worked for the "good kids". The Cope and Stewart article (1996, pp. 154- 166) helped me make sense of strategies I had been putting in place. I came to a better understanding of what I was doing right, and how to improve existing policy and enhance equity. Now all program participants will enter into the contract. I believe that this will improve equity, as the young people are not "the disempowered", having to commit to

the program, while staff retain freedom from commitment. The contract now binds all parties.

The 1998 Ethos Document (Ethos Document #3) reads as follows:

THE ETHOS DOCUMENT #3

The ethos of the program is:

- all staff and students have a right to be treated with respect.
- **everyone has a right to feel safe** in the teaching-learning environment.
- teaching materials will **relate to student needs wherever possible**.
- curriculum is flexible and can meet each young person's needs. **Teachers agree to attempt to meet these needs.**
- **truancy is regarded as an immature reaction to dissatisfaction with the curriculum, as students can negotiate for appropriate and interesting materials.**
- **all students are acceptable at their entry level.** It is expected that entry levels will differ greatly. It is acknowledged that students enter the program from a wide variety of backgrounds and social niches and with a broad spectrum of end goals. All students are required to continually move toward more acceptable behaviours. **Individuals are expected to improve, not be perfect.**
- **students will be excluded from the program only if all other possibilities have been exhausted.**

By the end of the course students must demonstrate that they are functioning at an adequate level to operate responsibly in the adult world. This may involve returning to post compulsory education, entering the work force, taking up an apprenticeship or entering a TAFE program or other post secondary institution. All these avenues require certain behaviours, skills and attitudes. Students on the program are expected to demonstrate an attempt to achieve these behaviours, skills and attitudes during the program:

- capability to **interact with people on the premises in a responsible manner.**
- **respect for the property of others and respect for program property.**
- **progress toward workplace skills and attitudes.**
- **improved literacy and numeracy** levels appropriate to their future workplace and lifestyle.
- **comply with workplace requirements** - such as regular attendance and arriving and leaving as specified.
- **do work experience** to demonstrate ability to function in an adult environment.
- make their way to and from the workplace, **arriving promptly and conducting themselves appropriately.**

To remain on the program students need to agree to **demonstrate effort** to make personal progress in all areas - **academic, social and attitudes.** Staff agree to **attempt** to make curriculum interesting and relevant for each student.

As a student on The VIP Program I, _____, agree to make an effort to work within the program ethos (operating principles) and make an effort to progress in all areas.

Signed by the Student: _____ Date: __/__/__

Sighted by Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: __/__/__

As teachers on the VIP Program we agree to work within the program ethos and to attempt to make curriculum interesting and relevant.

Signed by the Staff: _____ Date: __/__/__

_____ Date: / / _____ Date: __/__/__

_____ Date: / / _____ Date: __/__/__

Signed by Program Coordinator: _____ Date: __/__/__

(Netolicky, 1998, p. 4)

I felt that by participating in the signing of the contract, teaching staff would be more likely to take these commitments on board. It made the contract a more real and equitable contract, with the potential to shape both teaching styles at odds with program ideology, and students failing to achieve. The signing of the ethos document by staff is not viewed as a means of facilitating staff dismissal. It is accepted staff are not perfect, we are all learning. Working with 15 at-risk young people in a single group is hard work. We all make mistakes. I expect all staff (including myself) to acknowledge their mistakes and be "up-front" with students, apologising when necessary. This practice models appropriate behaviour and prevents program credibility being undermined through students' perceptions of injustice. The new document simply asks staff **"to attempt** to make curriculum interesting and relevant for each student".

The Ethos Document : An Overview

When designing the first ethos document, I began from scratch. I wanted a "toolbox" of shaping tools staff could employ to enhance student outcomes, whilst maintaining a low conflict work environment. I was frustrated with behaviour management policies encountered in schools and teacher training. I wanted to design a document I could believe in, something that had inherent logic, something with "teeth", and the potential to shape behaviour. I wanted the young people to be partners in the teaching-learning process, not victims of it. I wanted them to make a commitment to the program and I wanted them to realise they were stakeholders in the success or failure of the program.

I believe the ethos documents have proved their value as effective shaping tools. I also believe a similar document could be used effectively in mainstream, particularly with disaffected youth, to enhance socially acceptable behaviours. At the beginning of each school year, many young people are now required to sign a document agreeing to comply with school uniform codes. This document could easily be expanded into a set of positive shaping

tools for student behaviour, thereby augmenting behaviour management policies already in place.

Over the past three programs only one student remained unplaced in work, back in mainstream, or technical college by the program end. All the young people were still in their placements three months later. On entry these young people were considered to be exhibiting behaviours making service in mainstream impossible. This behaviour change was brought about, at least in part, through the use of the ethos documents. These documents set parameters for behaviour. They clearly stated only small achievable goals would be set for each young person. This enabled a gradual nudging in the direction of appropriate behaviours. A summary of the evolution of the ethos document can been seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3   The Ethos Document

1995
Problem perceived:
- need for a shaping tool
- student behaviour out of control

1996:
Solution:
Ethos Document I
- tool for augmenting social skills
- tool for regulating dress, language & behaviour
- tool for encouraging work-place skills

Modifications:
- addition of signing by program coordinator
- truancy policy incorporated
  - client-centred learning incorporated
    - safe work environment included

Flaws perceived:
- no staff commitment in contract
- need to state client-centred learning to shape teaching styles at odds with policy

1997
Result:
Ethos Document II

- Tested in action 1997

Problem perceived :
- particular staff members failed to feel personal commitment as the document was only signed by program coordinator
- individual staff contravened exclusion policy

1998
Ethos Document III
- To be tested in action 1998

Modifications:
- students excluded only if all other possibilities exhausted
- ethos document to be signed by all staff

III. The Behaviour Management Policy

The ethos document contains the model's basic shaping tools. It is used to encourage the general progress of the young people toward skills needed to succeed in the adult world. It is called into play to augment socially acceptable behaviours, improve attitude, commitment and academic achievement. The behaviour management policy, on the other hand, specifically addresses behaviour issues resulting in crises and conflicts.

Our behaviour management policy uses the local justice system as a base, rather than authorising the person with power in the classroom (the teacher) with the right to punish the person without power (the student). I wanted to design a policy, not grounded in pre-democratic dictatorial processes, but one reflecting contemporary views of justice and human rights. As most class bully and clown behaviour is motivated by the desire to gain attention whilst challenging the power of the teacher to punish and control, I wanted to employ strategies diminishing traditional power battles in the classroom. This meant involving a third party in classroom behaviour management. Here the program coordinator functions as adjudicator. This also extended opportunity for reflection, thereby diffusing the potential for spur-of-the-moment reactive decisions made in the midst of action.

Bully and clown behaviours are also addressed through curriculum, where the young people are taught socially acceptable ways to modify their environments through negotiation and conflict resolution skills (see "Negotiating a Deal", Appendix C, & "Top Dog", Appendix B). Our at-risk class groups are made up largely of class bullies and clowns. Instead of the usual one or two per classroom, we have 13 or 14 young people who have fought for power and control in the classroom. Many of these young people have derived pleasure from battling with teachers to influence classroom atmosphere and disrupt ongoing curriculum. It is vital we avoid power confrontations, as once power is used as a device to control the group, only

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increased power can increase control, and we are strictly limited as teachers in the tools we can employ. Also, in the classroom, the balance of numbers is heavily stacked against us. The smart way is to avoid these battles, to sabotage young people seeking conflict by operating from a different base, thereby diffusing weapons previously effective in the battle for classroom control. So, our behaviour management policy deliberately takes the power to judge and punish out of the hands of the classroom teacher and hands it over to the program coordinator. A similar approach is taken in mainstream schools using deputies or form teachers to enforce punishment and resolve conflict. However, for these policies to be effective, students need to perceive that justice will be done through this process, not merely the teacher's side accepted as the only truth, allowing the young person no opportunity for self-defence.

The Strike Four behaviour management policy was also designed to give all parties involved an opportunity to reflect on the situation, to tell their side of what happened, and to devise solutions to diffuse future incidents. The intention was to empower both staff and students with tools to better manage future crises and conflicts. The policy was also created to encourage citizenship skills whilst developing skills for self-defence, conflict resolution, and problem solving. Skills for oral and written self-defence are taught as an integral part of program curriculum. In the first week the young people are introduced to the behaviour management policy through a variety of case scenarios, such as this exercise, which is done in pairs:

Oral Communication 2

Learning to use the Behaviour Management Policy

1. Our behaviour management policy is based on the justice system. **This means that you will always get a chance to defend yourself.** This is a skill you can use all your life. You may have to use it if you're arrested, you may use it if you're arguing with parents, carers or friends, or you may use it with your bosses at work. So it's worth developing the skill here.

If a lecturer thinks you have done something against program policy, s/he will ask you to fill out a self-defence form. **The lecturer will have to fill out a form too** and the program coordinator will decide what's to be done about it. It's like in a law court - you are the accused, the lecturer is the prosecutor and the program coordinator is the judge. The lecturers can't always see everything that goes on in the classroom as they are busy doing their job, so you may be innocent, or you may have a reason for what happened. **On this program you get the chance to offer a defence for your actions, or to show what in court is called 'remorse'.** If you show remorse (that means you are sorry for what happened) the judge is usually lenient (gives you a lesser sentence). Also here you are offered the chance to suggest how to avoid conflict in the future. If you word this carefully, the program coordinator may use this information in making a decision on what action should be taken, or no action may need to be taken if the program coordinator believes you have sorted out the problem yourself.

If you take this chance to tell your side of what happened you will be in a much better situation. Maybe you weren't the only student doing it. Maybe the lecturer only saw you. Maybe another student got you into trouble. Maybe you admit to having done it and work out a solution so you won't get into the situation again. The program coordinator will take all these things into consideration when deciding what to do about it. So take the chance to defend your actions and offer constructive solutions.

Here are two examples of a form filled out by Cliff Jones. In the first one he didn't take it too seriously. In the second one he was trying to defend his actions.

FORM 1

SELF-DEFENCE FORM

Name: Cliff Jones
Date of conflict: 10/10/97
Location: City Farm excursion
Others involved in the conflict: Mario, Steve, David, Jim
My account of what happened: **We were bored and locked Jim in the shed.**
How I feel I may have contributed to the conflict: **I just watched.**
How I feel other's actions contributed to the conflict: **I won't say.**
How I believe the issue should be resolved: **Don't lock Jim in the shed again.**
How I can stop it happening again: **All I did was watch.**
Final agreement to resolve conflict: **Don't watch next time.**
I agree to avoid a repeat of this behaviour. I recognise that if I fail to comply with this my parents may be contacted.

Signed (student):... Date:...........................
Signed (person in charge): ....Date:.......................

FORM 2

SELF-DEFENCE FORM

Name: Cliff Jones

Date of conflict: 10/10/97

Location: City Farm excursion

Others involved in the conflict: Mario, Steve, David, Jim

My account of what happened: **Jim had been flicking sand at us all morning. We were all really mad at him. So we locked him in the shed at afternoon break.**

How I feel I may have contributed to the conflict: **I encouraged the others to do it. I was sick of him throwing sand at us. He never gets caught so the teacher thinks he's good and we're bad. He's always bugging us and getting us into trouble.**

How I feel other's actions contributed to the conflict: **We all did it, but we were really angry and he deserved it.**

How I believe the issue should be resolved: **Next time we should all talk to the teacher, or find a safer way to teach him a lesson. He could have suffocated in the shed as there are no windows. We didn't think about it, we just did it. Next time we need to think first.**

How I can stop it happening again: **Talk the others into finding a different way to stop Jim getting us into trouble. He always gets us into trouble and we fell for it again.**

Final agreement to resolve conflict: **Next time don't fall into Jim's trap. Maybe move away from him and work somewhere else or get together as a group and talk to the teacher about it.**

I agree to avoid a repeat of this behaviour. I recognise that if I fail to comply with this my parents may be contacted.

Signed (student):... Date:...........................

Signed (person in charge): ....Date:...........................

2. **Work in pairs**. To which of Cliff's responses would you be more lenient (give a lesser or no punishment)? Why? **Give at least three reasons**.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

3. **Work in pairs**. You and Marina are working on work sheets. She keeps scribbling on your book. Eventually you get really fed up. You pick up her book and rip it in half. The teacher sees it and gives you a Self-Defence Form. Fill in the form offering a defence for your actions and suggesting how you can deal with the problem in a more mature way next time. This does not have to involve dobbing her in, but you can choose to if you like.

SELF-DEFENCE FORM

Name: _____

Date of conflict: _____

Location: _____

Others involved in the conflict: _____

_____

My account of what happened: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How I feel I may have contributed to the conflict: _____

_____

_____

_____

How I feel other's actions contributed to the conflict: _____

_____

_____

_____

How I believe the issue should be resolved: _____

_____

_____

_____

How I can stop it happening again: _____

_____

_____

_____

Final agreement to resolve conflict: _____

_____

_____

I agree to avoid a repeat of this behaviour. I recognise that if I fail to comply with this further action may be taken.

Signed (student):_____ Date: _____

Signed (person in charge): _____ Date: _____

Action to be taken: _____

_____

_____

Signed Program Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

I am aware of action taken to avoid another incident (signed student): _____

4. **Group discussion** of strategies used on the Self-Defence Form.

(Unpublished work sheet, Netolicky, 1997)

In this way skills for smart use of the behaviour management policy are taught, and the young people are offered the opportunity to discover for themselves the benefit of taking the forms seriously. Our students are involved in 19 or 27 week programs. Nineteen or 27 weeks from the onset of the program they graduate and enter the adult world. Our intention is to send them out empowered to cope with their future environments, employing socially acceptable skills. The skills they develop through the behaviour management policy to resolve conflicts will be useful for life.

The Self-Defence Form asks students for their "account of what happened". Here the student is encouraged to tell the story from his/her point of view. The young people are often initially reluctant to tell their side, as they believe the school justice system is weighted against them because they are the smallest power holders in the environment. We stress that justice will be done if they offer an honest telling of their side of the events. We stress justice cannot be done if only the teacher tells his/her side of the story. This is their opportunity to get a fair judgement and to influence the outcome. It is stressed the way they frame their argument can have massive repercussions for them. It is important now, and in the future, that they learn to tell their side of a conflict convincingly. It is explained that they can apply this skill at home, at work, or if arrested. As the programs progress, students develop skill in accomplishing this task. They move from seeing the Self-Defence Form as punishment for inappropriate behaviour, to a chance to have their say. This can only be effective if operation of the policy demonstrates that justice will be done, even if it is found that the teacher is at fault. For the policy to maintain credibility, the judgement must be perceived to be just by all parties.

The point "How I feel I may have contributed to the conflict" gives the young person the opportunity to acknowledge their part in the conflict. The policy requires that all parties recognise the part they played in the conflict. Here even audience members may have to

acknowledge that their cheering or jeering may have augmented the conflict. Even listening to a protagonist boast may contribute to a re-occurrence.

"How I feel other's actions contributed to the conflict" offers the young person an opportunity to wear only partial blame for the conflict. Often the teacher on duty may not have noticed how others contributed to the conflict. They may only see what this young person has done. Here the student is given the chance to shed some, or all, of the blame.

"How I believe the issue should be resolved" presents the young person with an opportunity to begin to derive solutions to the conflict. They can suggest what they feel would be appropriate "punishment" for their actions, or they can offer positive suggestions of how they may fix the situation. Here the young people are encouraged to develop their problem solving skills. They are encouraged to come up with innovative solutions.

"How I can stop it happening again" gives the opportunity for students to develop proactive skills to manage future conflicts. This develops problem solving skills and is directly applicable to their situation, hence it is empowering for life.

"Final agreement to resolve conflict". The young people are encouraged to frame their side of the agreement in appropriate formal language. This also develops skills for life. Students are encouraged to draw from their other answers and so frame an agreement to both resolve the current conflict, and avoid future similar conflicts.

The document is then signed by both parties. The teacher in charge fills out an Incident Form offering his/her side of the conflict or incident. These forms are sighted by the program coordinator and a path of preventative action entered upon. This path of action will be the result of consultation with all stakeholders. The student once again signs the Self-Defence Form to acknowledge that s/he is aware of action taken.

It is stressed at the outset of the program that these documents are not a form of punishment. They are an opportunity to get justice, a tool for self-empowerment, a chance to develop skills for life.

The significant aspects of the behaviour management policy are:

- its opposition to exclusion as a solution. The policy recognises that exclusion does not change behaviour or provide strategies to manage future conflicts. Exclusion merely facilitates teaching to continue for the other students.

- it is based on the justice system. Here both the young people and the teacher are given the opportunity to offer their side of what happened in the conflict or crisis and adjudication is left to the program coordinator. Here skills for self-defence are developed in the young people.

- it develops literacy and problem solving skills as an integral part of behaviour management, whilst empowering the young person with skills to manage future crises or conflicts.

- it encourages group acceptance of responsibility as witnesses are also encouraged to fill out the appropriate forms and present their side of what happened.

- it encourages reflective rather than reactive action. Here staff and students are asked to take time out from the conflict to reflect and write down their side of the story. Adjudication is not instant. There is time between the conflict, and the action taken, for all parties to consider better ways to manage future conflicts of this sort.

- it encourages acceptance of responsibility for one's actions and choices.

- it offers opportunity for the student to be part of the solution, not just the object, or problem.

Filling in the behaviour management policy forms is initially taught as part of the literacy curriculum. Here students are taught the basic workings of the justice system and how to use the behaviour management policy to get justice, rather than to merely submit to power and social structure in the classroom.

The Behaviour Management Policy: Improvements Over Time

Some improvements in this policy have been put in place as a result of this critical inquiry. The function served by the Self-Defence Form was previously filled by the Inappropriate Behaviour Warning Form, the Inappropriate Behaviour Form, the Conflict/Disputes Warning Form, and the Conflict/Dispute Form. At the staff orientation meeting for the first 1998 program, I realised that these forms were creating unnecessary complications. I decided to use a more streamlined approach in 1998, thus employing a single form for all purposes. I believe the name change to Self-Defence Form will also be an improvement, as it removes association with the inappropriate behaviours and traditional behaviour management policies focusing on punishment, to one based on the justice system and the right to self-defence. I have also included a second signing by the "accused" student, to assure students are aware of action taken as a result of the conflict. This can be employed as a shaping tool and also enhances justice, as the student is offered the opportunity to read, discuss and dispute the judgement.

The Behaviour Management Policy and Model Ideology

Looking back at what I said was the ideological base from which we operate, I can see that many ideas I felt were fundamental to good practice have been written into the behaviour

management policy. For example, the statement made in the ideological underpinnings chapter stating:

> Environments where people with power control the decision making and problem solving processes, where curriculum content is dictated, not negotiated, and where rights are at odds with the local law, are disempowering environments, where clients fail to learn strategies and skills needed for life.

has been dealt with through the behaviour management policy. The policy shares the problem solving process with the student. The young person is invited to offer solutions to resolve the conflict - to be a part of the solution, not just the problem. The springboard for the policy is local law. The young people learn skills to operate both the program behaviour management policy, and the local justice system, simultaneously. Here the concern foregrounded in the chapter on ideological underpinnings, to "empower others" whilst "liberating their potential to shape their own futures and environments", is put into policy.

It is necessary to note that traditional teacher-power is, in this case, diminished. The power to inflict punishment as a tool for controlling the learning environment has been removed, and some of the burden of behaviour management has been reallocated to management staff, rather than teaching personnel. As stated, the purpose is twofold - it diminishes potential for power battles in the classroom, whilst encouraging reflective rather than reactive discipline. Teaching staff have the opportunity to tell their side of the incident. They can recommend action. These incidents are discussed at staff meetings. The classroom becomes a place for teaching, rather than a battleground for control and power.

I believe this policy is sound. It has run virtually trouble free for two years. It is consistent with what I purport to be my ideological base. It is innovative to the extent that it recognises that problematic student behaviours can arise out of power and control issues in the classroom. It attempts to diffuse this with proactive strategies. It also puts into practice the

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development of literacy and citizenship skills as an integral part of all classroom activity. It is based on the local justice system so young people are learning skills appropriate to adult life. As with all policy, it needs to be applied humanely, not to the letter; and it needs to be applied justly, endorsing right action and challenging injustice, to be seen as fair by all parties.

IV. The Truancy Policy

The Strike Four truancy policy was first put in place on the Ocean Ridge CGEA in 1996. It was an attempt to transfer some of the responsibility for students skipping school "because it is boring", back onto the young people. Many chronic truants frame their justification for non-attendance in this way. I believed the young people share some of the responsibility as they are participants in the teaching-learning environment. If they feel what is happening at school is boring and inappropriate, the mature way to deal with this is to take positive action to improve the situation, not deprive themselves of the opportunity to learn. My intention was to skill them up with positive socially acceptable strategies to do something about it. The policy was first put into writing in TSG II:

> **Truancy is an immature reaction to disliking what you're being taught.
> It won't teach you skills to manage the rest of your life.** You can't always
> dip out of what you don't want to do, so you might as well start learning skills
> now that will help you get what you want out of life. The negotiating skills
> you use in the class room can be applied in the work place, at home and in
> the future with your children. (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 35)

Here students are encouraged to develop empowering strategies to manage their environments. This is done through stories and work sheets such as "Negotiating a Deal" (Appendix C) and "Making Education Work for You" (Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 34-35). On professional development days and at conferences teachers often ask, "How much teaching goes on if you spend so much time negotiating?". On past programs, the young people have

only called the negotiating process into play if they fail to see the significance of what has been presented by the teacher. I believe every person has a right to know why they need to learn something. Teachers do not have the right to waste pupils' time with "busy work". Young people who are given work they perceive to be irrelevant and useless are disempowered. Students have the right, at the very least, to a simple explanation such as "This is part of the curriculum content I'm afraid. You have to complete this to get a pass", or better still, "This task is basic and in some ways boring, but you need to master these skills in order to be able to do the more complicated tasks ahead. Those tasks will have a direct use in your future". Even better, is the example given in Scenario III in "Making Education Work for You" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 34). Here the student asks "What use is that to us?" and the teacher replies:

> Well, for a start we can apply it to today and the rest of your lives. When you get into a company you'll begin at the bottom. You'll earn the lowest pay and have the least responsibility. As you move up the ranks you'll get more pay, but also more responsibility, so you pay for the social status and pay increase with higher stress due to increased responsibility. (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 34)

Here the student is given a real reason to pay attention, and the lesson itself is enriched by being tied to the students' everyday lives. These students were offered a rationale by the teacher that further engaged them, whilst facilitating the opportunity for this lesson to be tied to their personal experience, thereby making it a genuine learning experience. The students in the second scenario were merely told "It's on the curriculum and you have to know it, or you'll fail" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 34). Many of these young people would fail to engage with the rest of the lesson. Some would be willing to take the risk of failing, rather than engaging with curriculum they perceive to be a waste of their time.

Through my grounded self-study, I found that curriculum that had no links to my personal experience failed to affect my ideology and *modus operandi*. Also, if content is perceived by the students to have a meaning for them, the teaching-learning environment will improve,

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students will be engaged in the learning process, and teachers will be engaged in teaching, not behaviour management. The environment improves for all participants.

When asking students how their truancy was dealt with in mainstream, I was told, "If I truanted for two weeks, I was given two weeks suspension. Then I could stay home for two weeks, guilt free". Here the young people were not offered empowering skills to address their lack of interest in education. They were merely given two weeks off "guilt free". One local school even offered "Aboriginal students shop vouchers valued at up to $25, to encourage them to attend school" (Ashworth, 1997b, p. 5). This fails to get the young people engaged in the curriculum and wanting to learn. The Strike Four truancy policy evolved largely as a reaction to these types of stories. I wanted to place some of the responsibility back on the young people. I worked on the basis that if they found school boring there were appropriate, mature ways to deal with it, and inappropriate immature ways. So I began with the notion of making them accept some of the responsibility for the learning process, rather than the blame-the-teacher approach. The blame-the-teacher approach offers no positive empowering strategies to deal with the problem now, or in the future. The only empowering option is negative: to extricate yourself from the boring environment, thereby depriving yourself of an education.

I operate on the principle that we are partially responsible for all circumstances in which we participate. Even if power structures are in place, and we lack power in the environment, we are still contributing to the perpetuation through our participation. The young truants have taken a stand. That stand, however, has disastrous spin-offs for the rest of their lives. They will miss "chunks" of education and that may significantly affect their futures. These young people may have decided not to attend merely out of boredom. There may have been something better offering. The responsibility is both on the student and the teacher to create a working environment people want to participate in.

I began by telling the young people that opting out was not a mature way to deal with the problem. I then offered the students empowering strategies to deal with their boredom with the curriculum. These strategies included asking the teacher the value of what they are doing; negotiating with the teacher for a more interesting curriculum; or making a deal with the teacher to complete the prescribed task quickly so the class could get involved in something they choose. In this way the teaching-learning environment is improved for all participants. Less time is spent on behaviour management as students can see the value of what they are learning, and the young people can engage with the content, so real learning can take place.

The truancy policy has now been in place for three complete programs. On the first program we had zero truancy days. On the second program we had a single student truant on two occasions in the first week only. On the third program we lost two students in the first two weeks due to poor attendance and drug abuse. All other students attended regularly and took the policy seriously.

In retrospect, I believe most current truancy policies are inappropriate. They fail to address the underlying issues. They merely make the system feel that something is being done. They offer no empowering strategies to the young people to better manage their situation. I believe by placing some of the responsibility on the young people, a powerful policy can be forged, and the "school is boring" excuse invalidated.

No truancy policy is enough in itself to assure attendance. The policy needs to be backed with follow-up action. On Strike Four programs all students who are not present 15 minutes into class time are chased up by telephone, social workers, Aboriginal liaison officers, or mentors. Many of our students have not attended school for a year or two. It is hard to get them "back on track" right away. Some are homeless or living in care. Any student who has not arrived 15 minutes after class is due to start gets a phone call. Carers and parents are

contacted. If necessary in the first few weeks we get someone to pick them up. Every attempt is made to address their problems, whilst gradually handing over responsibility to the young person to attend regularly. We work on the basis that 50% attendance may be better than your past record, but it will not keep you in employment. The program is preparation for the world of work. Your boss will expect 100% attendance, so do we. If we are to write you a recommendation for work you need to prove to us you can get here on a regular basis, and on time. For most of these young people, we are their last chance at a good reference. They are warned they will not get a good reference unless they can prove they are capable of appropriate work habits. We explain that all our references are devalued if we write untrue references. For the reference process to retain value they must be earned.

V. The Exclusion Policy

In 1998 all staff will be given the exclusion policy in writing at orientation. On previous programs staff were informed verbally, at induction, and regularly reminded at staff meetings of the inclusive base of the program. The purpose of these programs is to retain the young people and address their issues on site. The program operates on the basis that behaviour is not modified by exclusion, but inappropriate behaviours can be improved through continual contact with the individual. However in 1997, there were still attempts by a single staff member to exclude students prior to exploring other options and without following due process. This stimulated the decision to put the policy into writing for 1998.

It is easy to understand how a staff member gets to the point of wanting to exclude a troublesome young person. Many of our students have been continually excluded in mainstream. In most mainstream contexts, exclusion is endorsed as a strategy for dealing with the most difficult students. We take 15 students in a single class that cannot be managed.

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in mainstream. We operate off campus, so there is no opportunity to utilise other teaching staff. In 1995 and 1996 we had only one staff member on duty at a time. However, after I took over as program coordinator in 1996, I was available to staff and students all working hours on a mobile phone. Difficult students were counselled over the phone during class hours. I would offer staff and the student strategies to get through the day so I could address the issue through curriculum, conflict resolution strategies, or counselling in the morning. In 1997 I was on site for 20 teaching hours, and on mobile phone the remainder of the teaching time. Most staff followed due process. I was called in case of a crisis. Solutions were presented to staff and students and the crisis was addressed in the morning through relevant curriculum, conflict resolution strategies, or through counselling sessions. In extremely difficult situations I returned to the site to deal with the crisis.

A teacher cannot choose to exclude a young person from the program without following due process. As teachers we have duty of care over the students during school hours. Students cannot be sent off-site without parents or carers being informed. For critical issues, the Education Department's Senior Psychologist or the police are available for intervention. However, all staff are expected to contact the program coordinator if drastic action is taken, or is to be taken.

For the 1998 program, I wrote into the funding component money for a trained youth worker to be on site all teaching hours. This has alleviated stress for staff on site on their own, whilst providing backup in case of a crisis. Staff still have access to the program coordinator all teaching hours for conflict resolution and counselling.

The exclusion policy has been included in all 1998 staff packages. It reads as follows:

The VIP Program Exclusion Policy

Every possible option will be explored prior to considering exclusion of a student from the program. Staff are expected to explore all options prior to suggesting to the program coordinator, or staff meeting, that a student be excluded. **No single staff member can exclude a student.** This includes the program coordinator. Due process must be followed:

- **Conflict resolution forms** need to be filled in by the student following each problematic incident. This is their chance to tell what happened.

