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Jamie R. Schlafke

St. Cloud State University

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These starred papers submitted by Jamie R. Schlafke in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science at St. Cloud State University are hereby approved by the final evaluation committee.

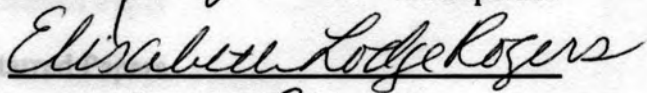
FOSTERING RESILIENCE WITHIN SCHOOLS

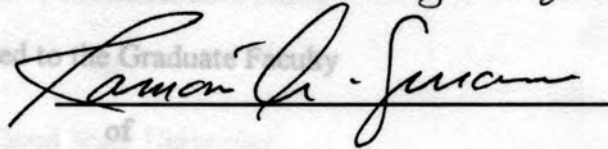
by

Jamie R. Schlafke

B.A.S., University of Minnesota, Duluth, 1991


Chairperson



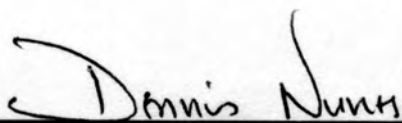


St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Science



Dean
School of Graduate and Continuing Studies 2000

FOSTERING RESILIENCE WITHIN SCHOOLS
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St. Cloud, Minnesota

June, 2000

Chapter I
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Russell-Victor and Palco (1999), who both work with school-family collaboration and early intervention, stressed the importance of decreasing the risks and nurturing the strengths in order to

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Resilience is related to the stressors and protective factors that are within a person's home, community, or school. Some children come to school each day with a variety of burdens. For example, some may be victims of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse. Others may be homeless and still others may live with an absence of one or both parents. The list goes on and on with regard to the various types of adversity that children face everyday.

Teachers often say they cannot help their students with the adversity they face because they have no control over what goes on in the children's lives after the bell rings. However, research indicates that school staff can and do have an impact on their students' lives both in the classroom and beyond the school door. For example, in a cross-cultural study of minority children who endured immense hardships, teachers were an important part of the protective process when working with children of minority background, not only for bestowing academic skills, but in acting as a role model and serving as a counselor (Werner, 1997).

Protective factors, also called compensancies or resiliency factors, refer to those attributes that individuals possess to assist them to overcome hardship or reduce their risk factors. Protective factors should not be confused with risk factors, which are factors that contribute to the reason the individual is "at-risk" (Fergusson & Lynskey,

Reed-Victor and Pelco (1999), who both work with school-family collaboration and early intervention, stressed the importance of decreasing the risks and nurturing the strengths in order to enable students to overcome adversity. "Resilience can be fostered by reducing risks and the impact of stressors while activating protective processes that increase the support, structure, and opportunities needed for positive adaptation" (p. 52).

Purpose

The purpose of this paper was to review the literature on nurturing protective factors which promote resiliency in school age children. In addition, this review focused on the role schools play in helping children who are "at-risk" to become successful in their lives.

Definitions

In this paper, fostering means "to promote the growth or development of (encourage) and to give parental care to (nurture)" (Merriam-Webster, 1983, p. 487). Resilience is defined as "an ability to recover or adjust easily to misfortune or change" (Merriam-Webster, 1983, p. 1003). "In general, children facing adversity are considered resilient if they are functioning within normal or acceptable bounds on measures of competence with respect to behavioral, social, and/or cognitive functioning" (Kinard, 1998, p. 670).

Protective factors, also called competencies or resiliency factors, refer to those attributes that individuals possess to assist them to overcome hardship or reduce their risk factors. Protective factors should not be confused with risk factors, which are factors that contribute to the reason the individual is "at-risk" (Fergusson & Lynskey,

1996). Adverse conditions (also referred to as hardships and life stressors), if not stated explicitly, may reflect various situations considered to be traumatizing or chronically stressful to a child such as homelessness, poverty, physical or sexual abuse, neglect, family discord, or impairment in close family members.

Search Methodology

Research for this review was initially conducted through Web Pals using the key phrase "Fostering Resilience." After finding some literature and studies under this phrase, additional key words were suggested, supplementary terms and phrases used included "program effectiveness," "high risk/interventions," "at-risk students/prevention programs," and "drop-out prevention." Some studies were found in references to secondary sources. The inclusive dates were from the year 1991 to 1999.

