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PREVENTING ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN THE SCHOOLS

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Multiple correlates and determinants of antisocial behavior within the home, community, and school are reviewed. Due to the school's pivotal role in our society, an emphasis is placed on how our schools contribute to antisocial behavior, and what educators can do to prevent antisocial behavior and related attendance problems. A variety of contextual factors and setting events within our schools appear to be major contributors to antisocial behavior, and some of the same factors identified within the schools also have been identified within the home. These setting events, rather than quick restrictive fixes, must be given more attention if we are to provide safe school environments—environments that durably prevent antisocial behavior and related attendance problems.

DESCRIPTORS: school environment, violence prevention, setting events, antisocial behavior, school dropout prevention

"More than 25,000 Americans are murdered each year" (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993, p. 13). According to the Los Angeles Police Department's report ("Anatomy of a Plague," 1994) on violent crimes during 1993, there were 38,174 robberies, 1,058 murders, 1,808 rapes, and 42,633 aggravated assaults just within the city of Los Angeles. It is no surprise then that our prisons and jails are overcrowded. "Today, 2.2% of all Californians over 18 are in jail or prison, or on probation or parole" (Becklund, 1992, p. B12). It is adolescents, particularly boys, who commit higher rates of crime than any other age group (U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1989). Even more disturbing is the fact that young children are increasingly involved in deadlier crimes. There has been a significant increase in juvenile crime in the most serious categories: murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. For example, in the past a majority of cases in New York City's Family Court were misdemeanors; today more than 90% are felonies (Lacayo, 1994). Homicide by youngsters ages 10 to 14 rose from 194 to 301 between 1988 and 1992 (Lacayo, 1994). To further attest to the more violent nature of our youths' behavior, Susan R. Winfield, who presides over the Family Division of the Washington, D.C., Superior Court, states, "Youngsters used to shoot each other in the body. Then in the head. Now they shoot each other in the face" (Lacayo, 1994, p. 61). This kind of antisocial behavior is reported to be most acute among urban, lower class minority youth (Elliott & Ageton, 1980). Yet, as the APA's Commission on Violence and Youth points out, "violence is most prevalent among the poor, regardless of race" (1993, p. 23).

Antisocial adults commonly develop from youths who drop out of school and engage in antisocial behavior (Heller & Ehrlich, 1984; Henggeler, Melton, & Smith, 1992). About one third of the youth in our country drop out rather than graduate from high school (National Dropout Prevention Center, 1992). Along with our high dropout rate and recent Los Angeles riots, our overcrowded prisons are, for the most part, a reflection of the degree to which our society has failed with a large percentage of our human resources.

In this paper I address what can be done to prevent antisocial behavior, defined here as "recurrent violations of socially prescribed patterns of behavior" (Simcha-Fagen, Langner, Gersten, & Eisenberg, 1975, p. 7), usually involving aggression, vandalism, rule infractions, defiance of

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adult authority, and violation of the social norms and mores of society. Students who exhibit chronic patterns of antisocial behavior frequently are characterized by clinicians as having oppositional disorders or conduct disorders (Horne & Sayger, 1990; Kazdin, 1987).

I also review possible determinants of antisocial behavior that exist within the home, the community, and especially the school. As the APA's Commission on Violence and Youth (1993) has pointed out, the school must play a critical part and become a leading force in any comprehensive plan to prevent violence. The commission recommended that school-based interventions be developed "to help schools provide a safe environment and effective programs to prevent violence" (p. 7). Reasons for this recommendation appear to be that youngsters are 2.5 times "more likely to be victims of violent crimes than those over the age of 20 . . .; much of this violence occurs around schools" (p. 42); and, because the school is called on more and more to meet the various needs of both the family and community, its function is increasingly central to our society. The focus of this paper, then, is to what degree do our schools contribute to antisocial behavior, and what can educators do to help prevent antisocial behavior? Research findings are summarized and recommendations are presented.

