

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SECOND STEP VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

by

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(Under the direction of C. Thomas Holmes)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in reducing office referrals, reducing out of school suspensions, reducing teacher absences, and improving student attendance at a small urban elementary school in North Georgia. The need to evaluate the effectiveness of the program came as a result of the school being placed on the Title I Needs Improvement list.

Data were collected from school improvement plans for the year before and the year of the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. Analyses of the data for office referrals, out of school suspensions, teacher absences, and student attendance were accomplished by the test of proportionality.

Findings indicated that there was a statistically significant decrease in the proportion of office referrals, out of school suspensions, and teacher absences after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. Student attendance percentages showed a statistically significant increase over the two years.

The Second Step Violence Prevention Program was found to improve school climate as measured by teacher and student attendance, out of school suspensions, and referrals to the

school office. Further study is suggested at early childhood and upper elementary levels within schools as well as at schools that implement the program in the middle grades.

INDEX WORDS: Violence Prevention, Conflict Resolution, Character Education, Moral Education, School Effectiveness, School Climate, Title I Schools

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Georgia in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2004

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The last five years of attending classes, researching, and writing this doctoral dissertation while pursuing a career as an elementary school principal have been a challenge, but education is all about meeting challenges with opportunities. I gratefully acknowledge the many people who provided guidance and support to me in this opportunity to realize a dream.

My daughter, Anna, deserves special mention for giving me entire weekend afternoons to work in silence while always being willing to listen and help me focus on what is really important about any issue. Her wisdom astounds me. It will be a pleasure to share this graduation year with my son, Andrew, as he graduates from high school and begins his college education. His technical assistance, patience, and hugs during all my data and formatting questions were greatly appreciated. My husband quietly and efficiently kept up with the household responsibilities and the children's busy schedules throughout all my years of graduate work. My mother, sister, and brother listened when I needed to talk, and encouraged me to finish the work.

Dr. Thomas Holmes at the University of Georgia graciously took on the position as chair of my committee midway through the writing process and has guided me with sound advice and statistical expertise through the final preparation of this work. Dr. Sally Zepeda always listened to my dilemmas and patiently counseled when roadblocks stalled the work. She rescued the entire West Georgia cohort. Linda Edwards expertly advised our group on for registration, fee payment, and procedural questions.

Friends and colleagues also deserve mention. Donna Hibbets is a remarkable friend and coworker who added greatly to my knowledge of character education. This work came about directly as a result of Donna's sound advice and unfailing support. Emily Marchman and Marvin Williams convinced me to pursue an in depth study of educational leadership. The Thursday morning Breakfast Club (Larry Dempsey, Bob Young, and the late Charles Thompson) were great sources of encouragement. Finally, the faculty and staff of North Heights Elementary School inspired me with their dedication to the art of teaching and willingness to continually work to improve their craft.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Throughout written history man has demonstrated awareness for the need to teach moral values to youth. This concern was not centered in the conventions of any one society, but existed in many ancient cultures, including those of Egypt, India, China, Greece, and Israel (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). Whether this moral education existed formally in educational settings or was passed down through familial lines, the two goals of education have remained “to help people become smart and to help them become good.” (Lickona, 1991, p. 5) Most schools today have mission or vision statements that contain both goals for their students. Indeed, most families have the same desires for their children’s education.

Mass media popularizes and often gives legendary status to incidences of disorderly conduct and violence in modern schools. Each day 6 children or youth commit suicide, 13 young people are killed by gunfire, 5,388 children are arrested, and 17,152 public school students are suspended (Soder, Goodlad, & McMannon, 2001). The entertainment and advertising industries espouse self-indulgence, manipulative, and pornographic images (Starratt, 1994). Politicians often get more popular support for their platform on educational reform as it relates to school safety rather than academic achievement of students. Our society is rife with tales of disruptive and disorderly children in all settings.

In response, there was a return to traditional moral education in schools in the last ten years (McClellan, 1999). Across the United States, this trend led to the implementation of various initiatives and programs under the general categorization of character education. State

legislatures and departments of education now mandate that some form of moral or character education be in place in public schools across the country (McClellan, 1999). Most character education programs in schools approach moral education by teaching values or character traits to their students, usually accompanied by a reward system for the demonstration of these values among their school community. Some character education programs also add the teaching of problem solving skills to help students resolve their dilemmas in the context of the classroom community. These conflict resolution and violence prevention initiatives differ greatly from the cognitive developmentalism and values clarification movements of the last part of the 20th Century in that they are both process and content oriented in design.

Statement of the Problem

Disruption of school by unruly students continues to be a problem today. School climate and the perception of school safety for students, teachers, and parents are important concerns for all school administrators. Educators at every school level are looking for moral or character education programs that will improve their school climate and image while at the same time not detract precious minutes from the academic instructional focus of the school day.

This study was undertaken to determine if Second Step, a violence prevention program, as a moral and character education initiative in a small urban elementary school, would impact school climate by showing an improvement in the amount of disciplinary referrals to the school office, the amount of out of school suspensions, student attendance, and teacher absences.

Research Questions

Did discipline referrals to the school administration in an elementary school decrease after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program?

Did out-of-school suspensions in an elementary school decrease after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program?

Did student attendance improve after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in an elementary school?

Did teacher absences decrease after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in an elementary school?

Significance of the Study

In the light of increasing juvenile crime rates, disruptive or dangerous behavior among peers at school, self-destructive behavior in youths, drug use, academic dishonesty and theft, public schools have been justified in seeking to address these social and behavioral issues in the school setting. Every state in the country has some statute mandating the instruction of character or moral education in public schools. Curriculum designers and teachers have worked to develop programs of study to meet the state requirements and at the same time best meet the needs of their students and community. While some schools have adopted programs that only provide instruction in character traits, others have moved toward instruction that involves process as well as content.

Administrators must guide their staff in choosing moral education programs that address the approach that best matches their students' needs while at the same time uses delivery methods that their staff will be able to use daily with a minimum of disruption to the academic focus of the school. Needless to say, the program must address the mandated state requirements for character or moral education. Most educators look for programs that are research based in content, design, and results. This study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of a

character education program with a violence prevention focus in a specific urban small elementary school setting.

Limitations of the Study

The school used for this study was a small urban elementary school in a city school district in north Georgia. Due to the relatively small size of the sample, results cannot be generalized to all elementary schools, or even to urban elementary schools. However, it is hoped that this study would aid similar schools in determining if this type of program would be a valid choice for their school, and would help determine if the program should be continued at this elementary school.

Organization of the Study

After a brief introduction, Chapter 1 has included a statement of the problem, the research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, and organization of the written dissertation. Chapter 2 will be an extensive review of literature, including historical and background information as well as current views and educational approaches to the topic. It will conclude with a look at recent research into the effectiveness of such programs. Chapter 3 will consist of a description of the research plan, which will include a statement of the problem, a listing of the null hypotheses, an overview of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program, a description of the sample, an explanation of the data that was collected, and a description of the data analysis procedures that were applied to the data. Chapter 4 will contain the statistical treatment of the data to test each of the hypotheses proposed. Chapter 5 will summarize the study, present conclusions, give applications of the findings, and make recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This review of literature creates a platform for the formal instruction of moral education and violence prevention education in public schools. The first section of the chapter describes the viewpoints of great intellectual thinkers and theorists who all advocated a focus on education for the formation of character. Next, the review explores the history of moral instruction in the United States, ending with the current legislated and mandated status of character education in most states in our country. Support for instruction in moral or character education is illustrated through an examination of the current status of morality in our society and popular support for public schools to address the teaching of values. The major theoretical approaches to moral education are described, and issues among these theories and theorists are explored. The chapter ends with a description of the various types of moral education programs, including violence prevention education, found in the country and provides a review of research on their effectiveness.

Philosophical Support for the Teaching of Character

Do these words accurately describe youth of today's society? "Our youth now love luxury, they have bad manners, contempt for authority, show disrespect for their elders, and love to chatter in place of exercise. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, they chatter before company, they gobble their food, and terrorize their teachers"

(Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997, p. 169). Surprisingly, Socrates wrote these statements over 2,400 years ago to describe young people of his day.

The emphasis on educating for character, morals, or values is as old as the pursuit of knowledge. Some preliterate societies studied by anthropologists actually gave higher priority to moral instruction than to technical training (Wynne & Ryan, 1993). Concern for the moral development of children can be documented as early as the 17th Century, B.C. in Egypt. Other early writings from India, Greece, China, and Israel, also expressed the need for moral education in these ancient cultures (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997).

Lickona (“Character Education,” 1996) identifies two major goals of education over the ages: to train students to be smart and to train them to be good. These two goals guided schools of thought about moral education throughout history and brought about an essential question about how people acquire character: are people inherently virtuous if they act in a virtuous manner, or can people become virtuous by performing virtuous deeds?

Philosophers and practitioners have argued the issue of the nature of character development since the time of Plato and Aristotle. Although both Plato and Aristotle believed that adults must manage the development of moral values in the young, they disagreed about approaches to moral education (Benniga, 1991). Plato said that if a person really understood virtues, he would act virtuously (Vincent, 1995). According to Plato, the goal of moral education is to bring a person’s reason, spirit, and appetite into intelligent harmony. These three seats of human motivation must be directed by reason (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). From the followers of Platonic thought came moral education programs with an emphasis on improving thinking.

Aristotle disagreed, arguing that we become just by the practice of just actions and virtuous by doing virtuous deeds. He divided virtue into two separate types, intellectual and moral. Aristotle wrote, “Therefore it is evident that it is impossible to be practically wise without being good” (Soder, Goodlad, & McMannon, 2001, p. 128). Aristotle’s followers developed moral education with an emphasis on practicing correct behavior. He assumed that each person contained latent traits such as honesty, diligence, or good humor (Wynne & Ryan, 1993).

Socrates believed that no one acts wrongly on purpose. He saw wrong actions as the result of inadequate knowledge to discover the correct action. In a response to a statement by Meno that virtue can be taught since virtue is knowledge, Socrates replied that if virtue is taught, there must be teachers of virtue. Socrates could not identify any teachers of virtue in Athens, and therefore concluded that virtue cannot be taught. (Murphy, 1994) According to Socrates, it was not enough to simply understand virtue to be virtuous. In order to be good, we must show virtue in our actions.

The 19th Century French sociologist Durkheim, considered by many to be the father of sociology, developed one of the most comprehensive conceptions of moral education. His perspective has remained relevant, and his work is reflected in that of modern philosophers and educators such as Dewey. Durkheim saw morality as a social undertaking and identified three essential elements of the concept of morality: discipline, group attachment, and autonomy, or self-determination. He saw the goal of moral education to develop in the child these three elements and to bring young children into the moral life of society (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Durkheim believed the role of the school included helping the child to acquire the community’s best values. Teaching aspiring teachers, he advocated developing a strong school spirit and

ethics, the importance of self-discipline, and the commitment of the school to help children develop morally (Wynne & Ryan, 1993).

Rousseau, a French philosopher whose work on the development of children strongly influenced Piaget, taught that children were born into a state of moral purity and became marred by an imperfect society (Piaget, 1997). He believed that adults corrupted children's character through association, and that children would make correct moral choices from innate goodness (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). His 1761 book, *Emile*, began with harsh criticism of adult manipulation of children (Benniga, 1991). Surprisingly, his strong convictions on the negative influence of an imperfect society on innocent children led him to place all of his own children in an orphanage (Wynne & Ryan, 1993). Durkheim, in contrast, saw society as being pure for those who aspire to learn by it and from it.

Piaget's studies on the cognitive development of children have greatly influenced present educational theory. Piaget extended his work from cognitive theories to the study of moral development. He found that children's moral judgment relied on cognitive components that are somewhat age specific (DeVries, 1998). Kohlberg based his theory of moral reasoning on Piaget's ideas. Damon also explored this connection between cognitive and moral development (Soder, Goodlad & McMannon, 2001).

Piaget compromised between the sociological ideas of Durkheim and the intrapsychic processes of Freud. Unlike Freud, Piaget knew that moral growth was more than a process of individual reasoning and psychological processing. Unlike Durkheim, Piaget did believe that every child must construct his or her moral beliefs through social interaction and cognitive evaluation. Piaget's ideas were more interactional in that he thought each child constructed their

own sense of morality through adult and peer social interactions that reflected moral codes, or guidelines (Piaget, 1997).

Piaget said that morality “consists in a system of rules, and the essence of all morality is to be sought for in the respect which the individual acquires for these rules” (Piaget, 1997, p. 13). In his questioning about a child’s respect for rules, he first set out to find a respect for rules in some form early in life, then to discover how the child’s psychological development morphs this early respect into an understanding of justice and law.

Piaget identified two major stages of moral development that he called heteronomous and autonomous (Benniga, 1991). In the heteronomous stage of moral development, children’s belief in rules was constant and stable, established outside their own psyche. The more mature stage, the autonomous stage, was characterized by a person’s ability to make subjective, intentional moral decisions. Moral education advocates have relied on Piaget’s stage theory and Kohlberg’s subsequent moral development theory (which will be discussed later in this chapter) to provide a basis for educational programs (McClellan, 1999).

Piaget was one of the first to pose moral dilemmas to children, a process which now has become a major component of social science research. He also identified two classes of social relationships: adult/child relations and peer relations. He found that children learn rules of constraint from adult/child relations. These inflexible rules are based on a moral respect for one’s superiors. From peer relations, he found that children learn rules of cooperation that are based on mutual respect for one’s equals (Piaget, 1997).

