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ABSTRACT

This document features a collection of research bulletins on prevention of conditions that place students at risk. The theme is that the focus on at-risk kids should be shifted from prevention to a concentration on creating environments that nurture individual resiliency. Thirteen bulletins offer information on peer programs, collaboration as a catalyst for creative problem solving, the celebration of multiculturalism, protective factors in prevention, the role of school restructuring in prevention, how schools convey high expectations to their students, mentoring, collaboration to foster children's resiliency, research on resiliency, and the integration of resiliency into communities. (LMI)

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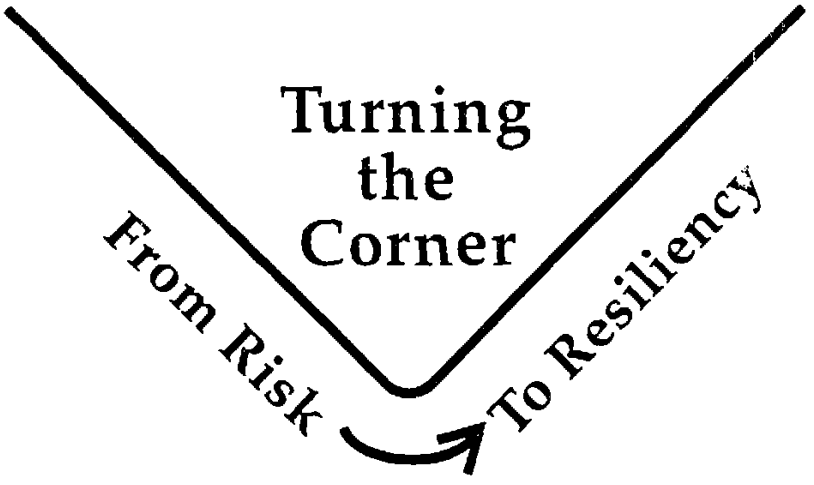

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TURNING THE CORNER:
From Risk to Resiliency

A Compilation of Articles from the Western Center News

By

Bonnie Benard

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November 1993

Preface

One theme certainly echoes throughout Bonnie Benard's "Corners on Research" that cover the last three years in the *Western Center News:* The time has come to "turn the corner" from our focus in prevention on at-risk kids to a concentration on creating environments that will nurture the innate resiliency within every child and person.

We must work together to create within the settings of school, family, and community the caring relationships, the positive expectations, and the ongoing opportunities for meaningful participation that are the keys to resiliency and successful human development. To foster resiliency we must change our attitudes, beliefs, and expectations of youth. We must name our youth as our greatest resource and enlist their active participation and creative energies in order to stand a chance at solving the social, economic, and environmental conditions that underlie and perpetuate the problems of alcohol and other drug abuse and violence in our communities and that diminish the possibility of that powerful protective factor—a bright future—for a growing number of our nation's youth.

Over the past years, the stakes have gotten higher as the United States has positioned itself as the most violent country in the industrialized world, leading the world in homicides, rapes, and assaults. The urgency with which we need to build communities, protective environments of caring relationships, positive expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation for all our children, could not be greater. It is with this hope that we offer you this collection of "Bonnie's Corner" from the Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities' *Western Center News*. Please feel free to hand out copies or to use the information as you see the need. We would hope that the positive message will help to create the school, the community, and the family that will provide the systems to nurture and provide the protective factors that will give us the children (and the adults) that will result in a nation of caring.

Judith A. Johnson
Director
Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities

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Corner on Research

Peer Programs Hold Promise for Prevention

By BONNIE BENARD
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A year ago I wrote an article for the Illinois Prevention Resource Centers *Prevention Forum* newsletter which addressed the critical need for the prevention and education fields to change the framework from which they often view youth—to see children and youth not as problems which need to be fixed but as resources who can contribute to their families, schools, and communities. In that article I discussed a powerful strategy for providing youth the opportunity to be useful contributing members of their communities—youth service.

I still believe youth service programs at the middle, junior, and high school level can play a major role in reducing the alienation many youth feel from their families, schools, and communities, a disconnectedness that often manifests in the social problems of alcohol/drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and dropping out of school. However, what has become increasingly clear to me this last year is the need for children to experience themselves as resources from early childhood on. This means youth service must be a concept we infuse throughout our schools from the preschool level forward; youth service should not be another program or course tacked on to an already over-full curriculum. The chances that a semester of youth service will instill in an already alienated adolescent a sense of personal worth and value—after experiencing years of treatment as a problem—are slim.

What I am advocating in stating that the concept of youth service must be infused throughout our schools is none other than the adoption of a peer resource model of education in which schools and classrooms are restructured so that youth—from early childhood through late adolescence—are provided ongoing, continuous opportunities to be resources to each other.

I use the term "peer resource" to refer to any program that uses children and youth to work with and/or help other children and youth. Included in this definition are programs such as youth service, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, cross-age tutoring, peer helping (replaces the term "peer counseling"), peer mediation, peer leadership, and youth involvement.

The rationale for a peer resource model of education is multifaceted and grounded in research from many disciplines, and the research evidence for the effectiveness of peer resource programs on a youth's academic and social development is very compelling. Researchers have found that peer relationships contribute to a child's cognitive development and socialization in a variety of ways. In the arena of peer interactions, children learn attitudes, values, and skills through peer modeling and reinforcement. Peers are critical in the the development and internalization of moral standards. Through reciprocal peer interactions children learn to share, to help, to comfort, and to empathize with others. They learn social skills, such as impulse control, communication, creative and critical thinking, and relationship or friendship skills. In fact, the failure to develop social and relationship skills is a powerful, well-proven early indicator of later substance abuse, delinquency, and mental health problems.

Developing peer programming throughout the life cycle—self-help groups, mutual aid groups, for neighbor natural helpers, intergenerational programs, etc.—should be a major focus of prevention policy and programming. We all know the negative power of cultural norms promoting alcohol use; imagine the positive power of a school-community, let alone society, that promoted and systematically infused the value of caring for others!

EDITOR'S NOTE: For a complete research-based discussion of peer relations and peer resource programs, Bonnie Benard's paper, The Case for Peers, *is available from the Western Center's Resource Center.*

From *Western Center News*, December 1990, Vol. 4, No. 1

Corner on Research

Collaboration Fosters Creative Problem Solving

By BONNIE BENARD
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It has become increasingly clear to the prevention field that collaborative, communitywide efforts are essential if we are to actually create the positive, supportive, and nurturing environments that will, in turn, discourage alcohol and drug abuse and other social problems like teen pregnancy, child abuse, delinquency, school failure, and dropping out. These problems are not only interrelated but share common roots that lie in the community. The responsibility, therefore, in addressing these problems falls to the community as a whole and not only to a few institutions of the community, such as the family and the school.

This growing awareness of social problems as community problems is not only witnessed in the developing consensus on the part of policymakers, advocates, and public- and private-sector organizations and foundations that only communitywide solutions can solve communitywide problems, but actualized in the thousands of communities across our nation who have mobilized to work together to solve problems like alcohol and drug abuse.

Collaboration, defined as a group of individuals who work together on common goals (creating healthy environments in order to reduce alcohol and drug use, for example), is a process that exemplifies the principles of prevention philosophy: empowerment, mutual problem solving and decision making, and mutual respect. In fact, the very process of collaboration, of coming together out of mutual concern and agreeing to work together, is doing prevention, for we're actually creating a more supportive environment by this action.

Through the process of involving representatives from all sectors of the community, problems will more likely be addressed at their source and not just dealt with symptomatically. As Ann Lieberman states, "None of us, no matter what our position, has the answers to the complex problems we face. The more people work together, the more we have the possibility of better understanding these complex problems and acting on them in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect."

The benefits commonly identified in the literature from using a collaborative model are as follows: (1) While we have a scarcity of research documenting program effectiveness, the literature on collaboration consistently identifies program effectiveness as a major benefit of collaboration. This is not only the result of the creation of a solution that addresses systemwide and not symptomatic change but also because ownership is spread among systems, thereby increasing the number of "stakeholders," those that have invested themselves and are committed to working on the problem. (2) The pooling of resources (time and money) reduces the loss from duplicated and fragmented interventions and provides a cost-effective way to address problems. (3) The process of collaborating (communicating, planning, problem solving, decision making, resolving conflicts, and laughing together) breaks down the isolation people often experience working alone and creates a stimulating, empowering, creative experience that builds nurturing and supportive relationships among the participants.

The following attributes have been consistently identified as essential to effective collaborative efforts, be they community task forces of concerned citizens, interagency, or interprofessional collaboratives, or statewide or national networks:

1. As Shirley Hord explains, "The extent to which organizations share interests and needs before joining is a major determinant of their propensity to work together. There must be a sense of gain for each."

2. Time is necessary to do joint planning and consensual decision making, the essence of collaboration. Furthermore, as Lieberman states, "Groups of people who work together need enough time together to strip away the stereotypes held by people in different positions doing different kinds of work."

3. Roy Park claims energetic people are the heart of a collaborative team, and Shirley Hord concludes that "Reaching-out, action-taking individuals are needed to initiate and sustain the collaborative effort."

4. Sharing of resources—funds, staff, etc.—is the

From *Western Center News*, March 1991, Vol. 4, No. 2

modus operandi for collaborating organizations. The rewards, or expected outcomes, must be worth the investment to each participant.

5. Group meetings are ongoing and frequent in successful collaboratives. As Hord concludes, "The collaborating mode is a sharing one, and sharing is grounded in communication."

6. The importance of institutional support to a collaborative effort is reiterated throughout the literature. According to Adrienne Baily, "At a minimum, effective collaboration must have the enthusiastic backing of top leadership if not their actual participation."

7. Broad-based representation—including youth—is critical to make sure not only elites are represented.

8. According to several authors the failure to establish mutual goals and objectives is a major reason collaborations fail.

9. While attention to group task, that is, goal accomplishment, is essential, we must remember that collaboration is an interpersonal process. This requires close attention to group process as well as group process skills.

10. Probably no quality better captures the essence of collaboration than the spirit of mutual respect; collaboration rests upon the principle that each person is capable and has something to offer.

11. In collaboration, power, control, and responsibilities must be shared; in fact several "experts" recommend sharing leadership and thus giving each person the opportunity to develop leadership and group facilitation skills. Linda Clements states: "In a genuine collaboration, all partners learn and all partners teach."

12. Shared planning, decision making, evaluation, and leadership among partners creates a sense of ownership on the part of each participant. The principle of shared ownership has been a cornerstone for community development theory and practice for decades and is a critical component of any successful change effort.

13. Commitment is also the direct outgrowth of equal participation by collaborating partners. According to Roberta Culbertson, "Wherever they are and whatever their goals, prevention programs are successful to the degree that they address one thing: people's commitment and responsibility for a positive and supportive community."

14. What is often overlooked and yet is unanimously identified in the literature as essential to successful collaboration are incentives and rewards, be they funding, recognition, or just plain fun!

15. Traits like patience, persistence, initiative, flexibility, risk taking, empathy, self-assurance and self-realization have all been identified by various researchers and practitioners as critical to working in a collaborative relationship with others.

Essentially, these all reflect an openness to life and new experience and a willingness to share with others. The resounding conclusion of panelists, presenters, and researchers at the 1989 Society for Applied Anthropology's Conference on Collaboration was that collaboration is a "people process" and requires, first and foremost, attention to "people issues." Comments like the following echoed throughout the conference: "Collaboration is a social process;" "Human dynamics is the basis for any collaborative effort;" "Collaboration is person-to-person." Furthermore, those who have studied successful schools and organizations have found them to be people-centered.

All this reiterates a central tenet of prevention philosophy: the need to create positive and caring environments which encourage our working and playing together in our families, schools, workplaces, and communities.

How we relate to each other in these arenas determines how successful we will actually be in achieving our goals of reducing alcohol and drug use by youth. Gandhi's dictum that our means will determine our ends, i.e., that there is no way to peace but peace is the way, is advice well heeded.

Corner on Research

Schools Should Celebrate Multicultural "Salad"

By BONNIE BENARD
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Research clearly demonstrates that if we are to truly address the issue of substance abuse in ethnic minority populations, we must face head-on the underlying dynamic of racism in our society. What is equally clear is that to create a society that values and nourishes its cultural diversity, we must create environments for children from infancy on that are characterized by respect for difference and by high expectations of success for *all* children.

While public policies targeting discrimination and segregation are essential at all governmental levels—local, state, and national—if we are committed to fighting racism, we cannot wait for policies from "above" to propel us. Rather, as in any successful change effort, we must "think globally" but "act locally," starting "where we are with what we got." This means taking action right in our own schools and communities.

While the school is often unfairly scapegoated and certainly forced to bear the burdens of social problems created by our political and economic systems, as well as the responsibility for their amelioriation, the school, as the major institution for socialization in our society, is a critical arena in which inequality is perpetuated. "Schools are the instruments by which people control access to more specialized microcultures and to the power and privilege they confer," wrote Ward Goodenough in a 1976 article in *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*. Historically, schools have played a significant role in denying minorities access to the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in American society.