- **Accident/Incident forms** need to be filled in by the staff members on duty to offer their side of the incident.

- It may be appropriate on some occasions to get witnesses to fill in a conflict resolution form telling what they believe to be the case.

- Issues arising from conflicts will be tabled at staff meetings. Strategies put in place to address the conflict or problematic behaviours will be discussed at staff meetings. Here **the central focus will be on making the teaching-learning environment safe for all participants, whilst, wherever possible, retaining the individual in the teaching-learning environment.**

- **Staff must contact the program coordinator, wherever possible, prior to taking any drastic action** such as calling the parents/carers, police or senior psychologist. Where this is not possible, the program coordinator must be informed of action taken **at the first opportunity**, by telephone, and **a full written report left in the in-tray at the day end.**

This process has been put in place for a variety of reasons. It:

- encourages **reflective, rather than reactive, discipline.**

- encourages **the development of strategies to address problems, rather than a punishment approach.**

- offers **a judicious base for behaviour management,** where all parties have the opportunity to offer their side of what happened and no party is stripped of their right to self defence.

The exclusion policy may need to be called into play if a student:

- **fails to meet the terms of acceptance into the program - to make effort to improve academically, in attitude and socially,** as stated in the contract signed as The Ethos Document. *Students and parents will be warned in writing and given the opportunity to address this issue prior to any final action being taken.*

- **regularly fails to employ strategies put in place to address problematic behaviours,** thereby violating interim contracts. *Students and parents will be warned in writing and given the opportunity to address this issue prior to any final action being taken.*

- **behaves in a manner that places others in the teaching-learning environment at risk and all options have been explored to address the issue.** *Wherever possible students and parents will be warned in writing and given the opportunity to address this issue prior to any final action being taken.* However **in some cases direct action may have to be taken if student and staff safety are at risk.**

- **fails to attend regularly.** If the student chooses to not benefit from having a place on the program, attempts will be made to address the issue. However if attendance does not become regular, that student's place will be offered to another young person who wants to benefit from the program. *Students and parents will be warned in writing and given the opportunity to address this issue prior to any final action being taken.*

All staff are expected to be familiar with this policy.

(Netolicky, 1998, p. 15)

The opening statement is designed to state program ideology in an unambiguous manner. This addresses ad hoc requests by staff to exclude students, whilst restating the rationale for the program - it is first and foremost an inclusive environment. The statement "Staff are expected to explore **all** options prior to suggesting to the program coordinator, or staff meeting, that a student be excluded" has been included to encourage staff to consider other options prior to making recommendations for exclusion. On past programs we discovered every staff member found different students difficult to teach or manage. We encourage staff to share their strategies for addressing difficult students' needs.

"No single staff member can exclude a student" was included in the policy statement to address individual likes and dislikes, to protect the student, and to maintain reflective rather than reactive policies, where whole group consideration of serious issues is encouraged. "Due process must be followed" addresses past reactive strategies of teachers to address conflict. Staff are reminded that they do not have the right to exclude a student "on the spot"; due process must be followed. We employ judicious behaviour management where the student has a right to self-defence - to have their story heard by others.

The "due process" is designed to assure fairness in the behaviour management process. Here all parties are given an opportunity to offer their side of the story, and to be heard by a panel if there are serious consequences. The statement **"the central focus will be on making the teaching-learning environment safe for all students and staff whilst, wherever possible, retaining the individual in the teaching-learning environment"** was included to stress the need to maintain, wherever possible, a safe environment for all participants whilst exploring every avenue to retain the offending individual in the classroom, rather than compounding the problem by the additional factor of learning deprivation. All young people are entitled to a full and appropriate education; our role is to work out how to achieve this for these difficult young people.

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The rationale for the exclusion policy reiterates the basic precepts of the model - "reflective, rather than reactive, discipline", "development of strategies to address problems, rather than a punishment approach", and "a judicious base for behaviour management". The section regarding the calling into play of the policy is included to make sure all staff and students are aware of actions that may result in exclusion.

The exclusion policy was first put into hard copy as a result of the policy review for this study. It became apparent that a number of past conflicts could have been avoided if the exclusion policy had been put into hard copy earlier. In 1998 the exclusion policy has been included in the staff orientation package and posted on the notice board. All program participants need to know the repercussions of choices of action. It is hoped that problems arising from staff seeking to exclude young people prior to exploring all options, and without following due process, should be alleviated or minimised through these actions.

VI. Roles, Rights, and Responsibilities

In 1997 conflict arose as the result of a particular staff member's misconceptions of the duties and responsibilities of a subject teacher. Duties and responsibilities had been handled fairly informally up until then. We operated with a small staff and had regular contact through meetings and staff training sessions. Staff roles and responsibilities were discussed at staff meetings and training sessions. However, one staff member regularly failed to grasp the difference between teacher, pupil, and program coordinator duties and responsibilities. This had negative spin-offs on student behaviour and attitudes.

This staff member arranged to meet students for recreational activities outside program hours. This invited problematic readings from parents and the public as to the staff member's intentions. At times the staff member became involved in recreational activities at

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the expense of student supervision. This led to conflicts and crises. The lecturer also took action to exclude individuals from both specific activities, and the program, without following due process. These actions necessitated the putting into policy of role expectations, rights, and responsibilities.

The problem may not have occurred if staff duties had been specified in writing in the staff orientation package. Perhaps I was naive in not foreseeing the potential for conflict, but all previous lecturers appeared to grasp appropriate role differentiation. We did address the issue in staff meetings and staff training. Ultimately I must assume responsibility, as I was in charge. In the future, job descriptions will be provided in writing with the orientation package. Duties and responsibilities of each group of participants on the program will be clearly delineated.

Apart from addressing problems encountered in the past, these documents will have potential for shaping student and staff actions and attitudes. The need for these documents was identified as a part of writing this thesis. Through daily diary keeping I realised that some conflicts could have been avoided or minimised if these documents had been put in place earlier.

Delineation of Staff/Student Roles

The Program Administrator and Senior Teacher participated in the creation of all documents delineating staff and student roles. All staff feedback was incorporated into these policy documents as I believe staff need to feel ownership of program policy. In particular the Senior Teacher had to feel her ideas were incorporated and valued as she is in charge when I am unavailable. These documents have been included in all staff packages for 1998.

Program Staff Responsibility and Duty of Care

Staff on alienated student programs are occasionally tempted to cross the line between teacher/youth worker and friend in an attempt to get students onside. Some of these young people respond positively to offers of friendship, **however there are inherent dangers in crossing this line. The duty of care as teacher/youth worker makes equal bonding impossible.** Teachers are responsible for educating the young people. Teachers/youth workers have a responsibility to the whole class. They are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. They are responsible for the equipment provided. They have a responsibility to the program and fellow workers. They are employees. They are not free to confide or hold confidence in the same way friends are, they have over-riding responsibilities. They are not free to cross over from friendship into romance. As stated by Paula Stanley, a teacher on the VIP Program:

"Teachers [youth/workers] can be friendly, not friends, with their students."

As a teacher, working with alienated students, it is easy to win some of the young people over with friendship. Many have no parents or a single parent. Many have had no positive feedback from an adult and crave adult approval. Many are desperate for warmth and friendship. There are real dangers in this choice. Staff are encouraged to take a mentor-type role, rather than that of friend. Mentors have similar responsibilities to teachers/youth workers, **the safety and well being of the young people is the over-riding consideration.** Friendship on the other hand assumes you are able to bond equally. **The conflict of responsibilities in the role of friend, and that of teacher/youth worker creates particular types of problems,** such as:

- **listening to confidential information** as an equal, as a friend, has expectations of concealing that information at all costs. **In particular circumstances, staff may have to make choices about confided information.** Staff have responsibilities for that young person's well being, but are equally responsible for the well being of others in the group. The young people need to understand that staff have an over-riding responsibility, duty of care. Students need to understand when confiding in staff that the staff member may have to make the choice to violate confidentiality based on duty of care responsibilities, particularly if the information involves other students in dangerous circumstances.

- **playing with students** as an equal. In game playing or recreational activities staff member's ultimate responsibility is the safety and welfare of **all** the students. This over-rides the need to encourage students to participate and see the activity as fun. Participation in student activities can result in crises arising from diminished supervision, or students failing to acknowledge staff as being in charge. Staff create problems for students by crossing the line.

- inherent in equal friendship is the potential for a **romantic or sexual encounter.** Students need to know that there is no potential for this in the staff/student relationship. Seeing students socially, in the evening or on weekends, creates conflicts that can result in students misreading the staff member's intentions, however honourable.

- staff need to **protect themselves from student's agendas.** Staff need to ensure that they are not alone with a student, even same sex students. Many of us operate from a middle class, heterosexual base and do not consider we are at risk when alone with same sex students. Many of these at-risk young people have attention seeking problems. There is always the risk of a young person falsely accusing a staff member.

(Netolicky, 1998, p. 16)

This document was included in all staff packages in 1998 and was discussed at the job interview and initial staff meeting. Staff who cannot accept the need for differentiation of staff and friend roles will not be employed, as these behaviours place both students, and program credibility, at risk.

The responsibilities, rights, and duties of students were discussed in orientation week and have been posted on the notice board for the first time in 1998. The intention is to help students keep in mind the program goals, to enable them to recognise their rights, and to remind them of the rights of others.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

You are here to:
- achieve an **academic goal** which will facilitate entry into your desired adult roles.
- prepare yourself for full time **employment or training**.
- learn skills to function in the work place, such as **dress, language and behaviour appropriate** to your future work or training environment.
- develop a personal style of **behaviour management, relationship management and conflict resolution** to address your particular needs.

You are expected to:
- allow others to pursue their goals with minimal conflict.
- allow others the opportunity to grow and learn.
- respect program equipment so we can continue operating.
- respect the rights of all staff and students on the program.
- help keep the work environment clean and safe.

You have the right to:
- feel safe in your place of work.
- be treated with respect in your place of work.
- an engaging curriculum that is relevant to your needs.
- equipment appropriate to your educational needs.
- full access to the learning environment.

(Netolicky, 1998, p. 17)

This document was posted on the bulletin board for the 1998 VIP Program. I can now see that it can be employed as tool to shape behaviour as well as divert crises. It reinforces many of the points made in the ethos document. It has the potential to be used to shape a variety

of non-compliant behaviours such as: students interfering with the work of others, students refusing to clean up, and students abusing program property. It is also empowering in that it tells students what they have a right to expect: safety in the workplace, to be treated with respect, an engaging curriculum and appropriate equipment, and full access to the learning environment. By stating program goals for students, the document can remind them why they are there, and keep them focused on their reason for being there.

Work Experience Student's Rights and Responsibilities

We accept numerous work experience students from technical college or university. I am particularly careful in appropriately orienting these people, as inappropriate action can cause serious problems with a class of 15 at-risk young people. All work experience students have to attend a pre-work experience interview. All are given material explaining program ideology. All are asked if they believe they can operate within this ideology during their time on the program. In the future all work experience students will be given their rights and responsibilities in writing to minimise misunderstandings, and to address issues staff members felt were problematic in 1997. In 1997 one work experience student had problems understanding her role as a trainee staff member and "crossed the line" with students on a number of occasions. One work experience student was unwilling to participate in cleaning up. Another treated time on the program as a holiday from technical college.

Teaching staff asked that these issues be addressed in the future. Teaching staff also asked that it be made clear to work experience students, that taking on work experience students increases our work load, that it is a privilege to be given the opportunity, not a right. This was written into the youth worker students' rights and responsibilities to minimise conflict and increase the work experience students' chances of a good pass, as it is clear what is expected of them.

Work Experience Students Rights and Responsibilities

The opportunity to do work experience is a privilege, not a right. Accepting students involves extra work for all staff, especially the program coordinator. We accept work experience students because we believe it is part of our responsibility to train workers for the youth services industry. We also believe that the young people benefit from having a broad range of role models. **You are expected to provide a positive role model for the young people** whilst involved on the program. Many work experience students are not a great deal older than our students, this makes **maintaining the line between trainee staff and student even more important. We expect all work experience students to read and comply with program policy and ideology,** to demonstrate a commitment to working with alienated youth and to enter with the belief that **every young person is worth the effort.**

Your program supervisor will normally be the program coordinator, but **all staff will have input into your report.**

Your are here to:
- assist the teacher and program coordinator in fulfilling his/her duties.
- **mentor the young people, not befriend them. They are to be encouraged to form friends in the own age set.**
- provide a **positive role model** for the young people.
- minimise conflict in the work environment.
- help the young people achieve their goals.
- participate in maintaining program equipment so we can continue operating.
- provide support for teachers in all subject areas.
- help with filing and photocopying.
- work as a team member for the good of the students.
- assist in cleaning up.

You have the right to:
- feel safe in the workplace.
- be treated with respect by program participants.
- attend staff meetings *unless strictly confidential material is to be discussed.*
- opportunity to achieve your work experience objectives as long *as this does not conflict with the running of the program or program ideology.*
- opportunity to fulfil assignment requirements *as long as this does not conflict with the running of the program or program ideology.*
- sufficient time to discuss issues with your program supervisor.
- ask for an alternative supervisor if you have personal problems with your program supervisor.
- expect all assessment for your institution to be completed by your last day of work experience.

(Netolicky, 1998, p. 18)

Despite problems encountered in 1997, I believe work experience students make a significant contribution to the modification of student behaviours and attitudes. They provide additional positive role models for the young people. They provide added mentor potential. These young people often lack positive role models. Each additional person working on the program provides added potential for the young people to adopt this individual as a mentor or positive role model. One work experience student was an ex-addict. He showed the young people what he had achieved since re-orienting his life. Another work experience student had worked in the prison system. The young people got a view from the inside of what it is like being in jail. Yet another student had a handicap. She demonstrated to the young people that this does not have to limit what you attempt in life. I believe her contribution was particularly useful for our amputee. Another student was interested in massage and natural medicine. She opened the young people up to meditation and relaxation exercises. These work experience students made a valuable contribution to the program by widening the skill base of the workers on the program, adding variety of experience, and providing additional positive role models. A number of these students have maintained their mentor roles with the young people in 1998. This has helped the young people in the transition period to technical college and work. We will continue taking work experience students in the future as we believe, despite the few problems and extra work load, they made valuable contributions to student successes and student self esteem.

Youth Worker Rights and Responsibilities

In 1998 we have taken on a full time youth worker to facilitate student supervision, and diffuse the risk involved in having a single staff member on duty at any time. On the first three programs we were operating in a community centre where there were always other community members or centre staff around. The second 1997 program ran in a house. This was a vast improvement over the community centre as we could expand our programs to

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include cooking and renovating, and there was less conflict between our clients and local community members. However, this meant there was often only one adult on the premises at a time. This made staff and student safety an issue. In the grant application for the 1998 program this issue was addressed. We applied for funding for a full time youth worker.

The youth worker was presented with his rights and responsibilities in the orientation package. We decided to employ a youth worker who did work experience with us in 1997. We have found this is often the safest option, as we have seen the individual in action. At an interview we can only assess purported ideology (what the individual says they believe, or what they think we want to hear), we are more interested in *modus operandi* (how they perform in action, how their ideology is reflected in what they do). Teachers on the program have been trialed in a similar way. All teachers currently employed on the program began as relief teachers. If they proved themselves in the workplace they were considered for employment. The youth worker's rights and responsibilities read as follows:

Youth Worker Rights and Responsibilities

Youth workers are expected to read and **be familiar with documents provided on the program ideology, in particular the mission statement and behaviour management policy.** Youth workers are expected to operate with our basic precepts in mind. These are:

- **exclusion of students is a last resort.** Every young person deserves a full and appropriate education.
- **every young person is worth the effort.**
- **curriculum relates to student future roles and current needs.** Youth workers will assist teachers in helping students attain their goals.
- **lifeskills, ethics, conflict resolution, relationship and behaviour management skills are essential to success in the adult world.** Enhancement of student skills in these areas will be integrated into all curricula and program activities.

You are here to:

- assist the teacher and program coordinator in fulfilling his/her duties.
- mentor the young people, not befriend them. They are to be encouraged to form friends in the own age set.
- assist with behaviour management and complete appropriate forms when required.
- provide back up in case of crisis.
- encourage the young people to accept responsibility for their behaviours and choices and through this process encourage them to develop strategies to manage their behaviours and make empowered choices.
- minimise conflict in the work environment.
- help the young people achieve their goals.
- be a role model for the young people. Here you are expected to model behaviour appropriate to the workplace.
- participate in maintaining program equipment so we can continue operating.
- provide support for teachers in all subject areas.
- help with filing and photocopying.
- work as a team member for the good of the students.
- assist in cleaning up.
- attend and contribute to staff meetings.

You have the right to:

- feel safe in the workplace.
- be treated with respect by all program participants.
- a say in the staff meetings.
- recommend to the teacher on duty that a student be issued with a behaviour form.
- appropriate breaks during the day for lunch or recess.
- be reimbursed for expenditure relating to program functioning.

(Netolicky, 1998, p. 19)

This was a piece of proactive policy-making. We had not yet had a youth worker employed on the program. In the past we only had work experience students, and responsibility and duty of care was obviously with the teacher on duty. In constructing this document I felt it was essential to establish who was ultimately responsible for student welfare in the classroom, the youth worker or the teacher. I believed it best to state clearly where responsibility lay so as to avoid possible conflict as a result of having two employed adults on duty.

As a result of this study I began to see the necessity of proactive policy construction. In the past, we had not had the luxury of time to design policy prior to conflict; this study gave me the opportunity for some proactive policy construction. Hopefully this will minimise conflict.

In 1998 I have asked for regular feedback from both teaching staff and the youth worker in order to ascertain if we are using the extra person appropriately. We are still developing the youth worker's role on the program. I believe the youth worker is proving valuable both as a mentor, and in the management of particularly difficult students.

Teachers' Rights and Responsibilities

Even though we have a single class of 15 students on site at any one time, we employ a number of teaching staff. It is too stressful to work a whole day with 15 severely at-risk young people. Teachers burn-out quickly if they have too many contact hours under stress. Our teachers do a 2 to 3 1/2 hour shift per day and are paid at the "higher duties" rate. This enables us to hold staff who want to work with this type of students, thereby drawing the benefit from experience and training gained on previous Strike Four programs. Also, as we teach subjects that require a wide range of teaching skills, the young people get better service from specialist teachers. We currently offer Oral Communication, Reading and Writing, Numerical and Mathematical Principles, Independent Living, and Recreation.

In Oral Communication classes job interview, research, and oral presentation skills are honed. Students run most job interview workshops after being provided with the materials and preparatory exercises in the TSG II. They proceed through "Preparing a Portfolio" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 22); "Curriculum Vitae" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 23); "I'm the Best!", (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 24- 25) a story and work sheet demonstrating the use of curriculums vitae and portfolios in self-marketing for employment; "Getting a Job - the interview" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 26- 27); "Getting a Job - the tough case" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 28- 29); "Fighting Social Stereotypes" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 30- 31); and "Job Interview Skills" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 32). Research topics are, on the whole, student determined. Students also study a unit in Reading and Writing. Here they develop research, self-expression and expository writing skills through content of their own choosing. The Reading and Writing unit also uses the TSG and TSG II stories and work sheets to address issues and conflicts in the classroom, whilst augmenting comprehension and reading skills. Stories are selected to teach strategies, or address relevant-to-the-moment issues. The young people also complete a Mathematical Principles unit, where most tasks are tied to personal experience, or need-to-know. We also teach Recreation where the emphasis is on introducing legal, healthy recreational activities and skill development. Our Independent Living lecturer teaches cooking, gardening, renovating, art, and craft. In 1997 students prepared meals two days week, ran the canteen, renovated the premises, renovated furniture for resale, reticulated and planted out the gardens (including a vegetable garden where produce from the garden was utilised in the cooking project), and produced a variety of craft items for sale or gifts. All staff are specialised and trained in their teaching areas as well as having an interest in working with disaffected teenagers.

In 1998 subject teachers' duties and roles will be provided in writing with the orientation package. This should diminish problems for individual staff in understanding their roles and

responsibilities. It should also clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various staff members. In 1997 there was conflict between staff regarding tidying up and keeping meeting minutes. These issues have been addressed here. Also the policy intends to make clear that duty of care rests with the teacher on duty, not the youth worker. As we are educating compulsory age students, this is crucial.

This policy document was designed to remind staff of the client-centred approach, the need to augment skills for the adult workplace, and the right of each young person to a full and appropriate education.

Teacher Rights and Responsibilities

Teachers are expected to read documents provided on the program ideology, in particular the mission statement and behaviour management policy. Teachers are expected to operate with our basic precepts in mind. These are:

- **exclusion of students is a last resort.** Every young person deserves the chance of a full and appropriate education.
- **every young person is worth the effort.**
- **curriculum will relate to student future roles and current needs wherever possible.**
- **lifeskills, ethics, conflict resolution, relationship and behaviour management skills are essential to success in the adult world.** Enhancement of student skills in these areas is to be integrated into all curricula and program activities.

You are here to:

- teach a particular subject area, **tailoring content to the target group.**
- empower the young people with skills for their future adult roles.
- be a role model for the young people. Here you are expected to **model behaviour appropriate to the workplace.**
- encourage the young people to **accept responsibility for their behaviours and choices** and through this process encourage them to develop strategies to manage their behaviours and make empowered choices.
- mentor the young people, not befriend them. They are to be encouraged to form friends in the own age set.
- **follow due process in case of crises and conflict.** (see behaviour management policy).
- **bring any serious issues to attention of the staff meeting.**
- minimise conflict in the work environment.
- help the young people achieve their goals.
- participate in maintaining program equipment so we can continue operating.
- provide support for other staff when needed, working as a team member for the good of the students.
- attend staff meetings and **take turns in keeping the minutes.** Present copies of minutes to each staff member before the next staff meeting.
- **notify program coordinator immediately of any crisis or major conflict.**
- help maintain the premises in an orderly and clean condition. Premises should be tidied up prior to handing over the to the next subject teacher.

You have the right to:

- feel safe in the workplace.
- be treated with respect by all program participants.
- recommend the exclusion of an individual you believe is putting others on the program in jeopardy, **but, due process must be followed.**
- a say in staff meetings.
- achieve your goals in your own way **unless this conflicts with program policy.**
- the assistance and support of a youth worker during most teaching hours.
- to the support of other staff members unless you have violated program ideology.
- be reimbursed for expenditure relating to program functioning.

(Netolicky, 1998, p. 20)

Program Coordinator Rights and Responsibilities

As I currently occupy the position of program coordinator it may seem redundant to provide rights and responsibilities for this position in writing. However, I have provided all staff members with the entire set of documents to help them differentiate between their duties, and those of others. This should facilitate team cooperation. The larger the team operating at any one point in time, the greater the need for delineation of responsibility. Hence the youth worker can recommend a student get a Self-Defence Form, but the enforcement of the policy is the teacher on duty's responsibility. As action taken regarding the behaviour management policy ultimately rests with the program coordinator, this person needs to be fully informed of actions taken. This policy, it is hoped, will diminish conflict of perceived duties and responsibilities.

Program Coordinator's Rights and Responsibilities

The program coordinator is expected to read documents provided on the program ideology, in particular the mission statement and behaviour management policy. Program coordinators are expected to operate with our basic precepts in mind. These are:

- **exclusion of students is a last resort.** Every young person deserves the chance of a full and appropriate education.
- **every young person is worth the effort.**
- **curriculum will relate to student future roles and current needs wherever possible.**

lifeskills, ethics, conflict resolution, relationship and behaviour management skills are essential to success in the adult world. Enhancement of student skills in these areas is to be integrated into all curricula and program activities

You are here to:

- provide leadership and deal with major crises and conflicts, **applying policy in a humane and reasonable manner.**
- **adjudicate justly and humanely in cases of conflict, supporting the party who is right,** not the person with most power in the teaching-learning environment.
- empower the young people with skills for their future adult roles.
- be a role model for the young people. Here you are expected to model behaviour appropriate to the workplace demonstrating that power can be used for the good of all.
- ensure staff work together as a team and support each other when necessary.
- encourage the young people to accept responsibility for their behaviours and choices and through this process encourage strategies to manage their behaviours and make empowered choices.
- mentor the young people, not befriend them. They are to be encouraged to form friends in the own age set.

- minimise conflict in the work environment.
- help the young people achieve their goals, working as a team member for the good of the students.
- participate in maintaining program equipment so we can continue operating.
- provide support for other staff when needed.
- chair staff meetings.
- represent the program at management meetings and report back to the staff meeting.
- bring major issues to the attention of staff at staff meetings.
- **keep staff informed of relevant issues concerning at risk students.**
- help maintain the premises in an orderly and clean condition.
- maintain files and reports.
- see that the work experience unit is achieved and supervised.
- facilitate a weekly meeting for students to express grievances and offer suggestions.
- function as key supervisor for tertiary work experience students on the program.
- organise graduation certificates and references.
- ensure curriculum delivery is consistent with program ideology.
- help in the selection of students.
- select teaching staff for the program.

You have the right to:
- feel safe in the workplace.
- be treated with respect by all program participants.
- recommend the exclusion of an individual you believe is putting others on the program in jeopardy, **but, due process must be followed.**
- a say in staff meetings.
- achieve your goals in your own way **unless this conflicts with program policy.**
- the assistance and support of a youth worker if not required elsewhere.
- to the support of other staff members unless you have violated program ideology.
- be reimbursed for expenditure relating to program functioning.
- full up-to-date information on the current state of the program budget to facilitate future planning.

(Netolicky, 1998, pp. 21- 22)

Whilst some of these documents do not relate directly to modifying the *modus operandi* of the young people, they do elucidate what processes are put in place to provide appropriate service to the students. For instance, statements such as the program coordinator can only "recommend the exclusion of an individual ... **but, due process must be followed"** reinforces our policy on reflective not reactive discipline, and our belief that power in the school environment must be shared, for justice and equity to be evident. I believe these factors all contribute to the success of the programs, and the way the young people read the environment. Many of these young people start the program believing school policies are

stacked against them. By observing policy in action, they begin to see that policy, rules and laws are usually put in place for their protection and benefit, and will be enforced with humanity. In this way, over the 19 or 27 weeks, many of these young people make the move away from being uncooperative and non-compliant, to supporting program policies. On entry questionnaire, about four out of each group of 15 students answer "no teacher deserves respect". By the program end, when we re-run the same questionnaire, all these students answer at the very least, "teachers need to earn respect". I believe this indicates an alteration in attitude toward authority figures. As students are encouraged to apply all lessons to other contexts, it is hoped that they will begin to apply this lesson to considering laws and law enforcers, parents and rules, bosses and workplaces requirements.

Summative Reflection

Model policies evolved over time. Policies were created largely to meet program needs. The mission statement evolved over two years to address distinct purposes. I believe it is now a better document as it addresses mission issues of all program participants, rather than just curriculum content, or student behaviours. The ethos document, designed as the basic "toolbox" for shaping student outcomes, was improved through use. It became a more equitable contract incorporating sharper tools for shaping both student outcomes, and teaching styles at odds with program ideology. The behaviour management policy was put in place in early 1996 and has seen little change as it proved effective from the start. The truancy policy was put in place in 1996 and has seen little change, as it proved effective over time. The exclusion policy has been put into hard copy for the first time as a part of this thesis, and is currently being tested in practice. Participant rights and responsibilities have been written as an integral part of this thesis. They have been put into play for the first time in 1998.

On each program I coordinated I provided staff with a package of current policy. This has been expanded in 1998 to include rights and responsibilities, the mission statement, the truancy policy, and the exclusion policy. All staff will also be required to sign the ethos document; thereby stating they believe they can function competently from this ideological base. This should diminish many points of conflict encountered on the 1997 VIP Program.

When setting up these programs for disaffected youth, we did not have the luxury of time to create policy. Most policy was laid down only a few days prior to the start of the next program, to address issues from previous programs. We were given only a few days notice that funding was available. As a result policy formation was largely reactive. This had advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, opportunity for proactive policy development was limited. On the other, as policy evolved to address our specific clients' needs, no policy was put in place that was inappropriate to our client group. As policy was put in place to address issues that arose in practice, the gap between theory and practice was minimised.

Limited planning time meant minimal reflective opportunity to put policy in place to address future possible problems. Some conflicts may have been avoided if there had been adequate opportunity for reflection and proactive policy making. On the Ocean Ridge CGEA we had no time budgeted for staff meetings. This meant that as program coordinator I had to double up on other teachers' teaching time to address policy issues. We were also not allowed to paste any policy on the walls at Ocean Ridge, as we operated in a community centre and shared the room with other community members. In addition, as the program was only funded in 19 week blocks, we were never certain of ongoing funding.

When the VIP program was in the planning stage I fought for running it in a building of our own. We were given a house in a semi-residential area. We could now paste policy on the

walls and renovate the building to meet our needs. This meant there were visible reminders of our mission and achievements, and less conflict with other community members. This contributed to a feeling of pride and ownership in the students. Operating in a house also helped violate student expectations of school. Most of our students view school as a hostile environment, so we developed the premises keeping this in mind. The students chose to paint the house a vivid light blue with dark blue trim. One of our chronic graffiti artists created the multicoloured sign for the front door, another tagger, the sign for the "BOYZ" toilet. Other students planned and planted out the gardens with yellow and blue flowers. The young people felt the house "looked welcoming and happy". They were extremely proud of the outcome of their planning and effort. This did wonders for student self-esteem. It also augmented respect for other people's work.

