Running Head: Identified Factors of School Violence

IDENTIFIED FACTORS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE BY
PROFESSIONAL HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS

by

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A Research Paper

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ABSTRACT

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This study examined the perception of the causes of school violence by Wisconsin professional

school counselors. A questionnaire was designed by the researcher and was distributed to high

school counselors employed in Wisconsin high schools. The questionnaire asked counselors to

identify two factors of school violence, identify the high school population of their school and

provided additional space for comments. The school counselors were identified through an

existing database from the Admissions Office at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The average

high school population within this study was 303 students. Open-ended data were analyzed using

 a content analysis. Results show that school counselors perceive media (radio, television, books,

music, newspapers, and video games) to be the single most identified factor of school violence,

while the lack of parental involvement in children's lives was identified as the second

contributing factor of school violence. Finally, the section dedicated to additional comments

displayed a diverse array of contributing factors of school violence, such as: lack of anger

management skills, family violence, lack of self-esteem, lack of adult role models, as well as

further comments regarding media and lack of family involvement.

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the following individuals that assisted me in the completion of this project. First, I would like to thank Dr. Richard Tafalla for his patience and guidance on my project. Thank you for your support after I told you that I wanted to change my project from the original title. You are a great friend and teacher. I would also like to thank the School Counselors that provided their feedback throughout this project. Without them, this project would not exist. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Paul, Christopher, and Alex, for their patience and support, when I told them that I had to work on my paper rather than go out and have fun.

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CHAPTER I

Statement of the Problem

In the past few years, shockingly violent acts perpetrated by young people have figured prominently in newspaper headlines. Many cases of violence by youth have occurred in schools. Such stories have added to the general public's growing fear of a rising tide of violence among today's youth. Many experts argue that statistics on teen violence lends credence to this fear. According to James Alan Fox, a researcher in demographic criminology, while the rate of murders committed by adults over age twenty-four fell ten percent from 1990 to 1993, the rate among young adults (ages eighteen to twenty-four) rose fourteen percent and the rate for teenagers jumped twenty six percent (Davidson, 1993).

School counselors employed in the education field share the common goal of working towards successfully educating and assisting school children in the daily survival of an average school day. There are a large number of professional school counselors involved in the education field, each counselor serving their own different roles comprised of various responsibilities. In order that counselors maintain this educational goal, it is important that all professionals work on a collaborative basis. In order for collaboration to be successful, it is crucial that each counselor gain an understanding of what environment exists within their schools.

School counselors are one of many professionals employed within schools. They play an essential part in the educational success of students. The traditional role of school counselor has focused on guidance of career development. Today, many school counselors are called upon to perform a wider array of services. Their role often includes the following responsibilities:

- ♦ Individual and group interventions

- ♦ Serving as a liaison to the administration, community, and social services departments

- ♦ Resource person for assessment teams

- ♦ Referral and consultation with teachers and parents

- ♦ Advocate for the children.

The role of professional school counselors has changed and with those changes it is crucial that each counselor continue to educate themselves with the ever- rapid growth of violence in schools. The role of professional school counselors is important in the focus of this paper because they must intervene in all problematic situations, such as school violence.   School counselors are also utilized as resources to law officials that investigate school violence in many facets and they assist in identifying various behaviors within students that lend a hand to intervention processes.

Violence has been far more insidious in our past, than we would like to think. The patriot, the humanitarian, the nationalist, the pioneers, the landholder, the farmer, and the laborer, have used violence as the means to a higher end. So great has been our involvement with both negative and positive violence over the long sweep of our history that violence has truly become a part of our unacknowledged value structure (Catalano, Loeber, & McKinney,1999).

Since they first emerged as a demographic entity earlier this century, adolescents of every era have carved out their own secret worlds, inventing private codes of style and behavior designed to communicate only within the in-group and to exclude or offend adults. It is a central rite of American passage. But lately this developmental process has come under great strain. "In the past, the toughest decision (teens) had was whether to have sex, or whether to use drugs,"

says Sheri Parks, who studies families and the media at the University of Maryland. "Those are still there, but on top are piled all these other issues, which are very difficult for parents or children to decipher." New technologies and the entertainment industry, combined with changes in family structure, have more deeply isolated grown-ups from teenagers. The results are what Hill Walker, Co-director of the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior in Oregon, calls "almost a virtual reality without adults" (Leland, 45-50, 1999).

