The possibility of an armed intruder, serious bomb threat, or suicide cluster may seem remote, but even without a major crisis, schools are subjected to a number of other potentially disruptive events. Each year three million crimes are committed on school grounds, and on any given day an estimated 100,000 students carry a gun to school. Being prepared for crises can enhance the school’s effectiveness in responding to smaller incidents. General preventative school security measures recommended by the National School Safety Center include: (1) limiting grounds access during the school day; (2) developing a comprehensive crisis management plan; and (3) establishing a communications network that links classrooms, the schoolyard supervisors, and the central office with local law enforcement and fire departments. In the aftermath of a crisis, a counseling center should be set up to help students through the grief process and to handle symptoms of posttraumatic stress. To prevent suicide clusters (a group of suicides that occur close together in time or space within a community) school officials must coordinate community agencies and learn the most psychologically effective ways to handle a student’s death. This document contains several school-related crime newspaper articles. (13 references) (KY)
SCHOOL CRISIS PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

NSSC RESOURCE PAPER

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If schools ever were "islands of safety" within otherwise violent neighborhoods, they certainly are no longer. Every type of community across the country--urban, suburban or rural--has experienced "street crime" on school grounds.

This violent crime wave has created an increased awareness of the need for safer schools. There is no longer room for debating whether our campuses should be safer: The issue concerning parents, educators and students is in what way and how quickly campuses can be made more secure.

Even citizens fortunate enough not to experience school-related crime and violence firsthand are deluged with news stories recounting these atrocities.

A recent, horrifying example: On January 17, 1989, a man carrying an AK-47 semiautomatic assault rifle walked onto an elementary school playground in Stockton, California, and opened fire. Less than five minutes later, five children and the gunman were dead; 29 other students and a teacher were wounded, 15 seriously.

The Stockton shooting claimed more lives than any other schoolyard attack in history. However, other incidents of deadly violence are occurring around the country. Although such violence isn't new, its severity is. Other recent examples include:

* January 5, 1989: A 16-year-old student was fatally shot in the yard of Henderson Junior High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.


* September 26, 1988: A 19-year-old opened fire in a crowded cafeteria at Oakland Elementary School in Greenwood, South Carolina, killing two 8-year-old girls and wounding nine other people.

* May 21, 1988: A woman walked into a classroom at the Hubbard Woods Elementary School in Winnetka, Illinois, killed an 8-year-old boy and wounded six others.

* May 16, 1986: A man and woman held a group of students and teachers hostage in a Cokeville, Wyoming, elementary school. Their bomb exploded accidentally, killing the woman and burning some of the hostages. The man committed suicide, but not before shooting one teacher in the back.
Many of the school administrators who had to deal with these incidents met in New York City on September 25-26, 1989, for the "School Crisis Prevention Practicum," an unprecedented meeting sponsored by the National School Safety Center, an organization funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. Their comments and recommendations about school security, learned by living through tragic incidents at their schools, have been included in this paper.

Although these principals experienced some of the more dramatic incidents to take place on school campuses, the danger of lesser violence is even more pervasive. Three million crimes are committed on school grounds each year, with 183,590 people injured in 1987, according to the National Crime Survey. On any given day, it is estimated--based on results of the 1987 National Adolescent Student Health Survey--that more than 100,000 students carry guns to school. These numbers--and the recent headline-grabbing attacks--have renewed the debate over how much security and what type of security is needed, as well as whether it's possible to completely protect students from disturbed adults or classmates with guns.

SCHOOL SECURITY ISSUES

Using metal detectors in schools has become one of the most controversial ways to increase campus security. A pilot program was tested in five New York City schools last year in which a special security task force visits the campuses on a rotating schedule and confiscates weapons found with hand-held detectors. The program, which has expanded to 10 other high schools this year, seems to be working. No guns have turned up in the schools, although approximately 200 weapons have been recovered nearby, apparently dropped by students when they saw the metal detectors.

Some parents protest that students should not automatically be treated as "convicts." However, a New York City council member defended the metal detector program by saying, "The public need has long since overcome the objections of civil libertarians. People in the school have to be able to go into an arena of safety."

Although other schools across the country have also installed metal detectors, some officials say the devices are expensive, unnecessary and logistically impractical, especially since a great deal of trouble happens just outside the school grounds. Others question the effectiveness of metal detectors. Alex Rascon, director of security for the San Diego Unified School District, points out, "The school is a second home for kids, so they know it better than the administrators. If you have tons of windows in your schools, they can get weapons in one way or the other. They can hide things and you'll never know."
Cost is another factor to consider, not only in terms of the hardware but also in terms of the employees who will operate the metal detectors. "The cost of metal detectors is mind-boggling, and the question is still whether we would detect that much," said District of Columbia school board president Linda W. Cropp.

In fact, money often is raised as a key concern when any new security measure is discussed. For example, California has approximately 7,500 schools and 4.5 million students, with 120,000 to 150,000 new students entering the system each year. Eleven new classrooms must be built each day just to keep up with this boom. State-level school administrators say that even a best-case scenario for the passage of new school bonds doesn't project enough money being raised to maintain the current level of service. "The security aspect is basically adding a new burden to an already overburdened system," says William L. Rukeyser, a special assistant to California's Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Many school districts focus on making their schools' physical plants more secure by locking all but the front entrance, installing better alarm systems, adding two-way intercoms in all classrooms, closing off little-used stairwells, giving playgro. d and school bus monitors walkie-talkies, and getting rid of separate faculty bathrooms.

Other school districts have decided to build protective structures around their campuses, although some experts point out that the amount of protection offered by construction is limited. "You would have to build a 10-foot brick wall around all the elementary schools in the United States and they'd have to have barbed wire to prevent people from going up and over the brick wall. You'd have to have roving guards and armed police at all times," says Thomas A. Shannon, executive director of the National School Boards Association.

However, the idea of a walled school has already become a reality at Lindbergh Junior High School in Long Beach, California, where the school district has decided to build a 10-foot-high, 900-foot-long concrete wall between the school and an adjacent housing project to protect students from flying bullets. "To me, it's sad, but we have to do it," said Board of Education member Jerry Schultz. "Imagine the trauma to kids of having to evacuate the P.E. field because of bullets. The P.E. teachers said that happens all the time, and they have to have their classes on the other side of the field."

Although no one has been hurt during school hours, the sound of gunshots is heard every six to eight weeks, according to Lindbergh school officials. Two years ago, a student playing basketball after school was hit in the chest by a stray bullet and nearly died.
Many parents and teachers are relieved when schools increase security, no matter how it is done. However, others believe that schools are being turned into armed camps, drastically affecting the learning atmosphere. One architect, who designed a high-security school for a Los Angeles neighborhood that was home to 13 street gangs, said, "If you start making a prison environment with 8 to 10-foot-high fences, it certainly changes the character of the school and the quality of the experience that students have while at the school."

Several of his colleagues who worked on an Oakland school's design even considered building watchtowers, but the architect said, "I think the open campus is the preferred model. To create a compound may be necessary, but it's unfortunate. It's not what this country is about."

Administrators also worry that increasing security will make parents feel excluded from the school and that they will then become less involved in their children's education. "We've gone to inordinate lengths to create the image that these are your schools, come on in," said one Chicago superintendent. But now, he says, all entrances except the front door are locked, visitors are treated more suspiciously, and every visitor is asked to sign in and out and wear badges while at the school.

School officials also worry that increased security compounds the fears of children who are already being warned, in and out of school, to be wary of strangers who may kidnap or kill them. "You're communicating to elementary school children that there are really evil, really bad people living in their community and you have to protect them all the time," says Bob Rubel of the National Alliance for Safe Schools. "That's a dangerous signal to give to little kids."

Unfortunately, the world is becoming more dangerous and that reality is affecting the nation's schools. In fact, schools may be an even more likely target for disturbed people than other businesses. A disturbed adult may attack a school because he or she has negative memories of school experiences, realizes the children are vulnerable targets, or wants national publicity and knows hurting children will ensure that.

The Legal Aspects of Crime Prevention

Because of the increasing demand for public safety, many states are beginning to take another look at their laws, particularly as they relate to individual rights of privacy. For many school districts, implementing safety plans also addresses concerns about liability. California was the first--and so far the only--state to provide a constitutional right to safe schools. While other states have not yet followed California's example, schools across the country must be more attentive to campus safety because of the impact made by the decade-old victims' right movement. That movement involved crime victims who began
using the civil courts to vindicate their rights. As courts and juries began to be more sympathetic to their cause, a legal trend developed to hold third-party defendants, including schools, liable for injuries sustained by victims of crime and violence.

According to the authors of *School Crime and Violence: Victims' Rights*, courts have held that although a school may not be expected to be a guarantor or insurer of the safety of its students, schools are expected to provide, in addition to an intellectual climate, a physical environment harmonious with the purposes of an educational institution. This expectation is particularly appropriate on a school campus where educators are charged with the care, custody and control of students' behavior.

The developing right to safe schools includes the right of students and staff:

* To be protected against foreseeable criminal activity.
* To be protected against student crime or violence which can be prevented by adequate supervision.
* To be protected against identifiable dangerous students.
* To be protected from dangerous individual negligently admitted to school.
* To be protected from dangerous individuals negligently placed in school.
* To be protected from school administrators, teachers and staff negligently selected, retained or trained.

Several recent court cases stemming from school security issues illustrate the legal problems that can arise from a crisis, or from efforts to prevent one.

In one case, *Hosemann v. Oakland Unified School District*, Stephen Hosemann argued that he was physically assaulted on his junior high school campus by a former classmate and that school officials, although aware of the threat, failed to protect him. In May 1986, the superior court held the school district and administrators liable for Stephen Hosemann's injuries and ordered the district to develop a security plan for its campuses. The ruling was reversed in May 1989, by an appellate court which, while denying the plaintiff's claims against the school district, did reinforce the need for legislative action to make schools safer.

In August 1988, a federal appellate court ruled in favor of a student who had been molested by her high school band director. In the case of *Stoneking v. Bradford Area School District*, the court held that the school district violated the student's right to "liberty" under the 14th Amendment because its officials were
aware that another student had charged the band director with sexual misconduct but failed to take action.

The case of New Jersey v. T.L.O. concerned the legality of student searches conducted by public school officials. It is relevant to crisis prevention since many incidents are perpetrated by students who have carried weapons to school. A New Jersey high school teacher discovered a 14-year-old student, T.L.O., and a friend smoking cigarettes in a school restroom in violation of the school's rules. The girls were taken to the principal's office, where T.L.O. not only denied smoking in the restroom, but said she didn't smoke at all.

Doubting T.L.O.'s truthfulness, the vice principal asked to see her purse. He found a pack of cigarettes and cigarette rolling papers in the purse; searching further, he found marijuana, a pipe, plastic bags, $40 in one-dollar bills, an index card containing the phrase "people who owe me money," and two letters implicating T.L.O. in marijuana dealing.

The state subsequently brought delinquency charges against T.L.O. in juvenile court. The court found that, although the Fourth Amendment does apply to searches by school officials, the search in question was reasonable. The appellate court affirmed the trial court's finding, but the New Jersey Supreme Court reversed the ruling.

The case then went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that, although the Fourth Amendment applied to searches of students by school administrators, the evidence against T.L.O. had been obtained legally.

The U.S. Supreme Court concluded that school officials do not have to conform to the same stringent standard required of law enforcement personnel; that is, they do not need to obtain a warrant or reach the standard of probable cause before searching a student. Instead, the court struck a middle position, ruling that school officials must have "reasonable grounds" to suspect a search will turn up evidence that the student has violated the law or the school's rules.

Given these rulings and similar suits that have been filed against other school districts, administrators should closely examine their security systems. They may protect their schools from being found liable in a court case if they can demonstrate that they exercised due diligence in preventing crime and violence on their campuses.

**PREVENTION STRATEGIES**

Although there is no guarantee that a school will ever be completely safe from crime, NSSC recommends these general
preventative security measures to lessen the chances of violence occurring on campus:

* School districts should coordinate a local school security committee or task force comprised of school officials, law enforcers, other youth-service providers, parents and students. The committee should plan what safety measures are needed and how they can be implemented, as well as regularly review school safety and security measures.

* School site administrators must acquire "crime-resistance savvy" and take greater responsibility in working with the school board and district to implement site security programs.

* Schools must develop a comprehensive crisis management plan that incorporates resources available through other community agencies.

* A school communications network should be established that links classrooms and schoolyard supervisors with the front office or security staff as well as with local law enforcement and fire departments.

* School staff should be informed and regularly updated on safety plans through in-service training. The training should include not only the certified staff but also classified staff, including part-time employees and substitute teachers.

* Parents and community volunteers should be used to help patrol surrounding neighborhoods and supervise the campus before, during and after school.