Returning to the chapter on my purported ideological base, in order to see if ideology has been incorporated into policy, I will begin by looking at education and power. In this chapter I discussed the notion of educational practice as "a dynamic force for both social continuity and social change" (Kemmis, 1995, p.1), where the teacher becomes a tool of the status quo. I believe Strike Four policy does address both of these issues. The issue of social continuity is addressed in a variety of ways by encouraging socially acceptable behaviours. The program curriculum invites students to consider the ramifications of legally sanctioned and illegal behaviours, and the repercussions from choice of lifestyles. Here the program does not merely enforce middle class morality or "thought-conformity" (Kneller, 1958, p. 4), rather it encourages staff to recognise students' diverse backgrounds and future paths, and service individuals accordingly. Policy advocates empowering the young people with strategies to make informed, well thought-out decisions in the future when teaching staff are no longer available for guidance. The program also functions as a force for social change, by questioning, through innovative policy, the inequities inherent in anachronistic policy still in

place in schools today. It also empowers the young people with skills to negotiate changes they perceive to be important.

The issue of power is also addressed through the behaviour management policy, curriculum, and roles, rights, and responsibilities, and the social construction of the classroom. Here policy addresses the issue of operating on democratic principles by applying "appropriate use of democratic principles, ethics, rights and responsibilities of all school personnel, individual freedom, self-discipline and lawful dealings" (Cope & Stewart, 1996, p. 155), rather than strategies where people in positions of power control behaviours of those disempowered in the particular environment.

The danger foregrounded in the previous chapter, where there is "a different set of rules for school and society", is addressed by the use of local law as a springboard for the behaviour management policy. Here justice, where staff "are encouraged to back the individual they believe to be right, rather than the status quo" (the person with most power in the school environment or classroom), and the right of self-defence, are written into Strike Four policy and taught through program curriculum.

The issue of personal responsibility is addressed both through the behaviour management policy, where individuals are expected to take responsibility for their actions and choices, and through curriculum content, where stories and work sheets encourage the reviewing of personal ethical codes and choices of action.

The notion that "all young people have the right to a full and appropriate education" is addressed through the exclusion policy. Our motto for the 1998 VIP Program is, "every young person is worth the effort". This has been incorporated into our crest.

I took on this study for a variety of reasons. One was an attempt to understand why our policies were working, and which policies needed development. I hoped that this critique would offer opportunity for reflection and model development not previously possible. Through the study, it has become apparent that the exclusion policy needed to be clearly delineated, and that the rights and responsibilities of staff and students needed to be laid down in hard copy. In most cases, I had naively assumed that policy clearly stated at the initial interview, and reinforced through staff meetings, was sufficient. The final program in 1997 clearly demonstrated a need for putting these policies down on paper. It is hoped that this action will minimise conflict in these areas in the future. This chapter examined how policy arose to meet perceived needs, was tested in action, and modified in preparation for future testing. The following chapter will examine how these various policy documents are applied in practice in the classroom.

Chapter 7

Putting Policy into Practice

In this chapter I investigate whether purported ideology and documented policy is reflected in practice, and to what extent the ideological base and written policy is effective when applied in action in the classroom. Three key teaching strategies are examined. These include: using crises as golden teaching moments, not a reason to exclude students; employing the curriculum as a tool to shape behaviour and augment lifeskills; and the implementation of positive contracting as an extension of the behaviour management policy, with the potential to develop positive strategies in the young people to self-manage their problematic behaviours. In this chapter I focus on whether classroom practice was effective in modifying the *modus operandi* of the young people. Some early critical incidents have been cited to establish the stimuli for strategy development.

I. Harnessing the Golden Moment

In teacher training we were taught the need for thorough preparation, detailed lessons plans and adherence to curriculum documents. Working with disaffected youth, I learned the value of flexible curricula and the use of key teaching times, or golden learning moments. Young (1989, p. 57) foregrounded this issue when criticising the "influence of positivist epistemology on the constitution of the curriculum". He stated that except "in special cases, or when used very judiciously, the constitution of curriculum in this way blocks the development of creative learning, confining the classroom to a technocratically managed recapitulation of predecided content" (p. 57). Experience in the classroom, as a teacher, and examination of my own critical learning moments through the grounded self-study, confirmed my belief in the value of flexible relevant-to-the-moment curricula, where golden moments are harnessed for real

learning and yoked to contemporary real life experience. As pointed out by Rogers (1983, p. 19) "nearly every student finds that large portions of his[/her] curriculum are for him[/her], meaningless", rendering education a "futile attempt to learn material that has no personal meaning". Rogers (p. 19) suggested that if learning is facilitated "in a way that has significance and meaning ... [that] such learning proceeds at an exceedingly rapid rate". He argued, that the purpose of teaching is to promote learning, not "the lifeless, sterile, futile, quickly forgotten stuff that is crammed into the minds of the poor helpless individual tied to his[/her] seat by ironclad bonds of conformity" (p. 18). As stated in our mission statement, Strike Four purports that it is the skills taught, not the content, that has significance and applicability for life. Also, I have noticed, content anchored to contemporary in-class, community, social, or world conflicts and crises, has the potential to have meaning for students - a content related to their here-and-now.

The First Golden Moment: the bully, the victim and the audience

The first story written for the TSG was written on pure instinct. I had been teaching on the Ocean Ridge CGEA for about a week. There had been a serious bullying incident after school on the previous day. Instinct dictated this was a golden opportunity to facilitate real learning. The students' choices and actions could have resulted in the hospitalisation or death of a fellow student. The student being bullied was having an asthma attack, yet the young people continued their bullying (Lecturer report, 1995). Audience enthusiasm diminished as his condition deteriorated, but the students stood transfixed. No one chose to go to the young man's aid. I found this extremely disturbing. But peer group pressure and the desire to be seen as one of the in-group, seemed a deterrent to humane action.

I felt there was a need to demonstrate the seriousness of this choice. The young people had not considered the possible repercussions of the choice to conform. I thought about running Lockie Leonard, human torpedo (Winton, 1990), but by the time we got to the relevant bit,

the issue would be too far in their past. So I decided to write a simple single page story and work sheet based on the incident in order to encourage the young people involved to acknowledge the possible repercussions of their actions, and to encourage them to consider better choices for similar future incidents.

I worked from a sociological perspective, accepting bullying and victimisation as social phenomena. These behaviours tend to manifest in social groups. One cannot be a bully without a victim, a victim without a dominator, and an audience has influence here too. Hence, I saw this incident as a whole-group problem, which required a whole-group solution. I wrote "Top Dog" (Appendix B), the story and work sheet, and ran it in class the following morning.

As I had changed the characters' names, it took the students a few minutes to realise this was a story about the incident they had participated in the previous day. They chatted incessantly whilst doing the work sheet. I had no problem with this. They were taking the educational task seriously. They were considering the possible repercussions of the incident and whether my telling was accurate. They were fully engaged in the learning activity and taking it seriously. This was a first with this group.

As a class, we considered the potential for serious repercussions arising from bullying and victimisation. We discussed audience participation and how audiences can fuel these incidents, and peer group pressure and group responsibility for repercussions from this type of action. This was a real learning moment for the young people. I believed some of them would think twice prior to contributing to a similar incident in the future. Some of the significant figures showed signs of being moved by the learning experience.

The Henchman

The mother of one of the henchmen in the story phoned me that evening. She told me her son had brought a copy of the story home. He had read it to her, and realised for the first time how the class bully was manipulating him to do his dirty work. She thanked me. It was something she had been trying to get through to him for some time.

The Victim

The victim initially felt he had no control over these incidents and carried none of the blame. He said he was bullied wherever he went. He explained he had been bullied at his last school, and on both work experiences. Yet, through the development of this lesson, he began to see possibilities for changing his behaviour, and why his actions might be read as inviting bullying.

We used "Top Dog" as a springboard. We talked about body language and how the class bully stood. He always stood too close to you with his head tilted up. He made you uncomfortable by standing in your personal space. The class victim always looked down. He stepped backwards if you walked forwards, and always kept well out of your personal space. He often put his hands up to shield his face. We moved into play-acting. I asked the victim to stand up straight, look me in the eye, and move into my personal space. I showed him the difference in how he was being read by getting another student to take up his usual stance, then take up the bully's stance. I could see he began to understand the power of body language to influence how you are read by others.

As a class we decided to help the victim change his body language. Every time he adopted a victim posture the other students pointed it out. It gradually became automatic. He began adjusting his posture himself. He wanted attention and wanted to make friends, but had always been isolated. Their attempts to help gave him the attention he was seeking in a positive way. Victim behaviour had attracted the attention he desired, but being a chronic

victim can result in serious repercussions. I believe it was in the student's best interest to encourage the development of healthier strategies.

I ran into the class victim about a year after the program ended. He was on the checkout at a supermarket. He read like managerial material. His body language was positive, assertive, and confident. It was exhilarating to see.

The Bully

I took the lesson still further. I realised it was necessary to compound the lesson if it was to have any long-term benefits. We looked at the bully's social life. He had no equal friends. Everyone felt uncomfortable around him. He was always domineering. I was worried about him keeping a job. He wanted an apprenticeship, but no one would keep him on with his current attitude and body language.

I explained that successful people are in control of their body language. They can change the message they are sending out and adjust to the situation. They can move up and down the dominance-subservience spectrum. They can be assertive when necessary, and can follow when appropriate. In order to succeed in life, I explained you have to be in control of the messages your body is sending out.

The class worked with the bully. They told him when he was using bullying body language. They pulled him into line. The positive attention he received when he was responding to their advice began to win him real friends and open opportunities for equal relationships. As the course progressed, I watched him slowly relax and let down his guard. Some of the young people began to trust him, and real friendships began to form. I believe he left the program a better adjusted, happier person. He was offered an apprenticeship before the program end, and was still employed and doing well in that position a year later.

Transformation of my Pedagogical Approach

When I ran "Top Dog" for the first time, the young people were attentive for the entire lesson. They achieved three times their usual literacy scores on the work sheet, whilst examining their personal ethical codes, and enhancing lifeskills. The effort made on the literacy task was enhanced by its perceived relevance, and the literacy task had other valuable spin-offs. I began to feel that in the short time these young people remained in compulsory education I had to make the most out of all learning activities; each task had to accomplish more than enhance literacy; with their current ethics and lifeskills they would not succeed in legitimate employment. All tasks had to address these issues.

This incident, and the observed significant learning that resulted from the incident and associated exercises, altered my pedagogical practice. Through this experience, I realised that this group of 15 at-risk young people were capable of functioning as a positive shaping force. They learned best from their peers. I began to see that peer group pressure could be harnessed as a powerful shaping tool. I decided to develop the use of peer group pressure as a tool to shape behaviour.

This was a critical point in the development of the model. It demonstrated the necessity of developing curriculum materials that would engage the young people. It made apparent the value of harnessing key learning moments. It clarified the need to introduce problem solving and the opportunity to review one's behaviours and ethical code critically. It foregrounded the need, on these type of programs, to address the issues of bullying, victimisation, audience responsibility, and body language as an integral part of class curricula.

This story and work sheet were also applied in 1996 and on both 1997 programs. The associated strategies extending the lesson into theatre arts and bioliteracy were also incorporated. The story and work sheet were as successful when applied with these groups,

even though the application of the story was handled differently. Students read the story and completed the work sheet following an incident of bullying. This enabled participants to recognise how each participant in a bullying incident feeds the action. We then applied the story to their particular bullying incident. This offered opportunity to apply judgments made on the work sheet to their own action choices. This proved to be as successful a strategy as using the work sheet with the original group, as initial judgements were made in relation to others, and then opportunity was made to apply these judgements to themselves and their part in the action. In 1996, 1997, and in 1998 the story was used proactively, at the first sign of bullying or victimisation.

"Top Dog": A Critique

With each student cohort this story and work sheet were used as a starting point to begin addressing the issues of bullying, victimisation, and audience contribution to conflict. Here all parties were invited to consider action taken, and alternative potential choices, whilst assessing their contribution to the conflict. The work sheet and story were effective. They did produce greatly improved student outcomes, but they were written at 3am to address an issue at 8.45am that morning. It was also the first work sheet of this sort I had written. With experience, the work sheets greatly improved. Future work sheets did not encourage simple one word answers like question 8, "Do you think Alan did the right thing?", to which most students answered simply "yes" or "no". The question could have been improved with "Why or why not?". It also could have asked, "How do you think the audience watching the fight might have contributed to the incident?". This would have encouraged audience members to consider how they had contributed to the conflict, rather than a simple single word response. In framing question 10 I made the same mistake. It also required a simple "yes" or "no" answer. This question could also have been augmented by "Why, or why not?".

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The positive aspects of this work sheet are that it did encourage the young people to consider what Sam, Gary, and Alan could learn from the fight. They young people were invited to view the conflict from both sides. They were also encouraged to see the dangers of "picking on the same person all the time". Here students were invited to consider the possible repercussions of their actions. Responses to Question 4 "Do you think Alan would stand by the narrator if he was in trouble? Why or why not?" varied. Student answers ranged from "He beleves thats write", to "because he wants to be in the cool groups". Here both students scored a point for their answer, as I was not judging their ethics, merely their ability to read and make meaning. Questions like 4 and 5 encouraged the young people to make inferences based on the story (see Appendix B for whole work sheet). This encouraged applying the story to personal knowledge, not mere retrieval from the story.

By doing the work sheet, students were invited to reconsider their current attitude to bullying and to derive alternate action choices for conflict participants. I was not intent on imposing my middle class ethics on the young people, merely encouraging them to consider their current ethical code, and the possible repercussions of choices based on this code. Students were not judged on whether the ideology underlying their answers was appropriate; they were merely encouraged to consider the ramifications of their current ideology when applied in action. The work sheet also encouraged a more sophisticated view of the incident. The young people were invited to see that participants in a conflict are making choices, that those choices may have serious repercussions, and that there is a rationale behind those choices that reveal something about how the person makes choices, their basic ethical code and their *modus operandi.*

The issue of body language and how it contributes to, and invites, bully-victim incidents was dealt with through the follow-up theatre arts lesson. Students were invited to consider the body language of the class bully and victim. We then considered how these individuals

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control situations through their use of body language. The young people became involved in role playing games, altering their body language to facilitate different readings. They were surprised at the power of body language to oppress and invite oppression. They began to realise that the way they are read by others is something they can choose to control. In order to compound learning, the strategies were applied in a variety of contexts. The next step was to apply body language to the job interview.

Applying Bioliteracy to the Simulated Job Interview

The young people were invited to apply for jobs. Three of their peers formed the interview committee. Another of their peers assessed their body language in the interview to see if this influenced their choice of future employees. We discussed how much information about a person can be gathered as they simply walk into the room and sit down. The young people began to see the significance of the unconscious messages they were sending out. These interviews became a weekly event. The young people began correcting each other's body language. Where no adult could succeed, they modified each other's body language. Their peers took on the teaching role, and real learning was facilitated.

Consolidation of this Approach

The use of a short story and work sheet, couched in local teenage English, had proved a positive learning tool. The positive outcomes inspired further application and development of this approach. The next story I wrote was called "Big Butt Betty" (Netolicky, 1996, pp. 38-39).

"Big Butt Betty": bulimia and anorexia

I was suspicious one of the girls on the program was bulimic. I had watched her rush off to the toilet after each break, and come out pale. I decided to prepare a story and work sheet on this issue. This became the second story for the TSG. As with "Top Dog" (Appendix B), I

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adopted the persona of one of the students in the class and wrote the story in simple conversational English. All names were changed and the incident was largely fabricated, using reality only as a springboard.

All students worked on the story and work sheet with enthusiasm. Their literacy results were, once again, greatly improved. There was one particularly interesting response that made me realise I was on the right track, that I had couched the tale in vocabulary the young people could relate to. The young man, whose persona I had adopted to write the story, replied using "I" to answer all questions relating to the narrator. All other students wrote "the narrator".

During the discussion, following the exercise, two of the female students admitted to the group that they were bulimic. We began to look at ways to address this problem as a group. It was revealed, through discussion, that what the other students had seen as harmless teasing, was having a significant negative influence on the one girl in particular. They had not intended to harm her, merely have some fun at her expense. They began changing their behaviour toward her. They stopped the negative teasing, and started making an effort to include her in the group.

I believe group cohesion and ethics were augmented by the exercise. Through "Big Butt Betty" and "Top Dog" the students had begun to look after each other, in particular their at-risk members. These actions signified an enhanced commitment to social responsibility, and hence, a move in their *modus operandi* away from self-gratification, to concern for the welfare of others.

To compound the lesson, I set the girls a research project on anorexia and bulimia. I collected a number of women's magazine articles on severe cases. The girls were horrified by the stories and revolted at the sight of the young anorexics. I set the boys a research project

on the waif look. The girls were surprised to realise that only the girls in the class saw this as "a good look". One boy remarked "You'd never see any of those people in Playboy or Penthouse magazines. Men don't like that look". Coming from their peers the girls began to see the women's magazines in a new light. They began to talk about how the magazines were encouraging a look that was only attractive to women. We began to relate this back to anorexia and bulimia and the drive to be thin. This led to dialogue on how our self-image is influenced by the media. In this way, the initial lesson was consolidated through further related activities.

"Fire Bug": a proactive strategy for dangerous behaviour

The use of golden moments as a means of addressing student issues came to a head after a series of small fires at the Ocean Ridge community centre. Our group was blamed on each occasion as we were the "at-risk" group. I believed it was imperative to discover who was responsible, before a serious incident occurred. So I wrote "Fire Bug" (Netolicky, 1996a, p. 54) in an attempt to "crack the case". I hoped that by reading the story to the students, and using the story as a springboard for discussion, someone would own up, or inform on the offender.

The beginning of the story was based on actual incidents that had occurred at the centre. The conclusion was an alternate tragic end to one of the incidents. The students argued that the tragic end could not happen. I pointed out how it could happen. The students were shaken. The young boy who was responsible owned up. He did not want all the students wearing the blame for his action, and he was aware some of them knew he was the perpetrator. I also believe he had not considered that his little fires could blow out of control. When interviewed, he said he did not think about the possible repercussions of his actions.

The sad thing was, it was almost as if he wanted to be caught. His parents had split up and he desperately wanted their attention to focus on him, not their own unhappiness. This became apparent at the parent conference. His father had had little to do with him since the marriage break up. He now agreed to accompany the young man to the Fire Department's course for firebugs. Attendance at the course was made a condition of his remaining in the program. He was happy to attend, as he was to do this with his father. His father became more involved in his life after the incident. He arranged his work experience and saw him regularly on weekends. This proved to be a win-win situation, as the mother was struggling to cope with the rebellious 15 year old. Once we began to put in place strategies to address this issue, many of his other problem behaviours dissipated.

I had picked up from some of his work that he was quite bright. However, he did very little work in class. At the interview with his parents on the fire incident, I mentioned my suspicions. His parents said that in primary school he was a top student; his performance had deteriorated since their marriage break up. I told him that he was achieving little and would not achieve his goal of technical college entry by the course end. I explained this would not affect my future, or his parents' futures, only his future opportunities would be diminished. He would be unable to access the computer course at technical college he was interested in. He was the one with the most to lose. From this point on, he worked extremely hard and completed all program assessments in three weeks. It was hard to believe the change in him. He had been chronically unmotivated. He made a complete turn-around and worked extremely hard to achieve his goal. He was accepted into computer technology and, I was told, did extremely well.

I can only assume that his early poor performance was related to his attention seeking that through the parent interview he realised he had not fooled me, and that he would be the

significant loser if he failed to achieve a pass. He also managed to draw his father back into his life, which I believe he desperately desired.

Here the golden moment - the last fire - was harnessed to address a behaviour issue that could have had serious repercussions. The story was a proactive strategy attempting to address the issue prior to a real crisis. I believe it was effective, as it changed not only the protagonist's future, but the other student's perceptions of covering up others' criminal behaviour. This issue was addressed through a variety of other stories in TSG and TSG II ("Off his Face", Netolicky, 1996, pp. 6- 7, "Who do you think they Blamed this Time?", Netolicky, 1996, pp. 24- 25).

I am not a psychologist. I took the risk of opening up "a can of worms" by introducing the story to "crack the case". It was a calculated risk. However, I felt everyone at the centre was endangered by the fires, and I was desperate for a solution.

Golden Moments to Facilitate Behaviour Change: Rosie

Many problem behaviours are, at base, attention seeking. Often the "victim" has control over the situation, and is manipulating the outcome. This kind of manipulation may appear harmless, but can have serious repercussions in the long term. Rosie was an attractive young lady. She was quite lonely. She had developed a style of relating to people and getting attention that placed her in the victim position and was dangerous and unhealthy. I waited for the appropriate opportunity where real learning could occur. Luckily the repercussions here were not too serious.

Rosie: A Case Study

Rosie is an only child. She claims that her mother does not want her, so she currently lives at her aunt's house. Her aunt has six children of her own and Rosie says she is a lot happier there.

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We have had regular difficulties with Rosie on the program. You can rarely catch her at anything, but she is always involved when there is trouble. Occasionally I catch a glimpse of her problematic behaviour out the corner of my eye, but never enough to pin a situation on her. She tends to set up others, and then sits back and watches.

The young people have been told not to leave their purses lying around. On this occasion some of them were playing basketball, while the lecturer on duty worked on the mezzanine level with students struggling with new numeracy concepts. Rosie had left her purse on a chair. One of the boys grabbed it. They started throwing it around. She snatched their basketball and ran into the storeroom. As she turned to leave the storeroom she called out "You wouldn't dare lock me in here!"

She had been winding the boys up all morning. I believe they read her statement as a challenge. I doubt the thought would have crossed their minds if she had not said it. The nearest student pulled down the roller door and flipped the latch.

The lecturer called them back to class. He did not notice one student was missing. About twenty minutes later one of the centre staff heard Rosie in the storeroom. They said she was hyperventilating and wanted to go home. She said the boys had locked her in and they should be thrown off the program.

The lecturer telephoned me. He wanted to know if he could send Rosie home. I said I wanted them all to fill out a conflict resolution form telling their side of what happened. I wanted all the young people who were down on the court to fill out a form, not just those directly involved in the incident. The lecturer was to fill out an Incident Report Form. I would review the situation in the morning.

I work largely from a social base. I believe victims, bullies and attention-seekers need an audience to take up their positions. These are social roles. Audiences feed these situations. Hence conflict forms were required from all students and staff to recognise their part played in the incident.

The next morning I read the forms and began to deal with the situation. All the students on the lower level were aware Rosie was locked in the storeroom. They were not guilt free. Rosie had participated in the teasing and had put the suggestion into the student's head. I asked her whether she expected to get locked in the storeroom when she called out. She admitted she did. But not for so long. She still insisted the boys should be thrown off the program for doing it. She suggested she could have died in there.

> I asked her to tell me who was guilt free here. Who deserved to remain on the program? The boys then said she should get thrown off because she always did things like this to get them into trouble. I explained they will meet people like this everywhere. They are going to have to smarten up and not get trapped like that. The next person may not be as understanding as I am and next time the repercussions might even be fatal, then it will not matter whose fault it was. I stressed that everyone who knew she was in the storeroom would have to share the blame. They were accomplices.
>
> (Case Study compiled from incident reports, notes for story and conflict resolution forms)

The incident was treated as a golden teaching moment, a time when real learning could occur, when behaviours could be modified. I wrote a TSG II story using this incident, and a number of previous incidents, as a springboard. The story is called "Once Bitten" (Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 51-52). It deals with the issues of attention-seeking, and friendship and its limits. Through the story we looked at the way in which the participants contributed to the incident. We looked at better strategies to keep out of this sort of trouble, and healthier ways to get attention.

After this incident, I approached the family regarding their daughter's behaviour. I was concerned regarding the extremes to which this behaviour could be taken. I was afraid that she may trap someone into a serious situation. My fears were justified. Rosie had accused an older man of rape. The deception was discovered only after serious repercussions for the gentleman.

We began the process of helping Rosie attract friends, and attention, using positive strategies. We attempted to raise her understanding of the seriousness of her actions. This was done through regular counselling on incidents and events, positive contracting, and her having to wear the anger of her peers as a result of her actions. Rosie's behaviour improved significantly. She got a job on her last work experience and was till employed by the same firm a year and a half later. She was also accepted into technical college to study retailing, passed, and is currently studying accounting and management.

Applying the TSG story to a New Group of Students: Penny

A year and a half later, on the 1997 VIP Program, I encountered a girl with similar behaviour patterns to Rosie. We used "Once Bitten", the story written for Rosie, to address the issues of attention-seeking and manipulation. This did help the young people realise what Penny was doing to them, and made them more cautious of her traps. However Penny was also dishonest. She was quite street-wise and managed to trap the more naive students in her web. I wrote a series of short scenarios relating to her particular issues. These were designed to help her consider her behaviours and their repercussions upon others. I also hoped that the students involved in the incidents would smarten up, and not get trapped again once they better understood what was going on.

To begin with, I only had fragmentary knowledge gathered from conflict resolution forms filled out by the students and Incident Forms completed by staff on duty. I had also spoken to various players in the incident. I used the information gathered to construct the following scenario. I had no idea which aspects of the story were true, and which were fabricated. I changed names and items stolen. Students were unsure what information was fact and what was fiction. This helped me use all information gathered to create a meaningful learning experience that had the potential to lead into further counselling, or work sheets, consolidating the lesson.

A number of students reported that Penny had borrowed a ring from Diane and that when asked for it to be returned, Penny had said she lost it swimming. One student reported that Penny had a lot of money on her that day, and that she rarely had any money as she was currently homeless. On talking to the two girls, I discovered that Penny had given Diane one of her rings to replace the missing item. I concocted the following scenario:

> Mary borrowed a necklace from Jenny to wear to a party on the weekend.
> She and Jenny were not best friends, but Jenny trusted her anyway. Mary
> took the necklace to <u>Cash Converters</u> and hocked it. On Monday she had
> twenty dollars in her purse but claimed the necklace was stolen at the party.
> (Unpublished work sheet, Netolicky, 1997)

Penny was late coming in that morning. A number of students smiled as they read the work

sheet, a couple asked if it was based on an incident from the class. I left them to draw their

own conclusions. The questions associated with the work sheet offered some interesting

observations and began to show how real learning can occur. The first question, "What

would you do if you were Jenny?" invited a wide variety of student responses. Penny wrote

"Well if she hocked it she's not a very good friend but if she just lost it I'd expect her to give

something in return". Penny's best friend wrote, "I would of punched the other girl out. and

then I would've taken all of her stuff, clothes, jewellery". Diane's reply was "Tell her to

replace it and never trust her again and tell kids not to trust her".

The second question was:

> Mary took advantage of Jenny's generosity. She began to feel bad. She went to buy back the
> necklace but *Cash Converters* now wanted sixty dollars for the necklace. What should she do?
> a. Give Mary the twenty dollars she got for the necklace.
> b. Do nothing.
> c. Try and earn the money to buy back the necklace.
> d. Apologise.
> (Unpublished work sheet, Netolicky, 1997)

Diane's answer to the second question was predictable "Try and earn the money to buy back

the necklace." She first circled (a), but after reading the other answers obviously decided she

preferred the other answer. Penny's friend said saying "Sorry" was enough. Penny wrote

"Save money and say 'sorry' like you mean it".

The answers to question 3 were interesting. Question 3 asked, "If you were Jenny's friend

what could you do about this to help resolve it?". Penny wrote, "I don't know. I'd think I'd

never lend anything to her again." This may indicate that she could understand how the

other party felt. I hoped it indicated that she saw how she might lose people's trust through

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her chosen behaviour. Penny's friend's reaction was surprising. She was normally a friendly person. I don't know if this was a warning for Penny as they always read each other's work. She wrote "Tell her to say to the other girl fuckoff. Never come near my stuff again or I will have to brake your legs". Diane's best friend wrote, "Try to comfort her to let her understand that Mary is a very lousy person & does not deserve any respect".

In this way through a short, quickly prepared, relevant-to-the-moment work sheet, I augmented the lesson taught through "Once Bitten", and applied it to the particular situation at hand. Once again, reading the scenario and framing the answers was assessed as a literacy skill. The work sheet was designed to test reading comprehension skills, but required more than mere retrieval of information. Students were encouraged to read the brief scenario and give answers they believed to be right, working with their ethical code as a base. Students were graded on one mark for each point made, hence their ethical code was not judged, their ability to make meaning was. The work sheets are designed to enable students to consider ethical questions through a series of similar incidents, some from the point of view of offender, others from the victim's point of view, thereby offering them the opportunity to reassess their current ethical code by considering the feelings of both the victim and the protagonist.