Violence among young people is nothing new. What is startling, however, is that violent crime has become so common among juveniles. A report by Northeastern University's National Crime Analysis Program indicates that during the six-year period from 1985 to 1991, the number of arrests for murder by thirteen to seventeen year-old males rose by more that 100 percent.

It is particularly disturbing that serious juvenile offenders are often very young. In 1982, 390 young teens (age 13 to 15) were arrested for murder. A decade later, the figure had increased to 740. Geoffrey Alpert, professor of criminology at the University of South Carolina, observes, "Where many young people use to start their criminal careers with minor and property crimes, we are seeing them become more violent very, very quickly (Albert,1996). The Justice Department estimates that nearly a million young people age 12 to 19 are raped, robbed, or assaulted each year, most often by their peers. The only thing remarkable about these statistics is that violent deaths of so many people could occur without a frenzied national outcry. Perhaps that is occurring now (Davidson, 1993).

The purpose of this study was to identify factors of school violence. This information was obtained by professional school counselors' responses to a questionnaire. These results were then compiled and recorded. This research has not attempted to solve school violence or provide any comparisons to other research. This research will simply provide the factors of

school violence identified by school counselors that work with high school children in

Wisconsin.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Prior to this study concerning factors of school violence, a review of the literature assisted in creating a basis for the focus of this study and provided an explanation as to the rationale that there is much recent interest in this area. First, the review of literature briefly defines violence along with the history of school violence. Second, it discusses media and violence. Next, it examines studies regarding minority children and crime along with socioeconomic factors. The review of literature concludes with a discussion of recent studies involving teen crime as an epidemic in America.

When discussing school violence it seems logical to begin with a definition of violence. Violence is the threat or use of force that injures or intimidates a person (makes them feel afraid) or damages property. The major kinds of violent crimes against people include:

♦ Assault: threatening to attack, trying to attack, or actually attacking someone else with or without a weapon

♦ Aggravated assault: attacking someone so badly that it hurts them seriously, or threatening or trying to attack someone with a weapon in order to kill or hurt them badly

♦ Battery: using physical force or violence against another person

♦ Rape: trying to or succeeding in having sex with someone without his or her consent by using force or the threat of force

♦ Robbery: stealing directly from a person by force or by threatening to use force, with or without a weapon

♦ Homicide: killing another person (Lang, 1998).

Most historians would agree that "throughout its short history, there has been a huge amount of violence in the United States, much of it associated with the glory and the construction of a "better" America. In fact, violence is traditional," writes forensic psychiatrist, John Gunn (Gunn, 1998).

One of the primary forces motivating the early European explorers who opened the New World in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the search for riches to finance the almost constant wars in Europe.

The New World conjured up glittering visions of endless opportunities. For peasants in Europe in the 1500's, a life of poverty and misery was cast at birth. For people who followed unpopular religions, life was dangerous, as enemies chased them out of homes and jobs, and sometimes out of the country. The long and dangerous trip to the New World seemed worth the risk, the only hope to change an otherwise bleak future (Lang, 1991).

Media and Violence

There are many teachers and sociologists who say that one of the leading causes of juvenile crime is that there is too much violence on television and in the movies (Margolis, 1997). Young people are often left alone while their parents are working, so there is little or no control over the programs they watch. Children, especially younger children under the age of ten, like to imitate what they see. Some experts in child development feel that children as young as fourteen months can imitate the behaviors they see on television (Margolis,1997). Our society has continued to allow more and more violence on television and in the movies. In a recent survey done by a national news magazine, 90 percent of the people who answered said that violence in the movies and on TV was still a serious problem (Margolis, 1997).

Americans appear to have an insatiable appetite for violence, and the more explicit it is, the better. Movies, television, dramas, talk shows, children's programs, network news, books, music, sports events, and, most recently, interactive video games. Advances in special effects provide blood that is bloodier, gore that is gorier, and carnage that appears real. In the 1987 movie Robocop, 32 people got killed; in the 1990 sequel, the body count rose to 81, but viewers barely noticed (Guernsey, 1996).