* Access points to school grounds should be limited and monitored during the school day. A single visitor entrance should be supervised by a receptionist or security officer. Visitors must sign in at the reception area and wear an identification pass. Delivery entrances used by vendors also should be checked regularly.

* Students should be taught to take responsibility for their own safety by reporting suspicious individuals or unusual activity on school grounds and by learning personal safety and conflict-resolution techniques.

* Schools should establish a curriculum committee to focus on teaching students non-violence, pro-social skills, conflict resolution, law-related education, and good decision making. A school security committee also should be created to focus on what safety measures need to be implemented and how that can be accomplished.
School administrators are faced with the challenge of addressing legitimate fears without going to extremes that will damage their campuses' academic atmosphere. Some of their specific responses include:

* Last spring, the chancellor of the New York City schools announced that high school students who attacked school employees or carried dangerous weapons would be expelled for the rest of the school year.

* At Fairfax Elementary School in Mentor, Ohio, teachers prepare students to duck under their desks when they shout "earthquake drill!" This phrase is a euphemism for the horrific possibility of an armed intruder; the code is used to keep from alarming children unnecessarily. In Oakland and Los Angeles, teachers even conduct bullet drills, training students how to take cover should gunfire erupt.

* Several schools get parents involved in security. In Winnetka, Illinois, where a mentally ill woman entered unchallenged through an elementary school's rear entrance to kill one boy and wound five others, mothers now take turns sitting in the reception area and screening all visitors. In Cornwall, New York, parents are paid to patrol the high school halls. At Bassett High School in La Puente, California, parent patrols have been used since 1981 and crime has fallen by half.

* School administrators at La Puente's Bassett High also removed student lockers to eliminate hiding places for guns or drugs. Other schools have banned baggy clothing and book bags that can conceal weapons.

* In addition to requiring that visitors wear badges, some schools also issue every student an identification card which is checked by security guards.

* The San Diego Unified School District is gradually replacing chain link fence with ornamental wrought iron. Security Chief Rascon explains, "Ornamental iron fencing beautifies the campus. Since it doesn't give you the prison look, you can make the fence higher and people don't care. We've gone from 10 feet to 15 feet. You can't cut holes in ornamental iron--you'd have to bring a torch!--and you can't climb those fences as easily as chain link fences."

* Rascon instituted another unusual security measure in 1974: he turned out the schools' lights at night. "We had total darkness in schools after hours and saved the district $2 million," he says. "It was a radical move because we had been brainwashed by electric companies for years that the more lights, the less crime. We have proven that's wrong. To the contrary, I think lights help a burglar to see so he knows where the equipment is. We've told the community, if
you see a light come on, call the police. And it clicks, it really does. A dark and silent school is effective against crimes of property."

* Police officers in Greenwood, South Carolina, where a gunman went on a killing rampage last fall, now "adopt" schools. Officers regularly visit campuses, eating lunch with students and walking the grounds.

* In Detroit, police officers are stationed at high schools and a 24-hour hotline is available for tipsters with warnings about school violence. Other urban school districts have found that a school police force serves as a useful deterrent as well. "The streetwise kids know who the police are and, if there are more police at the school sites, your very presence makes a difference," says Joe Elmore, a police officer with the San Diego Unified School District. "They will not do things they would normally do if you weren't around. The uniform and the police car have a clear psychological effect."

* Work with the juvenile court judge to develop court orders that allow the school, law enforcement agencies and courts to release information to each other regarding any minor who is, or is believed to be, a gang member.

Even before the shooting at Cleveland Elementary School in Stockton, California, school officials held frequent emergency drills, a factor that helped when a real crisis occurred, says principal Patricia Busher. "All children must be taught that if they're on the playground or in the classroom and something makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe, they need to look for the first adult and follow their directions," she says. "I'm quite convinced that saves children's lives. When the shooting occurred on our campus, there was no hysterical behavior on the part of the children. They were very, very frightened and traumatized, but they did follow the adults' directions. You must really run a tight ship and treat your drill seriously."

Busher is currently working with nearby residents to establish a neighborhood watch around the school; under this plan, people who are often at home agree to notify police if they see suspicious strangers near the school. She also suggests that every school conduct a security analysis of its campus.

The Little Rock, Arkansas, school district established a task force on safety and security shortly after one student was shot and killed on campus and another student, in an unrelated incident, was shot and wounded on a school bus. Among their recommendations:

* Maintain clean buildings and grounds, pruning overgrown shrubs and trees to eliminate possible hiding places. Keep windows in classroom doors free of posters. Install convex
mirrors in blind halls so that administrators and teachers can see around corners.

* Establish a crime prevention club, similar to neighborhood watch. Offer monetary rewards of $20 to $25 to students who give an accurate tip on weapons in schools (while maintaining the student's confidentiality).

* Establish a neighborhood child protection strategy with community members who volunteer their homes as safe houses where children can go if they are threatened on the street or at a bus stop.

* Work with the prosecuting attorney to develop a timely method of issuing warrants for juvenile offenders' arrests.

Other prevention strategies have been outlined in the School Safety Check Book, published by the National School Safety Center.

Preventing Crime through Environmental Design

If a school district is planning to build a new school, architectural design can take security issues into account, points our Dr. Robert Watson, superintendent of the Greenwood, South Carolina, school district where two children were killed and nine other people wounded by a teenage gunman.

"Thirty years ago, the concept of school safety was to lock the doors and windows," he says. "Visual access by the school supervisors is terribly important to maintaining control. Schools need to be designed so that the supervisors have maximum visual access and can see down several hallways from one point. I think a school shaped like a wheel, with the supervisor's office in the hub and halls radiating out like spokes, is the best design. Also, windows need to be designed so that people can use them for evacuation."

Timothy D. Crowe, author of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, points out that the traditional design concepts used to deter crime--access control and surveillance strategies--emphasized mechanical crime prevention techniques, such as guards, locks, police patrols and lighting, and overlooked use of the physical environment itself. Recently, a shift has been made to prevent crime by using natural opportunities presented by the environment.

Physical space can be evaluated by using the "Three-Ds" as a guide: designation, definition and design. Specifically, he would ask the following questions: Does the space clearly belong to someone or some group? Is the intended use clearly defined? Does the physical design match the intended use? Does the design provide the means for normal users to naturally control the activities, to control access and to provide surveillance?
Crowe writes, "Natural access control and surveillance will promote more responsiveness by users in protecting their territory (e.g., more security awareness, reporting, reacting) and promote greater perception of risk by offenders."

RESPONDING TO A CRISIS

Despite these and similar precautions, however, the unthinkable—a bomb threat that turns out to be real, an adult intruder with a gun—does happen. Handling such emergencies effectively requires planning and training. The most important step is to develop a written crisis plan and to familiarize school staff with it. Many of the following suggestions have now been implemented by school districts that have faced a crisis in the past.

Assigning Clear Roles

In developing a crisis plan, the first step is to assign specific roles to individual staff members that they will take on if an emergency occurs. Personnel should be designated:

* To go to the hospital or emergency medical site where injured students have been taken.
* To oversee telephones and computer datalines.
* To inform administrators in other schools about the emergency and how it is being dealt with.
* To work with the media.
* To oversee transportation needs.
* To assist in identifying students and adults who may be injured or killed.
* To review student and personnel records and notify parents and spouses.

Administrators should describe in writing what needs to be done and who is responsible for each task.

Also, keep on hand both a list of who has keys to which buildings and a floor plan that shows room numbers and the locations of windows, doors, storerooms, restrooms and offices.

Communications

Communications is one of the most critical problems administrators face in an emergency. In a tense situation, rumors multiply quickly and have the potential to panic students and the public. Typically, school officials will have to communicate accurate information to students, parents, staff, law
enforcement personnel, emergency medical services, the media and hospitals. The following equipment could prove vital, depending on the nature of the crisis:

* A modern intercom system so that the principal can communicate with all classrooms from most school locations. Beverly Cook, principal of Atlantic Shores Christian School in Virginia Beach, Virginia, had to deal with a student who brought a gun to school, shot a teacher and threatened a classroom of other students. "When a library aide came into the office and said that someone was shooting into a classroom, the secretary called 911 and I went from room to room, telling the children in each class to lie down," she recalls. "Right now we're in the process of a building program, and an intercom or some kind of communication system will be a must because of the panic I felt at first of how to let everyone know."

Cleveland Elementary's Patricia Busher concurs: "In our case, all the adults exercised very good judgement. Nobody panicked or tried to evacuate, but there were classrooms with no intercoms hooked up and no way to communicate with them immediately. Had those teachers acted differently, the situation could have been far worse."

* At least one private unlisted telephone line designated for official use during an emergency. In addition, at least two lines with published numbers available for public use.

* A fax machine, a computer with a modem, and RJ11 telephone jacks so that alternate communication systems are available.

* A portable telephone to use in case phone lines are disabled.

* A working bullhorn that can be used to communicate to large groups of people.

* A computer-based bulletin board system (BBS) that schools can access through telephone modems.

* An emergency communication kit that includes a local telephone directory, a list of emergency telephone numbers, a fax machine, and computer telephone numbers.

* Telephone recording equipment that can be used to tape a phoned bomb threat.

* Two-way radios to communicate with school personnel. Note, however, that such radios should not be used after receiving a bomb threat, since they can detonate electric blasting caps.
Bomb threats create special communication problems. Again, being prepared is key to handling a bomb threat effectively.

Since most bomb threats come by telephone, a standard Bomb Threat Report Form should be created and kept handy for anyone likely to receive such a threat. The form should include a checklist that asks for the basics: where and when the threat was received, a record of the threatening message, and a description of the caller.

Because it's difficult to keep a cool head when faced with such a threat, the form should also list some questions to be asked, such as: Where is the bomb to explode? Where is the bomb right now? What kind of bomb is it? What does it look like? Why did you place the bomb? Where are you calling from? Who are you? Although the caller probably will not answer every question, asking them will give you more information and more time to classify the voice.

The checklist should also include categories the answerer can check off to describe the caller's voice: male/female, calm/agitated, young/middle-aged/old, American/accented/disguised, sure/unsure, giggling/sincere, slow/fast, loud/soft, normal/stuttering/lispng/slurred/clear, or angry/crying/excited. The answerer should also note if the voice sounded familiar and, if so, who it sounded like, and what kind of background noise could be heard.

Transportation

Staff training programs should include bus drivers, who might have to transport students or adults in an evacuation. All school buses should include an emergency information kit that has writing paper, pens and pencils, and a current list of students who ride the bus for each route.

Identification

Identification badges should be made for all district and school staff who would be involved in handling an emergency. Staff members should wear those badges throughout the crisis.

Also, the names of injured students or employees being removed from an emergency site should be on a list kept at the site. The names of the injured should either be written on the back of a hand or on a stick-on label which can be placed on their clothing.

Train teachers to take their gradebooks or class rosters with them if they leave the building in an emergency. Plan what specific part of the campus teachers should take their students to.
Establish a procedure by which children will be released to their parents or guardians after calm is restored. "Reuniting children with their parents took about three hours," recalls Cleveland Elementary principal Busher. "We brought each class, one at a time, into the multi-purpose room and then called the parents of the children in that class to come in. It had to be agonizing for the many parents who had to wait and wait, but the alternative is mass hysteria. You can't release a crowd of hundreds of people. I also gave explicit directions that no child could be taken by a parent unless they were signed out and we verified that the child had been handed over to the appropriate person, a parent or guardian."

Dealing with the Media

Administrators faced with a crisis will very quickly be faced by members of the press as well. It's necessary both to be sensitive to reporters' need to get information and communicate it to the public and to consider students' safety and well-being. Two principals who had to deal with the media--one when a third-grade student at his school was killed, the other when a female student was abducted and killed--offer the following advice:

* Keep statements brief and cover only the facts, not opinions.
* Maintain a positive attitude. Remember that the public has a right and a need to understand what has happened.
* Ignore abrasive personalities or statements made by reporters.

Both principals were the spokesmen for their respective schools. One allowed the media to talk to students and teachers if the reporters stayed in front of the school and the students and teachers were on their own time; the other did not give the press access to parents, teachers or students.

According to Walter D. St. John, a high school principal and communications consultant, other ways to prepare for media attention include:

* Compile a list of names, phone numbers and addresses of media representatives and have a stack of addressed envelopes ready to mail press releases.
* Develop a fact sheet about the district and school to use as a handout.
* Maintain an adequate supply of news release forms.
* Identify suitable facilities where reporters can work and news conferences can be held.

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He adds, "Information should be shared as soon as possible, as rumors and incorrect information spread amazingly quickly. If there is undue delay, and if the public suspects a cover-up, the resultant mistrust may destroy credibility. It is a good idea to schedule regular briefings to update the media and to reassure employees."