<div align="center">Positive Marking: a tool to shape behaviour</div>

Marking student's work can be harnessed as a golden teaching moment. It is a key shaping tool, often squandered or abused. Teachers may try and achieve too much with marking. They may feel they have to correct all student errors in a piece of work. We operate on the basis that each piece of work is marked only for the set task. Hence if this is a comprehension task, grammar and spelling are not corrected. We may note the most common grammatical or spelling errors, and set a task based on these errors, but this particular piece of work is marked solely for the task at hand. The young people we teach

have had little positive reinforcement, academically speaking. They are frequently low achievers, and were often the troublemakers in the classroom. Classroom teachers spent most energy managing their behaviours. These young people have experienced little positive reinforcement.

Disaffected students will rise readily to new expectations and positive reinforcement. We try to set small achievable tasks. Students are praised for any success, however small. This has to be real and done with sincerity and enthusiasm. These young people are weary of false praise. This may involve comments like "intelligent observation Ariel", "Great idea Jane!". We write at least one positive comment on each young person's work. We try and mark some of the assignments while students are working on other tasks, and offer positive oral feedback continuously.

Grammatical and spelling errors are ignored in most subject areas. We only make these corrections when doing formal English. We operate on the basis of language, behaviour, and dress must be appropriate to the situation. So, the young people only need to write in correct formal English in formal English lessons. They are free to write and speak in Australian teenage English in all other subjects. Hence a written answer like "no becase he wose the mane charichter" can be marked correct, as it answers the question. The most common error on that particular work sheet was the spelling of the word "because". This was addressed in formal English. The student was set a task addressing this problem.

> **Assessment Task 3: Write and give a speech to the class offering your point of view.**
>
> - Explain why you would rather go to <u>McDonalds</u>, or <u>Chicken Treat</u> next week after the excursion.
> - Use the word "because" to explain why you want to go to that particular restaurant.
> - The first paragraph should state which restaurant you will choose and briefly why you made this choice.
> - The second paragraph should deal with one of the restaurants, telling its good and bad points.
> - The third paragraph should deal with the **other** restaurant, telling its good and bad points.
> - The final paragraph should sum up why you want to go to that particular restaurant.
> - **Be sure to spell "because" correctly each time.**

(Unpublished work sheet, Netolicky, 1997)

In this way the young person can get a good mark on a comprehension task, even though the work is littered with spelling errors. A new meaningful task can be set using a common error as a base. This exercise can be made real if the student can convince other students, and the staff member, to accept their side of the argument, then the eating venue for the next excursion can be changed. This way the task is valued, not just busy work. If the young people can see a purpose in a task, they are more likely to put in effort.

When working with disaffected students, it is necessary to help the young people build confidence in their academic abilities. We set small easily achievable tasks, but not simple ones. We aim to keep the academic skills to complete the task low, but the content level sophisticated and geared to their age set. We operate on the understanding that all the young people are not expected to work at the same level, merely steadily improve. Receiving back a harshly marked piece of work can knock a person of confidence. We try and set tasks to build confidence and encourage improvement. Students are not expected to attain perfection in a single task, merely improve.

Marking is a powerful tool. If teachers expect perfection with each piece of work, it is not surprising that young people with low skill levels give up. Encouragement and addressing

only the most urgent issues is a healthier approach. Here improvement, rather than perfection, is demanded and rewarded.

Also, requiring the young people to switch to formal English only when it is appropriate, say in a lesson practicing job interview skills, or in writing a speech to give at graduation, empowers the young people with skills to read contexts correctly and adjust their vocabulary accordingly. Students are not under stress from having to watch their language for the whole school day, and they are empowered with skills to adjust to context.

Imposing formal English at all times does not empower the young people with skills to read contexts. Many of the students on our programs lack skills to move in and out of different contexts appropriately. This has landed them in trouble in school. It will get them in trouble in the adult world. The policy of language-appropriate-to-context gives us the opportunity to assess only the task at hand, thereby increasing the potential for positive marking.

Golden Teaching Moments: A Summary

By harnessing golden teaching moments and adjusting curriculum to address the conflict at hand, rather than ploughing on with a prescriptive curriculum, we facilitate both real learning, and the opportunity to retain troublesome students in the classroom, whilst offering them positive strategies to address their issues. It also minimises the need for exclusion as a solution to deal with the most troublesome students. In this way, the troublesome student is maintained in the teaching-learning environment and not deprived of education as a result of behaviours that need addressing, and the whole group can benefit by participating in real learning, tied to contemporary real experience.

Harnessing golden moments does at times interfere with curriculum-driven instruction, when a particular test or assessment task has been set. However, in most cases, students find it difficult to focus on a set task if there are unresolved issues in the classroom. Also we do not

always address an issue immediately; it may be left until morning if an immediate appropriate strategy is not at hand. In that case new curriculum may need to be generated to address the issue.

II. Curriculum as a Tool to Shape Behaviour

Strike Four uses literacy and numeracy curriculum as a means of addressing multiple issues. Here literacy, numeracy, ethics, and lifeskills may be taught as an integrated whole. The model operates on the notion that enhancing literacy and numeracy is not enough to assure success in legitimate employment. Students often need to enhance lifeskills, and their work ethic, in order to be able to access and maintain employment.

In Australia, in the late 1800s, there was "pathetic confidence in the efficacy of the three R's to transform men's natures" (Austin, 1965, p. 178). There was a belief that an "instructed and intelligent people ... are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one" (Austin, 1965, p. 178). Many schools today still operate on the misconception that efficient workers, and good citizens, can be produced merely by augmenting literacy and numeracy. Compounding this is a fear by teachers to address ethical issues. As stated by a ninth grade teacher cited by Rogers (1983, p. 2), "I think twice about what I'm doing. Is there anything controversial in this lesson plan? If there is, I won't use it. I won't use things where a kid has to make a judgement". Honesty and appropriate behaviour remain largely in the domain of religious instruction, or school behaviour management policies, rather than an integral part of all school curricula. Schooling is still largely perceived to be about the 3Rs, not about building communities, citizens and workers.

When working with disaffected young people, I realised that these young people will fail to succeed in the world of legitimate work, not as a result of poor literacy and numeracy, but

due to a poor work ethic, ethical codes at odds with mainstream society and lack of job-getting and job-keeping skills. Rogers (1983, p. 1) observed that our "educational system is ... failing to meet the real needs of our society ... our schools, generally, constitute the most traditional, conservative, rigid, bureaucratic institution of our time, and the institution most resistant to change". He suggested that most teachers would be interested in facilitating real whole-person learning, however "the vast majority of schools, at all educational levels, are locked into a traditional and conventional approach that makes significant learning improbable if not impossible" (pp. 20- 21). He stated that meaningful learning is at an absolute minium when we combine "a *prescribed curriculum, similar assignments for all students, lecturing* as almost the only form of instruction, *standard tests* by which all students are externally examined, and *instructor-chosen grades* as the measure of learning" (p. 21). These factors preclude potential for shaping curricula to individuals, communities and populations, they prevent teachers harnessing real learning moments and exploring students' areas of interest.

In 1995, whilst using "Top Dog" (Appendix B) and "Big Butt Betty" (Netolicky, 1996, p. 38-39), it became apparent that these young people were interested in learning if curriculum content was yoked to their real life issues. Student responses to these stories demonstrated that there was opportunity within the general activity of facilitating the learning of the three Rs to shape attitudes and behaviours, to modify the *modus operandi* of the young people, and to encourage prosocial skills.

Working with this group of young people I realised that these students had failed to succeed in the school environment, not as a result of poor literacy and numeracy, because many were very bright and highly competent in the three Rs, but due to a failure to adopt, learn, or read behaviours appropriate to the school environment. As our goal on the Ocean Ridge CGEA was to have these young people prepared for technical college or the world of work at the

program end, we needed to enhance their lifeskills, ethical codes, and work ethic, as well as their literacy and numeracy if they were to succeed in the adult world.

Our programs are only 19 or 27 weeks. This makes it crucial to address lifeskill deficits through all curriculum content. As I was responsible for literacy, I began by producing literacy tasks that would enhance skills appropriate to success in the adult world. In 1996 I also began developing an experimental curriculum, integrating numeracy, lifeskills and ethics. Various institutions and programs are currently testing these materials.

On the whole, the stories in TSG and TSG II were the result of in-class issues. Hence, "Best Mates Don't Do That" (Netolicky, 1996, p. 4) was written to address a stealing incident, whilst "Every Day it's the Same" (Netolicky, 1996, p. 18) addresses victimisation. However, stories like "Negotiating a Deal" (Appendix C) were written to teach skills of empowerment using a socially acceptable strategy. These young people possessed skills for increasing power at home and in the workplace, but their strategies for power enhancement had negative spin-offs for all concerned. My interest lay in offering skills for environmental augmentation for all participants. The first story written to address this issue was called "Negotiating a Deal" (Appendix C). This story and work sheet have remained a central focus in the application of ideology and policy in the classroom; using this story as a springboard, the young people are skilled up to manage and shape their environments.

Applying "Negotiating a Deal" in the Classroom

The story and work sheet, "Negotiating a Deal" (Appendix C), offer empowering positive strategies for shaping relationships. They attempt to clarify the base from which negotiations can take place by demonstrating the underlying principles of deal making, and the dynamics of parenting and becoming an adult. In the introduction to Section II in the TSG, the binary relationship of "letting go" and "taking control" is introduced:

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> Knowledge can be empowering. Ignorance is disempowering. To struggle
> through the teenage years without a knowledge of the dynamics and
> mechanisms operating in the processes of "taking control" (the teenager's
> role) and "letting go" (the adult's role) can be frustrating and create
> unnecessary tensions. (Netolicky, 1996, p. 9)

The young people need to understand both the adult standpoint and the dynamics of becoming an adult in order to negotiate the journey to adulthood empowered. The young people also need to develop empowering ways to frame their problems. Hence the text states that

> each partner in the "growing up" process has a role, responsibilities and
> freedoms. If these are understood and respected the processes of "taking
> control" and "letting go" can be empowering rather than disempowering,
> allowing rational negotiation rather than alienating battles. (Netolicky, 1996,
> p. 9)

The dynamics of this process are described so the young people can enter negotiations empowered:

> Most parents work instinctively on the principle of **"responsibility
> demonstrated - freedoms gained"**. This means that if the teenager
> demonstrates s/he can and will behave in a reasonable manner and make
> responsible choices, then s/he is entitled to increased responsibility and
> greater freedoms. The reverse is of course also true. If the young person
> demonstrates an inability to make responsible choices, **freedoms and
> responsibilities are limited**. (Netolicky, 1996, p. 9)

Once they understand the processes operating, the young people can enter the deal-making negotiation as equals, rather than as victims, uncertain of the dynamics operating. The lesson is compounded through the story and work sheet, "Negotiating a Deal" (Appendix C).

Deal Making

In order to enter the deal-making process empowered, the young people need to be able to read the problem from both sides. To make a successful deal, one needs to understand both one's own perspective, and the agenda of the other party. The introduction to the work sheet attempts to offer the young people an opportunity to understand the parents' position. The

exercise encourages the young people to consider the dynamics of letting go and taking control by looking at another young person's situation. The students are asked "What extra freedoms does the narrator want now that she is a teenager?", and "Why do you think she is not allowed to do these things yet?". Once the teenager can see the other side of the issue, and can see that parental refusal is often out of concern for the welfare of the young person not for direct benefits for the parent, they can begin to work on a strategy for negotiation.

Framing the Problem in a Useful Way

The work sheet and story also attempt to teach an empowering way of thinking. The young person may think, "My folks won't let me cross roads". This style of framing a problem is negative. It offers no possibilities for empowerment. The young people need to begin to frame their problems in a useful way such as, "My parents won't let me walk to the shops on my own, because they think I can't cross the road responsibly". Now, in order to solve the problem, they can see that they need to demonstrate that they know how to cross the road safely, and that they are mature enough to do it consistently. This perspective is empowering as it opens up possibilities for the young person to address the issue, and possibly solve the problem.

Applying the Exercise to a Personal Problem

After completing the work sheet, the young people are encouraged to look at their home situation and consider what extra freedoms they want, and why they may not be allowed to do these things yet. Recognition of the reason they are not allowed to do these things yet is a base to work from. How can they change their home situation? How can they convince their significant adults that they are mature enough for increased responsibility and freedom?

By looking at Penny's deal with her parents, the young people are invited to consider the difference between Penny's style of getting what she wants, and the narrator's. Penny

understands how the letting go and taking control process works, so she has a functional base from which to operate. The narrator is a victim of the process, as she is caught up in it, but does not understand how it operates. She is unhappy about her situation, but she does not know where to begin to improve it. The young people are invited to take this story and work out how to make the negotiation process work for them at home, in school, and in the workplace. In this way they can begin to develop positive strategies to manage their own futures, and once the skill is learned, it can be consolidated and generalised through multiple applications.

When asked "What did you learn from the story?" students answered "Don't think things come for free all the time", "I lernt that I shodd treat my parent's right and thay might give me more freedom", "I think that if I act mature to my parents they'll give me more freedom", or "if you compromise about things it can mean a better life for both parties". These answers demonstrate that the young people are beginning to see what the other party has to gain from deal making. Their own deal-making skills have been augmented by applying Penny's skills to their own situation. The story and lesson have been tied to their personal experience, and the young people have learned how they can employ this lesson to improve their home situation.

Past students have attempted to negotiate for staying out, or up, later at night, smoking cigarettes at home, being allowed to entertain members of the opposite sex in their bedrooms, and being able to smoke marijuana at home. Through this process they have begun to see that everything is worth a try. The young man who wanted to smoke marijuana at home was certain that there was no way his grandparents would allow this. We opened the issue up for class discussion. It came out that his late mother was a heroin addict. She had died from heroin and his grandparents were scared that if he used drugs, the same thing would happen to him. Through discussion the young people developed a plan:

"Are you going to smoke mull even if your grandparents won't let you?"
"Yes."
"Well why do you want to smoke at home?"
"Because if I smoke at the dealer's house or at the shopping centre I'll get busted. I'd never do heroin. I saw what it did to my Mom and Step-Dad."
"Well I reckon your grandparents don't want you to get busted either so, why don't you try telling them that you'd never do heroin because you saw what it did to your Mom, but you are using marijuana. You're going to go on using it even if they don't approve. But you'd like to do it safely at home where you're less likely to get busted. If they'll let you smoke at home, you'll only do it out the back and you'll promise not to try any harder drugs. Do you think they'd go for that? After all I'm sure they're worried about you. All they're trying to do is keep you safe."

What is relevant here is not whether the young man should be allowed to smoke marijuana at home, but the problem solving skills developed in constructing the plan. The young people worked together. They began to see that the grandparents are not just trying to sabotage their friend's fun, but were concerned for his safety. The students can then see that if the grandparents can see the reduced risk in smoking at home, they may even change their minds.

Once the students begin to understand the dynamics of deal making for increased freedom on an issue close to their hearts, we can then apply the principle to the workplace, and the classroom. Here the young people are invited to look at how this process can be applied to negotiate curriculum content and freedom in the classroom, and how they can negotiate for better pay or shorter working hours in the workplace. The lesson is consolidated through these various applications and the skill acquisition is reinforced. In this way maximum opportunity is offered for internalisation; for these strategies and skills to become part of the young people's *modus operandi*, opportunities are facilitated for application of the lesson and real rewards. As Aronson (1984, p. 33) suggested,

> at gun point, I could be made to say most anything; but with the threat of death removed, I could quickly shrug off those statements and their implications. If a child is kind and generous to his younger brother in order to obtain a cookie from his mother, he will not necessarily become a generous person because of it. He has not learned that generosity is a good thing in itself - what he *has* learned is that generosity is a good way to get cookies.

Real learning needs to be consolidated by a knowledge of being right, making sense and reaping real rewards related to experience. In Aronson's example, the young boy learned a way of getting cookies, not how to be generous. Generosity has its own rewards.

At a professional development day in 1997, a school principal asked, "Isn't this dangerous? Don't the young people have enough power already? How are teachers going to cope with these skilled-up young people?". Teachers can use this strategy to work for them in the same way the young people can. The teacher can work out what would make his/her teaching easier, whilst improving the classroom environment. The teacher can then negotiate with the young people for changes they perceive to be important. Both parties have something to trade. The teacher is also empowered, and the environment can be improved for all parties. The student becomes an active participant in the teaching-learning environment, not merely the object of it.

When dealing with young people who are having trouble at home, I also give the parents the story to read. We then discuss how negotiating a deal can be applied at home, so that they can get the changes they want from their teenagers. This gives the parent a functional tool to modify at-home behaviour. This strategy empowers both parties to benefit from the negotiation process.

Identifying the Other Party's Agenda

Teenagers can always see what they will gain from a deal. In order to negotiate successfully, the young people need to be able to identify what the other party may gain through the negotiating process. In this way they can work out an appropriate offer to entice the other party. Question 8 on the work sheet asks students "What can the parent gain?". Student responses demonstrate that some young people can see a gain for the other party: "A more mature, young adult for a daughter", "more respect from the child for letting her have

freedom", "Knowing their child can make decisions for her self and maybe feel a little bit of trust", "The parent can gain alot of trust in the child. They also get alot of odd jobs around the house taken care of", or "she feels safe with her daughter going out because she knows shes responsible".

Question 10 asks the young people "What can you learn from this story?". Here responses like "Don't expect things come for free all the time ", "to always find a way to forrifil everybodys needs", "Negotiate with your parents don't argue", "if your responsible enough for freedom, you can work on an agreement", and "When you want to do something and your parents say no! then you sit down with them and negotiate", demonstrate that the young people can begin to see how to use the strategy in an empowering way. It also demonstrates that they recognise that if the other party has something to gain, negotiation is possible.

The Best Time to Deal

Question 9 asks the young person to consider the best time to approach the parent. Many of the young people chose "half an hour before the dance, so her folks have to make a quick decision", "when her Dad walks in the door from work", or "when she's really excited about the dance, because she just heard about it". In class we discuss this question. Usually students then begin to see the logic of option "b", "after she had baby-sat her brother and cleaned the kitchen." In this way the work sheet becomes a springboard for discussion, encouraging the young people to reconsider the option selected. The young people begin to see the rationale behind successful deal-making - rule 1 - wait for the right time, that is, the moment when the other party is most likely to be willing to listen to you, and you have notched up some positive *karma.*

In this way, through the story, work sheet, and in-class discussion, the young people are encouraged to recognise:

- you can improve your situation through negotiating a deal;

- the best time to negotiate is when the other party has just gained, or can see personal benefit; and

- in order to negotiate a deal you must consider what the other party has to gain by the deal.

Through application in a variety of contexts, the young people become aware of the other possible applications of this skill. When the students complain about a teacher, or curriculum content, we return to this work sheet, thereby encouraging them to apply the strategy to address the problem at hand.

Applying the Principle in the Classroom

On every program the students take a dislike to one teacher. They usually ask me to sack this person. I explain that in the workplace there will always be someone they do not like. They will not be able to have that person sacked. The strategies they apply here will work for them in the future. They need to work out what they do not like about that teacher, why they think the teacher finds them a hard class to teach, and what they are willing to trade.

The 1996 group wanted to be able to go to the toilet whenever they wanted. I asked why the teacher would not let them. It turned out that they had abused the teacher's trust by continually asking to leave the room to go to the toilet, and by remaining out of class an unusually long time. I suggested they needed to find a way to get the lecturer to trust them again. They needed to assure him they would not abuse the right to go to the toilet if he

would let them go again. The problem was easily solved once the young people saw that they had invited the lecturer's reaction, and that they could make a deal if they could regain his trust.

Negotiating a Deal: a critique

"Negotiating a Deal" was written to address a particular problem with the 1996 group. It has been applied on all subsequent programs. A variety of tasks have been trialed to encourage application of the skill in other contexts. As I wrote the story for my at-risk year 10 groups, it may have been more appropriate to make the protagonist the same age as the target group to facilitate identification. Also it is becoming apparent, through application of the story on a variety of programs, that a set of stories applying the skill in other contexts would aid internalisation of the skill into the young people's *modus operandi*. This could be facilitated through development of a set of stories applying the skill to the workplace, the classroom, to friendship, and to marriage. Negotiating deals and compromise can enhance social skills and relationship management. This has not been addressed on past programs. Application of this skill to address relationship issues, and the notion of making a relationship or marriage work, would be a valuable extension of the lesson. This issue needs to be addressed during the 1998 program, and in Teenagers Learning about Life: Cross-curricula outcome driven lifeskills, ethics and citizenship education (Netolicky, 1998b).

A New Problem: The Beginning of Teenagers Learning about Life

Toward the end of the 1996 program, I began to perceive a new problem, one not directly addressed in the TSG and TSG II. There were a small number of young people whose prime needs were not so much job-getting and job-keeping skills, as fundamental ethical code and work ethic issues. These young people came from backgrounds where illegal activity was socially acceptable, whilst others had failed to adopt socially endorsed ethical codes, or had begun to make bad choices due to peer or family affiliations. The task of getting these young

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people into employment was not their major issue. Employers in legitimate businesses would not accept their ethical codes, and the salary for these jobs was low compared with what could be made in the short term from illegitimate businesses. How could I convince these young people it was worth accessing legitimate employment if the remuneration was significantly less than they could access drug dealing, stealing, or through prostitution? Many of these young people came from homes where these activities were taken for granted as a way of earning a living. The result was, the beginning of Teenagers Learning about Life: Cross-curricula outcome driven lifeskills, ethics and citizenship education. I began writing a series of work sheets and stories in an attempt to address this issue. I focused on encouraging the young people to examine their current ethics, immersing them in proactive problem solving, and hopefully beginning to convince them that in the long term, legitimate employment and honest work results in better outcomes.

Numeracy, Literacy and Work Ethics: "Skimming off the Top"

One of the first work sheets I wrote to address this issue was based on a student's story about why he lost his first job. I decided to combine literacy, basic numeracy, and work ethics when writing this story and work sheet. The story was called "Skimming off the Top" (Appendix D).

Question 1 to 4 required basic mathematical, or mere retrieval-from-the-text, skills. Question 5 is the first question requiring judgement and personal opinion. It asks "Do you think Steve will find it easy to get a job and pay back the money he stole? Why or why not?". All students felt the young man would be unlikely to be employed again as the "next job will ask him why he got fired", or "because he will have a criminal record". Question 6 asked "How will having a police record affect the rest of his life?". All answers to question 6 recognised it would have life-long repercussions on his employability. One young man with a criminal record also said "Cant go someplaces over seas limited in many other ventures he may want

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to do in the future". This demonstrated he had personal experience of this problem and had applied it to his own situation. This compounded the lesson, and class discussion meant others in the group also benefited from his personal experience. Question 7 raised some interesting issues "Why do you think Steve decided to steal the money?". Most young people felt "working for it was to hard for him and it seemed so easy", or "he thought she wouldn't miss the money", or "he didn't think it would matter". I believe this reflects the students' attitude to stealing small amounts of money - it won't be missed, it's so little it won't make a difference, it's easier than earning it. The last two questions asked the young people to consider whether Steve's action actually makes sense when you think about it in economic terms. All students answered "no" to question 9 - "Do you think it was worth Steve stealing the money? Why or why not?" - but their reasons varied. One student answered "No, because it was only 30 dollars and from that he lost his job and got a police record"; another said "No, it wasn't worth stealing the money because he had to pay it back and do thirty hours community service and a criminal record"; yet another remarked "No it was not because he lost his job & it was shit all money".

Some young people applied the lesson to their personal experiences. The young people were encouraged to consider the repercussions from a small theft on one young man's life. They all recognised how stealing "shit all money" can affect the rest of your life. This made the lesson a valuable experience, with the potential for application in their own futures.

With development, I believe the practice of integrating numeracy, literacy, and ethics can work. The trial curriculum demonstrates this. The young people reviewed their ethical codes. Their literacy skills were challenged. However, I believe the mathematical task was too basic. I was accepted into university after year 10. This was the end of my mathematics education. This is a job for a mathematics specialist. Here opportunity to create tasks that

test a higher degree of mathematical skill, in a more thorough manner, whilst exploring ethical issues, needs to be explored.

Augmenting Students' Work Ethics: "Making a Living"

The results from work experience in the second half of 1997 were disappointing. Half of the students failed to attend the full first work experience. Some quit after only a day or two. This had not happened on previous programs. I tried to ascertain what made the difference. I began by developing a series of work sheets to find the source of the problem. It was through these work sheets that it became apparent that the young people from backgrounds where dealing drugs, theft, and prostitution were an accepted norm, were unwilling to persist at jobs with minimal remuneration. The young people made remarks like "Why should I dust shoes for $5 an hour when I can deal for my Dad?", or "My mom makes $100 a day as prostitute, what other kind of job can I get where I'll make money like that?". This was a difficult problem. I began trying to reason with the young people. I tried the tack "At least you're making money on a regular basis and you don't have long periods without money when you're in jail". One young girl answered "My brothers deal in jail. They say business is better in jail. Everyone wants drugs there". I tried "Five years down the track the guy working at Chicken Treat will have been promoted to manager and will be buying a house". She answered "We live in Homes West housing and my parents get the dole and my Dad deals drugs and we don't have to pay tax on the money *we* get." On one occasion I asked one of the young people what he wanted to be when he left school. He answered "I'm a small time drug dealer now. When I leave school I want to be a big time dealer". I was getting desperate. What angle could I take with these young people? My middle class values meant nothing to them. I began to design a set of work sheets to ascertain if some of these young people could be assisted in reviewing their work ethics and ethical codes through work sheets.

I was determined to find a way to encourage these young people to access legitimate employment.

One of the work sheets was called "Making a Living" (Appendix E). Question 1 set up the choice to be made and asked for justification of that choice. The young people were asked to choose from three job opportunities: working at Chicken Treat for $7 per hour, working for the local drug dealer for $20, or working as a prostitute for $30 an hour. Six young people chose to be drug dealers, two chose prostitution, and four chose to work at Chicken Treat (three students were away sick or on work experience on this occasion). Question 2 encouraged them to look at the motivation behind their choice. Two students answered that their choice was motivated by self-respect, seven were motivated by money, one student wanted to stay out of jail and drug free, and two stated they wanted to earn an income legally. Questions 3, 4, and 5 required them to look at the benefits and disadvantages of each profession. Question 6 asked if they changed their mind about their initial choice. Four students changed their mind by the end of the work sheet. One young man changed his mind about drug dealing saying, "you could end up in jail, with a record", another said, "I would probably work at chicken treat". None of the students who chose to work at Chicken Treat reversed their decision. However, neither did the young people from the most at-risk home backgrounds.

Generally, my approach was to encourage proactive approaches to decision making. Here students were encouraged to consider the repercussions of possible future choices, and the resultant repercussions. Four students had decided that their original choice was not smart as a result of considering the disadvantages of that choice. This was just a beginning. Further work sheets, discussions, and debates explored the issue. The intention here was to consolidate the lesson. I considered this a positive initial result. I decided this had to be our

main agenda for the next few weeks. This was discussed at the staff meeting so all program staff could address the issue through curriculum.

This lesson demonstrates the transference of policy statements from the mission statement being put into practice. The mission statement "recognises that individuals will fill a variety of niches in society, not necessarily the niche occupied by parents or teachers". This statement acknowledges that the program should not merely mirror middle class morality, manners, and language. Lecturers need to recognise that the young people come from the full range of social niches, and they will enter a wide variety of social niches with varied expectations. Teachers need to consider this when framing expectations of students and when constructing curriculum. Here, through work sheets, the young people were invited to consider paths chosen by their parents and siblings, and make their own judgements. The young people's *modus operandi* comes largely from family values. This type of work sheet encourages a reassessment of family values, whilst inviting the young person to begin shaping their own values for their future family, rather than repeating the pattern of their family of orientation. As teachers, we have to be careful, particularly when working with young people whose family values are at odds with our own, not to be judgemental, thereby alienating the young people, or creating significant conflict with home values.

I was slow to recognise the problem of work ethics at odds with middle class values. It probably should have been addressed on past programs, but I come from the middle class, and failed to perceive the problem as it was outside my personal experience. There are also inherent dangers in addressing ethical codes at odds with middle class morality without alienating students from their families. This is a constant danger. Teachers need to proceed with caution in this area. Alienating students from their families is an ever-present risk. Yet our aim is to encourage them to access legitimate employment.