Essential to living and working in increasingly culturally diverse schools, workplaces, and communities is a perspective that cultural diversity is not a problem or crisis but rather an incredibly exciting opportunity enabling every American to experience other peoples and cultures.

In fact, when discussing the issue of multiculturalism or multicultural education, we must remember we're not only concerned with creating opportunities for ethnic minority youth. Rather, even though inextricably intertwined with this concern, we're concerned with empowering *all* youth through cross-cultural interaction, with changing the hearts and minds of the dominant culture, beginning with preschool children, to not only respect difference and appreciate other cultures but to learn cross-cultural literacy and competency as well.

The current popular metaphor to describe this perspective of multiculturalism is that of the "salad bowl" or "fruit salad" in which each vegetable or fruit retains its integrity and yet contributes to creating the whole. This perspective will allow us to develop a truly culturally transformed society that celebrates its diversity.

An *attitude that celebrates diversity* is the foundation upon which a school can be culturally transformed and the principle around which all school change efforts are organized.

So, just how do we proceed in this endeavor? From a review of the extensive literature on "multicultural education," five components appear to be essential to creating a culturally transformed school community:

- Active involvement of the school community
- School policy
- Redistribution of power and authority within school and classrooms
- High expectations by teachers
- Curriculum issues: infusion, language study, individual learning style, and personnel

If we are truly concerned with prevention of problems such as substance abuse, delinquency, and teen pregnancy, we as a nation must commit ourselves to ensuring that all people have access to health care, child care, housing, adequate nutrition, education, and employment opportunities. We must make our commitment and exert our collective will to ensure that two ends are achieved: all youth are given the opportunities to celebrate their respective cultures as well as the opportunities to experience academic success. If we make these two goals inseparable, wrote Yolanda Moses in a 1990 article in *Education and Urban Society*, "Education will move from being

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in crisis to being what it can and should be: the seed ground for a more just and vital culture."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Fo a complete discussion of multiculturalism in schools, Benard's paper, Moving Toward a "Just and Vital Culture": Multiculturalism in Our Schools, *is available from the Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities, 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204, (800) 547-6339, ext. 486. In California, call SWRL, (213) 598-7661, or FWL, (415) 565-3000.*

Prevention Should Emphasize Protective Factors

By BONNIE BENARD
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The field of prevention, both research and practice, came a long way in the 1980s: from short-term, even one-shot, individual-focused interventions in the classroom to a growing awareness and beginning implementation of long-term, comprehensive, environmental-focused interventions expanding beyond the school to include the community. Furthermore, in the mid-1980s we finally started to hear preventionists talking about prevention strategies and programs based on research identifying the underlying risk factors for problems like alcohol and other drug abuse, teen pregnancy, delinquency, gangs, and dropping out.

While certainly a giant step in the right direction, the identification of risks does not necessarily provide us with a clear sense of just what strategies we need to implement to reduce the risks. More recently, we are hearing preventionists talk about concepts like "protective factors," about building "resiliency" in youth, about basing our strategies on what research has told us about the environmental factors that facilitate the development of youth who do not get involved in the life-compromising problems of school failure, drugs, and so on.

What clearly becomes the challenge for the 1990s is the implementation of prevention strategies that strengthen protective factors in our families, schools, and communities. If we can determine the personal and environmental sources of social competence and wellness, we can better plan preventive interventions focused on creating and enhancing the personal and environmental attributes that serve as the key to healthy development. In their 1983 book *Stress, Coping and Development in Children,* Norman Garmezy and Michael Rutter write: "Ultimately, the potential for prevention surely lies in increasing our knowledge and understanding of reasons why some children are not damaged by deprivation."

A phrase occurring often in the literature sums up the resilient child as one who "works well, plays well, loves well, and expects well." Since this is a little too abstract for most researchers, the following more specific attributes have been consistently identified as describing the resilient child:

- *Social Competence.* This commonly identified attribute of resilient children usually includes the qualities of responsiveness, flexibility, empathy and caring, communication skills, a sense of humor, and any other prosocial behavior.
- *Problem-Solving Skills.* These skills include the ability to think abstractly, reflectively, and flexibly and to attempt alternate solutions for both cognitive and social problems.
- *Autonomy.* Different researchers have used different terms to refer to autonomy, including a "strong sense of independence," an "internal locus of control," a "sense of power," "self-esteem," "self-efficacy," "self-discipline," and "impulse control." Essentially, what researchers are talking about is a sense of one's own identity and an ability to act independently and exert some control over one's environment. Several researchers have also identified the ability to separate oneself from a dysfunctional family environment—"to stand away psychologically from the sick parent"—as the major characteristic of resilient children growing up in families with alcoholism and mental illness.
- *Sense of Purpose/Future.* Within this category fall several related attributes invariably identified in the protective-factor literature: healthy expectancies, goal-directedness, success orientation, achievement motivation, educational aspirations, persistence, hopefulness, hardiness, belief in a bright future, a sense of anticipation, a sense of a compelling future, and a sense of coherence.

While research also ascribes a few other characteristics, such as good health and being female, to resilient children, the attributes of social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and sense of purpose appear to be the common threads running through the personalities of resilient children—those who "work well, play well, love well, and expect well"—no matter their health or sex status.

Now, looking beyond the children themselves to their environments—their families, schools, and communities—the protective characteristics that appear to facilitate the development of resiliency in

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youth fall into three categories: (1) caring and support, (2) high expectations, and (3) opportunities for children to participate.

Research has shown that shifting the balance or tipping the scales from vulnerability to resilience may happen as a result of one person or one opportunity. Individuals who have succeeded in spite of adverse environmental conditions in their families, schools, and/or communities often have done so because of the presence of environmental support in the form of one family member, one teacher, one school, or one community person who encouraged their success and welcomed their participation.

While tipping the scales toward resiliency through individual, serendipitous relationships or events is certainly important, the increasing number of children and families that are experiencing risks in their lives due to environmental deprivation necessitates that we preventionists take a systems perspective and intervene with planned environmental strategies to build protection into the lives of all children and families. From this perspective, a major underlying cause of the development of social problems can be traced to the gradual destruction of naturally occurring social networks in the community. The social, economic, and technological changes since the late 1940s have created a fragmentation of community life, resulting in breaks in the networks and linkages between individuals, families, schools, and other social systems within a community that traditionally have provided the protection—the "social capital"—necessary for healthy human development.

What has become clear, not only from the failure of alcohol and drug abuse programs and other prevention programs that do not address this root cause but from the positive findings of protective factor research into why some kids succeed, is the need for prevention efforts to build these networks and intersystem linkages. We must work within our families, schools, and community environments to build social bonds by providing all individuals with caring and support, relating to them with high expectations, and giving them opportunities to be active participants in their family, school, and community life. While volumes can be written (and have!) on just how to go about this, the strategies are fairly simple and reflect not a need for behavioral interventions as much as for an attitude change—a willingness to share power within a system, to create a system based on reciprocity and sharing rather than on control.

We also must work to build linkages between families and schools and between schools and communities. It is only at this intersystem level—and only through intersystem collaboration within our communities—that we can build a broad enough, intense enough network of protection for all children and all families.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For a complete discussion of resiliency and protective factors, Benard's paper, Fostering Resiliency in Kids: Protective Factors in the Family, School, and Community, *is available from the Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities, 101 S.W. Main, Suite 500, Portland, Oregon 97204, (800) 547-6339, ext. 486. In California, call Southwest Regional Laboratory, (213) 598-7661, or Far West Laboratory for Educational R&D, (415) 565-3000.*

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Corner on Research

School Restructuring Can Promote Prevention

By BONNIE BENARD
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While the relationship between substance abuse and school disengagement and failure is highly complex, research clearly finds that a lack of commitment to school (or lack of achievement motivation) often precedes and is a risk factor for later problems with alcohol and drugs (Austin, 1991; Newcomb and Bentler, 1986; Hawkins et al, in press). Furthermore, research into both effective schools and resilient youth also identifies the positive academic and social outcomes in youth who attend schools characterized by climates of caring, participation, and high expectations for all students (Rutter, 1979; Wehlage et al, 1989; Benard, 1991). Our current sad state of affairs, however, is described succinctly by Thomas Toch in his recent book on educational reform, *In the Name of Excellence: The Struggle to Reform the Nation's Schools:* "The vast majority of public schools simply fail to create a climate in which teachers want to teach and students want to learn" (1991).

Because research so clearly implicates positive school climate as a mediator of substance abuse, it is imperative that we preventionists become active voices in the current discussions around educational reform—at the local, state, and national levels. The current "hot topic" of school restructuring is especially salient to the substance abuse prevention field because schools will not and cannot become caring and participatory places unless the social relationships among administrative staff, teachers, and students are systemically changed to encourage the creation of supportive and collaborative human networks. The research of social scientists such as Seymour Sarason, Thomas Toch, Frank Riessman, and Nel Noddings—to name only a few—has pointedly demonstrated that school is first and foremost a social situation, and that "educational change must address the mechanisms which nourish and sustain the life-giving qualities of these relationships" (Weinstein, 1990).

While the concept of restructuring appears to mean different things to different people, it seldom is used to refer to this actual systemic change in social relationships. As a recent report on school restructuring concludes, "Restructuring has come to stand for efforts carried on at a variety of levels, justified by a diverse array of educational and organizational theories, and with a number of different goals in mind" (Kahne et al, 1991). In fact, in their book, *Restructuring Schools: The Next Generation of Educational Reform,* Elmore et al state: "School restructuring has many of the characteristics of what political and organizational theorists call a 'garbage can,' [accommodating] a variety of conceptions of what is problematic about American education, as well as a variety of solutions" (1990).

Unfortunately, much of what passes for restructuring—strategies such as parental choice, special pedagogies, even site-based management—can result in just more educational "tinkering," rather than in systemic changes in social relationships that can significantly affect students' academic and social outcomes. According to several investigators of social change, real restructuring means the actual altering of the old or the creating of new linkages and patterns of social relationships, a process ultimately dependent on and resulting in the redistribution of power within the system (Sarason, 1990; Seidman, 1988; Riessman, 1991). Restructuring means empowering teachers to support each other and the children, as well as to participate in collaborative decisionmaking. Furthermore, restructuring also means empowering students to support each other, as well as to participate in the decisions affecting what goes on in their school and classroom. True restructuring means the redistribution of policymaking power, not only from the central office administration to the local school (school-based management) and not only from the principal to the teachers, parents, and community (family-school-community collaboration); rather, true restructuring must also involve a shift in power to the school's primary constituency, the students themselves.

In his recent and very wise book, *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform,* Seymour Sarason unequivocally states that unless students are given "the right and responsibility [i.e., power] to participate in forums where the constitution of the

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classroom is forged," any attempts at improving student outcomes through educational reform are doomed to fail: "The sense of powerlessness frequently breeds reduced interest and motivation, at best a kind of passionless conformity and at worst a rejection of learning. When one has no stake in the way things are, when one's needs or opinions are provided no forum, when one sees oneself as the object of unilateral actions, it takes no particular wisdom to suggest that one would rather be elsewhere" (1991). Furthermore, because the redistribution of power is systemic change, he adds, "Whatever factors, variables, and ambience are conducive for the growth, development, and self-regard of a school's *staff* are precisely those that are crucial to obtaining the same consequences for students in a classroom"—and vice versa! These factors, as discussed earlier, are clearly identified in research as the school climate variables of caring, participation, and high expectations.

So, just what form should school restructuring take? What strategies are implied from the above discussion? While no one strategy is the be-all and end-all for restructuring the power relationships within schools to create more social support and participation opportunities, an overwhelming amount of research supports schoolwide cooperative learning and other peer resource approaches as the single most effective way to achieve these mutually reinforcing goals. Creating a cooperative/collaborative school culture is a process involving the total school constituency and is based on the establishment of the common goals of creating classrooms and school communities that care and support *all* kids and teachers, that have high expectations for *all* kids and teachers, and that provide *all* kids and *all* teachers with the opportunities to participate and to be successful.

Certainly, many other strategies exist for creating within our schools a caring climate and opportunities to participate and experience success—for example, reduced class size, K-8 schools, intergenerational programs, cross-age tutoring, mentoring, and many other specific peer resource programs such as buddy systems, peer tutoring, peer education, peer helping, and peer support groups. However, unless a cooperative learning structure is *infused* schoolwide, these programs can become mere add-ons, more ineffectual "tinkering" and not the structural, systemic change in power relationships that will truly transform the school culture and from which these other various strategies will naturally flow.

