USING SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' CITIZENSHIP IN COLORADO

A Report to Colorado Educators

THE COLORADO JUVENILE JUSTICE
AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COUNCIL

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from

The Colorado Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council

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Action Research Project, University of Colorado

October 1987

The Colorado Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council was created in 1976 by executive order of the Governor of the State of Colorado in accordance with the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-415). The Council engages in policy and program development in the areas of delinquency prevention and improvements in the juvenile justice system. The council is responsible for allocating funds from the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Programs of the Council are administered through the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, Department of Public Safety. Current members of the Council were appointed by Governor Roy Romer.

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IMPORTANT FINDINGS

The research and development programs supported in Colorado schools by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council have demonstrated that:

- School programs can reduce students' delinquent behavior and make them better citizens in and out of school.
- Staff's good intentions, dedication, and hard work are not enough to change students' behavior.
- Lessons can be targeted to reduce specific kinds of troublesome behavior by students.
- Improvements in instruction and school climate do not guarantee better behavior by students.
- Combining normative content with quality instructional strategies can make a program succeed.
- A school's location and the characteristics of its students are not reasons for a program to fail to improve citizenship.
- Building-level control of a new program is likely to produce better results than district control.
- To succeed and last, a program to improve students' citizenship should have both in-building and district-level administrative support.
- A focused program has a better chance to succeed than one which tries for a multitude of school improvements at once.

INTRODUCTION

"One purpose for schools — education of the intellect — is obvious. The other — an education in character — is inescapable. "

Theodore R. Sizer

When students exhibit good conduct in and out of school and view those who teach them favorably, educators can do their best work. The programs described in this publication are guided by an inverse proposition: *students' behavior and attitudes can improve as a result of work by educators.*

After reviewing research and theory, the Colorado Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council recognized in 1984 that carrying out school programs to improve students' citizenship was not an exact science — but that some avenues for doing so looked more promising than others. To learn more, the Council has since supported research and development programs in 12 schools and assessed their results. Information has been gathered on the ways in which the programs have affected students' behavior and citizenship; their learning habits; and their attitudes toward school, teachers, and authority figures.

All the schools are in eastern Colorado. They are a mix of inner-city, suburban, and rural. They include one elementary school, three middle schools, five junior high schools, and one high school, as well as two multi-level schools (K-8 and K-12).

The Council wishes to share the information it has with Colorado educators. Those thinking of adopting a new program can refer to this information in weighing the many options available. In this publication are accounts of programs in our state which have significantly reduced delinquency and improved students' and parents' attitudes toward their school, programs which have made students' views of school and teachers more favorable without measurably altering behavior, and a program which failed in most of its objectives despite months of planning and an extraordinary level of effort by staff who carried it out.

The programs represent various combinations of innovative course content and improved instructional strategies. Theory and previous research offered grounds for expecting desirable effects on citizenship from every program supported. In practice, some worked much better than others. Some programs proved successful on virtually every count assessed, while others had mixed or weak outcomes. Only a few merit being called "model programs," but all have added to our knowledge of what is likely to improve students' citizenship and what is not. As a consequence, the Council's funding priorities and criteria for school-based programs are different today from those of three years ago.

Following an outline of general program guidelines and theory are descriptions of the individual school programs and their results.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Programs were allowed latitude in specific course content, teaching strategies, and other elements. But all had to meet a common set of requirements.

First, *an eligible program must have claimed a basis in a contemporary theory of delinquency causation for reasonably expecting a reduction in delinquent behavior as an outcome of the innovations proposed.* The logic for predicting success could rest on presumed program effects on (a) conventional bonding and belief (*social control theory*), (b) friendship choices (*differential association theory*), or (c) opportunities and life chances (*strain theory*).

Each theory specifies factors predictive of law-abiding or delinquent behavior. In order to improve students' behavior, a program should be capable of affecting some of those factors in a favorable direction.

Social control theory offers a basis for expecting reductions in delinquent behavior to result from school practices which improve students' bonding to teachers, school, or family; or from instruction which increases students' belief that rules and laws are mostly necessary and just. A least part of the justification for every school program was tied to social control theory.

Conventional Bonding and Belief

According to *social control theory,* most people stay out of trouble most of the time because they are bonded to society's norms through their home, school, workplace, or church. As long as at least one of these ties remains strong and rewarding, an individual has a compelling incentive to engage in socially approved behavior. For most young persons, the chief sources of support for proper conduct are home and school. For those who value their experiences in one or both places, acceptable behavior is likely to be maintained through four control processes.

The first is *commitment,* which rests on an individual's perception that something worthwhile results from continued good standing in a legitimate position (e.g., that of student) and that the loss of standing would carry costs outweighing any benefits from rule-breaking. A second control process is *attachment* to people who support conventional behavior. To violate a rule is to violate the wishes and expectations of others; a low level of attachment to persons who expect law-abiding behavior makes infractions more likely. A third control process is *involvement,* which refers to a person's ongoing output of time and energy in certain conventional pursuits. The activities associated with law-abiding behavior are productive ones (like doing homework or repairing a building) and do not include recreation and passive entertainment.

The fourth control process is *belief* that rules governing behavior are both necessary and fair enough to merit being obeyed.

According to differential association theory, strategies which cause students to shift their friendship from delinquent to nondelinquent peers should result in improved behavior. Part of the justification for six of the 12 school programs came from differential association theory.

Friendship Choices

Differential association theory depicts crime and delinquency as behavior learned in social groups. Some groups convey attitudes mostly favorable to law-abiding behavior, while others convey arguments in favor of breaking the law. The relative amount and intensity of contact a young person has with conventional groups (either adult or youth) as opposed to delinquent peer groups partly determines which type of behavior the weight of attitudes learned will support. When his or her rewards from conventional groups are scant, a young person is likely to turn for approval to peers in a similar situation. Among peers who share a sense of alienation from home and school, the range of behavior rewarded by the group usually includes violations of rules. In such a group, delinquent behavior often becomes a means for achieving satisfaction and a sense of legitimacy.

Strain theory implies that practices which allow more students opportunities to succeed in the legitimate business of school or make them aware of prospects in the world of work should also remove an obstacle to rule-abiding behavior. Elements of three school programs found justification in strain theory.

Opportunity and Life Chances

According to *strain theory,* our society tends to hold out the same goals to everyone as desirable. However, legitimate avenues for achieving those goals are not open equally to all. The combination of similarity of goals and unequal access to legitimate means makes it impossible for some people to obey the rules and still achieve their goals. Consequently, some turn to illegitimate, perhaps delinquent, means. Others may reject both the goals and means and retreat socially by using alcohol or drugs. For some students, one bad year may result in restricted opportunity for school success in subsequent years; in many subjects, unlearned material from a previous term can make showing competence and participating actively in a current class difficult. Inability to see prospects for a rewarding career also can interfere with a student's present performance.

Relationships between many explanatory factors from the theories and avoidance of various forms of delinquent behavior have been verified by research. In Figure 1, the results of one study are summarized by school level. The correlations are based on data obtained in fall 1982 from 338 high school students, 684 junior high students, and 220 elementary students — as part of national research on law-related education, sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency

FIGURE 1

SIGNIFICANT CORRELATIONS BY SCHOOL LEVEL BETWEEN THEORETICAL VARIABLES AND AVOIDANCE OF VARIOUS FORMS OF DELINQUENCY

	Social Control Theory (Bonding)					Differential Association Theory	Strain Theory
	Commitment to School	Attachment to Teachers	Involvement in School (Homework)	Belief: Unfavorable Attitudes Toward Deviance	Belief: Unfavorable Attitudes Toward Violence	Noninvolvement With Delinquent Peers	Perceived Equality of Opportunity
Avoidance of:							
School Rule Infractions	H J	H J E	H J	(H)(J)(E)	H J E	(H)(J)(E)	J
Violence Against Other Students	J	J E	J	(J)(E)	(H)(J)(E)	H(J)(E)	
Minor Fraud	J	H J	J	(H)(J) E	(H)(J)(E)	(H)(J)(E)	
Minor Theft	J	J	J	(J)(E)	H(J) E	(H)(J)(E)	J
Vandalism	J E	H J E	H J	H(J)(E)	H(J)(E)	(H)(J)(E)	H
Law-Breaking in Groups	J	J	H J	H(J) E	H(J) E	(J)(E)	
Drinking Alcohol	H J	J (E)	H J E	(H)(J)(E)	J (E)	(H)(J)(E)	H J
Smoking Marijuana	H J	J E	H J	(H)(J)(E)	J (E)	(H)(J)(E)	H J
Very Serious (Index) Offenses	J	H J E	J	H(J) E	H(J) E	(H)(J)(E)	H J

H = Significant correlation with behavior of high school students (grades 10-12)

J = Significant correlation with behavior of junior high students (grades 8 & 9)

E = Significant correlation with behavior of elementary students (grades 5 & 6)

(O) *Highest correlations are circled (r = .30 to .55)*

Prevention (OJJDP). Of particular interest is the location in the table of the highest correlations. Except for drinking by elementary students, the strongest explanatory factors for every type of offense are the dimensions pertaining to belief and peer relationships.

Judgement that a particular program strategy could affect one or more behavior-related factors was informed where possible by evidence from existing research. Previous studies had shown *cooperative team learning* capable of producing lasting changes in friendship choices across racial lines, provided that student working groups contain a deliberate mix of ethnic backgrounds. That finding implies that heterogeneous working groups might also cause some students to shift from relationships with predominantly delinquent peers to relationships with a cross-section of classmates. Existing data on *mastery teaching* strategies indicated that those methods could engage a larger proportion of students in the learning process than conventional methods. Three years of research on the effects of law-

related education had demonstrated that when taught according to a set of prescribed standards, the course could improve attitudes toward school and beliefs supporting law-abiding behavior, and reduce student delinquency.

For innovations lacking documentation of behavioral and attitudinal outcomes, the presumed ties to theory were more speculative. For example, by letting students discover that rules could be used to settle personal disputes, instruction in conflict resolution might at the same time increase students' respect for rules and diminish their inclination to resort to violence. Career education was seen as a way to increase students' perceptions that legitimate avenues for success were open to them, and engaging parents in the educational process was viewed as a way to enhance bonding to home and family.

Figure 2 displays the link between theory and the elements of each school's program.