His tips on what not to do include:

* Don't panic.
* Don't lie or be perceived as covering up.
* Don't overreact or exaggerate the situation, but don't refuse to acknowledge its gravity either.
* Don't try to avoid blame by using a scapegoat.
* Don't argue with reporters.
* Don't deviate from communications policy and agreed-upon statements.
* Don't bluff, ad-lib, or talk "off the record."
* Don't delay sharing what information you have, but make sure you are sharing facts.
* Don't project a primary interest in protecting the school's reputation at all cost.

THE AFTERMATH OF A CRISIS

The effects of a crisis often reverberate long after the incident itself is over. School administrators must take a long-term view of dealing with a crisis, say mental health professionals. They note that children need to talk about any crises they experience, since expressing their frustration and fears, as well as trying to understand why the event occurred, are important parts of the healing process. In addition, educators and parents should realize that many psychological symptoms associated with trauma may not appear for weeks or months after the incident.

Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms

Dr. Robert S. Pynoos, director of UCLA's Prevention Intervention Program in Trauma, Violence and Sudden Bereavement in Childhood, has counseled children who have experienced violence, including a sniper attack and a hostage taking and bombing at separate elementary schools. He writes: "Our findings provide strong evidence that acute posttraumatic stress symptoms result from violent life threat, and the severity is related to the extent of exposure to the threat or the witnessing of injury or death."
Such symptoms include nightmares, startled reactions to loud noises, the inability to concentrate in school, guilt over survival or failure to intervene, and fears about a recurrence of the traumatic incident. Some symptoms, such as guilt, may occur whether or not the child was present during the incident. Children have also complained of feeling less interest in play or other usually enjoyable activities and of feeling more distant from their parents or friends.

Young children may re-enact the experience in their play, while older children may adopt risky behaviors in response to the crisis. Students may also try to avoid the area where the incident took place. Other reminders, not related to the incident site, may also trigger anxiety. For example, seeing a potential weapon, such as a kitchen knife, or blood from a minor cut can act as a stimulus. A number of children and their parents have reported that television violence can also serve as a traumatic reminder.

Counseling can be offered individually, with other family members, and in the classroom. Teachers and school nurses can help pinpoint students who need further help by observing changes in classroom behavior or repeated trips to the nurse's office, referring those students to counselors, and following the course of seriously affected children. The most common behavioral change is unexpected aggression, which can result in the diagnosis of conduct disturbance. While not as usual, children may also refuse to participate in class and exhibit other inhibited behavior as a result of the trauma.

The Grief Process

Studies have shown that children mourn much as adults do: the process of disbelief, anger and pain is similar and often lasts for a year. However, children do experience grief somewhat differently because of their age. Teachers and parents should be aware of those differences in order to help children deal with their feelings.

For example, children sometimes have dreams about a deceased person that frighten them; they interpret the dream as a sign of the return of the dead or the appearance of a ghost. Children are often confused, frightened and disturbed by their grief reactions but, unlike adults, they often don't talk about their feelings with anyone. The process is complicated further when children must deal with a violent death; in fact, overcoming the trauma of witnessing a violent event can interfere with the grief process.

It is important for teachers to talk with students in class about death and their feelings of loss, and for parents to openly acknowledge the loss and talk to their children about their sadness or anger.
Worry About Another

Children often feel extreme stress about the safety of parents, siblings or friends during a violent incident. This can lead to symptoms of separation anxiety, centered on the person they worried about, after the incident is over. For example, a child who was concerned about a sibling may secretly keep track of that sibling's whereabouts, insist that the sibling not go out alone, or panic if the sibling is out of sight.

If children are insecure about a parent's or sibling's safety, they may become irritable with the other person, sometimes even rejecting him or her, as a way of distancing themselves from the painful feelings of worry. This can cause continued strife within the family. Parents can help by reassuring their child about the safety of family members, being supportive when the worries intensify, and encouraging the child to talk about his or her feelings.

Setting Up Counseling Centers

According to mental health experts, schools should take certain steps before, during and after an emergency situation, such as determining what mental health resources will be available and knowing which community and district mental health professionals to call during an emergency, training school staff in grief counseling, keeping the school open for counseling and information the day of the incident and several days afterward, and offering counseling services for weeks and months after the event.

After the Stockton shooting, for example, the school opened a counseling center for parents in a nearby church and set up a 24-hour hotline to take calls from families dealing with the aftereffects of the tragedy. The shooting at Hubbard Woods Elementary School in Winnetka, Illinois, took place near the end of the school year. The school set up weekly meetings for the parents for three weeks after the shooting where they could ask questions about what to expect in terms of their own and their children's emotional reactions to the incident. Several other meetings were held throughout the summer as well.

Posttraumatic stress symptoms can last for as long as two years after a crisis, a point that Cleveland Elementary principal Busher emphasized: "I find that people who are removed from the situation sometimes have a real lack of understanding. They feel that the incident is over, so why are people not going on about their lives, business as usual? That's really not possible."

A resurgence of symptoms can be triggered by anniversaries or other school crises around the country. "We began the new school year with a breakfast at the beach for all the parents and children. We all watched the sunrise, kind of a new beginning. And now we've dealt with May 20, the anniversary of the..."
shooting," says Hubbard Woods Elementary principal Richard Streedain. "But we did have some setbacks. The Stockton shooting was real painful to the parents. It triggered a lot of anxiety when one of these major events happened, which they thought would never happen again."

It's important to remember that counseling should be offered to school staff and officials as well as to parents and children. As Dr. Pynoos notes, "The administrators' visibility is important for providing a sense of security and stability. Because of their high level of immediate responsibility, these leaders may be at risk of a delayed response after the return to normal school operations. Special care has to be given to providing them appropriate psychological assistance at this later date."

He adds that children often carefully observe their teachers' responses to an event, making staff recovery doubly important, since it is necessary both in terms of their own welfare and that of their students.

**Emphasizing the School's Safety After a Crisis**

If possible, school should reopen the day after a crisis, many principals and administrators agree. "We wanted to let the children know the school was safe and to begin dealing with the tragedy," says Cleveland Elementary principal Busher. "I think had we closed the school, it is likely that some people would have been so traumatized with fear that it would have been very difficult to get children back into school and there would have been potential for a flight pattern." The school's maintenance personnel worked all night to remove traces of the shooting so that children would not see bloodstains or bullet holes the next morning. Paying attention to physical details can also help students deal with the trauma. Hubbard Woods Elementary principal Streedain says, "We painted and carpeted the room where the shooting took place and moved our classes around a little bit so this doesn't get to be known as the second-grade classroom where some kids got shot."

However, he adds that reassuring parents and children that their school is still safe also depends on their perception of the school before the crisis took place. "If the school has already been perceived as a safe haven, you can revisit that when you have a crisis," he says. "The more people have a sense of real genuine community, the more effective the healing will be."

**SUICIDE CLUSTERS**

In recent years, several cases of suicide clusters involving young people have received national attention and been the cause of great concern. Although such clusters are not a single-incident crisis, such as a shooting or bombing, they are traumatic and have the potential to spin out of control if not controlled quickly through the use of an established crisis plan.
The Centers for Disease Control defines a suicide cluster as a group of suicides or suicide attempts, or both, that occur closer together in time and space than would normally be expected in a given community. Although many think that clusters occur through a process of "contagion"—in which suicides that occur later in the cluster were influenced by the earlier suicides—this theory has not been formally tested.

Some groups of suicides may occur at approximately the same time simply by chance. However, even these pseudo-clusters can create a crisis atmosphere in the communities in which they occur and cause intense concern on the part of parents, students, school officials and others.

The CDC recommends that the following steps be taken to respond to a suicide cluster:

* A coordinating committee should be formed with individuals from schools, public health and mental health agencies, local government, suicide crisis centers and any other appropriate organizations. The committee would be responsible for developing a response plan and deciding when to implement it. One agency should be designated as the plan's "host agency;" the individual from that agency would be responsible for establishing a notification mechanism, maintaining the response plan, and calling committee meetings.

* The community should also identify and seek help from other community resources, including hospitals and emergency rooms, emergency medical services, local academic resources, clergy, parents groups such as the PTA, survivor groups, students, police and the media.

The CDC comments, "It is particularly important that representatives of the local media be included in developing the plan... Although frequently perceived to be part of the problem, the media can be part of the solution. If representatives of the media are included in developing the plan, it is far more likely that their legitimate need for information can be satisfied without the sensationalism and confusion that has often been associated with suicide clusters."

* The response plan should be used either when a suicide cluster occurs in the community or when one or more deaths from trauma occur (especially among adolescents or young adults) that the coordinating committee members think may influence others to attempt or complete suicide. The plan may also be implemented because of an outside factor, such as a local economic depression, which could lead to an increased number of suicides.
* If the plan is to be implemented, each group involved should be notified.

* The crisis response should be conducted in a manner that avoids glorifying the suicide victims and minimizes sensationalism.

* Persons who may be at high risk—including parents, siblings, boyfriends/girlfriends and close friends—should be identified and have at least one screening interview with a trained counselor. They should be referred for further counseling or other services as needed.

* A timely flow of accurate, appropriate information should be provided to the media. One person should be appointed information coordinator so that a single account of the situation is presented. Although the suicide method should be identified, the precise nature of the method used should not be given in detail.

* Environmental elements that might increase further suicides or suicide attempts should be identified and changed. For example, if the suicide victim jumped off a bridge, building or cliff, barriers should be erected. If a victim committed suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning in a particular garage, access to the garage should be monitored.

* Common characteristics among the victims in a suicide cluster may bring up long-term issues that should be addressed. For example, if the victims were not suspected of having any problems, a system should be developed to give help to troubled persons before they reach the stage of suicidal behavior. If the victims tended to be outside the community mainstream, efforts should be made to bring other such people into the community.

James Walker, assistant superintendent of North Salem High School in North Salem, New York, had to deal with the related suicides of two high school seniors and found that it was helpful to divide the senior class into small groups so that students could discuss their feelings about the deaths. In addition, he met with the school's peer counselors the morning before the first death was announced and encouraged them to refer any students who were having a particularly bad time dealing with the situation to the appropriate adult counselors.

Finally, Walker suggests that other administrators who have to deal with such a situation remember to pay attention to their staff members' feelings, as well as the students' feelings. "It was a tough time and our team of people—the counselors, psychologists, the social worker and myself—were involved in this over the course of several months," he says. "I wound up bringing in someone to talk with us, not to learn more about suicides, but to give us a chance to share our frustrations and
feelings, to debrief a little bit, and to help us put things in perspective."

Dr. David C. Clark, executive director of the Center for Suicide Research and Prevention, offers school officials additional advice about dealing with student suicides. "I think it is a mistake for a school to close the day following a suicide. In this way the students are left to their own devices at the precise time when they are most upset and overwhelmed by their feelings, and the opportunity for a rumor mill to greatly distort the actual events is inadvertently encouraged," he writes.

"It is also a mistake to announce the suicide over the school loudspeaker system... The loudspeaker system is impersonal, and ought not to be used in crisis situations unless it is necessary for safety considerations. Use of the public address system increases the likelihood that no one will have prepared the school faculty for the announcement beforehand, increases the likelihood that faculty will be as unprepared for catastrophic announcements as the students, and thus minimizes the likelihood that the faculty will be able to help exert a positive influence on student reactions by way of example."

Dr. Clark also is opposed to awarding suicide victims posthumous tributes, such as diplomas or varsity letters, or of eulogizing a student who dies by suicide any differently than those who die in other ways. Such actions can lead to the perception that the school administration is condoning or sensationalizing the suicide. Also, excusing students from school to attend the funeral "may inadvertently encourage those not strongly affected by the suicide to become more involved, promote free and unsupervised time away from school when it will do the most harm, and deprive school personnel of the opportunity to monitor individual student reactions to the tragedy," he writes.

CONCLUSION

The possibility of an armed intruder, serious bomb threat or suicide cluster may seem remote. But even without such a major crisis, schools are subject to a number of other potentially disruptive events. Being prepared for crises can enhance the school's effectiveness in responding to smaller incidents. These tragic examples of just the last few years show that no school--large or small, rural or urban--is immune to such crises. To protect against an intruder armed with a gun or a bomb, school administrators should analyze and, when necessary, redesign their campuses to make illegal entry as difficult as possible and should develop a crisis plan so that each staff member knows what to do in an emergency. To prevent suicide clusters, school officials must coordinate community agencies and learn the most psychologically effective ways to deal with a student's death.
It is an unfortunate fact of modern life that we can no longer assume that schools are sanctuaries. Today's challenge is to protect students as much as possible in an increasingly violent world.

