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ABSTRACT

A high school in the New England area was the setting for experimenting with a potential model for effective prevention and intervention in drug abuse and other areas of social concern. The method used is called Partnership in Research. It breaks with the traditional research model by involving the subjects as partners and participant researchers in an attempt at self study. The students studied drug use at their school, utilizing research methods to objectively appraise the problems which drugs pose to them and their peers. This paper discusses the role of science in the struggle for social survival, noting that traditional scientific models are inadequate for social science research, that much research is irrelevant and lacks utility, is narrow and simplistic in focus, and has little practical effect on social problem solving. The student's efforts as described demonstrate that high school students can develop and apply highly relevant questions and issues regarding their own interests and development. Findings from the student's study are listed and possibilities for further use of this model are examined. An appendix contains a drug group questionnaire.
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PEER CONDUCTED RESEARCH: A NOVEL APPROACH IN
DRUG EDUCATION*

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October, 1973

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Summary	i
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN OUR STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL SURVIVAL	5
a. Traditional scientific models inadequate for social science research	5
b. Perceived irrelevancy and lack of utility of research	6
c. History of narrow and simplistic focus of research	7
d. Little practical effect of research on social problem solving	8
III. DRUG ABUSE AND A NEW SCIENTIFIC APPROACH FOR STUDY AND INTERVENTION	9
1. The scope of the problem	9
2. <i>Partnership in Research: A Research Model for Responsible Change</i>	11
3. The Study	16
IV. DISCUSSION	39
Appendix	42

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SUMMARY

A high school in the New England area of the United States was the setting for an experiment that may be a potential model for effective prevention and intervention in drug abuse and other areas of social concern. *Partnership in Research* was the method employed. This method breaks with the traditional investigator-subject research model by involving the subjects as partners and participant researchers in an attempt at self study. The research objectives and methods are defined and carried out by the participant researchers, providing for the participant an intense learning experience. It is theorized that such a method of existential inquiry will lead to new understanding, new visions and thought and will enhance self-growth of the participants.

Students studied the drug use at their school. They utilized research methods to objectively appraise the problems which drugs pose to them and their peers. They presented the findings of their search to their fellow students and teachers during a workshop session. The procedure followed in the project is described and the results of the study presented. In a discussion during the workshop, the students pointed out the need for school related drug education. The consensus was that a high quality of such programs is of great importance, as inadequate programs would rather aggravate the situation. The *Partnership in Research* strategy could provide such a high quality model.

Paper presented to the First International Congress on Drug Education, held at Montreux Vd., Switzerland, October 14-18, 1973.

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PEER CONDUCTED RESEARCH: A NOVEL APPROACH IN DRUG EDUCATION¹

I. INTRODUCTION

Modern societies are facing complex social problems that demand a determined and broadminded search for solutions. Drug abuse is but one major problem threatening the social fabric of many societies and the individual lives of millions of people. Drug abuse is closely related to problems of crime and delinquency and alcohol abuse. For some nations, this is one of the most serious social problems they face today.

There is no one answer, magical solution, or model for prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation that can effectively deal with drug abuse. Differential approaches have to be developed, applied, and tested in varying conditions and situations. Various cultures, living

¹The research reported in this paper was, in part, supported by a grant from the New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency to the National Council on Crime and Delinquency Research Center and by funds provided to the NCCD Research Center through the General Research Support Grant 1SOL RR-05693-02 from the United States Public Health Service.

under different social ecological circumstances, will require different prevention and intervention strategies. To combat drug abuse, crime and delinquency, and alcohol abuse, three major strategies have been generally utilized.

1. A *medical* strategy provides the rationale for a treatment approach that employs the "sickness" concept, requiring the afflicted person to take on the role of the patient and to look to the "healer" for help. This model has been given a preferential status, particularly for persons with drug and alcohol problems, and often little distinction is made between alcohol and drugs by regarding alcohol basically as a drug. However, it has also found its application in the area of crime and delinquency, if only as an intervention strategy within the criminal justice system.

2. A *legal* strategy is widely applied in all three areas, but increasingly large parts of the drug abuse and alcohol abuse problem are being de-legalized or at least de-criminalized. This development is largely due to the perceived ineffectiveness of the legal strategy, a strategy that is based on the concept of guilt and the belief in one's self-determination of one's actions.

3. An *educational* strategy is beginning to appear, here and there, mostly cautiously applied and without great hope, as if to ask: "How can we hope to succeed with teaching where medicine failed by diagnosing and treating, and justice failed by condemning and correcting?"

This assumption of educators can be understood when one considers the recent development of public education and compares this method with the old tradition of treating which led to modern, scientific medicine, revolutionizing our very existence, and the long-standing attempts of mankind to define, institutionalize, and apply justice.

The scope of this paper will not attempt to deal with the success and failures of the medical or legal strategies, but rather would like to emphasize an alternative approach. The requirement of the medical approach for the person to be helped to enter the role of sick person or patient, and the requirement of the legal approach for the person to be helped to enter the role of evil person or criminal, are believed to be detrimental to any personal growth. These two requirements stigmatize a person and prevent often social readjustment.

In contrast, the educational strategy assumes a

basic outlook of growth and development and perceives the person as student and learner, a role that is happily accepted and maintained throughout life by many educated individuals. Learning seems most successful demonstrated through teaching, tutoring, or helping strategies which, in turn, appear to facilitate personal growth. The educational strategy does not need to apply negative labels which in themselves can lead to the self-fulfilling prophecy. Instead, this strategy applies the label "student," that is supportive and enhances self-esteem and self-growth.

The present paper presents a model using an educational strategy that was employed in a New Hampshire high school and suggests that this model, and other learning models, can be more widely applied in social problem solving, particularly before sanctions based on medical models and legal models are employed. Such an approach may divert a great many individuals permanently from becoming patients or convicts by keeping them in a learning role as involved, motivated students. Education, then, could replace treatment, therapy, and correction, whether it is community based or institution based. Therapy and justice could then be reserved for seriously non-responsive persons who are a serious danger to themselves and others.

II. THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN OUR STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL SURVIVAL

Scientific research has added much to our lives. This can particularly be seen in the physical world where mastery of the physical world, as witnessed in the technological achievements, has altered the existence of mankind quite drastically. Attempts to equal this progress in man's social domain with scientific methods have, in the most part, been disappointing. Some of the factors that contributed to this failure are:

a. Traditional scientific models inadequate for social science research

Not enough attention has been paid to the distinction between physical and social research. Often, the social sciences approach research as if it is an engineering problem. While we should not attempt to go to the moon before every conceivable angle of the journey is calculated, we should not confuse this relatively stable, physical universe with a dynamic and interactive, social universe in need of study.

The moon is a physical quantity and moves in stable relationships to other physical objects. Physical science can help us to understand this body by applying physical knowledge to stable relationships. The seemingly timeless laws of matter have set the conditions

for the human conquest of the moon. The engineering potential of modern technology made it possible to achieve what for most people appeared impossible.

In the social context, however, we are dealing with a dynamic, interactive, time-bound mode of existence. In spite of this, social theorists and researchers have borrowed many assumptions and models from the physical sciences which have shaped man's earlier thinking. The need is great today for the innovation and development of new scientific research models which are more sensitive to change processes which, in turn, create newer social configurations.