FIGURE 2

THEORETICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS
SUPPORTED BY THE COLORADO DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

THEORY	*IMPROVEMENTS THAT THEORY INDICATES WILL REDUCE DELINQUENCY AND LEAD TO LAW-ABIDING BEHAVIOR*	*PROGRAM STRATEGIES PROPOSED TO BRING ABOUT EACH KIND OF IMPROVEMENT*	*SCHOOLS WHICH TRIED EACH PROPOSED PROGRAM STRATEGY**
SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY	Increased bonding to school and teachers (more student commitment, attachment, and involvement)	Clinical teaching with collegial peer coaching	Lakeside High School Gateway Junior High Springer Junior High
	Increased bonding to home and family	Activities to involve parents actively in the educational process	Hollenbeck Middle Rose School
	Increased belief in the fairness, basis, and moral validity of rules and laws	Law-related education (also fits under "increased bonding to school")	Bradford Junior High Carter Junior High Williams Junior High Benjamin Middle Hilltop Middle Hollenbeck Middle Smallwood School
		Substance abuse factual lesson unit	Rose School
		Instruction in settling interpersonal disputes without violence	Miles Elementary
DIFFERENTIAL ASSOCIATION THEORY	Shift in friendship choices away from delinquent peers to nondelinquents or a cross-section of classmates	Cooperative team learning	Gateway Junior High Springer Junior High Rose School
	Reduced susceptibility to delinquent peer pressure	Student open discussion periods (or advisories)	Lakeside High School Bradford Junior High
		Wilderness group experience	Rose School
STRAIN THEORY	Increased perception of own capabilities to achieve goals through legitimate means	Teaching for mastery	Carter Junior High Williams Junior High
		Career education	Lakeside High School

*School pseudonyms are used throughout this publication.

A second requirement was that *an eligible program must be offered to a cross-section of all students at a grade level, never to a preselected group thought to be especially troublesome or at risk of becoming delinquent.* One reason for this requirement is that heterogeneous grouping of students is the setting required for strategies designed to shift students' friendship choices away from predominantly delinquent peers. In a class populated entirely by "troublesome" or "at risk" students, the prospects for affecting interaction patterns in a favorable direction are slim; moreover, a setting is created for peer reinforcement of undesirable attitudes and behavior. Another reason is the risk that the program will develop a "spoiled image"; as students come to realize why they were selected to participate, attending a class session can be a reminder that school authorities hold them in low regard.* Research also supports the requirement for mixed classes; findings from the law-related education study, in particular, indicated that the course loses its ability to reduce delinquency in a classroom that is topheavy with delinquents.

A third requirement was for *an implementation plan that would permit the best evaluation of program outcomes possible.* In most schools, this meant providing for either a randomly selected control group or an equivalent comparison group of students not exposed to the program — then administering pre and posttests to students in this group, as well as those in the program.

Rather than comply with these last requirements, two schools forfeited support for their otherwise acceptable programs (which are not subjects of this report). At one, the principal accepted on faith the merits of his untested innovation and maintained that offering the program only to a randomly selected cross-section of students would be unfair to those who did not receive it. His decision rendered an adequate evaluation impossible. Staff at the second school had a nearly opposite objection. They argued that allowing a cross-section of students to participate in their classroom innovations and activities to involve parents would be a waste of resources. Instead, they insisted on offering their program only to handpicked students who had a history of trouble.

THEORIES OF DELINQUENCY CAUSATION: SELECTED REFERENCES

Social Control Theory:

Hirschi, Travis. *Causes of Delinquency.* Berkeley, University of California Press. — 1969

Differential Association Theory:

Sutherland, Edwin H. and Donald R. Cressey. *Principles of Criminology.* 8th Edition. Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott Company. — 1970

Strain Theory:

Merton, Robert K. "Social Structure and Anomie." *American Sociological Review* 3:678-682. — 1938

Cloward, Richard A. and Lloyd E. Ohlin. *Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs.* Glencoe, IL: The Free Press. — 1969

Labeling Theory

Becker, Howard S. *Outsiders.* New York: The Free Press. — 1963

Gove, Walter R., ed. *The Labelling of Deviance: Evaluating a Perspective.* 2nd Edition. Beverly Hills: Sage. — 1980

Integrated Theoretical Models:

Elliott, Delbert S., David Huizinga and Suzanne S. Ageton. *Explaining Delinquency and Drug Use.* Beverly Hills: Sage. — 1985

Hawkins, J. David and Joseph G. Weis. *The Social Development Model: An Integrated Approach to Delinquency Prevention.* Seattle, WA: Center for Law and Justice, University of Washington. — 1980

* Some will recognize this as a tenet of *labeling theory,* which predicts that persons will tend to live up to favorable expectations that others have of them or "live down to" derogatory expectations. During the 1960s and 70s, a common assumption among advocates of this perspective was that the most damaging labels are those conferred by the justice system. A decade of research produced mixed findings regarding the consequences of judicial labels, calling that assumption into question. More consistent are findings of serious consequences when negative labels are introduced into a setting that is salient to an actor and in such a way that the actor's opportunities in that setting are restricted. For youth, one such setting is the school.

THE COLORADO SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS

This section describes each school's program plan and its implementation, methods of assessment, and results achieved. The accounts are based on quantitative evaluation data, project proposals and progress reports, interviews with program staff, and notes from site visits. The visits were occasions for participation in planning sessions, observation of the programs in operation, and debriefing of personnel.

The results reported here pertain mainly to students' behavior and attitudes related to citizenship, notably the theoretical dimensions described in the previous section. Not emphasized is the finding that those in a program which included a specific body of content learned more about the subject than students who did not take the course. After receiving instruction in communications skills, students in the conflict resolution program displayed measured gains in such skills. In the only program which included parent effectiveness training, students' parents who received it showed increases in their parenting skills and knowledge. Except at one school (as noted in the report), law-related education courses produced significant gains in students' knowledge of the law and legal processes.

Knowledge and skill gains are important objectives, but they are not what distinguish the programs described here from routine school activities. Therefore, this report focuses on more distinctive program outcomes: changes in behavior and factors believed to contribute to such changes.

photo courtesy of Julia Marchant

Reaching for Perfection at Lakeside High School

Located 40 miles north of Denver in a community of 35,000, Lakeside High School restructured the school day for one-fourth of its tenth-graders in the 1985-86 school year. Because it may embody several innovations currently under consideration by educators, the program and its results will be described in detail.

The program had 10 objectives:

- Reduce students' delinquency and increase their law-abiding behavior in and out of school.
- Increase the sense of civility toward and cooperation with peers and significant adults demonstrated by students.
- Increase bonding toward the school, significant adults, and peers.
- Increase student productivity
- Improve school climate.
- Increase students' ability and inclination to be autonomous learners.
- Increase students' successful use of problem-solving techniques.
- Increase students' participation in school governance.
- Increase students' knowledge of their own employability and skills for making the transition to the world of work.
- Maintain student mastery of district English, Speech, and Health objectives, and at the same time diminish students' compartmentalization of those topics as distinct and unrelated subjects.

The schedule for students in the program included a special two-and-a-half hour block each morning. The block began with a daily advisory period, intended as an opportunity for guided student interaction around task-oriented, career-related, and normative topics. As described in the proposal submitted to the Council, the advisory program was designed to

> teach and reinforce the norms and skills of productive engagement in academic work and provide youngsters with the opportunity and information necessary to make tentative career decisions . . . and know the educational and attitudinal implications of the choice.

During the remainder of the block, students were to receive innovative instruction in English, Speech, and Health — with course content merged in such a way as to "break down the boundaries" among the three subjects and discourage students from compartmentalizing their learning. Throughout the block, the program plan called for emphasis on cooperation among students, input from students concerning school rules and operation of the program, connections between academic learning and the world of work, and productive use of time.

The persons who would carry out the program met several times the previous summer to develop concrete steps for achieving each of their objectives — including lesson plans intended to present a single topic from all three subject area perspectives. Four teachers, three building administrators, the district curriculum planning director, a career transition consultant, and an outside evaluator attended the summer meetings. The curriculum director and the principal had worked together previously to develop the program, but took steps during the sessions to give staff a strong sense of ownership in its operating details. Their success in this regard may have been a mixed blessing.

Despite the extensive preparation, there were many slips between the plan and the way the program actually operated. In the view of the curriculum director, the most devastating slip was in the conduct of the advisory program. Instead of keeping its intended focus on productive academic work and career decisions, this objective

> was somehow reconceptualized by the project staff to include a large portion of the old T group or sensitivity training notions. Thus, the advisory concept came to be dominated by T group activities resulting in the neglect of career/transition activities . . . The most unfortunate result . . . was that it increased the ambiguity of the entire program. The hypothesis of the program design called for the advisory to support academic learning through the career/transition skills curriculum. When the advisory failed to provide this support, the entire program lost the opportunity to demonstrate any cumulative effects. In addition, the opportunity to make productive use of team cooperative learning strategies was negated by the emphasis on T group activities in the advisory (from the project final report submitted in June 1986).

Moreover, the teachers reported making little or no use of cooperative learning strategies during the remainder of the daily experimental block (even through such strategies were widely accepted in the school at large). Instead of learning in small groups, the students in fact received much of their instruction in the three subject areas in *larger* groups than their other classes. To set the scene for boundary-breaking among subjects, accordion walls separating the classrooms were

The Evaluation Design

A classical research design was used to assess outcomes of the program. Before the start of the school year, scientific random assignment was the basis for selecting one-fourth of entering tenth-graders to participate in the experimental program. The remaining tenth-graders received conventional instruction without an advisory period or interdisciplinary teaching and served as control subjects. Students transferring in or out of school after the beginning of the term were excluded from the evaluation.

Students in both groups completed a pretest questionnaire near the beginning of the fall 1985 semester and a posttest on February 25, 1986. An outside data collector used secret numerical identifiers to assure confidentiality of students' responses and at the same time allow individual matching of the pre and posttests. Matched questionnaires were obtained from 62 experimental and 183 control subjects. The questionnaires contained 199 items pertaining to student attitudes, normative orientation, and perceptions; as well as 23 questions about self-reported frequency of behavior, covering 11 categories of delinquency and one form of desirable behavior (telling parents about content learned in school). The measures encompassed 55 possible outcomes for students, all related to program objectives. On the posttest, experimental students only answered an additional 26 questions calling for their opinions of various facets of the program they had experienced. Analysis of the pre-post measures compared postscores of experimental students with those of control students, controlling for prescores — in effect assessing differences across groups in students' attitudinal and behavioral changes from September to February.

pulled back — leaving teachers in the vortex of an L-shaped room to half-face 70 to 80 students at once.

Although the teachers often worked to the point of exhaustion on integrated lesson plans (as observed by two of the building administrators), they expressed disappointment at the results of their efforts to join the three subject areas. They agreed that joint lessons taught by three primary teachers sometimes amounted to little more than sequences of the same instruction traditionally received by students when the three courses were taught separately. District requirements which impeded any substantial modification of the content apparently contributed to this problem. In addition, staff speculated that there were other combinations of subjects more suitable for integration than English, Speech, and Health.

