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The Social Development Model: An Integrated Approach to Delinquency Prevention

J. DAVID HAWKINS and JOSEPH G. WEIS

ABSTRACT: This paper describes a comprehensive developmental approach to preventing youth crime based on the social development model, an integration of social control theory and social learning theory. The model asserts that the most important units of socialization, family, schools, peers, and community, influence behavior sequentially. Positive socialization is achieved when youths have the opportunity within each unit to be involved in conforming activities, when they develop skills necessary to be successfully involved, and when those with whom they interact consistently reward desired behaviors. These conditions should increase attachment to others, commitment to conforming behavior, and belief in the conventional order. These social bonds to conventional society inhibit association with delinquent peers and, in turn, prevent delinquent behavior. The paper describes prevention approaches consistent with the model. Rigorous evaluation of the delinquency prevention effects of these interventions is needed.

The Problem

Juvenile delinquency is a persistent social problem (Stark, 1975). Over 40% of the total arrests for the eight major FBI "index" crimes—murder, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, arson, and motor vehicle theft—are of youths under 18 years old. By far the largest number of juvenile arrests are for larceny and burglary (Galvin & Polk, 1983). The social and economic costs of juvenile delinquency are high (National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, 1976) and public fear of victimization is pervasive, with more than two thirds of adults in the U.S. worrying about the prospect of becoming the victim of a typical juvenile offense—residential burglary (Weis & Henney, 1979)—and 87% perceiving a "steady and alarming increase in the rate of serious juvenile crime" (Galvin & Polk, 1983).

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The History of Prevention and Control

Historically, there have been two ways to deal with juvenile crime: prevention and control. Prevention is an *action* taken to preclude illegal behavior before it occurs. Control is a *reaction* to an infraction after it has been committed (Lejins, 1967). Prevention can be differentiated further into two broad categories: early intervention and primary prevention. Early intervention seeks to identify predelinquents or youths who are high risks for delinquency and to correct their behavioral tendencies or criminogenic circumstances before delinquency results. In contrast, primary prevention does not seek to “correct” individuals who are identified as on the path to delinquency. Rather, it attempts to preclude the initial occurrence of delinquency, primarily at organizational, institutional, social structural, and cultural levels. Thus, it also has been called preclusive prevention (Weis & Hawkins, 1981).

From the passage of the first juvenile court statute in Illinois in 1899 to the signing of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, the juvenile justice system had almost total responsibility for dealing with juvenile crime. This system is largely reactive, seeking to *control* juvenile crime by responding to illegal acts by juveniles brought to its attention. It also practices early intervention by responding to individuals whose behavior, environment, or other attributes are thought to be predictive of delinquency. These youngsters are often brought to the attention of the juvenile court for “status offenses”—noncriminal misbehavior which is viewed as indicative that the child is headed for more serious trouble (Gough, 1977). Although ostensibly a paternalistic institution of control *and* prevention, the juvenile justice system primarily engages in the control of juvenile offenders and presumed predelinquents (Weis, Sakumoto, Sederstrom & Zeiss, 1980).

In the 1960s and 1970s, collective criticisms mounted against the juvenile justice system resulted in a new juvenile justice philosophy embodied in the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 and its subsequent amendments. The new *dual functions* philosophy of juvenile justice separates formal legal control from prevention.

The dual functions philosophy restricts the responsibility of the juvenile court to the control of juvenile criminals, a responsibility consonant with its status as a criminal justice institution with the power to deprive law violators of liberty. At the same time, the juvenile court’s mandate to intervene before young people commit delinquent acts is severely restricted under this new philosophy. Mandatory deinsti-

tutionalization of youths accused only of status offenses, diversion of youths who engage in both minor crimes and noncriminal misbehavior, and the removal of certain status offenses from the jurisdiction of the juvenile court in some states, have limited the court's authority to engage in the corrective prevention of youth crime. The court's major responsibility now is to control identified juvenile criminals through rehabilitation and punishment. The task of *preventing* youth crime has been removed from the court and given back to communities.