Moreover, the restructuring of power to create a cooperative/collaborative school is also perhaps the most critical variable in creating a truly multicultural classroom and school (Benard, April 1991). Because the school is a microcosm of the larger society in which ethnic minorities—and youth—have systemically been denied access to power, moving toward multiculturalism necessitates empowering ethnic minority youth. The conclusions of research into why so many multicultural programs fail parallels that of research into why educational reform efforts never seem to make a difference: the issue of power is not dealt with. "It is, of course, far easier to tamper with curriculum or adopt a new slogan than to redesign the ways in which teachers, students, and administrators relate to one another. But such changes seem to be a prerequisite for successful introduction of pluralism into contemporary education" (Rosen, 1977). Furthermore, "To act as if power does not exist is to ensure that the power status quo remains the same" (Delpit, 1988). And to ignore the issue of power is to ensure that no real change, no educational reform, occurs.

While research is certainly clear that the redistribution of power to involve youth is critical to successful educational change, the concept of redistributing power in our society—especially to youth and those who work with youth—requires a paradigm shift of the highest order! To view youth as resources instead of as problems remains difficult for many policymakers and practitioners philosophically, let alone operationally. Asa Hilliard recently described the situation well: "I have long wondered why it took us so long to 'discover' cooperative learning, an approach that is well-known among many peoples in the world, and why, once 'discovered,' it has become so difficult to execute. At least one reason must have to do with the fact that *we do not have a cooperative philosophy in the general culture.* The pervasive commitment to vouchers and school choice certainly does not suggest a cooperative but, rather, a competitive philosophy. We no longer accept, it seems, the idea that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers" (1991).

The challenge for us as preventionists concerned with creating the conditions that promote healthy human development in order to prevent problems like substance abuse is clear: We must become involved in the educational reform dialogue; we must advocate for bringing the *human* element into the discussion; we must persevere together with vision, courage, and mutual support to create within each of our schools a climate of caring, of participation, and of high expectations for all—a climate that, indeed, encourages us to be our brothers' and sisters' keepers.

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Corner on Research

Creating Change Requires Vision, Interaction

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Given the politics of the time, it's hard not to get discouraged and not to feel that one's efforts are merely "plugging the hole in the dike," as the cliché goes. Do our efforts really make a difference in the wake of a government that fails to invest in the health, education, and welfare of its people, especially in its children, and chooses instead to allow an enormous and growing concentration of wealth to accrue to a small percentage of its population? For example, the average income for the bottom 25 percent of the population has increased about 4 percent since 1969, while the top 5 percent experienced a 30 percent increase in real income! Another angle: In America, the compensation of major CEOs is between 85 and 100-plus times that of the average worker (for comparison, the ratio in Japan is 17:1; in France and Germany, 25:1). Certainly, the growing disparity between the rich and poor, with increasing numbers of middle-class Americans falling into the latter, has been documented by economists and demographers as a foreboding trend for the future of this nation.

Given also our knowledge that poverty is perhaps the greatest risk factor for the development of problems like alcohol and other drug abuse, good systems-thinking (i.e., common sense!) clearly identifies the most efficient, cost-effective prevention to be focused at the policy level on the allocation of resources. While this reality behooves us as preventionists concerned with social and economic justice to be involved at the political level, we are still forced to continue "plugging" along in a far-from-ideal or systemic way in our work to create better environments for children and families. And while we must "think globally," unless we aspire to some sort of madness, we must "act locally," and furthermore be able to acknowledge all the successful "plugging" we do.

From talking with practitioners and from reviewing the research on planned change and resilient youth, I have drawn some conclusions about successful change—for social change is what prevention is about. I see seven principles as the essence of successful change, and thus, as the essence of programs that create opportunities for all youth and families to live fulfilling lives.

1. Believe in your ability to make a difference

The expertise and the power to change and to make change resides in each of you as practitioners. Terrence Deal and Allan Kennedy tell the following story in their book, *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life*: "To inspire [her employees] with her own confidence, [Mary Kay Ash, founder of Mary Kay cosmetics] always awards diamond bumblebee pins and explains that, according to aerodynamic engineers, the wings of the bumblebee are too weak and the body is too heavy for the insect to fly. But bumblebees don't know this, and so they fly anyway. The message is clear: Anyone can be [successful] if they have the confidence and persistence to try." Your belief in your ability to make a difference is the sine qua non for any change effort, as well as a key trait of individual resiliency—it is what keeps a person going in the face of adversity.

2. Have a vision of a better world

Behind every successful change is a sense of vision, often beginning with a single person who, in turn, inspires others to share his or her dream. Research on effective cultural change, from that of Deal and Kennedy to that of Saul Alinsky and many, many successful prevention programs such as the Perry Preschool Project and New Parents As Teachers have consistently identified this sense of vision—and shared vision, as you infuse others with your vision—as not only the critical component in being a leader, but also as the essence, the glue, that binds the whole change effort. As Saul Alinsky writes in *Rules for Radicals*, "A bit of a blurred vision of a better world" is what keeps a change agent going in spite of setbacks.

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3. Understand that change is a people process

While you must have a vision, a sense of mission if you will, successful change necessitates that we understand—and act on this understanding—that it is at the interpersonal level that change will actually occur. As one practitioner phrases it, "You can't shake hands with an organization!" As practitioners, we must follow the "garbage-can" method of social change: We must start where we're at with what we've got! This usually means working with some people who aren't easy to work with. As Roger Fisher and Scott Brown emphasize in their book, *Getting Together: Building Relationships as We Negotiate*, we will not get what we want unless we are willing to build relationships with those we deal with. Furthermore, successful collaborations and successful organizations—including schools—have clearly been shown to pay attention, first and foremost, to people issues.

Besides the utility of paying attention to the people process, it is also the people relationships that will keep you going as a change agent. The following quote from a letter written to a young activist by the theologian Thomas Merton illustrates this point:

"Do not depend on the hope of results. When you are doing the sort of work you have taken on...you may have to face the fact that your work will be apparently worthless and even achieve no result at all, if not perhaps results opposite to what you expect. As you get used to this idea, you start more and more to concentrate not on the results, but on the value, the truth of the work itself. And there, too, a great deal has to be gone through as gradually you struggle less and less for an idea and more and more for specific people. The range tends to narrow down, but it gets much more real in the end; it is the reality of personal relationships that saves everything."

And as several successful change agents like Michael Carrera in New York City or Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund point out, saving one child, one person, is success. Michael Carrera states, "We can only go so far in saying, 'The government is the enemy'; then we must roll up our sleeves, get in the trenches, and save one kid!"

4. Create caring relationships

Not only do successful change agents acknowledge that change is a people process, they understand that a caring relationship with their clientele is the key to change. The research on protective factors is loaded with examples of the power one caring teacher or adult has to change the life trajectory, the outcome for a child. Concomitantly, other investigators of why kids drop out of school clearly identify the lack of caring as a major reason. Furthermore, Lisbeth Schorr's research into successful prevention programs, especially those focused on family support, identified caring staff as a critical ingredient.

5. Believe that everyone has the innate capacity for mental health and well-being

This attitude accounts for 85 percent of successful planned change, according to one longtime community developer of longtime experience. What we're talking about here is an attitude of mutual respect that is positive, encouraging, and nonjudgmental. As community psychologist Roger Mills states, "Everyone is doing the best they can," and Michael Carrera operates on the principle that "All kids are basically good." Furthermore, this attitude includes having and communicating high expectations for our clientele. Not only is this principle validated in educational research through successful programs like Henry Levin's Accelerated Schools program and Robert Slavin's Success for All model, but research into the protective factors in the family, school, and community environments clearly identifies the strength of this attitude to empower individuals to believe that, yes, they can achieve; that, yes, they can have a bright future.

6. Elicit the active participation of those involved

Perhaps no principle is cited more often in the community development literature on promoting success. Local ownership is critical. Furthermore, we can see evidence that it works in the success of self-help support groups, cooperative learning environments, peer helping groups, collaborative teaching environments, indigenous parent educators, and so on. We also know that active participation is a major protective factor—people feel bonded to what they feel part of, to what they are involved in. Active involvement is the remedy for alienation!

7. Be committed and patient

Michael Carrera says anyone who's into helping kids had better be prepared for the "long haul" with "patient endurance" to outlast the kids. Similarly, Roger Mills, in beginning his work in the Modello

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Housing Project in Miami, says he "just would not go away!" What we're talking about here is a good, old-fashioned community organizing process that takes time and nurturing.

What we see, then, is really a spiral in which we involve more and more people: By believing in our own abilities to effect change, by understanding that change is basically an interpersonal process that requires creating a caring relationship with those we work with, by having a vision and sharing that vision with others, by believing in the power of others to change, by actively involving others in the change effort, and, finally, by being patient and committed to your effort, you will be successful. You will become part of a spiraling process of broader community change.

Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, says: "Enough committed fleas biting strategically can make even the biggest dog uncomfortable and transform even the biggest nation."

Do we really have a choice?

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Corner on Research

How Schools Convey High Expectations for Kids

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One of the clearest findings from protective factor research as well as school effectiveness research is the importance of positive and high expectations for school success (see Benard, 1991, for a discussion of this point). In fact, Judith Brook and her colleagues found that a school's high expectations, along with an emphasis on student participation and autonomy, even mitigated against the most powerful risk factor for adolescent alcohol and drug use: peers who use (1989).

While the value of high expectations is not even a disputed concept these days, it is obviously one of the most difficult to operationalize. The undermining of youths' sense of self-efficacy through low expectations communicated at school—the beginning of the insidious process of decreasing motivation and increasing alienation that eventually results in dropping out and the interrelated problems of substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and so on—continues to happen on an all-too-frequent basis. In fact, the concept of school as a risk factor for dropping out and substance abuse is cropping up increasingly in the literature.

Flip Side

The flip side of this tragic phenomenon is that because schools do have tremendous power to influence the life trajectories of youth, they can also be a positive influence, serving as protection and a buffer against other adversity and stress. This column will briefly discuss the work of two researchers, Jeff Howard of the Efficacy Institute and Rhona Weinstein of the University of California at Berkeley. These researchers not only address the issue of how schools communicate expectations to youth but also give us suggestions for how schools can turn the risk factor of low expectations into the protective factor of high expectations for all students.

Weinstein writes: "While the call to 'raise expectations' has become a large part of recent school improvement efforts, relatively little is known about how to implement both higher and more equitable expectations in practice. There are surprisingly few intervention efforts targeted toward preventing the negative effects of expectancy processes in schooling" (p. 336). And this is in spite of the fact that years of research into "expectancy communications"—the "expressions of belief, both verbal and nonverbal, from one person to another about the kind of performance to be expected"—have clearly demonstrated the powerful impact of expectancies on performance (Howard and Hammond, 1985, p. 19). Furthermore, studies consistently have found that expectations of teachers for their students have a large effect on academic achievement.

In order to plan preventive interventions, we must understand *the process* by which teacher expectations are thought to affect student performance. According to Jeff Howard, expectancies affect behavior in two basic ways. First, they directly affect performance behavior by increasing or decreasing our confidence levels as we approach a task and thus affecting the intensity of effort we're willing to expend. Second, expectations also influence the way we think about or explain our performance outcomes. "Research in social psychology has demonstrated that the causes to which people attribute their successes and failures have an important impact on subsequent performance" (Howard and Hammond, 1985, p. 20).

As Howard explains: "When people who are confident of doing well at a task are confronted with unexpected failure, they tend to attribute the failure to *inadequate effort*. The likely response to another encounter with the same or a similar task is to work harder. People who come into a task expecting to fail, on the other hand, attribute their failure to *lack of ability*. Once you admit to yourself, in effect, that 'I don't have what it takes,' you are not likely to approach that task again with great vigor" (Howard and Hammond, 1985, p. 20).

Double Whammy

A negative expectancy definitely has a double whammy: It generates failure by its effect on

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behavior via lack of confidence, and then it entices the person to blame the failure on lack of ability rather than on lack of effort, which is an entirely remediable problem. What we see here is the beginning of a vicious cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy, which for many youth is their daily experience of school. Eventually, it will lead to an early exit from school.

African-American youth, in particular, are victims of this experience. As Howard explains, the expectation of genetic intellectual inferiority—unique to this group—accompanies a black person into each new intellectual situation. "Each engagement in intellectual competition carries the weight of a test of one's own genetic endowment and that of black people as a whole. Facing such a terrible prospect, many black people recoil from any situation where the rumor of inferiority might be proved true" (Howard, 1985, p. 20).

In contrast, a positive expectancy can generate self-confidence and result in success. "An important part of the solution to black performance problems is converting the negative expectancies that work against black development into positive expectancies that nurture it" (Howard, 1985, p. 21). Howard's "Expectancy Performance Model" proposes several strategies to do this turning around. However, educators must first adopt the philosophical stance that *all children can learn*. From this belief the following strategies naturally flow.