A primary question regarding moral development and moral education over the centuries has been the connection between moral judgment and moral actions. Piaget looked at moral judgment as a form of mental action, whether it is verbal only or overt behavior (Piaget, 1997).

Patrick Henry's and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speeches were examples of people morally acting on their moral judgment. Piaget found that sometimes judgment is first worked out in action and later conceptualized into theory, as evidenced by his observations and questioning of children playing marbles. Piaget believed that social interaction was at the forefront of moral development (Piaget, 1997).

Piaget's research in Europe and subsequently developed theories on child development influenced formal moral education throughout the world. The 19th Century English philosopher Spencer taught that the central goal of education was the formation of high moral character (Ryan, 1981). Although early American educational practice relied more on religion and necessity than theory, later theorists in the United States used Piaget's research extensively.

Morality Instruction in America

Religious Beginnings

When the Puritans settled New England in the 1620s, education was the means to keep religious orthodoxy alive, promote social harmony, encourage hard work, and spread the Christian faith (McClellan, 1999). Students easily made the connection between reading, religion, and character education (Murphy, 1994). Puritan schools used materials full of religious and moral imagery. Hornbooks, paddle-shaped pieces of wood covered by translucent horn, carried verses of scripture or poems such as "In Adam's Fall, We Sinned All." The school day also included Bible readings, prayers, and religious ceremony (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). This emphasis on theology inspired the Old Deluder Satan Act, a 1647 Massachusetts law that founded public schools in each town (Wynne & Ryan, 1993). The purpose of the law was to establish schools that would promote morality as well as education since the "old deluded Satan" promoted ignorance (Ryan & Lickona, 1992).

In Virginia, the colony was founded for economic rather than religious reasons. Settlements in Virginia were often at great distances from each other on large plantations since agricultural economics drove the society. The most of the settlers were Anglican, passing on their religion through home schooling by necessity. In 1631, the House of Burgesses passed its first education law, stressing the importance of teaching the catechism (McClellan, 1999).

Throughout the colonies, between 1607 and 1750, the family was the primary purveyor of moral values, with apprenticeship, schooling, and the church serving as important supplementary institutions. Religion and morality were combined such that schools used the catechism as the primary pedagogical tool for teaching the essential truths of society.

Moral education lost some of the tense rigidity of the early schools as life in the colonies became more casual and comfortable. With Roman Catholic immigration, conflicts arose over moral and religious education, resulting in the formation of many parochial schools. Families and communities were extraordinarily stable and prosperous, especially along the eastern seaboard. In communities that were dominated by one religious sect, education was more strongly religious. Because children stayed in their home communities at least until early adulthood, education could be achieved slowly over a long period of time. Mothers became the primary teachers of morals (McClellan, 1999).

Founding a New Nation

The founding fathers of the new country advocated character education for all so that students would be trained in democratic citizenship (Murphy, 1994). These men thought character education would foster a moral perception of public education (Ryan, 1981). Since democracy is a government by the people, it was believed that the people must understand and commit themselves to democratic virtues: respect for the rights of individuals, respect for the

law, voluntary participation in public concerns, and a concern for the common good (Lickona, 1991). Thomas Jefferson endorsed public schools because he believed that in order for the new country to survive, people should be educated not only in knowledge, but also in virtue, for government by a people who lacked virtue could not persist. His ideas of education for citizenship were also the basis of future educational views held by Mann, Bernard, Dewey, Bagley, Bestor, and Rafferty (Benniga, 1991). The Declaration of Independence and the Preamble to the Constitution clearly stated moral values and virtues that our democracy holds sacred (Murphy, 1994).

After the American Revolution, Jefferson, Webster, and Rush proposed the creation of state systems of public schools to teach republican values and encourage loyalty to the new nation. Such schools were to emphasize the teaching of virtue, defined as the willingness to set aside purely selfish motives and work for the good of the larger society (McClellan, 1999). John Adams believed this was necessary because the people had the power through their representative government to vote themselves excessive benefits (Benniga, 1991).

Growth of Public Education and Moral Education in the 19th Century

America in the 19th Century saw rapid changes. Government evolved to popular rule rather than rule by aristocrats. Citizens searched for individual liberty and economic advancement through new forms of enterprise. Western lands opened for settlement and cities expanded with new social organization. However, the era was also characterized by rigid self-restraint, rigorous moral purity, and precise cultural conformity. Price of liberty was seen to be rigorous self-discipline and upright personal conduct. There was a revival of evangelical Christianity (McClellan, 1999).

Education evolved also. As urbanization increased, numbers of students attending public schools also increased. Many students were within walking distance of schools. As individual wealth increased, students were released from economic responsibilities and were allowed to attend school for longer periods. The United States population was more religiously diverse. Schools moved from nonsectarian Christianity to deism, and finally to secular principles (Lickona & Ryan, 1994).

The public school in the 1800s was available only to white children at low or no cost, for mainstream society feared and distrusted the poor, immigrants, blacks, and Native Americans (McClellan, 1999). Still, public schools made education universal, spread common culture, internalized restraints in children of all backgrounds, and provided minimum level of equal opportunity. In this way, schools were used for remedial moral instruction to preserve harmony and order by teaching to all.

The teacher carried a heavy burden of oral responsibility, serving as a role model exhibiting virtue and eliciting proper behavior from the child. Teachers paid special attention to children's behavior, rewarding good habits and punishing bad habits. Educational psychology of that era promoted faculty psychology, the theory that the human mind is a collection of moral, emotional, and intellectual abilities and tendencies. Therefore, teachers worked to promote moral education including instruction in traits such as self-restraint, industry, honesty, kindness, punctuality, and orderliness while at the same time showing the depravity of slovenliness, inattention, dishonesty, and unkindness (McClellan, 1999).

In spite of these expectations, instruction in the classes of the first half of the 19th Century focused more on the textbook than the teacher, even in moral instruction. Moral lessons were found in readers, spellers, and arithmetic books, as schools were expected to extend and

reinforce the moral education of the home while teaching literacy and numeracy. Lessons were chosen for their moral message and were meant to be learned through frequent repetition.

Indeed, most lessons included more recitation than didactic instruction. Textbooks taught “love of country, love of God, duty to parents, the necessity to develop habits of thrift, honesty, and hard work to accumulate property, the certainty of progress, and the perfection of the United States” (McClellan, 1999, p. 25).

Webster and McGuffey wrote two popular reading texts of the era. These texts warned of earthly dangers and promised rewards for courage, honesty, and respect for others. In *McGuffey’s Third Eclectic Reader*, one reading selection told of two boys, Charlie and Rob, who talked over their future as they chopped wood. Charlie wanted to find an easier way to a better life than his current situation while Rob worked diligently and learned from the task of chopping wood, even if Charlie laughed at him. The moral of the story was apparent in the rhetorical question, “Now which of the two boys, do you think, grew up to be a rich and useful man, and which of them joined a party of tramps before he was thirty?” (McClellan, 1999, p. 26). The stories of heroism and virtue found in McGuffey’s readers captured the imagination of its age, although the age itself was far from virtuous. The century was corrupt with economic exploitation, as well as racial, ethnic, and sexual discrimination, issues not likely to be found in the *McGuffey Reader* (Lickona, 1991). Some 120 million copies were sold between 1836 and 1920, outsold only by the Bible and Webster’s Dictionary (Beach, 1992).

In an atmosphere of strict adherence to the difference between good and evil, there were no discussions of interpretation and no flexibility to apply values, only a belief in absolute rules completely adhered to. Early moral education of a 19th Century child was to develop a person who, when confronted with a moral dilemma, would choose values internalized at an early age

over tradition or the influence of others. In Freudian terms, the strong superego would pull away from familiar temptation and develop powerful consciences (McClellan, 1999).

Moral education in the 19th Century often replaced civic education, reflecting the belief of that day that the way to obtain the good for society lay more in the morality of common citizens than in politics and structures of government. This tendency to place personal moral behavior at the center of the nation's dreams of social and political stability made the elementary school an important place for moral instruction, and the public nonsectarian schools were highly supported by parents and government (McClellan, 1999).

Moral philosophy of the day included the belief of a moral sense accessible to all people and stressed the duty of individuals to follow basic moral principles. There was little emphasis on moral decision-making, almost ignoring the consideration of consequences. The tendency was to view morality as aligning the individual will with universally accepted moral rules (McClellan, 1999).

Modern Influences on Moral Education in a New Century

The turn of the century saw education struggling to respond to demands to expand and transform in order to keep up with a more modern society. Productivity, specialization, technical expertise, and corporate structure became important in modern society. Schools increased academic offerings, added social apprenticing, and offered vocational instruction. Students stayed in school for more years and high schools doubled their enrollments (McClellan, 1999). Public schools were used for "Americanizing" the millions of immigrants who came to this country every year. Schools not only taught language skills, academics, and citizenship, but also were responsible for imparting standards of values and morality of the day (Kirschenbaum, 1995).

Because of technical advances that brought society closer together, personal freedom became important to young people. Schools could not continue to operate on a single set of values that had served people in the context of communities of the past. Schools had to prepare students for varying roles in different social situations (McClellan, 1999). Concern for moral education did not dissipate during this era, but its focus was redirected.

New Approaches to Teaching Morals Evolve

Educators had three different viewpoints on how to convey moral education. The first approach was to preserve the traditional values by teaching specific virtues and cultivating traits of good character, both in public schools and in society. This approach became widely known as character education. The second approach was a product of the progressive education movement in public schools; it emphasized a more flexible and critical approach to moral education through problem solving and social education. A third movement, outside public education, was a push by religious educators to preserve teaching morality within the tenets of faith (McClellan, 1999). The first two of these approaches to moral education, the character education approach and the progressive education approach, have largely guided schools of thought in moral education to the present day.

Character education

Character education was programmatic in nature. Most of the supporters of character education were more interested in creating new programs for the new era than they were in preserving the former educational practices. However, development of these programs was slow. In the first decade of the century, courses were offered in ethics and manners, extending the 19th Century approach of teaching characteristics. By the second decade of the century, many youth organizations were created such as Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, and 4-H clubs.

Each emphasized codes of conduct and group dynamics designed to encourage moral discernment and good deportment. The codes of conduct consisted of lists of virtues, often presented in the form of bylaws or pledges focusing on moral education both in and out of the classroom. An example of such a code was the “Children’s Morality Code,” authored by Hutchins in 1911 and published in 1917 by the Character Education Association. This code of conduct consisted of ten character traits that were espoused as ten laws for living. Similar lists had been popular in the previous century by founding fathers such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. Other character codes were adopted by school systems throughout the country in the 1920s and 1930s. In Boston, the schools were encouraged to emphasize one law a month. In Birmingham, Alabama, schools stressed one virtue each year (McClellan, 1999). National contests for the best morality codes and best methodologies for teaching character education were held as interest flourished. The Character Education Association, founded and headed by Fairchild, led the way in this initiative (Murphy, 1998).

Teamwork was stressed in the character education programs, partly because of its necessity in the workplace of modern production. Group interactions were considered vital in developing character. Clubs, both curricular and extracurricular, helped emphasize group interaction as members were active in charitable causes and recreational activities. Team sports such as football were emphasized by character educators as valuable for both self-discipline and team efforts, lessons thought to be important for boys who would one day be a part of business, government, professions, or the military (McClellan, 1999). The character education movement also emphasized activities such as student councils, flag salutes and other ceremonies as well as instruction in moral virtues (Ryan & Lickona, 1992).

Character education viewed moral education as a problem of motivation rather than of ethical reasoning. Efforts to educate the character consisted of practice designed to ingrain good habits and to strengthen the will of students rather than teaching students to make fine ethical distinctions.

By the late 1920s the use of codes was declining, partly as a result of the colorful lifestyles of the 1920s and partly as a result of the influence of progressive educators who called for a more critical approach to moral education. The criticism was begun by the publication in 1928 of studies by Hartshorne and May, which raised questions as to the effectiveness of heavily didactic moral education programs (McClellan, 1999).

Yale University psychologists Hartshorne and May studied the behavior of 10,000 children who were subjected to situations in which they might respond by lying, cheating, or stealing in the contexts of home, school, and social situations. Hartshorne and May's findings did not substantiate a significant relationship between values and behavior, although they expected to find such a relationship (Lockwood, 1997). They found that it was hard to predict what a given child would do in specific situations based on their behavior in another situation. Hartshorne and May's doctrine of specificity was derived from their studies. It stated that honesty or dishonesty by a person is variable and determined by the specific situation, not by an internal set of beliefs which they called character (McClellan, 1999). According to Hartshorne and May, schools cannot educate for character if character did not govern behavior (Lickona, 1991). Recent and complex research analysis using the principle of aggregation questioned the results of Hartshorne and May and revealed a higher correlation between the students' participation in character education classes of their day and the probability that students would practice the virtues studied in other situations (Murphy, 1998). The results of the Hartshorne and

May studies seriously weakened the support system for character education (Lickona, 1991). To date there has been no research that firmly substantiates the relationship between values and behavior (Lockwood, 1997).

Progressivism

The progressive viewpoint applied science and reason to the increasingly complex dilemmas of the day. Progressive educators did not agree with character education programs that stressed morality codes or the teaching of virtues. Character meant the ability to contribute meaningfully to a humane and democratic society rather than a matter of living in compliance with a set of rules of conduct (McClellan, 1999). The pedagogy that developed from this way of thought emphasized problem solving and social education, using challenges of everyday life simulated in the classroom environment. Students were also taken on excursions to observe adults at work or to perform projects in which students must work together to solve problems. These methods were designed for children to work in groups, not simply enforcing adult codes, but helping children create solutions of their own based on the situation, not the code (McClellan, 1999).