The limitation of the juvenile court's authority does not signal a preference for control over prevention. On the contrary, the change embodies the belief that informal socialization units such as families, schools, and communities are both more appropriate and more likely to succeed in preventing juvenile crime than is the juvenile justice system (e.g., Woodson, 1981). In a major exposition of this philosophy of juvenile justice, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice and its Task Force on Juvenile Delinquency emphasized the importance of the primary prevention of juvenile crime outside the juvenile justice system:

In the last analysis, the most promising and so the most important method of dealing with crime is by preventing it—by ameliorating the conditions of life that drive people to commit crimes and that undermine the restraining rules and restrictions erected by society against antisocial conduct. (1967, p. vi)

Clearly it is with young people that prevention efforts are most needed and hold the most promise. It is simply more critical that young people be kept from crime. . . . They are not yet set in their ways; they are still developing, still subject to the influence of the socializing institutions that structure—however skeletally—their environment. . . . But the influence to do the most good must come *before* the youth has become involved in the formal criminal justice system. (1967, p. 41)

Prevention of juvenile crime is an essential element in the current philosophy of juvenile justice. Reforms such as diversion and deinstitutionalization are not likely to decrease the initial rates of criminal acts by juveniles. At best, they can prevent further penetration into the juvenile justice system. Without effective means for decreasing the number of youths who initially engage in delinquent acts—that is, without effective delinquency prevention at the family, school, and community levels—the costs of youth crime, the fear of victimization, and the number of youths processed through the juvenile courts will remain high.

In summary, under the dual functions philosophy of juvenile justice, the juvenile court has been limited to the control of juvenile offenders. While prevention has been legislatively mandated as essential to the success of the philosophy, the juvenile court's power to engage in either primary prevention or early intervention has been severely limited. Instead, families, schools, and communities have been given back the task of preventing youth crime. For this philosophy to succeed, a pressing task is to find effective means in these units for preventing youth crime.

Past Experience and Prospects

The history of juvenile crime prevention provides little cause for optimism about this task. Given the control orientation of the juvenile justice system during its first 75 years of operation, there have been only a small number of early intervention efforts and even fewer primary prevention programs. The knowledge and techniques of delinquency prevention have not been well developed. Most efforts at delinquency prevention that have been evaluated rigorously show ambiguous, mixed, or negative results (see, e.g., National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1981; Lundman & Scarpitti, 1978; Newton, 1978; Powers & Witmer, 1951; Wright & Dixon, 1977). Of 10 delinquency prevention programs with experimental designs which were carried out prior to 1970, nine failed to reduce rates of official delinquency among experimental subjects as compared with controls (Berleman, 1980). It should be noted that most of these projects were early intervention efforts, focused on high-risk youths, rather than primary prevention programs.

Unfortunately, even some of the recent federal program initiatives in delinquency prevention have provided little information about effective approaches. The *Preliminary Report of the National Evaluation of Prevention* funded in 1978 by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention reported that "few of the projects actually attempted to prevent delinquency" (Krisberg, 1978, p. 28). These federally funded prevention efforts appeared to lack the conceptual foundation, clear focus, and commitment to rigorous research necessary to generate the knowledge required for effective delinquency prevention (Krisberg, 1978).

Two general implications for delinquency prevention can be drawn from past attempts. First, a major goal of future efforts should be the development of a tested body of knowledge about effective preven-

tion programs. Since past efforts in delinquency prevention have been largely ineffective, it is not sensible to replicate and generalize existing exemplary programs as the preferred approach. New delinquency prevention efforts should be created and tested within a research and development framework. Both their efforts and effects must be documented using rigorous research designs if techniques of effective delinquency prevention are to be developed.

Second, the best empirical evidence available on correlates, causes, and theories of delinquent behavior as well as on delinquency prevention programs should be used as a basis for selecting promising prevention approaches. This position was stated directly by the National Task Force to Develop Standards and Goals for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in its volume *Preventing Delinquency* (1977, p.8):

. . . it is necessary to clarify assumptions about what causes delinquency before deciding what to do about it. . . . Since theory sets forth assumptions about what causes crime, the theories, by implication, should also suggest appropriate action to reduce delinquency.

Additionally, the best available evidence regarding delinquency prevention programs should be used (Task Force on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, 1977).

Toward a Model of Delinquency Prevention

At the National Center for the Assessment of Delinquent Behavior and its Prevention we have conducted a comprehensive review of theories and research on delinquency, secondary analyses of self-reported delinquency data sets, and a national survey of prevention programs, to identify promising approaches to delinquency prevention. Our work suggests three general principles for delinquency prevention:

1. Prevention approaches should focus on the causes of delinquency if they are to be effective (Hawkins, Pastor, Bell, & Morrison, 1980).
2. There are multiple correlates and causes of delinquency. They operate within the institutional domains of family, school, peers, and community (Henney, 1976; Sakumoto, 1978; Seder-

strom, 1978; Weis et al., 1980a, 1980b; Worsley, 1979; Zeiss, 1978). Effective prevention should address these multiple causes in all of these settings.