Measured results of the program for students were another source of disappointment for the staff. Although experimental students as a group reported liking most parts of the program, the evaluation showed that few of the intended effects occurred. On the portion of the posttest asking experimental students (only) to rate elements of the program, the group responded favorably to 14 out of 15 questions about their advisory periods. Girls were significantly more positive than boys on most of those questions. For example, girls who "usually looked forward to advisory" outnumbered those who did not by a ratio of five to one; for boys, the ratio was three to two. With respect to treatment of the three subject areas, boys and girls equally expressed support for the idea of interdisciplinary teaching, but strongly disliked receiving it in groups larger than normal class size. On balance, the program appeared well received by students.

Nevertheless, the measures of 43 possible attitudinal and normative outcomes revealed only four significant differences between experimental and control students after the program had operated for six months. Three of the differences favored students in the program, and one favored the control group. Also, there were six trends (differences which did not reach statistical significance), of which three favored students in the program and three favored the control group. There were no experimental/control differences on any of the 11 types of delinquent behavior covered in the evaluation.

Favorable outcomes attributable to the program were most evident for the school climate and governance objectives. Compared with control subjects, experimental students reported being more informed in their classes about the purposes of their lessons and perceived that fellow students were more attentive in class. Experimental students also displayed greater consensus among themselves in their degree of approval or disapproval of various kinds of student behavior than did control subjects. The average scores on those normative scales, however, differed little between experimentals and controls. With respect to governance, students in the program more than those not in the program perceived that their input regarding school rules and procedures could make a difference (i.e., was not futile). Experimental students also expressed a significantly greater recognition than controls that school rules were necessary, important, and fair (but increased compliance with those rules had not occurred by the time of the posttest).

The significant difference which favored control subjects pertained to the employment transition objective. Experimental students saw less connection between their school courses and future careers than did controls, and were more inclined to postpone thinking about a career. When they heard of this finding, the staff said it made sense. At the time of the posttest, advisory activities had omitted the planned career block — but control students had received a shortened version of it in their regular classes. Experimental students eventually received the block during the

last two months of the school year, too late for its effects to be picked up by the evaluation. Also contrary to plan, students in the program turned out slightly less supportive than controls of norms supporting team learning and task-oriented cooperation. Although experimental students had agreed (by a ratio of 13 to one) that their advisory had "demonstrated that students from different school groups (e.g., athletes and hoods) can work together effectively," they apparently could not make a transfer from the affective advisory activities to instrumental learning tasks.

The curriculum planning director included the following observation in his final report:

> In the proposal for this project the author noted the long history of failure of advisory programs. In this case, we can add to the history of failure a footnote that such programs can have negative side effects upon other programs.

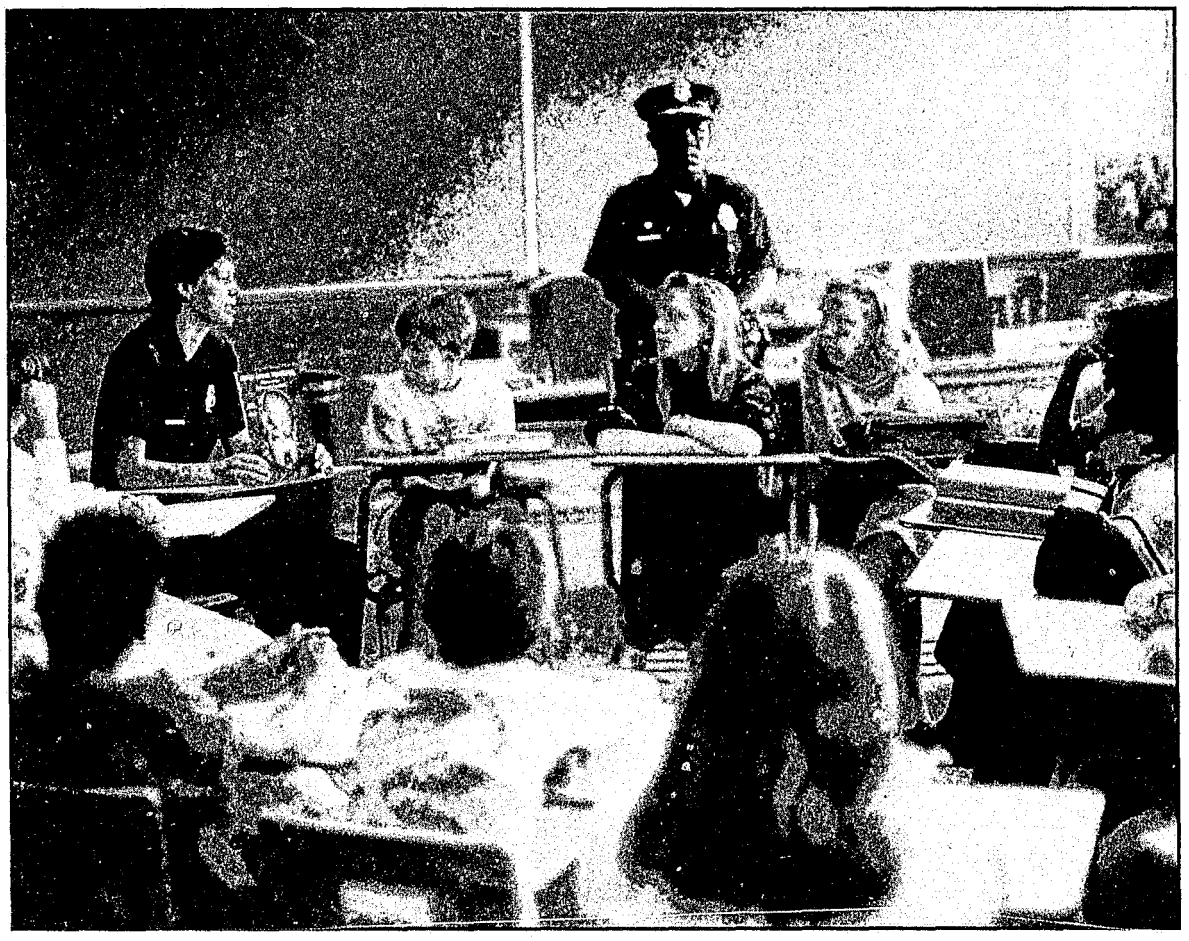
Assessment of a possible positive side effect of the interaction which occurred in the advisory periods is in progress. Research in the 1970s identified unsatisfactory relationships with classmates as a powerful predictor of student dropout. If it accomplished nothing else, the "T Group" emphasis in the advisory program appeared to have improved students' understanding of one another. To assess the possible consequences on dropout rates, the former experimental and control students will be monitored in this regard until the end of their senior year. The numbers to date are too small to warrant a conclusion, but are in a direction favoring the program: during 1985-86 (the program year), one experimental and five control students dropped out of school; dropout figures for 1986-87 were not compiled at this writing, but students who were suspended one or more times that year included no former experimental students and six former control subjects. (In both instances, the ratio expected by chance would be one experimental to three controls.)

Interviewed during spring of 1987, the former advisory teachers reported another residue of the program: students who had been in their advisory periods the year before continued to single out those teachers for help with problems. In addition to working with their new batch of sophomores, the tenth-grade teachers still were called upon regularly to advise and counsel a segment of the current eleventh-grade student population.

Using Law-Related Education to Build Citizenship at Seven Schools

Law-Related Education (LRE) is a program of instruction to build students' conceptual and practical understanding of the law and enforcement and judicial processes. Built into LRE (at least as the term is used here) are lessons intended to provide a foundation for improved citizenship skills, ability to work within the legal system to settle civil grievances and deal with criminal problems, reasoned understanding of the basis for rules, and favorable attitudes toward law enforcement and the justice system. A typical program offers a coherent sequence of law-related topics, usually lasting an entire semester. Frequently integrated into that sequence are mock trials, use of legal and law enforcement professionals in the classroom, visits to courtrooms, police ridealongs, and home security audits.

An LRE course was the sole or principal program supported by the Council at seven Colorado schools: three junior high schools (Carter, Williams, and Bradford), three middle schools (Hollenbeck, Benjamin, and Hilltop), and one multi-level school (Smallwood). From the standpoint of improving citizenship and curbing delinquency, the most successful programs were in this group.



The prescribed design of the course was based on standards established in a previous national study of 61 LRE classes located in 32 schools (see inset). In order to resemble the more effective of those classes, the Colorado LRE programs ideally would all incorporate seven features:

- *Adequate preparation and frequent use in the classroom of local law enforcement officers as coteachers.*
- *At least 30 to 40 classroom hours devoted to the LRE course*
- *High instructional quality, including the mastery strategies of stated learning objectives and thorough checking for understanding of one topic before moving on to another*
- *Judicious selection and presentation of illustrative material, balanced to depict law enforcement and the justice system as neither incredibly infallible nor nightmarishly abusive*
- *Active student participation and involvement, including use of opportunities for structured cooperative team learning built into LRE text materials (e.g., mock trials)*
- *Strong in-building administrative support, at least in providing classroom resources, facilitating field trips (e.g., to a courthouse), and dealing with concerns voiced by other teachers or members of the community*
- *Professional peer support for teachers, preferably from persons teaching LRE in the same building or district*

Fine-Tuning Law-Related Education: A Capsule History

1979 Several organizations had developed a variety of LRE text materials and trained educators from selected cities in their use. LRE was a part of the curriculum in elementary and secondary schools in scattered locations around the country. Activities ranging from celebration of Law Day to semester-long courses had been termed "LRE."

1980 Over 1,200 responses to a national mail survey showed strong support among professionals for LRE. By at least a two-to-one margin, members of each of the following groups favored making LRE a secondary school requirement: social studies teachers, school principals, state school superintendents, juvenile and family court judges, and police chiefs.

1981 The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) commissioned the first evaluation of LRE to examine behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. Ten LRE courses were subjects of structured observations and assessment of effects through pre and posttesting of students. Only four produced favorable outcomes; observational records identified their common features, which were absent from the remaining six courses.

1982 Another 27 LRE courses were subjects of observation and assessment of outcomes. Both observed quality and magnitude of effects varied widely, yielding further information on what is necessary to make LRE effective. In addition, the research team trained staff of a Colorado junior high school in creating a "state-of-the-art" LRE course, based on everything learned to date. The success of the subsequent LRE course at that school in affecting behavior and attitudes surpassed anything achieved by the other 37 courses.