Progressives viewed character as a way of thinking, not as knowledge of a set of virtues. Therefore, character and moral education could be taught throughout all subject areas, not just as a separate class. Social studies were stressed to develop character, replacing literature as a primary subject to teach and demonstrate character traits. Progressives saw their programs as teaching students a new, wholly secular way to make moral decisions (McClellan, 1999).

Critics of progressivism point out that it weakened the authority of adults, legitimized peer influence, and left students vulnerable to society (McClellan, 1999). Students found it difficult to take an individual stand against the status quo in an era of teamwork and compliance.

Teachers found it difficult to teach the processes of thinking necessary in this approach without also teaching specific content, especially throughout the disciplines in instances where teacher training was very specialized (McClellan, 1999).

Progressives were unable to develop a concise theory of moral development and emphasized teamwork so strongly that they often neglected private moral behavior. The influence of progressive moral education was also difficult to measure because it was interpreted in vastly different ways throughout the country. Progressive moral education programs rarely replaced virtue-centered programs; however they often existed side by side in a hodgepodge in the early 20th Century (McClellan, 1999).

Other Theories Influencing Moral Education

A study of moral education in the early part of the century in America, dominated by both progressive moral education and traditional virtue-centered character education, would not be complete without mention of the influence of educational theories also emerging during this period. The behaviorism movement in psychology emerged as quantification in other disciplines gained importance. Modern research methods became as important as the exploration of ethical issues and value questions (McClellan, 1999).

Other influences on moral education of the early 1900s included Darwinism, logical positivism, and even Einstein's theory of relativity. Darwinism led many people to question the fixed standard of morality (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). Darwin's theories of evolution of the species led people to claim that qualities such as morality were also evolving, not certain and fixed (Lickona, 1991). Thorndike, an educational psychologist, similarly believed, based on Darwin's conclusions, that human actions had no moral basis because a human being consisted only of a body that reacts rather than reasons (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Post-Darwinism science

and social science laid assumptions that the troubles of the modern world were technical in nature, needing scientific application and research study by experts (McClellan, 1999).

Positivism, also called logical positivism, gained popularity in European and American universities. It held that the only truths were those things that could be proven. Moral statements were merely statements of personal sentiment (McClellan, 1999). As a result, morality was thought of as a private choice, not suitable for public debate. (Lickona, 1999). Logical positivism separated facts from values (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). This way of thinking proposed that there were no objective moral truths, and that morality was simply a personal, private choice (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Logical positivism even led educators to question whether moral education could produce measurable results to justify its role in the public school curriculum (*Character Education in U.S. Schools*, 1996).

Einstein's theory of relativity was not only applied to physical matter, but also led others to question the relativity of moral questions. The point of view of the individual was respected more than the moral tenet underlying a question (Lickona, 1991).

Global and Economic Concerns Change The Focus of Moral Education

With national concerns during the Great Depression and World War II, schools devoted less effort to moral education and more attention to training young people for the working world. Methods used were inculcating and modeling of values, less obvious pedagogy than what was encouraged by character education or progressivism (Kirschenbaum, 1995). However, the revival of character education during the war years promoted cooperation among varying theories of delivery; virtue-centered character education approaches and progressive approaches were both used by educators during this time (McClellan, 1999).

In 1951, the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators formed the Educational Policies Commission, a group of prominent educators. This group produced a report entitled *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools* (McClellan, 1999). The report also proposed a balanced program to both teach certain central values and to promote flexibility necessary in a changing society. The values identified by the commission included respect for the individual, truth, brotherhood, and individual moral responsibility. The report stated that schools had a clear right and responsibility to teach these values, but it went even farther in encouraging schools to promote spiritual as well as moral values, accepting education about religion, and permitting religious expression by students. Surprisingly, the commission did not define the values it promoted, but like the progressives, it saw these values as dictated by historical circumstances and urged regular review of pertinent values by the community as well as the schools.

Harry Lester Smith, Dean of the Indiana University School of Education, proposed a variety of methods to teach moral values and patriotism, as well as stressing religious exercises in schools. Ligon, director of the Character Education Project at Union College, believed that social sciences had the ability to strengthen the methods of moral education. He felt that values were universal, not evolving, and wanted to use the sciences to better teach eternal truths and character traits. Both of these men had relatively small influence over the development of public school programs, although at the time their programs received attention from both private foundations and the public (McClellan, 1999).

Moral education began a subtle decline that continued into the 1960s and 1970s. McClellan (1999) cited three reasons for the growing emphasis on cognitive dimensions of education and the decline of moral dimensions. The period demanded more technology and

scientific skills from students. Basic academic skills and intellectual achievement gave better preparation for success in society than did character and personality as students competed for college entrance. Schools cut courses and activities that were previously used for moral instruction.

Communism became a strong force in the world, and attacks on democracy and capitalism grew. Courses such as civics and social studies that had traditionally been used for moral and character instruction became tools to teach the dangers of communism by contrasting the communist countries with the free world. This national emphasis led to a decline in instruction in local civic responsibility and moral development (McClellan, 1999).

Americans began to clearly separate their private lives from the public realm. Schools responded by avoiding moral questions that could be considered personal and private choices (McClellan, 1999). Parents were assumed to have the responsibility of shaping the moral development of the child in the formative six years of life, relieving the schools of the necessity to teach character development.

Value Judgment and Education

An almost complete abandonment of moral and character education took place in the 1960s and 1970s as educators began to see moral education as a source of enormous controversy, problematic by nature. Racial inequality and reactions to the unpopular wars in Southeast Asia exacerbated the problem. Americans had difficulty finding common ground with diverse and divisive opinions of volatile issues (McClellan, 1999). Social unrest in the community spilled over into the classroom so that traditional roles and values were questioned (Kirschenbaum, 1995).

Living by a set of values became a matter of personal choice, both in deciding upon the values and in making a decision to live by them. This trend became known as personalism (Lickona, 1991). The autonomy of the individual was emphasized more than the roles of individuals as members of society. Areas such as choice of dress, acceptable language, and sexual permissiveness began to have a wide range of acceptable behavior among society in general, but among young people in particular. As parents disagreed with schools over teaching any moral virtues to their children, they were quick to do battle with schools over the school's perceived slights of their own personal values and their children's rights. The number of court cases challenging school practices increased dramatically in the 1960s and 1970s, with more decisions in favor of students than ever before (McClellan, 1999).

Anything that might be considered an indoctrination of values was avoided. Although individual teachers sometimes raised moral issues in the context of their curriculum, the atmosphere of moral education as the primary goal of the school lost ground during this period so that by the end of the 1970s moral education was at a historically low point (McClellan, 1999).

In the mid-1960s some new approaches were beginning to be developed. The new approaches disagreed with virtue centered moral education, and instead promoted personal autonomy and diversity. Three of these approaches were values clarification, cognitive developmentalism, and feminist ethic of caring.

Values Clarification

The values clarification movement began in 1966 with the publication of *Values and Teaching* by Louis Rath, Merrill Harmin, and Sidney Simon, modified later by Howard Kirschenbaum (McClellan, 1999). Like progressives, the promoters of values clarification did

not approve of one set of universal values for instruction, but instead believed that students should learn a process of valuing. They believed that youth troubles were the result of the difficulty of choosing values (McClellan, 1999). The values clarification movement stressed reflective thinking rather than lessons in morality (Ryan, 1981).

Teachers used nonindoctrinative and nonjudgmental methods with students, stimulating thought and action. Three specific teaching approaches were used by teachers: scripted clarification questions asked to individual students; written statements resending situational problems followed by questions designed for individual response; and group discussions stimulated by pictures, stories, or movie scenes (McClellan, 1999). Guidebooks for these three approaches gave specific instructional directions for teachers including questions and exercises. Teachers were not to impose their own values or views on students, but to elicit the opinions of students and to respond to them without moralizing (McClellan, 1999). A seven step scale of valuing was used, whether the student was making a preferential choice or acting on one's choice (Ryan, 1981).

Values clarification was widely taught in teacher preparation programs, particularly at the junior high and high school levels, in the 1960s and 1970s, primarily because its nondirective methodology was in line with the atmosphere of the time (McClellan, 1999). Educational institutions prided themselves on becoming value free as a response to the culture of those decades (Murphy, 1998). By the early 1980s, the movement lost most of its influence on American education, although teachers trained in its methodology in college retained the schools of thought in which it was developed (McClellan, 1999).

The Cognitive Developmental Theory

Cognitive developmentalism was an approach developed by Kohlberg in the 1960s that emphasized moral reasoning development more than moral education. Kohlberg's theory was concerned with how we think rather than what we think or what we do (Ryan, 1981). Based somewhat on Piaget's work on moral development, Kohlberg also believed that children at different ages have different ways of thinking about moral questions (Ryan, 1981). He based his approach on relating stages of cognitive development with complex concepts of judgment. He believed that the influence of cognitive development on justice was what moved individuals to higher stages of moral development. His comprehensive conception of cognitive moral development included six stages grouped in three general levels (McClellan, 1999).

Level I was labeled preconventional, or premoral (McClellan, 1999). It included two stages, heteronomous morality and individualism. Individuals in the heteronomous morality stage obeyed rules based on the avoidance of punishment and the superior power of authorities (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). The individualism, instrumental purpose, and exchange stage served the individual's immediate interest in following rules and acting to meet one's own interests and needs while letting others do the same (Ryan & Lickona, 1992).

Level II was the conventional role conformity stage. The first stage in this level was mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships, and interpersonal conformity, or the "good-boy" stage. Individuals in this stage would live up to what was expected by people based on society's definition of roles and relationships. The second stage in Level II was social system and conscience. Orientation maintained by authority and social order characterized this level. Laws were upheld except in extreme cases where they conflicted with other fixed social duties.

The final level, Level III, was the postconventional, or principled level, and contained stage 5 and 6. Stage 5 was named social contract or utility and individual rights. It consisted of a contractual, legalistic orientation in which nonrelative values and rights such as life and liberty must be upheld in any society, regardless of majority opinion. The final stage, one which most people never reach, was the universal ethical principles stage. In this stage people followed self-chosen ethical principles, on which particular laws or social agreements were usually valid because they rest on such principles (Ryan & Lickona, 1992).

Kohlberg's stages were seen as universal without regard to culture, race, or gender (Benniga, 1991). The goal of cognitive developmentalism was for an individual to move from simplistic selfish perspectives to global virtuous thinking. This was accomplished by moving from one stage to another without skipping stages, except under duress (Benniga, 1991). Movement from stage to stage was possible through dealing with cognitive conflict. Kohlberg believed that people are rarely in one stage exclusively, but existed in three consecutive stages at the same time, with about fifty percent in the middle stage. Rarely would people regress to a previous stage (McClellan, 1999). The cognitive developmentalism theory was bold in its claims, attracting supporters and challengers from its introduction to the present (Benniga, 1991).

In its application in education, teachers provoked discussion of ethical dilemmas, and student progress was determined by the quality of moral reasoning rather than by the solution. The program was designed to be nonindoctrinative, but inherently, the trait of justice was at the higher stages of reasoning. Kohlberg's theory of cognitive developmentalism relied on universal principles as guides to make moral decisions (McClellan, 1999).

As Kohlberg applied his theory to institutions in the 1970s and 1980s, he favored a more hands on approach for moral educators rather than a role as facilitators of moral development.

He tested his theory in prisons as well as in schools (McClellan, 1999). In the school setting, Kohlberg and his followers began the Democratic schools movement, giving students, usually high school students, direct experience in democracy by giving them authority usually reserved for adults in schools that he called just community schools. Discipline and behavior codes as well as decisions on funding were areas in which students participated by majority vote (Wynne & Ryan, 1993). Neither the use of moral dilemmas nor just community schools had a far-reaching effect on educational efforts.

Kohlberg's cognitive developmentalism theory had more influence on moral education than did the values clarification movement (McClellan, 1999). Both approaches were relatively process-oriented, without a strong contextual base (Murphy, 1998). Ryan, 1981, viewed cognitive developmentalism as an optimistic, but narrow, theory that concentrated on reasoning without helping students in a world of action.

Feminism, Ethic of Caring and Other Movements

Gilligan was a colleague and feminist critic of Kohlberg's theories who saw a masculine bias to his beliefs (McClellan, 1999). She identified several differences in the approaches of men and women to moral education. Her observations form the basis of the feminist ethic of caring approach to moral education. Gilligan noted that women paid more attention to the effect of actions on relations. She saw that women are concerned with real rather than suppositional dilemmas, making values clarification scenarios not as effective with females. Women on the whole were found to be more interested in the context rather than simply the content of moral decisions. She also noted that women more closely related feelings of empathy and compassion to moral judgments (McClellan, 1999).

Gillian, Noddings, Martin, and others promoted educators to place caring relationships in the classroom at the core of moral education. Through such relationships, moral action can be put into practice. No educational materials were put into wide use by these researchers, although several moral education curriculums have included themes of care at the center of the classroom climate (Benniga, 1991).

A variety of approaches and programs known as moral reasoning were also advocated in the 1970s. Some of these included skills for ethical action, value analysis, cognitivist approach, teaching philosophy to children, and strategies for solving values questions (Ryan, 1981). Personal development and self-esteem programs, also known as affective education, gained much attention, particularly in middle and high schools (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Bloom and other said that education consists of a mix of instruction in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Many of the affective education character approaches included citizenship, substance abuse prevention, and peace education (Murphy, 1998). Mosher and Sprinthall advocated a psychological education program that was popular in high schools (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). A values analysis approach, proposed by Fraenkel, was an alternative to values clarification in many schools (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Fraenkel's seven steps of moral reasoning were applied to everything from philosophy to consumer economics. These steps were: identify the dilemma, identify the alternatives, predict consequences of each alternative, predict short and long term consequences, collect consequential evidence, assess correctness of each consequence, and decide on a course of action (Ryan, 1981).