3. Delinquency results from experiences during the process of social development. Different causal elements are more salient at different stages in the developmental process. Therefore, different prevention techniques are required at different stages in the socialization of youths (Weis & Hawkins, 1981).

Delinquency prevention should not only be responsive to the "causes" of delinquency, but also to the manner in which etiological factors interact in the process of social development. If prevention efforts are to address the apparent complexities of causal relations, they should be targeted at factors as they emerge and interact during the different stages in youngsters' lives. In short, a dynamic, multifaceted model of delinquency prevention is required.

An integration of *control theory* (Briar & Pilivan, 1965; Hirschi, 1969; Matza, 1964; Nettler, 1974; Nye, 1958; Reckless, 1961; Reiss, 1951; Toby, 1957) and *social learning theory* (Akers, 1977; Akers et al., 1979; Burgess & Akers, 1966) promises to meet these requirements by specifying the empirically supported elements, units, and processes necessary in a comprehensive model of delinquency prevention.

Empirical tests of control theory (Hindelang, 1973; Hirschi, 1969; Kornhauser, 1978) have shown that "attachment" to family, school, and conventional others, "commitment" to conventional lines of action, and "belief" in the validity and legitimacy of the legal order are elements of a social bond to conventional society which prevents delinquent behavior. Control theory specifies that family and school are important *units* of socialization which should be the foci of prevention efforts. The goal of these efforts should be to strengthen the *elements* of the social bond (attachment, commitment, and belief) between youths and society. But control theory does not specify how such a bond develops within the units of socialization.

In contrast, social learning theory (Akers, 1977; Akers et al., 1979; Burgess & Akers, 1966) specifies the *processes* by which behavior—whether conforming or criminal—is learned and maintained. According to social learning theory, behavior is learned when it results in a reward (positive reinforcement) and it is not learned or is extinguished when not rewarded or punished (negative reinforcement). Within the social context of interaction, reinforcement contingencies determine whether an individual learns conforming or criminal be-

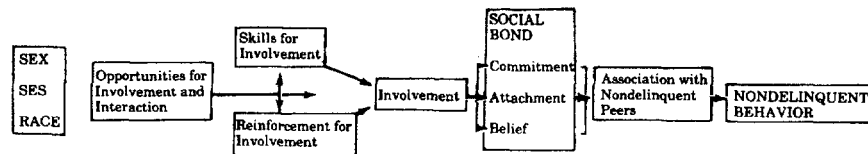
havior. Thus, according to social learning theory, differential involvement with those who reinforce criminal or conforming behavior will determine whether or not a youth adopts criminal behavior patterns.

In addition to specifying the processes by which conforming and delinquent behaviors are learned, social learning theory's emphasis on social influence fills a void in control theory. It suggests that association with delinquent peers can contribute to delinquent behavior. Control theory fails to account for the empirical evidence which shows that peer influence is directly and strongly related to delinquent behavior (Elliott et al., 1982; Hindelang, 1973; Hirschi, 1969; Jessor & Jessor, 1977). However, an integration of control and social learning theories allows for the incorporation of peers as an important unit of socialization.

The social development model of delinquency prevention derived from integrating control and social learning theories is presented in Figure 1. As shown in the figure, social development is a process in which the most important units of socialization—families, schools, and peers—influence behavior sequentially, both directly and indirectly.

FIGURE 1

THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL



In each unit of socialization, three types of process variables (opportunities for involvement, skills, and reinforcements) determine whether a youth's participation in that unit will contribute to the development of a bond of attachment and commitment to and belief in conventional society.

In the social development model, opportunities for involvement are viewed as necessary, but not sufficient, for the development of a social bond. We hypothesize that youths must have opportunities to interact with conventional others and to be involved in conventional activities in order to develop attachment and commitment to conventional oth-

ers and lines of action. However, we hypothesize that such interactions and involvements will lead to social bonding only if they are positively experienced and evaluated by youths. Two factors appear to affect the extent to which youths are likely to perceive their involvements as rewarding: the level of skill applied by youths during involvement or interaction and the availability of reinforcements from the environment for desired behavior. Therefore, we hypothesize youths' possession of the skills for involvement and interaction is a second necessary condition for the development of a social bond. Finally, we hypothesize that the availability of consistent rewards for skillfully handled involvements and interactions is the third prerequisite necessary for the development of a social bond.