CORRELATES OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Investigators generally agree that there are multiple determinants of antisocial behavior (e.g., Henggeler et al., 1992; Lipsey, 1992; Tolan, Cromwell, & Brasswell, 1986). Henggeler (1989), for example, argued that the primary reason for the historically poor results of delinquency treatment studies, and for delinquency's stability across generations, may be that the interventions used in these studies have addressed only a small number of the factors that contribute to a particular youth's antisocial behavior. Certainly, some approaches to treating antisocial behavior appear to be more promising than others. For example, Lipsey (1992) reported a meta-analysis in which he reviewed more than 500 control and comparison group delinquency treatment studies. He found that the least successful treatment approaches appear to be traditional counseling, psychotherapy, or case work (individual, family, group, vocational, etc.), and that some deterrence programs (e.g., shock incarceration) produce increased delinquency. Similarly, attempts to get tough on criminals have failed to lower the crime rate. For example, Becklund reported that

> In California alone, more than 1,000 laws were passed between 1984 and 1991 that changed felony and misdemeanor statutes, most of them in the name of cracking down on criminals. . . . Such laws have required the building of new prisons and have vastly increased penal costs but have failed to significantly decrease crime rates. . . . Each new prison guard may mean one less teacher and every new jail cell one less gang prevention counselor. (1992, p. B12)

Increased rates of delinquency and crime as a result of deterrence programs come as no surprise. Research has taught us that punishment, or aversive environments, predictably set the stage for aggression, violence, vandalism, and escape (Azrin, Hake, Holz, & Hutchinson, 1965; Berkowitz, 1983; Hutchinson, 1977). In schools, escape takes the form of tardiness, truancy, and dropping out.

As Lipsey (1992) points out, the approaches that have shown promise in preventing and treating antisocial behavior are "more structured and specific, e.g., behavioral or skill-training," (p. 12) and focus on multiple correlates and determinants that exist in the family, peer groups, community, and school (Elliott, Huizinga, & Ageton, 1985; Fagan & Wexler, 1987; Henggeler, 1989; Henggeler et al., 1992). Thus, correlates in the family, peer groups, and community are reviewed briefly, followed by a more

extensive review of possible determinants within the school.

Family Contributions to Antisocial Behavior

Specific parenting practices are highly correlated with antisocial behavior in early childhood (Dishion, 1992; Patterson, DeBaryshe, & Ramsey, 1989) and are prognostic of more serious forms of antisocial behavior in adolescents. For example, a coercive or punitive interactive cycle can occur in the home as the child makes demands on the parent who lacks certain parenting skills. As D. Shaw and Bell (1992) illustrate, "when faced with an overly assertive, goal-directed child, a parent who lacks firmness and adequate discipline techniques might vacillate between yielding and demanding compliance, then occasionally, out of desperation, resort to harsh discipline" (p. 2). Or, stated another way, "ineffective parent discipline and child antisocial behavior mutually maintain each other" (Vuchinich, Bank, & Patterson, 1992, p. 518). The result is that these parents "inadvertently shape more intense forms of the very behaviors they wish to eliminate" (DeBaryshe, Patterson, & Capaldi, 1993). Among the significant characteristics that parents of antisocial youth often exhibit are the following: (a) providing infrequent monitoring of the child's behavior (Loeber & Dishion, 1983); (b) relying on coercive behavior management procedures (Reid & Patterson, 1989); (c) being inconsistent in setting rules (Minuchin, 1974); (d) not communicating effectively (Tolan et al., 1986); (e) having poor problem-solving skills (Patterson, Capaldi, & Bank, 1991); (f) exhibiting low levels of affection and little involvement with the child (Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Green, 1987; Tolan et al., 1986); (g) administering harsh, inconsistent consequences (Loeber & Dishion, 1983; Loeber et al., 1987); and (h) exhibiting personal problems that often interfere with their ability to parent effectively (Henggeler, 1992; Tolan et al., 1986).

When the aversive cycle is corrected, corresponding decreases in antisocial behavior in both the home and school have been obtained (Dishion, 1992). Similarly, when increased involvement and attachment are achieved in the home and the family becomes more involved in the community (e.g., in the school, church, and community organizations), corresponding decreases in antisocial behavior have occurred (Dishion, 1992; Elliott, 1992). However, many experts agree that programs that identify and treat children by the time they reach the age of about 8 years are the most likely to be successful (Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1994); if antisocial behavior is not addressed by that time, it becomes more durable and resistant to treatment. One reason for this might be that the older the children get, the more involved they become in antisocial networks.