Many people want to do more than passively watch violent acts on a screen. Interactive videos make it possible to join in the "fun". In one game called "Night Trap" for instance, half-naked women are stalked by vampires, who drill holes in their victims' necks and then hang them on meat hooks. Mad Dog McCree, a Western shoot-out, is a favorite among many kids because it's so realistic. Instead of the usual joystick controlling action, this game uses toy handguns. Actors, (not cartoon characters), shoot at the player, who then shoots back with electronic "bullets". The game inevitably ends with someone's death (Guernsey, 1996).

The American Psychological Association named three factors found in homes that contribute the most to a child's becoming violent: child abuse and neglect, family violence such as spouse abuse, and the violence depicted in movies and television programming (American Psychological Association, 1996).

Several decades ago, a few psychologists hypothesized that viewing violence in the unreal television world would have a cathartic effect and thus reduce the chances of violent behavior in the real world (Huesmann & Eron, 1999). But other psychologists began to doubt this notion when their research with children revealed that much action on the TV screen is perceived as real by children. L. R. Huesmann and L. D. Eron, who studied the effects of media violence on 758 youngsters in grades one through three, found that children's behavior was

influenced by television, especially if the youngsters were heavy viewers of violent

programming (Huesmann & Eron,1993). Television violence, according to the researchers,

provided a script for the children to act out aggressive behavior in relationships with others. The

most aggressive youngsters strongly identified with aggressive characters in the TV story, had

aggressive fantasies, and expressed the attitude that violent programs portrayed life as it is.

These children were also likely to perform poorly in school and often were unpopular with their

peers (Davidson, 1993). The commission's report concluded:

Prolonged exposure to violent images produces an impact that reaches as deep and lasts

as long as other contributors to violence, increasing fear of becoming a victim, desensitizing the

viewer to violence, and increasing the viewer's appetite for engaging in violence (Davidson

1993).   Two U.S. Surgeon Generals have publicly supported the position that excessive

exposure to media violence can trigger aggressive behavior. The American Medical Association,

the American Pediatric Association, and the American Academy of Child Psychiatry, and the

American Psychological Association have taken similar positions (Goodwin, 1998).

Since 1950, there have been a total of more than 3,500 research studies conducted in

America on the effects of media violence on the population. One random analysis of almost

1,000 studies found that all, save only 18 (12 of those were funded by the television industry),

demonstrate there is a tangible correlation between violent entertainment and violent behavior

(Grossman & DeGaetano, 1999).

Minority Children and Crime

Racism and discrimination against groups of people in our society also foster violence,

the American Psychological Association finds (American Psychological Association, 1996).

First, long-term discrimination in jobs, economic opportunity, and education helps keep

minorities in much higher poverty rates, which are linked to violence. According to the <u>Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention</u>, in 1992 African American children had a poverty rate of 47 percent, and Latino children 40 percent, compared with a poverty rate of 17 percent for white children. The higher violence rate of African American youth seems to be linked to their higher poverty rates, concludes the APA (American Psychological Association). Victims of racism and discrimination also frequently have low self-esteem and anger, which, combined with other factors, can contribute to violent behavior (Klee, 1996).

Since minorities tend to populate inner-city ghettos and compose a much larger proportion of the lower socioeconomic levels, a much higher proportion of violent crimes are committed by minorities and against minorities. About 90 to 95 percent of those arrested for violent crimes are unemployed, under-employed, or living below the poverty level. African Americans make up 12.1 percent of the American population, but account for more than half of the arrests for murder, rape, and non-negligent manslaughter, five times the rate for whites. All told, more than half the violent crimes in America are attributed to minorities attacking minorities, with the exception of robbery, whose victims are just as likely to be white.   Arrest rates, however, are not an accurate reflection of the crime among races. Although police report much higher arrest rates for African Americans proportionate to their representation in the population, studies reveal that these arrests significantly underestimate crime committed by whites, are never caught. In 1987, for example, African Americans were arrested at three times the rate of whites for aggravated assault, yet the National Crime Survey, based on victim interviews, found that whites attack proportionately, just as often (Lang, 1991).

Teen Crime: An Epidemic?