Think You Can

First, we must directly teach children that intellectual development is something they can achieve through effort. "Think you can, work hard, get smart" are messages children must be taught. Second, we must build up children's confidence through belief and emotional support. Quoting Jon Saphier, Howard suggests we communicate the following positive, nurturing expectancy: "This schoolwork I am asking you to do is important; I know you can do it; and I won't give up on you" (1990, p. 13). And finally, we must teach children the efficacy of effective effort, step-by-step. This involves gearing instruction to the individual child's learning level, "instilling confidence, teaching him or her to think of failures or difficulties as feedback calling for an alternative approach to the task, and then supporting him or her through the step-by-step process of effective application of effort at increasingly challenging goals" (Howard, 1990, p. 15). Howard has operationalized these components of his expectancy performance model in "The Efficacy Program," an intensive teacher training and curriculum approach that is being used in cities across the country.

Having looked at the prevention strategies Howard suggests as a viable and effective approach to creating positive expectancies on the part of educators and hence successful performance by students, let's now look at other ways in which expectations are communicated to youth. As Weinstein states, teacher-child interactions are "only a piece of the web of low and unequal expectations that is currently institutionalized in schooling practices" (p. 336). Her model, an "expectancy communications model," looks "beyond patterns of differential teacher-child interaction to include the *structure and organization* of classroom and school life, which sets the stage for certain kinds of educational and social opportunities." She identifies eight features of the instructional *environment* as critical in communicating expectations to students. She says, "To create a positive expectancy climate, substantial changes need to be made in the following":

- *Curriculum*—all students should receive higher-order, more meaningful, more participative tasks
- *Grouping practices*—should be heterogeneous, interest-based, flexible
- *Evaluation system*—should reflect the view of multiple intelligences, multiple approaches, multiple learning styles
- *Motivation*—should use cooperative rather than competitive teaching strategies and focus on intrinsic motivation based on interest
- *Responsibility for learning*—should elicit active student participation and decisionmaking in their learning
- *Teacher-student relations*—should develop individual caring relationships with each student and value diversity
- *Parent-class relations*—should reach out to all parents with positive messages
- *School-class relations*—should provide lots of varying activities for all students' participation, including community service opportunities. (Adapted from Weinstein, 1991, pp. 337, 345)

In all of the above ways, expectations are communicated to students in their daily lives in school. And once again, to change the school environment to convey positive expectations necessitates first and foremost that educators adopt the attitude that *all* children can learn and all children have strengths and talents to be nurtured. With this underlying attitude, the above changes will naturally flow. Of course, once again, we're talking about making a major shift in educational paradigms, moving from a problem-focused deficit model in which only a few kids are considered intelligent enough to become

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well-educated to an empowerment model in which all children are validated for their unique strengths and abilities.

From an empowerment perspective, we have to acknowledge that educational reform that supports the healthy emotional and intellectual development of kids will not emanate from national assessments, school choice, model elite schools, and various other red herrings but from a focus on creating caring schools that have high expectations for all kids and give them lots of opportunities for participation.

As Jeff Howard concludes, "It is within our power to *decide* to believe in children; once we accept the idea that they can learn, we will discover within ourselves the *will* and the know-how to restructure our schools and our pedagogy, and enough faith in the future to invest our resources and our best people in education" (1990, p. 17).

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Corner on Research

Quality of Relationship Is Key to Mentoring

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During the last decade a social movement has quietly but rapidly been gaining momentum: the "mentoring" of youth by adult volunteers. Commonly considered a one-on-one relationship between an adult and youth that continues over time and is focused on the youth's development, mentoring's popularity and increasing presence in programs concerned with addressing the needs of youth at risk for educational failure, teen pregnancy, delinquency, and substance abuse requires preventionists to take a closer look at the literature and research on this intervention. Specifically, we need to explore whether planned mentoring is a viable prevention strategy. In other words, does mentoring promote the healthy development of children and youth? The answer to this question is not a simple yes or no.

A powerful rationale for mentoring emanates from the longitudinal research of Emmy Werner and others who have found that child-adult relationships—that is, natural mentoring, provided not only by parents and grandparents but by neighbors, teachers, and other concerned adults—are a protective factor for youth growing up in stressful family and community environments. Werner and Ruth Smith stated in their seminal study of 700 youth growing up in high-risk environments that the key to effective prevention efforts is to reinforce, within every arena, the natural social bonds—between young and old, between siblings, between friends—"that give meaning to one's life and a reason for commitment and caring."

Augmenting these rigorous, long-term examinations of life trajectories and outcomes are volumes of case studies, biographies and autobiographies of successful and famous individuals, and anecdotal observations of youths' lives that clearly identify the often pivotal role supportive adults played in the life success of the youth they mentored. For example, Bernard Lefkowitz's book, *Tough Change: Growing Up on Your Own in America*, is based on interviews with 500 disadvantaged youth, a majority of whom credited their success to the support of a caring adult in their lives. In fact, Public/Private Ventures recently initiated a number of research projects focused on mentoring based on the unintended findings from evaluations over the years of youth job training and apprenticeship programs that the bonds formed between the youths and the adults in the program were often the critical factor in whether the program had an impact on the youths' lives.

These social relationships are not an end in themselves, however, but provide youth with the motivation to access the resources, both internal and external, they need to succeed. Unfortunately, these strong natural ties have been splintered in the last 25 years as more women have entered the workforce, two-earner families have become common and necessary, single-parent families have increased, extended family networks have diminished, and economic bases have shifted. It is clear that the family and the community that traditionally provided social capital for youth are no longer able to do this for a growing percentage of our young people. And the impacts of these societal changes are most severe in the lives of disadvantaged youth.

For young people growing up in poverty, the financial capital is unavailable to purchase quality child care, quality schooling, and quality after-school programs that provide social capital in terms of additional caring adult support. Furthermore, given the exodus of middle-class African American families from inner cities, the children left behind lack the relationships with successful role models that were available to earlier generations.

The key question preventionists must address, then, is, "Can planned mentoring programs create the same positive outcomes as these mentoring relationships that evolved naturally?"

To truly answer this question requires longitudinal impact evaluations of planned mentoring interventions. Erwin Flaxman and Carol Ascher of the Institute for Urban and Minority Education state, "Successful mentoring can really only be measured over time: by how efficiently the mentees move toward their own educational goals as well as toward career and personal goals that they may not reach for a dozen years or more after they have been

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mentored." Such evidence does not yet exist. "Unfortunately," Flaxman and Ascher note, "we know very little about what mentoring will accomplish, because there is very little research on its effects."

However, the program evaluation research that does exist clearly identifies the quality of the mentoring *relationship* as the major component in the successful outcomes for youth. Planned mentoring programs can be effective if a relationship between the adult and youth develops that is based on five components: personalized attention and caring, access to resources, positive and high expectations, reciprocity and youth participation, and commitment. As Ron Ferguson explains in his study of community-based programs for African American youth, "Caring relationships that provide affiliation (i.e., belonging) and security are the foundation of what programs provide....Without the affiliation and security of caring relationships, youth hesitate to incur the costs or to take the risks that conventional success requires."

Besides personalized attention and care, the mentoring relationship is intended to provide youth from disadvantaged environments with another form of support: an access to resources—especially cultural and vocational—that they have systematically been denied. In this role of "ombudsperson," broker, or advocate, adults not only can expose and link youth to services and opportunities and social networks, but can model as well as directly instruct the youth in the skills needed to successfully negotiate the bureaucratic intricacies of institutions like schools, colleges, employment agencies, and workplaces.

In addition to providing support to a youth, one of the major functions of a mentor is to convey to a youth the message that he or she can be successful. Herein probably lies the most essential requirement for an effective mentoring relationship: an adult attitude that views youth as resources to be nurtured and not problems to be fixed. Without this positive attitude, one cannot communicate high expectations.

While discussed far less often in the adult-to-youth mentoring literature than that on organizational mentoring, reciprocity is also an essential component in any healthy relationship. That a mentoring relationship is a mutually transforming one was confirmed in a survey of 800 Career Beginnings participants from 16 cities. Not only did at least half the students say mentoring helped them learn to succeed, improve their grades, avoid drugs, increase their regard for people of other races, and improve their relationships with teachers and family, but the adults also reported positive benefits, such as helping them fulfill their own responsibilities, strengthen their family relationships, increase their regard for people of other races, and recognize that they make a difference.

Probably the best way to communicate to a youth the message of positive expectations and to encourage reciprocity is to engage the youth in joint problem solving and decisionmaking on an ongoing basis, thereby creating a truly collaborative relationship. This conveys the message that his or her opinion is listened to, respected, and acted upon. Furthermore, providing the opportunity for a mentored student to become mentor to a younger student (cross-age peer helping) is a powerful strategy for getting a student actively engaged as well as for spreading a caring ethic and reciprocity. For disadvantaged youth, many of whom have systematically been denied the opportunities to participate in a meaningful way in their schools and classrooms, a positive mentoring relationship can fulfill this very basic human need for power and control over one's life through active participation as both a mentee and as a mentor.

While caring, high expectations, reciprocity, and youth participation are critical to establishing a viable mentoring relationship, they are all moot unless an adult is willing to make a "sustained personal commitment," in the case of planned mentoring programs, for whatever period of time is designated. By making a time commitment, both the adult and student are also thereby committing themselves to being predictable, available, accessible, and responsive—all antecedents to the development of trust and mutual respect in a relationship.

A real danger exists in "over-selling" mentoring as a prevention strategy. If mentoring diverts attention from the need to address deep-seated social problems noted earlier, then advocating this approach is clearly a means of "copping out" from seeking solutions in the political arena. We must work actively to convince others that money, time, commitment, social policy restructuring, and equitable taxation are necessary to build a society in which all youth are given the opportunity to learn and succeed. As a bumper sticker I recently saw stated, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."

EDITOR'S NOTE: For a complete discussion of mentoring programs, Benard's paper, Mentoring Programs for Urban Youth: Handle with Care, *is available from the Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities, 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204, (800) 547-6339, ext. 486. In California, call SWRL, (213) 598-7661, or FWL, (415) 565-3000.*

Corner On Research

Collaboration Can Help Foster Kids' Resiliency

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article is excerpted from a recent paper, Using Community-Wide Collaboration to Foster Resiliency in Kids: A Conceptual Framework, *in which Robert Linquanti makes a case for relating Bonnie Benard's resiliency model to the process of collaboration at the community level.*

For those involved in delivering and improving effective services for children, collaboration is an idea whose time has come. With the growing awareness that our fragmented delivery of services to families and children has been underachieving at best, collaboration across agencies and with communities has quickly become a key strategy to try to improve program effectiveness and outcomes.

There has been a veritable campaign during the past three years to better understand collaboration, reflecting the many efforts to use it to improve, if not transform, our current system of fragmented services. The current system's shortcomings are well-documented:

- Reactive crisis management precludes prevention and early intervention
- Rigid, category-driven programs focus on treating symptoms rather than their underlying causes
- Lack of communication, coordination, and proximity among agencies serving children and families creates a bureaucratic obstacle course of protocols and prerequisites that virtually assures service gaps, duplication, and ineffective outcomes

Fighting Fragmentation

Thus, collaborative efforts have been driven largely by a conceptual framework of integrating services to fight fragmentation, with the goal of better orchestrating accessible, comprehensive services to meet the interrelated needs of children and families. In the many interagency efforts to link existing programs and integrate services, collaborators across agencies are overcoming structural and technical challenges through better interorganizational communication and employee cross-training, joint planning and resource pooling, co-location of services, and simplified eligibility and confidentiality requirements.

But what we are learning, and in a sense knew all along, is that interagency collaboration, though worthy and necessary, is insufficient to realize our ultimate vision. As Lisbeth Schorr recently warned, we must not become "so absorbed by the difficulty and complexity of what we are trying to change at the system level, that we lose sight of the goal of improving the lives of children and families."

Many are re-focusing attention to this basic, human level and posing some real challenges to human service professionals.

Several experts on collaboration recently have reminded us that the people we most need to actively involve as key players in the collaboration process are the very children, families, and communities we hope to help. As national child policy expert Sid Gardner emphasizes, "Trusting a community to help itself, and equipping it to do so, can release a storehouse of energy that will be one of the most important local policy resources of the 1990s."

Along with this clear emphasis to involve and empower families and communities to help themselves comes the need to build on their capacities, skills, and assets, rather than to focus primarily on their deficits, weaknesses, and problems.

Community development experts John McKnight and John Kretzmann state, "Communities have never been built upon their deficiencies," but upon "mobilizing the capacities and assets of a people and a place."

Furthermore, even as we are challenged to promote collaborations that communities own and drive, and that focus on individual and family strengths, those in youth development tell us that the risk-reduction focus of so many of our collaborative efforts could prove inadequate. Youth development expert Karen Pittman advocates "a widespread conceptual shift from thinking that youth problems are the principal barrier to youth development to thinking that youth development is the

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most effective strategy for the prevention of youth problems."

Youth advocate and collaboration expert William Lofquist also reminds us that "only when adults view and respect young people as resources from the time of their birth are we likely to create organizational and youth opportunity system cultures that in fact promote the well-being of young people."