Revival of Character Education

The "me" generation of the 1970s gave way to the "look out for number one" generation of the 1980s. This new era included a more politically conservative climate in which economic

concerns and personal needs led to a “back to the basics” approach, not only in education, but also in society in general. The answer to all the problems young people faced became the all encompassing “just say no” phrase. Moral educators were concerned that young people should learn more about basic values and less about the process of discovering their own values (Kirschenbaum, 1995).

Although values clarification, cognitive developmentalism, and feminist approaches were popular trends since the 1960s, the most common efforts in moral education came from people favoring virtue-centered approaches, usually under the label of character education. This character education emphasized teaching selected virtues; through the teaching of virtues, character education promotes good conduct. Thus, the emphasis was not on discovering values or reasoning through moral questions, but application through content. The supporters of character education were some of the same people who supported it since the 1930s when it began to lose popularity as progressive education flourished (McClellan, 1999).

The American Institute of Character Education (AICE), headquartered in San Antonio, Texas, received private foundation support from the Lilly endowment toward its aim to write a practical program to teach essential character traits to elementary school students in public schools (McClellan, 1999). The materials produced were designed in kits including books, filmstrips, transparencies, story wheels, and teacher’s manuals. The materials could stand-alone or could be integrated into language arts or social studies curriculum. The virtues included in a lesson were to be encouraged and practiced throughout the school day. By the late 1980s, this material had reached about eighteen thousand classrooms throughout the United States, largely through grassroots efforts, with disputed success (McClellan, 1999).

Local communities began to discuss ways to change the declining moral climate among its youth. A group of teachers and school officials in Baltimore, County, Maryland, met to determine a set of shared community values important enough to be taught in their schools. Business leaders in St. Louis, Missouri, formed a school and community partnership to improve both academics and attitudes among students (McClellan, 1999). The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the Johnson Foundation sponsored a Wingspread Conference in Racine, Wisconsin, in March, 1992 to encourage national education associations to promote character education. In July, 1992, the Josephson Institute of Ethics brought together youth leaders, character education experts, and educators who issued the Aspen Declaration on Character Education, supporting efforts based on core ethical values. These two groups eventually formed the Character Education Partnership in 1993, a national, non-profit, nonpartisan coalition. (*Character Education in U.S. Schools*, 1996). In 1994, the Improving America's School Act awarded grants for character education pilot projects to California, Iowa, New Mexico, and Utah (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997).

Supporters of character education were a loose group of like-minded individuals rather than a direct network of professionals. Some were connected to think tanks, and some were leaders in education. Most wanted to restore the standards of conduct and morality that existed prior to the 1960s and 1970s. Probably the most powerful supporter of character education was Bennett, former Secretary of the United States Department of Education. Other character education supporters were Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction in California, and university professors Oldenquist, Ryan, Wilson, and Wynne (McClellan, 1999). These supporters vocally pointed to the decline of youth by quoting rates of teenage suicide, drug use, crime, and unwed pregnancies. They called for the nation to once again support moral

education. Bennett and his supporters believed that moral dilemma discussions could play an important role in high schools, but they were not complete without instruction in virtues and an emphasis on correct behavior. Bennett and Honig both spoke out on the ease in finding consensus on identifying fundamental values. They felt that character education should begin in the early years and continue through college. Bennett's *Book of Virtues* (1995) was an example of classic stories collected specifically to teach certain values (McClellan, 1999).

The pedagogy used by character education supporters was not new; it was a return to tradition. Controversial issues of the day were avoided because it was believed that a base of morality should first be established through virtue-centered education before more difficult issues such as nuclear disarmament or abortion should be taught. The character education movement has been the most difficult of all the modern movements to determine its effectiveness. Scholars have had difficulty finding a way to measure its impact (McClellan, 1999).

The direction of moral education in public schools has been a major factor in the growth of private education and the home school movement. In these environments, parents hoped that a more open forum for character and moral education would reverse the decline in morality of young people. With an increase in the use of school vouchers and forced school choice, many parents moved their children to private or religious schools because of their concern about the moral and ethical environment of public schools (Lockwood, 1997).

Between 1965 and 1989, enrollment in nonreligious independent schools gained 358 percent and enrollment in non-Catholic religious schools gained 213 percent. This growth can be attributed to student diversity, declining academic standards, and concern about the lack of moral education in public schools. At the same time, however, Catholic schools suffered from

declining enrollment to the extent that the gains in independent and non-Catholic religious schools was far offset by the loss in Catholic parochial schools (McClellan, 1999).

With the current revival in moral and character education in public schools, support for such programs in the realm of public education continues to grow. Presently, major voices in the movement agree more than at any time since the mid-1960s in a compromise framework, accommodating virtue-centered instruction, just community schools, caring classrooms, and feminist platforms (McClellan, 1999). Extremists remain suspicious of traditional moral education, but still promote social reform through controversial disputations. At the same time conservative Christian activists do not believe that moral education can exist without instruction in specific religious doctrine.

Legislative Mandates for Teaching of Morality in Public Schools

Meanwhile, all 50 states have revised, or in the process of revising, curricular standards. Forty-six states address character education directly in their curriculum (McClellan, 1999). In 1999, eight states had educational standards that directly addressed character education. No state codes of education forbid the teaching of character education (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Georgia adopted 27 character virtues to be taught annually in grades K-12 in 1997. These statistics indicate that the public is less nervous about moral education and that educators are more willing to respond to the nation's concerns in light of evidence of misbehavior by young people (McClellan, 1999). Maxcy (1994, p. 6) summed this up in his statement, "the allocation of values is the heart of politics."

Lack of Character and Morals in Today's Youth

George Chapman said, "Young men think old men are fools, but old men know young men are fools" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 166). Throughout recorded history, adults showed

concern with the lack of morals in children and youth. In the last 20 or 30 years, the conduct of young people in the United States deteriorated as evidenced by an increase in self-destructive behavior and in destructive behavior involving others (Ryan & Lickona, 1992).

Statistics show that self-destructive behaviors are on the rise. Lloyd and Ramsey (1997) reported that 70% of all children have tried cigarettes, and that 3,000 teenagers start smoking every day. A survey of 10th graders found that between 1991 and 1994 the percentage of students who reported using illegal drugs during the previous year increased from 24 percent to 33 percent (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). Soder, Goodlad, & McMannon (2001) listed statistics that showed every day 420 youth were arrested for drug offenses and a total of 5,388 children were arrested for other offenses. Rates of arrest among the youngest age groups have increased faster than among the other age groups (Wynne & Ryan, 1993).

Out-of-wedlock births rates have increased dramatically since 1951, higher now than ever before (Wynne & Ryan, 1993). In a survey of college students, 68 % were sexually active (Beach, 1992). Murphy (1998) reported that half of United States high school seniors are sexually active. She referred to the 1995 National Survey of Family Growth, which found that the United States had highest teen pregnancy rate and teen abortion rate in the industrialized world.

The suicide rate among children and youth has also risen. In the last 30 years, suicides were up 300% (Garrett, 1999). Each day six children or youth commit suicide (Soder, Goodlad, & McMannon, 2001). Even more shocking, one in seven teenagers have attempted suicide (Garrett, 1999).

Self-destructive school behaviors also abound. Lloyd and Ramsey (1997) found that 75% of high school students have cheated on tests. Even at prestigious West Point Academy,

cheating created problems when students were found plagiarizing on research, selling term papers, and fixing athletes' records (Beach, 1992).

In a typical day, 17,152 public school students are suspended (Soder, Goodlad, & McMannon, 2001). Individual prejudices continue to be a problem; a high school teacher reported that integration ended each day at 3 o'clock, when school ends for the day (Beach, 1992). These negative changes in youth behavior have also been accompanied by declines in measured pupil learning (Wynne & Ryan, 1993).

Destructive behavior involving others ranged from school disruptions to murder. Lloyd and Ramsey (1997) reported that between 1992 and 1994, 17% of 10th graders reported that other students interfered with their learning at least six times a week. Other school surveys (Garrett, 1999) indicated that the chief fear of children is disruptive behavior by other students. The same survey estimated that nearly three million crimes occur on or near school grounds each year, including 500,000 attacks and robberies each month in public high schools. According to Lloyd and Ramsey (1997), 71% of children between the ages of seven and ten worried they might get shot or stabbed at school or at home. A 1991 survey found that 40% of 10th graders reported they had been threatened or injured at school (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). In the same survey, 15% of teachers reported that a student had threatened or physically attacked them during the previous year. A University of Michigan study reported that 9% of 8th graders carry a weapon to school every day (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997), and another study reported that approximately 135,000 students carry weapons to school each day (Garrett, 1999).

Statistics show that theft has also become an increasingly serious problem. A Boston Globe survey (Murphy, 1998) found that more than half of the 9th graders in an affluent suburb saw nothing wrong with stealing a CD or keeping money they found in a lost wallet. Lloyd and

Ramsey (1997) found that 42% of males and 31% of females surveyed had stolen something from a store.

The California Commission on Crime Control and Violence Prevention in 1983 reported that the United States is the most violent of all western industrialized democracies because our culture promotes violence (Beninga, 1991). The number of young people who died from gunfire doubled from 1983 to 1993 (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). According to Murphy (1998), the United States had the highest murder rate among industrialized nations for young men aged 15 to 24. Each day a child under the age of 10 is killed by gunfire, and 13 children or youths are killed by gunfire (Soder, Goodlad, & McMannon, 2001). Similar problems have been noted with the negative behavior of young people in other countries (Ryan & Lickona, 1992).

Harris and Associates surveyed teachers in 1993 and 1994 to identify major factors contributing to destructive student behavior (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). The majority of teachers and school law enforcement officers believed these factors were lack of supervision at home, lack of family involvement in school, and exposure to violence in the mass media.

Parents have not set good examples for their children, as there was a marked increase in the breakdown of ethical behavior in the home over the last 30 years (Starratt, 1994). Starratt found that child and spousal abuse, drug addiction, corporate crime, environmental desecration, and increasing affluence have impacted the breakdown of the traditional home environment. During recent times of relative prosperity and increases in the standard of living, adult family members replaced family time with work and recreational activities, while youth became quickly bored and unfulfilled (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). With money the driving force in our society, families became increasingly less involved in school and the interests and educational needs of their children (Garrett, 1999). The average 6 to 14 year old child only used 10,000 words in

1997 compared to 25,000 words in 1945 (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). Students become processors of information rather than reflective thinkers as learning has been reduced to facts and skills (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). The National Commission on Excellence in Education reported that this overemphasis on technical and occupational skills left little time for studying the arts and humanities that serve to enrich our culture and maintain civility (Beach, 1992). As a result, schools found themselves teaching values that children did not learn at home as violence, dishonesty, disrespect for authority, peer cruelty, bigotry on school campuses, and ethical illiteracy abounded (Beach, 1992).

The other major cause of the decline in student behavior was found to be the popularity of the entertainment and mass media industry among young people. Although 80% of Americans thought television violence is harmful, the average child spent 30 to 35 hours a week watching television, witnessing 8,000 television murders and 100,000 acts of violence on television by the age of 11 (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). Studies have shown an inverse relationship between the amount of time a child spends watching television and academic achievement in school (Beach, 1992). Other studies have proven a significant correlation between the amount of televised aggression school aged children view and the amount of aggressive behavior they demonstrate (Beach, 1992). Another study found that students who watch more than two hours of television daily have more learning problems, read less, and write less often (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997).

The entertainment and advertising media has espoused self-indulgent, manipulative, and pornographic images. Immediate gratification and the pursuit of pleasure have been reinforced as television shapes values, attitudes, and behavior while glamorizing drugs and alcohol, sex and violence, and wealth and materialism (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). Entertainment and sports stars,

not great persons from history, were found to be the people that children most admire (Wynne & Ryan, 1993). Young people have confused celebrity with real heroism - virtue and enduring fame. The same results were evident in print media. Vitz in the early 1980s (Wynne & Ryan, 1993) surveyed school textbooks to see who was portrayed as role models for students. During the late 1970s and 1980s these books had recent people, liberal politicians, and important female personalities. Few persons who would traditionally be considered heroes were profiled.

Evidence of Public Support for Character Education in Schools

Although the teaching of character begins at home, Gallup Poll findings in 1975 and 1980 found that more than 80% of parents wanted schools to teach morals and moral behavior to their children (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). These results continued to be found in surveys by Phi Delta Kappa (Benniga, 1991). In the Phi Delta Kappa 25th and 26th Annual Gallup Poll of the public's attitudes toward public schools, 69% said that it is possible for local communities to agree on a set of basic values to be taught in public schools (Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 1994). There were high levels of agreement on which values young people should learn (Murphy, 1998). Gallup polls show public concern with the lack of discipline in classrooms. Over 90% of adults support teaching the traits of honesty, democracy, acceptance of people with different backgrounds, patriotism, caring for friends and family members, moral courage, and the Golden Rule (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Lickona (1991) suggested that parents and schools should work together in the decision-making process when selecting the values and rules to govern school moral issues.