Research by Elliott et al., 1982, supports the hypothesis that the development of a social bond of attachment, commitment, and belief between a youth and conventional society will decrease the likelihood that the youth will associate with delinquent peers. We hypothesize that a social bond to conventional society also will prevent delinquent behavior, both directly and indirectly, by decreasing the likelihood of association with delinquent peers.

The bonding process begins in the family. When youths experience opportunities for involvement in the family, when they develop the requisite social, cognitive, and behavioral skills to perform as expected in family activities and interactions and when they are rewarded consistently for adequate performance in the family, they will develop a bond of attachment, commitment, and belief in the family. When these three conditions are not present in the family, a bond to family is not likely to develop.

Bonding to school is conditioned by the extent to which social bonds to the family have developed by the time the child enters school as well as by the extent to which the child experiences opportunities for involvement, develops skills, and is rewarded for skillful performance at school. Similarly, social bonds to peers, whether prosocial or delinquent, will develop to the extent that youths have opportunities for involvement with those peers, the skills to perform as expected by those peers and the rewards that are forthcoming from interaction with those peers. We do not suggest that strong bonds of attachment to family and school will preclude the development of strong bonds of attachment to peers so long as the norms of family members, school personnel, and peers regarding appropriate performance or behavior do not conflict. However, we suggest that the formation of social bonds to family and school will decrease the likelihood that youths will develop

attachments to *delinquent* peers in adolescence, since the behaviors rewarded in family and school and those likely to be rewarded by delinquent youths are not compatible.

However, if the process of developing a social bond to conforming others has been interrupted by uncaring or inconsistent parents, by poor school performance, by inconsistent teachers, or by circumstances which make conventional involvement unrewarding, youths are more free to engage in delinquent behavior *and* more likely to come under the influence of peers who are in the same situation. Such youths may then provide each other with the social and psychological supports, rewards, and reinforcements which are not forthcoming in more conventional contexts (e.g., Cohen & Short, 1961). Consequently, such youths are more susceptible to those who reinforce deviant actions, as well as to the direct reinforcement offered by delinquent involvement.

As a foundation for delinquency prevention, the social development model implies that families, schools, and peer groups are appropriate objects for intervention, depending on the developmental stage of the child. Interventions which seek to increase the likelihood of social bonding to the family are appropriate from early childhood through early adolescence. Interventions which seek to increase the likelihood of social bonding to school are appropriate throughout the years of school attendance. Interventions which seek to increase social bonding to prosocial peers are appropriate as youths approach and enter adolescence. It should be noted that interventions consistent with the model do not directly treat individual youths in hopes of changing their attitudes or behavior. Rather, the model suggests that prevention approaches should seek changes in the units of socialization to increase opportunities for rewarding involvement in conventional activities, the development of skills for successful participation and interaction, and clear and consistent systems of reinforcement for conforming behavior.

Promising Programs

The social development model provides an empirically grounded theoretical base for designing, implementing, and assessing delinquency prevention programs. In the remainder of this paper, we review some interventions which appear consistent with the model.

This list is by no means exhaustive. It includes approaches currently in operation across the country, although a number of these programs

do not hold an explicit goal of delinquency prevention and few have been evaluated rigorously. Thus, except where otherwise noted, their selection is based on their fidelity with the model of social development, rather than on their proven effectiveness in delinquent prevention. It is clear that identifying and developing proven prevention approaches will require a long-term commitment to systematic research and evaluation.

Family Interventions

The social development model assumes both direct (Bahr, 1979; Jensen, 1972; Stanfield, 1966), and indirect (Elliott et al., 1982; Krohn, 1974) influences of the family on delinquent behavior. The indirect effects are through school experiences, belief in the moral order, and peer group associations. There is sufficient evidence to conclude that strong attachments between youths and their parents inhibit delinquency (Hirschi, 1969; Nye, 1958; Reckless et al., 1956). Family structure appears to be less important as a predictor of delinquency than is attachment to parents (Nye, 1958; Sederstrom, 1979; Weis et al., 1980; Wilkinson, 1974). Family focused interventions seek to increase parent-child attachment.

1. Parenting Training

Parenting training for delinquency prevention is one vehicle for achieving this goal. Parenting training should seek to teach parents effective family management and child rearing skills (Fraser & Hawkins, in press). Parents should have the skills to:

- a. Provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for their children to be involved with other family members and in family tasks. It is hypothesized that when parents provide children with developmentally adjusted participatory roles in the family as contributors to family functioning and when they reward children for performance in these roles, attachment to the family will be enhanced and delinquency prevented. Additionally, the greater the affection, nurture, and support shown children by parents, the greater the likelihood of attachment between parents and children and the less the likelihood of delinquency (Hirschi, 1969; Jensen, 1972).