These youth experts point out that our role is not to fix kids' problems or to treat them as recipients or objects of youth programs; it is to provide them with ample opportunities *today* to develop their competencies so they can meet their own needs to contribute and be connected to a coherent, caring community.

A New Paradigm

These perspectives form the contours of a new paradigm that challenges collaborating service professionals in these ways:

- Getting community ownership, not just representation
- Developing and utilizing people's strengths, capacities, and assets, not targeting and treating their deficiencies, weaknesses, and problems
- Moving beyond risks to actively engage children and develop their competencies

This new paradigm is forcing us to revisit the ultimate vision guiding our collaborative efforts. For if we are serious about prevention, then our ultimate vision lies beyond integrated service delivery, improved outcomes, and risk reduction.

Our ultimate vision will be of children, families, and communities that are healthy, empowered, self-sustaining, and self-helping—not dependent, but independent and interdependent. Collaborators who seek to involve and empower children, families, and communities in achieving this vision are more likely to succeed if they infuse their collaborative efforts with resiliency principles.

Resiliency refers to that quality in children who, though exposed to significant stress and adversity in their lives, do not succumb to the school failure, substance abuse, mental health, and juvenile delinquency problems they are at greater risk of experiencing. Over many years, researchers have identified protective factors present in these kids' family, school, and community environments. These factors foster the development of resilient attributes, which in turn help kids successfully avoid, minimize, or overcome risks.

In her synthesis of the resiliency literature, Benard describes the key protective factors found in these kids' families, schools, and communities:

- Having a caring and supportive relationship with at least one person
- Communicating consistently clear, high expectations to the child
- Providing ample opportunities for the child to participate in and contribute meaningfully to his or her social environment

The presence of these protective factors helps foster the growth of a resilient child—which, according to Benard, is one who is socially competent, with problem-solving skills and a sense of his or her own autonomy, purpose, and future. These resilient attributes are more likely to develop in kids whose environments have adults and youth who provide these protective factors.

And while we know only too well that adding risk factors multiplies the likelihood of health-compromising choices, we need also to remember that adding protective factors—via families, schools, and religious and youth-serving organizations throughout the community—counteracts that likelihood with equal power.

Resiliency Framework

To help us meet the challenges placed on our collaborative efforts and realize our vision of involved families within empowered communities that together bring up resilient children, the resiliency framework, with its protective factors and resilient attributes, offers collaborators significant advantages:

1. It necessarily makes our collaborations *inclusive* by recognizing that all adults within a child's environment have an active, critical role to play. Moreover, their understanding and owning this role genuinely empowers them. Collaborations that foster resiliency are more than client-friendly systems for multiple service consumption; they're user-driven processes that promote protection and nurture resilient attributes. Service professionals can facilitate that process and encourage that ownership by modeling the very same protective factors with their newfound partners.

2. It offers a compelling metaphor to guide our collaborations—that of working together to build environments rich in protection for children. The emphasis is on *the environment*, not on fixing kids' behaviors, or on doing anything to them. Indeed, kids are not responsible for becoming resilient; adults are responsible for working together to provide kids with caring and support, high expectations, and opportunities to participate in meaningful activities. To the extent that adults do this, they encourage the natural development of resilient

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attributes in kids. Thus, resiliency is an outcome of collaboration.

3. It does not orient our collaborations around deficiencies and risks, but instead recognizes and builds on participants' *strengths and capacities.* This positive focus can move participants away from the pessimism and burn-out which often plague collaborators who see themselves in an endless struggle against deficits and risks. This positive outlook also helps service workers to avoid relating to kids and families with the low expectations that can unintentionally engender a learned helplessness.

Not only can a community in collaboration foster resiliency in kids, but the very same protective factors can be used to enhance the collaborative process itself. For successful collaborators, like people building healthy communities, will care for and support one another, have high expectations of each other, and give each other significant opportunities to participate and contribute meaningfully to the collaboration's objectives. In this way, collaborators build an environment of protection for each other.

Collaborations that promote protective factors to foster resiliency in kids are more than theoretical constructs. Preventionists can draw from several tools and programs which are currently being used in communities across the country to actively engage families, schools, community organizations, and youth themselves in building environments rich in protection. For example, cities across the country are using approaches based on resiliency, such as John McKnight's Neighborhood Innovations Network at Northwestern University, the 4H and National Collaboration for Youth's Making the Grade project, and Roger Mills' Health Realization/ Community Empowerment model.

Communitywide collaboration based on protective factors is not just the best way to promote resiliency; it may be the only way to create an environment sufficiently rich in protection for kids facing the enormous stresses and risks of growing up in present-day American society. Resiliency-based collaborations are still systemically oriented, yet keep us from losing sight of the human dimension essential to any effective collaborative endeavor.

The guiding principles of resiliency are powerful precisely because they are as basic to healthy human development as they are intuitively appealing. As service professionals dedicated to prevention, each of us can promote protection through caring and supporting each other, relating with high expectations, and providing ample opportunities to contribute.

These very principles embody the spirit of collaboration, and are surely necessary to promote resiliency through protection and achieve our ultimate vision.

For a more complete discussion of resiliency-based collaboration, Linquanti's paper, *Using Community-Wide Collaboration to Foster Resiliency in Kids: A Conceptual Framework,* is available from the Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities, 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500, Portland, Oregon 97204, (503) 275-9486 or (800) 547-6339, ext. 486. In California, call Far West Laboratory, (415) 565-3000 or Southwest Regional Laboratory, (310) 598-7661.

Benard's resiliency model is described in her recent paper, *Fostering Resiliency in Kids: Protective Factors in the Family, School, and Community,* also available from the Western Regional Center.

Corner on Research

Resiliency Requires Changing Hearts and Minds

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Judging from the positive response I've had to my document on resiliency published a year and a half ago, as well as from the growing number of recent books and articles incorporating this concept, I feel the need to address what I see as the fundamental issue of the "resiliency approach"—the shifting of our personal perspective, our paradigms, from a focus on risks and deficits to a focus on protection and strengths. My concern is that the movement toward resiliency—toward creating family, school, and community environments rich in the protective factors of caring, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation—not dissolve into more add-on, quick-fix programs and strategies.

Systemic Change

The building of resilient kids is a long-term developmental process that involves *systemic* change—the fundamental altering of our human systems, including the family, the school, the neighborhood, community-based organizations, and the workplace to make each of these arenas supportive, caring, participatory climates for all involved persons. Fostering resiliency isn't something we do *to* kids; it isn't about teaching them "resiliency skills," per se. Rather, protective-factor research has clearly shown us that the development of resiliency is the process of healthy human development that is based on and grows out of nurturing, participatory relationships grounded in trust and respect. If we as adults and preventionists are truly concerned with preventing problems like alcohol and other drug abuse, then it is imperative that we make our central vision and mission the creation of supportive relationships with youth and their families. Only then will we be helping to create what Garmezy calls a "protective shield" that helps children "withstand the multiple vicissitudes that they can expect of a stressful world" (1991).

Years of educational and community research have documented that long-lasting, systemic change—change that is infused throughout the daily life of the school and community and not just a tacked-on program—begins with our beliefs, feelings, and attitudes. If we have the attitudes, we can easily learn skills and strategies; if we try to learn skills and strategies that don't match our attitudes and values, we'll drop them by the wayside. Consider this example from education: It is futile for a teacher to learn the logistics of creating cooperative learning groups in her classroom when she believes that kids need a competitive environment to be motivated or that only she has the expertise and right answers. On the other hand, the belief that each child has talents and skills to share with others will encourage her to use a pedagogy like cooperative learning.

It is only when we change our paradigms—that is, our world view or the lens through which we see our world—that we will change our feelings, beliefs, and attitudes, and ultimately our behaviors and practices. To make the systemic changes in our schools, community-based organizations, and prevention programs that will foster resiliency in kids and families depends ultimately, then, on changing the hearts and minds of all those who work with them.

Paradigm Shifting

"Paradigm-shifting" is a concept appearing in the dialogue of several fields, especially organizational development. Probably 100 different terms describe paradigm-shifting. We can best summarize the resiliency perspective this way: seeing people as resources, as experts in their own lives, as possessing innate mental health and well-being, instead of identifying and labeling them as problems. As Bill Lofquist so eloquently puts it: "If we were to use as a beginning point a new commitment to viewing and respecting young people as resources in all that we do—which incidentally would mean that we would also begin viewing and respecting all people as resources—we would create a new basis for shaping a shared *vision* and clear *mission* for youth opportunity systems" (1992).

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If we are to shift our prevention paradigm to a resiliency focus, we have to let go of our preoccupation with risk and risk factors as the research base guiding our planning and evaluation efforts. Solutions do not come from looking at what is missing; solutions will come by building on strengths. While several approaches to prevention programming try to combine a risk- and protective-factor approach, I believe that these are two incompatible paradigms for change. Individuals cannot simultaneously hold on to two competing paradigms; we cannot simultaneously see the proverbial glass as both half-empty and half-full. Thomas Kuhn, who coined the paradigm-shift concept 30 years ago in his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, discusses it as requiring a "transformation of vision" that "cannot be made a step at a time, forced by logic and neutral experience. Like a gestalt switch, it must occur all at once or not at all" (1962, p. 149). The shift is born out of "flashes of intuition" or like "scales falling from one's eyes."

As change agents, we have to focus on what works, on what we've learned from longitudinal research about what protects kids living in high-risk environments, on what we've learned from programs that have successfully reduced problems such as alcohol and other drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and school failure. As Werner and Smith state in their recent book *Overcoming the Odds: High Risk Children from Birth to Adulthood:* "Our findings and those by other American and European investigators with a life-span perspective suggest that these buffers make a *more profound* impact on the life course of children who grow up under adverse conditions than do specific risk factors or stressful life events. They appear to transcend ethnic, social class, geographical, and historical boundaries. Most of all, they offer us a more optimistic outlook than the perspective that can be gleaned from the literature on the negative consequences of perinatal trauma, caregiving deficits, and chronic poverty. They provide us with a *corrective lens*—an awareness of the self-righting tendencies that move children toward normal adult development under all but the most persistent adverse circumstances" (1992, p. 202).

This quote provides two critical rationales for the resiliency paradigm. First, we know that the protective factors of caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation are more powerful than risk factors and serve to protect kids across ethnic, social class, geographical, and historical boundaries. Second, a resiliency paradigm offers us as change agents hope and optimism, which not only can influence positive intervention outcomes but can also prevent burnout. We know, all too well, the power of negative expectancies to become negative outcomes. We also know how negative expectancies result in high levels of burn-out among teachers and other human service workers. In a discussion of paradigm-shifting in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*, Stephen Covey sees positive expectancies toward others as a "self-renewing" process: "What do we reflect to others about themselves? And how much does that reflection influence their lives? We have so much we can invest in the emotional bank accounts of other people. The more we can see people in terms of their unseen potential, the more we can use our imagination rather than our memory, with our spouse, our children, our co-workers or employees. We can refuse to label them—we can 'see' them in new fresh ways each time we're with them. We can help them become independent, fulfilled people capable of deeply satisfying, enriching, and productive relationships with others" (1989, p. 301).

Moreover, as researcher Martin Seligman explains in his recent book focused on his paradigm shift from studying learned helplessness to learned optimism (*Learned Optimism: How to Change your Mind and Your Life*), optimistic people "do better in school, win more elections, and succeed more at work than pessimists do. They even seem to lead longer and healthier lives!" (1990, p.96-97).

A third related rationale I will propose is that a risk-factor approach itself can become a risk factor. While labeling is noticeably absent from most lists of risk factors, an enormous body of research has documented the deleterious effects of programs that label and track kids. (See the related article on children of alcoholics and resiliency, Page 6.) Yes, we try to talk about high-risk environments, but we still end up with programs for high-risk kids, families, schools, and communities. We end up with programs that perhaps further "blame the victim" and further stigmatize disenfranchised populations.

Furthermore, the labeling process is clearly a demotivator to change. For change to happen, people have to have a sense of self-efficacy. They have to believe and have hope that they have the strengths and the abilities to make positive changes. A risk-factor approach that sees the "half-emptiness" of kids, families, schools, and communities can only further entrench feelings of "internalized oppression" that disenfranchised groups in our country already feel. As community development specialist John McKnight explains: "Our greatest assets are our people. But people in low-income neighborhoods are seldom regarded as 'assets.' Instead, they are usually seen as needy and deficient, suited best

for life as clients and recipients of services. Therefore, they are often subjected to systematic and repeated inventories of their deficiencies with a device called a 'needs survey.' The starting point for any serious development effort is the opposite of an accounting of deficiencies. Instead there must be an opportunity for individuals to use their own abilities to produce. Identifying the variety and richness of skills, talents, knowledge, and experience of people in low-income neighborhoods provides a base upon which to build new approaches and enterprises" (1992, p. 10).