While bullies, gangs, weapons, and substance abuse all contribute to the fear experienced by many of today's students, violence in America's neighborhoods and communities cannot be overlooked. Not withstanding the sometimes unfounded and over generalized fear and apprehension about violence among children and adults, often fueled by the media, violence in America is a legitimate concern for everyone. Likewise, research and statistics regarding juvenile victimization cannot be entirely discounted as mere media sensationalism (Arnette & Walsleben, 1998). For example, according to America's Children; Key National Indicators of Well-Being, a report released in 1997 by the federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics in Washington, D.C., almost 2.6 million youth ages 12 to 17 were victims of violent crimes in 1994. For this study, violent crimes were defined as simple and aggravated assault, rape, and robbery (Arnette & Walsleben, 1998).

Adolescent violence is partly attributable to escalating sequences of events that culminate in outcomes unintended by the participants. Although the young people who engage in violence do not intend the outcome, they nevertheless suffer the consequences. Either the harm that comes from being victimized or the punishment that comes from being the aggressor. This type of violence is extensive. An estimated 16 percent of all high school students in this country have been in one or more physical fights on school property in the course of a year. A victimization rate for simple assaults are highest among young people ages 12 to 19. The problem is increasing, because while some types of violent crime are declining, the risk of being a victim of this type of crime has risen since the mid-1980's among juveniles ages 12-17. The same is true with the more serious offense of aggravated assault; juvenile arrests for this offense are projected to rise (Lockwood, 1997).

Chapter III

Methodology

<u>Participants</u>

The participants of this study included 314 professional school counselors from public and parochial high schools within the state of Wisconsin. Four surveys were returned undeliverable, due to closed high schools. The surveys were anonymous, therefore it was not possible to identify whether the survey was from a high school counselor that was employed in a public or parochial high school, with the exception of ten of the self-identified surveys.

All counselors were identified through an existing database in the Office of Admissions at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. This database is used for recruitment purposes of high school students from the state of Wisconsin. One survey was mailed to each high school addressed to the Guidance Department in 617 high schools. Returned survey rate was 51% of the school counselors surveyed.

There are 2,131 (K-12) licensed professional school counselors in the State of Wisconsin, as of December 1999, according to Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Licensing Division. Roughly 15% of the counselors in Wisconsin were surveyed.

The participant's educational level is at least a Masters Degree. Each participant's high school population ranges from 4 students to 2100 students. The average high school student population from the returned surveys reflected 303 students.

<u>Instruments</u>

An exhaustive search of the literature resulted in no studies, examining counselor's perception of causes of violence in high school students. Because of this, no themes or guiding

principles exist for developing a survey instrument. It was, therefore, decided to utilize an open-ended survey instrument.

Three questions asked counselors to identify at least two contributing factors to school violence, and to add additional comments. A fourth question asked to provide the school's total student population.

<u>Procedure</u>

Between March 1 and March 10, 2000; 617 surveys were mailed to high school guidance departments within the state of Wisconsin. The survey included a cover letter introducing the researcher while informing them of the intentions within this study. One survey was mailed to each high school guidance department along with a returned self-addressed stamped envelope.

There were approximately 12 high schools that reproduced the survey and distributed a survey to other school counselors within those schools. All duplicated surveys were then returned within the self-addressed stamped envelope provided to that school. Directions to reproduce the survey were not given.

Chapter V

Results

The purpose of this study is to identify counselor's perceptions of the root factors of school violence in the state of Wisconsin. In order to analyze this data a content analysis was conducted in three steps. In step one, all unique responses were listed. Forty- nine different items were contributing factors and were identified as prospective causes of school violence and one category of "I do not know."   In step two, the frequencies for each different response was tabulated and the factors were ranked from the most frequent response to the least frequent response. This was done for top rank factor and the second rank factor. Table 1 shows the ranking for factor one and Figure 2 shows the percentage breakdown.

Table 2 shows the rankings for factor two, and Figure 2 shows the percentage breakdown.

Table 1 Factor One

Most Identified Contributing Factor of School Violence	Total Number of Responses 314
Media: Television, Radio, Books, Video Games, Music, Newspapers, Magazines, and Sports	52 (16.3)%
Lack of Parental Involvement in Children's Lives	44 (13.8)%
Breakdown of Family Structure	35 (10.9)%
Feelings of Alienation from Home and School	23 (7.2)%
Intolerance	15 (4.7)%
Bullying/Harassment	14 (4.3)%
I Honestly Do Not Know	1 (.31)%
Other Factors	130 (42.49)%