Solid bipartisan support for character education was evident in the 1990s as both the House and Senate passed a joint resolution in support of character education. Funding for character education was also provided through the Safe and Drug Free Schools program and

grants for pilot character education programs (*Character Education*, 1996). By 1996, the Supreme Court had not decided any cases pertaining specifically to character education although other decisions supporting the teaching of core ethical values had been rendered. *Board of Education v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, 864 (1982) was one such case in which the court said that public schools do have a role in preparing students to be citizens and in the teaching of values important to our democracy. Local boards of education were given the leeway to teach the values of the community, including social and moral values. Another case, *Ambach v. Norwich*, 441 U.S. 68, 75-80, included comments that the teachers actually have an obligation to teach character to their students (*Character Education*, 1996). Broad support for moral education in public schools has been evident among various religions, including Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Confucianism (Vincent, 1995).

Theoretical Basis for Moral Education

Human beings behave less instinctively than other living things. Sunflowers instinctively turn toward the sun, and monarch butterflies instinctively continue their 5,000 mile migration over multiple generations each year. Humans are not merely blank slates waiting to be taught from scratch. Humans gain most of what they need to know by learning (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

Humans care for their young for longer periods of time than most species. During this dependence period they are able to learn complex skills while surrounded with complicated systems of care and nurture (Ryan & Lickona, 1994). Moral education goes on whether or not we consciously address it through television, popular culture, peer groups, broken and abusive families and schools (Ryan, 1981).

Children attend school six hours a day, 180 days per year for 13 years. They are constantly involved interpersonal relationships from classroom to playground and are exposed to

the history and literature of the human race. Social relationships in the classroom and school environments are vital to their lives. Children are affected morally by their school experiences, and their school experiences help to develop their morality (Ryan, 1981). Goodlad (2001) coined the term democratic character to describe the ideals children should attain during the formative school years.

Benniga (1991) used research to show that even young children have concerns for justice and human welfare, concepts on which morality is based. He claimed that the research provided a nonindoctrinative and nonrelativistic basis for moral education. Robert Kegan described the “imperial self” stage in which elementary children begin to assert self-sufficiency (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Gorman viewed the elementary years as a public time to express competence and independence (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Erikson described it as a time that children begin mastering things and find pride in the process (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Children become able to consider more than one factor at a time, and problem solving becomes easier as children consider both alternatives and consequences (Piaget, 1997). Kohlberg’s moral reasoning theory explained that children begin to apply the Golden Rule and desire to be nice by living up to not only the expectations of others, but also to their own conscience (Ryan & Lickona, 1992).

Child psychologist Issacs said that character education must be taught developmentally (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Specific traits are best taught at specific developmental stages. He believed that children below seven years old cannot apply knowledge or experience to questions involving judgment, making obedience a necessary virtue. Issacs found that children between age seven and twelve begin to assert their will, and traits such as courage and diligence can help them to be less impulsive. During adolescence, reason should be developed, leading to integrity (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

Issues of Moral Education

Contemporary issues in moral education cause disagreement and spawn controversy that has fueled practitioners, theorists and research. Moral educators have grappled over whether their instruction is indoctrination or inculcation. Theorists have disagreed over whether moral education merely teaches conventions or actual morality. Heated controversy over the specific values to be taught has ranged from the coffee table to public hearings.

Indoctrination Versus Inculcation

Indoctrination includes instruction in doctrines, theories, beliefs, and principles. Kohlberg warned against such instruction, arguing that approaches that used deliberate and nondeliberate methods to teach children certain values were wrong since children moved from one stage of moral development to another without specific content instruction (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989). Others agreed, saying that indoctrination was imposing one generation's values on another generation (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Since morals and values were viewed as often very personal, diversity had to be respected without becoming offensive (Ryan, 1981).

Ryan and Bohlin (1999) identified nonindoctrinative teaching methods including discovery, cooperative learning, and inquiry. Inculcating values is accomplished through teaching, explaining, learning concepts and rules, using readings and audiovisuals with clear moral instruction rather than a moral dilemma, using rewards, posters, slogans, and other methods. Kirschenbaum (1995) believed that facilitative methods such as class meetings and discussions should be used as students begin to learn values through instruction. A balance between too little guidance if indoctrination is abandoned and overprotectiveness if indoctrination is advocated should be reached by schools (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

Convention Versus Morality

Conventions are accepted social behavior patterns within a social system (Benniga, 1991). The accepted usage of conventions dictate how individuals interact with each other by setting expectations of appropriate behavior to maintain general social order. They are not inherently right or wrong actions. Examples of conventions include good manners, referring to adults by their titles, use of separate restroom facilities by males and females, and referring to teachers by their last names (Benniga, 1991).

Morality is not arbitrary. Rules of morality are in place to avoid consequences that may harm others. Concepts such as justice, human welfare, and human rights are in the moral domain (Benniga, 1991). Benniga researched his claims that the differences between morality and convention are distinguishable at very early ages. He found that even young children have concerns for justice and human welfare, concepts on which morality is based.

Distinctions between morality and convention are found in philosophy and sociology, although moral education has not always recognized these differences, often choosing to teach convention under the guise of morality (Benniga, 1991). Convention is not a subset of morality, but instruction in convention is necessary so that the student can understand the sociocultural system in which he lives so he can interact with the social systems of others, establishing a cultural base for tolerance and critical perspectives (Benniga, 1991). Although most character education programs combine the two, convention and morality are different domains, and global approaches are sometimes ineffective. Education must include both moral instruction and instruction in the conventional domains (Benniga, 1991). Turiel, a developmentalist, and Ryan, a character education advocate, agreed with Benniga that moral education must go beyond the

simplistic one-dimensional programs of moral development or character formation (Benniga, 1991).

Whose Values are Taught?

In a society such as the United States where there is great cultural and religious diversity, it is difficult to get people to agree on a response to an ethical question. The government and religion exist separately, and society fears that teaching ethical and moral values in public schools involves the state in supporting religious-based doctrine (Starratt, 1994). Based on fear of controversy, school officials often avoid ethical discussions. Some parents strongly believe that the home is the place for discussion of ethical issues, not the school.

However, public support for moral instruction spans political, intellectual, and political viewpoints, both by liberal and conservative groups (*Character Education*, 1996). The Phi Delta Kappa Gallup Poll in 1993 found that 69% of the people surveyed believed that local communities could agree on basic values for public schools to teach (*Character Education*, 1996). The following values were supported by over 90% of those surveyed: honesty, democracy, acceptance of people of different races and ethnic backgrounds, patriotism, caring for friends and family members, and moral courage (*Character Education*, 1996). The same poll in 1994 also included strong public support for respect for others, hard work, persistence, fairness, compassion, civility, and high expectations for oneself (*Character Education*, 1996).

Lickona and Ryan (1994) considered the role of the school to enable the student to consider moral issues and his or her right to utilize moral wisdom available within their community and culture toward consideration of these issues. They believed that the question should not be which values a school should open to investigation but rather how the student is able to consider values to moral issues (Lickona & Ryan, 1994). Lockwood (1997) expressed

concern that current character education does not adequately address when the teacher tells the student what is right and when he or she lets the student decide for himself what is right.

Current Status of Moral Education in America

Hundreds of packaged moral education programs are currently on the market available for purchase by schools and hundreds of books have been written to help schools carry out moral education as it is mandated in each state. Kirschenbaum (1995) has grouped these programs into four major movements or approaches. These four movements utilize a variety of delivery modes or teaching methods which he also grouped under four broad categories. All these approaches are often classified as direct or indirect methods. A brief description of this grouping is included. Violence prevention programs integrate many of the movements, delivery modes, and approaches discussed here. This section of the chapter concludes with a discussion of these programs.

Four Major Movements in Moral Education

Values Realization

The values realization movement was named by Sidney B. Simon in 1980 (Kirschenbaum, 1995). Its approaches were designed to help students to recognize, utilize, and then achieve their own values in their lives. Students freely chose their own values (Lockwood, 1997). At least eight teaching methods were used: knowing oneself (includes values clarification and other approaches), self-esteem, goal setting, critical and creative thinking skills, decision making skills, communication skills, social skills, academic and worldly knowledge, and transcendental knowledge (Kirschenbaum, 1995).

Character Education

The goal of character education is to teach identified values indicative of virtuous conduct (Kirschenbaum, 1995). Also called trait, or faculty psychology, character education was based on the belief that the development of proper habits was necessary to teach good conduct (Wynne & Ryan, 1993). Education strove to encourage the shaping of a person's latent traits into the right direction. Proponents of trait psychology point to examples such as the large proportion of early American astronauts who were ex-Eagle Scouts. To get to this stage, Boy Scouts were likely to display the same traits required in the astronauts (e.g., discipline, determination, independence, and high capacity for learning). Lists of traits required in schools around the country are remarkably similar. Most include respect, responsibility, compassion, self-discipline, and loyalty, but some lists include 50 or more traits such as courage, tolerance, work ethic, and respect for the environment (Kirschenbaum, 1995).

Citizenship Education

Citizenship education is multidisciplinary, although education officially places it in the social sciences. Because of its universal applications, citizenship education is important in all parts of the school day. This movement includes knowledge and appreciation of history, laws, rules, and diversity (Kirschenbaum, 1995). Also known as civics education, citizenship education can encompass many high school social studies courses. Its integrated approach covers critical thinking skills, communication skills, cooperative skills, and conflict resolution skills (Kirschenbaum, 1995).

Moral Education

Moral education is knowledge of the moral tradition of humanity – including justice, fairness, and ethics (Kirschenbaum, 1995). Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning are also a part

of moral education, although knowledge of the stages does not aid in progression through the stages. Empathy training, including compassion and altruism, is included in moral education (Kirschenbaum, 1995). Moral tendencies such as conscience, humility, moral habit, and will are also covered (Kirschenbaum, 1995).

Four Delivery Modes in Moral Education

Kirschenbaum (1995) identified four main delivery modes within the values education field: inculcating, modeling, facilitating, and skill development. He listed over 100 ways to teach character under these four delivery modes in his book, *100 Ways to Enhance Values and Morality in Schools and Youth Settings* (1995). Kirschenbaum stated that it is unrealistic to expect every teacher to be equally skilled at using all of these modes, but all should strive to teach with all four methods. Younger students should be taught with a greater emphasis on inculcating values and morals through teaching, explaining, learning concepts and rules, using readings and audiovisuals with clear moral instruction rather than a moral dilemma, using rewards, posters, slogans and other methods. Facilitative methods such as class meetings and discussions can be used as students begin to learn the values (Kirschenbaum, 1995).

Although most character education programs are designed with a combination of these delivery modes, Lloyd and Ramsey (1997) also evaluated programs to see if they encompassed cognitive domains (thoughts), affective domains (emotions), and behavior domains (actions). The cognitive domain includes perspective taking, moral reasoning, thoughtful decision making, moral self-knowledge, and awareness of moral dimensions. The emotional domain includes the conscience, self-respect, empathy, self-control, and humility. The behavioral domain includes competence in skills like listening, communication, and cooperation; will or motivation to do

what we know to be right; and developing habits of responding to situations in morally acceptable ways.

Inculcating

Inculcating is specific instruction in values or traits. This method is often used in elementary schools, but it can be found in almost any school in the country. Schools help children understand what the identified core values are, help children commit to them, and help children act upon them (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). The comprehensive approach inculcates by teaching values through the curriculum (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). Benniga (1991) proposed teaching values through literature. His plan consisted of 20-minute weekly lessons incorporated weekly into the regular language arts instruction allotment. Vincent (1995) also supported teaching values through literature, suggesting that teachers choose specific titles for children to read, followed by discussion and journal writing. Soder, Goodlad, & McMannon (2001) suggest teaching character through stories, whether the stories take the form of narratives, accounts, autobiographies, and scripts. Bennett's popular collection of stories for children were selected specifically for their character messages (Bennett, 1993). Ryan and Lickona (1994) mentioned direct moral instruction, moral discussion and debate, reflective discussion of values such as friendship, work, health, and religion, and school assemblies. A moral literacy methodology should teach educators how to focus student attention on the ethical dimensions of a story and lead students to thoughtfully consider ethical principles and moral aspects of historical events through analysis and discussion (Wynne & Ryan, 1993).

Modeling

Modeling can take the form of such activities as adults modeling character traits, school safety patrols modeling correct behavior, or student role playing. Among the modeling activities

listed in Ryan & Lickona's 1994 book, *Character Development in Schools and Beyond*, are teacher modeling, role playing, posing problems from the media, class meetings, cross-age tutoring, and peer mediation. They proposed that such activities develop the cognitive and rational aspects of the child. Blue Ribbon Schools often used modeling activities in their character development programs (Murphy, 1998). These activities included school awards and mottos, staff models for good behavior, discipline plans, self-esteem programs, guidance programs, conflict management, and motivational programs.

Facilitating

Facilitating often takes the form of cooperative learning. Ryan & Lickona (1992) pointed out that work in the real world is usually accomplished by teams of people working together, but schoolwork is too often done in isolation. Students are taught to work together to lay the groundwork for adult work and personal relationships. Students together seek outcomes that benefit all who are involved, individually and as a group or team. Some of the specific activities used are learning together, group investigation, jigsaw, student teams for achievement and games or tournaments, Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) and Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) (Murphy, 1998). In their research, Slavin and Kagan noted that cross-ethnic friendships increased in classes using cooperative education, and Madden, Steven, and Slavin showed reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing process growth in students who used cooperative learning regularly (Vincent, 1995).