Beyond Therapy

Educator and writer Herb Kohl also provides us with a clear challenge to move from a risk to a resiliency paradigm: "Although I've taught in East Harlem, in Berkeley, and in rural California, I have never taught an *at-risk* student in my life. The term is racist. It defines a child as pathological, based on what he or she might do rather than on anything he or she has actually done. It is a projection of the fears of educators who have failed to educate poor children. Rather than define children as 'at risk,' it would be educationally and socially more effective to join with community members and fight to eliminate poverty. Standing with the community is one strong way of showing children that their teachers care and are willing to take risks for them, instead of dubbing them 'at risk' " (Nathan, 1991, p. 679).

Similarly, in her latest book, Anne Wilson Schaef argues for moving from a mechanistic scientific paradigm to an empowering participatory paradigm. *Beyond Therapy, Beyond Science: A New Model for Healing the Whole Person* challenges all helping professionals to examine their underlying paradigm: "Are psychologists and others in the helping professions open to ask, Is the unspoken world view that underlies the assumptions in the way I practice my profession perhaps, unwittingly, contributing to the very problems that I am committed to help solve? If we are not open to struggling with this question and articulating our assumptions, we are, indeed, part of the problem" (1992, p. 227).

The challenge to us as preventionists, then, is to look within ourselves, examine our personal lenses, reflect on our practices, discuss our beliefs, values, and feelings with others, and listen to the kids and families we work with. Finally, we have to let go of prior negative beliefs and assumptions.

"Change—real change—comes from the inside out. It doesn't come from hacking at the leaves of attitude and behavior with quick-fix personality ethic techniques. It comes from striking at the root—the fabric of our thought, the fundamental, essential paradigms, which give definition to our character and create the lens through which we see the world" (Covey, 1989, p. 317). Moving to a resiliency approach requires a personal transformation of vision. Creating positive changes in ourselves requires a context characterized by caring relationships, mutual respect, and active participation.

Inside-out change means that we take care of ourselves, that we love and accept ourselves. This message resounds through the anthology *Healers on Healing*: "The best thing therapists, whether medical or psychological practitioners, can do to help their clients the most is to love themselves. When therapists really love who they are, it's easy for them to teach that love to their clients....When we're willing to love and accept ourselves, we can make changes" (Hay, 1989, p. 23).

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Corner on Research

New Research Adds to Knowledge on Resiliency

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While I hope to soon update my document *Fostering Resiliency in Kids: Protective Factors in the Family, School, and Community*, I'm going to take this opportunity to briefly mention a number of recent books that I highly recommend to those of you interested in this topic. While several of the books focus directly on resiliency and protective factors, many of the authors probably have not heard of these concepts. Yet what they are writing about is just this—the importance of environments that encourage the healthy development of all people through caring and support, high and positive expectations, and opportunities for active participation and contribution.

So, following my resiliency framework, we'll look first at the books focused on the personality attributes of resiliency and then at those that discuss the family and school environments that foster these attributes through the creation of caring environments with high expectations and opportunities for active participation. A discussion of recent books on the community and resiliency will be the focus of the next "Corner on Research."

The foundation of resiliency research is the seminal work of Emmy Werner and her colleague Ruth Smith. Last year, they published their most recent book summarizing their ongoing longitudinal study of all individuals born on the Hawaiian island of Kauai in 1955. While their earlier book, *Vulnerable But Invincible* (1982), had documented that one out of every three high-risk children developed into "a competent, confident, and caring young aduit by age 18," their new book, *Overcoming the Odds: High-Risk Children from Birth to Adulthood* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), further finds that of the remaining two out of three high-risk children who did become high-risk adolescents, two-thirds became successful adults by age 32!

Several of the conclusions drawn by Werner and Smith have profound implications for our work with youth, families, schools, and communities. First, they clearly establish the "self-righting tendencies that move children toward normal adult development under all but the most persistent adverse circumstances." Second, "The life stories of the resilient youngsters now grown into adulthood teach us that competence, confidence, and caring can flourish, even under adverse circumstances, if children encounter persons who provide them with the secure basis for the development of trust, autonomy, and initiative." Third, their research, along with other prospective longitudinal research, finds that these positive, buffering relationships "make a more profound impact on the life course of children who grow up under adverse conditions than do specific risk factors or stressful life events." Fourth, it is never too late to change a life trajectory from despair to one of hope and success. And last, a focus on these protective factors gives all of us who work with youth—and adults—a motivating sense of optimism that through our positive relationships, youth and adults can recover their inner strengths.

If you read no other book on resiliency, I encourage you to read this passionate account of the most solid research done in the field.

Self-Righting Tendencies

A just-published book by Steve and Sybil Wolin, *The Resilient Self: How Survivors of Troubled Families Rise Above Adversity* (New York: Villard Books, 1993) is a compelling and beautiful book that documents the "self-righting tendencies" and attributes of individuals who have learned to love well, work well, play well, and expect well in spite of growing up in very troubled families. Drawing on their combined therapeutic experiences in working with these "survivors," as well as on prior research, the Wolins make the point "that by learning about resilience, you can become resilient—that you can "master your painful memories rather than tripping the 'Victim's Trap.' " Instead of compulsively rehashing the damage you have suffered, the Wolins write, you can accept the fact that your troubled family has left its mark and give up the futile wish that your scars can ever disappear completely. You can get revenge by living well instead of squandering your energy by blaming and fault-finding. And finally, they say,

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you can break the cycle of your family's troubles and put the past in its place.

The Wolins identify seven traits of resilience that develop when children actively learn to watch out for themselves, identify allies outside the family, and engage in rewarding activities: insight, independence, relationships, initiative, creativity, humor, and morality. Targeting primarily adult survivors and therapists who work with them, the book challenges helping professionals to move beyond the old paradigm, the "damage model," to the "challenge model" in which the incredible strengths of these survivors are acknowledged. Although the authors don't discuss implications for prevention in other settings, it is clear that any adult working with youth or other adults can, by accepting the challenge paradigm, convey the above messages to kids in troubled families and help them see their internal strengths and innate common sense.

Another "gem" that focuses on healing from a painful family past and identifies the strengths that facilitate survival and healing is Wayne Muller's *Legacy of the Heart: The Spiritual Advantages of a Painful Childhood* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992). As a therapist and minister, Muller "noted that adults who were hurt as children inevitably exhibit a peculiar strength, a profound inner wisdom, and a remarkable creativity and insight." Muller also promotes the challenge model (i.e., resiliency paradigm) and asks all who were hurt as children or those who work with adult survivors to see that "You are not broken; childhood suffering is not a mortal wound, and it did not irrevocably shape your destiny. You need not remove, destroy, or tear anything out of yourself in order to build something new. Your challenge is not to keep trying to repair what was damaged; your practice instead is to reawaken what is already wise, strong, and whole within you, to cultivate those qualities of heart and spirit that are available to you in this very moment."

In this book, Muller presents 12 childhood "wounds" and then, through a discussion based on his professional experiences and spiritual teachings from around the world, he illustrates how these pains also provide opportunities for growth. For example, from pain we learn forgiveness; from fear, faith; from disappointment, nonattachment; from isolation, intimacy; from obligation, loving kindness. While Muller, like the Wolins, is addressing therapists and adult survivors, his empowering message is one that children living in stressful families also need to hear. While it's never too late to change a life trajectory, it's also never too early!

In the arena of family, Andrew Billingsley asks us to move beyond the damage model in how we perceive African American families. In his recent book, *Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Enduring Legacy of African American Families*, he not only provides data and information that counters stereotypes and misconceptions about African American family life, he illustrates with compelling stories about real individuals the incredible resilience that has sustained this institution "against all odds."

Just as the above two books discussed the importance of adult survivors of troubled families seeing their internal strengths, Billingsley argues that while "it would be naive in the extreme to ignore the many pressures bearing down and compromising the ability of many (African American families) to meet the basic needs of their members, there is another side to the story. And we argue in this book that this other side—enduring, positive, and powerful—is more important because it is more generative. It can continually renew and sustain this vital sector of American society in the years ahead."

Billingsley is making the case, as did Werner and Smith, that a focus on strengths provides people with a realistic sense of optimism that empowers them not only as individuals but, as Billingsley so eloquently reiterates throughout this book, also enables them to work together as a collective community for social justice.

Providing a segue from the family as protective buffer to the school is James Garbarino and colleagues' book, *Children in Danger: Coping with the Consequences of Community Violence* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992). Serving as a companion piece to their 1991 book, *No Place to Be a Child: Growing Up in a War Zone*, which explored the experience of children in war zones around the world—in Mozambique, Nicaragua, Cambodia, the Middle East, and inner-city Chicago—this book addresses what professionals and policymakers can do to provide refuge and safety to nurture the resiliency of the increasing number of children who are growing up in inner-city war zones in the United States.

After documenting, through interviews with children and caregivers and through others' research, the realities of life in these war zones and the developmental tolls they take on children, the authors discuss how we can best support these children. Coming as no surprise is their conclusion that their research and that of others has found that "most children are able to cope with dangerous environments and maintain reservoirs of resilience as long as parents are not pushed beyond their stress absorption capacity. Once that point is exceeded, however, the development of young children deteriorates rapidly and markedly. Reservoirs of resilience become

depleted, day-to-day care breaks down, and rates of exploitation and victimization increase."

Unfortunately, as we've seen in the Wolin and Muller books, parents do succumb to the stresses of poverty and unemployment and are not always there to provide this powerful buffer. In the absence of a sense of predictable caregiving and structure in the home, the school becomes a vital refuge and a pivotal point in turning a life of despair into one of hope. "We observe that, despite the overwhelming pressures in the environment, 75 percent to 80 percent of the children can use school activities as a support for healthy adjustment and achievement when schools are sensitive to them and their burdens," the authors write.

Beginning with early childhood programs, school-based interventions must "stress the importance of close, mutually reinforcing, and growth-enhancing relationships between adults and children." Furthermore, quoting an earlier researcher, "The most important single factor in establishing sound mental health is the relationship that is built up between the teacher and his or her pupils. This is as true in the kindergarten as it is in the high school."

Centers of Care

And just how might we best facilitate the development of these positive relationships in the school? Nel Noddings gives us a clear road map in her recent book, *The Challenge to Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992). Noddings creates a vision of a school system built on the central mission of caring—which from her perspective incorporates the other protective factors of high expectations and opportunities for participation—and organized around "centers of care: care for self, for intimate others, for associates and acquaintances, for distant others, for nonhuman animals, for plants and the physical environment, for the human-made world of objects and instruments, and for ideas." Her approach also is "an argument, first, against an ideology of control that forces all students to study a particular, narrowly prescribed curriculum devoid of content they might really care about. Second, it is an argument in favor of greater respect for a wonderful range of human capacities now largely ignored in schools. Third, it is an argument against the persistent undervaluing of skills, attitudes, and capacities traditionally associated with women" (i.e., caring!).

As she so articulately acknowledges, her integrated way of looking at curriculum and instruction is neither new (being well described by John Dewey long ago) nor "mushy." She writes: "When we care, we accept the responsibility to work continuously on our own competence so that the recipient of our care—person, animal, object, or idea—is enhanced. There is nothing mushy about caring. It is the strong, resilient backbone of human life."

If I were queen of the world, *The Challenge to Care* would be required reading for anyone involved with children but especially parents, educators, and policymakers.

Validating Noddings' agenda is a recent study of schooling which is rather unique, ironically, in that the researchers, operating on the assumption that what matters most about education happens inside the classroom, chose as their primary experts about the classroom those who actually work there—students, teachers, administrators and staff, and parents. *Voices from the Inside: A Report on Schooling from Inside the Classroom* (Institute for Education in Transformation at the Claremont Graduate School, November 1992) found, as did Noddings, that the policy remedies offered by most education reformers seldom relate to the problems identified by students, teachers, and parents. Their data suggested that "the heretofore identifed problems of schooling (lowered achievement, high dropout rates and problems in the teaching profession) are rather consequences of much deeper and more fundamental problems."

The participants identified seven major issues from inside the classroom, including such issues as unsatisfactory relationships between and among students and staff members, differences of race and class, and deep concerns about school safety, all of which are reflected in a "pervasive sense of despair" and summed up in the statement, "This place hurts my spirit."

As you read the report (which I hope you will!), over and over again the issue of caring is raised as the Number One concern of students, teachers, and parents—caring between the teacher and student, between teachers, and among staff members. A fascinating finding was that the researchers realized over the course of the year that "the participatory research processes we are developing are critical to school and classroom transformation." Operating in the participatory, empowering resiliency paradigm by using a group process that promoted caring relationships, acknowledged everyone's expertise, and elicited everyone's participation, they were actually beginning the process of school and classroom change!