Compounding the Lesson: "School Mates"

The next day I tried addressing the issue of the future the young people want for their own children, the issue of lifestyle, and the benefits of owning your own home. I hoped this approach would encourage some of the students to reconsider their lifestyle choices. I wrote "School Mates" (Appendix F). In answering question 1, "Do you think Rosie's mom's choice of a career affected her children's choice?", 13 students wrote "yes"; only two answered "no". In answer to the second question, "Do you think you have a responsibility as a parent to set a good example for your kids or are their choices their problem?", one young man from a particularly problematic background answered "of course parents have to set a good example. Their is not one home I know where the kids from a bad family are straight". Question 4 resulted in a significant shift in two students who had previously resisted change. The question asked, "Diane's mom worked for a low wage for a few years. It took time before she was promoted and now she is earning well. Do you think it was worth her effort or would she have been better off doing what Rosie's mom did?". One young man, with an extensive criminal record, who had up until now failed to respond positively to work sheets examining criminal ethical codes replied, "She works a decent job for a living and has no worries about police or any other people and she is saving up for a house". A young girl who was living on the streets and had serious drug and alcohol issues wrote "no, I think that Rosie's daughter shouldn't copy her". However, one young girl continued to resist change. She came from a home where children were introduced to dealing drugs at a young age, and then worked for the father. She answered "I would do what Rosie's mum is doing sit at home wait for teenagers to sell drugs to them its easier than working at Woolies". This young girl is currently employed at a supermarket on the check-out. By the program end she could see the benefits of legitimate employment. She called me on her first day of work really excited and enthusiastic. She was determined to make a fresh start for herself, and her family.

Her boyfriend had quit heroin, they moved out of town to escape "bad influences", and she was proud she had a legitimate job. She is still working at the same job.

Question 6 affected a lot of the homeless students, or those living in rented accommodation. These young people could really appreciate the advantages of owning their own home. Even the young girl most resistant to change saw an advantage here. She wrote, "You can do what you want to it. You dont have to follow rules from owners. You are your own owners". This young girl's family was evicted from three dwellings over the 27 week program. Most of the young people opted for the honest job by the work sheet end, as they felt "you end up better off".

Discouraging Illegal Activities: "Joy Ride"

Toward the end of 1997 another issue began to surface. I felt it imperative that I address the issue. In mid program Mariah got involved with a new young man. She began using hard drugs again. She arrived at the centre at midday, shaking and looking extremely pale, desperate for money for her next fix. Her boyfriend was waiting in the car. She asked to be withdrawn from the program so she could access unemployment benefits. I said I would consider the possibility if she came in to see me in the morning as I was teaching at that moment. She did not turn up.

I was determined to keep her tied to the centre. I felt as long as we had some tie to her there was a possibility of bringing her around. A few days later she was arrested with her boyfriend for car theft. She spent the night in prison and asked to be able to come back on the program. It had been a critical moment for her. She had learned a harsh lesson. She found the night in the detention centre tough. We got a second chance to get her back on track.

A couple of days later, as I arrived at work, I noticed some of the young people were sitting in a car close to centre. When they came in I asked whom the car belonged to. Ronnie claimed

it was his brother's car. He said he had driven it to the centre. He offered to take the other students for a joy ride. This was the second driving incident in a week. In Western Australia you cannot get a licence to drive until you are 17, our students are 14 to 16. None of them should be driving. However, many of these young people come from families that show little respect for the law. One young man's carer offered him a car if he graduated from the program so he could drive to work. Another student's mother let him borrow her car regularly. Many of the young people had written assignments on driving cars, and they appeared to know how to drive. The students had lost a number of friends over the past few weeks in car crashes involving stolen vehicles. These young people could not get licences, yet they were driving. Many of their parents were endorsing, rather than discouraging, the illegal activity. I felt the issue needed to be addressed. I wrote "Joy Ride" (Appendix H).

I used a number of local incidents that the young people were familiar with as a springboard for the story. I tied the story to the group in the opening paragraph. The young people recognised the characters. This made the learning more significant. They knew why I had introduced the work sheet at this time. It was not a brilliant work sheet. I wrote it the night Ronnie brought the car to the centre. I felt the issue had become critical, and needed to be addressed immediately to prevent a crisis.

The first two questions encouraged the young people to consider "What is a 'joy ride'?", and "Would you call this a joy ride?". It is probably the first time many had thought about it, rather than just doing it. It was a good starting point. The third question asked if the narrator was "partly responsible for what happened? She said 'but I couldn't do anything'?". Mariah answered "yes because she could of told him not do steal the car or to slow down". I was pleased she recognised that as a passenger she also was responsible for the repercussions. I was also pleased she could see some ways she/the narrator, could take action in a situation like this. This was reinforced by her answer to question 4. Here she stated the narrator could

have "told him to slow down, not got in the car, not stole the car." Ronnie's answers to question 5, "How do you think the baby's family feel about what the young people did?", was "their will be really upset and very angry with the young kids". His answer to question 6 was also interesting. Ronnie chose to put blame on the brother who let him use the car, not himself/the car thief. His answer also indicated that he probably took the car without his brother's permission. He said Dave's brother would feel "very angry and might be guilty for not locking the car or putting a club lock or different lock. He will upset and worried." To the last question Ronnie answered "yes So everyone on the road know the road rules and drive safely so their might not be as many accidents". Ronnie did not bring the car to the centre again.

When I first analysed the work sheet responses I felt I had no way of knowing if the work sheet had had an impact on Ronnie. I felt, at least he had done some serious thinking when writing up the answers, and question 6 did indicate that he applied the story and question to his specific situation, as he included very specific details other students did not, obviously gleaned from real experience. A few weeks later another incident occurred. This made me realise Ronnie had taken the work sheet on board, and it was affecting his *modus operandi*. Ronnie was arrested for driving without a license. The next morning as he came in the door he told me he did not want to drive, but his mate had "got too drunk", so he did. This incident consolidated the lesson. We discussed other courses of action that may have prevented his "need" to drive the car home.

One male student gave some particularly interesting answers to question 4. He suggested the narrator could have prevented the crash by using "the back streets", or "Put on an act to get him to stop - start to cry and feel scared". Whilst this answer did reflect a particular gender bias, the same student would not suggest a boy cried and acted scared, it did demonstrate a real attempt to problem solve.

Curriculum as a Tool to Shape Behaviour: A critique

Our greatest tool, on a daily basis, is the use of curriculum to address student issues, as many potential crises are diffused prior to boil-over. In this way many incidents that would normally result in implementation of the behaviour management policy, are diffused by being handled as class curriculum. This also facilitates real learning as issues are dealt with at moments when students can see their significance, and can apply lessons to contemporary real life experiences. For instance, on the first day of the 1998 VIP Program, the Reading and Writing lecturer observed students taking up the role of class victim and bully. She immediately planned to run "Top Dog" (Appendix B). The flexibility of our program offers an opportunity to address these issues before they become critical. The story was then followed up with a wide variety of other strategies to compound the learning moment for all students. This approach means that bullying and victimisation tend to be handled as curriculum issues, rather than as crises managed through the behaviour management policy. Issues are diffused, wherever possible, prior to boil-over.

"Top Dog" (Appendix B) was written for the 1995 Ocean Ridge CGEA. It has been applied, at the relevant moment, with each subsequent group. It is used as a springboard to address bullying and victimisation. Generally it is run in the first few weeks, as this is the point at which the young people are vying for position. The story is referred to regularly during the program when reinforcement of the original lesson becomes necessary.

The success of "Making a Living" (Appendix E) demonstrated the potential, for even a single work sheet to facilitate reassessment of students' ethical codes. The first time the work sheet was run, four students changed their mind about life choices by the end of the exercise. Those students are currently in mainstream school, technical college, or employed. The young man who recognised he could "end up in jail, with a record" decided to return to mainstream and complete high school. He wanted to be the first person in his family to

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finish high school. Another young man who decided he would rather work at <u>Chicken Treat</u> after considering the pros and cons is in technical college studying office skills. A young man who only changed his mind by the second work sheet in the series, and answered "drug dealer, so I can make money and also take drugs at the same time", in conclusion answered that he felt he did not make the best career choice, but he'll "live with it". He is in technical college studying food science and is extremely motivated. He drops in to the centre regularly to tell us how his course is going.

At weekly staff meetings, all issues arising in the classroom are discussed, and strategies for the following week are planned. Issues are addressed, wherever possible, through curriculum and counselling. I believe the use of flexible curricula, where the goal is enhancing literacy and numeracy, whilst addressing student ethical codes, lifeskill deficits, and work ethic issues, is a vital part of our success. Most of these young people would be unable to retain legitimate employment, or succeed in technical college, with their entry attitudes and behaviours, yet over the 19 or 27 week program these young people are empowered with the skills to access legitimate employment, function in technical college, or return to mainstream.

As curriculum is written, and tested in action, the job of working with these at-risk teenagers should become easier. The first few years have been tough. I have often risen well before dawn to prepare relevant teaching materials for the next day. I believe the detailed tables of contents have facilitated the application of TSG and TSG II stories by other teachers. I no longer teach on the programs. I am now only involved as coordinator, counsellor, and staff trainer; hence I am relying on my teaching staff to access the materials at the appropriate times.

I believe the materials have proved themselves in action. Applying relevant-to-the-moment curricula to address an issue has contributed to our successes with these young people, as has

the fact that we judge these work sheets merely as comprehension exercises, not for the ethical judgements. This has meant the young people feel free to express their real feelings, and work through their ethical issues free from judgement. I believe if we judged their ethics, as well as their literacy, these work sheets would not have encouraged ethical code review; students would merely give teachers what they think the teacher wants to hear, and no meaningful learning would have taken place.

However effectively teachers employ curriculum to diffuse behaviour issues, there will still be the need to deal with crises and conflicts. Positive contracting was developed as part of the Strike Four package as a tool to address behaviour issues, whilst empowering the troublesome young people with skills to self-manage their behaviour issues.

III. Positive Contracting: Behaviour Management in Action

Student contracts are a generally accepted way of addressing students' troublesome behaviours. They are a tool implemented by schools to replace repressive, out-dated strategies such as the cane and detention. Contracts are an attempt to modify the *modus operandi* of troublesome students. They are a manifestation of the behaviour management policy in action. My early attempts at writing contracts were patterned on models I discovered in textbooks, or had been taught to construct in teacher training. Like most teachers, and administrators, I was developing contracts in the midst of crisis and action, with little or no time to develop innovative models. Each time a contract failed to achieve its goals; I tried a minor modification. Eventually a style evolved that worked most of the time. I called it "positive contracting" as it focused on offering positive strategies to the young people to manage their unacceptable behaviours.

These contracts avoided negative phraseology with exclusion outcomes. They offered a positive set of strategies for student self-empowerment and student self-management that had transportability into other contexts. These contracts were designed to be life empowering, not merely school relevant. Their intention was to skill up the young people with tools they could employ in their futures, and strategies to manage their troublesome behaviours that would enable them to enter the adult world empowered and in control.

Positive contracting is an extension of the other <u>Strike Four</u> behaviour management strategies. It is the putting into practice of the ethos document and behaviour management policy to address truancy, crises, and behaviour issues. The concern is with developing a set of tools the young people could employ in the midst of action.

Positive contracting was a reaction against what for convenience I will call "negative contracting". This style of contracting merely tells the young person the repercussions of repeat inappropriate behaviours - such as, "If Marco damages any more property he will be excluded from the program". Positive contracting works on the basis that merely telling someone not to do something again is often not enough. If the young person lacks skills and strategies to change these behaviours, s/he is destined to fail. I wanted to implement a form of contracting that enabled us to maintain the young people in the teaching-learning environment, whilst empowering them with strategies to manage their futures.

Early Contracts: Ernie's Case

My early contracts were simple. The initial contract generally involved a warning - behaviour must improve or further action would be taken. These contracts had some problems, but generally worked to address the issue at hand, as these young people were accustomed to this type of disciplinary action and were desperate to remain on the program. They were aware that for most of them this was their last chance to graduate from high school. These

contracts were an attempt to shape behaviour, whilst maintaining the young person in the classroom. However, until one failed, I failed to perceive the problem with these early contracts.

It was four weeks until the program end. Ernie had pushed the ethos document and behaviour management policy to their limits. We had reached a point where exclusion appeared the only option. The contract I had written for Ernie had backed me into a corner. I wanted to give him another chance, but I thought my hands were tied by the phrasing of the contract, and the need to be seen to follow through. One of my lecturers insisted that Ernie had been given his last chance, and that the contract must be enforced to the letter. He did not want Ernie back in class. I was afraid if I did not enforce the contract, our behaviour management policy would lose credibility and student behaviour would deteriorate. I also realised if I enforced the contract to the letter the repercussions of the punishment far out-weighed this particular "crime". Ernie's last contract read:

Contract for Ernie

On Monday Ernie's behaviour was intolerable. He was consistently rude, abusive and non-compliant. All three lecturers had problems with him. This cannot be tolerated. By this point in the course, Ernie's behaviour should have made significant improvement. However, in recent weeks his behaviour has deteriorated. As stated in the Ethos Document, all students agree to make the effort to improve academically, in attitude and socially. Ernie's attitude and work has deteriorated and we will not tolerate a single future incident. Any further incidents will necessitate recommended withdrawal.

Student: _____ dated: _____
Parent: _____ dated _____
Program Coordinator: _____ dated: _____

(Unpublished contract, Netolicky, 1996)

Following the signing of this contract, Ernie had played up again. He gave one lecturer a particularly bad time. The lecturer said "Enough is enough, Ernie has to go". I felt this was tragic, as he was so close to graduating. He merely had to complete one more week of class

work and assessments, two weeks of work experience and attend the wind-up week, and he would achieve his graduation certificate. Without this certificate he was unemployable as he had had no passing reports since year seven. This was his last chance. He was 16 and had already repeated one school year. He was unlikely to find a school that would let him complete year 10 at his age, and with his behaviour record. I still had faith Ernie could succeed in the work force, and I believed there was still opportunity to shape his behaviour. I felt excluding him at this point was counter-productive, and both he and we would lose.

Strike Four was designed to service troublesome behaviour students in inclusive environments. Contracts need to take this into consideration. Whilst developing the style of contracting currently being employed on the programs, I made some mistakes. Ernie's contract was an unquestionable mistake. However, I did save the moment by applying the contract in a manner that avoided reinforcing the fault that would have necessitated Ernie's total withdrawal from the program, if the contract had been enforced to the letter.

Ernie's contract demonstrated the need to remain flexible, reflective and humane, keeping the end goal in mind, whilst positively affecting the *modus operandi* of the young person, and enhancing skills for success in the adult world. At the time we were at our wit's end with Ernie. All shaping tools appeared to have only temporary impact. There was considerable pressure from some lecturers to exclude him. He was making teaching extremely difficult and preventing others from achieving their program goals. We were close to the program end and many students needed intensive teaching time to get through the final assessment tasks. Ernie's behaviour was spiralling out of control, making it increasingly difficult to control the classroom environment. Though he had over-stepped the mark once too often, I felt following the contractual agreement to the letter was too harsh a punishment. It would affect the rest of Ernie's life. Despite having been on the program nearly full term, he would not achieve even a basic graduation certificate. I was determined to find a way out that would

positively affect his *modus operandi*, facilitate his graduation, and enable us to continue teaching the other students unimpeded, whilst maintaining program behaviour management policy credibility.

It was Thursday. I decided to delay taking action. I asked Ernie to come in with his father on Monday. This gave me a few days to reflect. I wanted to make sure I felt right about my decision, and I needed time to come up with some positive alternatives. Over the weekend I decided to offer him the opportunity to organise two weeks' work experience by Friday. This would take him almost to the course end. I explained he would fail to achieve a Level 3 pass in two subjects as a result of missing the last academic week, but he would still get the Foundation Certificate and could graduate. He was elated. I told him he would have to meet me out of class time as he was technically excluded. He had to come in half an hour before class for each meeting to sort this out.

On the Friday he brought in his work experience form. He realised he had been given a last chance. He was far more serious. He appreciated the opportunity. I told him he was not welcome back for the last week, but I would meet him before school on the Tuesday and help him compile his portfolio for job applications, and he was welcome at the graduation.

Ernie got an excellent report from this work experience. They said they would offer him the next vacancy in the firm. His previous work experience had been a total disaster. He had failed to get himself organised and I had to set it up. Also he got into a water fight with another work experience student and the employer made it clear they would not have him back. I believe he saw he had been given a final chance and decided to take advantage of it. He did not wait for the job offer from work experience. He began applying for jobs. He got a job within two weeks of the program end. He was still employed and succeeding three

months later. The last time I saw him he looked smart, appeared motivated, and was aiming at applying for a higher position in the same firm.

Exclusion would have meant yet another failure for Ernie. Ernie could not function in a mainstream school environment, yet he is doing fine in the work force. Flexible use of the contract gave him the chance to review his behaviours. In retrospect, maybe the real threat of exclusion, and the time off to consider the repercussions had positive shaping effects. Reactive discipline would have resulted in immediate action taken, and the original contract enforced. Ernie would have been unlikely to gain employment without a qualification, far too harsh a punishment for his actions. We would have lost as the young man's behaviour could no longer be shaped. As suggested by Brodeth (1997, p. 1), discussing styles of management, it is only by "combining emotional cues and our personal commitment to human issues with the use of reason to reach an 'enlightened' deliberation and decision in resolving ethical issues that may exist in the workplace" that everyone involved could win. Here the use of reflective decision making resulted in a new strategy being derived, that enabled both another opportunity to "save" Ernie, and another chance for Ernie to demonstrate he was worth the effort.

A Move Toward Better Contracts - Jeremiah's Case

I learned from the crisis with Ernie. Negative contracts worded "If you fail to comply with this contract you must withdraw", are now avoided wherever possible. We began employing the "further action will be taken" option. Most contracts do not even state what further action will be taken. This action depends on the particular violation of the contract, and the negotiation process. This adaptation was used in 1997 at VIP when dealing with Jeremiah's problem behaviours.

The Case of Jeremiah

At the initial interview I felt Jeremiah was too immature to gain maximum benefit from the program, despite being in the appropriate age group. I was put under pressure to offer him a place as he had no other options - he was no longer welcome in mainstream, did not have a year 10 pass, and was too young to seek full time employment. He was still largely reacting against adult lifestyles, rather than constructing his own style. I felt he would be more likely to gain benefit from the program at a later date. The young people most likely to benefit from the program are those in the process of developing their own style, with these young people mentor role modelling can be used most effectively.

Jeremiah got through the first week with minimal conflict. He did well in all literacy and numeracy tasks. In week two he was in trouble daily. Always small sneaky things, but at least an incident every day. By week three staff began to feel concerned. I decided to design a contract encouraging him to widen the gap between disruptive and violent behaviours.

As stated in the ethos document, students are not required to be perfect, merely improve. Jeremiah was asked to lengthen the gap between incidents. His behaviour was recorded on the contract. Initially I asked that he try to keep out of trouble every other day.

I discussed the notion of self-control with him. I pointed out the times I had seen him employ techniques for self-control. When trying to control his actions he became quite tense. His hands would shake and his face would tense up. It was a battle for him, but at times I had observed he managed to stop his impulsive actions. I stressed that unless he could begin to get his behaviour under control he would be unable to hold a job, or an apprenticeship. He desperately wanted an apprenticeship, so I felt this had shaping potential.

Jeremiah's initial contract focused solely on increasing the gap between conflicts.

Jeremiah's Move to Develop Self-Control

Jeremiah's goal will be to lengthen the gaps between aggressive incidents with both staff and students. I consider this skill vital if he is to succeed in the workplace. He will begin trying to be out of trouble every second day.

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

Jeremiah's goal - I will consider I have succeeded when:_____

_____

_____

_____

Signed Jeremiah: _____ Date: _____

Signed Program Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

(Unpublished contract, Netolicky, 1997)

Staff were to sign the boxes daily and remark if Jeremiah had been in trouble or not. The contract had some success, but I noticed it was a continual struggle for Jeremiah to keep on task.

Suddenly Jeremiah's behaviour began to deteriorate. Within a week there were four violent incidents. I called in his mother to ascertain if there was some problem at home. His mother explained that his home situation had deteriorated. His older brother had returned home. There was serious conflict between Jeremiah and his brother and that may explain why Jeremiah came to the program in a bad mood some days.

I explained I was concerned his problem was greater than this. I had begun to suspect Jeremiah may have ADD. His behaviour appeared to be just out of his control, he was repeatedly in trouble for impulsive harmful acts, and his attention span was short. I felt he needed to be assessed. I explained to them both that it didn't seem fair that life was so hard for him. He was always fighting to stay in control. I suggested he find extended work experience until he could be assessed. I explained I was afraid that if he was involved in another serious incident, I might not be able to justify keeping him on the program, as I had to consider the safety of the other students.

I believe all the young people have the right to feel safe, and he had drawn blood on four occasions in the past week. None of these incidents were particularly serious, but all involved impulsive action. I wrote a report for his doctor recommending assessment be undertaken:

Re Jeremiah:

1. Jeremiah's behaviour is inconsistent. He frequently has trouble maintaining attention in class. Some days he works well, but most of the time he only partially completes work. Jeremiah is bright and has no trouble academically speaking with any of the work. His problem appears to be maintaining attention. On a number of the tests he has scored very high marks, but it is rare that he can maintain interest long enough to complete a task.

2. Jeremiah is frequently in trouble for his behaviour. In mainstream school he has faced regular exclusion for these behaviours. Most days these incidents are scattered throughout the day. Very occasionally his behaviour is off all day.

3. We have tried a number of strategies to help Jeremiah increase his self-control and increase the gaps between incidents. We have had some successes, but I can see he only manages this with considerable effort.

4. I believe Jeremiah really wants to be here, and wants to succeed. I am concerned about his behaviour resulting in his exclusion from the program or an inability to maintain employment in the future. As he shows all signs of wanting to be here, I feel this should be motivation enough to help him control his behaviours, unless there is another problem such as ADD. I feel it may be appropriate to assess him.

Yours sincerely,

Cecilia Netolicky
(Program Coordinator)

(Unpublished letter, Netolicky, 1997)

I have also included the report I wrote for the Management Committee as it provides other incites into Jeremiah's problem:

Report on Jeremiah for the Management Committee

Jeremiah has been involved in a number of sneaky violent incidents. He stabbed one girl on the arm with a power point, gouged another girl's arm with a pen and stabbed a pen about a centimetre into the palm of another girl's hand. At this point I called the police. I felt some action needed to be taken.

Jeremiah was placed on a contract after the initial incident. After the second incident his mother was called in for a meeting. We discussed having Jeremiah assessed for ADD. She mentioned she had tried to have him assessed in the past, but he had been non-compliant. He says he will now cooperate. I wrote a letter to her GP telling of his behaviours on the program. He has been referred for assessment in a month.

After the third incident I called in the police as this incident was more serious. The police employed the "scare-em-straight" approach. This failed to work, as Jeremiah threw a duster at a student and cut him under the eye the following day. I felt his behaviour is currently just beyond his control and, as a result, I have asked his mother to arrange extended work experience to avoid us having to move on to an exclusion option. I am trying to avoid having to ask him to leave the program as the safety of others is currently in question. We will re-negotiate after he has been assessed.

Cecilia Netolicky
(Program Coordinator)

(Unpublished report, Netolicky, 1997)

Jeremiah went on extended work experience. He desperately wanted to remain on the program. He got an excellent report from work experience, was assessed ADD, and was put on a mild medication. He returned to the program and did extremely well. He said he "felt much better". He described it as " more in control". He was much calmer. The tension in his face was gone and he appeared to be enjoying himself. His mother said, "The real tragedy was that he wasn't assessed and put on medication in year one. He wouldn't have been in all that trouble in school if he had".

On returning to the program Jeremiah's attention span and behaviour was greatly improved. He went from writing single paragraphs, to writing three and four page essays almost immediately. He was awarded the prize for top Numerical and Mathematical Principles student and won the Chess award. The ADD medication had made a significant difference to his academic outcomes. He could now concentrate for long periods, and his behaviour issues were minimal and addressed with positive contracts suggesting strategies he could try out.

Jeremiah went on to gain a technical college place, but decided to return to mainstream high school. I believe his chances of success in that environment have greatly increased as a result of medication and strategies developed over the program. Also his confidence in his ability was greatly augmented by his program successes. This has resulted in increased self-esteem, and his focus on higher life-goals.

A contract focused on exclusion would have failed to shape Jeremiah's behaviour. Regular exclusion in mainstream had failed to address his needs. The initial contract helped us see when Jeremiah could control his actions. It also helped us identify when his behaviour began deteriorating, and further action needed to be taken. After assessment, Jeremiah's inappropriate actions were minimal, and were managed with positive contracts, offering solutions and strategies he could employ to prevent re-offending.

Positive Contracting: Maurice's Case

The initial contract with Maurice (1997) was the first contract with which I was totally comfortable. It directly addressed all past contracting problems, and offered Maurice a set of positive strategies to try next time he felt angry. This contract was a clear departure from past contracts - its focus was on offering Maurice strategies and it had nothing to do with facilitating curriculum-driven instruction for the other students. It was designed to be student self-empowering, and to specifically address Maurice's particular needs.

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Maurice: A case study

Maurice's behaviour was worrying even at the initial interview. He couldn't sit still. I've never seen anyone so edgy. His hands shook continuously. His gaze was all over the place. He didn't make extended eye contact with any of us, or any object in the room. He didn't stop shifting his weight in the chair. He was having a hard time just staying seated for the 15 minute interview, and appeared to be struggling just to keep his mind on what was being said. He looked like an animal trapped in an invisible cage, trying to determine its parameters. We all got the feeling that he was fighting to keep himself under control for the interview.

Maurice thought he had burned all his bridges. Both he and his mother believed there was no other opportunity for him. He had spent time on a wide variety of anger management programs without any noticeable improvement. My heart went out to him at the initial interview. I could imagine how hard it must be for someone like him to have to sit still in school, at a desk, for six hours a day.

We offer places on the basis of most at need, least likely to succeed in mainstream, and demonstrated desire to succeed on the program. Maurice definitely fitted the bill. We offered him a place.

In the first week he and Roger were in regular conflict. On one occasion he got up to attack Roger. He started shaking uncontrollably and crying. He wanted to hit Roger, but realised if he did there would be serious repercussions. He had been warned about our attitude to violence.

The young people are told that everyone has the right to feel safe on the program, and that violence is not tolerated. Maurice didn't want to be thrown off the program. He said his "home-boys would get Roger". Maurice wore a number of symbols of his gang and Roger regularly made fun of these. Maurice felt that this was a matter of self/gang-esteem and, that this time he couldn't let it pass.

I got both boys to fill out conflict resolution forms. I wanted to see how each of them perceived the problem. I was interested in seeing if they could find a solution to the conflict themselves. Wherever possible we try and get the young people to resolve their own conflicts. This keeps us from being regarded as the enemy, judge, and jury. They need to develop their own conflict resolution skills. This would not be facilitated by a top-down solution. At least the beginnings of a solution must come from the young people.

I began devising a way to handle the gang issue through curriculum content. At the staff meeting we also decided that with this group it might be easier, and safer, in the beginning to let them work in separate areas to diffuse potential gang conflict. I hoped once they bonded as a group these initial entry issues would diffuse. Also that through the conflict resolution process they would begin to find other ways to keep out of conflict and resolve their group status issues. Much of this initial conflict was obviously the result of positioning in the group for status and control.

In the second week Maurice got into a fight. He got Larry in a headlock and started punching him. One of his fellow home-boys realised he was risking getting thrown off the program. He intervened and broke up the fight. Maurice started shaking uncontrollably and crying. He didn't know what to do with himself. I decided we needed to begin teaching him positive strategies to manage his behaviour. I went out and bought a punching bag and designed a contract for Maurice.

A Contract for Maurice

Maurice has lost his temper twice in the past two weeks. He has chosen to attack another student. **All students have the right to feel safe in the workplace.** Maurice must find other ways to manage his anger.

Next time I feel angry I will:
- work out my anger on the punching bag, not a fellow student.
- go and play shoot-em-ups on the computer to work out my anger.
- or ask for time outside on my own to quiet down.

I realise that hitting another student means they will not feel safe here. So, I will try and develop other ways to work out my anger.

Signed Maurice: _____ Dated: _____
Signed Program Coordinator: _____ Dated: _____

(Unpublished contract, Netolicky, 1997)

This was the beginning of our new style of contracting. Maurice now had three strategies he could try out next time he felt violent. He used the punching bag frequently. He acquired one for home use. I believe this had some success as well. He also regularly used the time-out-on-his-own option. We had six weeks of relative peace.

In week eight Maurice backed a lecturer into a corner, threatened him and damaged program property. He was extremely feral and very intimidating. After this incident many of the students were afraid to be outside at the same time as him if he was in a bad mood. He also threatened to get his "homies" to beat students up after hours. At this point, a new contract was negotiated with Maurice:

A Second Contract for Maurice

1. **No staff or student is to be threatened.** Maurice has damaged a smoke detector in a fit of rage and has threatened staff and students. Some students are scared to go outside when he is in a bad mood. All staff and students have a right to feel safe on the premises. This includes threats of violence for after school hours.

2. Maurice **must return to using the punching bag when he feels aggressive.** Staff and students need to see signs that he is regaining control of his behaviour and can work out his violent feelings in ways other than hitting and threatening people. If he cannot comply with this, he needs to come up with an alternate solution, we are open to suggestions, but the present situation cannot be tolerated. **Staff will call the police immediately next time someone is threatened.**

3. Maurice failed to set up his own work experience that is his obligation under the program agreement. I sent him to work experience at an outlet regularly offering opportunities to our students. They have informed they do not want him back. He was unreliable. I cannot set up his future work experiences. All other students organised work experience themselves. I expect the same of Maurice. Perhaps friends or relatives can help here.