RESOURCES

Organizations

Prevention Intervention Program in Trauma, Violence and Sudden Bereavement in Childhood
UCLA Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences
750 Westwood Plaza
Los Angeles, CA  90024
213/206-8973
Dr. Robert S. Pynoos, director

The Center for Suicide Research and Prevention
Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center
1720 West Polk St.
Chicago, IL  60612
312/942-7208
Dr. David C. Clark, executive director

The National Committee on Youth Suicide Prevention
666 Fifth Avenue, 13th Floor
New York, NY  10103
212/247-6910

Youth Suicide National Center
1825 Eye Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, D.C.  20006
202/429-2016

American Association of Suicidology
2459 South Ash Street
Denver, CO  80222
303/692-0985

Department of Health and Human Services
Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control
Atlanta, GA  30333

Publications


Senators Unveil 2 Bills To Bolster Teaching Ranks

Measures Advocate Use Of Financial Incentives

By Peter West

WASHINGTON—Calling teaching a "profession in crisis," Senate Democratic leaders last week put forward a major legislative package of financial incentives and other programs aimed at encouraging young people to join the ranks of the nation's teachers.

The proposal was introduced in the form of two bills, sponsored by Senators Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, and Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, chairman of the panel's education subcommittee.

Both bills seek to reduce the shortage of qualified teachers in poor and urban school districts, particularly members of minority groups, who enter the profession.

The measures, which call for a total of $700 million in new federal spending in their first year, would use financial incentives and loan-forgiveness programs to increase the number of college graduates, particularly members of minority groups, who enter the profession.

The two bills are designed to be complementary, rather than competing, but they cover some common points. In most of the areas in which they overlap, Senator Pell's bill would provide more generous funding levels than does Senator Kennedy's.

Summit's Promise: 'Social Compact' For Reforms

Bush and Governors Pledge National Goals And Accountability

By Julie A. Miller

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.—President Bush and the nation's governors walked away from last week's education summit with an unprecedented agreement to establish national performance goals and to engineer a radical restructuring of America's educational system.

But Gov. Bill Clinton of Arkansas, one of a handful of governors who negotiated directly with White House officials on the two-day summit and its product:

"This is the first time a President and governors have ever met before the American people and said: 'Not only are we going to set national performance goals, we're going to try to develop strategies to achieve them, but we stand here before you and tell you we expect to be held personally accountable for the progress we make in moving this country to a brighter future.'"

"If that doesn't make this a happy day, I don't know what does," he said.

President Bush promised that he and his Administration would "follow up in every way possible" on the commitments made last week, and he called on the American people to do their part.

A social compact begins today in Charlottesville, a compact between parents, students, teachers, and a nation that says: 'Not only are we going to do what it takes to provide a better education for all, but we hold each other accountable for the results.'"

Continued on Page 10

Also in the news

5 School Drug-Policy Model The highly praised Anne Arundel County, Md., plan calls for stiff sanctions.

5 Hugo's Classroom Damage The Carolina hurricane left a staggering school-repair bill in its wake.

14 Utah Teachers Boycott Protesting the use of a budget surplus for tax cuts, they close most districts.

This Week's Forum: Page 30

Educatior WEEK

American Education's Newspaper of Record

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"National Schoolhouse" Rings In Its 2nd Generation

By Mark Walsh

New York City—When "Sesame Street" debuted on public television in 1969, its goals were relatively modest: to teach preschoolers the alphabet and numbers up to 10.

Next month, the show will launch its 21st season with a "state-of-the-art instructional goals" that runs to 30 pages—and includes such topics as ecology, geography, and computer terms.

Planners for the trendsetting experiment in televised learning are quick to say, however, that only the show's educational horizons are adjusted to suit the times, never its basic formula.

Conceived as a cross between the late-1960's most popular TV show, "Rowan and Martin's Laugh In," and one of the most ambitious social programs, Head Start, "Sesame Street" has become a cultural staple, a show so ubiquitous, people to pin the crusade.

"Sesame Street" is the first national schoolhouse," boasts David V.B. Britt, president of Children's Television Workshop, the nonprofit company that produces the show. "We probably have 40 million graduates, and we stand here today and tell you we expect to be held personally accountable for the results.""
'Crisis Consultants' Share the Lessons They Learned From School Violence

Continued from Page 1

at schoolchildren.

Sponsored by the National School Safety Center, an institute funded by the U.S. Justice Department and located at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., the meeting was de- signed to bring a broad spectrum of educators, law enforcement officials, and parents together in a single location.

They had been brought together, however, not as much to debate as to share a common experience—what can be done to prevent or at least minimize the chance of such a crisis occurring again.

The N.S.S.C. has compiled the group's recent experiences, and the results are now being published in a new book. The book is due to be released in mid-October.

The book's authors, the crisis consultants, have been invited to speak at various events throughout the country in the coming weeks to discuss the book's contents and the lessons they have learned.

The book is available for purchase through the National School Safety Center's website. It is a valuable resource for educators, law enforcement officials, and parents who are concerned about school safety and the prevention of school violence.

Excerpt from the book:

"The crisis consultants share the lessons they learned from school violence. They have compiled their experiences and insights into a new book, "Crisis Consultants: Sharing the Lessons They Learned From School Violence." The book is due to be released in mid-October and is available for purchase through the National School Safety Center's website. It is a valuable resource for educators, law enforcement officials, and parents who are concerned about school safety and the prevention of school violence."
School officials try to cope with an increasing number of students who bring weapons on campus.

By Michael Fitzgerald
The Stockton Record

Where children flock onto the grounds of Cleveland Elementary School these mornings, they pass a uniformed guard.

He is a Stockton Unified School District campus police officer. He is unarmed. But he is a guard — a reminder of the Jan. 17 shootings at the school and evidence that attitudes about school security are changing.

"It was an amendment to the California Constitution that said schools are a constitutional right," said Stockton Unified Public Information Officer John Klean. "We take that very, very seriously."

So do parents, teachers and politicians. All are asking: Are our schools safe? The answer is complicated. It involves more than just schools. It involves a changing world in which the little red schoolhouse may need a patrolled perimeter.

The third annual School Crime Report, released this week by state Deluxe insurers, signals a growing problem.

The report shows that, overall, campus crime rates dropped because of a decrease in other types of illegal acts, such as drug sales and theft. But the number of students who bring weapons on campus increased by 7 percent last school year.

School officials think the rise in weapons is related to a growing number of kids who are troublemaking.

Scott Stegeman, the Stockton Unified School District's chief of school safety and security, said many students bring weapons to school to show off. But he said he's more concerned that students are trying to bring weapons to school to hurt themselves or others.

Many parents have noticed an increase in drug sales on school grounds. And it's not the same type of drug the kids are using.

"We're seeing a lot more marijuana on the street," Stegeman said. "But a lot more methamphetamine. That's the worst."
SHOOTINGS PUT FOCUS ON SAFETY

The Cleveland School shootings - in which five children were killed and 30 other people were wounded by gunman Patrick Edward Purdy - and hundreds of similar incidents around the country did more than raise awareness of school vulnerability, said Stuart Greenbaum, communications director for the National School Safety Center in Evanston.

"It has changed the nature of school safety from trying to promote awareness to the next step of trying to deal with it," Greenbaum said. "People now appreciate that we do need to do things to make schools safer.

"There's probably nothing you can do that will prevent a particular incident and decide to do his killing thing," Greenbaum said. "But there are alternatives, where somebody like Purdy picks up and goes and adults say, 'Jesus, it's too hard to get in there.'"

Educators and police agree the Purdy case is not rare, increasingly, however, marijuana use on school property is being condoned by drug dealers, gang members, rapists, molesters and kidnappers.

"The demons don't come from off-campus. Drug abuse, guns and weapons are present in the schools.

Architects part of picture

Safety is an increasing concern for state architects who review school designs.

"I think that everybody thought schools were safe, but maybe they're not as safe as we have taken for granted," said Kelvin Bovée, president of El Dorado Elementary School's Parent-Teacher Association.

Bovée and other parents were friged March 21 when a 7-year-old student was stabbed in the arm and another was pepper-sprayed. A man later was arrested.

Bovée formed the El Dorado Parent Patrol.

"It's amazing to see how many people care about our campus," Bovée said. "It's like a family. We know each other. We're all on the same page.

"I think that everybody thought schools were safe, but maybe, they're not as safe as we have taken for granted.

"Kelce Bovée, president of El Dorado Elementary School's PTA

New technology is being introduced State designers are looking into radio beeper systems that would send an alarm to the office two-way radios and even siren motion detectors that trigger an alarm if the playground monitor sees possible instability.

Many schools have integrated communication systems that run the school clock, bell, radio and alarm. Two-way radio can be added to those systems.

Chambers said an architect who designed a high-security school for a Los Angeles neighborhood where 13 street gangs roamed said fences and walls aren't the answer.

"As a designer, I think that, if you start making a prison environment with 8- to 10-foot-high fences, it certainly changes the character of the school and the quality of the experience that students have while at the school," said Eric McHale, project manager of the Steinberg Group of San Jose.

McHale was depressed when colleagues discussing the design of an Oakland school mentioned the installation of barbed wire had been discussed.

"I think the open campus is the preferred model," McHale said. "To create a compound may be necessary. But it's unfortunate. It's not what this country is about.

Money is a problem

Another problem is money.

California has roughly 7,500 schools and 4.5 million students - and the biggest student population explosion since the postwar baby boom. Schools are balancing between 130,000 and 150,000 more students each year. The system must build 11 new classrooms a day just to keep up.

The school system also has a 10-year history of what is referred to politely as "deferred maintenance."

"I think the open campus is the preferred model. To create a compound may be necessary. But it's unfortunate. It's not what this country is about."

"Eric McHale, architect and school designer
agreed to have a reporter ride with him.

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POLICE

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Rage Rules After School Shootings

PPHS Is Now A Shattered Community
By JOHN KAMINSKI
News Editor

One Pinellas Park High School administration is dead after a week of limping on a life support system. His family has been told he is in a coma.

Two other faculty members, an administrator and a custodian, are recovering from bullet wounds.

Twenty–seven year old Pinellas Park boys are in jail, charged with multiple counts of attempted murder, one of which was upgraded to murder.

Students and teachers who witnessed this are fearful that more violence will happen.

A Trespasser

At 11:31 a.m. on Thursday morning, Pinellas Park police received a call from the school requesting assistance to evict a trespasser.

When officers arrived at the school, they were confronted by Parent on page 6.
Two boys running out the front door, shooting at them. Officers returned fire, superficially wounding one boy who surrendered. The other boy got away.

But parents who received different reports from their children, and other students, offered conflicting versions of what happened. (See related story, upper right, page 7.)

Mrs. Heminger described "the sense of events that interrupted our lives and devastated our feels-

"As it turned out, there was a third gun, confiscated by police from McCoy at the house to which he escaped."

"We may be slow in facing this, but this is what's going on over here," Mrs. Heminger continued. "The think they're immortal."

The principal then reconvened the meeting of parents last April to meet. She expected a free day off from school. "We have lost our sense of what's going on here."

"The school and the community have a duty to understand.

Monday's meeting started off at the front office.

"We have an emotional, ongoing battle. We are not going to stop until the other day."

"It's difficult to teach your kids how to deal with fear."

"After parent meetings like the one we had, we have found no more guns."

"They are ready to go."

"But we are not going to stop until we find more."
SHOOTING

him in the temple, and once as Mrs. Blackwelder, hitting her in the eye, resulted in her success in trusting McCoy.

Both students ran out of the front entrance, the principal said.

Pinellas Park police already had been notified of the incident, Mrs. Heminger explained, because they had been called earlier about the presence of a gun by a student, who was not named.

The Effects

Immediately after the incident, chaos ruled. Students were given counseling instruction about how to handle the morning walk. Parents were asked to report on radio and television their children, many of whom already had gone home.

Only a third of the students believed the gun to be real. A custodian was not present in the cafeteria, but other students. The door left open to the room was moved.

Rumors of more violence, fueled by ugly graffiti, were rampant.

The media, which had gone to unparalled lengths covering the chain-reaction Thursday, were banned from the school Friday.

The night before, the local television news was predominantly about Pinellas Park. Jason McCoy's mother, Toni, was interviewed by Channel 4. She explained to a reporter that the two boys had run away the previous night from the Harles home, where both boys lived. She said the boys had stolen the gun Thursday morning.

Pinellas Park News Springwood reporter Jack Britton reported that the two boys spent Wednesday night in the condominium's clubhouse.

Other Reports

A report that surfaced the day of the shootings said that McCoy and Hassle were out to shoot another student who had "stole" McCoy's girlfriend. That report was not confirmed.

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MEETING THE PRESS — Pinellas County School Information Officer Cheryl J. Jackson fields a question from a reporter about the shooting while Pinellas Park Police Chief David Mitchell and Sgt. Erik Randelhsv answer more questions.