As social conditions and individual awareness of those conditions change at an ever increasing rate, greater emphasis must be given to the questions of adaptability and direction of a meaningful life existence. This adaptability is rapidly becoming a central issue for the existence of civilization as we know it today.

b. Perceived irrelevancy and lack of utility
of research

In many instances, the concerns addressed by social scientists are felt to be irrelevant to "people" and do not appear to have "real" meaning for them. Much research is strictly self-serving and overly academic,

which has too little practical value.

c. History of narrow and simplistic focus
of research

A great deal of the scientific study of human behavior has been, in the past, subject oriented and paternalistic. Human subjects were studied under conditions where they had little voice in the study design, purpose, and execution. They were the objects of the study and often subjected, by design, to misrepresentation and deceit. Most of the research on human behavior assumes that certain personal characteristics or traits are primarily responsible for certain types of behavior and the correlary that if these behavior patterns are in need of change, the changing has to occur primarily within the person. Too long have scientists been preoccupied with the study of personality factors while neglecting empirical studies of environmental factors and how they contribute to behavior.

In recent years, this focus has changed to some extent and increasing attention is being paid to environmental factors and the interaction between the characteristics of persons on the one hand and the characteristics of the environment on the other. This redirection proposes that to remedy social ills, a great deal more scientific attention must be paid to

the characteristics of social environments and social institutions. The impact of social climates and programs on the behavior and well-being of the individuals affected is at least receiving appropriate study.

d. Little practical effect of research on social problem solving

The modest success in applying research findings to social problem solving is due to a great extent to the fact that, in the past, much research has been done in the "ivory tower" of universities and reported by scientists in a "never-never-land" language. While one of the objectives of science is the study of particulars for the sake of understanding the universal, most scientists have failed to inform the world in common language about their discoveries. Their usage of technical jargon, only understood by colleagues, has often discouraged social reformers from relying on scientific methods in their efforts at solving social problems.

These and other difficulties have to be overcome if scientific methods are to be as successful in the social domain as they prove to be in the physical domain. The present paper suggests that scientific methods hold some important answers for social problem

solving and effecting responsible change, and proposes to experiment in different ways to get scientific strategies to bear on our social system. One such way, the *Partnership in Research* approach, is described in the main part of this paper. Its partnership principle assumes that a more effective cooperation can be established between the social reformer and the social scientist that could lead to better integration of problem solving efforts with scientific methods.

III. DRUG ABUSE AND A NEW SCIENTIFIC APPROACH FOR STUDY AND INTERVENTION

1. The Scope of the Problem

Drug abuse is a problem of unprecedented social importance. The following citation from a recent report to the United States Congress describes very accurately the kind of concerns and fears millions of people have today:

"We are a Nation suffering from a deadly disease. Our Nation's youth is being decimated and slowly destroyed by a drug epidemic. Drug abuse proliferates and spreads like a contagious disease and has advanced to such a degree that it menaces the health of every child in this Nation today. And it appears that all of us are standing around waiting for somebody to do something about it.

It has often been observed that our attack on the Nation's drug abuse problem has at least three major facets--legal, medical, and educational. Each of these approaches has been a

dismal failure in not having significantly reduced the extent of drug abuse in the United States. ...

Our preliminary examination of the matter indicated that the problem was severe, but our investigation demonstrated that the drug crisis in our schools greatly exceeded our worst expectations. All of us were repeatedly shocked by the revelations about extensive drug abuse in our schools. We had anticipated that the well-publicized drug epidemic which has caused such devastation in New York City's schools, was an isolated experience caused by factors peculiar to that city.

As we delved further into the problem we discovered that drug abuse in our schools is appropriately described as an extremely deadly epidemic which is presently raging in our schools; it is infecting our youth and contaminating our schools; it has reached crisis proportion; and it is leaving a trail of devastation that will take a decade to remedy.

Tragically, the chances are substantial that when a parent sends his child to high school each day he is sending him into a drug filled environment. He is placing him in an atmosphere where drugs are usually bought and sold--an atmosphere where there is considerable pressure from other students to use drugs.

Drug abuse in our schools has become so extensive and pervasive that it is only the uniquely gifted and self-possessed child who is capable of avoiding involvement with some form of drug use."²

This quotation presents a frank and serious statement about the imminence and threat of the drug abuse

²Select Committee on Crime, United States House of Representatives Report to the 93d Congress. Report No. 93-357, June 1973, pp. 1-2.

problem facing the United States today. It also mirrors quite accurately the drug abuse situations in other countries, either as they exist today or will exist tomorrow.

2. *Partnership in Research: A Research Model for Responsible Change*

In Spring of 1972 an unique opportunity for research in a New England senior high school presented itself to the author. A decision was made to deviate from the traditional research approach where researchers apply their design in the area of their interest. It was decided to involve the subjects to be studied in the study as participant researchers. This participation was more than mere token involvement and included not only information gathering but, more importantly, the formulation of the study questions, the choosing of the research strategies, and an attempt at dissemination of some of the study results. The research questions were formulated on the expressed concerns of nearly 2,000 students attending this school. Drug abuse emerged as a major focus of study for student volunteers. The description of the nature of the strategy and the work carried out by this group of young drug abuse "researchers" is the primary goal of this paper. Some of the most significant objectives of this strategy

were as follows:

a) Youth Involvement

By using the self-study approach and involving students in their own school setting in the study of some of the problems concerning them, a great untapped resource of our society was utilized in a most constructive way: Youth.

Youth involvement in this project meant the substantial opportunity of all students to accomplish or succeed at some task by becoming a partner in research. The partnership principle means involvement in formulating the focus of research as well as in the objectives, methodology, and decision making process of the project. It includes responsibilities as well as implying a power base from which youthful participants can express their concerns and have them considered within the realm of research objectives.

This study was meant to be a model by which youth could experience problem solving methods, decision making, and responsibility taking while decreasing the "channeling" influence of faculty and school administration personnel. While it is not expected that this process will lead to a new "type" of youth, it was felt that such an approach could reduce school-student conflict and confrontation by increasing the real and

perceived importance of the student in that context. In this sense, this method can increase youth participation and lead to better utilization of this society's most vital resource.

b) Knowledge Through Doing

Partnership in Research is a heuristic approach where learning is accomplished by doing. Similar to the Dewey's concept of the student's active involvement in his own education, this method assumes similar advantages during the research endeavor. The students' authority to help define research objectives as well as their active involvement in the formulation of the design is foreseen as integral aspects of "learning by doing." In this same sense, knowledge gained by active learning can have a more significant impact than learning by passive acceptance.

c) Knowledge--Relative and Time-Bound

A third assumption that *Partnership in Research* makes concerns the transitory nature of knowledge. In this sense, knowledge acquired through activity is experienced as a time-bound, situation-bound phenomenon which requires constant updating to be continually relevant. The dynamic quality of knowledge can be experienced by the youthful participants of this project

by realizing the inherent change within the configurations of reality as perceived during the research inquiry.

Too often knowledge stands in the way of progressive education if learning is not perceived as a time-bound phenomenon. Knowledge then becomes an "institution" by itself and the person so "knowledgeable" may be in danger of becoming a knowledge dispenser instead of a knowledge facilitator, and thus reduces his ability to change or adapt.

The sensitivity to change appears to be a learned phenomenon where the student realizes that the pursuit of knowledge is an ongoing pursuit. A great deal of disillusionment, frustration, and apathy may be experienced by students because they sense the transitional or irrelevant nature of some knowledge that is not presented to them as transitional.