**Figure 1: Question #1: Single Most Identified Factor of School Violence**
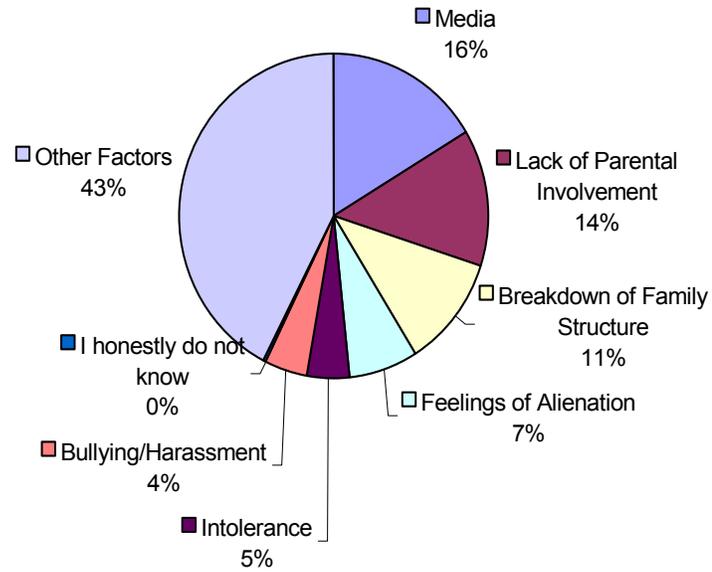
Media	Lack of Parental Involvement	Breakdown of Family Structure
Feelings of Alienation	Intolerance	Bullying/Harassment
I honestly do not know	Other Factors	

Table 2 Factor Two

Second Most Identified Contributing Factor to School Violence	Total # of responses 253
Lack of Parental Involvement	59 (14.9)%
Media: Television, Radio, Books, Video Games, Music, Newspapers, Magazines, and Sports	50 (12.6)%
Breakdown of Family Structure	24 (6.0)%
Society's Acceptance of Violence	24 (6.0)%
Lack Of Conflict Resolution	25 (6.3)%
Alcohol & Drug Related Problems: Individually & At Home	20 (5.0)%
Domestic Violence	17 (4.3)%
Lack of Respect	14 (3.5)%
Intolerance	13 (3.2)%
Low Self Esteem	11 (2.7)%
Gangs	7 (1.7)%
Accessibility to Guns & Weapons	6 (1.5)%
Lack of Morals & Education for Child	6 (1.5)%

Figure 2: Question 2: Second Most Identified Contributing Factor of School Violence
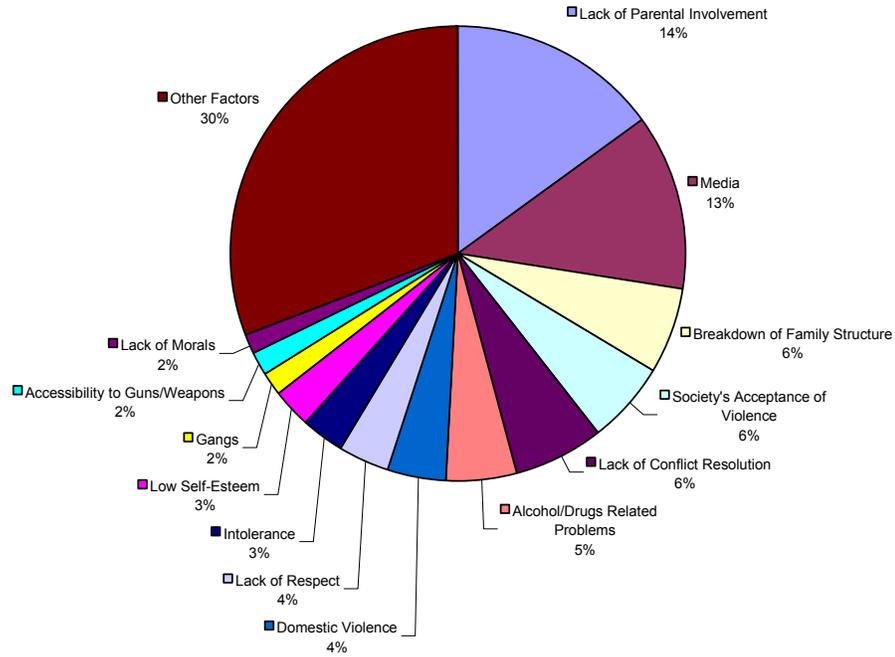
Legend:
- Lack of Parental Involvement
- Media
- Breakdown of Family Structure
- Society's Acceptance of Violence
- Lack of Conflict Resolution
- Alcohol/Drugs Related Problems
- Domestic Violence
- Lack of Respect
- Intolerance
- Low Self-Esteem
- Gangs
- Accessibility to Guns/Weapons
- Lack of Morals
- Other Factors

In question one, media was identified as the most contributing factor of school violence. School counselors commented that the media, such as television, radio, magazines, music and video games are highly influential negative factors in children's lives.