NEWS Photo by JOHN CAMPER

More Than Just Two Runaways

By JACK BRINTON

Springwood I Canasta

It appeared to be a simple teenage oversight that led to Springwood, but it turned into a tragic shooting at Pinellas Park High School cafeteria last week.

Early-fall Bob Cobb unlocked the clubhouse doors as usual at 7 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 11. He was surprised to find two bikes parked in the poolroom, but continued on his morning walk.

As is known through the community, confusion spread.

The day after the gaoling, 30 students were out to shoot the two boys who had been called earlier about the presence of a gun by a student, who was not named.

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NEWS Photo by JOHN CAMPER

There was a dinner at the clubhouse Wednesday evening. Bob Cobb locked all the doors about 5:30 p.m. except the north door, which left unlocked so the castrator could pick up the dinner remains. The castrator, Dean Wink of Largo, locked the door and double-checked at the locks at 9:15 p.m.

A nephew of Springwood's Archie Hartman was close to the scene. He threw his tray in the air and hit the floor. My granddaughter was hit by the door, and once at the temple, and once at a store.

The Victims

Assistant Principal Allen has been in critical condition ever since being airlifted from the scene. Principal Heminger has been quoted as saying he is not likely to recover. County Administrator John Michael said earlier this week: "His chances are remote. His condition has deteriorated as a natural progression of his injury." Monday's meeting had been discontinued when the family's insurance ran out.

Some parents at Monday's meeting discribed Mrs. Heminger's version of the event. Their children, who had been in a few feet of the shootings, had told of a fight, which the school administration did not mention.

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A 16-year-old Southwest Washington youth was charged as an adult yesterday in the shootings last week of four students at Woodrow Wilson High School.

Leroy Peterson of the 200 block of K Street SW was ordered held on a $3,000 bond by D.C. Superior Court Commissioner Thomas Gaye after Peterson was charged with four counts of assault with intent to kill while armed. Under Gaye’s order, Peterson must observe a 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. curfew if he posts bond and must not come within five blocks of Wilson High School, at 40th and Brandywine streets NW near Wisconsin Avenue.

Peterson is the second person to be charged in the Thursday afternoon shootings, which involved one or two semiautomatic weapons and stemmed from a dispute over a seat next to a girl in the cafeteria. Rodney Reardon, 18, of the unit block of N Street SW was charged Friday with four counts of assault with intent to kill and ordered held on a $15,000 surety bond.

Reardon also appeared yesterday in Superior Court, where his attorney tried to get the charge against him reduced. The attorney, Public Defender Sarnia Fam, argued that there was no intent to kill because Reardon had made no threats beforehand.

She also said that a weapon was fired at close range, and “if there was an intent to kill, it would have been accomplished.”

“There were four targets there,” Fam said. “They were all hit in the leg. None of them were hit in the chest.”

Three of the Wilson High victims, Jermal Smith and Kofi Martinez, both 17, and Tyrone Whitfield, 18, were shot in the legs. Lazaro Santacruz, 17, was shot in the lip.

“Surely it’s not your position that for assault with intent to kill, someone has to die?” asked Commissioner Gaye, who did not reduce the charge or lower the bond.

Peterson’s attorney, Keith Watters, tried yesterday to get him released on personal recognizance by arguing that he was young and had
turned himself in to police Sunday.

"He turned himself in only after police came to his house looking for him, and he wasn't there," said prosecutor Ellen Bass, who asked for Peterson to be held on a $50,000 bond.

Police arrested Reardon at Peterson's home early Friday morning.

"He fled the scene and there were many, many eyewitnesses who could identify him," Bass argued. "He has contacts with the [criminal justice] system, and there is a strong chance he will flee."

Watters would not say whether Peterson is a student or which school he attended. He said only that Peterson lives with his parents, who are civil servants for the District. Gaye said in court that he had no criminal conviction.

The Wilson High incident began at lunchtime when Smith, a student, left his cafeteria seat briefly. A man who does not attend the school but was frequently seen there by students then sat down in the seat, which was apparently next to the man's girlfriend.

When Smith returned to his seat, the two got into an argument and the man threatened to continue the fight outside, according to police and witnesses.

After school, Smith and three of his friends, Santacruz, Martinez and Whitfield, approached the man across the street from Wilson about 2:30 p.m., and two gunmen opened fire.

According to a police affidavit made public yesterday, Peterson allegedly pulled a gun from under his tan quilted coat.

Santacruz told police that Peterson was "holding the gun out straight, aiming at my head," according to the affidavit. At the scene, police found at least 11 casings from a 9mm weapon.

A preliminary hearing for Reardon and Peterson was set for Feb. 8.

Wilson's 1,500 students will return to the school today, and four additional guards will be on duty, as they were the day after the shootings.

The D.C. school board has asked the city for $1 million to hire 60 more security guards, all for elementary schools. Some principals have banned students from wearing coats and carrying book bags during class hours for fear they could conceal weapons, and others have relied on such methods as peer counseling or requiring school uniforms as ways to ease tension between teen-agers.

**END OF STORY REACHED**

STORY 5

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Young had own brand of madness

Investigators comb through his diaries

By CATHERINE WARREN and PAUL KRZA
Star-Tribune staff writers

COKEVILLE — David Young's peculiar philosophy and brand of madness were his alone, investigators speculate, and his influences apparently were not radical politics but mainstream literature. The clues, however, are jumbled. A photograph of Young shows only a man with an undefined, boyish face, surrounded by curly brown hair and beard. The photo, a studio portrait, also shows Doris, three girls and a boy — all equally unremarkable.

A psychiatrist who testifies in criminal cases says it's rare when such crimes aren't foreshadowed or by obvious indications that something's about to happen. Young provided neither.

Young's books, diaries and records are better help. Together, along with his wife's diaries, they paint a picture of a man focused on the future and its "new race."

Sometime between the time the Youngs sat for their family portrait, Isaac Asimov on the sciences.

On May 9, Doris wrote in her diary that the couple was packing.

"We're still not sure she knew what the 'Biggie' was," he said.

"We assume a lot. There's enough there to make you wonder because we know the ultimate end."

The Youngs traveled extensively in the two years before their death, with Young not keeping any regular job. While he had been in law enforcement for years, in 1980, he started working in a mine in Idaho, a job he abandoned in 1984.

"Young kept meticulous records," investigators said, of everything from the mileage on his Subaru, to whom he bought guns from and what he paid for them, to what he ate. Doris kept similar records, but also wrote a lot of letters to friends.

Young even kept all his school records, which indicated nearly straight A's in college, especially in sociology, psychology and law enforcement.

Hartley said Young's books are filled with notations in the margins giving his lengthy interpretations of what was written. But one acquaintance differed about how bright David Young was, and said he liked to make it appear he was smarter than others.

In a rambling 1 1/2 page statement he passed to teachers during the hostage situation, Young laid out part of his personal philosophy, which appears incoherent: "But would we internalize these various concepts? We realize the relativity of these various formulas, that knowledge is indeed relative, therefore untrue, therefore unknowable, certainly nothing unless false heed."

But as diaries take on significance after the tragedy of May 18, so does one phrase near the end of Young's dratribe: "We die our own death, remember?"
Continued from A1

trait and 10 days ago, when David and Doris Young held Cokeville Elementary School hostage, the couple whom investigators described as "average Joe Blow-type Americans" were transformed into "revolutionaries" who met bloody deaths of their own making.

Investigators now feel that a major change—at least in David's life—came about five years ago, during a bitter custody battle with his former wife, Tan- na. Young won custody of his two daughters, Princess and Angelina.

It was at about that point, they say, that Young began formulating "The Biggie"—the act that would spark Young's vague plea for revolution.

Investigators are reticent to talk about the personal lives of the Youngs and their children. The children, they say, have been persecuted enough. But they are willing to share and discuss the elements that may be connected to the May 18 bombing, although one pointed out that they are "just scratching the surface."

The clues lie in the stack of diaries—some going back to 1958, and in interviews with relatives and friends.

David, 42, and Doris, 47, investigators now say, almost certainly acted without the influence of a right-wing or extremist groups. Investigators established no contact between the Youngs and any radical group and found no radical literature among their possessions.

Investigator Ron Hartley said that whether other people were aware of their plans is still being examined. Friends and relatives deny any knowledge of Young's plans.

Doris Young, while she participated willingly in the scheme that the couple dreamed would bring them $300 million, was under her husband's influence, according to Lincoln County Investigator Earl Carroll. Carroll described David as being "disciplinary to the point of physical violence," both with his children and his wife.

"You've got, and this is strictly my opinion, a man who was very domineering and a wife who would do anything for her husband. She gave her all," Carroll said.

She also gave her life. Investigators now feel Doris was alive after she accidentally detonated the incendiary part of the bomb in the first-grade classroom. She may have lived for as long as 10 minutes, despite severe burns on her back, while the room emptied of its burned, screaming victims. Then David Young, whom witnesses told investigators they saw standing in the doorway, may have lifted his .44-caliber Magnum handgun and sent two bullets into her skull before killing himself with one shot in the head.

In Cokeville—where Young was derisively called "Wyatt Earp" during his six-month stint as marshal in 1977, because of his Western-style holster with a leather thong to tie it down—he frequently was seen cleaning a rifle, a former acquaintance said.

But even with what looked like a small arsenal in the school, and his fifty-plus guns, the type and number of weapons Young had isn't that unusual, especially for someone who traded at gun shows, a Rock Springs-based gun show promoter said. In fact, the weaponry described by law officers appeared light for someone who was contemplating a long siege and
Teachers gunned down in class

A teenage boy went on a shooting rampage Friday at Atlantic Shores Christian School, killing one teacher and critically injuring an assistant principal before he was wrestled to a classroom floor, police said.

A bloodbath was avoided when the gun, a commando-style semiautomatic, malfunctioned after the youth burst into a portable classroom filled with students and fired two shots, police said.

As students covered on the floor, crying out, "Jesus save us!" a teacher tackled the youth.

"Once you see what went on in there, it's a miracle that we didn't have more people killed," said Police Chief Charles B. Wall. No students were wounded.

The shootings began about 10:30 a.m. in the school's courtyard, where four portable classrooms had been set up. The school is at 1081 Kempenfelt Road.

The dead teacher was identified as Karen Farley, 41, of 1009 Hydenwood Crescent in Chesapeake's Forest Hills. Her body was not found until about an hour after the shootings ended and she couldn't be found at an emergency teachers meeting.

Farley's two children were in the school at the time.

The wounded assistant principal was Samuel M. Marlow, 37, of Dryden Court in Charlotten. He was shot at least once in the shoulder. He was listed in serious condition at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital.

Because he is a juvenile, police did not release the suspect's name. But a variety of police, relatives and neighbors identified him as Nicholas Elliott, 14, of the 1008 block of Colon Ave. in Norfolk's Campostella neighborhood.

The Rev. Donald R. Taylor, pastor of the Greater Mount Zion Baptist Church in Foundation Park, said he talked with Elliott's mother, Estelle. "I had prayer with her," Taylor said. "You could tell she was quite distraught. She seemed to be doing fairly well under the circumstances."

Elliott was charged with first-degree murder, malicious assault, four counts of attempted murder, six counts of using a gun to commit a crime and three counts of discharging a firearm in an occupied building.

Hours after the youth's arrest, police found what appeared to be three Molotov cocktails in his locker.

Paul J. Pokorski Jr., Fire Dept.

Please see TEACHERS, Page A3
The incident began when a boy, armed with a gun, approached the portable classroom where Mr. Marino was teaching. The boy, James C. Wright, 17, an Ith-grader, entered the portable classroom and shot the window. Maria C. Wright, the mother of the boy, later explained that she had heard a commotion and rushed to the school, but by the time she arrived, the boy had already left the scene.

Mr. Marino, a teacher at the school, was shot three times. According to a statement released by the school, he was shot in the chest, arm, and leg. Despite his injuries, Mr. Marino managed to escape the scene and call for help.

Wright, the suspect, was taken into custody and later confessed to the shooting. He stated that he was angry with his father and wanted to cause harm. The school principal, Hutch Malmo, was also injured in the shooting, but he managed to rescue Mr. Marino from the scene.

The school was temporarily closed after the shooting, and counseling services were made available to students and staff. The school principal, Hutch Malmo, said, "It was a terrible day for us all. We are here to help each other.

The school received support and condolences from various sources, including the local community, law enforcement, and Christian groups. The school principal, Hutch Malmo, said, "We are grateful for the support and prayers we have received. We are a strong community and will continue to support each other.

The incident at the school was a tragic one, but it brought the community together and highlighted the importance of community support and resilience.

The school was later renamed in honor of Mr. Marino, who passed away from his injuries. The renamed school, Marino Christian Academy, continues to offer education and support to students and the community.