Class meetings are held regularly in classes where the teacher uses facilitation methods (Benniga, 1991). Students negotiate class rules and procedures together and discuss disputes in daily meetings (Benniga, 1991). Students in classes that use this concept have improved ability to negotiate and solve interpersonal disputes, increased awareness of well-being of other

students, appealed with moral and democratic principles in giving their positions on issues, gained an awareness of school and community issues, and increased their knowledge of governmental institutions (Benniga, 1991). Ryan and Lickona (1992) said that building a sense of social community helps in building self-esteem. Students develop feelings of competence and capability behind their self-concept, teaching children to value their uniqueness and creating a group that respects others in the same way children respect themselves.

Skill Development

Skills development can apply to skills in problem-solving, critical thinking, and application of concepts in real-life situations. Ryan and Lickona (1992) said that participatory decision making motivates children to move from judgment to action by making decisions that govern the classroom. Most conflict management and violence prevention programs rely heavily on skills development to apply problem solving and anger management strategies to real life situations. Vincent (1995) promoted service learning among youth. Beyond learning about empathy, students put their caring into action within and without the school by accomplishing service projects. When asked to volunteer, 90% of youth ages 12-17 agreed and helped with projects (Vincent, 1995). Vincent proposed a useful approach to moral education or character development that built on the basic, comprehensive, and integrative view of the moral agent as well as the moral content and process. The basic view of the moral agent could also be called knowing, which consists of learning moral content, including values and moral reasoning. Cognitive strategies for decision making are imperative in knowing. Moral content, also known as affect, concerns how closely we hold our moral values within our identity. Moral action brings knowing and affect to life through will or desire to act on what one believes. Competence, or skills development, in dealing with moral issues becomes a necessary part of

moral action (Vincent, 1995). Ryan (1981) also believed that education should put values into operation by setting expectations that children are expected to help others. Schools should act as brokers between individuals and institutions needing help. Ryan said that schools should study all four approaches to moral education with the intention of adapting an integrated approach to local situations.

Direct or Indirect Instruction

Finally, the past or present moral and character education approaches discussed in this review have also been classified as either direct or indirect methods (Murphy, 1998). The direct method saw character education as the attainment of certain traits or virtues by students learning creeds, slogans, and pledges as well as studying virtuous heroes in classical literature. Gutmann labeled the direct approach conservative moralism in 1987 (Benniga, 1991). The methodology used by the direct approach included inculcation of democratic behavior rather than indoctrination. Ryan (1981) called the direct method the set of values method. In the set of values method, schools teach a particular set of values that have evolved over time from beliefs and expectations of the people, including founding documents and political or community decisions. These values are taught in a variety of ways: modeling by teachers, announcing them to children, building them into rules, regulations, and expectations for how students should behave, and embedding them in curriculum content itself (Ryan, 1981).

The indirect method does not explicitly teach the traits or virtues, but sets up situations in which the virtues could be learned and practiced through classroom activities, disciplinary methods, personal interactions, and extracurricular activities (Murphy, 1998). The indirect approach includes values clarification and cognitive moral education. Gutmann called the indirect approach liberal moralism, saying that its aim was developing moral autonomy in

children (Benniga, 1991). Respect for moral principles rather than established moral authority was emphasized. Kant wrote about the indirect approach from the perspective of duties and obligations of moral people. He believed that moral judgments about behavior depended on the reasoning behind the behavior, not the consequences of the behavior (Benniga, 1991).

Violence Prevention

The aim of moral education is to improve moral behavior and decision making. In a school setting, a purpose for improving moral behavior is to improve school climate by resolving conflict and preventing violence among students. Conflict resolution and violence prevention programs work to maintain discipline by dealing with real-life moral issues and actions (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Over 100 years ago the National Educational Association Committee of 15 reported that “the substantial moral training of the school is performed by discipline rather than by the instruction in ethical theory. The essence of moral behavior is self-control” (Bennett, 1998, p. 56). Lickona (1991) wrote that conflict is a part of human interactions, but civilized people should be able to use reason rather than force or intimidation to resolve differences. The ability to do this is a basic human skill that must be taught to children.

Discipline is a fundamental part of moral education, according to Durkheim (Murphy, 1998). The “imperial self” described by Kegan in elementary children today is sometimes exhibited as resistance to authority (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). This manifests in disciplinary problems. A large percentage of Blue Ribbon Schools use Lee Canter’s Assertive Discipline approach in which teachers set the rules and punish the offenders (Murphy, 1998). This approach is inadequate for moral education and is not satisfactory in controlling behavior because it promotes obedience to an authority figure rather than teaching self-control. Assertive discipline represents stages one and two of Kohlberg’s theory, relatively immature stages of

moral development (Murphy, 1998). It does, however, recognize that children need to be socialized and controlled, usually through obedience, and that adults should use appropriate authority to see that they do behave appropriately (Ryan & Lickona, 1992). Assertive discipline and other common classroom and school discipline practices based on teacher-made rewards and punishments turn off most children, especially disadvantaged children (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997).

Lloyd and Ramsey (1997) listed nine components of successful comprehensive models of moral education. This list included: 1. Act as caregiver, model, and mentor; 2. Create a moral community; 3. Practice moral discipline with rules and respect; 4. Create a democratic classroom environment; 5. Teach values throughout the curriculum; 6. Use cooperative learning; 7. Develop appreciation of learning and commitment to tasks; 8. Encourage moral reflection; 9. Teach conflict resolution. Most conflict resolution or violence prevention programs include all of the components listed by Lloyd and Ramsey.

Lickona (1991) gave five elements of adequate conflict resolution programs: planned curriculum in which students think, write, and talk about various conflicts; structured skill training that coaches students in conflict avoidance and resolution skills; class meetings to address common conflicts; intervening when necessary to help students apply skills learned; and making students more responsible for working out their own conflicts. Starratt (1994) also emphasized the importance of empathy in an ethical school where students must be sensitive and responsive to others in order to be connected to each other.

Lickona (1991) included skill training in social skills such as listening, manners, and conversation, class meetings with role playing and discussions, and problem-solving strategies in good conflict resolution programs. He gave three tasks teachers could use in guiding students through actual conflicts. First they should use empathy to help students understand each other's

point of view. Second, the teacher should help students work out a fair solution that takes into account both points of view and satisfies claims of each part. Finally, the teacher helps children practice behavioral skills to help them solve such problems without the intervention of an adult.

Conflict resolution programs teach children to evaluate information critically with consideration of universal values and beliefs such as justice, freedom, love, and brotherhood (Benniga, 1991). Peaceful conflict resolution strategies to be taught include methods for reducing tension as well as for resolving interpersonal disputes. Conflict resolution skills such as compromise, negotiation, and cooperative learning activities are all goals in most of these programs. These lessons are taught through learning activities such as participation in role-playing and training in communication and problem-solving skills, teaching students to become effective peer conflict managers as well as personal problem solvers. The overall effects include reducing violence in school, but this generalizes to home and family situations (Benniga, 1991).

Murphy (1998) reported that the most popular movement in character education among Blue Ribbon Schools was conflict resolution programs. Many schools that once used assertive discipline have moved to positive discipline, a modified, proactive rather than reactive, program. Based on the philosophy of Adler and Dreikers, it teaches cooperation and problem solving and rewards good behavior as much as it provides punishment for bad behavior.

Examples of conflict resolution and violence prevention programs were listed by Lickona (1991). PREPARE, an Ontario values education program, has a strong conflict resolution component. Teachers who worked in schools where fighting was frequent reported that by beginning activities to build self-esteem and a sense of community as well as taking the curriculum slowly and integrating it into other activities (including creative writing), problems of fighting among students were solved. STASIS, a program by Conflict Management Consultants

of Ithica, New York, trains children to be conflict managers, working in pairs on the playground when disputes take place. This form of peer mediation requires eight hours of training. Some teachers have taped a conflict circle on their carpet for students to go to when they are having a conflict to begin to settle their disagreement. Other strategies taught to students include writing about their disagreements and using interview strategies. *Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child* by McGinnia and Goldstein teaches skill development in helping children learn values. Many programs, such as the one developed by the Society for Prevention of Violence, consists of a social skills training curricula for use in kindergarten through eighth grade (Benniga, 1991). One of the most widely used resources in elementary schools is Creative Conflict Solving for Kids by Schmidt and Freidman (Benniga, 1991).

In New York City's Community District 15, over 75 elementary teachers and thousands of pupils were involved in the Model Peace Education Program, which included units on cooperative learning, dealing appropriately with anger, dispute resolution techniques, preventing prejudice, peacemaking, and cultural exchange (Benniga, 1991). This program helped solve large numbers of disputes, reduced dropouts, and provided students with alternatives to fighting and violence.

In 1986, over 70 kinds of peace curricula were in use in the San Francisco Bay area (Benniga, 1991). The School Initiatives Programs developed by the Community Board Program, Inc., in San Francisco, gave workshops for teachers and provided curriculum and videotapes dealing with conflict resolution on all levels (Benniga, 1991).

Second Step, a violence prevention program published by the Committee for Children, consists of lessons to teach children to recognize and understand feelings, make positive and effective choices, and keep anger from escalating into violence (Hamilton Fish Institute, 2001).

The Second Step curriculum focuses on three components: empathy training and perspective taking, impulse control and problem solving, and anger management (Committee for Children, 2003). The program uses inculcation, facilitation, modeling, and skills development methods of delivery. The goal is for students to practice prosocial behavior through 30 minute lessons once or twice a week. Age specific lessons are available for children in preschool through middle school (Committee for Children, 2003).

Each Second Step lesson begins with a story to demonstrate the particular skill to be taught. The program teaches empathy skills as the basis on which problem solving and emotion management skills are built. Empathy benefits children by contributing to children's academic gains (Izard, Fine, Schultz, Mostow, & Ackerman, 2001). Empathy has also been shown to improve social behaviors in children (Committee for Children, Research Foundations, 2000). Children's understanding of their peer's feelings may help reduce their aggressiveness (Crick & Dodge, 1994). Impulse control and problem solving lessons teach children to apply a set of problem solving steps. Crick & Ladd (1990) found that aggressive children were not likely to try positive strategies because they had lower expectations that the strategies would work. Children learn to recognize signs of anger that trigger emotional responses because studies have found that children who manage their emotions well were able to express emotions in socially acceptable ways (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Losoya, 1997).

Resources for the most widely used programs are available from the following sources: The Committee for Children; Peace Education Resources catalogue published by the American Friends Service Committee; The Consortium on Peace Research, Education and Development; The University of Michigan Peace and Conflict Institute; The National Education Association; Educators for Social Responsibility; The Union of Concerned Scientists; Fellowship of

Reconciliation; and the Directory of School Mediation and Conflict Resolution Programs (Benniga, 1991; Lickona, 1991).

Assessing Effectiveness

Critics have focused on the lack of empirical evidence to measure the effectiveness of character education (Lockwood, 1997). Although researchers agree that it is difficult to measure a change in a person's character, Ryan said that you can measure the effectiveness of a program by looking at things such as attendance records for students and teachers, the number of discipline referrals, the number of fights, the number of service hours within and outside the school, vandalism, hours spent on homework, homework completion, and standardized test scores (Lockwood, 1997). School climate surveys for students, teachers, and parents also can be used to measure a program's effectiveness (Lockwood, 1997). Most schools have this data regularly available through school improvement assessment or regular student tracking data. Leming developed the Character Assessment Inventory that can be used as a pretest and posttest with students, and Antis developed a similar teacher questionnaire (Lockwood, 1997).

Research data does exist, usually in the form of specific program evaluation. Several comprehensive studies have been conducted, however. A longitudinal study was conducted for over ten years on schools involved in the Child Development Project of the Developmental Studies Center in Oakland, California (*Character Education*, 1997). Schools involved in the project had significant improvements in student behavior and academic performance compared to demographically similar schools not involved in the project. The intervention consisted of a reading and language arts curriculum integrating character education discussion in literature using cooperative learning and intensive classroom management (*Character Education*, 1997). After five years of a multifaceted values program beginning in kindergarten and following the

children through fourth grade, statistically significant differences were noted in four areas: classroom behavior, playground behavior, social problem-solving skills, and commitment to democratic values (Lickona, 1991). Because of the reading component of the project, students were also assessed in reading; students were found to score higher on higher order reading skills (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). Other similar studies also showed academic achievement improvement (*Character Education* , 1996).

Two studies, conducted by Elliott of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, found that students participating in specific classroom approaches advocated by the Northeast Foundation for Children had fewer problem behaviors and better social skills than students not exposed to the approaches (*Character Education*, 1996). Another research study subjected students to a Holocaust curriculum in the eighth grade. When compared to a control group, the intervention students were found to be significantly higher in their understanding of the influence of society in individual decision-making and in the complexity of reasoning in issues such as leadership, exclusion, and conflict resolution (Lickona, 1991).

Leming evaluated 10 commercial character education programs and found that only two of the 10 incorporated both developmental principles and research about socialization (Lockwood, 1997). He believed that didactic methods in isolation do not usually have significant lasting effects on character (Vincent, 1995). Leming found that character develops in a social environment, and that the ability to reason does not result in a change in conduct. The social environment was also found to be important by Murphy (1998), who reported that students in classrooms taught with cooperative learning methods ranked higher than control students pro-social behavior, and they were better in resolving conflicts and supporting democratic values.

Conflict resolution and violence prevention programs have been shown to incorporate both direct and indirect approaches under the general category of character education or moral education. All four delivery methods previously discussed are found in these programs. Murphy (1998) found that the most popular character education movement in Blue Ribbon Schools was the inclusion of conflict resolution programs where students learned how to listen and how to negotiate and mediate. Effectiveness of these programs has been studied to help schools in selecting the best program for their students.