Partnership in Research aims to keep individuals "sensitive" to an inquiry type of knowledge which, as a rational process, serves to promote a basic mental posture that provides self-discovery, self-adaptation, and self-development. It suggests that this basic process be adapted as a lifelong strategy. Such a strategy of "meaning making" for youth and by youth could offer methods of combating alienation as well as

anti-social and self-defeating behavior.

d) Research Principles--A Guiding Model

As a continuation of the above statement, research principles can be perceived as guiding tools or models for perceiving the transitory nature of knowledge. The "objectivity" of sensitive inquiry can provide the method by which perspectives of youths and adults could be made more responsive to necessary societal changes. Seen within a longer range plan, it is believed that knowledge gained through such a continuous objective inquiry can provide a solid basis to initiate changes in the participating individual and in the environment in which he lives.

e) Directions for Solutions: The Need for
Differential Models

Since this strategy offers a twofold objective which encompasses drug abuse related prevention or intervention as well as educational goals, the resulting model should retain some flexibility. Often, concepts in education have been promoted under the auspices of "total" solutions. This paper offers no panaceas except to define directions that a more relevant-responsible method of educational "enrichment" should take. *Partnership in Research* points out the need for

specific models to be applied and evaluated in specific circumstances and for specific goals.³

3. The Study

(1) The Setting

The Research Center of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency received funding from the New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency for an exploratory study that proposed to apply the *Partnership in Research* approach in a large high school in New Hampshire. The prime interest was to involve as many students as possible in defining some of the major concerns they had in regard to their school. It was hoped that understanding of the educational setting might lead the students to learn about school related factors that contribute to social problems, such as juvenile delinquency and youth crime, school non-

³For more complete information on this strategy and similar approaches in various social settings see:

Wenk, E. A., Schools and Youth Unrest: A Look at our Basic Educational System and a Description of Two New Strategies for Initiating Change in this System.

Invited paper presented at the International Symposium on Youth Unrest, Tel-Aviv University, Israel, October 25-27, 1971.

Goodwin, L., "Bridging the Gap Between Social Research and Public Policy: Welfare, A Case in Point," The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 9(1):85-114, 1973.

Emrich, Robert L., A New Strategy for Public Policy Research. Davis, California: National Council on Crime and Delinquency Research Center, August, 1971.

involvement, and dropping out. The high school was situated in a medium large New England city and had a student population of close to 2,000 students, attending grades 9-12. As most schools in the U.S.A., the high school was co-educational.

Positive cooperation between the research staff, the school administration, and the school staff was a welcome result of the study. Also, much support was received from the local school board and the mayor of the city.

(2) The Procedure

During meetings between the vice principals and research staff, the decision was made to initiate the project during the school's English periods. This ensured that practically all students would be initially reached. While, after the initial contact, the English classes were maintained as prime contact places for communication between the project and the students, the actual work of the project was completed extraneous to the regular school activities, as an optional interest for the students.

Phase 1 - Planning and Initiation - December, 1971.

As the project director, the author made preliminary contact with some students and teachers. Together with

a research assistant, the author prepared a questionnaire asking students to name three of the most pressing concerns or problems they felt needed attention in the school. Other main questions asked on the questionnaire were:

TRUST forms the basis for open and honest expression and, therefore, is an important part of any study. Do you believe that students and staff in your school trust each other sufficiently to express themselves openly and honestly during this study?

Do you think that PARENTS should be involved in this study of some aspects of your school?

For this study we will need some STUDENT RESEARCH TRUSTEES as research helpers. They will be working closely with the information from all phases of the study. Would you be willing to help with the work of this study as a research trustee?

The questionnaires were presented and the study explained to each English class by the author or his assistant. They started with the senior classes and recruited and instructed volunteer senior students, who then acted as assistants, giving questionnaires and introducing the study to the junior, sophomore, and freshmen classes. This completed the first step in turning the study over to the students, which led to further responsibility taking on the part of seniors and young students.

Besides giving the initial questionnaire to 9th through 12th grade students, each student received a questionnaire to give to his parents. Parent questionnaires asked about priorities of concerns and whether or not the parents should be involved in this kind of study.

The teachers received a similar questionnaire, as did the janitorial staff and the food services staff. Also, each student who dropped out since September, 1971 received a questionnaire and was asked to designate a student still in school who would act as a liaison between himself and the study.

The returned questionnaires were analyzed at the NCCD Research Center during Christmas vacation.

Phase 2 - Forming of Student Task Forces - January, 1971.

The return of the questionnaires filled out by the students was close to 100 percent. One-third of the teaching staff returned the questionnaires and approximately 5 percent of the parents. There were practically no responses from the janitorial and food services staff and the students who dropped out earlier in the school year, which suggests a feeling of isolation predominant in these groups. The student concerns were tabulated and organized in five major areas, as follows:

- a. People to people relationships
- b. People behaviors and actions
- c. School programs
- d. School administration
- e. School resources

Eight major topics surfaced that led to the forming of student task forces or study groups looking into the following student concerns:

1. *School Rules* and the procedure for disciplinary measures taken at the school. This study group was also interested in the relationship between school, police, and the courts.
2. *Race Relations*
3. *Drug Misuse*. This study group was interested in looking into the student involvement in drug misuse and presenting some suggestions for coping with this problem.
4. *School Programs for the Non-College Bound Student*. This study group was to investigate programs available to the student who is seeking a vocational career and needs preparation to enter the labor market. Emphasis was to be on developing new ideas for programs.
5. *School Programs for the Academically Inclined Student*. This study group was to look at the programs for the college-bound student.
6. *Student Roles*. This study group was to study the roles of the high school student, his rights, and responsibilities. They were to focus on the way students can be involved in curriculum planning and other aspects of the administration of the school. This group's emphasis was central to the major study objective of mobilizing untapped student resources.
7. *School and Community*. This study group was to study the relationship to the community, the

voters, the taxpayers, the authorities (such as the School Board), and wanted to come up with suggestions to improve some of these relationships.

8. *The Drop-out Problem.* This study group was to interview drop-outs and planned to develop alternative educational programs for students who feel alienated to most current educational programs.

All groups were started with a nucleus of a few students who were highly involved in these particular issues and volunteered to recruit additional students to help with the tasks. Special efforts were made to keep established student leaders from taking over the study groups by assigning traditionally active students, who were already in leadership roles in the school, to individual assignments in the project that were independent of the study groups. The leadership positions in the study groups were open to students who previously had little opportunity to express themselves or take leadership. That gave the project the opportunity to mobilize some untapped student resources while still utilizing already active student leaders for important tasks outside the study groups.

Phase 3 - The Study Group Projects - February, 1972-May, 19

During Phases 3 and 4, beginning in February and terminating in June, a recently graduated college student, who had experience in working with groups, was the resident project staff at the school. She acted in the role of advisor and liaison between the project, teaching staff,

and school administration. While the initiative was primarily left to the students, coordination and assistance was needed and was provided in an active way by giving support as soon as the need was perceived.

The research assistant set up, with the help of the director of the business department, an office space for the project. Two students from the business department were employed by the project as part-time employees under a student work program. This project office maintained contact with the students through class representatives in each English class and maintained direct contact with the volunteers working in the various study groups.