4. I am concerned with Maurice's extreme moodiness and violence. I have spoken to the program psychologist and she is happy to see him in this regard if he is interested. I believe if this issue is not addressed now, Maurice will not be able to hold down a job and is highly likely to land in jail in the near future, as his anger usually results in violence.

5. Maurice needs to be able to recognise when his behaviours will land him in trouble. He needs to begin to read the signs earlier and find strategies that will calm him down. If he is angry or frustrated he needs to take action - **like ask to sit quietly outside on his own, take out the punching bag or play shoot-em-ups on the computer.** I want to see him demonstrate a willingness to do this immediately, or I will have to recommend a return to mainstream. Maurice can recognise the warning signs because he tells me he knows when he comes in, in a bad mood.

We cannot take any further threats to staff or students. Maurice will be asked to return to mainstream unless I am convinced he is making considerable effort to control his violent behaviours.

Maurice will also do the dishes at the centre for the next week to pay off the fire alarm he has damaged.

I have read this contract and understand what it says and agree to make an effort to get my behaviour under control. I accept that if I do not do this I will be asked to return to school.
Signed Maurice _____ date: _____
I have read this document and understand what it says Mrs Andreski:
_____ date: _____
I have read the document to both Maurice and his mother and am certain they understand what has been written here Cecilia Netolicky (Program Coordinator):
_____ date: _____

(Unpublished contract, Netolicky, 1997)

After signing this contract Maurice was cooperative for some time. He asked for time-out if he was wound-up, or worked out on the punching bag. The psychologist assessed him. She said he was classic ADD. We were awaiting final assessment by the psychiatrist. Appointments have to be made well in advance.

Prior to final assessment, Maurice's behaviour deteriorated. He was involved in a series of altercations with other students. It was getting increasingly difficult to operate with him in the group, as there was substantial negative feeling toward him. I wrote to his mother, as she had no telephone, to see if she would call me, arrange to keep him home for two weeks, or arrange extra work experience until the final assessment. Unfortunately she made no attempt to contact me.

On Monday Maurice got into a major fight with another student. He refused to back off. There was nothing I could do to break it up, as they were both really wound up. I asked Maurice to go home and ask his mother to call me. I still believed there was a chance we could keep him on the program if he remained home until his final assessment. Unfortunately he began hitting walls and damaging program property. I had to threaten to call the police if he did not leave. He left and I contacted his social worker to suggest someone from the school went around to see him, as he had left the centre in bad shape.

At this point I felt the line had been crossed. As his family was unwillingly to cooperate, and the safety of staff, students, and property could no longer be assured, I felt I had no choice but to recommend a return to mainstream.

I believe this style of contracting was an effective way of dealing with Maurice's behaviours, whilst maintaining him in the teaching-learning environment. It successfully diffused many of his critical incidents. He had previously spent time in the time-out room, been suspended, expelled and sent to a variety of anger management programs, yet was still unable to control his outbursts. With positive contracting we introduced him to new strategies that had some success. In his case, however, medication was also necessary, as control of his anger and impulsive behaviour was out of his grasp. After final assessment Maurice was put on ADD medication. He said he felt "more in control and much better". He was integrated back into mainstream, and I was informed by his social worker, he has done well and is coping.

The Crime and the Punishment: Two cases

In response to hearing our policies at professional development days, staff in mainstream often argue that young people need to know the exact repercussions of a specific troublesome behaviour - for instance, starting a fight will always result in three days suspension. As demonstrated in Ernie's scenario, specified pre-decided consequences can become problematic in implementation. After the experience with Ernie, we began developing a more flexible approach, stressing "further action will be taken", rather than what specific action would be taken. Various follow-up incidents confirmed our belief that the young people needed to perceive action taken to be humane and just, rather than that program policy would be applied to the letter.

Teachers insisting young people need to know the exact repercussions of their actions, are working from an assumption that there is a significant difference between adults' perceptions of justice, and young people's perceptions. I believe young people are no different to adults. In order to develop a respect for the law they need to know that policies, rules, and laws are there for their protection and benefit, and that they will be applied justly, humanely, and appropriately.

Same Crime, Different Triggers: Clarey's case

Clarey was involved in two fights. In the first instance, he definitely over-reacted and the students endorsed the action taken. In the second, once the group understood what had triggered Clarey's aggressive behaviour, his reaction was perceived as acceptable by the group, and application of the behaviour management policy to the letter would have been regarded as harsh and unreasonable, possibly polarising students against staff.

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Clarey: A case study

Clarey has minimal control of his temper. He's attended numerous anger management programs and has made little headway. It doesn't take much to set him off.

The first incident:
It was the first week of the program. Clarey was completing a work sheet. Peter kicked his chair. Clarey got up. His jaw was clenched. His hands were clasping and releasing. His face was tense, his stare directed. He grabbed Peter's chair. Pulled it out from under him and gripped Peter in a headlock. Peter struggled. It was useless. When Clarey went feral he was really strong. It was like being in a vice grip. You couldn't get free. He looked across at me as he was about to thump Peter. I said, if he left me no choice, I would have to call the police. Clarey let go. He fought to calm himself down. He didn't want the police called in, and he wanted to remain on the program.

I set the others to work and took Clarey outside. He stared crying. He was shattered. I was pleased he had been able to stop himself hitting Peter. I was also pleased he had looked up to seek my reaction prior to hitting Peter. This demonstrated that he did think before he acted. Also he was able to stop himself taking action when he was made aware what the repercussions would be.

I asked Clarey why he got so angry over something so small. He said, "Peter's a faggot!" I asked what the real problem was. He said that sometimes he just woke up in a bad mood. When Peter kicked his chair, he didn't think. He just felt so angry. We discussed what he could do next time he came in, in a bad mood. He could ask for time outside, he could work-out on the punching bag, or he could play on the computer. But he was not to take it out on another student as all students and staff have a right to feel safe in their workplace.

Clarey filled in a conflict resolution form. I filled out an incident report form. Clarey was given a contract suggesting alternate strategies to try next time he wanted to hit someone, or came in wound up.

The second incident:
At the entry interview, Clarey had boasted that he was going with Cheryl. Cheryl also got a place on the program. They broke up before the program began, but the repercussions came later.

A few weeks into the program Basil, Clarey's mate began going with Cheryl. At recess Cheryl and Basil were sitting outside holding hands. Cheryl, Basil, and Larry began teasing Clarey. They could see he was getting wound-up, but they kept at it. Clarey snapped. He lunged at Basil and started thumping him. He was shaking all over. He was hitting and shouting. He totally lost control.

I came around the corner to see what the noise was about. I warned Clarey to back off or I'd have to call the police. He let go. I asked the others to go back inside. They were all yelling "He should be thrown off the program for this. He's done it before." They wanted justice. They felt he should reap the repercussions of his actions. They knew violence and threatening another student was unacceptable and against program policy.

I set the other students to work and went out to deal with Clarey. As I started to talk he broke down. He told me they were teasing him. He said he couldn't take it any more. He was totally shattered. He said he really cared for Cheryl still and couldn't cope with them teasing him in front of her. It was hard enough watching her and Basil getting it together and holding hands, but when they started teasing him in front of her, he just couldn't take it.

He began to sob and calm down, so I went to talk to the others. I took Larry aside first. I asked him if he knew that Cheryl and Clarey had been going together before the program started. He didn't know, but suddenly the whole thing made sense to him. He realised why Clarey was so upset. He realised what they'd done was cruel. He asked to go out and talk to Clarey. He said he felt "real bad" and wanted to see Clarey. I let him go.

Then I talked to Cheryl. I asked her if she realised why Clarey had become so upset. She said "Maybe". I asked her to think about it. Perhaps he was hurt seeing her and Basil together, and the teasing, had pushed him over the edge. I left it at that and we began the lesson. I took no further action against Clarey at that point. At lunchtime I heard Basil talking to Clarey. Cheryl had obviously talked to him. He apologised to Clarey. Said he wouldn't have moved in on Cheryl if he knew that Clarey was still keen on her. Said he was really sorry.

Clarey had been involved in two fights. A behaviour management policy that reacted to all fights with identical repercussions would not have been perceived by the students to be just once the students recognised that they had contributed to Clarey's outburst. Clarey's behaviour was unacceptable on both occasions. But on the second occasion he needed compassion, not punishment. The time for discussing more appropriate ways to manage his anger would come, this was not the time. All the students learned something about the repercussions of their behaviours through exploration of the incident. Once the students understood the background to the event, they diffused the conflict themselves. No forms were given out after the second incident. The situation had been diffused, and real learning had taken place.

Here action taken against Clarey would not have been perceived to be judicious by the other students once they recognised how their actions had set Clarey off. They would not have been comfortable if Clarey's actions had resulted in serious punishment, or his exclusion. I believe that in order for a behaviour management policy to maintain credibility with students, its implementation must be seen by the students to be judicious. The second incident was employed as an opportunity to inculcate humanity, to encourage consideration of the repercussions of actions and choices, and to demonstrate that the policy would not be applied to the letter, but would be applied with humanity. In this way, the second fight became a key learning opportunity for all the students. For students to believe that rules, laws, and policies are there to protect them, rather than prosecute them, they must believe policy will be applied humanely and with justice.

Many of the young people we service have been at the wrong end of the justice system. Most of our students enter the programs believing that laws and rules are there to make their lives difficult and stifle their fun. Over the program, through policy application and exercises like "Ethical Codes" and "Your Code of Ethics" (Netolicky, 1996, pp. 2-3), students' attitudes to rules, policies, and laws are transformed. On entry testing about half our students state that "no teacher deserves respect". Many insert comments like "all teachers deserve to die", yet by the program end most students decide to return to mainstream or enter technical college rather than join the work force. Many of our students keep in touch for years. I believe this indicates a distinct change from entry attitude.

Roberto: Enforcing policy to the letter, versus flexibility

The previous scenario demonstrates the need to consider each offence in context, rather than taking consistent action on rule violation. The scenario with Clarey demonstrates that the motive behind the action may need to be considered, not merely the actual inappropriate behaviour, for justice to be seen to be done. Roberto, on the other hand, broke the law.

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Program policy says this is a police issue, not a program issue. However, if the police had been called in Roberto would have lost his liberty, and our potential to shape him would have passed. It was a difficult decision. We all felt the punishment was too harsh for the crime. We also all believed Roberto had jumped incredible hurdles on the program, and that these gains would be lost if he was put in detention. Justice had to be seen to be done in order to retain program credibility, and the opportunity had to be harnessed to further shape Roberto's behaviour.

Roberto: A case study

Roberto came on the program with an extensive juvenile justice record. He had been warned, "one more offence and you'll be locked up". Attendance on the program and "keeping his nose clean" were mandatory to his remaining at liberty.

Roberto was extremely bright, but had failed to achieve a year 10 pass due to truancy and frequent suspension for fighting. He had been involved in numerous anger management programs, and there was frequent, visible positive evidence of this. Roberto had a very short fuse. He was about to blow it on numerous occasions, but always managed to pull himself in at the last moment. I was regularly impressed by his battle for self-control. He was obviously employing strategies he had learned in anger management workshops.

Roberto worked extremely hard to achieve his academic goals and keep his temper under control. He had figured out that he had to pass four out of the five units to graduate, and he had no intention of working at the fifth subject. As a result most of the lecturers had no problem with him. He knew he needed our four units to gain a pass, and he was compliant and extremely hard-working in our teaching time. But, he continually baited the Independent Living lecturer, as he knew he could fail one unit, and he had decided that it would be this unit. It was the only time he was ever in trouble, and he was in trouble every Independent Living period.

Finally he crossed the line. He was caught loading manure, intended for our vegetable garden, into his mate's car. According to program policy this was a police issue. However, the lecturer on duty decided to bring the issue up with all the staff prior to taking action. He knew of Roberto's record, and that this would be "the straw that broke the camel's back".

We discussed the issue at the staff meeting and decided on the following contract:

CONTRACT FOR ROBERTO

Roberto has broken the program rules and the law. He has been caught loading stolen goods into his friend's car. A few alternatives are possible:

1. **Police intervention.** In which case Roberto will be asked to leave the program and a letter will go to the school and his juvenile justice case worker explaining the reason for his withdrawal. This is the most correct option.
2. However, as we realise in Roberto's current situation, due to his existing record, this will mean this punishment will have other negative repercussions, we are willing to negotiate an alternative. However any further violation, either through his own actions, or his motivating such action on the part of another student, will result in immediate police intervention. In order to avoid police intervention on the present issue, the following action needs to be taken:

- Roberto will agree to **cooperate and participate** in all lecturer's programs. This means that he will participate and cooperate in Independent Living as well.
- Roberto will agree to **six weeks community service** on the program. The activity can be negotiated. Examples of appropriate service are: vacuuming the whole house every Tuesday, doing all the washing up for six weeks or picking up all the garbage in the yard for six weeks. However if he fails to do this on *any single occasion*, or is sick, the period will be extended. If he refuses to comply, his place will be offered to another student.
- There will be **no further theft** in or around the program premises instigated by Roberto.

This option is being offered only because this is Roberto's first real conflict on the program. He has made an effort to work well with most staff. However, he must appreciate that it was the Independent Living lecturer's choice not to call in the police, and he must make an effort to work in his unit.

I have read and understand what is written here and I agree to comply.

Signed: _____ date: _____

I will agree to do six weeks community service. I will _____ for the next six weeks. If I am sick I understand the time frame will be extended. If I fail to comply I realise I will be asked to leave and a letter explaining this series of events will be provided to the school, education district office and my juvenile justice case worker.

Signed (carer): _____ date: _____
Program Coordinator: _____ date_____

(Unpublished contract, Netolicky, 1997)

Roberto did not re-offend. His compliance in Independent Living improved, and he completed his community service. Stories and work sheets were run on related incidents from past programs "Best Mates Don't do That" (Netolicky, 1996, pp. 4-5), "Who do you Think They Blamed This Time?" (Netolicky, 1996, pp. 24-25), and "Getting a Job - The

Tough Case" (Netolicky, 1996a, pp. 27- 28). The theft was transformed into a golden teaching moment for the whole group, Roberto was retained on-site, and opportunity was taken to compound the lesson through curriculum content.

The opportunities arising from the incidents with Roberto and Clarey allowed policy, rules, and laws to be applied with flexibility, rather than to the letter. In both cases had policy been applied to the letter the young people would have perceived the repercussions for the two students to have exceeded their offence.

Many young people leave school convinced that rules, laws, and policies are not in place for their benefit, that the law, rules, and policies are merely there to facilitate smooth operation of the administrative machine and protect the status quo. How can we encourage compliance with laws, if young people, through their experience of behaviour management policies in schools, feel that rules and laws are there to support the status quo, not for their benefit and protection? Twelve years of reinforcement through conflict with rules, laws, and policy in school breeds disrespect for rules and the law. Young people then extrapolate this disdain to society's rules and laws, and generalised inappropriate behaviour results. Many of the young people come on our programs believing "driving without a licence is okay, as long as you know what you're doing", or "stealing is okay if the other person is rich". On entry testing most of the students demonstrate minimal respect for rules and laws. Behaviour management policies in schools need to address this issue. Policy must be constructed in such a way that students can see the benefits for them, for example, that policies are there to protect them and facilitate their education, and that policy will be applied humanely.

Social Mechanisms and Positive Contracting: Mariah's Case

As we sharpened our contracting style, we enhanced opportunities to encourage behaviour change through use of positive contracts and existing operating social mechanisms. Here

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social mechanisms such as peer group pressure, mentor disapproval, and modelled behaviour were harnessed to augment behaviour change put into action through positive contracts. The incident with Mariah demonstrates this policy in action.

Mariah: A case study

Referral information:
Year 9 issues: non-attendance, non-compliance, drug use. Out of school and home since mid 1996. Living on the street. Developed drug problem but currently not using. At present motivated and goal oriented.

Initial interview:
Mariah came to the interview displaying extremely withdrawn body language. Wouldn't look me in the eye. Arms closed across her chest. Squirming in her seat. Played too shy to answer questions. I decided on a firm approach.

I made it clear that if we offered her a place on the program she would have to participate in all activities. She expressed a reluctance to participate in sport. I explained she didn't have to ice skate or scale cliffs if she chose not to, but she had to work out how she could contribute to these activities. Lecturers were not responsible for finding meaningful ways for her to contribute to organised activities, if she chose not to participate in the planned activity. She must find meaningful ways to contribute. This may involve taking photographs, helping other students get boots and gear on or off, scoring, refereeing, or purchasing or preparing the food and drinks for people involved in the activity.

I laid the responsibility on her. She appeared to look at me differently after that. I believe the victim role had suited her in most social situations. I made it clear that it wouldn't work here. I explained that with my disability I could justifiably do nothing but watch TV all day. Rather than perceive her problem as "I'm no good at sport, I won't do it", she should look at it as a problem solving exercise. Instead of looking for an excuse for exemption, begin to look for solutions. How you can participate, enjoy the activity and contribute to the group.

The first weeks:
Mariah's first weeks on the program were trying for us all. We put in considerable effort to motivate her. I had pre-tested her, so I was certain she had the ability to cope with the curriculum. She was choosing not to. She was non-compliant and often abusive.

After term break:

Mariah came back from the term break a different person. She was enthusiastic. She had a new hairstyle and was dressing differently. This seemed to give her confidence. We all praised her daily and she responded well. She started volunteering for a variety of tasks. She began attempting to win over the students and staff. I believe over the holidays she realised that she wanted to be here.

This made it easier to shape her behaviour. If students want to be on the program we have an excellent shaping tool. Alternative programs need to establish non-hostile environments, where peer group social interaction is the coinage of appeal. Classroom situations need to facilitate this. On the program we foster friendships between students. We encourage working together. Chatting is okay as long as work is proceeding. We see the constant noise level as a privacy tool, enabling individual counselling and coaching without embarrassment for the student.

Mariah began to cultivate a relationship with me. She used me as a mentor. I began to trust her and give her a bit more freedom. She seemed to admire the way I dressed and appeared to covet some of my jewellery. I gave her one of my pieces and she wore it with pride. It wasn't until after the crisis that I realised that her new way of dressing was inspired by my style.

The crisis:
For a week I had been letting Mariah go down to the local shop. The last few days she had returned with chocolate that she generously shared with students and staff. She was building a circle of friends and I saw this as a positive development. The girls were gathering round her and she was demonstrating good social skills and leadership qualities. I was pleased at the positive changes in her. She no longer seemed withdrawn and socially isolated. She was no longer non-compliant or abusive to staff.

On Friday I had an appointment with a prospective student. Mariah asked to go to the shop to buy some ham for the Independent Living project. I couldn't leave as I was in the middle of an appointment and the lecturer on duty was teaching. As I trusted her, I let her go. She returned shortly, claiming the ham was too expensive.

Moments later the shopkeeper stormed in. He was furious. He said Mariah had been caught stealing chocolate from his shop. He wanted to make sure none of our other students came into his shop. I called Mariah in. I was determined that she confront the shopkeeper's anger. She didn't seem particular disturbed by his wrath, but she was upset that the other students were now banned from the shop. She felt this was unfair. This was the shopkeeper's decision. I was comfortable with his decision, as I believe the students need to see that their actions and choices, during program hours, have repercussions for the whole group. The whole group gets read as a problem because of individual's choices.

Mariah's most extreme reaction to the crisis was in regard to my chastisement. It demonstrated how important my approval was to her. Her eyes filled with tears when I talked about how she had defied my trust and let me down. When filling out the conflict resolution form, she suggested it was best if she left the program. I had interpreted this as her typical reaction to loss of face. I decided she had to remain on the program and wear the repercussions of her actions.

Suddenly Clarey started shouting and swearing. He was really angry. He couldn't see why they should all be banned from the shop because of Mariah's actions. I explained that the behaviour he had just exhibited might mean we are once again banned from sitting behind <u>Job Club</u>. They won't tolerate swearing, as it upsets their clients. This reinforced the notion that an individual's actions affects the way the whole group is seen by the local community.

I contacted Mariah's carer. I needed to make sure that she did not use this as an excuse to leave the program. She may choose to tell them that she was unhappy here and wanted to return to mainstream. In this way she could avoid my wrath, the wrath of her peers and the community service I had imposed on her. I felt she needed to understand that she had two choices: to be charged with stealing, or to return and try and win back our friendship and trust. I emphasised that this was not to be done with gifts and bribes. I explained to her carer that I don't hold anger. I'm willing to trust Mariah again, but she must make the effort to win back my trust. The same is true of her relationship with the students. They'll realise they have all done similar things that have affected group freedom. But she needs to be here, through this process, in order to learn from the experience.

We constructed a contract for Mariah:

Contract for Mariah

1. As Mariah has been working hard this term we have decided to retain her despite her being caught for stealing from a local shopkeeper.
2. Mariah threatened the continuation of the program by stealing during program hours and this requires repercussions.
3. Mariah also put the lecturer on duty's job at risk through her action as we have duty of care over her at these times.
4. Mariah's action has had repercussions for all the students on the program as they have all been banned from the shop. The shopkeeper has said he will call the police if any of our students go into his shop.

It is important that Mariah realises that choice of this type of action does not just affect *her* future. It results in the neighbours reading us as a trouble-making group and they may move to throw us out of here. Students are asked to make particular effort to remain out of trouble in the local district as this threatens our operating. Her choice of action has resulted in negative repercussions for her friends and the program lecturers.

Agreement:
I agree to do the washing up for eight weeks. I will avoid any negative interaction with the local public that may affect the program. I will make an effort to contribute to the program's smooth running. I realise any future 'mistakes' of this sort may result in police action.

Signed Mariah Mancini: _____ date: _____

Signed Carer: _____ date: _____

Signed Program Coordinator: _____ date: _____

(Unpublished contract, Netolicky, 1997)

This case study demonstrates the calling into play in the shaping process, of two strategies central to the program. The first is the use of naturally occurring social mechanisms to shape behaviour. The second is reinforcement through creative contractual agreements.

In The Social Animal Aronson (1984) suggested there are three kinds of responses to social influences: compliance, identification, and internalisation. These distinctions are useful in considering the effectiveness of various behaviour modification strategies. Aronson (p. 32) saw compliance as that mode of behaviour where the person "is motivated by a desire to gain reward or avoid punishment". In the school setting the teacher has "the power of the influencer to dole out the reward for compliance and punishment for non-compliance" (p. 35). Aronson (p. 32) purported that the effects of this style of behaviour management tend

to taper off as "many experimenters see little difference between animals and humans.... if you remove the food from the goal box the rat will eventually stop running; remove the food or threat of punishment and the peasant will refuse to recite the pledge of allegiance". Hence in educational settings, the use of gold stars and exclusion have minimal effect in modifying the *modus operandi* of individuals, they merely facilitate compliance in the classroom. Compliance strategies in schools tend to maintain the teacher as behaviour manager; Strike Four behaviour management strategies focus on identification and internalisation strategies that tend to have longer lasting effects whilst empowering the students to become behaviour self-managers.

Identification is the response brought about by an individual choosing to be like the influencer. Identification "differs from compliance in that the individual does come to believe in the opinions and values he [/she] adopts" (Aronson, 1984, p. 32). Here the individual chooses to be influenced by an individual or group. In the teaching-learning environment, staff or peers serve as role models or mentors. This only has shaping potential if the influence is reasonably long standing, so the new pattern of behaviour becomes integrated into the individual's *modus operandi*. Mentors, positive role models, and peer group pressure can be employed to influence inappropriate behaviours. In Mariah's case, she adopted me as a mentor. Each of our students is encouraged to adopt a staff member as a mentor. Mentors have the potential to augment socially acceptable behaviour through modelling, praise, and reprimand. Mariah's behaviour was shaped both by my disapproval and withdrawn support, and by her peers.

Internalisation is "the most deeply rooted response to social influence. The motivation to internalise a particular belief is the desire to be right. Thus, the reward for the belief is intrinsic" (Aronson, 1984, p. 33). Internalisation involves assimilation "into our belief system, [where] it becomes independent of its original source and is extremely resistant to change" (p.

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33). In <u>Strike Four</u> programs internalisation is facilitated through the use of relevant-to-the-moment curriculum and test-driving strategies suggested through positive contracting, where the young people are encouraged to reassess their current *modus operandi*, apply lessons learned to new issues, and adopt strategies they feel best work for them. Aronson (p. 34) suggested that arguments presented by "an expert or trustworthy person" increase the likelihood of internalisation; in the classroom the teacher is expert. Also, through positive contracting the young people are offered the opportunity to test-drive a variety of strategies, thereby discovering what strategies work best for them to resolve their behaviour issues. Here solutions are self-tested, rather than other imposed. This means young persons have the opportunity to discover for themselves what they feel to be effective or "right" action. As suggested by Aronson, this type of change has the longest lasting effect as young people have the opportunity to discover strategies that fit in with their current *modus operandi*, test them in action, and observe the positive repercussions from "right" action.

In Mariah's case mentor disapproval, peer group pressure, and modelled behaviour were harnessed as shaping tools. Also curriculum was incorporated into the week's program to encourage internalisation of the lesson. Mariah was maintained in the teaching-learning environment so that the learning experience could be compounded and controlled. Excluding her as a result of her action would have meant the potential for internalisation and compounding of the lesson would have been lost. Mariah had come to value my approval. The shopkeeper's wrath meant nothing to her. His disapproval was "like water off a duck's back". My disapproval had shaping value. This coinage only has value if the young person is aware that mistakes can be forgiven, and trust can be regained.

Modelled behaviour is also a powerful tool for shaping behaviour. As Aronson (1984, p. 26) found only 6% of his study subjects responded by compliance to a sign advocating the practice of "conservation by turning off the water while soaping up". Yet when the

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behaviour was modelled 49% of the students complied. Aronson concluded "other people can induce conformity by simply providing us with information suggestive of what people generally do in a given situation." (p. 27). On our programs staff are encouraged to model appropriate behaviour. Once again it was only by maintaining Mariah in the teaching-learning environment that we had a chance of influencing her future choices, and bringing about long-term positive behaviour change.

Peer group pressure is a powerful shaping tool. It was harnessed as a positive force to shape Mariah's behaviour. We wanted her to have the opportunity to see the repercussions of her actions on her peers. If she had been excluded this tool would have been rendered useless. Instead, she had to face the wrath of her peers and the task of re-establishing their trust.

Mariah was given community service as part of her punishment. I believe community service is the least significant shaping tool employed here. It is used on the program as a way of extending the memory of the inappropriate action, rather than as a logical consequence. The really effective shaping tools employed here are positive contracting where the young person self-tests strategies to self-manage her/his problematic behaviours, peer group pressure, modelled appropriate behaviour, mentor disapproval, and relevant-to-the-moment curriculum. Community service merely helps hold the issue in the student's minds for an extended period of time, thereby compounding the lesson.

A typical exclusion policy would have failed to address Mariah's behaviour. Mariah would have comfortably accepted exclusion. This was a critical event where she could learn both about herself, and about others. She needed to realise that our liking her had nothing to do with her gifts, that trust should be valued and is not a commodity to be manipulated, that friends are earned and should be valued, and that trust can be re-established with effort. Excluding Mariah from the program would have failed to achieve any significant learning.

Real learning occurred both for her, and the other students, by making this experience part of the curriculum to be covered in class.

The following three weeks went well. Mariah did her community service and slowly worked to regain both her circle of friends, and my trust. Then I began to suspect she was slipping into past patterns of stealing and using gifts to consolidate friendships. She had a minimal income, yet she came in from the weekend with new clothes and jewellery. The following day she had on yet another new necklace. Also, as Damian walked in she handed him a new pair of earrings she said she had bought for him. I began to get suspicious. I decided it was time to address this issue. I could not accuse her of stealing, as I had no real evidence, so I wrote, "She's a Real Worry" (Appendix I) and ran it the next morning.

As with previous scenarios, I changed the name of the characters and wrote the story taking on the persona of one of the students. I had found this format most satisfactory in the past. There were enough tie-ins to reality for Mariah to think I was suspicious, but not enough for her to be certain. I hoped, as it related to a very recent incident, and she appeared to still seek my approval, this story may influence her. The story was treated in class as if it related to a past group of students. But if my suspicions were correct, Mariah would realise it was very close to her truth.

These stories and work sheets tend to be written at three in the morning to address an issue the following morning. Here I was concerned with opening up a set of issues for class discussion - using gifts to gain friends, stealing gifts to cement friendship, and group responsibility in shielding Mariah's actions and accepting her gifts.

The story and work sheet were not written merely to address Mariah's problem. Many of the other students were aware of her behaviours. They needed to consider their complicity in her crime. The issue once again became a learning experience for the whole group.

