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AUTHOR Kruiter, J. H.
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ABSTRACT

Since 1995, community schools in the Netherlands have provided multiple interventions to improve student behavior and socioemotional functioning, improve the home educational environment, decrease risk behavior, decrease educational and physical disadvantages, and create opportunities for all children in a neighborhood. This study examined the influence of community schools on children's behavior and on their parents' pedagogical behavior, focusing on whether the influence of community schools varied for children with different socioeconomic backgrounds and for children who attended several activities compared to those who did not. Participating in the research were 74 families with 4-year-old children who attended community schools, lived in 4 problematic neighborhoods in Groningen, and completed measurements 3 times between 1998 and 2000. Findings indicated that 30 percent of the families did not attend the recreational, educational, or parental activities offered. More than 30 percent attended 2 or more activities per year. The percentage of participating families hardly changed between 1998 and 2000. A clear relationship between participation rates and child behavior or parent pedagogical behavior could not be identified. Kindergarten and first-grade teacher assessment of student behavior revealed no reductions in socioemotional problems. Most children did not show severe behavioral problems, according to parent ratings, but there were increases in depression over the three times of measurement. Children from immigrant populations showed a larger decrease in social problems than did children from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds, and children from middle to high SES backgrounds showed an increase in social problems. (Contains 20 references and 7 tables.) (Author/KB)

The influence of community schools on child behavior and education at home

AERA 2001 Paper

J.H. Kruiter
GION
P.O.box 1286
9701 BG Groningen
The Netherlands
J.H.Kruiter@ppsw.rug.nl

Introduction

In the 20[th] century, various institutions that serve children and families were disconnected from each other, and from families. Each institution developed its own concepts of family needs and problems and developed different intervention strategies. Families who needed help to solve educational or behavioral problems had to choose between several kinds of organizations, such as schools, social service agencies, health care, and recreational agencies (Briar-Lawson & Lawson, 1997).

The last decade, however, has shown a renewed interest in the *connection* between families, schools and the community (Sanders & Epstein, 1998). Services integrated into a coherent whole within community schools try to solve educational problems by using multiple interventions (Crowson & Boyd, 1998). These community schools offer all kinds of activities that cannot only influence achievement, but also behavior of children and pedagogical behavior of parents. Especially children from families with a low socio-economic background are expected to benefit from these activities.

In a research project we study community schools' influence on behavior of children and on the pedagogical behavior of parents. We especially want to know whether community schools' influence differs for children with different socio-economic backgrounds, and for children who attend several activities compared to children who don't. This paper gives the first results of this research project.

Background

The last few years, schools encounter more and more problems that result from developments in society, such as high unemployment-rates, an increase of families with two full-time working parents, an increase of single-parent families, and social exclusion. As a result, schools often have to deal with behavioral and socio-emotional problems of students. In this respect Dryfoos (1993) notices that many school systems are driven by the desire to raise test scores and lower dropout rates, but teachers often become frustrated because they think that students' behavioral problems and social environments stand in the way of achievement. Besides, schools do not only aim at short-term goals like achievement but also at long-term goals like citizenship (Davies, 1997). The behavior and educational environment of students might also endanger the realization these long-term goals.

Teachers are often the first and only ones who have to deal with the influence of child behavior and the home environment on the realization of educational goals. They are not the only ones who are *responsible* for solving behavioral and educational problems of students, however. All institutions that work within a neighborhood should have a joint responsibility in reducing behavioral and educational problems and in providing equal opportunities for all children in that neighborhood (Dryfoos, 1993). Therefore, a lot of countries have recently started initiatives to connect schools, families and the community. Besides, community-based programs become more involved in improving educational outcomes (Sanders & Epstein, 1998). This cooperation between schools, families and communities makes sure that students hear from various people about the importance of things like working hard, staying in school, and helping each other (Epstein, 1995). It furthermore makes it possible to handle problems of children and families holistically, which is important because children's problems often are difficult to solve if their families and communities are not involved in the solutions of those problems (Evans, 1995; 1998). Moreover, if institutions start cooperating, teachers will have more time to focus on teaching instead of on solving non-academical problems their students might have (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 1997).