Already in early February a project bulletin was initiated by the project staff, designed to give the students information on the progress of the project on a weekly basis. After the first three issues of this one sheet bulletin, the operation was turned over to a group of students. They were to write the text and provide for typing, mimeographing, and distribution of the bulletin through the English classes. To check on the student interest in receiving this weekly bulletin, they had to sign up each week in their English classes to receive it. Consequently, in some classes the interest remained fairly good while in others the interest dropped considerably. To get the eleven issues out, the students needed strong support from the project research assistant, especially after in

several classes the interest for the bulletin dropped.

The various study groups of volunteer students went about their business in their own way. Some decided to interview local citizens about their attitudes toward smoking, alcohol, drugs, open campus, etc. (school rules). Another group interviewed drop-outs. One group, after several meetings and uncomfortable discussions, got scared and disbanded but not before they designed and administered a questionnaire probing racial attitudes. The group studying academic programs designed a questionnaire and administered some, but the group lost interest generally.

Two groups were quite active and involved, and carried out a productive program. The vocational program group presented plans to have students run, with staff, the cafeteria on a business like basis to learn the food services trade, and they proposed to develop and operate a school-based communications center, complete with their own 5-mile radius radio station, video studio for intra-mural T.V., and a student newspaper. They made a field trip to a neighboring state to visit a student operated radio station and reported back to the project.

The drug abuse group was probably the most active and most involved. Each student had a deep reason to be part of this group. One was a former heroin user

who came back to school after treatment to finish belatedly his high school requirements for a diploma. Others had experiences with drugs or had brothers, sisters, or friends using drugs, or had parents with an alcohol problem, or were just deeply concerned about what was happening around them related to drugs. This group visited some local facilities for drug prevention and treatment, designed and administered a questionnaire, compiled some of the results, and conducted a workshop at the end of the project.

Phase 4 - The Workshops - June, 1972

Three other groups conducted workshops during the last week of the project besides the drug group: school rules, vocational curriculum, and student roles. Students were on the panels and other students and teachers were the participating audience. These meetings were video taped and replayed for students at the school to pass on some of the information and ideas generated by these activities.

(3) The Results

As the primary interest of this paper focuses on the problem of drug education only, the results of the drug abuse study group will be discussed here. The presentation in the workshop gives some information on how the questionnaire was designed and administered and

gives a glimpse of some of the difficulties encountered.⁴

"Student: Well, when we started with the group, it was supposed to get right down to the drug situation in school. The first thing we did was to have two meetings to talk to the people at Odyssey House (a drop-in Help Center) in town, the storefront, and they have plenty of figures on drug use, and we figured they could tell us something that was from outside of the school. Then, we formulated our own questionnaire--made that up--and selected different English classes so that we could get a cross section of students. It turned out to be about 20 percent of the school in different classes, taking them from the English classes, where they were supposed to be arranged sort of according to--I guess they do it by intelligence or something. We took two academic and two general English courses from each class and we wanted it to come out as evenly as possible, as far as the number of people from each class. But with the English classes, each with different numbers of people in them, it didn't come out exactly even, but it was pretty close.

The questionnaire was mostly based for people who did take drugs, because there wasn't really much we could ask the non-user. We asked the non-users five or six questions like: "Would you if they were legal,?" "What do you think about the situation,?" and things like that. We sent the teachers out of the rooms and said at the beginning that they did not have to answer the questionnaire, but I suppose it had been bred into them that when something is handed out you answer it, because in my class there was just one person who didn't answer it. I was really impressed about this return. It was beyond my expectations.

⁴See questionnaire in the Appendix.

There was a lot of apathy. There weren't really too many people who were enthusiastic about answering it. Any time I can remember we had to do anything like that, especially since drugs is a pretty ticklish situation, anyway, there is always somebody looking over your shoulder, whether it's a teacher, it's always somebody who's got some sort of power over you--a teacher, a policeman, or somebody like that, and you just learn to be scared, especially if you take drugs. Most of the people who answered "No" were gung-ho for the questionnaire, but people who answered "Yes" were paranoid about answering it or were super-super-defensive.

We didn't have any set thing we were going to say to the classes. I told them it was a research thing--almost everybody had heard about the thing going on--and I explained a little more. I told them I wanted them to put the finished questionnaire on a desk way across from me or anybody else in the room. Then I just sat there. They could tell that I wouldn't know who put the questionnaires up there. I don't think it could have been any more anonymous. I told them it was going to be thrown together in a pile and we were going to just go through them and just look over the answers. So I personally don't understand why it was such a threat to them. Still, a lot of people were afraid the results were going to be turned in to the administration, then the administration would see the high percentage of drug misuse and start some sort of crackdown. I tried to tell them that that wouldn't happen."

One of the first decisions the group made was to change the name of the group from Drug Abuse study group to Drug Study group. They felt that the former name

would prematurely imply a problem and it would also limit the scope of their inquiry. After designing the questionnaire, the study group on drugs set out to obtain information about the use of drugs in their sample of approximately 20 percent of the students. The information was collected from 379 students from grades 9-12. Through this questionnaire they sought to determine the age of the drug users as well as information regarding the differences of drug use and abuse and drug related attitudes between boys and girls. Also, family income, the types of drugs used, the family situation, frequency of use, attitudes concerning legislation of marijuana and heroin, the perceived seriousness of abuse at the High School, and the reasons for using drugs were issues perceived as relevant to researching this issue. In an attempt to gain insight into the reactions to the questionnaire, a response was requested at the end concerning the perceived value of the method and questions asked.

The following section summarizes the feedback from the questionnaire. The compiled data are based on 259 questionnaires from eight English classes--two from each grade. These eight classes were felt to be representative of the school. One hundred and twenty questionnaires were discarded mostly because they were

returned blank. A few had to be discarded because of unusable information.

a) Types of Drug Uses

The responses regarding the types of drug use were tallied and the results grouped according to four categories:

1. No use of Alcohol, Marijuana or Drugs
2. Use of Alcohol only
3. Use of Alcohol and Marijuana only
4. Use of Alcohol, Marijuana, and other Drugs

Figure 1 gives a breakdown by class level and sex of the percentage of non-users. It can be seen that more than half of the Freshmen students are still non-users after several months in high school. Boys in the Sophomore class show a distinct increase in use of alcohol, marijuana and other drugs, while the Sophomore girls are continuing a relatively high non-involvement with alcohol, marijuana and other drugs, only to show during the Junior and Senior years a high increase in use, which follows closely the boys during the two last years of high school. The percentages are for boys: 65% for Freshmen, 27.3% for Sophomores, 35% for Juniors and 24.2% for Seniors, and 51%, 57%, 40.9% and 29.6% for girls, respectively.