1983 Additional training at the Colorado school resulted in an LRE course even more effective than the year before. Nationally, more classes were observed and evaluated -- allowing further refinement of the features recommended for making LRE successful in improving citizenship.

1984 Sixteen-month followup testing of the Colorado students who had been in the 1982 LRE and control classes showed the former LRE students still to be less delinquent than their counterparts who had taken conventional civics at the same school. For three types of delinquency, the LRE students' advantage over controls had increased with time. Staff of the other two junior high schools in the same Colorado district received direct training and subsequently taught LRE courses which produced superior outcomes (see "Carter" and "Williams" in this report).

1985
1986
1987 For three consecutive years, Colorado schools have sent teams -- made up of building administrators, teachers, and police -- to week-long training seminars in law-related/citizenship education at the University of Colorado. Every graduating team has since implemented (and maintained) an LRE course. Evaluations of some of those courses appear in this publication.

To equip schools to comply with these points, the Council arranged for three LRE/Citizenship Education training workshops at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Every school with an LRE program sent a team to a five or six-day workshop. The teams usually consisted of one or two social studies teachers, a building administrator, and one or more law enforcement officers.

Following the training, adherence to the recommended features appeared satisfactory at six of the seven schools. The exception was Benjamin Middle School, where the two trained teachers received only modest administrative support and devoted considerably less classroom time to LRE than the recommended minimum.

Evaluations using within-school comparison groups of students who received conventional civics or social studies without LRE permitted an assessment of results of the LRE course at five schools. Lack of equivalent comparison groups precluded a structured evaluation at the two remaining schools. In one school (Smallwood), the entire high school student body of 12 in this rural community received LRE. At the other (Hilltop), an unplanned intervention prior to the start of the LRE course rendered the intended comparison group significantly nonequivalent at the outset to the group of students who would receive LRE. Classroom observations at those two schools verified the courses' fidelity to recommended procedures (e.g., regular use of law enforcement officers in the classroom and active participation by virtually all students), and, in followup interviews, teachers and administrators provided anecdotal evidence that LRE had improved students' enthusiasm, attitudes, and behavior. Numerical analysis of outcomes was limited, however, to the other five schools.

Format Used In Reporting Individual Program Outcomes

Students' scores on scales measuring correlates of law-abiding behavior approximate a normal distribution — resembling a bell-shaped curve with the mean and median at about the same point and equal numbers of scores on either side of that point. For those scores, differences between experimental and control students can be computed in control group standard deviation units (indicating distance above or below the mean) and then converted to percentile scores (indicating distance from the median). In this report, the magnitude of differences on these measures between students in a program and control subjects is thereby expressed as the estimated percentile standing that an average program student would have in the control group distribution.

Frequencies of committing offenses, on the other hand, are not normally distributed — so use of the procedure just described would be inappropriate (and misleading). Accordingly, a different convention is used here in reporting outcomes pertaining to delinquent behavior. The average (mean) difference between experimental and control students in their frequency of committing a given type of offense is multiplied by the number of experimental students. The product is taken as an estimate of the total number of offenses of that type either avoided or generated as a consequence of the program.

The Evaluation Design

At the five evaluated schools, similar designs were used to assess outcomes of LRE: pre and post questionnaires were administered to LRE students and a comparison group of students at the same grade level who did not receive LRE. The measures covered theory-based dimensions known to be related to law-abiding behavior and a series of 21 self-report items to assess the frequency with which a subject had committed each of 11 types of offense during the preceding semester. To encourage frank responses, elaborate steps were taken to assure anonymity and still permit matching of pre and posttests completed by the same individual.

The design, however, was somewhat more rigorous at Carter and Williams Junior High Schools than at the other three schools. At Carter and Williams, placement of students in LRE or non-LRE classes was determined by scientific random assignment (using a table of random numbers), and an outside evaluator administered and immediately carried away the questionnaires. At the remaining schools, ordinary computerized placement procedures assigned students to LRE or comparison classes, and data collection was performed by a teacher, a school counselor, or a district staff person.

The number of matched pre and post questionnaires obtained at each school appears below. Control classes at the junior high schools were conventional civics — except at Williams, where cooperative team learning strategies (the Johns Hopkins model) were used throughout the semester. At the middle schools, control classes were regular social studies.

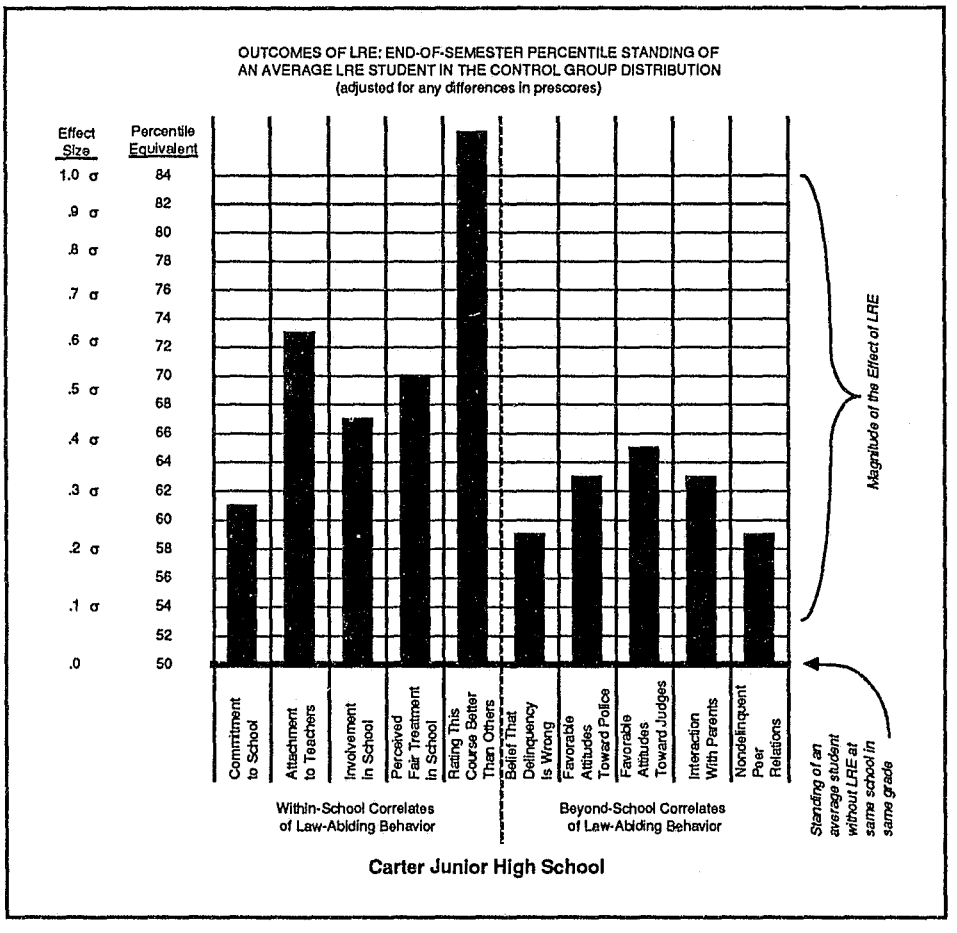
School & Number of Sections	Grade Level	Number of Students LRE	Control
Carter Junior High (3 LRE + 6 Control)	9th	76	146
Williams Junior High (3 LRE + 3 Control)	9th	69	61
Bradford Junior High (2 LRE + 1 Control)	9th	55	24
Hollenbeck Middle (6 LRE + 3 Control)	8th	158	78
Benjamin Middle (2 LRE + 3 Control)	7th	29	47

As at Lakeside High School, analysis of the pre/post measures compared postscores of experimental (in this instance, LRE) students with those of control students at the same school, controlling for prescores — in effect assessing differences across groups in students' attitudinal and behavioral changes from the beginning to the end of the semester in which LRE was taught.

The LRE courses at Carter and Williams Junior High Schools were virtually identical. Both courses were taught for a full class period every day for an entire semester and replaced traditional ninth-grade Civics. A team of six patrol officers from the same municipal police department served both schools. On a rotating basis, an officer taught the LRE classes at each school for two days every week. Teachers and police had received training together before the semester began and jointly planned the sequence of course topics. Text materials at both schools consisted of a combination of locally developed lessons and handouts and selected exercises from Street Law, a high school LRE textbook. A single teacher at each school had three sections of LRE.

At Carter Junior High, the control group consisted of students in each of two teachers' three sections of conventional Civics. On every theory-based dimension included in the evaluation instrument, outcomes significantly favored LRE students over those in conventional Civics. The chart below displays the magnitude of those differences.

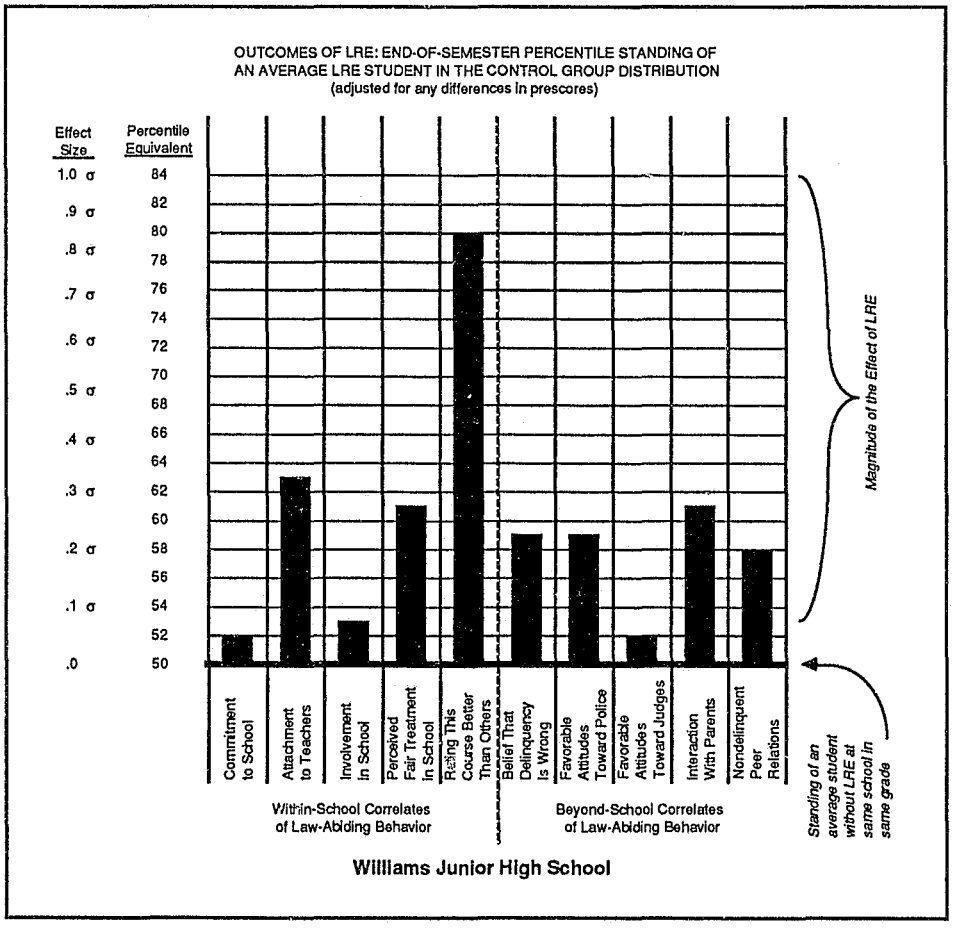
The LRE course at Carter also showed success in reducing students' delinquent behavior. The evaluation covered frequencies of engaging in ten forms of delinquency during the semester. For six of the ten, the average frequency for LRE students was moderately to substantially lower than that for controls. No behavioral differences favored the control students. Multiplying the average difference in frequencies times the number of LRE students (76) gives an estimate of the total number of offenses avoided. By this computation, the LRE course resulted in 100 fewer school rule infractions (such as cheating and truancy), 40 fewer acts of stealing, and more than 100 fewer other offenses (including vandalism and marijuana use) than would have occurred without the program.