In the Netherlands this cooperation between, up to now often disconnected, institutions has taken place in community schools since 1995. These community schools aim for the following objectives: improving behavior and socio-emotional functioning of children, improving the educational environment at home and the pedagogical behavior of parents, decreasing risky behavior, decreasing educational and physical disadvantages and creating opportunities for all the children in a neighborhood. The participating institutions, for example health centers, youth welfare institutions, day nurseries, libraries, sports clubs and elementary schools, should reach these objectives by the joint organization of activities for children and parents. Examples of these (extra-curricular) community school activities are sports, music and arts activities for students aged 6 to 12, and adult education (e.g. computer courses). Community schools also provide educational activities, such as courses in child rearing and a care-taking system in which socio-emotional problems are treated. Each of these activities has its own objectives, but they all are expected to influence the behavior of children and the

educational environment at home one way or the other. For example the sports and music courses should make it easier to actively spend leisure time, instead of just watching television or hanging around. Furthermore, community schools can play an important role in connecting different people within a neighborhood. For example through parent programs and parents' meetings, which is especially important for families with a low socio-economic background because they are often socially and culturally isolated from other inhabitants. Community schools hope to establish a strong connection between several institutions. This makes it easier for professionals to consult each other and to organize activities more efficiently and coherently. This should eventually lead to a better treatment of behavioral and educational problems within community schools.

This study

Research questions

In our study we want to examine to which extent community schools reach the objectives concerning child behavior and the way parents raise their children. Do behavior of children and the educational behavior of parents improve, and if so, is this because of activities organized by community schools? To answer this question we formulated three research questions:

1. Do children and parents participate in activities offered by community schools that concern child behavior and the educational situation at home?
2. What is the actual situation with regard to child behavior and the home environment of community school children? Are there any differences for children with a different socio-economic status?
3. To what extent do community schools influence child behavior and the home environment of community school students?

Research design

All 334 families with four-year-old children that attend community schools and living in four problematic neighborhoods in the city of Groningen, the Netherlands, were asked to participate in this research project. Of these 334 families 110 (33%) were prepared to do so. The parents in these families are interviewed three times between 1998 en 2000. Between these three measurements 36 families were not able to continue participating in the research project. So, 74 families participated in all three measurements. The results in this paper are based on these 74 families.

We expect socio-economic status (SES) to influence behavior of children and the home environment. Therefore we include an indication of SES in this study. The indication of SES we use comes from the financial system of Dutch education, which discerns three categories of students: students with a middle- and high socio-economic background, students with a low socio-economic background, and students from ethnic minority groups. Of

the 74 families in this study, 48 (65%) have a middle or high socio-economic background, 20 (27%) have a low socio-economic background, and 6 (8%) come from ethnic minority groups. The total population of families with four-year-old community school children counts 167 (51%) middle- and high-class families, 122 (37%) low-class families, and 38 (12%) families from ethnic minority groups. The socio-economic status of 7 students is unknown. The percentages mentioned above show that middle- and high-class families are over represented in this study.

The interviewer visits the families at home, and interviews the parents (mostly the mother). The interviews include questions about child behavior, about the way parents raise their children and about participation in community school activities. The questions about child behavior come from the "Child Behaviour Checklist" (CBCL) (Achenbach, 1991; Verhulst, van der Ende & Koot, 1996). This questionnaire measures behavioral problems of children aged 4 to 16. It consists of 113 statements about possible behavior of children. Parents have to say whether these statements are "true", "sometimes or somewhat true" or "not true" for their child. The statements can be divided into eight syndrome scales: aggressive, delinquent, depressed, social problems, social withdrawal, somatic, uncommunicative, hostile and hyperactive. These syndrome scales can be categorized with the Externalizing and Internalizing scales. The questions about educational behavior of parents and the home environment come from the "Home Observation and Measurement of the Environment" (HOME-inventory) (Bradley & Caldwell, 1988; Vedder & Eldering, 1996). This inventory is composed of a questionnaire and an observation scale. It assesses the quality of stimulation available at home and it consists of eight subscales: (1) toys, games and reading materials, (2) language stimulation, (3) physical environment, (4) pride, affection and warmth, (5) stimulation of academic behavior, (6) modeling and encouragement of social maturity, (7) variation of stimulation and (8) physical punishment.

Kindergarten and first-grade teachers are also involved in this study: 30 teachers annually assess the socio-emotional behavior of in total 700 students on a series of items on a 5 point Likert scale (Jungbluth, Peetsma & Roeleveld, 1996). The items in this instrument concern self-confidence, attitude towards schoolwork, social behavior, healthy behavior, school pleasure, special educational measures and the teacher's judgement of the home environment. Of those 700 students 30% has a low socio-economic background and 18% comes from the ethnic minority groups. The results presented in this paper, however, only concern 180 children who were assessed by a teacher in 1998, 1999 and in 2000. These are the children who were four years old by the time of the first measurement in 1998.