Peer and Community Contributions to Antisocial Behavior

Although certain parenting practices appear to contribute greatly to antisocial behavior, community and peer variables are also important influences (Bursik & Webb, 1982; Tolan & Guerra, 1992). Youth with more antisocial networks (e.g., family, peers, neighbors, acquaintances) tend to be more antisocial (Tolan et al., 1990). Further, involvement with deviant peers appears to accelerate the growth of antisocial behaviors (Dishion, 1992; Elliott et al., 1985; Henggeler et al., 1992). Another problem, according to the Carnegie Corporation (1992), is that about half of America's adolescents have too little to do after school and are in danger of falling victim to gangs, drugs, violence, sex or other activities that could limit their potential as adults. The report says that the number of youth in these circumstances has reached "epidemic proportions." One fourth face serious risk, and another 25% face moderate risk of not reaching productive adulthood. Involvement in school-related activities as well as involvement in church or community youth groups needs to be stressed, and association with deviant peers should be minimized.

School Contributions to Antisocial Behavior

Motivational variables: Setting events.[1] Factors within the schools that contribute to antisocial behavior have historically been difficult to identify because, as Wahler and Fox (1981) have pointed out, many are setting events. Setting events are antecedents that may occur within the same setting and closely precede the antisocial behavior (e.g., classroom noise when given an assignment), or they may be temporally and geographically more remote (e.g., events that occur during the previous period, on the school grounds, or at home). Setting events change the probability that a more proximal antecedent (e.g., instruction) will be followed by a particular behavior (e.g., compliance vs. aggression) (Munk & Repp, 1994). In other words, they affect subsequent stimulus–response relations (Bijou & Baer, 1961; Wahler & Fox, 1981). For example, Munk and Repp (1994) point out that "several instructions followed by several errors can serve as a setting event for the next instruction occasioning problem behavior such as aggression" (p. 391). An argument in the home can serve as a setting event for a request by the teacher occasioning noncompliance. Thus, aversive events may increase the likelihood of subsequent discriminative stimuli occasioning antisocial responses.

To help provide descriptive analyses of setting events, Wahler and Fox (1981) advocated the use of correlational analyses. Correlational research has begun to identify some of the factors that correspond with antisocial behavior. One factor appears to be low school involvement or integration as indicated by poor class attendance and participation, and a lack of homework completion and involvement in after-school activities (Fagan & Wexler, 1987). Other factors revealed by Mayer, Nafpaktitis, Butterworth, and Hollingsworth (1987) include (a) a lack of clarity of both rules and policies; (b) weak or inconsistent staff support and administrative follow-through; and (c) few or no allowances made for individual differences. These three combined contextual factors have been found to correlate significantly with both vandalism frequency and financial cost (Mayer et al., 1987). In addition, research evidence suggests that when these contextual factors are manipulated as treatment variables, antisocial behaviors (including vandalism) are affected, and so are attendance problems (Mayer & Butterworth, 1979, 1981; Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1983; Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1991; Mayer et al., 1993). Thus, each of these contextual factors will be discussed, with the issue of low school involvement being considered under individual differences.

Clarity. One factor that correlates with antisocial behavior appears to be a lack of clarity of both rules and policies. Rule following cannot be developed unless discipline policies and rules are clearly communicated (Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1991). Further, a lack of rule following tends to result in punitive actions, often including disapproving comments by the teacher (a probable setting event for antisocial behavior). In other words, unclear discipline policies or rules are likely to result in a lack of rule following, which often results in the use of punitive