At Williams Junior High, the three control sections of Civics were taught by the same teacher as the three sections of LRE. In the Civics (but not the LRE) classes, the teacher used structured cooperative team learning as a strategy throughout the semester. This variation in evaluation design was chosen in part to address earlier speculation by some that favorable results of LRE obtained elsewhere may have come as much from innovative teaching strategies or superior teachers as from the course itself. The outcomes at Williams again significantly favored the LRE students over controls, though by a narrower margin than at Carter. The chart shows favorable effects on seven of the ten theory-based dimensions, with trivial differences (still favoring LRE students) on the remaining three.

Outcomes pertaining to delinquent behavior also favored LRE students over controls. By the computation described above, the number of offenses avoided among the 59 LRE students included 75 school rule infractions, 44 acts of vandalism, and 76 other violations of the law. For no form of delinquent acts was the average frequency for control students lower than that for LRE students.

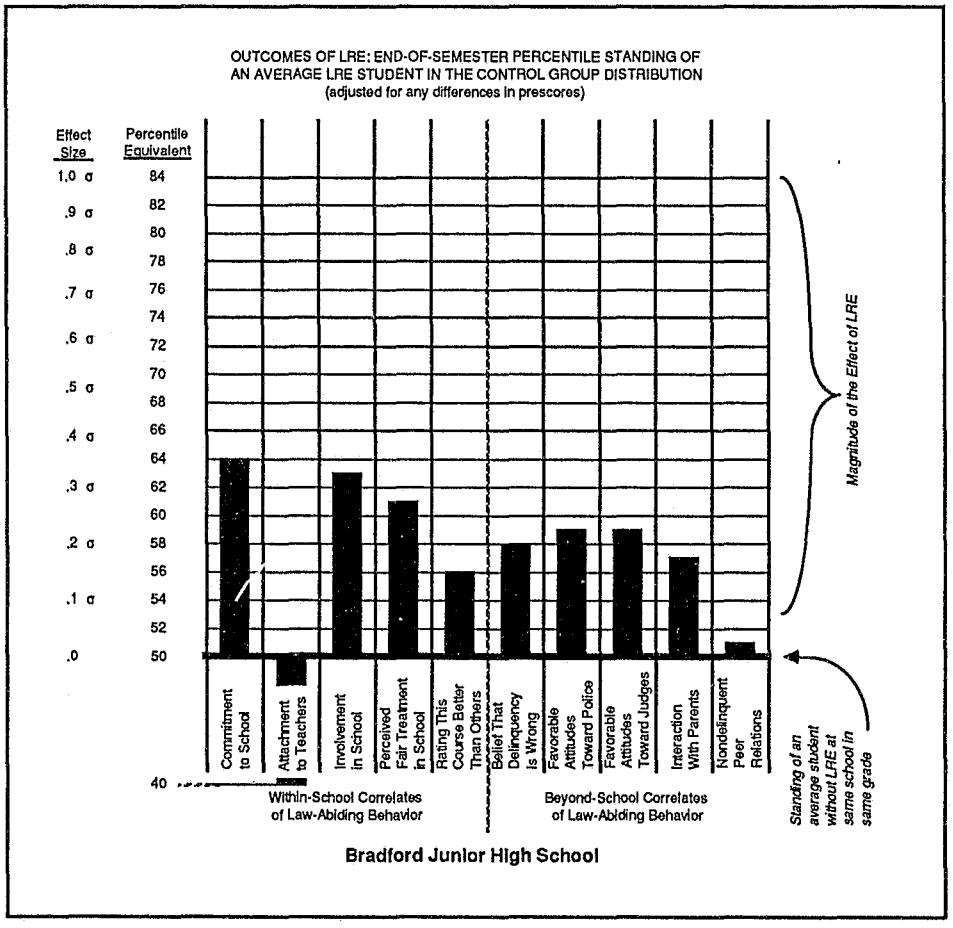
In addition to its impact on students, LRE at Carter and Williams apparently produced other benefits. The principals of both schools reported more favorable feedback from parents about LRE than any course they had ever offered, and the chief of police indicated that coteaching the course had improved his officers' ability to deal with juveniles on the street. Since the year of the evaluation (1983-84), LRE has become a required course for every ninth-grader in the two schools.



In the pilot program at Bradford Junior High, substantially fewer classroom hours were devoted to LRE than at Carter or Williams. Still meeting the recommended minimum, the course was taught four days a week for ten weeks. On the fifth day, LRE students (only) participated in an affective interaction session conducted by the school counselor. The LRE teacher reported subsequently that those sessions accomplished their intended purpose, which was to make students more comfortable and open in classroom discussion of law-related topics.

Either or both of two local police officers (from the juvenile division) taught the class once a week. On alternate weeks, other guests came in for an additional class period. These included a district court judge, an assistant district attorney, a social worker, and an instructor from a state correctional school. Prior to the start of the semester, the LRE teacher, two police officers, school counselor, and assistant principal had attended a six-day LRE training session. Students did not receive a textbook; the materials used were locally developed or adapted from other sources. The comparison group consisted of students in one section of conventional Civics (taught by another teacher).

The measured effects of LRE on the theory-based dimensions were predominantly favorable, but of less magnitude than at the other junior high schools — possibly due to the shorter course duration at Bradford. Favorable outcomes ranging from modest to substantial were evident for eight of the ten dimensions, and there was one unfavorable outcome ("attachment to teachers").



With respect to frequency of engaging in various forms of delinquency, the only two significant differences favored the LRE students, as did three out of five smaller differences — with the remaining two favoring students in the control class. Among the 55 LRE students, the estimated total number of offenses avoided as a result of the program include 50 school rule infractions, 29 instances of marijuana use, and 52 other violations (including stealing, hard drug use, and minor fraud). The unfavorable outcomes translate into total increases of 10 acts each of violence against other students and law-breaking in groups.

Because the per-student decline in marijuana use was the largest obtained in any LRE program, the teacher was asked to recall what part of the course might have produced that outcome. He attributed the result to the direction that students took in carrying out an assignment similar to one often used in non-LRE Civics classes. In groups of six, LRE students were asked to research thoroughly and prepare for debate by the class a legislative bill on a topic of their choice. From a list of 20 categories, one group in each section of LRE chose marijuana legislation. After a library search, the students listed as many pro and con facts as they could find pertaining to use and control of the substance. Following discussion within groups of the fact sheets, each student wrote a one-page essay on his or her own position and each group prepared two essays — one in favor of legislation and one opposing it. The essays were critiqued in writing by students working on unrelated topics. Then each group prepared a draft of a bill for "discussion in committee," the committee being one of the other groups. Finally, the class at large sat as members of the state legislature and debated the bill. In both LRE sections, students decided overwhelmingly that the arguments against marijuana use and in favor of its control were more persuasive than the counter-arguments.

The teacher denied taking a heavy hand in any of this process, other than making the initial open-ended assignment. Students perceived (correctly) that the topic chosen, arguments developed, and conclusions reached all came from them. That perception probably made the exercise far more effective than any series of sermon-like "temperance lectures" from adults could have been. The teacher now faces the challenge of repeating the process deliberately without robbing it of its spontaneity.

Origination of the two evaluated middle school LRE programs differed from that at the other schools. The results reported so far pertain to first-year programs, each of which was initiated by a decision at the building level. In contrast, the programs at Hollenbeck and Benjamin Middle Schools began as a consequence of proposals developed at their respective districts without input from the persons who would carry them out. During the first year, each of the programs consisted of an incoherent diversity of innovative elements. Each provided a smattering of LRE — one period a week for eight to ten weeks —, interspersed with such unrelated innovations as "Keys to Excellence," "Innerchange," and "Circle of Warmth." Neither first-year program yielded a usable evaluation. In one instance, control teachers were uncooperative in administering pre and posttests; in the other, the district processing center lost some of the data. (Even if results had been obtained, the difficulty of determining which aspects of the programs had produced them might have proved insurmountable.)