Results

To see to what extent community schools can influence child behavior and the educational behavior of parents, we first look at the participation of children and parents in activities organized by community schools. Table 1 shows three different types of activities: recreational activities (e.g. sports and music), educational activities (e.g. courses in child

rearing and socio-emotional training), and parental activities (e.g. being a member of the parents' council or being a class assistant). Table 1 makes clear that, in total, approximately 30% of the families in this study do not attend activities, and more than 30% attend 2 or more activities per year. Between 1998 and 2000, the percentages of families that attend two or more activities in the categories parental activities and total activities increases, but the percentages of families that participate in recreational activities and educational activities does not change much. This might be caused by the fact that community schools organized fewer activities in 2000 than in 1998. Groningen Community schools organized 189 activities in 1998 and 158 activities in 2000 (Walrecht, 2001)

Table 1: percentages of families (N=74) that participate in activities per number of activities per year

	Number of activities attended per year				
	0	1	2	3	4-6
Recreational activities					
1998	75.7%	17.6%	5.4%	1.4%	0.0%
1999	73.0%	23.0%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%
2000	77.0%	16.2%	4.1%	2.7%	0.0%
Educational activities					
1998	78.4%	21.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
1999	64.9%	31.1%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%
2000	78.4%	20.3%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Parental activities					
1998	59.5%	27.0%	9.5%	4.1%	0.0%
1999	71.6%	17.6%	9.5%	1.4%	0.0%
2000	60.8%	17.6%	14.9%	6.8%	0.0%
Total activities					
1998	32.4%	36.5%	18.9%	8.1%	3.1%
1999	27.0%	36.5%	25.7%	9.5%	1.4%
2000	27.0%	31.1%	18.9%	18.9%	3.1%

The activities mentioned in table 1 should positively influence behavior of children and educational behavior of parents. Table 2 and table 3 show what that behavior of parents and children looks like, measured by the CBCL and the HOME-inventory subscales in 1998, 1999 and 2000. These scales run from 0 through 100. For the CBCL subscales, which are so-called problem scales, 0 means that children have no behavioral problems and 100 means that children have severe problems. For the HOME-inventory, which consists of so-called stimulation scales, this is exactly the opposite: 0 means that parents do not stimulate their children and 100 means a lot of stimulation. In case of the subscale physical punishment, 0 means no physical punishment and 100 means frequent physical punishment.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the CBCL subscales (N=74).

CBCL-subscales	Items	1998		1999		2000	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Social withdrawal	9	9.4	10.0	8.2	9.3	9.8	10.3
Somatic	9	2.7	4.4	2.1	5.2	!1.3	4.0
Depressed	14	8.5	9.1	9.5	9.6	9.7	8.2
Social problems	8	6.2	9.1	5.9	8.0	5.5	7.3
Uncommunicative	7	5.7	9.2	*2.6	4.2	!2.5	3.6
Hyperactive	11	10.7	11.0	11.0	11.3	9.6	8.9
Delinquent	13	5.4	5.8	5.7	5.4	†!3.9	4.3
Aggressive	20	21.6	12.4	19.5	12.1	†!15.9	9.7
Externalizing	33	14.9	8.5	14.0	8.5	†!11.2	6.7
Internalizing	31	7.3	6.7	7.3	6.4	7.5	5.5
CBCL total	120	16.2	8.4	15.8	8.1	†!13.5	6.2

Note: 0 means no problems, 100 means severe problems

* means significant difference between 1998 and 1999 ($p \leq .05$)

† means significant difference between 1999 and 2000 ($p \leq .05$)

! means significant difference between 1998 and 2000 ($p \leq .05$)