[1] Some professionals prefer the use of the term *establishing operations* rather than *setting events.* An establishing operation is defined by Michael (1993) as "an environmental event, operation, or stimulus condition that affects an organism by momentarily altering (a) the reinforcing effectiveness of other events and (b) the frequency of occurrence of the part of the organism's repertoire relevant to those events as consequences" (p. 192). Considerable overlap appears to exist in the meaning of these two terms. For example, if the stimulus–response relation is changed by a setting event, then the reinforcing effectiveness of the typical consequence to the stimulus–response relation has probably also been affected. Similarly, when an establishing operation alters the effectiveness of the reinforcer, the stimulus–response relation is affected. Michael (1993) infers this when he discusses how food deprivation can increase "the evocative effectiveness of all S^Ds for behavior that has been followed by food reinforcement" (p. 192), and how establishing operations "that warn of . . . increased effort, a higher response ratio requirement . . . and so forth will all evoke the behavior that terminates such stimuli" (p. 202).

consequences in the class and school, which in turn can promote antisocial behavior.

Support. The second factor involves weak or inconsistent administrative support for staff in carrying out student discipline (consistent follow-through), little staff support of one another, and a lack of staff agreement with policies. Lack of support has been shown to be related to staff absenteeism (Manlove & Elliott, 1979; Spuck, 1974) and tends to foster a greater reliance on punitive methods of control in managing student behavior (Mayer, Butterworth, Komoto, & Benoit, 1983; Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1991). Also, absent or inconsistent support for the school discipline policy appears to result in inconsistent follow-through by staff, often resulting in more behavior problems by students.

Individual student differences. The third factor involves few or no allowances being made for individual differences with respect to students' academic and social skills, and with respect to the selection of reinforcers, punishers, or treatment strategies. Looking first at the academic area, Greenberg (1974) has shown a strong correlation between delinquency and reading skills, and Center, Deitz, and Kaufman (1982) reported that "failure level academic tasks resulted in significant increases in inappropriate behavior from some students" (p. 355). Similarly, Gold and Mann (1982) concluded that "poor scholastic experiences are significant causes of delinquent and disruptive behavior" (p. 313). APA's Commission on Violence and Youth (1993) also concluded that antisocial aggressive youth are those who do poorly in school, who have a history of poor school attendance and numerous suspensions, and who tend to be rejected by their peers. Likewise, DeBaryshe et al. (1993) point out that low levels of academic engagement are typically exhibited by antisocial children. Low academic engagement is characterized by low levels of attendance, compliance, participation, and homework completion. Academic engagement, in turn, has been found to be associated with academic achievement (DeBaryshe et al., 1993; Greenwood, Hart, Walker, & Risley, 1994). Poor school achievement also is correlated with outcomes after schooling. For example, low parental academic achievement has been found to be related to ineffective discipline practices and child antisocial behavior (DeBaryshe et al., 1993). In addition, Berlin and Sum (1988) report that poor basic skills are evident in 69% of all those arrested, 79% of welfare dependents, 85% of unwed mothers, 85% of dropouts, and 72% of the unemployed.

It appears that academic failure serves as a setting event for antisocial behavior. Thus, assignments need to be appropriate for each student's functional level to minimize failure. It also would be beneficial to program frequent success into the academic experiences by interspersing tasks that have a high probability of resulting in success for the student (Munk & Repp, 1994; Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1994b).

Distinctive learning histories also can cause particular consequences to be more or less effective for individual students. Thus, consequences unsuitable to the function of an individual's behavior can result in an increase, rather than a decrease, in antisocial behavior (Mayer & Butterworth, 1979) (e.g., when a teacher routinely attempts to use time-out as a consequence for antisocial behavior even when the behavior functions to provide a student with escape from a difficult assignment). The resultant increase in the antisocial behavior often results in the administration of more aversive consequences.

Many students, particularly those from poor homes, also lack the social skills necessary to relate positively to peers and to do well academically (Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw, & Klein, 1980; McGinnis & Goldstein, 1984; Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1994a). For example, they might not have learned to persist on a task, comply with requests, pay attention, negotiate differences, handle criticism and teasing, or make appropriate decisions. Educational programs must address individual differences in so-

cial skills rather than responding with punishment when a student lacks these critical skills.