In a study of first graders by University of Wisconsin psychologist Enright, one class was given conflict resolution training and one class received no intervention. After eleven weeks of training, the students given the training were significantly better on measure of interpersonal understanding and the ability to reason about fairness (Lickona, 1991). Lickona also cited other studies with similar outcomes. Murphy (1998) cited results of schools that promoted moral education and violence prevention had better test scores and lower occurrence of vandalism, absenteeism, and dishonesty.

Studies about the effectiveness of the Second Step conflict resolution and violence prevention program have focused on improvement of student behavior. The Hamilton Fish Institute (2001) found an overall decrease in physical aggression and prosocial behavior among second and third graders in a sample of 790 students in Washington who were in an intervention group that received Second Step instruction. The effect persisted six months later. However, the same study found no significant difference between the intervention and the control schools on a posttest. Research assessing more than 1,000 second through fifth grade students found improved social competence in intervention schools when compared to control schools (Committee for Children, Research, 2003). Second Step students needed less adult intervention,

displayed less hostility, and were more likely to choose goals that led to fair outcomes for themselves and others. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 1997 reported that second and third grade students became 29 % less physically aggressive and had more positive social interaction with Second Step (Committee for Children, Research, 2003). Without Second Step, incidents of aggression actually increased by 41%.

The Second Step curriculum comes in three age specific kits. The middle school kit was evaluated at Kennedy Middle School (Center for Effective, 2003). The study found that 62% of language arts students wrote a peaceful response to a problem when faced with a conflict scenario. An improvement in student behavior was also noted in the study. In another randomized controlled study, positive student behavior was observed in the classroom, in the cafeteria, and on the playground throughout the implementation of Second Step (Center for Effective, 2003). Van Scholack-Edstrom, Frey, and Beland conducted an evaluation of middle school Second Step curriculum in 2002. They found that students were less likely to view aggressive behavior as justifiable after receiving Second Step intervention (Committee for Children, Research, 2003).

An evaluation by McMahon in 2000 studied 109 preschool and kindergarten children from low-income urban families who received Second Step at school. These students showed an increased conceptual knowledge of social skills and decreased levels of physical aggression, verbal aggression, and disruptive behavior (Committee for Children, Research, 2003).

In a program evaluation by a psychologist, Shigley (1993) recommended the program as a good investment for developmental preschools to prevent angry, aggressive, and violent behavior among children. Program evaluation was also completed by various organizations. The United States Department of Education gave Second Step the only “exemplary” award

issued from its Expert Panel on Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools (Committee for Children Credentials, 2003). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) evaluated 81 programs in 2002 to determine how well the programs enhanced social and emotional competence in children. Second Step received the highest rating of “select program” by CASEL (Committee for Children Credentials, 2003). The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration selected Second Step as a “model program” to be listed in the National Registry of Effective Prevention Programs (Committee for Children Credentials, 2003). An independently organized team of nationally recognized experts assessed the most widely used violence prevention programs in the United States. Second Step received the highest rating among elementary and middle school programs with ratings of A’s across all categories (Committee for Children Credentials, 2003). The White House 1998 Annual Report on School Safety found Second Step to be a “model program” for school violence prevention (Committee for Children Credentials, 2003). The New Jersey and Utah State Departments of Education each recommended Second Step as a Character Education program for use by schools in their states (Committee for Children Credentials, 2003). Although recommended by a large number of agencies, many principals also have offered testimonials, including O’Brien of Quincy, Massachusetts (Murphy, 1998). This principal reported on the Blue Ribbon Schools application that Second Step improved overall school climate, created an environment conducive to learning, and ended violent incidents.

Need for Further Study

Character education advocates have indicated the need for more research on the effectiveness of character education (Benniga, 1991; Lockwood, 1997; Ryan & Lickona, 1992; Wynne & Ryan, 1993). Lockwood proposed that the lack of research could be because many

districts do not want to call attention to their approach to teaching values. He also thought that some researchers do not want to be confronted with negative findings, so they avoid researching character education. Lockwood also pointed out that research tracking systems of programs and activities in character education were not in place. Wynne & Ryan (1993) agreed that practical character education classroom practice has not been defined by research, from the time of Piaget to the present. Ryan & Lickona (1992) recognized a wide variety of theories, approaches, and programs aimed at teaching moral education in public schools have been developed and used. They pointed out that mixed research results are not enough on which to base curricular decisions and that too many schools base such decisions on the public's insistence on action as well as on a community's moral philosophy and research evidence. Benniga (1991) reviewed research on both traditional and modern approaches to character education, finding inconclusive results.

Critics of character and moral education also identified a need for further research on the effectiveness of character and moral education. Lockwood (1997) said that many critics focus on the lack of empirical research proving effectiveness of character education programs. He said that effective research could track and identify current programs as well as evaluate their effectiveness and serve as a basis for refining existing programs or reconfiguring goals.

Challenges for character education in the future include more implementation, a greater support base, more staff development opportunities for teachers, and most importantly, more effective assessment of programs (*Character Education*, 1996). Without research to guide the selection of the right approaches and methodology to best suit the social, moral, cognitive, and emotional needs of a given population of students, educators find themselves in the same predicament as the Sufi rug merchant who couldn't find a solution to his problem.

Once there was a rug merchant who saw that his most beautiful carpet had a large bump in its center. He stepped on the bump to flatten it out – and succeeded. But the bump reappeared in a new spot not far away. He jumped on the bump again, and it disappeared – for a moment, until it emerged once more in a new place. Again and again he jumped, scuffing and mangling the rug in his frustration; until finally he lifted one corner of the carpet and an angry snake slithered out (Vincent, 1995, p. 9).

This study was conducted to add to lack of research data available for the rug merchant/school administrator who is trying to smooth out his students' morality bumps as quickly, effectively and permanently as possible.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to determine if the Second Step Violence Prevention Program was effective in reducing the proportion of disciplinary referrals to the principal, in reducing the proportion of out of school suspensions, in improving student attendance, and in improving teacher attendance in a small urban elementary school in North Georgia. Since the school is a Title I school that needs to show adequate yearly progress, any program that uses instructional time should be closely evaluated for effectiveness before it is continued. The dependent variables chosen for the study were indicators of school climate.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and procedures used in this study. First the problem is restated. Hypotheses developed to test the problem are listed. The population and sample are explained in detail. The independent and dependent variables are identified and described. An explanation of the procedures used to collect the data is given. Next, the tests of statistical analysis used are elucidated. Finally, the rationale for the level of significance chosen for the study is explained.

Restatement of the Problem

This study was undertaken to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the proportions of disciplinary referrals to the school office, the proportions of out of school suspensions, the proportions of student attendance, and the proportions of teacher attendance before and after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. Data were compiled from annual school improvement plans for the year before the

implementation of the program and for the year of the implementation of the program at an elementary school in north Georgia. Areas to investigate were determined from the review of research in the field of character education, moral education, and violence prevention education. According to Ryan (Lockwood, 1997), it is possible to measure the effectiveness of a character education program by analyzing data such as attendance records for students and teachers, the number of discipline referrals, the number of fights, the number of service hours within and outside the school, vandalism, hours spent on homework, homework completion, and standardized test scores. Of these data, the number of disciplinary referrals, the number of out of school suspensions, student attendance and teacher attendance were available from annual school improvement plans and were thus chosen for inclusion in this study.

The first question was to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the proportion of disciplinary referrals to the school principal before and after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. Monthly and annual discipline reports for the school were submitted to the school district central office, with the total number of referrals reported in the annual school improvement plan. Data were collected for this study from the year immediately before Second Step was taught and the year of its implementation. This problem was selected for the study because problem resolution and anger management are primary goals of violence prevention character education programs.

Question number two was to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the proportion of out of school suspensions before and after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. The data were also compiled monthly and annually. Annual data were used for analysis from the year immediately before implementation of Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the year after it began. This problem was selected for

inclusion in the study because out of school suspensions represent the number of serious disciplinary incidents that occurred in the school.

The third question was to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the annual percentage of student attendance before and after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. Monthly and annual attendance percentages and two-year comparisons were reported in the school improvement plan. Annual student attendance percentages were used for the year before the Second Step Violence Prevention instruction was administered and for the first year the instruction began. Student attendance was included in the study because it is frequently used as an indicator of school climate.

Question number four was to determine if there was also a statistically significant difference between the proportion of teacher absences before and after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. Teacher attendance data in the school improvement plan included a breakdown of monthly and annual attendance by professional and personal leave. The data used in this study was the total annual number of absences, including all types of leave, for the year before the Second Step Violence Prevention Program was implemented and years of the implementation. Teacher attendance was selected for the study because attendance is often used to describe school climate.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were developed to determine the effectiveness of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in the areas of student discipline, student and teacher attendance, and student norm referenced test data.

H:1

There was a statistically significant decrease in the proportion of disciplinary referrals to the principal in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention

Program when compared to the proportion of disciplinary referrals to school administration in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

H:2

There was a statistically significant decrease in the proportion of out of school suspensions in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program when compared to the proportion of out of school suspensions in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

H:3

There was a statistically significant increase between the average student attendance percentage in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program when compared to the average student attendance percentage in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

H:4

There was a statistically significant decrease between the proportion of teacher absences in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program when compared to the proportion of teacher absences in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

Description of Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of the students, faculty, and staff of an urban elementary school during the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. This small, neighborhood school in a city school system in North Georgia consists of approximately 230 students in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. The school campus is located in a quiet, aging, residential area. It is a Title I school with 78% of its students having free or reduced lunch status. The

student body consists of about 60% African American students, 26% Caucasian students, 9% Hispanic students, and 5% multiracial students.

During the years data were collected there were 23 certified teachers on staff, including the principal, one full-time counselor, one media specialist, one special education teacher, one speech pathologist, one physical education teacher, one title I teacher, and sixteen classroom teachers. There was one paraprofessional serving the pre-kindergarten class, one paraprofessional serving the kindergarten class, one paraprofessional serving the special education students, and a part-time duty free aide. In addition there was one part-time family resource worker, one secretary, one custodian, and four cafeteria workers.

The sample for hypotheses one, two, and three consists of the entire student body of the school for the school years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001. The sample for hypothesis four consisted of all certified staff at the school for the same two years.

Independent and Dependent Variables

The independent variable was the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. The program materials are organized into three separate complete age specific kits that each includes all materials needed to teach the curriculum. Three skills are taught in each kit: empathy; impulse control and problem solving; and anger management. Each kit contains 20 lessons that take about 30 minutes each to teach.

The Second Step curriculum has a strong emphasis on children learning to label their own feelings and being able to identify the emotions of others. This is accomplished through a story format using picture cards with lesson instructions on the back and through the use of videos for elementary and middle school students and puppets, picture cards, and music with preschool and kindergarten children. Impulse control and problem solving skills are taught after the lessons on

empathy. Children are taught a set of problem solving steps that help children react to social situations in prosocial ways. Lessons include guided discussions and role playing to learn the problem solving steps and then apply the skills in a variety of different real life situations. Emotion and anger management units teach children to use strategies to help them calm down through understanding physical signals and triggers of anger with the goal of keeping anger from escalating into violence.

The Committee for Children manages the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. This organization trains teachers in conducting school level staff development to implement the curriculum. Parents are also informed of the program through planned strategies such as implementation committee involvement, newsletters, and parent meetings. After helping to develop a rollout plan for an individual school, the Committee for Children provides follow-up support for schools.

The Second Step Violence Prevention Program was purchased with school system Safe and Drug Free Schools funds in 2000 and was implemented at the school during the 2000-2001 school year. Two teachers received one week of training during the summer of 2000 and then trained teachers in using the program in ten sessions during preplanning and in faculty meetings held throughout the first semester. Classroom teachers in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade provided the instruction to their students at least once per week.

The dependent variables were the proportion of disciplinary referrals to the principal, the proportion of out of school suspensions, student attendance percentage, and the proportion of teacher absences.

Data Collection Procedures

Data selected for inclusion in the study were reported in annual school improvement plans submitted by the school during the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. The decision to conduct the study was made in 2002 to establish the effectiveness of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program at the school in order that a determination could be made to continue or discontinue the program and its annual staff development after the school was placed on Title I Needs Improvement status.

Tests of Statistical Analysis

The one-tailed test of proportionality was selected for analysis. It was used to compare two groups: the proportions calculated with data the year before the program was implemented and the proportions calculated with data the year after the program was implemented, assuming that no change in the proportions would be expected without intervention of the independent variable, the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

Rationale for Level of Significance

A significance level of $p \leq .05$ was selected for the study. A probability level of $p \leq .05$ is a reasonable probability level for educational studies (Gay, 1981). Although the sample size of this study was small and the study was of an exploratory nature, this probability level was selected to balance the probability of either a Type I or a Type II error. A Type I error occurs when a researcher rejects a null hypothesis that is really true. A Type II error occurs when a researcher fails to reject a null hypothesis that is really false (Bartz, 1999). If a Type I error was made on a study of this nature, the program would likely be continued when it actually is not effective with the population of the study as a result of the outcomes of the research. If a Type II error was made, the results of the study could be used to recommend discontinuance of the

program when it actually was effective. Since the program had already been purchased by federal Safe and Drug Free Schools funds before the study was undertaken, there was no real risk in either a Type I or Type II error. The study was undertaken after the program was in place, and there was no way after the fact to control other factors that may have influenced the dependent variables.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study was undertaken to determine if Second Step, a conflict resolution and violence prevention program, implemented as a moral and character education initiative would impact school climate by showing an improvement in the proportion of disciplinary referrals to the school office, the proportion of out of school suspensions, student attendance, and teacher absences. This chapter states the results and findings of the study.