Table 2 shows that, on average, most children do not have severe behavioral problems, according to their parents. Disturbing, however, are the relatively high problemscores on the aggressive subscale. Some problem scores decreased during the three years in which measurements took place, some problems remained more or less stable, and one problem scale (depressed) showed an increase of problems. T-tests were carried out to see which increases and decreases are significant. Significant changes ($p \leq .05$) between 1998 and 1999 have been found for the subscale uncommunicative; between 1999 and 2000 for the subscales aggressive, delinquent, externalizing and the total CBCL score; between 1998 and 2000 for the subscales aggressive, somatic, delinquent, uncommunicative, externalizing and the total CBCL score. Furthermore, a one-way ANOVA with a Bonferroni post-hoc test was computed to check whether the changes between the measurements differed significantly ($p \leq .05$) for children with a different socio-economic background. This was the case in the following subscales. Between 1998 and 1999 the social problems subscale showed a bigger decrease for non-native children (-9.3) than for children with a low socio-economic status (-0.7). Children from middle and high socio-economic status even showed an increase of social problems (+0.9). Between 1998 and 2000, the subscale delinquent showed a decrease for children with a middle and high socio-economic status (-3.1), and an increase for children with a low socio-economic status (+0.6) and for non-natives (+3.9). The same holds for the subscale somatic: middle and high-class children show a decrease of problems (-2.4) while the somatic problems of low SES (+0.6) and non-native (+1.85) children increase.

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation of the HOME subscales (N=74).

HOME-subscales	Items	1998		1999		2000	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Toys, games, reading materials	11	84.8	14.0	*89.6	10.2	!89.9	11.8
Language stimulation	7	95.0	8.9	*98.6	5.4	†99.2	4.0
Physical environment	7	93.2	13.8	95.1	13.3	!96.9	8.3
Pride, affection, warmth	7	47.7	27.9	*35.1	30.9	!34.6	31.3
Stimulation of academic behavior	5	90.8	17.9	*97.0	10.8	!97.0	10.3
Modeling of social maturity	5	79.5	11.9	82.7	10.6	†78.4	13.9
Variation of stimulation	9	81.1	13.5	*89.5	9.7	!†87.2	10.0
Physical punishment	4	66.6	37.5	*52.7	33.3	!50.7	37.0

Note: 0 means no stimulation (physical punishment), 100 means a lot of stimulation (physical punishment)

* means significant difference between 1998 and 1999 ($p \leq .05$)

† means significant difference between 1999 and 2000 ($p \leq .05$)

! means significant difference between 1998 and 2000 ($p \leq .05$)

Table 3 shows that parents, on average, score high on the HOME-subscales. This means that they stimulate their children sufficiently. Especially the subscales language stimulation, physical environment and stimulation of academic behavior show very high scores, and even an increase between the three measurements. Strikingly, parents score relatively low on the subscale pride, affection and warmth, and, on top of that, the score decreased between the first and second measurement. T-tests show that the following changes in table 3 are significant ($p \leq .05$). Between 1998 and 1999 the subscales toys, games and reading materials; language stimulation; stimulation of academic behavior and variation of stimulation significantly increased. The subscales pride, affection and warmth and physical punishment significantly decreased. Between 1999 and 2000 the subscales modeling of social maturity and variation of stimulation decreased significantly. Between 1998 and 2000 all changes except for the one in the subscale modeling of social maturity are significant. A one-way ANOVA with a Bonferroni post-hoc test only shows a significant difference for socio-economic groups on the subscale modeling of social maturity between 1999 and 2000 ($p \leq .05$). Non-natives show a significantly bigger decrease (-16.7) than middle and high-class children (-3.0).

Tables 2 and 3 show the current situation of behavior of children and the educational situation at home. In our research questions, however, we ask to what extent community schools influence child behavior and the educational situation at home. We expect that families who attend community school activities experience a decrease in child behavior problems and an improvement of the home environment. To see whether such a relationship exists between the change scores of the CBCL and the HOME-inventory subscales on the one hand and the participation rates in table 1 on the other, table 4 and 5 show the correlations between them. Only the significant correlations are presented ($p \leq .05$). These

correlations run from (-).24 to (-) .36, which means explained variances of 7% to 13% respectively.

In table 4, negative correlations mean that the more activities families attend, the more child behavior problems decrease. Positive correlations mean the more activities families attend, the more child behavior problems increase. Striking, in this respect, are the positive correlations between the number of educational activities in 2000 and the change in CBCL subscale scores between 1998 and 2000. An explanation could be that families with problematic children more often attend educational activities, to be able to solve behavioral problems in the long run. No significant correlations between participation in parental activities and child behavior were found.