NON-USE OF ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA AND DRUGS

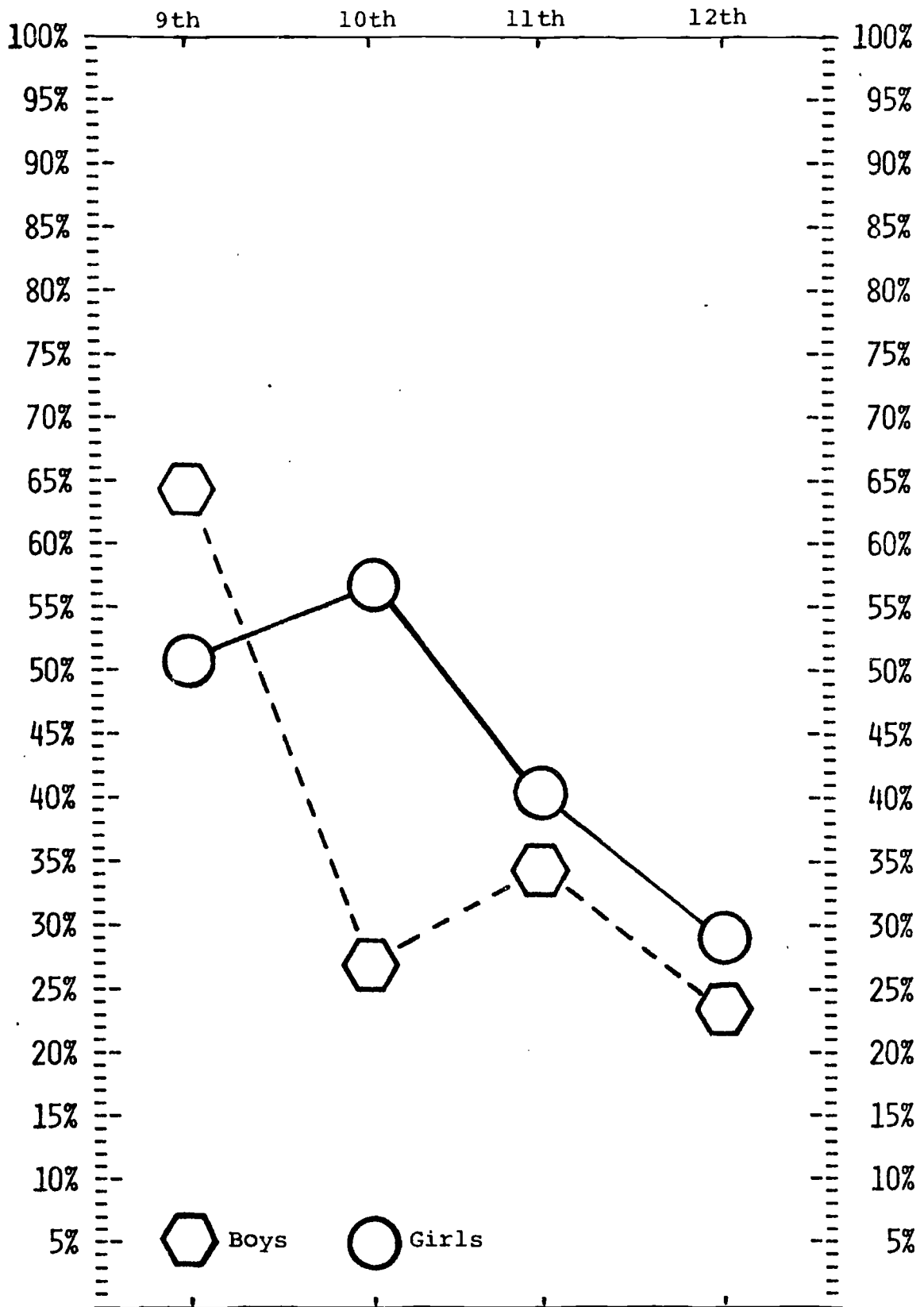


Figure 1

Percentage Students By Class and Sex Who Do Not Use Either Alcohol, Marijuana, or Drugs

Figure 2 shows the increase in alcohol use over the years by sex and class. It is the reverse of Figure 1 and includes students who either use alcohol only, or alcohol and marijuana only, or alcohol and marijuana and other drugs. It is interesting to note that alcohol use was found to be always present when marijuana and other drugs were used. The percentages for alcohol use are for boys: 34.0% for Freshmen, 72.7% for Sophomores, 65% for Juniors, and 75.8% for Seniors, and 48.8%, 42.9%, 59.1%, and 70.3% for girls, respectively.

Figure 2 here

The increase in percent of students who use alcohol, marijuana and other drugs is depicted in Figure 3. The percentages are for boys: 12.5% for Freshmen, 29.5% for Sophomores, 40% for Juniors, and 42.4% for Seniors, and 24.4%, 21.4%, 36.4%, and 33.3% for girls, respectively.

Figure 3 here

Figures 4 and 5 give a summary of these data by sex. As noted, it seems that drug usage (other than alcohol) increases substantially over the high school experience.

Figures 4 and 5 here

ALCOHOL

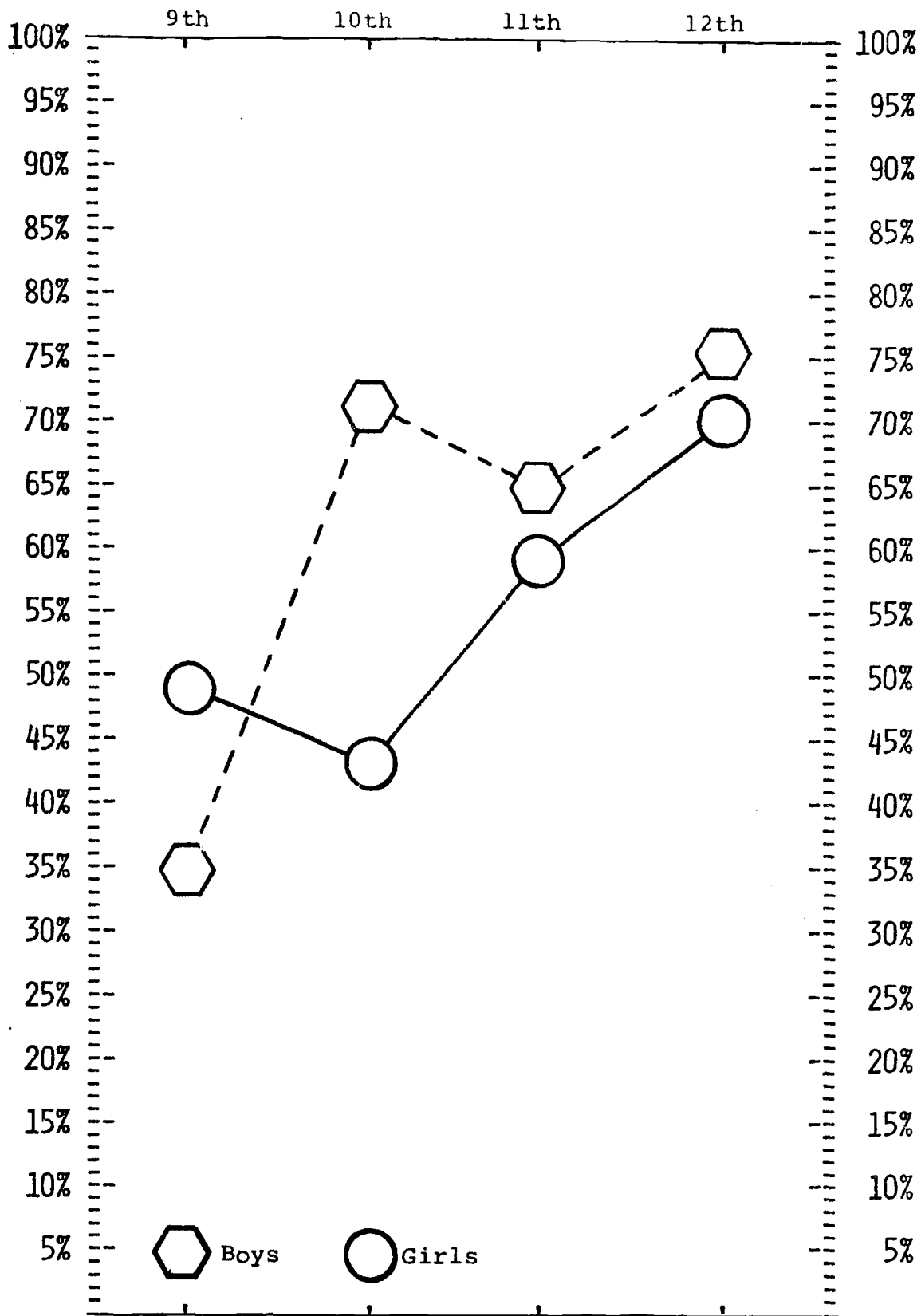


Figure 2

Percentage Students by Class and Sex Who Use Alcohol, Including Students Who Also Use Marijuana and Other Drugs

ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA AND OTHER DRUGS

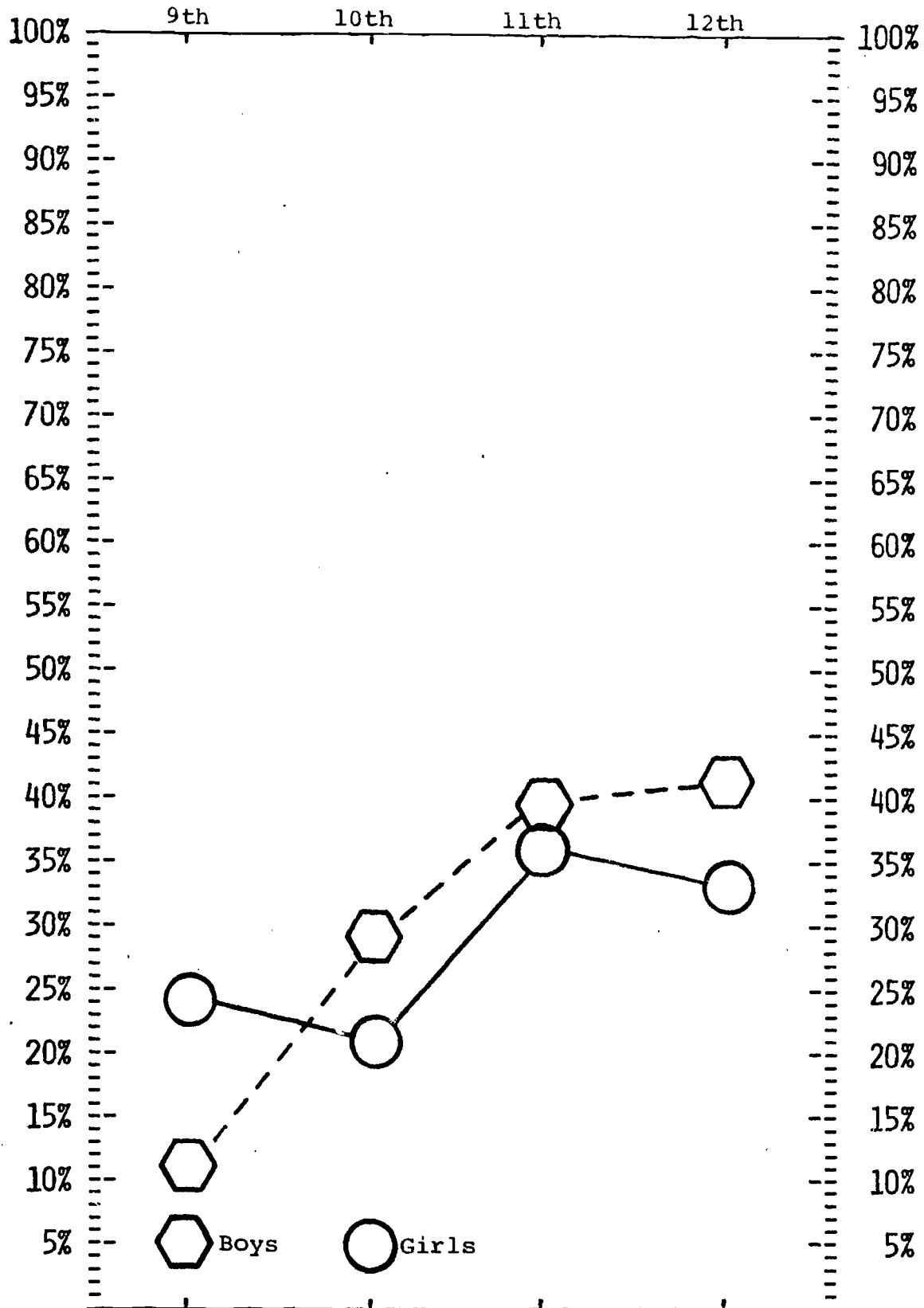
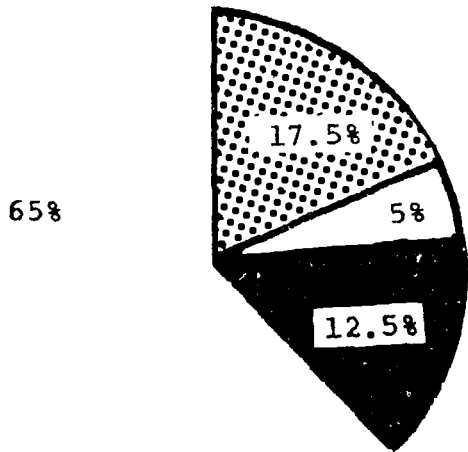