The critical role that the principal of the school plays in creating this participatory, resiliency-promoting structure in a school is the focus of Thomas Sergiovanni's book, *Moral Leadership:*

Getting to the Heart of School Improvement (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992). This book neatly complements the Noddings book, for Sergiovanni is attempting to reframe the role of leadership in a school from an old paradigm focus on management and control and the view that a school is a formal organization to a new paradigm of empowerment through caring, acknowledging the expertise of teachers and students, and facilitating their active participation in the school. A school, he says, is a community with a shared sense of values and purpose. He describes a "virtuous school" as one founded on the beliefs that a school must be a community, that this community includes parents and community as well as teachers and students, that every student can learn, that caring for the whole child is the key to academic success, and that mutual respect and positive expectations are the operating dynamics. This "virtuous school," in fact, is very similar to Noddings' "caring school" (and the "resilient school!").

Sergiovanni expresses his optimism that schools can be transformed in this way in a recent interview. "I think the door is open now to a kind of revolution," he said. "We're beginning to recognize that schools are special places where people care about teaching and learning. They're not like most organizations; you can't apply organizational principles to places characterized by sandboxes, books, and children. Schools are more like families and small communities where, if you can develop the right substitutes, you can throw traditional leadership away. There's no need for it ever again."

A Vicious Circle

I'm going to close this very selective review—there are so many exciting new books, not to mention journal selections, that I have not mentioned which relate to the resiliency paradigm —with a wonderful little resource focused on that key player in creating a school climate of caring, high expectations, and participation: the teacher. Pat Munson's *Winning Teachers/Teaching Winners* (Santa Cruz: ETR Associates, 1991) addresses a seldom-acknowledged key to effective change in the schools: how teachers feel about themselves. "When teachers feel inadequate, unappreciated and isolated, they become more punitive in their actions, display less patience in their instruction, demonstrate less compassion for students, and engage in less effective problem solving," she writes. "The results are reflected in students who see school as an uncaring institution, who lack motivation, who see little point in continuing in school and who engage in deviant behavior to compensate for their own feelings of inadequacy."

Clearly, what we have here is "a vicious cycle" that needs to be addressed by systemic changes that give teachers opportunities to form supportive, caring relationships with their colleagues with whom they collaborate in making decisions and planning their activities. However, teachers—or any adults working with youth—do have the personal responsibility to examine their beliefs and values and know who they are, no matter what the structure of their work environment. As Munson states, "The front of a classroom is a powerful place to be. The responsibility is awesome. You cannot teach and empower children to be successful if you do not hold yourself to be so. Everything you are and all that you believe is transmitted to your students at some level. We owe it to our students and ourselves to be sure that who we are and what we believe is really our truth."

Whether we like it or not, the relationships we have with youth possess the potential to become what Emmy Werner refers to as a "turning point" in another person's life. In some ways, this last book leads us back to the theme of the books we began our review with—the need to acknowledge our own strengths and sources of resilience in coping with what are often uncaring, troubled institutions that are not supportive of people and relationships; to move beyond a view of ourselves as "victims" of these institutions; and to claim the right to feel what the Wolins call "Survivor's Pride!"

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Corner on Research

Resiliency Paradigm Validates Craft Knowledge

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EDITOR'S NOTE: In this column, Bonnie Benard addresses a number of the concerns raised by the Social Development Research Group (SDRG) as expressed by J. David Hawkins in his letter to the editor (see Page 7). The Western Center News welcomes any additional perspectives from readers. If you wish to join the dialog, please send your comments to Editor, Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500, Portland, Oregon 97204.

I want to thank the Social Development Research Group for responding to my column of last March and for bringing up several issues that need to be addressed if we are to pursue the most effective strategies and approaches for preventing the development of not only alcohol and other drug abuse but of the interrelated problem behaviors of teen pregnancy, delinquency and gang violence, and school failure. I'll respond to each of the issues raised by the SDRG and then add some of my own.

First, can protective factors exist without risk factors?

"Risk and resiliency/protection are two side of a coin and cannot exist individually," the SDRG states. As I discussed in my document, *Fostering Resiliency in Kids: Protective Factors in the Family, School, and Community*, protective-factor research grew out of research focused on youth with multiple risks in their lives. However, according to Michael Rutter, the premier researcher of this question, while protective processes often mediate and buffer, they also can operate independently of risk (1987). in fact, Rutter poses this very question, "Were these not opposite sides of the same coin?" and answers that, "If the concept of protective mechanisms is to have any separate meaning it must be more than that." In concluding his discussion of this issue, Rutter states: "Protective processes is the term used here when the focus is on factors that counter risk, when the process involves a change of life trajectory from risk to adaptation, and when the mechanisms of protection seem to differ from those of vulnerability."

In many ways, this issue is not of real relevance to prevention practitioners. While, as Rutter states, "Protective mechanisms are more necessary in high-risk groups," we have all experienced risks and stressful life events, and we all require protective mechanisms—at some times and in some situations more than others—throughout our life span. When we have successfully negotiated a risk or stressful life event, we have built our resilience. Given the dynamic nature of resiliency, we have all moved in and out of resiliency. This is the nature of human development. Yet, it is just this developmental perspective that the SDRG's risk-focused approach appears to ignore.

If, as Emmy Werner and Michael Rutter both state, the development of resiliency is a long-term developmental process and the human organism—this means each and every infant, child, youth, and adult—is a "self-righting mechanism," protective processes are clearly those that promote successful, healthy development throughout the life span (Werner and Smith, 1992; Rutter, 1984) To say, as the SDRG does, that, "In the absence of risk for alcohol or other drug abuse, there is no need for protective factors or processes to prevent abuse," is to ignore decades of research in developmental psychology and developmental psychopathology. This is tantamount to saying that all kids do not require the fulfilling of their basic human developmental needs for caring and support, positive expectations and regard, and active participation in their community—which, not coincidentally, are also the major categories of protective processes!

Are risk and protective factors mutually incompatible paradigms for change?

I have never "asserted that the concepts of risk and protective factors are somehow incompatible"—they are part and parcel of human experience. I did state, "While several approaches to prevention programming try to combine a risk- and protective-factor approach, I believe that these are two incompatible paradigms for change." The issue here is change strategy. I will briefly reiterate my rationale for using a protective-factor as opposed to a

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risk-factor approach to initiating family-, school-, or community-based change efforts.

First of all, a knowledge base founded on risk does not inform us as to what does work. As Norman Garmezy has stated, a focus on risks and problems has "provided us with a false sense of security in erecting prevention models that are founded more on values than facts" (in Werner, 1989, p. xix). We are not "in denial," as the SDRG suggests, about the risks in youths' lives; the knowledge of risk factors gives us, as another researcher has stated, "a context for understanding kids' lives." However, it does not tell us what to do to improve their lives. It begs the big question, "So what?" My colleagues and I have found that when we ask the participants at our workshops to identify what they see as problems in kids' lives that often lead to behaviors such as dropping out, substance abuse, and gang involvement, even though a majority often have never heard of the concept "risk factor," they can generate a list that has all 16+! Practitioners are keenly aware of what's going on with their kids. They don't want to hear about problems and risks; they want solutions and protections.

A second rationale speaks to the issue of labeling youth, families, and communities according to their risks. For whatever reasons, risk factors usually get translated by practitioners and policymakers into programs for "at-risk" and "high-risk" youth and families. According to the SDRG, this labeling and targeting is necessary to get services where they are needed the most. They state, "Knowledge of the degree of risk exposure of a population, group, or individual facilitates the allocation of prevention resources where they have the most potential to make a difference." I wholeheartedly agree that we should allocate resources to populations experiencing the multiple risks associated with poverty. As I stated previously, "According to most researchers, the greatest protection we could give children is ensuring them and their families access to the basic necessities...for healthy human development: health care, child care, housing, education, job training, employment, and recreation" (1991). We do not need to "identify risks" in order to make these basic necessities of life available to all children and families in this country. And it certainly does not take any more research to identify populations and communities that lack these resources.

What research does not support are prevention strategies that label and target individuals, families, and communities for remediation based on their identified risks. As I stated in my March column, "Labeling is noticeably absent from most lists of risk factors," including that of the SDRG. This appears an amazing oversight given the enormous body of research documenting the negative effects of programs that label, track, and, thus, stigmatize youth and families and further compound the risks in their lives. Why should we waste valuable prevention resources exploring the problem and perhaps through our activities of identifying, labeling, and targeting individuals, further exacerbating the problem, when we have a solid and growing research base founded on solution, on success, on health, on positive youth development, on individuals who have "overcome the odds" and surmounted the risks in their lives?

A third rationale, which alone validates using a knowledge base of protective factors and not of risk for creating change, is that protective factors are more predictive and more powerful than risk factors. According to Emmy Werner, "Even among children exposed to potent risk factors, it is unusual for more than half to develop serious disabilities or persistent disorders" (1990). She states that, "Our findings and those by other American and European investigators with a life-span perspective suggest that these buffers make a more profound impact on the life course of children who grow up under adverse conditions than do specific risk factors or stressful life events. They appear to transcend ethnic, social class, geographical, and historical boundaries" (Werner and Smith, 1992).

A fourth rationale is that grounding our prevention efforts on protective factors gives practitioners a sense of hope and optimism. Emmy Werner states: "[Protective factors] offer us a more optimistic outlook than the perspective that can be gleaned from the literature on the negative consequences of perinatal trauma, caregiving deficits, and chronic poverty. They provide us with a corrective lens—an awareness of the self-righting tendencies that move children toward normal adult development under all but the most persistent adverse circumstances" (1992).

Interventions based on risks are ignoring the research on change that has identified the attitude of the change agent as the pivotal variable in change efforts. Bill Carmack, a longtime community developer and professor of communications at the University of Oklahoma, states that 85 percent of all successful change is due to the attitude of the change agent, an attitude that expresses caring, exhibits positive expectations, and encourages active participation in decisionmaking (1990). How are we to encourage the development of a sense of a bright future, a major trait of resilient children, when we look at a youth and see "alienation and rebelliousness," "family conflict," and other risk factors?

Not surprisingly, Werner and Smith begin their

latest book with a line from an Emily Dickinson poem: "I dwell in possibility." It is just this attitude of possibility—read "positive expectations"—that not only promotes positive intervention outcomes but also prevents burnout. It is an attitude that speaks to the strengths and engages the "self-righting mechanism," the natural resiliency, inherent in every person. I maintain that a risk-focused approach discourages the development of this attitude of possibility in practitioners by bogging them down in problems and deficits instead of focusing their energy on solutions and strengths.

Furthermore, much research in motivational psychology supports the view that intrinsic motivation to learn and to change is facilitated by a relationship between learner and facilitator of learning that fosters these same three basic human needs for caring, respect, and participation. "People are engaged and motivated in domains where their basic psychological needs can be and periodically are fulfilled" (Ryan and Powelson, 1991). Protective factor research repeatedly has identified the power of a caring relationship with a teacher, youth worker, etc., that is based on mutual respect and participation to change a life trajectory from risk to resilience (Benard, 1991).

The SDRG states that my "suggestion that we ignore risk factors and focus only on protective factors is like encouraging smokers to exercise without attending to their smoking." I confess I am suggesting this very strategy because it addresses human motivation. It is through finding a positive alternative—one that becomes more rewarding than the negative behavior—that we create the "cognitive dissonance" necessary to change our behavior (Jessor, 1984). Likewise, when our human needs are met through caring, mutually respectful, participatory relationships in our families, schools, and communities, we become bonded to these institutions, as the SDRG group has so well articulated in their theory of social development, and we are less likely to engage in health-compromising and socially irresponsible behaviors.

I see two other issues the SDRG's letter raises that are critical to the prevention field. First, the field of prevention, to live up to its name, has to be about systemic change that promotes positive development for all kids. Therefore, prevention must address root causes for the development of problem behaviors, not just the symptoms, as several of the SDRG's identified risk factors are. Several researchers, including William Julius Wilson, James Coleman, and James Comer, see the social, economic, and technological changes since the late 1940s as having fragmented community life, resulting in breaks in the naturally occurring networks and linkages among individuals, families, schools, and other social systems that traditionally have provided the protection necessary for healthy human development (1987; 1987; 1992). We must be about building community in all our prevention and intervention efforts. As Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, states: "It really takes a community to raise children, no matter how much money one has. Nobody can do it well alone. And it's the bedrock security of community that we and our children need" (1991). It is this very sense of community that welcomes and includes all youth—no matter what their risks, their special needs and challenges, their cultures, their gender. Perhaps we should have as a goal in all our prevention efforts the vision John Dewey expressed for schools: "School is a home, a complete community, an embryonic democracy."