Table 4: Correlations between difference scores of CBCL subscales and participation rates

	Recreational		**Educational**			**Total**
Change scores	**1999**	**2000**	**1998**	**1999**	**2000**	**1999**
1999-1998						
Depressed						.27
Hyperactive				.29		.33
2000-1999						
Depressed		-.24			.26	
Uncommunicative	-.24	-.26				
Hyperactive			-.26	-.35		-.26
CBCL total score				-.30		
2000-1998						
Social problems			-.25			
Somatic					.33	
Depressed					.30	
Hyperactive					.31	
Internalizing					.29	
CBCL total score					.29	

Table 5 shows the correlations between the difference scores of the HOME-subscales and the participation in activities. Unlike the CBCL, which is a problem scale, the HOME is a stimulation scale. Therefore, positive correlations in table 5 mean that the more activities families attend, the more stimulation provided by parents improves. Negative correlations mean that attending more activities goes together with a deterioration of stimulation. The correlations in table 5 seem to be rather arbitrary. No significant correlations between participation in activities and recreational activities were found.

Table 5: Correlations between difference scores of HOME subscales and participation rates

Activities	Educational		Parental		Total	
Change scores	**1999**	**2000**	**1998**	**2000**	**1999**	**2000**
1999-1998						
Variation of stimulation	.28					
Pride, affection, warmth			.25			
2000-1999						
Modeling social maturity			.24			
2000-1998						
Language stimulation					-.23	
Physical environment				.29		.27
Pride, affection and warmth		.29				
Variation of stimulation	.36				.24	

As has been said before, behavior of children and their educational home environment are believed to negatively influence short-term as well as long-term goals of schools. To see to which extent children show behavioral problems at school, teachers are also involved in this study. They rated the behavior of their students on a rating scale concerning socio-emotional behavior of children. Table 6 shows the subscale scores of 180 children that were assessed in 1998, 1999 as well as in 2000. These children were all four years old in 1998. Similar to table 2, the scores in table 5 run from 0 to 100, 0 meaning little problems, 100 meaning severe problems.

Table 6. Mean and standard deviation of the teacher rating scales on socio-emotional behavior of children (N=180)

	Items	1998		1999		2000	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Self-confidence	3	31.8	14.0	*26.5	13.7	!28.2	15.9
Attitude towards schoolwork	3	32.7	16.5	30.4	17.4	†29.5	18.5
Social behavior	3	28.2	16.9	*30.7	16.7	29.3	20.0
Healthy behavior	3	24.2	10.2	25.0	12.5	24.6	13.3
School pleasure	3	20.5	9.1	*18.2	9.2	19.0	12.2
Special educational measurements	6	23.3	14.6	22.5	18.0	†25.3	19.5
Home environment	5	26.2	13.6	26.7	15.6	28.3	17.9

Note: 0 means no problems, 100 means severe problems

* means significant difference between 1998 and 1999 ($p \leq .05$)

† means significant difference between 1999 and 2000 ($p \leq .05$)

! means significant difference between 1998 and 2000 ($p \leq .05$)

Table 6 shows that teachers notice, on average, moderate school related socio-emotional problems in their students, which Driessen (1998) also found in his study with the same teacher rating scale. Changes between the three measurements are relatively small. Notable is the decrease in the subscale attitude towards schoolwork. This decrease is significant between the 1998 and 2000 measurement ($p \leq .05$). The subscale self-confidence also shows a significant decrease between 1998 and 2000, as well as between 1998 and 1999. Another significant decrease was found for the subscale school pleasure between 1998 and 1999. The subscales social behavior (1998 - 1999) and special educational measurements (1999 - 2000) increased significantly. A one-way ANOVA with a Bonferroni post-hoc test shows that the change in the subscale special educational measurements differed significantly ($p \leq .05$) for different socio-economic classes. Special educational measurements decreased for children with a low socio-economic status (-2.2) and increased for children with a middle- or high socio-economic status (+4.9) and non-native children (+8). This decrease differs significantly from the increases. No other significant differences between socio-economic classes were found.

In the 2000 measurement, some of the teacher rating scales were also included in the parent interviews. Table 7 shows the correlations between parents' and teachers' ratings. These correlations are significant, but not very high. Table 7 furthermore makes clear that the average scores of parents are much lower than the teacher scores. This means that parents, on average, perceive less school related problems in their children than teachers do. Especially striking are the differences between parents and teachers in the subscales attitude towards schoolwork and school pleasure. Apparently, parents experience fewer problems with regard to attitude towards schoolwork and school pleasure than teachers do.