In addition, counselors commented frequently on the media for example, "Violence for many is just a way of life from the time of birth. For some it becomes a matter of survival. Does music, videos, and other violent data contribute? Absolutely!"   Another respondent points out "Media and professional sports send very mixed messages. It is okay to fight if you disagree with the referee's call."   Counselors are suggesting that the media is teaching kids how to be violent. "Watch T.V. any day, any hour, and you will see sex and violence. I believe society overall contributes to school violence-the media's reporting of violence, different condoning and approval of violence. Within domestic violence parents set poor examples and do not address violent actions by their children." A major theme seems to be that the media teaches that violence is acceptable.   "Many students come to school believing that violence is an appropriate, acceptable response to problems based on what they see at home, in movies, and on television."

The second most identified factor was the lack of parental involvement in children's lives. Counselors commented that many parents assume their children are functioning very well without the parent's involvement, and this assumption has led to a lack of discipline and responsibility on the child's part. Additional support of lack of parental involvement includes comments from question #4. One counselor comments "An adult role model plays a huge factor in a kid's sense of value and appreciation for human life." Another counselor adds, "Poor social relationships, lack of self-esteem and limited parental connections add to school violence." One final additional supportive comment included this statement; "Parents need to stay involved with their son/daughter's high school education and play an active role in their lives. Too often I

observe a lot of apathy on the parent's part. Students are given too much freedom from their

parents before they are ready to handle that freedom. It seems today's parents are much too

willing to stop raising their son/daughter just because they turn 18 or have a year or two left of

high school. Sometimes these students make poor choices (drugs & alcohol) and become angry

at the system because the system (school) has rules that the student is not use to following."

Chapter V

Discussion

The results of this study show that high school counselors identify two key contributing factors to school violence, media as the number one key factor, and the lack of parental involvement in children's lives as the second key factor. Results further indicated that the breakdown of family structure was identified as the third contributing factor to school violence within question number one as well as question two.

Interestingly, counselors also agreed that intolerance within children was another factor to school violence. Within question number one intolerance ranked ninth, while it ranked fifth within question number two. This reveals that intolerance on a child's behalf plays a crucial role within possible school violence actions. An inference may be made that school counselors view a student's tolerance of others as an important component within the lives of children. Tolerance of other students as well as teachers and administrators within a school system is vital to the success rate of high school students. A school will mandate a "No Tolerance" policy for the safety of all students, staff and administration. It is the anticipation of administrators that all students obey and respect the "No Tolerance" policy implemented.

School counselors provided many other factors that they believed contributed to school violence. The lack of conflict resolution arose consistently within the returned surveys. Conflict resolution has been a highly regarded issue amongst counselors and educators. The idea that students can communicate effectively to resolve their problems or may select to not use communication, but rather use physical violence to address problems is at the top of many school counselors' curriculum agendas. Many elementary counselors implement conflict management into the classroom instruction beginning at the kindergarten level. It is the anticipation of counselors that these students will choose to use effective communication methods to resolve

their problems. It is suggested within this study however, that many high school students do not have conflict management skills.

There were a number of written comments added on the survey reflecting some individual thoughts and opinions regarding the survey items. On several occasions, counselors indicated that they believed that alcohol and drugs determined whether a school was safe or not. The role of alcohol and drugs within a high school student's life determined how happy a student was at home, and within the school. These comments may lend to future research ideas addressing conflict management issues and alcohol and drug related issues pertaining to the counseling role of school counselors.

Limitations of Research

Limitations within this study identified by the researcher include; the survey administered to the School Counselors could have included further inquiries of the Counselor. Perhaps the questionnaire should have asked the Counselor to indicate the length of service they have served as a School Counselor, which may have provided consistency in the findings of the identified factors. Another shortcoming to this study was the non-anticipation of Counselors duplicating the survey and distributing a copy to each Counselor within the high school, therefore increasing the number of Counselors that participated in this study. Each survey was mailed to the Guidance Department of each Wisconsin high school. Increased participation is not a shortcoming, just an unforeseen event.