Because both programs included some LRE, teachers from the two schools completed one of the summer training workshops on that topic. The teachers left the training enthusiastic enough to want LRE as the primary focus of their respective second-year programs. Control of the continuation program at Benjamin Middle School remained with the district. The teachers there were allowed

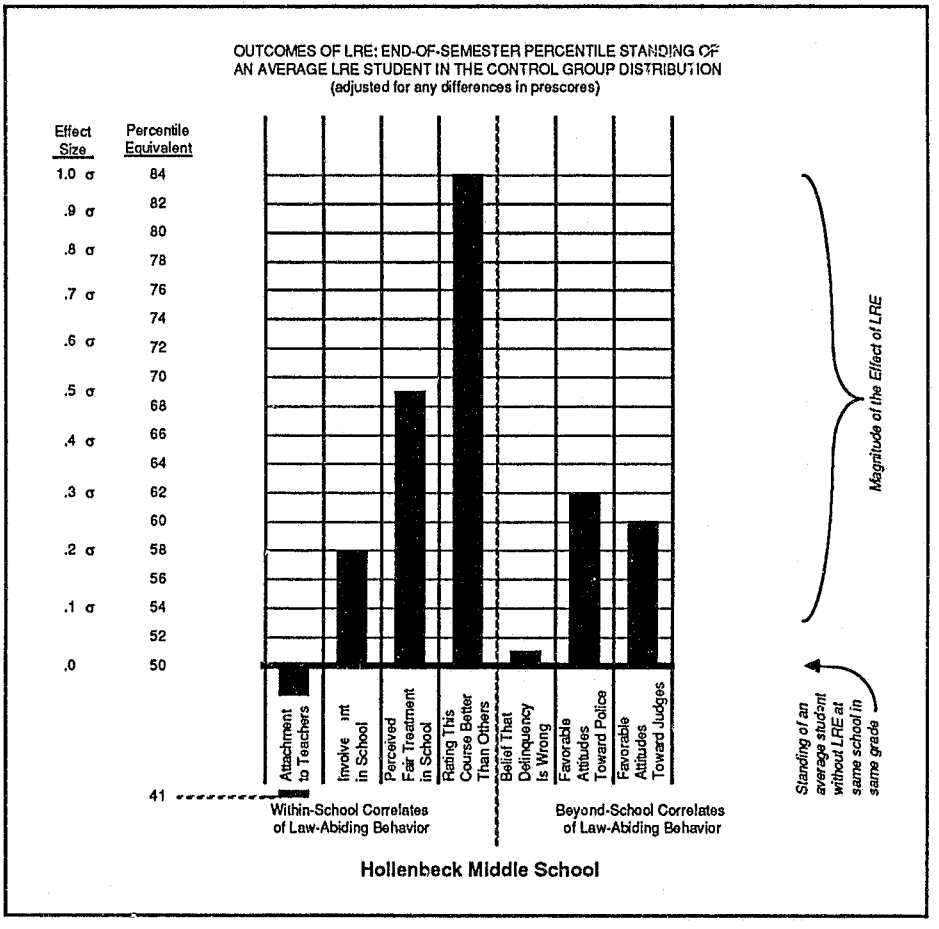
to expand LRE from once a week to week-long sequences, scattered throughout the semester. The amount of classroom time devoted to the subject about doubled that year, but remained considerably short of the recommended minimum.

Evaluation of the second-year program at Benjamin Middle School showed only one significant difference between LRE students and those in comparison classes: at the end of the semester, LRE students displayed greater attachment to teachers. Moreover, the LRE course at Benjamin had the distinction of not producing significant gains in factual knowledge of the law — a failing shared by only two of the more than 70 LRE courses evaluated previously (nationally and in Colorado).

The continuation program at racially mixed, metropolitan Hollenbeck Middle School (50 percent Black) was more successful. District staff relinquished leadership of the program and gave the directorship to the trained teacher. LRE became a full-semester course, and the teacher offered students and their parents optional extra sessions for discussion of law-related topics. Several metro police officers attended LRE summer training, co-taught the course, and appeared at the extra sessions.

Two-thirds of the eighth-graders at Hollenbeck received 35 classroom hours of distinctive LRE (over and above instruction in the Constitution and Bill of Rights, which all students received), participated in a half-day multimedia assembly conducted by a city police officer, and went on a field trip to observe arraignment court. Other officers served as primary instructors during 10 of the 35 classroom hours. About a third of the same students also attended one or more of the after-school and evening law-related sessions. The remaining eighth-graders (in three Social Studies sections) received none of these components and served as the control group for evaluation purposes.

At the teacher's request, the evaluation instrument was shortened to accommodate slow readers. Seven theory-based dimensions were assessed (rather than the 10 dimensions assessed elsewhere). Five differences favored the LRE students, and one ("attachment to teachers") favored the controls. For the remaining dimension, there was no difference.



Relative to the control group, the 168 LRE students at Hollenbeck showed moderate reductions in their frequency of committing six of the eleven types of delinquent acts assessed and increases in none. The offenses avoided as a result of the course included 133 school rule infractions, 20 instances of marijuana use, 29 acts of vandalism, and 130 other infractions (including drinking, minor fraud, and gang fighting). The reduction in vandalism occurred only among students in three of the six sections of LRE. Due to an unplanned variation among sections, those LRE students — but not the rest — had seen and discussed a series of four short films depicting primary and secondary consequences of damaging and destroying property.

Parents and students who attended the final of four evening LRE sessions completed surveys allowing them to rate the series. Responses were obtained from 25 students and 21 parents or sets of parents. Eighty-five percent of the students and 100 percent of the parents reported that the sessions had contributed to discussions at home between students and parents. More than 70 percent of both groups described the series as "excellent" (the top rating possible), with the remainder giving less extreme favorable ratings. (Because of bias from self-selection, the voluntary nature of attendance precluded any conclusive statistical findings regarding added effects the extra sessions produced: LRE students who attended the most extra sessions scored better than the rest on many of the theoretical measures on the pretest — and they maintained their advantage on the posttest.)

Using Clinical Teaching to Increase Students' Bonding

As at Hollenbeck, the programs at Gateway and Springer Junior High Schools ran for a year under district direction before control devolved to the building level. Both schools are located in a suburb west of Denver. During the first program year, a portion of each school's faculty received training in cooperative team learning and clinical teaching — covering peer coaching, principles of mastery, lesson design strategies, and ways to increase time on task. First-year objectives also included expanded student involvement in governance, student peer counseling, an experimental human relations course, development of school profiles, and staff recognition (posting photos of outstanding teachers in the faculty lounge). District staff subsequently reported that all their objectives were achieved, although the two school principals admitted being unfamiliar with some of them.

The principals took direct responsibility for the continuation program in the second year. They became codirectors, and the program became more focused. One-third of the eighth-graders at each school were taught core subjects by teachers who had received the special training the year before. The teachers used cooperative learning strategies (following the Johnson brothers' model) and frequently observed one another's classes. All received feedback from peers designed to sharpen their use of skills learned in the training. The remaining eighth-grade students were given conventional instruction by teachers who had not had the special training.

The evaluation design corresponded to that used for the LRE courses, except for omission of attitudinal scales pertaining to police and judges. Outcomes were similar at the two schools: favorable effects of the program were limited to within-school correlates of law-abiding behavior. Students in the experimental classes at Gateway and Springer showed stronger attachment to teachers (particularly on the subdimension of "perceived support received from teachers") and more commitment to school at the end of the semester than did the control subjects. At Springer only, measures of involvement in school also favored experimental students over controls. The magnitude of effects put an average experimental student in the 60th to 66th percentile of the control group distribution on those dimensions. At neither school were there effects on other correlates of law-abiding behavior, nor were there any differences between experimental and control students in their frequency of involvement in any of the 11 forms of delinquency.

To examine the possibility that improved attitudes toward school and teachers might have a *subsequent* effect on delinquent behavior, the former experimental and control students at Gateway Junior High School were retested during their ninth-grade year, eight months after the program ended. At followup, there were slight differences between the groups in frequencies of committing eight types of delinquent acts. Seven of those differences favored the former experimental students. Across all forms of delinquency, the total number of offenses avoided averaged one per student. There were no longer any differences between experimental and control students, however, in their attitudes toward school and teachers.

In sum, the clinical teaching program produced significant short-term improvement in students' bonding to school and an extremely slight longer-term reduction in delinquency.

Using Team Learning in and Out of School To Improve Behavior

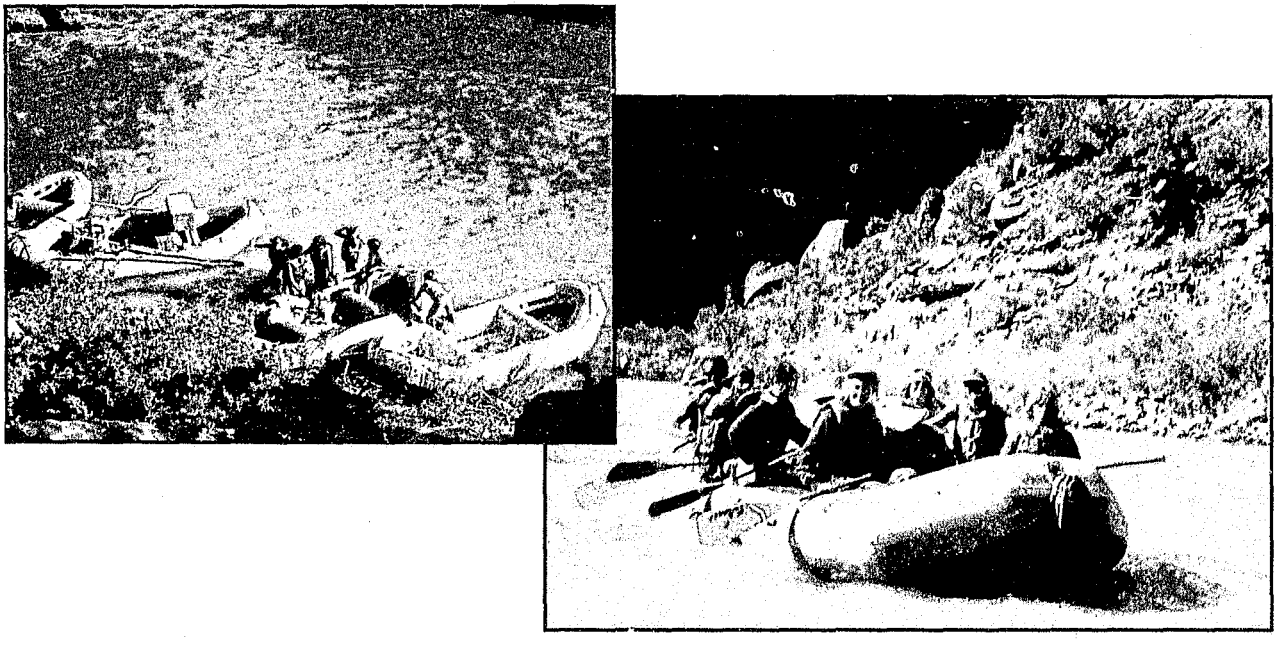
Serving a sparsely populated area of southern Colorado, Rose School launched several innovations for its sixth, seventh, and eight graders during the 1986-87 school year. Teachers received training early in the year in both the Johns Hopkins and Johnson models of cooperative team learning. After experimenting with each version, the teachers determined that the Johnson model was more adaptable to their classes — most of which include students from more than one grade level. For the remainder of the year, they used that model extensively. The seven teachers involved videotaped one another's cooperative activities and provided their colleagues with feedback.

Culminating the team learning approach was an outward bound cooperative living experience during the entire last week of school. Three teachers, two parents, and 16 students (all but two of those enrolled in seventh and eighth grades) participated in a rafting and hiking trip — designed by staff as an opportunity to test and sharpen cooperative skills.