Relevance of Identified Factors

A question that might be raised is whether the proportion of students being affected by a punitive school environment is substantial. Research indicates that schools too often emphasize punitive measures to manage student behavior. This overemphasis occurs disproportionately with males, minority students, and students from low-income homes (Brantlinger, 1991; McFadden, Marsh, Price, & Hwang, 1992; Moore & Cooper, 1984; S. Shaw & Braden, 1990). Not only are certain groups singled out for more punishment, but the total school environment often is too punitive for all students. For example, disapproval is used more frequently than approval as a consequence of student behavior by many teachers (Heller & White, 1975; Thomas, Presland, Grant, & Glynn, 1978; White, 1975), although certainly not all (Nafpaktitis, Mayer, & Butterworth, 1985; Wyatt & Hawkins, 1987). Similarly, results from a survey by the American Association of School Administrators (Brodinsky, 1980) indicated that school personnel reported spending more time and energy in implementing punitive measures than positive or preventive measures. And, Greenberg (1974) has pointed out that reliance on heavy security arrangements and punitive discipline strategies appears to aggravate rather than reduce vandalism as well as aggression towards others.

It appears, then, that schools are indeed punitive for many students, and that the identified contextual factors need to be addressed to help reduce the emphasis on punitive discipline measures. Their importance is further highlighted by the fact that these factors are similar to some of those that promote antisocial behavior in the home (e.g., reliance on coercive or punitive discipline, inconsistent rule setting and delivery of consequences). As will be further illustrated below, when the aversiveness of the school environment is corrected, there is a decrease in antisocial behavior.

TREATMENT OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN THE SCHOOLS: PREVENTION THROUGH CONSTRUCTIVE DISCIPLINE

To address these contextual factors and their integral setting events we developed the constructive discipline approach. A brief overview of the approach is presented here to illustrate how such contextual factors and setting events might be addressed and some of the outcomes that have been achieved.

Constructive discipline is based on what Goldiamond (1974; Schwartz & Goldiamond, 1975) refers to as a constructional approach. The emphasis is on teaching or building desirable behavior rather than punishing, reducing, or eliminating undesirable behavior, and involves (a) selecting behaviors to be established or strengthened, rather than those to be reduced or eliminated; (b) identifying individuals' existing academic and social repertoires upon which to build; (c) matching procedures of change to those individual repertoires; and (d) selecting individual reinforcing contingencies to increase and maintain the goal behaviors. The use of reinforcers natural to the environment is emphasized, such as those that previously reinforced the problem behavior (Hawkins, 1986).

Constructive discipline expands on Goldiamond's constructional approach, stressing clarity, support, and individual differences. To address clarity, classroom and schoolwide rules are jointly established by the teacher and students, posted in the class where all can view them easily, and reviewed by the teacher with the class periodically. Students receive reinforcement for adhering to the rules, because rules will be followed only when differential consequences are applied for compliance and noncompliance (Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1991). Rules are stated positively to stress how to behave rather than how not to behave (e.g., "Be in your seat by

the time the tardy bell rings," rather than "Don't be tardy"), and the list is kept short, usually to not more than five to seven rules.

To develop support for staff, constructive discipline uses programs designed to improve staff morale, communication and cohesiveness. Many of these programs—such as "secret pals" for staff members, "extra thanks board," and "hot messages" to teachers—have been illustrated elsewhere (Mayer, Butterworth, Spaulding, et al., 1983; Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1991, 1994c). Briefly, their purpose is to decrease aversiveness and increase positive reinforcement for teachers and administrators. For example, administrators and other support staff are asked to comment positively on the constructive programs that their teachers implement in their classes. Similarly, other teachers and parents are encouraged to make positive comments and demonstrate their appreciation for what others in the school do to assist students and one another. For example, staff members write one another positive notes on a "Fuzzy Gram" or "Thank-U-Board" located in the faculty lounge. Individual staff members might also be assigned "secret pals" to whom they are responsible for writing positive notes. A principal may send "hot messages" to teachers congratulating them for the successful programs implemented in their classroom. Part of the rationale for implementing such activities is to help the school environment become a discriminative stimulus for implementing constructive discipline programs.