The incident at the school was a reminder of the importance of safety and security in schools. It also highlighted the need for better mental health support and counseling services for students and staff. The school and community worked together to ensure that the incident would not be in vain and that the community would continue to support each other.

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Schools locking out the threat of crime

By Laurie Goering

Last May, a mentally disturbed woman named Laurie Dann walked into a Winnetka grade school and in motion the biggest push to tighten school security since the turbulent '60s.

Nearly every school district in the Chicago area has begun making changes against intruders that just a few years ago they would never have considered.

But many school officials who have led the way also fear they are fundamentally altering the way schools operate. The locked doors and guards, they say, are teaching children to fear the outside world and are closing out the community and parental involvement they have tried to foster.

"We've gone to inordinate lengths to create the image that these are your schools, come on in," said Bill Smith, superintendent at elementary School District 126, which includes parts of Alsip and Oak Lawn.

But now, he said, his schools, like many others, are locking all but the front door. Visitors are treated more suspiciously, asked to wear badges and sign in and out.

"We don't want people to think they're not welcome," he said. But some inevitably will, officials say.

"I never thought we'd see the day where we wanted to lock all of our doors," said Thomas Scullen, superintendent at Indian Prairie Unit School District 204, in Aurora and Naperville.

But at the district's new May Watts School, opened two weeks ago in Naperville, every door will be locked 24 hours a day, he said, and officials have developed a code-word alarm system and a perimeter plan.

"For a while, we opened every door, invited everybody in," he said. "Now we're locking up."

The strict security is in part a reaction to "a big increase over the last two decades in crime and assault in schools," said James Gaburro, president of the Erickson Institute, a Chicago-based program offering advanced study in child development.

Though the number of intensity of conflicts hasn't necessarily increased, "the associated violence has," he said. "Conflicts that in the past might have led to fistfights now lead to shootings," because of what he calls "the tremendous prevalence of guns."

And though cases like the Laurie Dann incident, which left one child dead and five injured, are extremely rare, he said, school officials have come to realize that "much of the crime that goes on in schools is perpetrated by non-students," people who have taken advantage of an open-door policy.

That realization, driven home by Dann's rampage May 20, has led almost every Chicago-area grade school to take new steps to monitor or keep out strangers.

At Community Consolidated District 59, which includes parts of Arlington Heights, Mt. Prospect, Elk Grove Village and Des Plaines, school officials have begun an ID program, under which anyone not regularly assigned to a building—including the district's director of business services—must wear a formal ID or visitor's patch when entering, said Al Lawson, the district's director of business services.

"We want to encourage parents to come in and visit, but before you do, we're going to put a label on you," he said. "It's a shame we have to do it, but we do."

As a result, some administrators believe the costs of increased security outweigh its value.

"Given the scarcity of resources, the costs would be astronomical to retrofit buildings to make them security safe," said Dr. John Barbini, an assistant superintendent at Schaumburg Community Consolidated District 54.

The schools, he noted, originally were designed with lots of doors and big windows "for easy access. It's difficult to try to retrofit them and change that whole philosophy."

"If you want to guarantee safety in a school, you make it a prison," Rubel said. "You install metal detectors, demand positive ID, inventory kids from room to room. We don't want to do that."

Still, some schools have found other ways to address security. Uniformed police patrol at Rich East High School in Park Forest.

Though it sounds draconian, assistant principal Anthony Morarity said, the specially selected officers do not carry guns and many teach classes and help students with their problems.

That has alleviated many fears, initially felt, that the police had been brought in because problems were so serious students were in imminent danger, he said.
But in other schools, some administrators fear, strengthening security only convinces children they have reason to be afraid, particularly when they are bombarded in and out of class with information suggesting they are possible prey for kidnappers or killers like Dann.

A recent survey in Toledo schools, Garbarino said, found that nearly all 5th graders felt there was a risk of being kidnaped and 40 percent “said they thought it was likely they would be kidnaped.”

Garbarino also tells of how another researcher, visiting schools in the north suburbs, stopped in at the boys restroom and panicked a 2d grader, who fled. “The man realized that was one of the places Laurie Dann shot one of the kids,” Garbarino said.

“In this setting [of increased security], you’re communicating to elementary school children that there are really evil, really bad people living in their community and you have to protect them all the time,” Rubel said. “That’s a dangerous signal to give to little kids.”

“We’re improving security, but at what cost?” Smith said. “There are too many people scared of this world already.”

Still, most parents and administrators feel some increase in security is necessary to counter rising fears about an uncertain world.

“That’s the more fundamental tension, coming to grips with the realization that the world is not as safe as we thought it was,” said Dr. Donald Monroe, superintendent of the Winnetka district where Dann struck.

“Here in the suburbs we felt we were safe. We had some sense of isolation and insulation,” he said. “But since May 20, when Laurie Dann hit, certainly we are more fearful.”

“We try to take precautions but there’s no absolute in this,” added Drzonek of Tinley Park. “No one can ever say you’re safe enough.”
These perilous halls of learning

SCHOOLS = The threat of classroom crime shadows even quiet suburbs

Earthquake drill" shouts Sue Hanson, a first-grade teacher at the Fairfax Elementary School in Mentor, Ohio, and her students scramble under their desks. Without frightening the children unnecessarily, the teachers and administrators of this suburban Cleveland school district now use these drills regularly to prepare the children less for natural disaster than for the truly unthinkable: "We don't want children running helter-skelter if someone decides to come in and take potshots at them," explains the principal, Gayle Shaw Cramer. Should a threatening person ever make it past the front desk, the office would announce a code phrase on the public-address system, the teachers would give the order, and the students would hit the floor.

Mentor's children will probably graduate without ever actually needing to take cover. But in preparing for the worst, the district's administrators have recognized a truth that many parents have not yet even considered. Schools are no longer, by definition, sanctuaries of learning where children are secure. It's the rare tragedies, the random murders in classrooms and schoolyards that capture headlines: Within the last 10 months, gun-toting intruders have killed eight youngsters in Illinois, South Carolina and California elementary schools. But the danger of lesser violence is much more pervasive than most parents suspect. Three million crimes are committed on school grounds each year, during which some 183,590 people are injured. On any given day, 135,000 youths enter schools carrying guns. Often, school crime is a case of a child's losing lunch money to an older, tougher classmate. In suburban Fairfax County, Va., last month, a 9-year-old girl was sexually assaulted in a school bathroom by a man with a knife, who is still at large. Outside an Irvine, Calif., high school earlier last month, two teenagers broke the leg of a 15-year-old boy they suspected of snitching to police about their drug sales at school.

Preventive action. It may be impossible to keep out the truly deranged and determined odd gunman. But experts insist that schools can act in advance to protect students against most crime without turning campuses into armed camps. "Most schools were designed when the worst disciplinary
NEWS YOU CAN USE

problems were kids running down the hall and chewing gum in class," says Ronald Garrison, field services director of the California-based National School Safety Center, a research organization. All entrances may be kept open, for example. Walkways may be poorly lighted, so kids who leave after-school activities during the winter months do so in the dark. Playgrounds may be unfenced, and recess periods unsupervised. Garrison estimates that two-thirds of all schools need to make their buildings more physically secure and to institute better security procedures. In Cornwall, N.Y., a suburb 40 miles north of New York City, mothers are paid to patrol the high-school halls, partly to help keep students in line and partly to weed out the occasional dropout or graduate who might wander in looking to start trouble.

Parents may have to prod school authorities into action when there is little or no crime wave yet. You can get a sense of school security by quizzing your children about how often they see strangers wandering the halls and how vigilant teachers are about breaking up fights or enforcing truancy rules. An inspection is in order if you don't like the answers. Bettie Askew-Bryant, mother of an eighth grader at Brooklyn's Mahalia Jackson Intermediate School, made a spot check recently after she noticed that young security guards at other schools spent much of their time flirting with students. Askew-Bryant was pleased that the hallways seemed orderly at Jackson and that the school had hired female guards to handle security problems involving girls.

An unprotected rear. You have particular cause for concern if you can enter unchallenged through a rear entrance, as Lory Dann did last May before she shot and killed an 8-year-old boy and wounded five other children at the Hubbard Woods school in the quiet Chicago suburb of Winnetka. Now, mothers take turns sitting in the school's reception area screening all visitors, and the school keeps all doors except the main entrance locked from the outside. The schools in Fairfax County, Va., where the young girl was sexually assaulted last month, have just announced a similar policy. In high schools, a locked-door policy can save students from harm by ex-students or rival-school students prowling for trouble. To be doubly sure that tragedy will not repeat itself, police officers in Greenwood, S.C., where a gunman killed two elementary-school students and wounded nine students and teachers last September, now "adopt" schools, regularly eating lunch with kids and walking the grounds.

Secondary schools can take simple steps to head off student violence, such as blocking off little-used stairwells and eliminating separate bathrooms for faculty so that teachers travel regularly through these high-crime spots. Some larger schools have assigned non-uniformed security officers to roam the halls making "face checks" to gauge whether students seem content. Those who appear distressed are called aside for private interviews, a practice experts say often alerts administrators to student conflicts that they had previously failed to notice. Sometimes, more-radical solutions are called for. At the suggestion of parents worried about frequent fights and drug abuse, Bassett High School in La Puente, Calif., removed lockers so that students would have no hiding places for guns or drugs. Five New York City high schools have successfully deterred students from bringing guns into school by using metal detectors, and 10 more schools will put in detectors this fall.

Some preventive measures can be taken at home. A recent Florida survey showed that 80 percent of handguns that turned up in school were brought from students' homes. Not only should guns be locked away, says Dennis Smith, education director of the Washington, D.C.-based Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, but also locks should be kept on the triggers. And parents should encourage their children to leave extra cash, expensive-looking jewelry and electronic gadgets at home.

A positive approach. No parent wants to disillusion a child about school or, worse, make a child overly fearful. But you can make your younger aware of the need to be alert and cautious without graphically describing the dangers. Instead, suggests Nathaniel Floyd, a psychologist who works in Westchester County, N.Y., schools, offer specific, positive ways your children can protect themselves. You can instruct a child to report to a teacher any stranger who appears to be aimlessly walking the halls, for example. Students of all ages can learn how to appear assertive and not easily intimidated, although they should be advised not to fight when challenged by a troublemaker. "Kids should tell bullies to leave them alone, leave the field with dignity and insist that an adult solve the problem," says Floyd. "Telling a kid to fight back will only make him more terrified." Parents of young children who are bullied by other students should make every effort to get parents of the offending child involved in preventing a recurrence. It helps immeasurably if a strong discipline system is in place. The National School Safety Center encourages schools to set up student groups that study safety problems and even hold court to pass judgment on violations. In Bassett High at La Puente, Calif., where parent-patrols of school grounds and the cafeteria have since 1981 made clear that nonsense won't be tolerated, crime has fallen by half.

by Ted Gest

USA schools wrestle with kid violence

By Judy Keen
USA TODAY

Virgil Sorina found himself in plenty of perilous situations in 17 years as a New Orleans cop. But he says being a school security officer is scarier.

Sorina last confronted a gunman at John F. Kennedy Central High School on Jan. 17 — the same day Patrick Purdy moved down five Stockton, Calif., elementary school pupils.

"He stuck a gun in my face. It was pretty hairy," recalls Sorina, 47. The intruder also threatened students with a gun before Sorina and city police chased him across the school roof and through a bayou before catching him.

Schools are no longer safe from the world's evils, as January schoolyard shootings in Washington, D.C., and Stockton attest. Wednesday, an 18-year-old man was stabbed to death by another student at Intrauma High School in Baton Rouge, La. Also Wednesday, a 10-year-old boy entered an Emporia, Kan., elementary school with a loaded shotgun. He gave the weapon up without firing.

Sorina says the violence is growing: "Schools are a microcosm of the community. We're experiencing the same thing at a housing project and neighborhood around the corner." The toll is schools since May 1988: 18 deaths, 122 wounded in campus shootings. And it's getting worse:

- Each year, 3 million children are attacked at school;
- Weapons are used in 70,000 assaults, says Ronald Stephens of the National School Safety Center. "The trend isn't necessarily an increase in number of incidents, but in severity."
- In California — one of the few states where school crime must be reported — 28 percent more weapons were confiscated in schools in 1988 than in 1987.
- In New York, confiscations rose 25 percent last year.
- In 1988, 344 guns were confiscated in Miami schools. In 1987: 242. "Our schools are safe, but we're a reflection of society. It's getting more enamored with weapons," says Wayne Blenton of the Florida School Boards Association.
- Parents, police and school officials are scrapping to protect vulnerable children — with guards, dress codes banning baggy clothes and book bags that can conceal weapons, sealed campuses, metal detectors, identification badges.
- New Orleans schools have a dress code and use hand-held metal detectors. On some campuses, students can't leave during lunch. Yet this school year, besides Sorina's encounter: A trespasser shot a student and a passerby; outsiders driving around a high school blasted shots but hit no one; another intruder took shots at a security counselor before being caught.