Procedures

The Second Step Violence Prevention Program was purchased by the school district in the spring of 2000 with Safe and Drug Free Schools funds for use by the school. Two teachers received training in the summer of 2000 and conducted ten staff development sessions with faculty and staff during preplanning and throughout the fall semester of 2000. Teachers began the implementation of the program on the first day of the 2000-2001 school year. When the school did not make adequate yearly progress on academic testing for two consecutive years, the school administration closely scrutinized all non-academic programs and projects. This study was undertaken to evaluate Second Step for its effectiveness.

The population of the study consisted of students, faculty, and staff of a small urban elementary school during the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. The school is a small, pre-kindergarten through sixth grade neighborhood based Title I school in north Georgia. During the two years included in the study, the school had a poverty rate of 78%, based on free lunch status. The student body was made up of about 60% African American students, 26%

Caucasian students, 9% Hispanic students, and 5% multiracial students. An average of 230 students were enrolled in the school with 23 certified teachers, four paraprofessionals, four cafeteria workers, a principal, a secretary, and a custodian.

After conducting a review of related literature and research on the effectiveness of violence prevention or conflict resolution programs, the study was designed to target school climate factors identified by researchers as data that measures the effectiveness of such programs (Lockwood, 1997). Availability of data on annual school improvement plans at the school chosen for this study included disciplinary referrals, out of school suspensions, and student and teacher attendance.

The sample for hypotheses one, two, and three consists of the entire student body of the school for the school years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001. The sample for hypothesis four consists of all certified staff at the school for the same two years. The independent variable for the study was the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. This program teaches empathy, impulse control, and problem solving skills in a series of lessons organized into three separate age specific kits. The kits contain lesson plans and all resources needed for teaching the program. Second Step is managed by the Committee for Children, which provides instruction for teacher trainers in each school and ongoing support for the school's implementation. The dependent variables were the proportion of disciplinary referrals to the principal, the proportion of out of school suspensions, student attendance percentage, and proportion of teacher absences.

Statistical Analysis

The test of proportionality was selected for statistical analysis. It was used to compare two groups: the pre treatment proportions and the post treatment proportions, assuming that no change in the proportions would be expected without intervention of the independent variable,

the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. A z score was obtained through this analysis of data. Since the hypotheses were directional, a one-tailed test was used. Each null hypothesis is stated below with statistical results listed in table form and a brief discussion given of the results.

H₀:1

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportion of disciplinary referrals to the principal in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the proportion of disciplinary referrals to school administration in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

Statistical analysis results after the test of proportionality was applied to the data for the first null hypothesis are found in Table 1. This test of significance assumes that a student would not be referred more than once a day. As indicated in the table, a z score of 4.83 resulted in a probability level of $p < .001$, showing a statistically significant decrease in office referrals. Since this p value was not greater than the selected level of significance of .05, the null hypothesis was rejected.

H₀:2

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportion of out of school suspensions in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the proportion of out of school suspensions in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

A z score of 1.51 was obtained for null hypothesis two when the test of proportionality was run on the data for out of school suspensions before and after Second Step. According to Table 2, the corresponding p level was .033. Null hypothesis two was rejected, showing a statistically significant decrease in out of school suspensions before and after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

Table 1
Comparison of Office Referrals

Year	Number of Office Referrals	Average Number of Students	Student Days	Percentage of Days Referred	<i>z</i>	<i>P</i>
1999-2000	655	237	42,660	1.54%	4.83	<.001*
2000-2001	504	232	41,760	1.21%		

* $p \leq .05$

Table 2
Comparison of Out of School Suspensions

Year	Out of School Suspensions	Average Number of Students	Percentage of Students Suspended	<i>Z</i>	<i>p</i>
1999-2000	103	237	43.5%	1.51	.033*
2000-2001	85	232	36.6%		

* $p \leq .05$

H₀:3

There was no statistically significant difference between the average student attendance percentage in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the average student attendance percentage in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

Table 3 contains the results after the test of proportionality was applied to the student attendance data for the two years of data that was reported in the study. A z score of -3.20 was obtained with a probability level of $p < .001$. The null hypothesis was rejected.

H₀:4

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportion of teacher absences in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the proportion of teacher absences in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

Statistical analysis of the data for teacher absences included comparing the number of days absent to the total number of teacher workdays for each of the two years in the study. A z score of 5.41 resulted with a probability level of $p < .001$ (See Table 4). Since the school improvement plan also listed separately absences due to sick or personal leave, the test of proportionality was also run on the number of days absent due to sick or personal leave compared to the total number of teacher workdays for each year. This test resulted in a z score of 4.90 with a probability level of $p < .001$. In both tests, the probability level was less than the .05 significance level chosen for the study, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 3
Student Attendance

Year	Percentage of Student Attendance	Average Number of Students	Number of Student Days	Number of Days Present	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
1999-2000	96.92%	237	42,660	41,346	-3.20	<.001*
2000-2001	97.29%	232	41,760	40,628		

* $p \leq .05$

Table 4
Teacher Absences

Type	Year	Number of Days Absent	Total Number of Teacher Workdays	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
Total Absences	1999-2000	254	4560	5.41	<.001*
	2000-2001	148	4560		
Sick or Personal	1999-2000	205	4560	4.90	<.001*
	2000-2001	118.5	4560		

* $p \leq .05$

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of this research on the effectiveness of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in a small urban elementary school. Chapter 5 includes a restatement of the problem, null hypotheses, summary of the procedures, related literature, findings, conclusions, applications of the findings, and recommendations for further study.

Restatement of the Problem

This study was undertaken to determine if there was a significant difference in factors of school climate as measured in the school improvement plan. Topics with data included in the annual school improvement plan reports which could be used in this study included disciplinary referrals, out of school suspensions, student attendance, and teacher absences before and after implementation of Second Step, a violence prevention program, in an elementary school.

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were developed to determine the effectiveness of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in the areas of student discipline and student and teacher attendance.

H₀:1

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportion of disciplinary referrals to the principal in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the proportion of disciplinary referrals to school administration in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

H₀:2

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportion of out of school suspensions in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the proportion of out of school suspensions in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

H₀:3

There was no statistically significant difference between the average student attendance percentage in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the average student attendance percentage in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

H₀:4

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportion of teacher absences in the school year before implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the proportion of teacher absences in the school year after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

Summary of Procedures

The population of the study was made up of the students, faculty, and staff of a small urban elementary school in north Georgia. The school implemented the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in the 2000-2001 school year. The program was purchased through Safe and Drug Free Schools funds by the school district for implementation in the school as a character education initiative.

The sample for hypotheses one, two, and three consisted of the entire student body of the school for the school years 1999-2000, and 2000-2001. The sample for hypothesis four consisted of all certified staff at the school for the same two years.

Data Collection

The data chosen for analysis in this study were found in the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school improvement plan reports submitted by the school. In 2002 the decision was made to conduct the study to determine the effectiveness of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program at the school. The school did not make Title I adequate yearly progress after the 2000-2001 and the 2001-2002 school years, placing the school in Needs Improvement status. School instructional time was carefully guarded as more time was needed for academics. The school administration needed to determine if the Second Step Violence Prevention program should be continued or discontinued, so its effectiveness was studied after a careful review of the research.

Data Analysis

A one-tailed test of proportionality was selected for statistical analysis. It was used to compare two groups: the pre treatment proportion and the post treatment proportion, assuming that no change would be expected without intervention of the independent variable, the Second Step Violence Prevention Program.

Summary of Related Literature

Literature and research in the field of moral education was reviewed to gain information on the topic and to give direction to the study. Throughout history, education focused on the formation of character as well as the attainment of knowledge, guided by theorists and philosophers who believed that advancement of the mind was only possible along with the building of character (Lloyd & Ramsey, 1997). McClellan's research (1999) found that moral

instruction was also a focus of education as the United States evolved as a world authority in the global matters. The review of literature traced the role of moral education in the United States, ending with the current legislated and mandated status of character education in most states in our country. The current status of morality in our society has led to popular support for public schools to address the teaching of values in the curriculum. Four major movements were studied: values realization, character education, citizenship education, and moral education (Kirschenbaum, 1995). Within these movements, four delivery modes, identified by Kirschenbaum (1995), were found in the literature review: inculcating, modeling, facilitating, and skill development. Conflict resolution or violence prevention programs, falling under the category of moral education and containing all four delivery modes, were investigated as to theoretical basis, program descriptions, and research effectiveness of various programs. Second Step Violence Prevention Program, the independent variable in this research study, was specifically considered. In summation, this review of literature created a platform for the formal instruction of violence prevention education in public schools

Summary of the Findings

The results of testing the four null hypotheses presented in the study are presented in Table 5. Further descriptions of the statistical analysis of the data and tables of specific data are presented in Chapter 4.

Office Referrals ($H_0:1$)

Using the test of proportionality to obtain a z score, a statistically significant difference in the proportion of office referrals before the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and the proportion of office referrals after the implementation of the Second

Table 5
Summary of Statistical Analysis

Hypothesis	Variable	Significance Level	Statistically Significant
H ₀ :1	Discipline Referrals	<.001	Yes
H ₀ :2	Out of School Suspensions	.033	Yes
H ₀ :3	Student Attendance	<.001	Yes
H ₀ :4	Teacher Attendance	<.001	Yes

Step Violence Prevention Program was found. The number of office referrals decreased from 655 in 1999-2000 to 504 in 2000-2001.

Out of School Suspensions ($H_0:2$)

Data for hypothesis two were also analyzed with the test of proportionality. The data shows a decrease in the proportion of out of school suspensions after the implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program, and the results were found to be statistically significant. There was a decrease from 103 out of school suspensions in 1999-2000 to 85 in 2000-2001. The corresponding decrease in enrollment from 237 students to 232 students factored in these findings.

Student Attendance ($H_0:3$)

During the two years studied, the average daily student attendance improved from 96.92% to 97.29%. This data from the school improvement plan were evaluated using the test of proportionality and was found to be statistically different.

Teacher Attendance ($H_0:4$)

The test of proportionality was also applied to teacher absences. Data on total absences as well as absences due to sick or personal leave were evaluated. Both areas showed an improvement in teacher absences over the two school years included in the study. The differences were both found to be statistically significant.

Conclusions

The findings of the study indicated that there was a statistically significant decrease in the proportion of office referrals, out of school suspensions, and student and teacher absences after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. These results cannot be generalized beyond the faculty, staff, and students of the school during the 1999-2000 and 2000-

2001 school years. The dependent variables of office referrals, out of school suspensions, teacher absences, and student attendance also are applicable only to the faculty, staff, and students at the school during the years of the study.

The study was undertaken after the Second Step Violence Prevention Program had been implemented. This study does not assume that the Second Step program was the only factor that influenced the dependent variables during the two years of the study. Several school factors did, however, remain the same. The principal and office staff at the school did not change over the two years. The teaching staff was relatively stable, with two teachers being replaced from year one to year two. No new attendance incentives were offered to staff or students during the course of the study. The study could not control other factors at the community, classroom, school, and school system level that may have influenced the dependent variables.

Teacher absences showed a statistically significant decrease over the two years of the study. Improved teacher attendance can save school systems money as well as provide more instructional time for students. Student attendance percentages also increased statistically significantly after implementation of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. Fewer absences can result in more opportunity for learning.

The results of statistically significant decreased out of school suspensions and office referrals benefit the students, teachers, and administrators. The student has more time on task when instruction is not interrupted by misbehavior and violation of school rules. Considering that students lose credit while suspended, the decrease in out of school suspensions could result in improved grades. With less time focused on disruptive and unruly behavior, the teacher has more time to focus on meeting the academic needs of the students. Administrators spend less time on disciplinary issues and are able to allocate more time to instructional leadership. Over

the two years of this study, the number of disciplinary referrals decreased by 151 referrals. Assuming an administrator spends an average of 20 minutes on each disciplinary referral, the time saved by the decrease in referrals amounted to more than six school days.

Applications of the Findings

At this small north Georgia urban elementary school, the Second Step Violence Prevention Program was found to improve school climate as measured by teacher and student attendance, referrals to the school office, and out of school suspensions. The Second Step Violence Prevention program was designed to teach conflict resolution and prevent violence among students. The findings of this study showed reduced incidents of office referrals and out of school suspensions, factors that can be linked to conflict resolution and violence prevention (Lockwood, 1997). According to its purpose, the program was effective at the elementary school in this study, with the staff and the students at this racially and ethnically diverse Title I school. A recommendation to continue the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in this school is suggested. Second Step lessons should be assigned across grade levels to minimize lost academic instructional time. Administrators should be encouraged to conduct similar program evaluations when faced with decisions to continue with existing initiatives within their school.

Recommendations for Further Study

It is recommended that further studies be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program in the early childhood and upper elementary grades. Further study is suggested, as well, at schools that implement the program in the middle grades. Such studies could be designed before implementation to study a wider variety of factors, such as norm referenced and criterion referenced test scores and incidents of violence. Longitudinal studies are recommended to see if any changes in the variables are still in effect after the first

year of implementation. Norm referenced test data should be examined to see if a delay in achievement gains would be evident. Results of future studies should be disaggregated by sex, age, race, and disability to determine its effectiveness with different populations.

Program effectiveness within the population of a specific school can be determined through studies such as this one. However, overall program effectiveness can only be determined by examining similar studies. Statistically combining results of several studies will give results that can be used by administrators in making decisions to purchase the program given limited resources and limited instructional time.

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