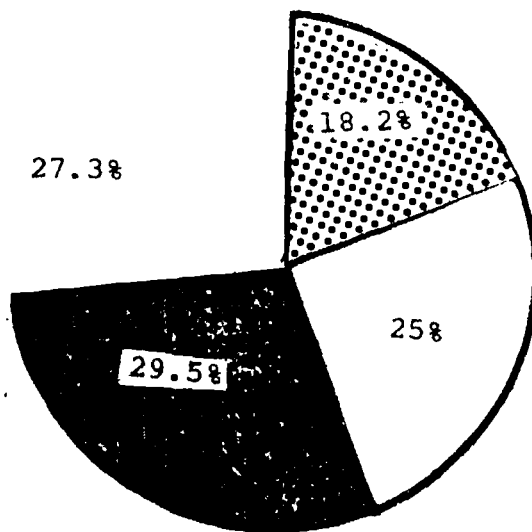
Figure 3

Percentage Students by Class and Sex Who Use Alcohol, Marijuana and Other Drugs

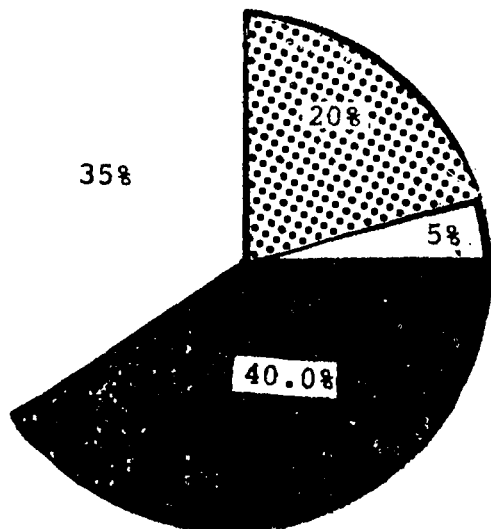
9TH GRADE



10TH GRADE



11TH GRADE



12TH GRADE

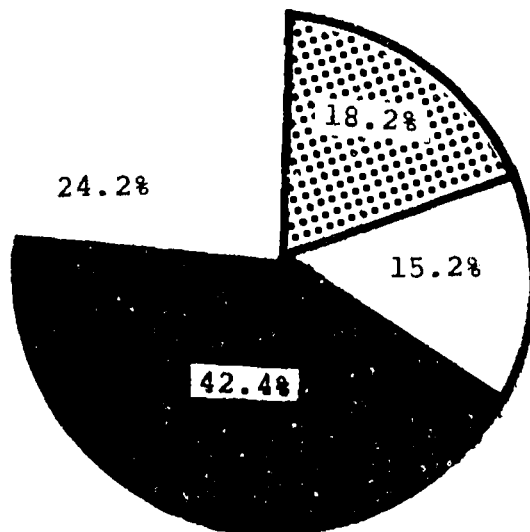



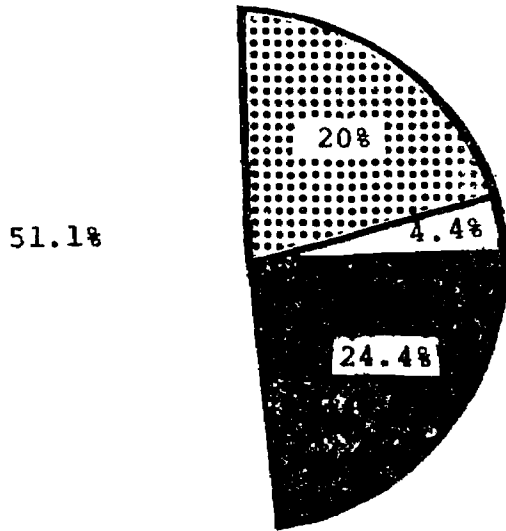


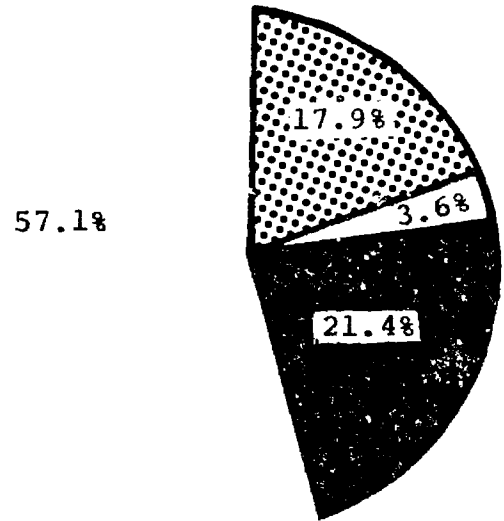
Figure 4

Percent Male Students using  Alcohol,  Alcohol and Marijuana and  Alcohol, Marijuana and Other Drugs

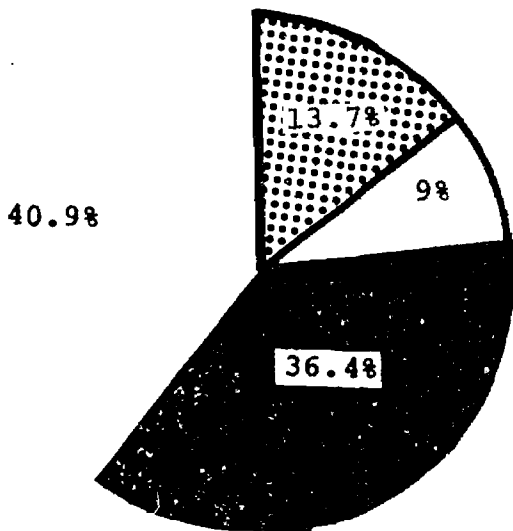
9TH GRADE



10TH GRADE



11TH GRADE



12TH GRADE

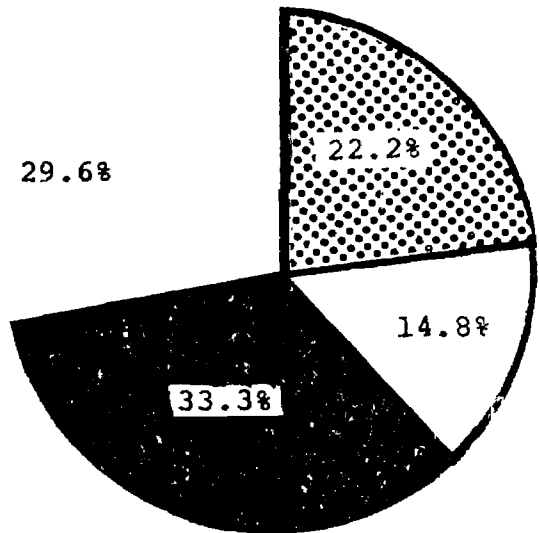





Figure 5
 Percent Female Students using  Alcohol,  Alcohol
 and Marijuana and  Alcohol, Marijuana and Other Drugs

b) Kinds of Drugs Used

The kinds of drugs by students using more than marijuana are arranged in order of their frequency of mention:

<u>Type of Drug</u>	<u>Number of Times Mentioned</u>
Downs	56
Ups	51
Hallucinogens	44
Speed	34
Cocaine	20
Heroin	9

c) Order of Initial Use

Freshmen: All of the freshmen boys who answered this question initially used alcohol, then went to marijuana, and then to other drugs. Only half of the freshmen girls who answered started with alcohol; the others began with marijuana or with other drugs.

Sophomores: Again in the sophomore class were differences between boys and girls. Practically all boys started using alcohol first, most then used marijuana and then went on to other drugs. All girls started initially with marijuana and then went to using other drugs. This slight difference in pattern for girls may be related to dating of older boys who are already using marijuana, preferring it to alcohol for many social occasions.

Juniors and Seniors: Both groups, boys and girls

alike, reported that initially they used alcohol but then about half of them reported to have used marijuana next, while the other half went into other drug use.

d) Main Source of Supply of Drugs

Of those who use drugs other than alcohol, it was also asked how many obtained their drugs from a friend. The following summary indicates, by class, the percentage of each grade level questioned who obtained their drugs from friends:

Freshmen	75%
Sophomores	76%
Juniors	93%
Seniors	94%

e) Peer Relationship to Drugs

The response to the question: "Do your friends use drugs?" was left unanswered by many students. That was particularly noticeable for the group of students who use alcohol, marijuana and other drugs, where 73% chose not to answer that question compared to 29% of the students in the Alcohol Only category and the only 8% of the students not answering this question in the Non-User category. Practically all of the respondents in the category using alcohol, marijuana and other drugs answered the question in the affirmative, that their friends also used drugs.

f) Drug Use and Home Situation

Unhappy home situations are often said to be related to drug use. Table 1 provides little evidence of this relationship, at least as far as a "broken home" or a home where one or both parents are gone is concerned.