- b. Communicate effectively with their children—parenting skills rely in good part on effective communication between parent and child. The more parents and children communicate with one another regarding thoughts, feelings, and values, the stronger the attachment between children and parents (Hirschi, 1969; Krohn, 1974). Parents can be assisted through parenting training in opening and maintaining lines of communication with their children, in empathetic listening, and in basic interaction skills (Alexander & Parsons, 1973; Patterson & Reid, 1973).
- c. Define clear and consistent expectations and sanctions for family members—fairness and impartiality of discipline appear related to family attachment and family control (Bahr, 1979; Hirschi, 1969; Nye, 1958; Stanfield, 1966). Sanctions used to punish should be moderate and inclusionary and imply no rejection or ostracism of the child. Consistent parental discipline also appears to increase the likelihood of belief in the moral order (Bahr, 1979). Parenting training can assist parents in developing consistent discipline practices and can also provide parents with the skills to utilize positive reinforcement to shape the life of the child (Alexander & Parsons, 1973). Finally, parents should be consistent in modeling law-abiding behavior for their children if children are to develop belief in the legal order. Parenting training can emphasize the importance of this modeling by parents.

By including parenting training as a school- or workplace-based program and by recruiting parents intensively through schools, work place, and community organizations, broad cross sections of the parent population may be involved in parenting training. Parenting training may be beneficial at several stages during the child's social development. The content of training can be altered to suit the developmental level of children whose parents are included. For example, for parents of fourth graders, emphasis might be placed on involving children in contributory roles in the family and rewarding satisfactory performance of those roles. Content for parents of seventh graders might emphasize behavioral contracting and negotiation of rights and responsibilities during the process of adolescent individuation. Parenting training for delinquency prevention seeks to improve parenting skills, thereby increasing attachment between children and parents and improving the control effectiveness of the family. (See Wall et al., 1981, and Fraser and Hawkins, in press, for examples and reviews of parenting training programs.)

2. Family Crisis Intervention Services

A promising early intervention approach focused on the family is crisis intervention for families of children aged 12 to 16. Family crisis intervention services which use an educational approach to families as systems have been shown effective for both early intervention and primary prevention (Alexander & Parsons, 1973; Klein et al., 1977). Experimental evidence indicates that when both parents and children are trained in communication, contingency contracting, and negotiation skills, delinquency referrals are reduced among "status offenders" and minor delinquents. This approach also appears to reduce the likelihood of delinquency referrals of younger siblings (Klein et al., 1977).

As runaways and children in conflict with their parents have been deinstitutionalized, diverted, or removed entirely from jurisdiction of the juvenile court, greater responsibility for controlling children has been returned to families. The systems-oriented, skills-training approach to family crisis intervention services seeks to increase effective parental supervision and family communication in families in conflict, to increase attachment between parents and children where these attachments have become weak or broken, and thereby to prevent delinquent behavior. (See Wall et al., 1981, pp.46,127 for examples.)

School-Focused Interventions

Research has linked academic failure, as measured by grades and achievement test scores, to delinquent behavior (Elliott & Voss, 1974; Hirschi, 1969; Jensen, 1976; Linden, 1974; Polk & Schafer, 1972). At the individual level, academic achievement appears to be a predictor of delinquent behavior that transcends social class and ethnicity (Call, 1965; Jensen, 1976; Polk & Halferty, 1966; Stinchcombe, 1964), suggesting that providing a greater proportion of students with opportunities to experience success in school should hold promise for preventing delinquency.

A second school factor related to delinquency is commitment to academic or educational pursuits. When students are not committed to educational pursuits, they are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior (Elliott & Voss, 1974; Hirschi, 1969). Similarly, attachment to school is related to delinquency. Students who do not like school are more likely to engage in delinquent acts than those who do (Hirschi, 1969). These data suggest that educational innovations which encour-

age students to feel part of the school community and to become committed to educational goals hold promise for preventing delinquency.