Table 7: Correlations between parents and teachers in the 2000-measurement (N=74)

	Means		Correlation	p-value
	Parents	Teachers		
Self-confidence	21.2	27.3	.38	≤.001
Attitude towards schoolwork	15.7	29.1	.41	≤.001
Social behavior	26.9	29.3	.38	≤.001
School pleasure	10.0	18.3	.46	≤.001

Conclusion and discussion

The results on participation of parents and children in activities (table 1) showed that the percentages of families who attend activities organized by community schools hardly changed between 1998 and 2000. The participation in recreational activities remains quite stable, and the participation in parental activities and the total number of activities slightly increased. The number of families that attended educational activities decreased between 1999 and 2000. A possible explanation could be the decrease of the total number of activities that were

organized by community schools (Walrecht, 2001). This decrease was partly caused by the awareness of community schools that families did not feel the need to participate in some of the activities, which lead to the abolition of certain activities. The decrease in the number of activities that were organized might also have to do with some of the features of Groningen community schools, however. Unlike school reform programs such as Success for all and the Comer School Development Program (see Datnow, 2000), Groningen community schools do not receive additional financial support, and teachers and other professionals are not additionally trained and guided. The idea behind the Groningen community schools is that new activities should be developed without additional resources. Especially in the first few years this could lead to an increasing workload, and a decrease of activities. An alternative explanation for the decrease in *participation* in activities might very well be that parents who already joined a course on child rearing might not be inclined to do so again.

Correlations between participation in community school activities and CBCL and HOME subscales (tables 4 and 5) do not seem to establish a clear and stable relationship between subscale scores and participation rates. In this respect, one should take the frequency, intensity and content of an activity into account. It is not fair to expect a basketball course to positively influence the educational environment at home. Further analyses should therefore take a closer look at activities' characteristics. A community school is more than only the activities organized by it, however. The closer cooperation of participating institutions might also influence child behavior problems and the educational environment at home. CBCL subscales (table 2) indeed do show some significant decreases between the three measurements and HOME (table 3) subscales do show some significant increases. Further analyses are needed to investigate the cause of these changes.

The teachers' assessment of socio-emotional behavior of students makes clear that school related socio-emotional problems are not reduced dramatically. On the contrary, some problemscales even show an increase. This increase might be caused by the fact that the students where in Kindergarten during the first measurement, and in the first grade during the third measurement. For example, more special educational measurements might be taken in the first grade, were children have to perform academic tasks, than in Kindergarten where playing still is an important aspect. Further analyses on the teachers' assessments, which include all children assessed between 1998 and 2000, can give more information about the difference between Kindergarten children and first-graders. A possible reason why teachers do not seem to experience a decrease of problems might be that the adoption of the community school program leads to some uncertainties. As Stringfield and Ross (1997) noticed, teachers who work in schools that adopt school reform programs often do not have the opportunity to make choices about the program's options. More time might be needed for teachers to make optimum use of community schools' options and for effects on socio-emotional behavior to become visible. At this moment, teachers still have to deal with as much socio-emotional problems of their students as they did three years ago.

In Groningen, the Netherlands, policy-makers initiated the development of community schools, and, according to the objectives they formulated, they expect quite a lot of it. This study makes clear that the objectives are not met at this moment, but that we might be moving into the right direction considering the fact that the development of community schools in the Netherlands only started five years ago. For community schools to reach their objectives in the future, however, it is important to get more people to attend more activities (see Kruiter, 2001). Community schools should actively try to involve parents and children in activities. Doing so, they have to consider that a discrepancy might exist between what institutions think parents and children need (objective needs) and what parents and children themselves think they need (subjective needs). To combine these objective and subjective needs, communities, schools and parents should cooperate in organizing activities.

The low scores on the CBCL syndrome scales do not necessarily mean that community schools can drop programs on child behavior and courses on child rearing. The results shown here concern average scores, but some parents and children do experience pedagogical or behavioral problems. In depth case studies could give more insight into how community schools can help these families.

Not only should more analyses be done and more research be carried out to get insight in community schools, community schools themselves should also emphasize further development of the community school concept. Five years of community school development is hardly enough to get all families and institutions to cooperate with each other, let alone to reach objectives. Epstein's (1995; p.709) description of a possible approach to involve families in schools outlines what community schools might look like in still another five years: an approach to involve families in schools that "emphasizes partnerships and views the school as a homeland. The conditions and relationships in this kind of environment invite power sharing and mutual respect and allow energies to be directed toward activities that foster student learning and development. Even when conflicts rage, however, peace must be restored sooner or later, and the partners in children's education must work together."

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