Adolescent violence is partly attributable to escalating sequences of events that culminate in outcomes unintended by the participants. Although individuals who engage in violence do not intend the outcome, they nevertheless suffer the consequences, either the harm that comes from being victimized or the punishment that comes from being the aggressor.   This type of violence

has grown to be extensive within high schools.   School violence has become evident within our society.

It is evident to the researcher that preventive action must occur within our schools, but the researcher is also aware that the preventive action and intervention procedures must first occur within the community. A community must take steps in understanding that school violence does not just happen. Communities must assess their own backyards and determine that violent acts within children begins at a young age and escalates over time. If a community takes action in the developmental stages of children, through activities that involve the family and teaches open communication from all aspects, then it might be possible to prevent escalation to more serious violence.

This study began exactly one year after the Littleton Colorado Columbine High School shootings. There have been many other incidents such as the Columbine shootings since April 1999. The answer to the unknown question "Why?" is still not resolved, but it is the author's hope that this research provides a window of opportunity in which educators, legislators, parents, and children may examine an overview as to the insight that is provided within this paper from School Counselors.

School violence is prevalent among our society. It is an unfortunate dilemma in which we send our children into their educational institutions on a daily basis with the existing violence that is displayed in schools. Public and parochial school systems have come so far in its teaching abilities, yet these schools must endure the painstaking school shootings, outrage of killings, and unresolved violence caused by children.

This study has examined School Counselors and their ideas regarding contributing factors to school violence. The contribution to further research or the development of educational

programs exists within this study. It can provide an opportunity to gain insight into the educators

that work with children in schools across the nation, as school and community intervention

programming planning increases. It is anticipated that this study may also assist in creating

positive social and educational environments for our children.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument

FACTORS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is asking that you as a professional school counselor, identify 2 factors that

you believe contribute to school violence.

1._____

2._____

Please provide the student population of your high school:

Number of students_____

Please feel free to add any additional comments regarding school violence.

COMMENTS:_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND YOUR INPUT!

Appendix B

Consent Form

Human Subjects

Consent Form

This research examines the factors that contribute to school violence. The goal of this study is to evaluate a questionnaire that measures these factors as part of this study. Before completing the questionnaire, I would like you to read the consent form, indicating that you understand the potential risks and benefits of participation, and that you understand your rights as a participant. If you have any questions, please contact the primary researcher, Barb Tuchel at 715-232-3485 (tuchelb@uwstout.edu) or Dr. Richard Tafalla at 715-232-1667 (tafallar@uwstout.edu).

RISKS

There is little or no risk to you in filling out this questionnaire. Your responses are completely confidential.

BENEFITS

Although the results of this study may be of benefit to others in the future, there is no direct benefit to you by participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESPONSES

Your responses are strictly confidential. Only the primary researcher or her advisor will have access to the confidential raw data.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW OR DECLINE TO PARTICIPATE

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntarily. You may choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to you. Should you participate and later wish to withdraw from this study, you may discontinue your participation at this time without incurring adverse consequences.

NOTE: Questions or concerns about participation in the research or subsequent complaints should be addressed first to the researcher or research advisor and second to Ted Knous, Chair, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11 Harvey Hall, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI 54751, phone 715-232-1126.

Appendix C

Cover Letter

Barb Tuchel

624 Maple Street

Eau Claire, WI 54703

May 18, 2000

Dear School Counselor,

I am a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Stout in the Guidance and

Counseling program. A critical part of the Masters Degree is the completion of a research

project. Factors of School Violence is my Plan B project. I am hoping that you may find time

within your busy day to assist me with the data collection process of my Plan B. Your responses

are vital to my research.

As a future school counselor, I would like to be able to have attained a broad array of

knowledge pertaining to violence within our schools. I understand that much of school violence

is learned on a day-to-day basis and the factors may vary from school to school.

You will notice within the survey, that I am asking you to identify the student population

of your high school as well as to identify factors of school violence.

Enclosed you will find a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please return responses within

this envelope.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

With regards,

Barb Tuchel