The second issue of import for the prevention field is the tension that often exists between the world of prevention research and that of prevention practice. The SDRG's response to my call for redirecting the prevention field to a new paradigm for research and practice founded on protective-factor research and positive youth development reflects the contrast between the mission and values of the research community and those of the practitioner community—both policymakers and direct service providers. Researchers are usually more concerned with seeking understanding than with taking action and making change. In contrast, practitioners, by definition, have to take action and make change—often without any clear, rational understanding, often following their intuition and common sense. As I have stated in other articles, the SDRG's research has greatly contributed to the prevention field's understanding and awareness of the multiple risk factors associated with the development of adolescent substance abuse and delinquency. However, now that we also have a large body of research that provides us with understanding and awareness of what has helped youth overcome these multiple risks, it is time for research to move beyond a focus on understanding to an examination and evaluation of the efforts of practitioners who are seeking to create environments rich in protection for kids and families.

If research is to successfully inform practice, it must be useful and useable to practitioners and validate their innate wisdom and common sense. "Research findings are more likely to be used when they are not counter-intuitive [i.e., when they do not conflict with 'craft wisdom'] and when their action implications are clear" (Nelson, 1987). In the words of

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Alfred North Whitehead: "Science is rooted in...common sense thought. That is the datum from which it starts, and to which it must recur....You [as researcher] may polish up common sense, you may contradict it in detail, and you may surprise it. But ultimately your task is to satisfy it" (quoted by Martin Seligman, 1991).

Herein lies the fundamental power of a resiliency-focused paradigm for prevention practice: It validates practitioners' craft knowledge and common sense—and their hearts. It answers for them the big question, "So what?" My colleagues and I have heard from hundreds of teachers and youth workers who have expressed their appreciation for our work in promoting protective-factor research and a resiliency approach because it validates what they do and energizes them to do it. I'll conclude with a statement from one note we received: "I tried to imagine how it would be if I did not know about resiliency when I am working with the kids at school. I would feel totally defeated in some cases because there is no way I can remove the risk situations they have to deal with. Resiliency is my only hope..."

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Corner on Research

Weaving the Fabric of Resiliency in Communities

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In last June's "Corner on Research" I reviewed a few of the recent books relating to fostering resiliency in individuals, families, and schools. At that time I promised a review of some books concerned with promoting resiliency from the community level, with creating caring communities that have positive expectations for youth and consequently give children and youth lots of opportunities for active involvement and meaningful decisionmaking. The following is, indeed, a very selective review; books on community-building, both theoretical and philosophical as well as extremely pragmatic how-to guides and manuals, abound. The following books are featured because they all focus on the community contexts/settings of adolescents' lives as well as on the need for systemic changes, for rethinking the patterns of relationships between the basic institutions in kids' lives—the family, the school, and community organizations and service systems.

Adolescent Society

I want to begin with a not-so-recent book that somehow escaped my notice when I compiled my *Fostering Resiliency* document—*The Search for Structure: A Report on American Youth Today*, by Francis Ianni (1989). This book provides rich, in-depth research support for the roles community norms and expectations play when they are nurtured by community support, resources, and opportunities in promoting positive youth development.

Ianni's book summarizes his research of over a decade, spanning the 1970s and 1980s, in which he and his colleagues observed and interviewed thousands of adolescents in the many contexts of their lives—families, schools, peer groups/gangs, youth programs, street corners, and even jails—in 10 geographically, racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically representative communities throughout the United States. Their guiding research questions were: "What are the codes or rules that structure and organize the transition from child to adult status in the social contexts of actual communities, and how do the adolescents in these communities internalize and learn to use or abuse these rules?" (p. 7).

Ianni's findings clearly challenge the prevailing world view that "adolescent society" or the "youth culture" is "a separate social system, with a psychosocial unity of its own, that is capable of resisting and even countering the adult society's authority and demands for integration into the general community" (Ianni, b, p. 674). Rather, "The teenagers in the 10 communities we studied were actually as different from each other as adults are. The variation went beyond individual differences in biological predisposition or temperament or some critical life experience, such as the loss of a parent. Teenagers live in poverty or affluence or someplace in between, come from broken or intact families, attend good or bad schools, and encounter very different role models in the communities in which they live. Adolescent development takes place within a specific community as the individual teenager's internal resources are nurtured or stifled by the opportunities available" (Ianni, a, p. 23).

What did make a difference, Ianni found, was experiencing shared expectations: "In every community, urban inner-city as well as suburban or rural, we found that not only agemates but a variety of continuing relationships with family members, relatives and neighbors, institutional settings, and the significant adults who are part of them serve as exemplars and guides for individual or groups of adolescents. Congeniality among their values and clarity and consistency in their guidance are essential to the adolescent, who is engaged in a search for structure, a set of believable and attainable expectations and standards from the community to guide the movement from child to adult status. If the values expressed by different community sectors are at odds, if their directions are unclear or inconsistent, the teenager cannot be expected to accept their good will or trust their judgment" (Ianni, a, p. 262).

Communities that worked for adolescents, that facilitated instead of hindered the transition from childhood to adulthood, were those in which

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adolescents were linked into positive social support systems with adult role models and with positive peers. While these happen naturally for many youth, the trend has been a decrease in these natural support systems for a growing number of youth. The increasing fragmentation of family, school, neighborhood, and community life make the creation of these linkages especially critical.

Ianni's research supports the programmatic implications of other protective factor research in calling for programs that link adults and youth, such as mentoring, tutoring, and apprenticeship; programs that link youth with other youth, such as peer helping and peer mediation; and programs that link youth with community life through community service endeavors.

However, Ianni echoes resiliency researcher Emmy Werner's concern that creating environments that promote the healthy development of youth, especially during the childhood to adult transition, is not just creating a potpourri of programs. He also calls for—as will the other books we review—institutional changes in which the family, the school, the workplace, and the criminal justice system create new linkages with youth and each other. Examples of systemic changes that restructure social relationships and truly reweave the fabric of resiliency include intervention thrusts like school-to-work transition efforts; the integration of academic and vocational tracks in schools; second-chance programs for kids who have dropped out; programs that reconnect youthful offenders with their families and communities, parents, and teachers; student involvement in school governance; and workplace family support efforts.

Developing successful programs and systemic changes is most effectively done, according to Ianni, by the creation of a community youth charter: "Programs for adolescents should grow out of a community youth charter which promulgates the expectations and standards that can meet the developmental needs of the adolescents in the specific community. A well-integrated and consciously developed pattern of relationships can provide a stabilizing transformational structure that produces equally integrated identities as workers and citizens and parents; no single institution has the resources to develop all of these roles alone" (Ianni, a, p. 279).

While a community's norms and expectations are often unwritten, a community that gives voice to them by developing an explicit youth charter through "comprehensive community planning" involving youths is, in essence, weaving a fabric of resiliency that links youth into their community through caring relationships based on positive expectations and through opportunities for meaningful participation.

Community Supports

Another valuable document focuses on the critical role community supports—especially youth-serving organizations and programs—play in the healthy development of adolescents. *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours* is the December 1992 report of the Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Anyone working in middle-grade school reform is well-acquainted with the task force's earlier, wonderful document, *Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century*. In this report, the task force extends its effort to improve the lives of young adolescents "by advocating a new national effort to make use of nonschool hours for the vast and important job of promoting development among American youth..." (p. 119).

A Matter of Time is must reading for the comprehensive community planning efforts recommended by Ianni's research. Not only does it provide research support for the role community-based youth-serving organizations play in adolescent development, but it also surveys the wide spectrum of programs that are "out there" and provides us with the first large-scale national study of the services and program structures of these organizations.

A Matter of Time asserts that for a growing number of youth, the family, school, and community supports essential to healthy development have been decreasing and that the nonschool hours, which for a majority of adolescents is wasted time, offer a rich, seldom-acknowledged opportunity to provide adolescents with the kinds of participatory experiences that promote healthy development through the creation of "networks of community supports." Specifically, this study found that successful community programs do the following:

- Tailor their program content and processes to the needs and interests of young adolescents
- Recognize, value, and respond to the diverse backgrounds and experience of young adolescents
- Extend their reach to underserved adolescents
- Actively compete for the time and attention of young adolescents
- Strengthen the quality and diversity of their adult leadership
- Reach out to families, schools, and a wide range of community partners in youth development
- Enhance the role of young adolescents as resources in their community

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- Serve as vigorous advocates for and with youth
- Specify and evaluate their programs' outcomes
- Establish strong organizational structures, including energetic and committed board leadership

This document also recommends specific policy agendas for the institutions—national youth organizations, other community organizations, schools, parents and families, health organizations, higher education institutions, research and evaluation organizations, funders, media, government leadership, and, of course, adolescents themselves—that must work together to create the fabric of resiliency that promotes healthy youth development. "Every level of government, every adult, and nearly every for-profit and nonprofit organization in this country has a role to play in the development of community-level support services for young adolescents" (p. 111). In the end, the report says: "We will all benefit from such an effort. For the nation as a whole, the rising new generation will consist of healthy, confident young adolescents who are ready to become fully contributing members of society. For all of America's youth, uncertainty about their futures will be transformed into preparation by a caring community for a promising and fulfilling life. Risk will be transformed into opportunity for young adolescents by turning their nonschool hours into the time of their lives" (p. 15).

Losing Generations

The new book by the National Research Council's Panel on High-Risk Youth, *Losing Generations: Adolescents in High-Risk Settings* (1993) is based on the same premise as *A Matter of Time*. The panel notes, "Many of the major institutions, or settings, in which adolescents are growing up are unable to provide the guidance and support young people need for positive development" (p. 1993). The purpose of this book, however, is to move research and policy away from its concentration on the individual characteristics of youth and families in explaining high-risk behavior to a focus on the settings, the environments, that make healthy development difficult. "High-risk settings do not just happen: they are the result of policies and choices that cumulatively determine whether families will have adequate incomes, whether neighborhoods will be safe or dangerous, whether schools will be capable of teaching, whether health care will be available—in short, whether young people will be helped or hindered while growing up" (p. viii). In an effort to redress the over-emphasis on individual risk factors, the panel studied the major institutional settings youths experience: families, neighborhoods, schools, health systems, employment and training opportunities, and (as these institutions become more severely stressed) the juvenile justice and the child welfare systems.

The panel concludes that "four conditions create and sustain high-risk settings": (1) the large and increasing number of families who are living in or near poverty; (2) the concentration of poor families in some urban and rural neighborhoods and the increase in the numbers of severely deprived neighborhoods; (3) the nation's major service institutions and systems—health, academic, and vocational education, and employment and training—are not meeting the needs of many young people; and (4) the strong influence of racial and ethnic discrimination on employment, housing, and the criminal justice system.

Any attempt to ameliorate these conditions "must be powerful and comprehensive" (p. 237). Just as our earlier two books concluded, *Losing Generations* warns that "attention to policies supporting families and neighborhoods and restructuring service institutions is necessary to impart the functional academic, vocational, social, and psychological competencies needed by young people" (p. 237).

The panel challenges federal and state governments to "face responsibility" and provide "financial support, leadership, and incentives toward change." That change, however, must happen at the community level. Echoing the theme of several recent books such as David Osborne's *Re-inventing Government*, the panel suggests that our current economic crisis gives us the opportunity to rethink federal, state, and local roles and funding "as a way of bringing the resources needed to deal with problems closer to the people who are most likely to do it sensibly"—local communities (p. 245).

Good Practice

Reinforcing both Ianni's research and that of the Carnegie task force, the panel's chapter on "Good Practice: Community-Based Interventions and Services" is a rich summary of effective community efforts focused on strengthening families and communities, improving institutional services, and implementing comprehensive services for positive youth development. Reflecting their resiliency paradigm, the panel concludes: "In good practice initiatives, community residents—both adults, and increasingly, adolescents—are viewed as integral resources who can contribute substantially to the change process. That is, good practice programs focus on the conditions for change—engagement and empowerment—rather than the problems per se of

families, neighborhoods, and young people" (p. 195).

Providing further validation for the resiliency approach, the panel concludes that in good practice efforts, "Consistent demonstrations of caring and high expectations are a prerequisite," as is "providing young people with choice and voice" in program operation (p. 219).

Several themes recur in the above three books: (1) the community is a critical arena for youth development; (2) the relationships, expectations, and opportunities for participation youth find in their communities is critical to healthy development; (3) there is a need to create programs that reconnect kids to adults and other kids in mutually caring, respectful, and shared power relationships; (4) there is a need to restructure the linkages among the critical institutions in youths' lives—their families, schools, neighborhoods, and community organizations and services. These books also document many, many examples of programs and efforts to reconnect youth as well as to build linkages between families and schools and communities.

What all these successful efforts require is the active participation and involvement of all of us, not just as professionals but as students, parents, and citizens. However, what is not discussed in these wonderful resources is the idea that civic participation has, indeed, become problematic in our culture. As Robert Bellah in *The Good Society* states, "...responsible social participation, with an enlightened citizenry that can deal with moral and intellectual complexity, does not come about just from exhortation. It is certainly not enough simply to implore our fellow citizens to 'get involved.' We must create the institutions that will enable such participation to occur, encourage it, and make it fulfilling as well as demanding" (p. 19).

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