1. Schools-within-a-School

The size of a school and the number of students taught per teacher may help determine the availability of opportunities for active participation in school. In large schools where teachers see a number of different students each day, teachers are generally less able to establish interpersonal relationships with students and to utilize a broad range of rewards for student participation (Garbarino, 1980). In the absence of warm interpersonal relationships between students and teachers, delinquency is more likely (Gold, 1978). Consistently, research has shown correlations between rates of school crime and both school size and average number of students taught by teachers. Smaller schools are characterized by lower levels of student offenses when ability level, racial composition, and economic status of students are controlled (McPartland & McDill, 1977; National Institute of Education, 1978; Smith et al., 1976). Similarly, where fewer students are seen each day by a teacher, rates of school crime are lower. Given the fiscal pressures facing school districts, it is not usually feasible to alter school size, though the number of different students seen by teachers can be affected by organizational change such as the creation of schools-within-a-school.

The schools-within-a-school concept refers to the division of a larger school into smaller units called houses. This subdivision of schools can provide the benefits of a small school setting while allowing for the diversity of resources and course offerings afforded by a large school. Schools-within-a-school may be subdivisions of educational structure (subdividing students, teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators) or may be distinct social entities in which academic and extracurricular activities such as student government and sports are decentralized.

The schools-within-a-school plan is designed to promote the development of interpersonal relationships (Yaglou, 1968), to provide for "increased attention to the individual pupil" (Barrett, 1971), and to increase "opportunities to take initiative, to enjoy recognition, to exercise leadership" (Kleinert, 1969). It is hypothesized that this restructuring of schools will produce increases in the quantity and quality of opportunities for active participation in school roles and in the contacts between students and teachers, which in turn will lead to greater commitments to school and attachments between students and

teachers. These attachments and commitments should enhance a belief in the value and legitimacy of the educational process.

2. Restructured Methods of Instruction

Traditional teaching methods and grading practices do not guarantee the success of all students (McPartland & McDill, 1977; Silberman, 1970). A promising approach to the development of social bonding to school is to train teachers in instructional methods which will enable a broader range of students to experience academic success without compromising academic standards. Systematic changes in classroom instructional practices should increase the proportion of students who experience academic success, increase students' attachments to teachers and nondelinquent peers, and increase students' beliefs in the fairness of school. Promising instructional methods for achieving these goals are interactive teaching, proactive classroom management, and student team learning.

- *Interactive Teaching*—Interactive teaching is a method based on the supported assertion that under appropriate instructional conditions, virtually all students can learn most of what they are taught (Bloom, 1976). The approach requires the specification of clear and specific instructional objectives that students must master in order to proceed to additional coursework. Each student is required to demonstrate a certain cognitive level of mastery of these instructional objectives. Students' grades are determined by demonstration of this mastery rather than by comparison of their ability to that of other students. The student is supported as necessary in repeated trials on a task and is assisted by "formative evaluations" that measure progress toward mastery and identify areas of difficulty. The student receives small incremental rewards that are clearly tied to performance in the attainment of the established instructional objectives (Block, 1971; Brophy, 1979).
- *Proactive Classroom Management*—Proactive classroom management trains teachers to prevent behavioral problems in the classroom before they occur. Strategies include the establishment of clear rules, the teaching of management systems that give students responsibilities, the effective use of praise, clear direction giving, and the systematic use of the least disruptive intervention in the classroom needed to maintain order. Proactive classroom management strategies have been shown to relieve teacher

stress and to create a positive climate for learning (Brophy, 1979; Emmer & Evertson, 1980).

- *Student Team Learning*—Successful mastery of learning tasks, student motivation, positive student attitudes toward teachers and school, and student self-esteem are greater when students learn in cooperative classroom situations rather than in competitive or individualistic ones (Johnson & Johnson, 1980; Slavin, 1979). Student team learning is an instructional technique which groups students together to perform tasks in the classroom. In student team learning, the attainment of individual student goals depends simultaneously on the success of other students. This encourages students to influence one another to do their best academically. In short, student team learning creates a general classroom norm favoring learning and academic performance (Slavin, 1978).

3. Student Involvement in School Classroom Policy Formulation and Discipline Procedures

While adolescents are not usually in a position to take on major work roles, commitments to conventional lines of action can be enhanced by providing them opportunities to find meaningful roles in shaping the institution in which they are most directly involved—their school and its classrooms (Coleman, 1961).

Students can be provided opportunities to be involved in formulating certain school policies and discipline procedures. Attention should be given to recruitment of a broad range of “natural leaders” for participation in policy making and disciplinary bodies to insure that participatory roles are created for students not typically involved in traditional student leadership groups. (See Open Road Student Involvement and Positive Peer Culture in Wall et al., 1981, pp. 75, 90 for examples of programs which provide opportunities for mixed student groups.)