TABLE 1
Percent of Different Drug Categories from
Broken Homes (All Grades)

Category	Percent in Category	% of Students from Broken Homes
Non-use	42.1	36.6%
Alcohol only	18.5	22.0%
Alcohol and Marijuana only	10.8	7.3%
Alcohol, Marijuana and Other Drugs	28.6	34.1%

As noted from the distribution of respondents, a greater percentage of the Non-use category have broken homes than the Alcohol, Marijuana and Other Drugs category. Generally, these results do not seem indicative of a drug use-broken home relationship.

g) Drug Use and Perceived Intelligence

A question was also designed to determine the respondent's self-perceived intelligence according to

a below average, average, and above average selection. Of those individuals who responded they were above average intelligence, 49% were in the Non-use category compared to 42.1% who were in the Alcohol, Marijuana and Other Drugs category. A breakdown by class level provided inconsistent findings. Except for the above finding, there was no indication of any other relationship.

h) Drug Use and Parental Income

Table 2 provides information regarding drug use when compared to parental income. Excluding the 8 Welfare families, drug use appears to increase with family income, a finding that may seem surprising.

TABLE 2
Percent of Different Drug Categories When Related To Parental Income Level (All Grades)

	N	Non-use	Alcohol only	Alcohol and Marijuana	Alcohol, Marijuana and Other Drugs
Welfare	8	37.5%	12.5%	0.0%	50.0%
Less than \$10,000	48	50.0%	16.7%	8.3%	33.3%
\$10,000 - \$20,000	160	44.4%	16.9%	11.3%	38.8%
More than \$20,000	39	25.6%	30.8%	15.4%	43.6%

IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the previous narrative was not to demonstrate a highly methodological attempt at problem solving, but rather to demonstrate that high school students, working under their own volition, can develop and apply highly relevant questions and issues regarding their own interests and development. The actual data collection is peripheral to the actual goal of this endeavor, which was to involve the students in observing and evaluating issues that have a significant impact on their lives.

The project was exploratory and had limited financial resources only. These restrictions were offset by the enthusiastic support the study received from students and from some of the school staff. It is recommended that future attempts to carry out *Partnership in Research* activities should be made part of the regular school curriculum and not appended to the school program as an extracurricular activity. This kind of scientific inquiry could then develop a tradition of its own and become, for certain research projects, more sophisticated in research methodology. Projects undertaken could then very well focus on other than school related problems that are of special interest to the students.

The findings of the Drug study group were modest

and the method employed unsophisticated. Yet, the method and the findings are valuable from several points of view:

1. Interesting facts about drug use by students at a high school were found.
2. We were told that drug education is needed in schools to educate students about drugs. These programs should be honest and give true facts.
3. The project gave students the opportunity to make a deep, personal commitment to an activity that was aimed, in part, at learning more successful coping strategies.
4. The project provided an example of a democratically-based educational experience by giving the students the opportunity to act as independent participants and by showing respect for their critical insights.
5. The sharing of the decision making gave the students the opportunity to experience the existential equality with the adults involved.
6. The open, honest, and objective confrontation with some social problem issues provided a learning experience that enhanced personal growth.
7. The learning that resulted from the participation in the existential process of research produced, we believe, a much deeper understand than could be expected from the reading of a final report and listening to a lecture. The existential approach taken seems to facilitate the acquisition of learning and adaptive skills so very necessary for survival. The focus of this method on self-evaluation, self-help, self-development, self-growth, at both the individual and group levels should lead to continuing growth.

Problems, such as drug abuse in our schools, make it clear that legislating behavior is for many kinds of behavior a highly ineffective control mechanism. In fact, some laws and their enforcement problems may aggravate the situation. Recognition of this led, in the U.S.A., to many changes in the law in regard to marijuana since the 1970 Drug Reform Act which reduced the federal penalty for private use of marijuana from a felony to a misdemeanor. Today, in all states, with the exception of Rhode Island, the possession of marijuana is treated as a misdemeanor or provides the court with the option to treat it as a misdemeanor. Oregon decriminalized private use and made possession of marijuana of up to one ounce for private use a violation, like a traffic offense, rather than a criminal act. This does not imply that no problems exist with marijuana but rather that laws and their enforcement were ineffective in controlling some of these problems. Educational methods, such as *Partnership in Research*, may be a tool for prevention and intervention. This study can provide exploratory material for this thesis.

APPENDIX

PARTNERSHIP IN RESEARCH

Drug Group Questionnaire

PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS QUESTIONNAIRE
In this study alcohol is considered a drug.

Age _____ Sex _____ Race _____ Class _____

1. How would you rate your intelligence? _____ below average
_____ average
_____ above average
2. Parental Economic Status _____ welfare
_____ less than \$10,000
_____ \$10,000 to \$20,000
_____ over \$20,000
3. Father _____ living at home
_____ deceased
_____ not living at home but whereabouts known
_____ whereabouts unknown
_____ name unknown
4. Mother _____ living at home
_____ deceased
_____ not living at home but whereabouts known
_____ whereabouts unknown
_____ name unknown
5. Mother _____ doesn't work
_____ sole support of family
_____ has part-time job
_____ has full-time job

6. Father ___ doesn't work
 ___ sole support of family
 ___ has part-time job
 ___ has full-time job
7. Number of older brothers and sisters ___
8. Number of younger brothers and sisters ___
9. Brothers and sisters use drugs? (include prescription drugs and alcohol)
- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| ___ only child | ___ two only |
| ___ none do | ___ more than two |
| ___ one only | ___ don't know |
10. Do your parents use drugs? (include same as question 9)
- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| ___ neither | ___ both |
| ___ father | ___ don't know |
| ___ mother | |

What drugs? _____

11. Have you ever used drugs to get high? Yes ___ No ___

If you answered YES to question 11, please answer questions 12-22.

12. What drugs have you used? Please specify frequency.
- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| D - daily | W - weekly |
| O - occasionally | 1 - tried it once |

	Check here	Frequency of Use
Alcohol	___	___
Marijuana (Hashish)	___	___
Ups	___	___
Downs	___	___
Hallucinogen	___	___
Heroin	___	___
Cocaine	___	___
Crystal Meth (Speed)	___	___
Other (specify)	___	___
_____	___	___
_____	___	___

13. Which drug did you like best? _____
14. Age of first drug use? _____
15. Do your parents know you take drugs? Yes ___ No ___
16. If you answered YES to question 15, how did they find out?

17. Have you ever been in a drug associated situation where you were: (check all that apply and number of times if more than once)
 ___ questioned by police
 ___ arrested--convicted
 ___ arrested--not convicted
 ___ other (specify) _____

18. Where do you get your drugs? (check all that apply)
 ___ friends _____ known dealer
 ___ taken from your home _____ at school
 ___ outside of school
 ___ other (specify) _____

19. Where do you get the money to get drugs?
 ___ allowance _____ stealing or shoplifting
 ___ job _____ panhandling
 ___ other (specify) _____

20. In order--what were the first three drugs you used (including alcohol)?

21. If marijuana was legal would you use it more often if you already have tried it?

Yes No

22. If you no longer use drugs how long did you use them before you stopped?

If you answered NO to question 11, please answer questions 23-25.

23. Have you ever considered using drugs? Yes No

If so, what drugs? _____

24. Do your friends use drugs?

none close friends

acquaintances

other (specify) _____

If so, what drugs? _____

25. If marijuana was legal would you try it? Yes No

Explain _____

Whether you answered YES or NO to question 11, please complete the remainder of this questionnaire.

26. Do you support the legalization of marijuana? Yes No

Why? _____

27. Do you support the legalization of heroin? Yes No

Why? _____

28. How do you feel about the drug situation in Portsmouth?

29. If you use drugs, why? _____

30. If you don't use drugs, why? _____

31. Do you consider alcohol a drug? _____

32. How do you feel about this questionnaire? _____