Mariah's answer to question 5 was interesting in that it showed she had considered other strategies Belinda could use to make friends: "just be herself, Not steal, and who care if they didn't like her there are always other people". She was also able to identify with the shopkeeper and see why he had called the police this time. In answer to question 6 she wrote "because the shopkeeper was sick of her stealing things from him". In answer to question 8 Mariah obviously gave it some thought and was not interested in giving me the answer I was seeking. This demonstrates that the young people were well aware by this point in the course that they were not judged on their ethics. Question 8 asked, "Is stealing okay sometimes? Why or why not?". Mariah answered "yes because that is the only way some people can live". Here through a combination of positive contracting and relevant-to-the-moment-curriculum, Mariah was encouraged to develop positive strategies to manage her future. Mariah is currently employed and intending to go to technical college at mid-year to improve her education.

Positive Contracting: An Evaluation

Positive contracting was devised as a way of maintaining troublesome students in the classroom, whilst offering them strategies to address their problematic behaviours now, and in their futures. The strategy was developed and applied in 1997. Up until then, the ethos document and behaviour management policy appeared sufficient to address most issues. I now believe positive contracting would have made better student service possible in the early programs.

As I withdrew from direct teaching, my ability to shape the young people diminished. Whilst I was teaching 50% of the program, I was suggesting positive strategies to students during class time. I believe this minimised the need for written contracts as many problems were addressed as an integral part of classroom instruction. Also the second 1997 group had some extremely difficult students. Positive contracting added another functional tool for enhancing

student behaviour self-management. The positive contracts also offered an opportunity for consistency in the staff approach to a student's behaviour. Once a contract was put in place, all staff could encourage the young person to employ the strategies.

Through positive contracting, many of the young people developed strategies to self-manage their problem behaviours. For some students this was gradual. As stated in the ethos document, we only required improvement, not perfection. Many of our students have spent considerable time in time-out rooms, and in-school and out-of-school suspension. Some students had been repeatedly expelled. These exclusion strategies failed to address their behaviour issues, or empower the young people with skills to remain out of conflict. These students were in their eleventh year in education, and were still exhibiting, and unable to manage, their problem behaviours. For the young people with behaviour self-management skill deficits, positive contracting offered sets of strategies to test in action, in the environment where they were continually in conflict. Hence strategies were developed on-site, and the young people remained in the learning environment, continuing their education.

Peter (VIP 1997), who came on the program with extremely poor self-control, was only required to remain out of trouble for half days at first. He was continually in trouble in the first few weeks. On entry he exhibited no self-control. If he wanted to say something it rolled off his tongue. He would eat seven plates of food in one sitting. He was a chronic graffiti artist. He had set fire to a school, tagged another school extensively, and had been excluded for sexual harassment of staff and students. On entry he appeared unable to prevent himself from any impulsive action. His positive contract merely suggested that he count to three each time he wanted to "shoot off his mouth", tag something, light a fire, or hit someone. During the first few days of his contract he would continually call out "Celia, I'm counting to three!". After two weeks we tore up his contract. Skills he had failed to develop in 15 years, he acquired in two weeks employing positive contracting. The strategy

worked for him. It gave him something concrete to do between thinking and acting. He left the program for employment five months ago, and is still employed by the same firm. They are now considering putting him into management training, as they are so impressed with his performance in the workplace. Mariah has been employed since the program end. She is an enthusiastic worker, and is aiming at a part-time technical college place in youth work at mid-year. Jeremiah has chosen to return to mainstream and complete high school. He was offered a place in technical college but decided he wants a better education. He is now capable of fully functioning in mainstream. Clarey is also back in mainstream and the school psychologist and social worker report he is coping well. Roberto left the program six months ago and will begin a technical college course at mid year. Maurice has returned to mainstream. He is determined to complete high school.

End Piece to the Fieldwork

I have deliberately placed this section between the final evidence and the conclusion to address "gaps" that exist due to the use of individual student scenarios and case studies. Inherent in this type of qualitative study is the ever-present danger of being read as having selected to tell only the stories that back the study's theoretical claims. Hence I decided to provide outcomes of all participants on one program, and a comparison of the various program outcomes, as an end piece to the study.

Outcomes of a Specific Program

The following table presents the outcomes of one 1997 program, providing essential entry information from referring bodies, major achievements and crises encountered during the program, and the student's placement follow-up during the three month post-support period. This program serviced only category 3 alienated students. All the young people were

designated "unable to be serviced in mainstream". About a quarter of the group were homeless and living on the street at some point during the program. Many had little or no parental involvement. About a third had been reported as physically or sexually abused, and a number of students had parents and step-parents who were drug addicts, prostitutes, and/or professional thieves. My prime concern regarding reporting referral information was to give a flavour of the client group at induction, whilst maintaining individual anonymity.

As a result in constructing the table, choices were made to minimise opportunity for identification of the study subjects, hence some information has been provided in general, such as there were four female and eleven male students. Gender has not been tied to a particular student's data. Specific identifying information such as physical disability, Aboriginality, or Maori descent may have contributed to a student's alienation, but as this would facilitate identification of the study subjects this information has been omitted.

Table 1

One Program's Participants' Entry and Exit Data

Note: Students studied the Certificate of General Education for Adults. Certificate II is the equivalent of a base year ten pass. A Foundation Certificate is equal to a year nine pass. As students are taught as a single group, we currently only offer the two levels.

Referral Information	Program Achievements and Issues	Current Status
Student 1 • fled family interstate due to "long history of severe emotional, social & sexual abuse". • homeless. Father committed suicide. Brother committed suicide. Currently either lives with remaining brother or on the street. • non-attender since year 8. • non-compliant in class. • previous Family and Children's Services client.	• worked well on program. No behaviour issues. • achieved Certificate II pass. • successfully completed 3 weeks work experience. Good reports. • 100% attendance. • extensive social improvement over program. Began as an isolate, made numerous strong friendships. • caught driving without a license. Showed remorse after addressing the issue through program strategies.	• offered a technical college place in area of first choice. • student is coping and doing well. • student's personal isolation is no longer a problem. Student is fitting in well with peers.
Student 2 • no school willing to offer service. • numerous out of school suspensions. • regular aggressive incidents. Uses intimidation tactics. • suspicion of drug involvement. • ADD currently on medication. • graffiti violations. • fighting, truancy, abuse of teachers, violent at times, and non-compliant. • determined to complete high school. • "application to work limited". • "does not accept that he must co-operate within a community such as this".	• joined the program very late yet attained Certificate II pass. • one successful two week work experience. • regular behaviour issues when not on medication. • a couple of non-attendance days due to "being kicked out of home". • severely traumatised as student informed s/he is the result of a rape. Took time to settle after this incident.	• accepted back to complete high school. Student is determined to complete year 12 and go on to further study. • applied for arts development scholarship. • part-time work at a variety store. • currently living out of home due to family conflict issues. • regular contact through post support program. Student is doing well and attending school regularly.
Student 3 • community agency support re: family issues. • aggressive, fighting, "verbally confrontative", physically threatening teachers. • poor interpersonal skills. • problems with anger management.	• sent for ADHD assessment during the program. Put on medication. Considerable improvement in academic work and conflicts minimised. Student's attention span greatly improved. • won program chess award. • top numeracy student. • five weeks of work experience. All positive reports. • 100% attendance. • Certificate II pass achieved	• offered a technical college place. Rejected it. Felt could do better finishing year 12. Believes with medication can cope with mainstream. Now wants to get a better education. • has been accepted back to complete year 11. • contact made through post-support program. Student succeeding in school environment.

Referral Information	Program Achievements and Issues	Current Status
	with ease once on medication.	
Student 4 • "serious problems in and out of school". • chronic truant/regular police intervention. • disobedience and defiance. • left home periodically. • suspicion of physical abuse. • teacher comment: "is more a waste of space than an active class participant."	• three excellent work experience reports. • second in chess competition. • no behaviour issues during program. • major contributions to Independent Living unit - vegetable garden, barbecue. • achieved Foundation pass. • 100% attendance. • cooperative, pleased to help.	• actively seeking employment. I believe student will gain employment in the near future as student is putting in considerable effort, has applied for numerous jobs and has excellent work experience reports. • regular contact through post support program.
Student 5 • currently expelled. • chronic truant. • negative attitude to school. • little respect for teachers, abuses staff, obscene language to staff, has threatened staff. • physical assault of students. • behaviour issues years 8-10. • at times complete loss of control. • numerous police investigations.	• model pupil. • only non-attendance due to death in family and attendance at out of town funeral. • top student in Reading and Writing. • extremely motivated. Joined the program late but achieved a Certificate II pass. Worked all through breaks and lunch hours. Highly motivated to achieve. • no issues with any students or staff. • all staff report student was a delight to have on the program.	• was committed from the start to re-enter mainstream and be the first family member to complete high school. Has been accepted back into mainstream and made a fresh start in a country school as wishes to be initiated into the tribe. Am confident student will succeed as student is highly motivated and has a definite goal. • student currently residing in small town and doing well.
Student 6 • truancy and behaviour issues. • lacks motivation. Does very little work. • suspected of substance abuse. • poor concentration. • low level conflict with teachers and peers.	• three good work experience reports. • low motivation at start but achieved a Certificate II due to increased effort at the end. Excited about technical college prospect - found reason to succeed. • behaviour issues and aggressive behaviour in the first two weeks. Short fuse. After that settled down and applied program strategies to diffuse anger. • one incident of staff conflict, but apologised. • 100% attendance.	• regular contact and counselling through post-support program prior to technical college entry. • currently attending technical college and is succeeding and motivated. • attending regularly.
Student 7 • history of behavioural issues and learning difficulties from year 1. • non-compliance, short fuse, aggression, disturbing and	• behaviour issues and violence in the first week. After that minimal problem. • top student in comprehension despite writing problems. • one day truancy.	• currently back in mainstream. If that does not work out student will access technical college place at mid year. • will contact student at mid year to help with this process if

Referral Information	Program Achievements and Issues	Current Status
disrupting others. • regularly suspended. • verbal abuse of staff. • two serious incidents of student physical assaults. • swearing, refuses to work. • attention difficulties. • remedial assistance needed.	• no conflict with staff. • excellent work experience reports. One employer offered student a job on work experience, another an apprenticeship. However, father was committed to student completing high school. • student achieved a Certifcate II pass.	necessary.
Student 8 • chronic non-attender - year 9 and 10. • in and out of home. Serious home issues. At times living on the street.	• made total commitment to the program from day one. • worked hard to address learning deficits due to prolonged absence from school. Achieved Certificate II pass. . • 100% attendance. • minimal behaviour issues.	• currently enrolled in a self-study program and working full time in desired area. • living out of home. • drops into the centre regularly to keep in touch.
Student 9 • chronic victim since mid year 8. Numerous attempts by school to diffuse the situation. • non-attender due to repeated victimisation, resulting in poor school results. • under-achieving.	• academically extremely motivated. Student worked hard to achieve a Certificate II pass. • five excellent work experience reports. • top student in Independent Living. • attendance 100%.	• student is currently attending technical college in an academic course. Student is being given support through the post-support program and is accessing a staff member as mentor. • student drops into the centre regularly and is doing work experience with us this year.
Student 10 • non-attendance. • non-compliance. • drug use, but currently not using. • homeless. Spent several months living on the street. • having trouble fitting back into mainstream.	• student worked well from day one. Back on the streets for a short time. Missed some days during this period. Fairly certain student was back on hard drugs at this time. Came into the centre in very bad shape on one occasion. Was arrested and spent night in jail. • returned to the program and worked extremely hard to complete all assessments. Was motivated and determined to succeed. • achieved Certificate II pass.	• currently employed and motivated. • intending to apply to technical college in the mid year. • back living at home. • regular contact through post support.
Student 11 • currently living in care. • various family abuse issues. • chronic non-attender. • unhappy at school. • regular conflict over cigarette smoking.	• various non-compliance issues in first two weeks. Then settled down and a model student. • top student in oral communication.	• student was offered a technical college place. Has deferred until mid-year as was homeless and living on the street at the time. Currently living in care. • regular contact via Family and Children's Services. • student currently employed full time and determined to take up technical college place at mid-year

Referral Information	Program Achievements and Issues	Current Status
Student 12 • has not attended school for a year and a half "never likely to return". • family issues. • family members involved in drug dealing. • sibling currently in jail for drug dealing.	• excellent commitment to the program at the beginning. Short period of problems. Made a pact with partner, if partner quits heroin, student will attend program regularly. Student attended daily, put in great effort, and achieved a Certificate II pass.	• student decided to not access a technical college place and has found full time employment. • currently motivated and achieving. • regular phone contact through post-support program. • student phones to report achievements and discuss issues.
Student 13 • expelled for setting fire to bushland near school. • suspended twice for extensive graffiti on school property. • stealing. • suspended for sexual harassment of students and staff. • swears profusely. • involved in self-mutilation. • was in care for sometime. • suspected abuse.	• poor academic skills. Student achieved a Foundation pass. • five excellent work experience reports. • began part time work during program. • multiple behaviour issues on a daily basis at the beginning. Through positive contracting student began self-managing behaviour. After first two weeks minimal issues. • 100% attendance.	• student is in full time employment and doing brilliantly. Employers are extremely happy and have offered increased responsibility and further training.
Student 14 • homeless. Father, sole carer, committed suicide. • currently residing in jail with older sibling in detention as is homeless, with no other prospects. • chronic truancy after father's death. • permanently excluded from school due to issues after father's death. • suspected substance abuse. • juvenile justice involvement.	• student committed to program from day one. Achieved high passes in all areas. • prepared meals for all students twice a week. • an excellent work experience report. • a few behaviour issues when under extreme stress due to accommodation uncertainty. • 100% attendance (had to phone student on a daily basis for many weeks to establish regular attendance).	• arrested once during holidays. Back on track and highly motivated. Believe jail was a "golden" learning moment. • student attending technical college. Highly motivated and drops into centre regularly to fill us in. • is being supported in current course through post-support program. • currently homeless but attending technical college regularly.
Student 15 • ministry of justice involvement. • various anger management clinics. • aggressive/violent behaviour. • attention-seeking. • alienated peers and is experiencing isolation. • communication style aggressive and unpredictable.	• academic performance poor. • numerous behaviour incidents in first week. Some serious. • employed program strategies and marked improvement noted. • sudden deterioration. Hit out at property and students. Other students and staff afraid. • recommended for ADD assessment. Gap occurred between assessment and treatment. Student involved in series of serious incidents. Lack of parental cooperation led to demands by staff to	• student is currently in mainstream and coping. • regular contact with school to ascertain current status. • behaviour strategies plus medication have resulted in success in mainstream.

Referral Information	Program Achievements and Issues	Current Status
	attempt a return to mainstream after diagnosis and treatment. • Put on medication. Great improvement reported. • On medication student managed to function back in mainstream. with minimal conflict. This was viewed the best option for the student at this point student had alienated most staff and students. • 100% attendance while on program. Demonstrated eagerness to succeed but problem beyond student's self-management capacity without medication.	

As is apparent from the table, many of the young people came to us with extremely poor attendance records. Some had not attended school for up to two years and most were unwelcome in mainstream due to poor anger management skills, chronic graffiti violations, vandalism, disruptive behaviours, stealing, fire-lighting, regular use of obscene language, cigarette smoking, sexual and physical harassment and assault of staff or students, chronic truancy, fighting, verbal and substance abuse, or general non-compliance.

In the first two weeks of the program we had regular crises. As students developed skills to self-manage behaviour issues through the various program strategies, behaviour issues diminished. All but one student was offered work, technical college, or re-entry to mainstream school. One student deferred taking up the offered place until mid-year as the student was homeless at the beginning of the new semester. All students went into the area of their own choosing. All were still in those placements three months from the program end. The student who deferred taking up the offered place is currently living in care, is in full time employment, and remains enthusiastic and determined to succeed and will start technical college in July 1998. The other unplaced student was still actively seeking employment on last contact.

The table demonstrates that despite the severe behaviour problems prior to program entry, many students' behaviour issues diminished merely by being moved to a non-confrontational environment. Other students needed intensive strategy education to take on the management of their problem behaviours. Two students required the assistance of medication. All students left the program with sufficiently improved behaviour, able to function in mainstream school, technical college, or work for at least three months.

Program Outcomes Compared

At alternative education conferences, I heard success rates of 50% attendance, and 2- 10% placement, spoken about with pride. As we regularly achieved close to 100% attendance and placement, I felt it was essential that we document what we were doing in order to ascertain if our success was due, as many claimed, to "my charismatic personality", or to strategies that had transportability into other contexts.

In order to be referred to our programs students have to be unable to be serviced in mainstream. Our program goal is to have these young people able to re-enter mainstream, technical college, or the work force by the end of the 19 or 27 week program. Many of these young people had not attended school for up to two years, or had been in almost permanent suspension or expulsion. In 1995 13/15 students were placed in work, and during the program marked improvement in attendance was noted. Introduction of the ethos document, truancy policy, and behaviour management policy resulted in better outcomes in 1996 and 1997. In 1996, and the first 1997 group, nearly 100% attendance was achieved with chronic truants. All students in the 1996, and the first 1997 group, were successfully placed in apprenticeships, work, or technical college (see Table 2 and Figure 4).
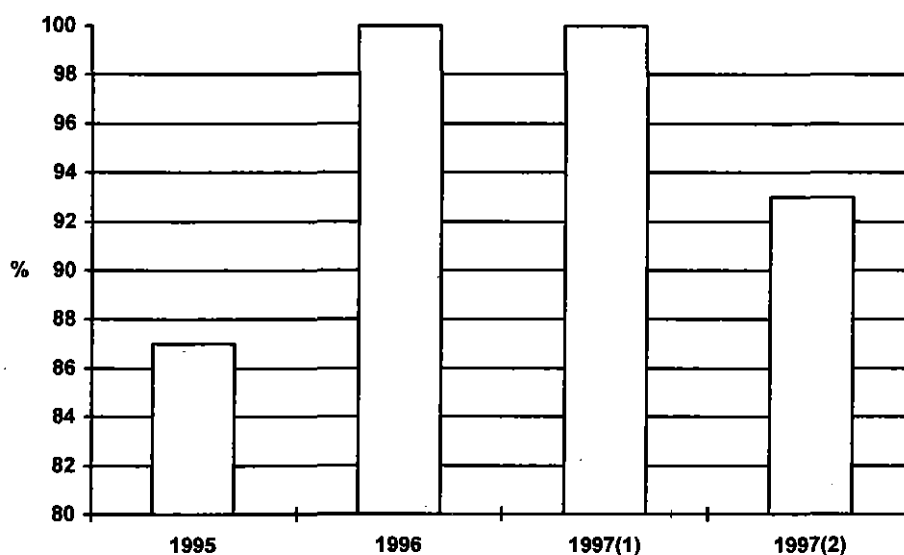
Table 2

Percentage of Students Placed in Mainstream School, Work or Technical College

Program	% placed	No of students placed	No of students retaining placement for 3 month post support period	Total No of students
1995	87	13	13	15
1996	100	15	15	15
1997(1)	100	15	15	15
1997(2)	93	14	13	15

Figure 4

Students Placed - %

A post-support program of three months provided support in the period of transition to the workplace. The 1995 and 1996 groups, and the first group from 1997, were all still in their placements three months down the track. However, one student from the second 1997 group deferred taking up the technical college offer until mid year. All other students from the second 1997 group were still in work, mainstream school, or technical college at the end of the three month post-support period (see Table 2). Even the young girl who chose to

"deal drugs for her Dad, rather than work at <u>Chicken Treat</u>", is now working at a supermarket. The young man who wanted his younger brother "to deal drugs to the primary school kids" so he "wouldn't have to work", now has an apprenticeship, and the young man who answered that there "is not one home I know where the kids from a bad family are straight" is now studying at technical college despite his family background.

Summative Reflection

The end piece to the fieldwork was included to fill in the "gaps" resulting from the selection of case studies to illustrate points, and to demonstrate that the case studies selected were typical, not just the "good" students. All our clients were classified "category 3 alienated" on referral. These students achieved their goal of employment, technical college entry, or a successful return to mainstream schooling by the program end. Our policies and the three key strategies discussed here (using crises as golden teaching moments, employing curriculum as a tool to shape behaviour and positive contracting) have contributed to our positive results. As is apparent from Table 1 and 2, and Figure 4, most students managed the transition to mainstream school, work, or technical college with minimal support. All students received some support during the three months post support period. Only the young people with no back-up system at home needed extensive support at any time.

When considering how effective our programs are in implementing <u>Strike Four</u> policies, it is necessary to return to the central claims of the mission statement. Our mission statement begins with the assertion "Education is for life". Harnessing crises as golden learning moments means that key issues affecting the students' futures are not ignored. Students excluded through typical behaviour management policies fail to learn strategies to avoid future conflict. Our students are retained in the learning environment, whilst their

problematic behaviours are addressed through relevant-to-the-moment curriculum, harnessing social mechanisms and golden teaching moments, and positive contracting. This means that during a program our teachers' role as behaviour manager diminishes as the young people are skilled up to self-manage their behaviours. The process of letting go (the teacher's role) and taking control (the student's role) is handled in a controlled manner with the end goal in mind - in 19 or 27 weeks these young people must be able to self-manage their behaviour if they are to succeed back in mainstream school, in technical college, or in employment.

Our mission statement states lifeskills, ethics, and self-control will be augmented as an integral part of all curricula. This is addressed through TSG, TSG II and Teenagers Learning about Life (Netolicky, 1998b) stories and work sheets. Through these texts the young people discover they already have an ethical code ("Your Code of Ethics", Netolicky, 1996, p. 3), through related stories and work sheets (such as "Skimming off the Top", Appendix D, "Making a Living", Appendix E, "School Mates", Appendix F, and "Joy Ride", Appendix H) students are invited to review their current ethical codes whilst enhancing "social responsibility through respect for the effort of others". In this way, the program also puts into practice the claim made in the mission statement, that the program offers "a framework for ethical code review and a methodology for reassessment of one's personal ethical code". "Skills for self-empowerment, negotiation and conflict-resolution" are augmented by enhancing students' knowledge of the social processes operating. "Negotiating a Deal" (Appendix C), and "Oral Communication 2: Learning to use the Behaviour Management Policy" (see Chapter 6) play a vital role in enabling the young people to discover how to employ social processes for self-empowerment and negotiation. All stories and work sheets augment "acceptance of responsibility for who one is" and many also "offer skills to

control who one will become" (for example "Top Dog", Appendix B, "Big Butt Betty", Netolicky, 1996, p. 38, and "Skimming off the Top", Appendix D).

This thesis was not intended to be a manual for running programs based on the Strike Four model. Hence some claims in the mission statement may appear to be only minimally met, such as, "**augment literacy and numeracy skills** necessary to the work place or further studies". Course curriculum does include items such as: preparation of curriculums vitae, portfolios, completing job applications and health benefit forms, learning personal and basic business budgeting, and reading and interpreting bank statements. However, discussion of these course elements have been only minimally dealt with in this report as the concern here is only with key strategies employed in modifying the students' *modus operandi.*

We still have unresolved issues regarding retaining students who put others' safety at risk. At times we have had to face conflict between our retentive focus ideology and the issue of other participants' safety. As in the case of "Maurice", student 15 in Table 1, it is still occasionally necessary to exclude a young person if appropriate strategies cannot be put in place to assure the safety of others. In the case of Maurice, if his parents had been cooperative I believe we would have managed to get through the "bad patch" and retain him. However, with no support from his home I had to consider the feelings of staff and students, and they no longer felt safe with him on site. Maurice is the only student we have "lost" since the inception due to this ideological conflict. At present it appears best to leave this issue as it stands - that we run retentive programs, but that if an individual has pushed program strategies to the limit and other program participants no longer feel safe with this individual on site, that an alternative arrangement must be made, or the student may be withdrawn from the program. Staff teaching on Strike Four programs have avoided exclusion wherever possible. Problem behaviours that may have resulted in exclusion have been dealt with by harnessing crises as golden teaching moments, using curriculum as a tool to shape behaviour,

and positive contracting. In rare cases troublesome students have been recommended to arrange two weeks of work experience to give staff and the other students a break, whilst we derive better strategies to continue the young person's participation in the teaching-learning environment. As our students set their own learning pace, these students are not disadvantaged by taking a work experience break.

Chapter 8

Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter focuses on the findings of the study, and the possible transportability of the Strike Four model, or parts of the model, into other contexts to augment educational service to other disaffected groups or mainstream students. The intention is to consider overall successes and shortcomings, and whether the policies and strategies developed for disaffected students have the potential for improving service for mainstream students, thereby minimising disaffection.

Part 1 of the study offered background material, a literature review, and a chapter on theory and methods. The literature review, in Chapter 2, provided an historical perspective on social attitudes to troublesome behaviours. The review covered literature dealing with early psychological attempts to diagnose and "cure" socially unacceptable behaviours, sociological theories seeking whole social group solutions, and education specific strategies for addressing troublesome behaviours in schools and classrooms. Chapter 3 exposed the rationale for the choice of an action research study and various qualitative methods, and the cyclical model employed for critical inquiry and policy development.

Part 2 of the thesis presented the fieldwork and critical analysis. The autoethnography, in Chapter 4, was undertaken to expose personal position and elucidate the ideological underpinnings of my pedagogical practice. It also aimed to discern if texts and mentors have the capacity to re-shape an individual's ideology and more importantly, their *modus operandi*. Readings undertaken for this thesis demonstrated that my experience of metamorphosis was not unique. Einstein and hooks both claimed to have been similarly transformed through exposure to texts and mentors. As an initial research tool the self-study provided a logical

starting place for examination of my current practice. I entered into the adventure reluctantly. In retrospect I believe it was sound practice.

In Chapter 5 I outlined the ideological underpinnings of the Strike Four model. This process necessitated personal reflection on what I believed to be "the engine driving" the model. This process required clarification of my personal educational theorisation, whilst facilitating tightening up of the model. The chapter also provided a base from which to critically assess if these beliefs had been applied in theory and practice, and if they were contributing to the modification of students' styles of operating.

The analysis undertaken in Chapter 6 confirmed that the purported ideological base was manifest in Strike Four policy. Chapter 6 also presented the evolution of the model's policy documents. When I took over the Ocean Ridge CGEA in 1996 there was no policy in place. There was little time to create policy prior to the start of that program; hence policy was designed initially merely to address critical issues from the 1995 program. Other policy documents were created during the programs, tested in practice, and modified to improve service. In this way a model evolved to suit the particular target group (disaffected year 10 students), and the program's ideological stance (providing education to disaffected students in retentive environments). Policy was also generated to aid grant applications. Here economic need drove innovation and policy generation. The writing of grant applications forced focus of vision. This at times worked as a motivating force generating new policy, and stimulating the consolidation of existing policy. The documentation and critical inquiry process undertaken for this thesis also led to strategy and policy innovation and augmentation. The model developed for this study, for the critical evaluation and development of policy, facilitated the process of identification of a problem, evolution of strategies to address the problem, and critical evaluation of these modifications in action.

My central concern in Chapter 7 was whether ideology and policy were being employed in practice, and if the three key model strategies (harnessing golden teaching moments, employing curriculum as a tool to modify behaviour, and positive contracting) were indeed proving effective in transforming the young people's *modus operandi.* I employed case studies and student work samples to demonstrate strategy successes and failures. To address the "gaps" resulting from a case study approach, and the danger of being accused of selecting only the cases that backed my argument, I included an end piece to the study providing data on an entire cohort and a limited comparison of programs over time. Harnessing crises as golden teaching moments proved successful in maintaining troublesome young people in the teaching-learning environment, whilst addressing their issues on-site. The use of curriculum as a tool to shape behaviour proved effective. On some work sheets change was observed in a single lesson. At times stories written for past programs were adequate, at other times it was necessary to generate new curriculum for new crises. However, both the re-application of stories written for other groups, and the application of new materials, demonstrated that the young people were engaged in the activity, and applying the lesson to their personal experiences. Positive contracting helped many of our students develop strategies to address their behaviour issues whilst being retained on-site. The three key strategies have proved effective over time. These young people attained their goals and maintained their positions in mainstream school, technical college, or the workforce for at least three months.

The Strike Four model is still in development, and I expect it to continue developing as long as it is being utilised. I am currently completing Teenagers Learning about Life: Cross-curricula outcome driven lifeskills, ethics and citizenship education (Netolicky, 1998b) to address critical issues from the 1997 programs. Innovations to positive contracting are currently being trialed. Young offenders are now being made responsible for managing their own behaviour contracts. The aim is to encourage student responsibility and self-

management of problematic behaviours. This is proving even more effective as the student observes the patterns that emerge during the mapping of inappropriate behaviours; hence they identify the need for change and can begin the process of addressing the issue. A variety of proactive strategies are also currently being developed to "nip crises in the bud".

I set out to ascertain "what kind of strategies and policies create an effective teaching-learning environment for disaffected year 10 students and modify their *modus operandi* sufficiently for them to qualify and retain a tertiary place or position in the work force, or sustain a return to mainstream?". Through this study it has become apparent that a warm retentive environment, where student issues are addressed when they occur, through curriculum; and where behaviour self-management strategies are taught, through positive contracting; can modify alienated students' modes of operating sufficiently to facilitate getting and holding a tertiary place or position in the work force, or sustaining a return to mainstream. This study deals with only three key model strategies. Further studies need to ascertain what other strategies are contributing to the success of this model, and other models, servicing disaffected youth with education.