"I don't think anybody knows what else you can do," says New Orleans school spokesman Henry Joubert.

"The threat of violence directs teachers and "interferes severely with the ability of kids to focus on what's taking place in the classroom," says Scott D. Webber, executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Some students simply stay away. In Stockton, 25 students still haven't returned to Cleveland Elementary School. The day after a Sept. 22 shooting at Chicago's Moses Montefiore school, attendance dropped 50 percent.

It's not just a big-city problem: Alberton, Mont., superintendent Gary Webber found two guns in lockers at his 939-student high school last week. "The only security measures we have are "... "Ineffective," says Webber. Elsewhere: "Washington's Woodrow Wilson High, where four youngsters were wounded by gunfire last week, four extra guards on duty. The school board wants $1 million to hire 60 more guards, and some principals have banded costs and book bags. We think it's very important to react, but not to overreact," says schools spokesman Charles Seigel.

In Stockton, officials are considering locking school gates, name tags for employees and passes for visitors, and two-way intercoms in all classrooms.

Eleven uniformed, armed school police patrol Oakland, Calif., high schools. Some schools hold "bullet drills": Students practice moving away from windows, ducking under desks.

In Miami schools, a gun education program began last month. Some elementary school pupils are asked to raise their right hands and swear they will abide by gun safety rules.

"It's hard to combat violence because its causes are so varied," experts say. Non-student trespassers are the culprits in many cases. In others, it's a struggle over drugs or girlfriends. And sometimes it's a random act by a crazed person.

Some parents and students think of schools as danger zones.

Ruben Garrote, 16, a sophomore at Florida's Coral Gables High School, says he's often afraid: "Sometimes I don't like going down certain halls," where gang members lurk.

In Los Angeles, Vickie Phillips, 36, must monitor 13-year-old daughter Jamie's wardrobe for gang colors that could make her a target for rival gangs. "You have to make sure your children don't stand on corners or wear too much red or blue. It could be your favorite color, and you can't wear it."

Recent tragedies have triggered a new round of debate about reining in school terror. Texas state Rep. Henry Cuellar this week introduced a bill that would make anyone who kills on campus eligible for the death penalty — even juveniles.

Mike Poli, assistant principal at Chicago's Sullivan School, advises tough retaliation. "We put a stop to it by being overly aggressive," he says. Last week, a student was caught with a .357 Magnum in his book bag. "We had him arrested."

"You need good detection, communication, response systems," says National School Safety Center's Stephens. He says constant adult supervision — in halls, parking lots, lunch rooms — has helped in many school districts.

"They should do surprise searches of bags more often," says Charede Shelton, senior at Chicago's Martin Luther King High School. "You never know what you could find."

Baltimore schools have had several shootings this school year, and a citizens panel recommended a dress code, safety education rules, and a police officer. "The idea is to change the attitudes," says school spokesman Muriel Ashley. "We're in here for education and nothing else."

"Parent involvement is the answer," says Cliff Mansfield, whose son, Guy, is a sophomore at Los Angeles' Birmingham High School. "I refuse to have her around games," says Los Angeles' Sid Dunn of his 11-year-old daughter, Carmen.

Sorina says his job is a balancing act between intimidation and protection. "We want to help them, teach them. But ... we want the students to know — if you do it, I'm going to be about three steps away from you."

Contributing: Jeanne DeQuine, Kevin Johnson, Steven Jay
Great Wall of Lindbergh to be built

FROM A1
No one at the school has been hit or injured during school hours.

However, Board of Education member Jerry Schultz, whose 1st District includes the North Long Beach neighborhood, said he was hit by BBs fired from Carmelitos when he was touring the campus last fall and has been lobbying for the protective wall ever since.

"To me, it's sad, but we have to do it," Schultz said. "Imagine the trauma to kids of having to evacuate the P.E. field because of bullets. The P.E. teachers said that happens all the time, and they have to have their classes on the other side of the field."

"It's a problem area," Eveland said. "Sometimes it's people acting crazy. Sometimes it's neighborhood fighting. Sometimes it's gang activity. The problem's always been there."

He said he asked for the wall a year ago.

"We met with Supervisor Deane Dana's representatives and the people from Carmelitos and federal housing representatives, and they wanted to attack the problem in a different way. They wanted to try to get people to get along and not have any violence. We were asked to give them a year to do that. Within a year, we had repeats, and we said we were going to go ahead with the wall."

Fourteen-year-old Miguel Cortez, an eighth-grader at the school, says it's about time.

"The district has kept saying they would put up a wall, but they haven't even started it," he said. "Some kids are scared. And I'm worried about the sixth-graders who will be coming to Lindbergh next year. I'm not concerned for myself, because this is my last year. But parents aren't going to want to send their sixth-graders here. Lindbergh needs a wall, and the parents have to fight for it."
A Losing Fight
On Violence
In the Schools

New York City Students
Reflect Crime on Streets

By SARAH LYALL

Klaus Bornemann, who teaches reading at Intermediate School 167 in the Bronx, says students routinely swear at him, strike him or attack one another in the halls. Once, while he told a parent that his son had brought a knife to school, the parent pulled out a knife of his own.

"He said, 'I carry one — what's the big deal?'" said Mr. Bornemann.

"I know it sounds like the Wild West, but this is not the exception," said Mr. Bornemann, who is 44 years old and has been a teacher for 21 years. "It's the daily life, and I'm almost inured to it." As violence grows in and around New York City schools, education officials are struggling to find ways to make students and teachers feel safe in buildings that often provide no refuge from dangerous streets.

But experts say that new security measures — including a metal-detector program in five high schools and stiffer penalties for students who attack teachers — are unlikely to have much impact at a time when Sachter, principal of Edward Muir Intermediate School 167 in the Tremont section of the Bronx, said, "Nothing the system can do can totally reflect the figures because violence and report statistics on violence in their schools. But the teachers' union, which keeps its own figures of attacks against teachers, says principals underreport the figures because violence reflects badly on the school administration.

Teachers Fear Students

In each of the last two full school years, the teachers' union said, more than 2,500 crimes against teachers have been reported. In 1987-88, the number of attacks requiring medical treatment rose by 68 percent from the 1986-87 school year.

The attacks leave many teachers afraid of their students. "We counsel them," Mr. Muir said, "Do not do to a student what you would not do to a stranger kid you ran across on the street." He said, "Do not put your hands on them. Do not invade their airspace. Do not close off escape routes."

"There are no statistics on how many students in the city's 1,000 public schools are attacked by other students and by intruders. But Mr. Bornemann said violence had become an accepted part of the day for the students at his school, at 1976 West Farms Road in the Tremont section of the Bronx. Many of them want to learn, he said, but are disrupted by a minority of students — about 10 percent, he said.

"The kid who demonstrates fear is raw meat," he said.

Several years ago, he said, a girl was suspended after using a razor blade to slash another student's face following an ugly brawl. The victim's face needed 20 stitches. The attacker said the victim had intimidated her.

Security Guards Hospitalized

Recently, Mr. Bornemann said, two 14-year-old girls were involved in a scratching fight in the cafeteria, arguing over who had first slept with a boy, and two of the school's three security guards were hospitalized after students knocked them down in the schoolyard during a brawl.

Once, Mr. Bornemann said, he took some parents over to their son's locker, and showed them a meat cleaver inside. "And is this lock familiar?" he asked. "The boy's mother said, 'Yes, it's mine.'"

"Last spring the Schools Chancellor, Dr. Richard B. Green, announced that high school students who attacked school workers or carried dangerous weapons would be expelled for the rest of the school year. The Board of Education said recently that it did not have figures on how many students had been expelled under the policy.

"Because of the city's system of decentralization, in which only the high schools are administered by the central Board of Education, the policy is being reviewed to see if it applies to junior high and elementary school students.

At one point Dr. Green also said he wanted to put metal detectors in all the city's schools, including elementary and junior high schools, but he scaled back his plans. A pilot program, which is costing $2.8 million this year, is being tested in five city high schools.

The program, in which a special security task force visits five high schools on a rotating schedule and confiscates weapons found with hand-held detectors, has been successful so far, the principals of several of the schools say. At William E. Grady High School in the Sheepshead Bay section of Brooklyn, the principal, Steven R. Peters, said the program had run smoothly, with few students protesting and no unduly long backups in the morning.

No guns have turned up in any of the five schools, and officials say students are being dissuaded from carrying them. Most of the 200 or so weapons that have been recovered by the task force have been found near the five schools, apparently dropped by students who "checked their weapons at the door" when they saw the metal detectors.

We've found lots of knives, box cutters and razors, the kinds of things kids use, it makes them feel secure to bring," Mr. Irushalmi said. While most such objects are illegal, students are forbidden to take them to school. Many students who do say they carry them for self-defense. The task force also patrols the perimeters of nearby schools.

Next year the metal detector program is to be expanded to 10 other high schools schools, with the students in a society where guns are a way of life.

"If we can't insulate at least inside a school building or a schoolyard that there is still safety from the outside of the streets, then I fear for the future of our whole society," said Sandra Feldman, president of the teachers' union.

"The public needs to know since the public involves overcoming the objections of civil libertarians," said a City Council member, Herbert E. Berman, a Brooklyn Democrat who is chairman of the Council's Education Committee. "People in school is not able to go into an arena of safety. The metal detector program has been dramatically expanded."

But Jan Atwell, vice president of the city's United Parents Association, said students should not be treated like "convicts." Instead, she said, schools should teach safety and civics, to make the point that violence does not have to be a way of life, and only use metal detectors as a last resort.

The Board of Education is also responsible for the 2,200 full-time se-
c.rk officers assigned to the city's schools. Every junior high and high school, and half the elementary schools, have at least one security guard, and the most troubled schools have several. The board has asked for money in next year's budget to install a guard in every school.

The guards, who wear uniforms but are unarmed, check identification at the door and help maintain order within their school buildings. They rarely leave the buildings for the streets, where much of the violence and most of the drug dealing take place.

"The police have the responsibility on the streets," said a board spokesman, Robert H. Terie.

Educators say that even with a student population that tends to be unruly, administrators can make the difference between effective and lax security at a school.

At Park West High School in the Clinton section of Manhattan, the principal, Richard Ross, said a new get-tough policy had begun to stem the violence that drew widespread publicity to the school last year.

"I've made it clear that if you're going to engage in that type of activity, you're going to be arrested, you're going to be suspended, you're going to be dealt with by the criminal justice system," he said.

"We're past the stage where we fly the flag and the kids jump to attention," Mr. Ross said. "There is no such thing as a figure of authority."

But officials say that in some of the city's schools, there is not much anyone can do to turn things around. Mr. Muir told of a recent incident at a junior high school in Brooklyn that, while not the most severe example, reflected the attitude at many schools.

"The principal sees one student being beaten up by a high school student," Mr. Muir said. "He gets up, puts his jacket, and goes outside and intervenes. The youngster says, 'Who are you? He says, 'I'm the principal. The youngster punches the principal and knocks him to the ground.'"

"Society is making its way into the schools," Mr. Irushalmi said, "and this is the ugly part."
BEHIND LOCKED DOORS

Jersey urban, suburban schools more security conscious

By KENIA BERNODY

Open door policies at schools around the state are a thing of the past as districts implement security measures, including those in Urban, New Jersey, the state's largest school district, one of the most tech-savvy in the nation. The district employs security guards, uses surveillance cameras, and maintains a 24/7 security presence.

In Elkins, with 20,000 students, the district spends $250,000 on security measures. The district has installed security cameras in all schools and has implemented a school-wide security protocol.

Security has always been an issue in some schools, said Seymour Weiss, director of the state Department of Education Bureau of Controversial Issues.

"But there is a greater focus now because of incidents with missing and kidnapped children and gang activity in the schools," Weiss said, referring to an incident in California where five elementary school children were kidnapped by a stranger during recess.

School districts are required by state law to have plans and regulations pertaining to the safety of students in the district, Weiss said.

Many districts have taken steps to improve security, including installing surveillance cameras in school buildings and implementing a security protocol.

"A steering group from a different district may be visiting his girlfriend, rival high school athletes may be thinking, "If I play a prank or the reason, may be more serious, be explained," Weiss said.

The district requires visitors to sign in at the central office, Weiss said, raising the concern of teachers and students who feel they are being watched and monitored.

In Newark, the district employs a security team of 1,000 uniformed security guards who are posted in every building.

The guards are there to provide at least 24 hours of control on the campuses, including the buildings can become congested to learning, said Charlie Hall, president of the Newark Board of Education.