Individual differences are addressed by matching students' existing performance levels with appropriate academic materials and instructional methodology and by teaching staff how to select and apply various behavioral strategies (Mayer, Butterworth, Komoto, & Benoit, 1983; Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1983), such as (a) increasing rates of teacher-delivered praise and other forms of positive recognition for constructive classroom behavior; (b) identifying and maximizing reinforcers; (c) emphasizing differential reinforcement strategies, modeling, and social skills training over the use of aversives; and (d) using various group contingencies.

Individual differences also are addressed by using functional assessments to help teachers reduce the misuse of behavior management procedures, such as helping teachers to avoid using time-out with a student who is misbehaving to escape from an assignment. Functional assessments are defined as "an attempt to identify the environmental determinants of specific responses that currently exist in an individual's repertoire" (Neef & Iwata, 1994, p. 211). According to Horner (1994), the purpose of a functional assessment is to provide information that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of treatment, and it includes the following four basic requirements:

> (a) Problem behaviors are operationally defined, (b) antecedent events that predict the occurrence and nonoccurrence of the problem behaviors are identified, (c) hypotheses are developed concerning the consequent variables that maintain problem behaviors, and (d) direct observation data are collected to provide at least correlational confirmation of hypotheses associated with antecedent and consequent events. (p. 402)

In addition, we have found it useful, in determining function and selecting relevant interventions, to collect the same information on the replacement behavior (if it has occurred). Treatment approaches based on such behavioral function can result in major reductions in the misuse of behavioral procedures and the use of punishment by educators, which in turn can provide a more reinforcing environment that is conducive to learning.

A manual for conducting functional assessments is available (O'Neill, Horner, Albin, Storey, & Sprague, 1990). In addition, many of the strategies mentioned above are described in detail by Mayer (in press) and Sulzer-Azaroff and Mayer (1991, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c). These have been presented to school personnel

through a series of workshops with follow-up consultation and support by both project and school personnel for program implementation (Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1983; Mayer, Butterworth, Spaulding, et al., 1983).

Attempts to clarify discipline policy, provide greater staff support, and allow for individual differences by assigning reading materials appropriately matched to student performance levels have resulted in decreases in both antisocial behavior and attendance problems. For example, in a constructive discipline study with 10 experimental and 9 control elementary schools (Mayer & Butterworth, 1979), vandalism costs were reduced an average of 57% in the experimental schools. Similarly, in a replication study with 18 elementary and junior high schools (Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1983), vandalism costs were reduced an average of 78.5%, while control schools throughout the area were experiencing annual average increases of 35% to 56%. Based on these results, Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, and Sulzer-Azaroff (1983) concluded that "A junior high school containing 1,500 students with an average monthly vandalism cost of $121.35 per 100 students could potentially save from $10,861 to $24,197 over a 9-month period" (p. 367).

In addition, in these studies rates of praise delivered by teachers increased significantly, student disruptions decreased significantly, and fewer discipline problems, greater cooperation, and more positive feelings among students and staff were reported (Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1983). These findings are similar to those of Gold and Mann (1982), who found that when curriculum was more individualized and the environment made more reinforcing, students' behavior and scholastic performance improved.

When these strategies were used in a high school setting to help reduce dropout rates (Mayer et al., 1993), the percentage of students working on their assigned activities increased from a range of 8% to 35% to a range of 70% to 100%; dropout rates for at-risk students (i.e., those who are poor, urban, minority, frequently absent, and working well below grade level) decreased from the typical 50% to 80% for similar at-risk students (Los Angeles County Office of Education, 1990) to slightly below the district's average dropout rate of 33%, and suspensions decreased by 35.5%. Increased rates of approving comments and decreases in disapproving comments by teachers also were obtained. Thus, the classroom environment became less punitive and more positive, probably a major reason for the increased percentage of students engaged in their assigned activities.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

There are multiple determinants of antisocial behavior. However, the school appears to be a major contributor, and factors similar to those identified in the school have been identified in the home: a coercive and punitive environment and inconsistencies in rule setting and applying consequences. Other factors include low involvement and integration in school and a lack of appropriate parenting skills, antisocial networks, and too little for youngsters to do. Three major factors within schools were identified that appear to promote a context in which punishment and extinction conditions are likely to occur: a lack of clarity of both rules and policies; weak or inconsistent staff support and administrative follow-through; and few or no allowances made for individual differences. The resultant specific occurrences of punishment and extinction (e.g., disapproving comments, academic task errors, and a lack of recognition for either student or staff effort) appear to serve as setting events that evoke aggression, attendance problems (escape), and other antisocial behaviors. It appears, then, that a punitive school discipline environment is a major factor contributing to antisocial behavior problems. The correlational evidence combined with the

experimental evidence cited here support such a conclusion.