At the 1998 AERA (American Education Research Association) Annual Meeting, I expected to find others attempting to service troublesome students. The conference was attended by 11,000 delegates. The meeting's theme was "Diversity and Citizenship in Multicultural Societies". The conference addressed the issue of increased equity and human rights where "many groups on the margins of society [have gained] the opportunity to participate in mainstream and to more fully realize their hopes, dreams, and possibilities" (Annual Meeting Program AERA 1998: Diversity and Citizenship in Multicultural Societies, p. 9). The focus, however, fell largely on ethnic and racial minorities, or young people traditionally excluded from mainstream education due to physical or mental difference. The issue of the exclusion

from schools of young people with troublesome behaviours, such as the students in <u>Strike</u> <u>Four</u> programs, was not addressed.

Over this century an extension of equity and human rights has given many marginalised groups better access to mainstream education. Troublesome students need to be included in these initiatives as all young people have the right to a full and appropriate education. This issue needs to be addressed so that all young people can be adequately serviced with positive, appropriate, retentive educational programs. The cost of the programs, per individual, is about the same as three weeks in jail, or six months on unemployment. These young people can cause this much damage in one night's vandalism. Through these programs, these young people have developed positive strategies for managing their unacceptable behaviours; positive attitudes toward legitimate employment, and skills to succeed in the adult world. Many of these young people were offered jobs on work experience based on their performance in the workplace. I see this as a type of external examination of their new behaviours. These young people moved from being a drain on community resources, to contributing to those resources. Programs of this sort pay off. Our past students are not on unemployment benefits, they are not incarcerated for stealing and vandalism, and they are employed and proving to be positive role models for their families and peers. The spin-offs cannot be simply measured by the improvement to the lives of the students; whole communities are affected by the potential for better futures.

As Fromm stated "in the past, children were able to rebel only in inadequate ways .... [Now they] demand the right to be heard, to be taken seriously, to be active subjects and not passive objects in the arrangements governing their lives" (Fromm, 1973, p. 113). Children now demand their rights. These young people with troublesome behaviours have rights too. They have a right to a full and pertinent education. Yet many are still deprived of an education as a result of a smoking addiction, use of English considered inappropriate to the middle class

school environment, anger management problems, or behaviours considered inappropriate to the classroom.

Carr argued, "education is similar to theoretical practices in being a consciously performed intentional activity that can only be understood by reference to the framework of thought in terms of which its practitioners make sense of what they are doing" (Carr, 1995, p. 33). All educational practitioners operate daily on personally framed theoretical assumptions, which govern their daily actions in the business of teaching. This theoretical framework shapes their daily teaching, their performance in action, their *modus operandi*. Perhaps as educators and researchers moving into the next century we need to examine our ideology and mode of operating and begin with a green fields/clean slate approach, and ask a fundamental question, "What function do we see schools serving in the twenty-first century?"

- should schools be a type of containment area (like a prison, or high security mental institution), keeping children off the streets for six hours a day? If so, we must concern ourselves with: 100% attendance; uniforms so we can identify all inmates; keeping to a rigid curriculum, and a set time frame, so the children are easier to control; and confine non-compliant individuals in deprivation rooms (such as time-out centres). We must remain concerned with rule making and power structures that maintain the status quo and disempower the children, so they will not rise up and rebel, and we must implement behaviour management policies that assure smooth operation and compliant inmates, whilst maintaining the real knowledge base in the hands of the school managers and staff.

- or should schools' agendas be focused on inculcation of the three Rs? Is this what the society pays teachers for? If so the children should be streamed so that those most able can be force-fed at a greater rate than those less able. Those unable should be provided alternate service off-site, so as not to impede the general progress of the valued others.

Teachers must put their "shoulders to the wheel", and get about filling students minds with stuff, so they can go out into the adult world and use the three Rs to make a living, contribute to society, and support the next generation while they are taught the three Rs.

- or should schools reflect communities and society? Is their prime function the socialisation of the next generation? Is their role the preparation of community members able to contribute to all aspects of society? If this is the case, schools should reflect the community. Members should not be excluded because they are disabled and "hard to look at", unable to cope with learning the three Rs as fast as others, or have a hard time sitting in a seat and being quiet for six hours a day. Schools, like the workplace, should provide adequate opportunity for all these individuals to be integrated into the school/work/community, and find meaningful roles so they can contribute to the growth of the community in real and positive ways. In this kind of school, education would be about honing citizens, workers, community members, who could contribute in whatever way their genetic predisposition and motivation made possible. Meaningful roles would be found for all individuals within the school community, where each person's assets are harnessed and honed, and where all individuals can contribute to the community's growth and richness. Here positive roles and meaningful work would be found for individuals who cannot walk, or cannot hear, or cannot sit for long, or cannot see. Schools would be concerned with how these individuals can enrich the school community, rather than with the problems of servicing these young people in mainstream. Teachers' and paraprofessionals' jobs would involve finding meaningful ways for all students to grow, learn and contribute to the community of the school, and later to the community as a whole.

In the third model the teacher's agenda is transformed. I believe if we as educators are ready to move into the twenty-first century, we need to rethink the ground rules. What are we here

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for? What are schools here for? How can they best serve their communities? How can we best serve the students? What kind of society are we contributing to? How can we contribute to new and better futures? The movement worldwide is for an inclusive education for all young people. At present little success has been demonstrated in servicing disaffected students, whilst technically included in mainstream, many are in reality, still excluded.

Further study needs to ascertain: if these type of programs would benefit from being located on mainstream school sites; if so, what changes need to be made in mainstream to facilitate this move; whether some Strike Four strategies can be successfully implemented in mainstream to minimise exclusion of troublesome students; and whether these strategies can be employed to improve educational service for mainstream students.

In many cases the educational needs of troublesome students are still not being met. Their full inclusion in mainstream schooling may remain unachievable. A variety of models, both inclusive and exclusive, need to be developed and tested so that these young people can get a full and appropriate education. Some of the strategies included in this report may prove useful to others developing or testing models to service these young people.

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The texts included as appendices were perceived to be interfering with the general flow of the argument, or are referred to in several places.

Appendix A - Numeracy Project: Afternoon Break

NUMERACY PROJECT 1
Afternoon Break

Jason and Mervin are fifteen years old. During the afternoon break they took a screwdriver and broke into eight students' cars outside the technical college. Jason stood guard while Mervin used a screwdriver to smash the locks. From the eight cars they got three dollars in change and a remote control to a garage door.

They were seen by the secretaries and students as the window of the technical college faced the car park. The window was covered in reflective film so Mervin and Jason couldn't see in, but the people inside saw all that was happening. One secretary called the police and they all went out to watch the boys being arrested. The technical college students were furious. One young girl, Maria, claimed that it was the second time her car had been broken into this week and now she had two broken locks and couldn't get into her car. The police suggested she broke a window to get in but she said she couldn't afford to replace the locks let alone replace a window as well.

The boys were fined a thousand dollars and given fifty hours community service.

1.1 How much does a fifteen year old on the minimum wage make in an hour?
_____   (/1)

1.2 How many hours do they each have to work to make their thousand dollars?
_____   (/2)

1.3 How much would they earn if they were being paid to work for the fifty hours community service? _____   (/2)

1.4 So how much did the break-ins cost them in the end?
_____   (/4)

1.5 What did they get from the break-ins?
_____   (/1)

1.6 Do you think it was it worth doing the break-ins? Why or why not? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____   (/5)

Question 1 (/15)

2.1 The students cars were rusty, old models and cost between $1,500 and $2,000. Find the cost of replacing a lock on a 1974 Toyota Corolla by using the telephone directory and calling spare parts dealers. _____   (/3)

2.2 What is the cost of second-hand lock? How much do you save by getting a second-hand lock? _____   (/5)

2.3 Call a garage/mechanic and find out what it costs to get the lock through them and have it fitted._____ (/3)

2.4 What will it cost Maria to have her two locks replaced and to replace the driver's window which she broke to get into her car?

_____ (/3)

2.5 Maria is seventeen years old and works ten hours a week at a fast food restaurant. She earns $8 an hour. How many hours does she need to work to pay to fix her car?

_____ (/5)

2.6 If you were Maria how would you feel about what's happened? _____

_____

_____

_____ (/2)

2.7 The other students each had to replace one lock. Only Maria had to replace both and a window. What was the total cost of the damage done by Mervin and Jason?

_____ (/4)

Question 2 (/25)

3.1 Mervin and Jason broke into the cars because they wanted to show the other kids they were cool enough to do it, they figured they'd get some good stuff from the break-ins and thought they were smart enough not to get caught. They now both have a criminal record, they had to work fifty hours for nothing for the community and they had to get a job to pay the $1,000 back, do you think it was all worth it_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ (/4)

3.2 Do you think the punishment will stop them doing it again? Why or why not? ____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ (/3)

3.3 Can you think of a better punishment that would make the boys think before they did it again and help the students get their cars in working order again? _____

_____

_____

_____ (/3)

Question 3 (/10)

Total (/50)   **Percentage: _____ %**

Top Dog

The classroom was hell. All day we'd been having a go at Sam. We were just back from a week off and everyone was re-establishing their position in the class. It was generally agreed that Alan was top-dog. He controlled the action and what he said went. We all looked up to him. Not because he was smart or anything, but because he had some kind of charisma. Sam was class victim. We all knew we could get the better of him because he always rose to our teasing.

From the moment Sam walked in, he set himself up. Told us stupid things that would get used as ammunition for the rest of the day. He's supposed to be one of the smartest kids in the class. But sometimes I wonder. Most of us know better than to provide Alan with ammunition to tease us. I guess Sam's just not street-smart.

Alan was psyching everyone up for a fight. He doesn't usually throw a punch himself. But we all know, if we don't, we'll lose our place in the group. I joined in and teased Sam like everyone else. I didn't want to risk them thinking I was on Sam's side.

As the day progressed, we split into two groups - those for Sam and those for Alan. A fight was inevitable, we were just waiting for the right moment.

The chance finally came. We walked up to Sam's group really proud looking. They were scared silly as usual. Garry, Sam's mate, let out with a punch at Paul, Alan's second in command. This gave Alan a real buzz 'cause, as usual, he could sit out and laugh at the whole thing. Two other blokes started swinging at each other, and before you knew it, things got out of control.

Sam fell to the ground having an asthma attack. He started screaming at Alan for his puffer. Alan laughed like he was watching TV or something. I just watched him. I couldn't believe it. This was the bloke we all looked up to! I began to wonder if we were all stupid. Asthma can kill you and he thought this was some big joke. Tells you something about a person when you see him behave like that.

Next thing the teacher broke it up. Garry had a beaut shiner, Paul looked a little worse for wear and Sam got his puffer. But I couldn't help asking myself, why do we all stand behind Alan? He isn't such a crash hot bloke. And where would we be if we asked him for help?

WORK SHEET ON TOP DOG

The Bully, the Victim and Power Relationships in the Class Room

1. Whose side is the narrator on, Alan's or Sam's? _____

2. Does this influence the way he tells the story? Why or why not? _____

_____

_____

3. What does the narrator learn through the fight? _____

_____

_____

4. Do you think Alan would stand by the narrator if he was in trouble? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Why do you think the narrator sticks by Alan? _____

_____

6. What could Sam learn from the fight? _____

_____

7. What could Alan learn from the fight? _____

_____

8. Do you think Alan did the right thing? _____

9. What **THREE** things could Alan have done differently? _____

_____

_____

10. Did Garry do the right thing? _____

_____

11. What else could Garry have done? _____

_____

_____

12. What are the dangers of picking on the same person all the time? _____

_____

_____

13. What can you learn from this story? _____

_____

_____

(Netolicky, 1996, p. 17)

NEGOTIATING A DEAL

Being a teenager's just plain hard work! No one warned me about all the lousy bits. Thirteen was like a magic age I was longing to reach. I wouldn't be treated like a kid any more and I'd have lots more freedom. Whoever made up that stuff had forgotten what it's like being thirteen!

One moment Mom's bossing me around and telling me what to wear, when to be home and to behave myself. The next, she leaves me to look after my younger brother, because I'm old enough now and should be responsible!

I'm still waiting to see the benefits. It's just "Tidy your room!", "Clean up that mess", "You're old enough to help with the dishes now!" and "What do you think I am, the family slave? Do it yourself dear!".

Well, it seems I'm still not old enough to go to the police discos, or to ride to the shops on my own. Now I ask you, what benefits did I get from becoming a teenager?

Finally I decided to talk to Penny about it. She's my best friend. She reckons being thirteen's great. Well it sure isn't for me - I'm going nuts! Life's steadily getting worse. I must say, a few months ago, I hardly believed that was possible!

Penny says she has a deal with her folks . She reckons her folks say, "If you show us you can be responsible, we'll give you more freedom". It seems to work for her. She's allowed to do lots of things I'm not allowed to do yet.

In my family - it's just work, work, work and fight, fight, fight! Perhaps I should try to negotiate a deal with my folks. Maybe if I show I can look after Johnny while Mom goes shopping, and I clean up the mess in the kitchen, she'll let me go to the shops for an hour, or to the police disco.

Guess the problem is they still treat me like a kid. I know they're just trying to do what's best for me, but right now, it's just not working out. Maybe I have to get my nerve up and talk to them. If they give me a chance, I'll show I can be more responsible and earn the right to more freedom. Maybe we can make a deal that'll benefit all of us.

(Netolicky, 1996, p. 10)

WORK SHEET ON NEGOTIATING A DEAL
Taking Control and Letting Go, Responsibility and Freedom

Most of us look forward to becoming teenagers. We expect more freedom, a better social life and to get treated more like an adult. However, things don't always go as we expect. If this happens, we can sit around and moan about it, or work out how we can improve things. Don't forget parents are people too. Your parents may not be ready to let go yet, you may still be acting like a child, or your parents may not have realised that you're ready for an increase in responsibility and freedom.

You don't get something for nothing . If you behave like a child, expect to be treated like one. On the other hand, **if you demonstrate you can handle more responsibility, you will be in a better position to negotiate more freedom.**

1. What extra freedoms does the narrator want now that she is a teenager ? _____
_____

2. Why do you think she's not allowed to do these things yet? _____
_____

3. Why do you think Penny is allowed so much more freedom? _____
_____

4. What does the narrator's mother ask her to do, that shows, her mother already believes she's more mature? _____

5. How can the narrator use this, to show her mother she is ready for more freedom?
_____

6. Can you suggest **THREE** other things the narrator could've done to show she's ready for more freedom? _____
_____

7. Can you suggest **THREE** other ways the mother may have handled the situation?
_____

8. Negotiating a deal is good for both parties. The teenager gains freedoms. What can the parent gain? _____
_____

9. **If both parties can see benefits from negotiating a deal, it can be more easily resolved.** Sit down and work out how both parties can benefit, and *then talk*. If you've thought things out from both sides, there is less chance of a battle. When do you think the narrator could best try making a deal: **(Circle the right letter)**
a. half an hour before the dance, so her folks have to make a quick decision.
b. after she had baby-sat her brother and cleaned the kitchen.
c. when her Dad walks in the door from work.
d. when she's really excited about the dance, because she has just heard about it.
10. What can you learn from this story? _____
_____

(Netolicky, 1996, p.11)

Skimming off the Top

Steve had a job working for a small hardware store near his house. He spent all day Saturday (9am to 5pm) and Thursday nights (5pm to 9pm) straightening and restocking shelves. He was only 15 years old but earned $6 an hour. He had been working for the store for a year and the owner, Mrs Hampstead trusted him.

One Saturday the store was very busy and Mrs Hampstead asked him to put some money in the safe. She told him the combination. Steve took the money down the back. The bag was full of cash. He figured Mrs Hampstead wouldn't notice a missing ten dollar note. He shoved it in his pocket, put the rest of the money in the safe and went back to work.

The next Saturday Mrs Hampstead asked him to put money in the safe again. Steve figured he'd take out a twenty dollar note as she hadn't missed the money the week before. As he was stuffing it into his pocket Mrs Hampstead walked in with a policeman. He arrested Steve and took him down to the police station.

Steve lost his job. He went to children's court and was told to pay back the money and do thirty hours community service.

1. How much did Steve try and steal from Mrs Hampstead? _____ (/2)
2. How much was Steve earning a week when he worked at the hardware store? ___(/5)
3. At his usual pay rate of $6 per hour how much would he have earned if he was getting paid for his community service? _____   (/5)
4. Steve had been working for Mrs Hampstead for a year. How much had he earned in the year?
_____   (/10)
5. Do you think Steve will find it easy to get a job to pay back the money he stole? Why or why not? _____
_____ (/5)
6. How will having a police record affect the rest of his life? _____
_____
_____ (/5)
7. Why do you think Steve decided to steal the money? _____
_____ (/5)
8. If Steve worked for Mrs Hampstead for another three years and each year he earned a dollar more an hour, how much would he have made in the three extra years?
_____   (/10)
9. Do you think it was worth Steve stealing the money? Why or why not?
_____
_____
_____ (/3)

Total (/50)   **Percentage:** _____ %

(Netolicky, 1997)

Appendix E - Making a Living: work sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

MAKING A LIVING - Choices for life

1. You have three job opportunities:
a. you can work in the local <u>Chicken Treat</u> and earn $7 per hour.
b. you can work for the local drug dealer and earn $20 per hour (when you're not in jail).
c. you can work as a prostitute and earn $ 30 an hour (but you risk getting AIDS and STDs).
Which job are you going to take and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. When choosing one of the above professions what mattered most to you? (circle your answer)
a. your self respect.
b. the money.
c. staying out of jail and disease free.
d. earning an income legally.
3. If you choose to work for the drug dealer what are the benefits and disadvantages (you need to have benefits and disadvantages to get a level three pass)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. If you work as the prostitute what are the benefits and disadvantages (you need to have benefits and disadvantages to get a level three pass)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. If you choose to work at <u>Chicken Treat</u> what are the benefits and disadvantages (you need to have benefits and disadvantages to get a level three pass)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Do you still feel you made the best career decision at the beginning of the work sheet? Why or why not? _____

_____

(Netolicky, 1997)

School Mates

Diane and Rosie's mothers went to school together. Rosie's mom is a drug dealer. She makes a good living dealing. Diane's mom has worked at <u>Woolworths</u> since she left school. She now earns about the same as Rosie's mom, but she has made a regular income and is paying off her house. Rosie's mom has been in jail on and off and she gets ripped off regularly. She also smokes up a lot of her profits. She has never managed to save enough to put a deposit on a house. She's still living in <u>Homeswest</u> accommodation.

Diane's mom is really pleased because her kids want to go to TAFE. They will earn a better living than she does as they will have a qualification. Rosie's brothers and sisters want to go into the family business. They can't be bothered studying more or working in an unskilled job for a few bucks an hour.

Three of Rosie's brothers have done time in jail. Her younger brother was raped when he was in jail. He's never been the same. Diane's oldest brother is studying to be a master chef. He'll be earning a good income soon.

1. Do you think Rosie's mom's choice of career affected her children's choice? _____

2. Do you think you have a responsibility as a parent to set a good example for your kids or are their choices their problem? _____

_____

3. What sort of career would you like your kids to have and what can you do to make that happen? _____

_____

_____

_____

4. Diane's mom worked for a low wage for a few years. It took some time before she was promoted and she now is earning well. Do you think it was worth her effort or would she have been better off doing what Rosie's mom did? _____

_____

_____

_____

5. What are the disadvantages of living in rented accommodation? _____

_____

6. Diane's mom has her own house now. Rosie's family is living in rented accommodation. What are the advantages of owning your own home? _____

_____

_____

7. What are the long term advantages of sticking with a low paid job?

_____

_____

(Netolicky, 1997)

Short but Sweet?

Bobby and Mark were mates. They'd been mates since primary school. Now they were in business together. Mark had a younger brother Vinny who was still in school. They were using him to sell their product to the local kids. It was great. He was the only young dealer in the area so they made a good profit from his deals.

Mark reckoned what he'd done was okay. The kid would have a good business established by the time he left school. Mark was convinced he'd done the best thing for Vinny.

Mark and Bobby had been busted a few times. Dealing was just as good in jail. It hadn't stopped them earning a living. They made a pretty good profit off most of their deals. Admittedly they smoked up most of that profit, but they were still doing okay. They had a car between them a good wardrobe.

The last deal they'd made wasn't so good though. They'd bought some bad stuff and had to unload it. They decided it was best to move it through Vinny. The high school kids wouldn't know the difference.

Vinny began dealing the stuff. A couple of kids complained about it. One gang however took it real bad. They beat Vinny up after school. Smashed his nose and broke his arm. Mark still reckoned he was doing okay. He'd been beaten up. It was part of getting tough for the business.

When Vinny recovered he began dealing again. This time was not so cool. He got himself busted and put in juvenile detention. Vinny got raped and hasn't been the same since.

Mark and Bobby got really angry over this. They would look after Vinny. They decided to chase up the blokes who'd done it as soon as they were on the outside.

Business was picking up and they'd made a big score just about the time they heard the guys were out. They went after them. They owed it to Vinny.

It was a good fight, but one bloke was skilled with a knife, and got Bobby in the chest. Blood began bubbling out of his mouth. They all ran off.

Mark went to get help. But it was too late. Bobby was dead.

1. Mark felt he was looking after his younger brother. Do you think he was using him or looking after him? _____

_____

_____

2. As a big brother what do you feel Mark's responsibility was? _____

_____

_____

3. Mark and Bobby were making "a pretty good profit". Do you think their friends with legal jobs would have been making the same amount? Why or why not? _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. One young man told me by the age of 23 he had lost 12 of his friends through drugs, another told me he'd lost 8. Two kids told me they knew someone who became schizophrenic after doing drugs. All still claimed drugs were harmless. Why do you think people with experiences like this still believe drugs are harmless? What excuses could they make to explain why these young people hadn't made it? _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. What do you think are the most common killers of young people? _____

_____
_____

6. Can you suggest some ways to prevent so many young people dying? _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

(Netolicky, 1997, unpublished)

"Joy Ride"

The TV said this was a joy ride. I'm not so sure. Last night Dave and I took his brother's car for a spin. Dave is fifteen. He hasn't got a license, but he knows a lot about cars. He works for a mechanic after school.

Last night we were bored. We took Dave's brother's car and went for a spin. It was a real adrenalin rush flying through the traffic. Dave wasn't worried about the speed limit. I don't think he even looked at the signs. We were having a great time.

We went round to Paul's place and picked him and Lisa up. After that it wasn't so much fun. Paul kept telling Dave to go faster. I didn't feel safe any more, but I couldn't do anything.

We were coming to an intersection. The light was yellow. Dave put his foot down and speeded up. The car began to spin. We flipped over onto the roof and hit another car.

The driver and the baby in the car are dead. Lisa is dead. Dave and Paul are both in hospital in critical condition. I'm okay. I broke my elbow and leg and my face is cut up a bit. But it's inside that I feel really sick.

1. What is a "joy ride"? _____

_____

2. Would you call this a joy ride? _____

_____

3. Do you think the narrator is partly responsible for what happened? She said "but I couldn't do anything." _____

_____

_____

4. Name **three** things the narrator has done to prevent the crash? _____

_____

_____

_____

5. How do you think the baby's family feel about what the young people did? _____

_____

_____

6. How do you think Dave's brother feels? _____

_____

_____

7. As the story shows, a car can be a deadly weapon. Do you think it's important to learn to drive safely and learn the road rules ? _____

_____

(Netolicky, 1997, unpublished)

She's a Real Worry

One of the kids in our class is a real worry. She steals stuff to try and win friends. She's always giving us presents. Like you'd think we wouldn't like her if she didn't do that.

Belinda's a nice kid. She's moved around a lot so she's always needing to make new friends. I guess she feels giving gifts is the easiest way to win people over. The fact is we all liked her before she started doing that. And what's more, we're really concerned now because we know she's stealing the stuff.

I saw her on the weekend at <u>Target</u>. I was down there with my mother when I saw her slip a necklace and earrings into her pocket. It's a real worry because yesterday she gave me the earrings and now I feel guilty because I know they're stolen property.

I don't know what to do. I don't want to talk to my mother or the teacher. She tried to get me to wear them, and I just felt I couldn't. I'm even scared to carry them around. After all they're stolen. What if my mother asks where I got them. She knows I haven't got money to buy stuff like that. She'll think *I* stole them. If I tell her they were a gift, I don't reckon she'll believe me. Guess I'll have to talk to Belinda and give them back.

I thought about it a bit. Decided to tell her I saw her steal them. I felt it was important she understands that she doesn't need to give me gifts to make *me* friends with her. I like her for what she is. Stealing's just going to get her a record and stuff up her life. I don't want to feel responsible because she was stealing stuff for me.

I decided to talk to her at recess. She got really upset. Reckoned I just didn't want her present. I said I just didn't want her stealing for me. There wasn't anything I wanted badly enough to see her get busted for it. I tried to tell her I liked her and I didn't need gifts to stay friends. But also that I couldn't have her taking risks to get things to keep my friendship. I said we all liked her and she should stop stealing. It was just going to get her into trouble. People aren't ever friends with you because of what you give them, it's because of who you are.

That afternoon she got caught stealing a cigarette lighter from the corner shop. I saw the police arrive as I was going home. The shopkeeper had her by the arm. He said he'd been watching her for sometime. He said he was sick of her stealing from him so he called the police. I was really depressed. But at least I'd had the guts to give her back the stolen earrings and try and talk her out of stealing.

WORK SHEET ON "She's a Real Worry"

1. Why did Belinda steal the earrings? _____

_____

2. What do you think is the *real* reason Belinda chose to steal things:
a. because she couldn't help herself.
b. to win and keep friends.
c. because she didn't have enough money to buy what she wanted.
d. because she had a generous nature and no money.
3. Do you think the narrator did the right thing giving back the earrings and trying to talk to Belinda? What else could she have done? Would it have been better to talk to the teacher or her mother? Justify your reasons.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Do you really believe the kids would have been Belinda's friend if she hadn't given them gifts? Why or why not? _____

_____

_____

_____

5. What other strategies could Belinda use to make friends? Name three. _____

_____

6. Why did the shopkeeper call the police this time? _____

_____

_____

7. Do you think Belinda will learn from this experience or will she try the same things to please her friends again? _____

_____

_____

_____

8. Is stealing okay sometimes? Why or why not? _____

_____

(Netolicky, 1997, unpublished)

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AERA	American Education Research Association
behaviour disordered	refers to a continuum, where normal children manifest some of the defining characteristics, but they exhibit these tendencies with less frequency and with better knowledge of appropriateness than behaviour disordered children
behaviour management policies	encompasses the policies formulated by school to manage the behaviours of their troublesome students
category 3 alienated students	students with significant social, emotional, and/or behavioural disorders - so severely alienated they cannot be serviced in mainstream
CGEA	The Certificate of General Education for Adults
charter school	Charter schools "are schools formed by parents, teachers and/or community members who collaboratively determine the school's structure, mission, and curricular focus" (Rofes, 1998, p. 2). At present a wide variety of models are being trialed in the United States.
compliance	is that mode of behaviour where the person is motivated by a desire to gain reward or avoid punishment
compulsory age student	the term is used here following the Western Australian State compulsory school age - the end of the school year where a student turns 15
delinquency	used in the literature to refer to teenagers exhibiting extreme socially inappropriate behaviours on a regular basis, or in socially inappropriate situations
disaffected students	students that are severely alienated, in particular, in relation to those in authority in the teaching-learning environment
exclusion within mainstream	school behaviour management policies that utilise practices such as time-out, suspension, and expulsion (now sometimes referred to as exclusion) to remove troublesome students from mainstream school/classes
identification	the response brought about by an individual choosing to be like the influencer
ideology	is used to signify the overall belief system of an individual
inclusion/exclusion debate	the debate concerning the inclusion of young people traditionally excluded from the mainstream school environment due to extreme physical, mental, severe behavioural, or psychological disorders
internalisation	the motivation to internalise a particular belief is the desire to be right. Thus, the reward for the belief is intrinsic. Internalisation involves assimilation into our belief system and is extremely resistant to change
modus operandi	is the mode, or style, of operating of an individual, what they actually do in action.
model	is used here to refer to the overall governing model on

	which the various <u>Strike Four</u> programs operate
positive contracting	a style of writing contracts for students offering positive strategies for alternate acceptable behaviours, rather than contracts where the student is merely excluded for repeat unacceptable behaviours
program	refers to a specific manifestation of the model as it is operating on a single site
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
TEE	(Western Australian) Tertiary Entrance Examination
troublesome behaviour students	refers to the group of students who are regularly disciplined in, or excluded from, mainstream classes due to their inappropriate or disruptive behaviours
TSG	The Teenage Survival Guide: For Teenagers, Parents, Teachers and Youth Workers
TSG II	The Teenage Survival Guide II: For Teenagers, Parents, Teachers and Youth Workers
VIP Program	The Victoria Park Program, or VIP Program, operates in the city of Victoria Park in Perth Western Australia, and currently services only category 3 alienated year 10 students with education