The program at Rose also offered a series of effectiveness sessions* to parents of students in every grade level (K-8), at which a fourth of all students' families (18 out of 76) were represented. To enable parents of children in lower grades to attend the sessions, specially trained older students served as baby sitters.

Teachers received inservice training in incorporating career awareness into the curriculum. The principal application of this training was to engage seventh and eighth grade science students in the construction work of building a solar greenhouse. The science course also included a substance abuse block, in which laboratory animals were used to demonstrate the debilitating effect of chemicals on athletic and other abilities.

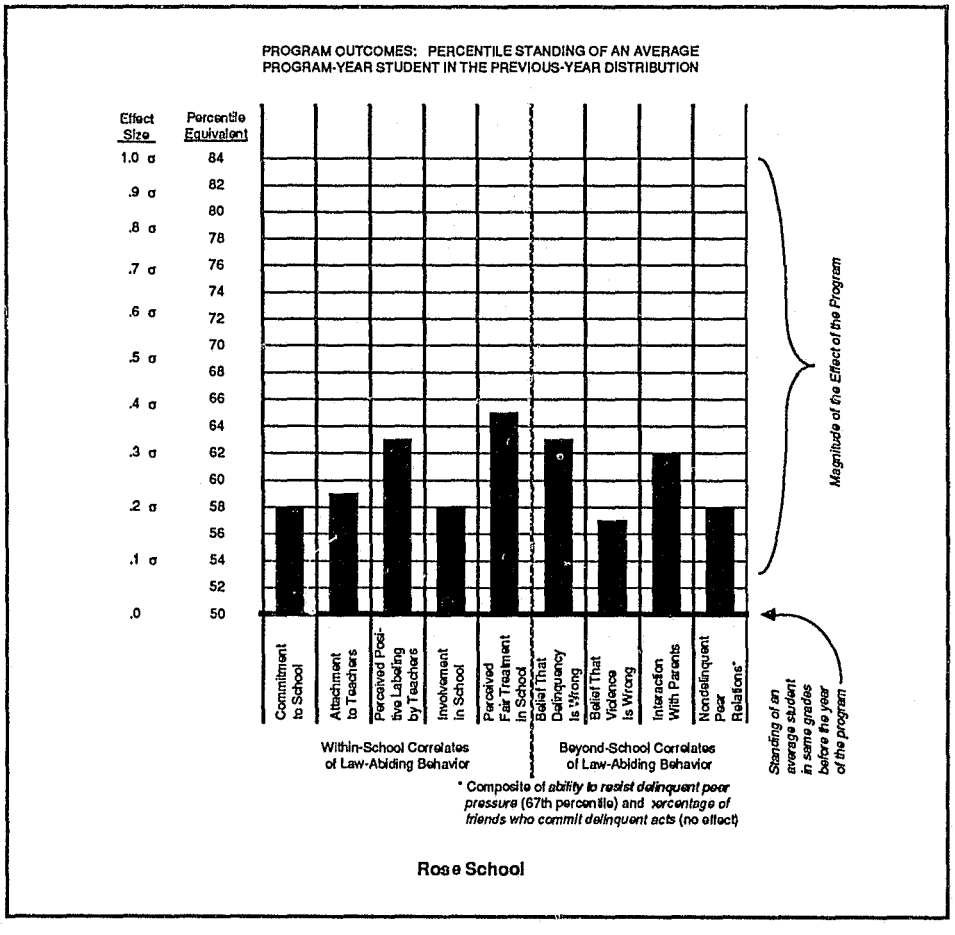
The pre and post questionnaires for program evaluation were similar to those used elsewhere, but the small student body at Rose precluded the use of a conventional comparison group. All 25 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders were in the



* This was the STEP program (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting).

program. The evaluation design instead consisted of collecting baseline data from students at these grade levels at the end of the 1985-86 school year (before the program began), readministering the instrument to students at the same three grade levels a year later (after the program had been in operation), then comparing scale scores and behavior frequencies for the second year with those for the first. Thus, students in the upper two grades in the program year were also a part of the comparison group. This prevented the evaluation from controlling for testing effects, which therefore may constitute an alternative explanation for some of the measured changes.

Between the end of the previous year and the end of the program year, every correlate of law-abiding behavior included in the questionnaire showed favorable change. The magnitude of positive changes in the school-specific dimensions tended to surpass slightly the outcomes for the more general dimensions.



The findings pertaining to behavior are mixed; they suggest a shift among offense types, rather than a change in overall levels of delinquency. There were an estimated 50 fewer school rule infractions (an average of two per student) during the program year than during the previous year and 18 fewer thefts. On the other hand, there were an estimated 10 more occasions of law-breaking in groups and 65 more instances of marijuana and alcohol use.*

Information from school records is consistent with the evaluation finding of reduced school rule infractions. From the previous year to the program year, there was a decline of 75 percent in disciplinary referrals to the principal (from 16 to 4) among sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. For students in lower grades (who were not targeted by most parts of the program), referral rates were virtually identical for the two years. Also, among students in the upper three grades there were three suspensions during 1985-86 and none during 1986-87 (the program year).

* It was in the area of self-reported behavior frequencies that school staff entertained the possibility of a testing effect. They suggested that the extremely small student body may have made some students skeptical about the anonymity of their responses, even though no names appeared on their answer sheets. Demographic items on the questionnaire asked students to indicate their sex, ethnic background, and grade level. In a group smaller than 30, that much information might have sufficed to single out some students. The same demographic items appeared on both the baseline and the program-year questionnaires, but staff reasoned that students who completed both instruments (about two-thirds of the group) could have become more trusting by the end of the program year — after surmising that no one had violated the confidentiality of their answers the first time around. Their heightened trust might have left students more willing to acknowledge frequent involvement in delinquency. In the absence of a distinct control group at Rose School, the extent to which this alternative explanation may account for higher reported frequencies at the end of the program year must remain a matter for speculation.

Teaching Conflict Resolution Skills to Reduce Violence

During the 1986-87 school year, half of the sixth-graders at suburban Miles Elementary School received instruction in ways to settle disputes peacefully. The objectives of the program were (1) to decrease violence and antisocial behavior, (2) to teach students new skills in communication and conflict resolution, (3) to effect positive attitudes toward peaceful expression and resolution of conflict, and (4) to prevent attitudes and actions that lead to delinquency. Program staff also expected their efforts to improve teacher-student relations and the general environment of the school.

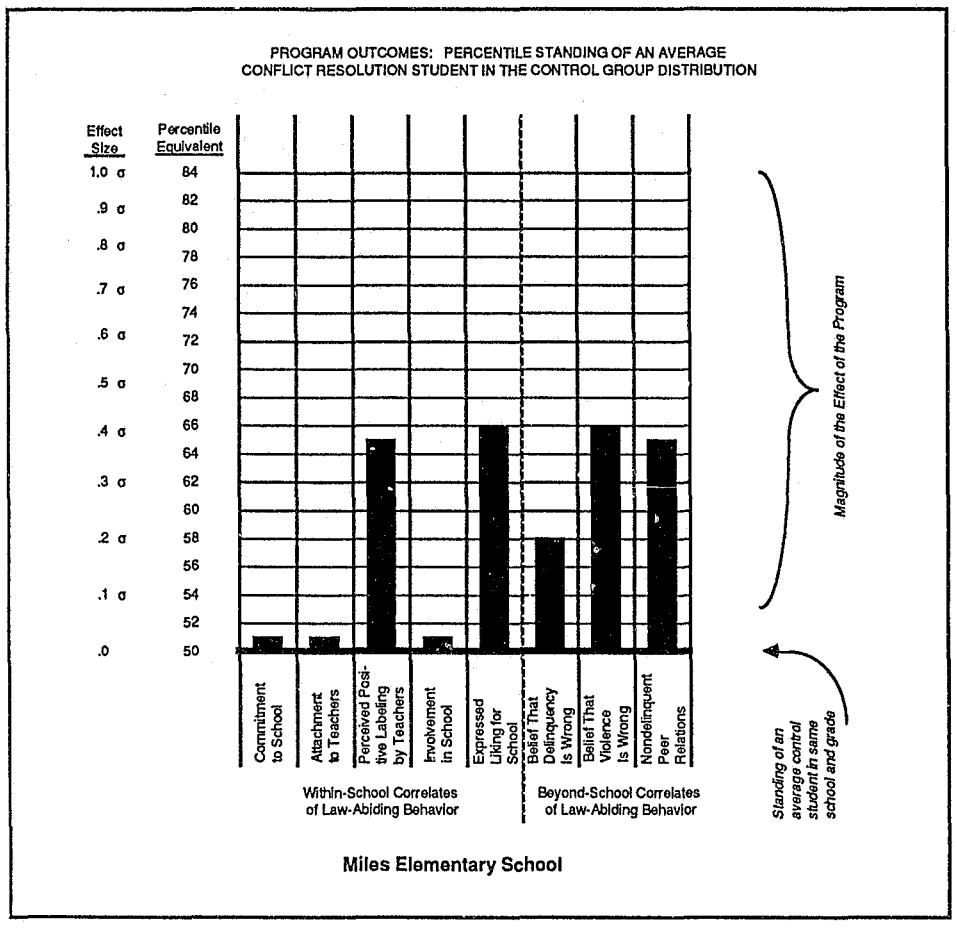
Early in the year an administrator-staff team completed three days of training in negotiating, mediating, interest-based bargaining, and interactive teaching skills. Most of the team also received a day of training in preparing students to serve as conflict managers on the school grounds. Students who had been assigned at random (through usual computerized placement procedures) to the two trained teachers' classes then received 15 hours of special instruction over a 10 week period. Their curriculum (adapted from the San Francisco Community Boards program) included active listening, problem solving, teamwork, assertiveness, open communication, and the conflict manager process.

Half the students who had received the "basic" instruction (18 out of 35) were selected by lot to take 10 hours of "advanced" conflict manager training. In a relatively informal learning setting, this subgroup used role-plays and simulations to practice skillful mediation of disputes. Members of the subgroup then were directed for the remainder of the school year to spot conflicts on the playground and help the students involved settle their disputes without fighting.

For assessment purposes, sixth-graders who had received no special instruction (neither the 15 nor the 10 hour block) served as the control group. They and the students in the program completed pre and posttests, slightly modified from the questionnaires used for other programs. The main evaluation of outcomes compared all students in the program with those not in the program.