Setting events have not been given sufficient emphasis in research or practice. Because of their remoteness in time to antisocial acts, setting events can be hard to identify or associate with antisocial behavior. Many decision makers therefore find themselves unable to support a given program of prevention because it does not make sense to them. Thus, care should be taken to educate school staff and parents as to the relevance of setting events and how to change them. As Sulzer-Azaroff and Mayer (1994a) have noted, "because setting events can function powerfully, they all must be identified and dealt with effectively if we are ever durably to prevent, rather than just temporarily suppress, violence and vandalism in our schools" (p. 342).

I am suggesting that a major strategy for creating safe, constructive school environments should focus on the contextual factors within our schools that promote setting events for antisocial behavior.[2] To start, we must identify and address the contextual factors and setting events early (i.e., in preschool and the primary grades), given the findings that antisocial behavior becomes more durable and resistant to treatment after the age of about 8 years. This approach also implies that our efforts should no longer emphasize "treating" youngsters as though they are the source of the problem. Rather, our focus must be on identifying and correcting the factors that exist within their environments that promote antisocial behavior.

To help prevent or remedy punitive school climates, an emphasis must be placed on functional assessments and positive, preventive behavioral interventions. School and classroom rules and policies need to be clear, with a positive focus. Support must be provided for staff, and allowances must be made for individual student differences in terms of provided consequences, social skills training, and the selection of academic materials and instructional methodology.

Academic programs that show the most promise for preventing antisocial behaviors are those that adjust to the student's functional level, program frequent success, and assume the responsibility for teaching without relying on out-of-school resources. Such an approach maximizes success and recognizes that the home environment for antisocial youth tends not to be very supportive (i.e., these students are not likely to receive home tutoring or assistance or encouragement with homework). Some programs, such as the Morningside model (Johnson & Layng, 1992, 1994), not only use well-designed and sequenced instructional materials matched to students' current performance levels but also build skills to fluency by using peer coaching and testing to provide multiple opportunities for fluency practice, recognition of progress, and correction of errors within the school.

For dealing with low school involvement and integration, a concerted effort must be made to provide and involve youngsters in afterschool activities. In addition, peer tutoring has been shown to be helpful for promoting both involvement and integration (Carta, Greenwood, Dinwiddie, Kohler, & Delquadri, 1987; Maheady & Sainato, 1985; Polirstok & Greer, 1986).

Youngsters also need to become more skilled in self-management and aware of the individual factors that contribute to antisocial behavior. They can be taught to monitor their behavior and to recognize the communicative purpose of the behavior and the possible chain of events that leads to the escalation of their behavior (Watson & Tharp, 1993). They can also be taught more adaptive ways of achieving the function served by the antisocial behavior, to select alternate modes of responding, and to avoid or minimize association with antisocial peers.

Schools and community organizations need to take a preventive stance by providing support

[2] This does not negate the importance of the role played by the family, community, or various agencies. It does, however, place the focus on what schools can do to reduce various antisocial and attendance problems.

for the parents in the form of child care and training in parenting (Hawkins, 1972, 1974) and by providing adult education classes in reading and other areas (Johnson & Layng, 1994).

If security arrangements and punitive measures are necessary within the school, they must be viewed as temporary expedients to help gain control in the situation while setting events are addressed. They are not the solution. Not until the identified setting events are dealt with will we be able to consistently prevent violence and other antisocial behavior. We must funnel more energy and resources into remedying the setting events for antisocial behavior and dropping out of school rather than continue our emphasis on security arrangements, incarceration, and punishment.

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