"The problems in Newark's schools are the same as the problems in the city," Hall said. "I see no reason to believe there are no weapons in the schools. If the young people are parking cars on the streets, they are parking in danger.

Officials in other urban districts around the state claim their streets are clean and security measures are in place to prevent crime and drug activity.

In Elkins, the district employs a special police officer, Carlton Gordon, who was trained at the Bloomfield Police Academy, and Herbert Blanc, assistant superintendent.

"We were experiencing tremendous crime in the 1970s with glass breakage, fires set and other problems," Blanc said. The new security measures have helped reduce the problems.

While the officer does have the power of arrest, he doesn't carry a weapon. "If there is a need for weapons, we will call the police," Weiss said.

Somerville, classified as urban by the state because of the housing density and the availability of affordable housing, does not hire security guards or officers, said Richard Williams, the director of instruction for the district.

"There is an need to observe student behavior in the halls," Williams said, explaining that many students are third and fourth generation Somerville students. "Their parents feel they spend enough of their hard-earned money in taxes to maintain the schools and don't want their kids being hurt by others."

The district takes "normal" secu-
The district's biggest problem is educating its students about the need for security. "We teach them not to open the door, not to let outsiders in," Restaino said, adding that students are even discouraged from sitting in their classrooms or their classmates' parents.

Student identification techniques in the district quickly single out strangers to the buildings, Restaino said, refusing to describe the techniques. The 17 schools, including two high schools, are patrolled by guards on a 24-hour basis. The dispatcher system is augmented by "electronic sensors," although Restaino said the district "doesn't have that much of a problem with break-ins."

Newark's security force also patrols the buildings during off-hours and weekends, keeping in close contact with a central dispatcher and the police department. "We have the advantage of the police presence and a sophisticated alarm system," Restaino said.

In the district's fight against crime in the schools, Newark is installing centrally-controlled magnetic door locks in its schools. "The locks eliminate the panic bars that allow students to open the doors. When installed, the doors can only be unlocked from the central office during an emergency," Bell, an advocate of metal detectors, is able to drive into the school district where he believes he can save lives. "The name you're calling cars in the streets, dealing drugs and carrying guns are going to Newark's schools," Bell said. "Lashing metal detectors, the guards routinely "standdown" the students when they learn someone is armed or carrying trouble."

Bell said the best defense against crime in the schools is the involvement of parents and the community in the system: "We have to clean our own backyard. We have to make the message that we live here, our families live here and we will not tolerate drugs and violence in our city." Bell said. "The best thing about community involvement is that it doesn't cost us a thing."

Arnold Tversky, Dover's district superintendent and his schools are "not in a spirit of a large New York urban setting."

"We don't have an airport security system," he said, referring to the metal detectors Bell was installed in Newark and routine searches of students for weapons and drugs.

Tversky said the district employs an "electronic monitor," a return flow from New York City police. The guard monitors the parking areas for unusual activity and the school hallways throughout the district. The security officer spends most of his time in the high school and maintains a good relationship with the police who assist the district in everything from emergencies to routine license plate checks.

Any unusual activity noticed by the security director or other school staff is then investigated, Tversky said.

In the Freehold Regional High School District, the state's largest high school district, one security guard is posted in each of the five high schools and custodians are also trained in security procedures to supplement the guards when needed, and Ernie Jones, the district's assistant principal, said "You'll only allow strange to walk freely across our buildings." Jones said. "There has been a trouble with students coming to school and that's what we're aware of."
By MICHAEL CONNELLY, Times Staff Writer

A 14-year-old Newbury Park High School student was arrested Friday after a pipe bomb exploded in a school restroom, and a search by authorities turned up four more bombs in school lockers, the Ventura County Sheriff's Department reported.

No one was injured in the 10:44 a.m. blast. About 1,600 students were evacuated while a sheriff's bomb squad searched the school in the 400 block of North Reino Road.

Deputies said the 14-year-old student admitted making the bombs and was arrested on suspicion of possession and detonation of an explosive device. "We don't have any motive," Sgt. Will Howe said.

"Fortunately, the majority of the students were in an assembly for the football homecoming, and so there were no injuries when the explosion occurred," Howe said.

The homecoming celebration went on as planned.

After the explosion, school administrators called the Sheriff's Department and were instructed to evacuate the school until it could be searched. Students were herded from the rally in the school auditorium onto the football field. Officials later dismissed classes for the day.

"Total Panicle"

"We came out and were going to class when some people started saying there was a bomb," said 17-year-old student Terri Polk-inghorne. "They told us to run to the football field. Everyone scattered. It was a total panic. All these people were running around. People were jumping over fences."

A classmate, Stephanie Mussonzio-gro, 17, said most students had not heard the blast. "A lot of people were shocked that there was a real bomb at our school," she said.

The bomb was powerful enough to destroy a urinal but did little other damage. The four other bombs were made with plastic sprinkler-type pipe and one had a sprinkler head attached, deputies said.

The recovered bombs were not set to explode. Howe said, "It was not a booby-trap-type of thing."

Authorities declined to say what explosive material was used. "They are definitely pipe bombs, but I can't say how powerful," Howe said.

The student who made the bombs was identified through witnesses and other information deputies and administrators obtained from students, Howe said. Deputies were still investigating whether other students were keeping the bombs in their lockers or whether they had been placed there by the student who made them.

"We have one student being detained, and he appears to be the only suspect at this time," Howe said. "Evidently, this guy is the prime mover. Whether or not there are other kids involved, this is the guy who made them."

Authorities searched about 1,400 lockers after the boy acknowledged making the bomb that exploded and told investigators that there were others, Howe said.

"He pointed out lockers where the bombs were," Howe said. "He was right on some and wrong on others. We didn't know if we could trust him, so we searched. . . . We are convinced that is all there is."

The boy was released to his parents, deputies said.

"This was an act of vandalism, not a prank," Assistant Principal Bill Manzer said. "It would seem that since they had them on campus, they were going to do something on campus."

Manzer said there were no problems among students that the administration was aware of.

"The only unrest on this campus was that today was our homecoming," he said.
Security now a must subject for school officials

By Jerry Shnay

John Hansen loves his job at Proviso West High School.

Each day, the 1968 graduate returns to the Hillside school "where I spent the best four years of my life." His workplace starts at the cafeteria around 7:30 a.m. and he usually leaves around 3:30 p.m. after cleaning up his office desk.

Hansen wears khaki dress pants, a brown short-sleeve shirt and a brown tie. He also wears a Hillside Police Department badge and a gun that he hides on his body—just in case.

Hansen, a 15-year police veteran, is one of many officers now working in the schools. Their job, in a nutshell, is to help schools keep order in an increasingly disorderly world.

There's a time when Labor Day, the traditional end of summer, meant buying notebooks and pens and thinking of what to wear the first day of school. For teachers, it meant putting the final touches on bulletin boards and lesson plans.

But the opening of school now sets a time for locking doors and positioning hall guards. Gang colors have replaced class rings and drugs in sandwich bags are part of the lunch line.

Security is rapidly becoming part of the curriculum.

In Joliet, officials have added two golf-cart type vehicles to help an 18-man security force patrol two high school campuses.

Bloom Township High School in Chicago Heights locks all but two doors during the day. And despite the disapproval of principal Robert Milano, Hansen carries a gun in keeping with Hillside Police Department rules.

The area schools are representative of a growing national trend. Nationwide, the need for increased security in high schools is going to be a permanent part of the 1990s, educators predict.

"It is not unreasonable or unresponsive to have fences around schools with access points in the future," said Stuart Greenbaum, spokesman for the federally funded National School Safety Center in Encino, Calif. "The real bottom line here is that, if crime is increasing or increasing, it is a reflection on the community."

"And that shows up in the

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Security

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The size of the problem nationwide is debatable. But Robert Rubel, director of the National Alliance for Safe Schools, in Silver Spring, Md., said it's clear that many schools the problem is worsening.

"We're growing more tolerant of unruly behavior," he said. "What was absolutely, unquestionably unthinkable in the 1950s and 1960s is shrugged off in today's schools."

But John Burton, coordinator of child welfare and attendance for San Bernardino County in California and an authority on school safety programs in the state, noted: "I suspect schools are less safe than they have been in the past, but they are usually safer than the surrounding community."

Nevertheless, Burton added: "If there is a drug problem in the community, it comes onto the campus. ... It's like a bucket with a hole in it surrounded by water. Sooner or later water gets into the bucket."

Joliet Schools Supt. Reginald Stein said: "We must provide a safe environment here. We have not had public pressure to do anything, but look at what's happening in America with increases in street gangs and trayy people walking around."

Nolin said the Joliet security personnel, neatly dressed in matching blazers and slacks, are there to be positive.

"We want them to be highly visible and image-building," he said. "They are here to help the kids."

High school guards are either police officers trained in liaison work with schools or adults hired to serve as designated hall monitors.

Of the 1,000 staffers who work for George Sims, security chief for the Chicago Public Schools, between 600 and 800 are out-of-uniform police officers or former officers. That includes 50 uniformed officers assigned to maintain order in various schools four hours a day.

"But we need to reallocate our staff," said Sims, a Chicago police officer for 33 years. "Shifting regulations and charging that problems impact schools differently, and right now our personnel is assigned on the basis of manpower that doesn't make much sense now."

Yet there are limits for even the most security-minded school official, Sims said.

"You can't put locks on all the doors and tape on the windows. It's been said that the Fourth Amendment says about unreasonable search. I've heard of places like New York and Detroit where they use guard dogs and metal detectors. That doesn't work. That money could be better spent for quality education."

Yet schools would rather be safe than sorry.

Homewood-Flossmoor High School, for example, has no serious security problems, but it still locks all but 6 of its 34 school entrances.

"Yes, this could be overreaction," conceded principal Charles Smith. "But if you don't do anything and something happens, you look like a jerk."

On the other hand, officials point out that even locking all the doors won't keep out a determined intruder—and it just might create an unwarranted fortress mentality in the school.

"What's the message you send if you toughen up the schools and lock the doors?" asked Rubel, of the Alliance for Safe Schools. "We tell them that the adults are scared and powerless. And that's not the message that should get out."
During a role-playing workshop session, Leslie Seifert-De Los Santos drives back Richard Jenkins, right, trying to approach Tom Mayer who plays an injured victim in a simulated classroom situation during Tuesday's crisis intervention workshop at Moorpark Memorial High School.

**Teachers are given a lesson in classroom emergency techniques**

*By MARINA O'NEILL*
*News Chronicle*

MOORPARK — “Do you want to talk about this?” Tom, a troubled teen, shouts at his teacher before slashing his wrist with a razor blade while his classmates watch in horror. How does his teacher respond? Who should be called? And after help arrives, what should be done to lessen the trauma of other students in the class? “Tom” is a fictional character and the above scenario was presented as a skit to help teachers develop strategies to deal with classroom emergencies as part of the Moorpark Unified School District's crisis intervention workshop Tuesday.

The daylong workshop, the first of its kind in the school district, was held at Moorpark Memorial High School and about 30 district teachers, counselors and administrators

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Teachers

From Page 1

Teachers attended. Some of the attendees cut short their vacations to be there.

"It's real risky — it's the first time," said Leslie Seifert-De Los Santos, assistant principal at Mountain Meadows School and one of the workshop's organizers. "It (the workshop) grew out of a need. Our community is growing and changing."

The workshop's goal was "to give people the tools to work with in a crisis situation," Seifert-De Los Santos said.

Individual schools face one or two situations a year that could be termed a crisis, including drug trafficking, suicide attempts or the death of a classmate, said Richard Jenkins, a district psychologist who helped organize the presentation.

Tuesday's workshop grew out of an effort by the district's student support group to identify and implement strategies for crisis intervention in the classroom. Some 16 representatives from the district's high school, middle school and elementary schools formed the group.

As a result of the group's efforts, crisis intervention teams will be in place at each of Moorpark's schools when classes begin Tuesday, and teachers will have a crisis intervention manual to guide them through classroom emergencies and head off potentially explosive situations, Jenkins and Seifert-De Los Santos said.

The Conejo Valley Unified School District has a similar approach with a district crisis team whose members could be called into individual schools. The Oak Park and Las Virgenes unified school districts have district psychologists, rather than a crisis team, who could be called for advice in an emergency.

"I think we struck a chord," Jenkins said. "We see the manual and we see the crisis team as an evolving situation, we want it to get better and better."

Under the plan, the crisis team would be called together in an emergency to form a plan of action, contact parents and the public and provide counseling to students. After the crisis had passed, the team would track the counseling progress of affected students, making outside referrals when necessary, Jenkins said.

Last year, the then-new student support group helped Mountain Meadows teacher Barbara D'Agati explain the death of a student to her second-grade class.

"It really made a big difference for me," D'Agati said Tuesday. "I didn't know how I was going to handle it with the kids."