At the end of the year, the conflict resolution students as a group perceived that their teachers viewed them more favorably than did the control students (in terms of staying out of trouble, obeying rules, and "being good"). Students in the program also expressed greater liking for school than did controls. There were virtually no differences between groups on the other school-specific correlates of law-abiding behavior, including "attachment to teachers." On the more global dimensions, outcomes favored the conflict resolution students. They expressed stronger beliefs than controls that general delinquency is wrong and, by a much wider margin, that personal violence is wrong. Students in the program also appeared better equipped than controls to resist influence from delinquent peers.

With respect to behavior, conflict resolution students appeared moderately less delinquent than controls in four of the eight categories assessed. The frequency of personal violence was lower in the conflict resolution group; an estimated 15 instances of "using a rock, stick, or something else to hurt another student" were avoided as a result of the program. Similarly, among the 35 specially instructed students there were 20 fewer incidents of vandalism than would have occurred without the program, 10 fewer thefts, and 20 fewer incidents of drinking alcohol. The only outcome which favored control students was one kind of behavior included under "school rule infractions": the average frequency of "shouting or swearing at a teacher or other adult in school in anger" was higher among conflict resolution



students than among controls. An estimated total increase of 15 such offenses can be attributed to the program.

An additional examination of outcomes compared the half of conflict resolution students who received advanced training and served as conflict managers with the half who received only the basic instruction. While the findings for the two subgroups were similar on most dimensions, there were striking differences on three counts. First, the favorable outcome pertaining to perceived positive views that teachers held of them was evident only among students who had not become conflict managers; the manager group scored about the same on this dimension as students who were not in the program at all. Second, the reduction in frequency of vandalism also was evident only among the non-manager group; again, the conflict managers scored about the same as controls. Third, the increase in "shouting or swearing at teachers in anger" was confined entirely to students in the conflict manager group.

The finding of instances where effects of the program favored the basic instruction group over the conflict managers was contrary to the program staff's expectation. One speculative explanation is the possibility that unintended learning may have occurred during the 10 hours of advanced training. Conducted in a relaxed, laboratory setting, the role-plays used to simulate conflict situations involved shouting (and perhaps some swearing). Along with learning mediation skills, students had an opportunity to practice undesirable verbal behavior — and do so with impunity regardless of the real-life status of their adversaries. Possibly, some of this behavior carried over outside the lab.

Nevertheless, teachers and other school staff in debriefing interviews credited students in the program with learning to "relate to adults better" and "express themselves more completely." They also commented that the program had helped students become more assertive and verbal. Consistent with students' perception that teachers viewed them favorably, interview responses included praise of students for exhibiting problem-solving skills, fighting much less on the playground, bringing fewer disputes into the classroom after recess, and controlling their anger. The principal reported, "I have had no referrals for problems from the experimental classes, which is a big change."

CONCLUSIONS

In terms of their effectiveness in improving students' citizenship, the group of programs reviewed in this publication display some apparent patterns. Those patterns are the principal subject of this section.

The programs that produced the largest improvements in student's attitudes and reductions in delinquent behavior were law-related education courses (LRE). In common with several other programs described here, those courses featured mastery and team learning teaching strategies. But they also had a more distinctive ingredient: combined with excellence of instruction was normative or moral content. That content did not come primarily from text materials nor from sermons in the classroom. Rather, it emerged from nonthreatening interaction between students and representatives of law enforcement and justice and from a more accurate understanding of judicial processes than that conveyed by the media. After learning firsthand that police and other symbols of authority were human beings with tough jobs to do, students came to share some of their concerns and to value their approval. After learning that rules were not just oppressive inventions of adults, but were necessary and could work to their advantage, students came to see more merit in obeying them.

A second, much narrower, example of normative content is in the conflict resolution program. The emphasis there was on the superiority over violence of alternative means of handling disputes. As a consequence, students' attitudes about violence became more negative, and their use of violence decreased. The LRE courses, too, illustrate the consequences of focusing on specific types of behavior. Where marijuana use or vandalism was made the subject of a series of lessons, there was a greater reduction in the respective behavior than in other LRE courses.

Accordingly, one inference from the findings reported here is consistent with the maxim; *If you want it, teach for it.* The body of theory about delinquency causation outlined in the first section of this report implied that any of a wide array of school improvements could improve students' bonding and reduce their delinquent behavior. To a degree, the experience of the programs supported by the Council belies that implication. Schools whose efforts were limited to improvements in instructional strategies or other aspects of the educational process experienced considerably less impact on students' citizenship than schools whose programs included a normative component as well.

A prime example is Lakeside High School. Students there indicated appreciation for the ambitious restructuring of their school day, improved teaching strategies, and opportunity to affect governance — but changed neither their normative orientation nor their behavior. At Gateway and Springer junior high schools, the clinical teaching program produced temporary improvement in some aspects of bonding to school — but at best only a token change in behavior. In contrast, every program that resulted in any substantial reduction in delinquency had a normative element built into it.

A second inference from the findings is that recommendations developed previously for effective delivery of LRE still appear appropriate. Before each LRE course described here began, building staff were trained to include in it the features identified by earlier research as critical to success. Subsequent observations verified that

those features were present in all but one of the courses evaluated. That one exception (which was short in duration and low on building-level administrative support) was also the only LRE course which failed to produce measured improvement in students' citizenship.

A third inference pertains to successful replication of LRE. The findings here imply that *with suitable training, any school can do it right.* In Colorado, effective implementation of LRE has occurred in suburban, rural, and inner-city schools — including those serving a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds and at least one having a high proportion of slow readers. (Findings from the national study, however, suggest one limitation: LRE is most likely to succeed in improving citizenship when taught at the eighth or ninth grade level.)

A fourth inference from the experience reviewed here concerns the locus of initiation and direction of an innovative school program. Ideas for the first-year programs at five of the schools covered in this publication originated at their respective districts. At one school (Lakeside), building-level staff participated in a series of planning sessions, and their input was incorporated before the program began. The principal was made director at the outset. At three schools (Gateway, Springer, and Hollenbeck), district personnel alone developed the plans, retained directorship for a year, and then turned over control to building-level staff. At the fifth school (Benjamin), control of the program remained with the district for an entire three-year grant period. At four of the five schools, there were grounds for doubting that details of the programs had been communicated adequately to those expected to carry them out.

In terms of changes in students' attitudes and behavior, those five first-year efforts were probably the least effective programs ever supported by the Council.* The program at Lakeside, where control had devolved immediately to the building level, was the most successful of the lot — and even there the outcomes were disappointing enough to discourage staff from continuing their program for a second year.

During the second program year, improvement was evident at the three schools given in-building control at that time. All three programs became more focused, concentrating on fewer components than during the first year. Students at Gateway and Springer ended the second year with some attitudinal gains, and those in the program at Hollenbeck (now exclusively LRE) showed improvements in correlates of law-abiding behavior and reductions in delinquency. At the one school where control stayed with the district — Benjamin — , second-year program effects remained at virtually zero.

In short, district control of the programs reviewed here was associated with failure. District support, on the other hand, appears conducive to success. Building staff operating the two most successful programs described in this publication (at Williams and Carter) maintained frequent contact with their district to make certain that central office personnel understood and valued what they were doing. As a consequence, what began as an experimental program is now a requirement for all ninth-grade students in the district.

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* Seriously flawed evaluations at two sites leave this assertion partly a matter of conjecture.

Kids comment on class

One thing I liked about the LRE class was that I got to see what the cops go through is not all fun and games. The cop that talked to us seemed to be kinda hard at first but when he was telling about the murders his emotions really came out.

...(Police) are really actually human.

students learn about the law firsthand

I really liked the LRE program because it taught me a lot about what police officers do everyday and how they are not out to get you but try to serve you in a lot of ways.

Students learn how to play the game of being a good citizen

The idea behind the course is that according to research kids are less likely to get involved on the bad side of the law, if they understand the law, and work with law enforcement agencies in a positive environment.

The field trip to Kiowa and the Elbert County Court House helped to make students more knowledgeable about how the court system functions. Students got to watch how a jury is selected. The students were also able to see the jail up close, but still at a comfortable enough distance.

The Law Related Education class was briefed throughout the day by the judge and lawyers.

Reactions to the field trip were quite favorable. "It was a nice, educational experience."

"I've been in that court before, but this time I was there on a different side. It was very much a learning experience."

Law Related Education builds trust and rapport

CPL. DAN SCOTT

The classes cover 14 different topics that offer a variety of information to the students. During Constitutional Law, they learn when we can search them legally and when we have to read them their rights. Most of these kids are approaching driving age and are interested in the Traffic and Radar class. Science and Technology in Law Enforcement shows the progress and sophistication in communications, equipment and techniques in investigation. Shoot, Don't Shoot, gives the student the opportunity to experience some of the same training that officers undergo in making the decision to fire a weapon. By far the favorite class of both students and officers has been the mock trial. Students play the parts of judge, defense attorney, prosecutor, witnesses and defendant. The remainder of the class serves as the jury. The students are given the facts of a case and spend two to three days preparing for the trial under the direction of the officers. The trial itself is conducted as a real one, sometimes using a real courtroom, and takes two or three days.

Additional benefits of LRE are that the students see police officers as human beings with a tough job to do and officers are reminded that it wasn't always easy being 15 years old. LRE classes have also done a lot to dispel the myths and distortions that television creates about law enforcement.

Overall, the end result of the program has been that the kids don't view policemen as the enemy and we don't look upon all kids as juvenile delinquents. We see each other as people, each with our own set of special problems. As the program enters its sixth year, I now look forward to working with Lou Price and the other teachers who strive to maintain the best LRE program in the nation.

From police, social workers, prosecutors, and probation officers, students learn when the vice principal can search lockers; what happens to prices for all customers when someone shoplifts; how the mother of a murdered child feels.

They learn the lingo of the law — and get to know a police officer as another person.

"Kids work with the police officer in the classroom and change their attitudes, their image of what police officers are like."

To shoot or not to shoot

Most classes feature "Shoot, Don't Shoot" — a police training movie where the students act as officers, holding a noise-making gun at a movie screen. The film depicts different situations where students make split-second decisions on whether to shoot.

Students learn to empathize with officers' situations after such an exercise.

students find real world in 'cooperative team learning'

Students spent this year learning to solve problems together through an educational technique called "cooperative team learning."

The venture culminated for seventh and eighth graders with a four-day raft trip through Slick Rock Canyon along the Dolores River in western Colorado.

It was, said one teacher, a true application of classroom theory to the real world. "If you didn't paddle together in the raft, you didn't make it through the rapids."

A raft trip gave both student and teacher a chance to see each other at their best and worst.

"The kids got a chance to see us, we got a chance to see them when they were tired. We could still work together regardless of what image was being projected."

"You really got to know your friends," noted one student.

And, as was the original intention, teachers and students gained better cooperation skills.