It is hypothesized that increasing opportunities for student involvement in school policy and discipline will increase student attachment to school, commitment to conventional lines of action, and belief in the moral order.

4. Life Skills Training

Developing youths’ cognitive and social skills is the major function of schools. Thus, many promising school-based prevention components

focus on student skill development. For example, the methods of instruction discussed earlier seek to increase cognitive skills. Life skills training is a specific addition to the school curriculum.

Life skills training assumes that young people need to learn basic communication, decision making, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills in order to perform effectively in interpersonal situations with family members, teachers, or peers. The premise is that schools should teach these skills for interpersonal functioning just as they teach cognitive skills. If young people have these skills, they are more likely to find their interactions with conventional others rewarding and to develop attachments to these others. These skills may also contribute to academic success and to attachment and commitment to schools. On the other hand, when these skills are absent, young people may become frustrated in interaction with others, may be more susceptible to delinquent influences, and may turn to unacceptable behaviors to meet their needs.

A number of effective curricula are available. (See Schaps and Slimmon, 1975; Wall et al., 1981, pp. 40, 97 for examples.)

5. Law-Related Education in Civil, Criminal, Consumer Rights, and Responsibilities

A second curriculum addition seeks ultimately to increase belief in the law by educating students about the functions of the law and their rights and responsibilities under it. By including attention to civil and consumer law as well as to criminal law, students can learn how to use the law for their own protection and how to use legal means to achieve their goals. By exploring the use of the law to achieve personally desired ends, this intervention seeks to develop belief in the law. (See National Street Law Institute in Wall et al., 1981, p. 68.)

6. Experiential Prevocational Training and Exploration

A final change in curriculum focuses on preparing students for the world of work while still in school. Young people's expectations and aspirations are related to their commitments to conventional lines of action (Hirschi, 1969). Schools can provide young people with information and experiences which will help them develop aspirations and expectations for attaining legitimate employment which they view as worthy of a personal commitment. If schools can help students make commitments to legitimate careers, delinquency should be reduced.

One mechanism for achieving this goal is experiential prevocational training and exploration, in which students are exposed to a wide range of possible career options and informed of the skills and training required to attain these. First hand exposure to career options can increase students' understanding of actual career opportunities while providing opportunities to contribute to placement sites, thus making participation more immediately rewarding. This should, in turn, increase the development of aspirations and commitments to legitimate career roles.

Experiential prevocational training can begin in classrooms in middle and junior high and continue through high school. During the early years, the program should be based largely in the classroom, with field trips to work sites. In subsequent years, opportunities for work experiences in the community can be included and articulated with traditional course work necessary for high school graduation. (See Experience-Based Career Education in Wall et al., 1981, p. 43.)

7. Cross-Age Tutoring

Cross-age tutoring is an early intervention strategy aimed at insuring satisfactory skill development for students in primary grades who are evidencing special difficulties in school. An additional function is to provide older students with opportunities to perform a productive role (as tutors), which may increase commitment to education and attachment to school. To maximize the preventive power of this intervention, selection of tutors should be based on teacher recommendations. Students whose cognitive skills are adequate for the tutoring role but whose commitments to school appear marginal should be included in the tutor pool along with students traditionally selected for leadership roles.

8. School Climate Assessment and Improvement

Research has shown that cooperation between teachers and the school administrator characterizes schools with low rates of teacher victimization (Gottfredson & Daiger, 1979). An approach which has shown promise for enhancing administrator and teacher cooperation is school climate assessment and improvement (see Fox et al., n.d.). This is a process in which the administrator and staff commit themselves to realistic appraisal of program, process, and material determinants of the school's social and educational milieu. These determinants include

variables such as "opportunities for active learning," "varied reward systems," "continuous improvement of school goals," "effective communications," and "a supportive and efficient logistical system." Faculty and administration collaboratively identify school variables in need of improvement and implement activities to address these problems. Where improvement activities focus on developing consistent expectations for student behaviors and a clear, common set of policies and procedures for dealing with infractions of rules, the school environment is more likely to be perceived by students as equitable. Students are more likely to develop belief in the fairness of the school in this situation. As a result, delinquent behavior should be inhibited.

9. Child Development Specialist as Parent Consultant

We have noted that consistent expectations are likely to facilitate belief in the moral order. Students are probably more likely to develop attachments to school when their parents and the school staff are in agreement regarding expectations for behavior and performance. One method for enhancing consistency of expectations and sanctions in the child's environment is to insure ongoing communication between schools and parents. Child development specialists in schools can insure that parents are routinely contacted regarding special achievements of their children in the classroom and emerging needs for assistance to insure skill development. They can train parents in home-based reinforcement of student learning (Barth, 1979) and coordinate recruitment of parents for classroom involvement and assistance in school decision making. (See Child Development Specialist and Regional Intervention Program in Wall et al., 1981, pp. 26, 103.)

Peer-Focused Interventions

1. Peer Leadership Groups

Peer leadership groups have been instituted in a number of middle, junior, and senior high schools across the country. One model of peer leadership which appears promising involves informal leaders of a number of major student cliques and groups, not just traditional student body leaders or students in trouble. Generally, members are nominated by teachers and students and a peer program coordinator is re-

sponsible for final selection of members. Student members of the peer leadership groups meet daily for an hour as part of their regular school activities. An explicit goal of these peer leadership groups is to identify school problems perceived by students and to work with the school administration to develop reasonable and enforceable school policies regarding these problems. Peer leadership groups can also serve as recruitment pools for student judicial bodies to handle student grievance and disciplinary referrals for violations of school rules. Designed this way, peer leadership groups can avoid the problems of peer-oriented approaches which focus wholly on delinquent groups (Hawkins & Fraser, 1983; Klein, 1969).

Peer leadership groups seek to encourage leaders of delinquency-prone groups to establish ties to more conventional peers. The approach suggested here presumes that ties will be developed as group members work together. It is also hypothesized that attachment to school will be enhanced by performance of these functions. Finally, to the extent that informal peer group leaders are identified and selected for participation, it is hypothesized that these leaders may, in turn, influence members of their own cliques toward more positive attitudes to school as school policies are altered in response to their participation. In this way delinquency prone groups may be coopted. (See Open Road Student Involvement Project and Positive Peer Culture in Wall et al., 1981, pp. 75, 90; Hawkins and Fraser, 1983.)

Community Interventions

The community provides a broad context for youth development. While families, schools, and peers have the most immediate effects on individual youths, community characteristics influence these socializing groups. Furthermore, aggregate level data show that crime rates are associated with characteristics of community areas (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Community areas offer general norms and expectations for deviant or conforming behavior which may indirectly influence youths. Two community-focused interventions appear promising for delinquency prevention.

1. Community Crime Prevention Program

This is the community block-watch model which has been successful in reducing residential burglaries where implemented. (See Commu-

nity Crime Prevention Program in Wall et al., 1981, p. 30; Greenberg et al., 1982; Fowler et al., 1979.) This approach is included not only for its obvious deterrent potential, but perhaps, more important, for its use of social networks of neighborhood members engaged in shared activities around the common goal of crime prevention. This involvement can generate a sense of shared concern and power in a community and a set of community norms against crime. It is hypothesized that these norms can contribute to a climate in which criminal actions are viewed by community youths as both risky and unacceptable rather than as an accepted part of growing up.

2. Community Youth Development Project

Community-focused youth participation and advocacy projects may also hold promise for delinquency prevention. In these projects community members, including youths, are organized into committees to mobilize resources to develop a community environment conducive to nondelinquent youth development. The major goal here, which is clearly problematic, is the involvement of community youths who are not typically involved in leadership roles in schools. If these youths are involved in planning and organizing activities to improve opportunities for youths in the community, they may develop stakes in conformity. A range of projects may be initiated. Regardless of the specific activity, the major goal is to involve youths who may not have established commitments to education or attachments to school with ties to a legitimate group which can lead to conventional commitments and attachments outside the school. (See Youth Community Development Project in Wall et al., 1981, p. 135.)

Conclusion

The discovery of effective methods for preventing youth crime before juvenile justice system involvement is the key to the ultimate success of this country's "dual functions" philosophy of juvenile justice. Extensive research on the etiology of juvenile crime over the past two decades has provided clues for that discovery. The social development model and its cause-focused primary prevention and early intervention strategies provide an organizing framework for designing and selecting promising prevention strategies. Primary prevention and early intervention strategies should be assessed and selected for their poten-

tial to create opportunities for involvement, skills for participation, and a consistent system of reinforcement for youths' involvement in family, school, and nondelinquent peer groups and the legitimate community. Using these criteria, the initiatives reviewed above appear promising, although few have yet been subjected to rigorous empirical testing. Systematic, rigorous tests of these interventions are now required to determine which ones ultimately can be included among proven delinquency prevention approaches.

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