High Expectations

Mundy (1996) found that resilient youth were held to high expectations by significant adults in their lives. People who were considered important to resilient youth often had set high expectations for them. These expectations contributed to their success and feelings of competence. Through her studies, Benard (1995) found

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Benard (1993), a known researcher in the field of resiliency, found that schools as well as families and communities that have protected their children growing up in adversity are depicted by their care and support, positive expectations, and ongoing opportunities for participation. Schools encompass a large portion of children's lives. Many adults state that their own school experiences played a significant role in their development. Schools can and should have an important part in encouraging resilience in the child who is "at-risk." By way of high expectations, opportunities for development of interest, responsibility, relationships, as well as other effective school interventions and professional development and collaboration, educators have an impact on fostering resilience within the school. The following sections will explore how schools promote resiliency in these areas.

High Expectations

Mundy (1996) found that resilient youth were held to high expectations by significant adults in their lives. People who were considered important to resilient youth often had set high expectations for them. These expectations contributed to their success and feelings of competence. Through her studies, Benard (1995) found

that schools that held high expectations for students and gave them the support needed to attain their goals were academically successful.

High expectations bear the message that students can realistically achieve success. "High expectations communicate beliefs about what students are capable of doing and achieving" (McMillan & Reed, 1994, p. 6). In addition, a high expectation approach creates safety and predictability through effective teacher direction which conveys clear boundaries and structure (Benard, 1999). Safety and predictability contribute to one's resilience.

A high-expectation approach allows students to take responsibility for their academic outcomes. In a study of four high-achieving schools, Anderson and Pellicer (1998) found that the students from these schools took responsibility for their progress. The teachers facilitated this by conveying high expectations by way of their projected belief that the students could achieve. When students did not achieve, teachers continued to encourage students to try again. "Failure was seen as an opportunity to improve, not as a chance to quit" (Anderson & Pellicer, 1998, p. 255). Allowing students to take responsibility for their achievement contributes to a sense of self-efficacy and a strong sense of self-efficacy is critical to students being successful in school (McMillan & Reed, 1994). In a study involving "at-risk" students, many attributed their success or lack of it to themselves. Each person felt they had the control over the amount of effort put into their work, as well as the result.

High expectations should not be confused with high standards that do not inevitably convey the message that students will be able to attain them (Mundy, 1996). Students must see themselves as capable individuals (Pasternack & Martinez, 1996). Setting high grade and work expectations that will set students up for failure is not

necessarily setting high expectations. According to Pasternack and Martinez, teachers need to guide students and arrange for the time and resources to allow them to reach these expectations. Mundy found that many at-risk youth have low expectations about what they are able to do; they often feel that they can not achieve. Positive messages (both verbal and nonverbal) were communicated to these youth so the message that they can succeed was internalized.

Recognition of "at-risk" student assisted in conveying high expectations for youth. In their study of successful programming for at-risk youth, Slavin and Fashola (1998) discovered that most of the programs aimed to bestow status and recognition upon the students for academic achievements. One successful dropout prevention program for high-risk middle school Latino students used interventions that included student recognition for academic achievement, counseling, and problem-solving training. Recognition for appropriate behaviors often resulted in more occurrences of these behaviors. Most at-risk youth get attention through their inappropriate behaviors (Mundy, 1996). Children need to be given attention for their positive behaviors. Appropriate behavior will occur most often if it is reinforced.

Recognition should continue throughout the school years to promote academic success. LePage-Lees (1997) conducted a qualitative study with 21 women who were academically successful, but disadvantaged as children. Many of the women reported that, initially, they were held to high expectations and recognized for their academic achievement in grade school, but not in high school. The women reported that this lack of identification was the reason that many became disinterested in their academics. Anderson and Pellicer (1998) found that recognition for student achievement was encouraged and as a result, motivated students.

By focusing on student strengths through recognition and setting high expectations, teachers create a resilient atmosphere. Nettles and Robinson (1998) found that what started as a resiliency research project in Stanton Elementary, turned into a whole framework shift of thinking among the teachers. Instead of focusing on the deficits of the students, the staff built on their strengths. This allowed for a more optimistic view of student expectations.

Opportunities

Providing students with opportunities for meaningful involvement and responsibility also served to support the high expectations that teachers had for them (Benard, 1995). Resilient individuals often were involved in activities in their leisure time or held a responsibility. Active participation in extracurricular functions and other interests may contribute to one's protective factors (McMillan & Reed, 1994).

Resilient individuals' self-efficacy and ability to console themselves can increase as a result of extracurricular involvement (McMillan & Reed, 1994). Involvement in activities and interests contributed positively to the confidence of individuals and their belief in the ability to make success happen. Such activities seem to have provided comfort especially when other parts of the "at-risk" child's life were distressed.

Extracurricular activities enabled at-risk youth to distance themselves from their adverse life experiences and enrich their lives through a talent. Steven and Sybil Wolin, experts in the field of resilience, stated that resilient individuals have the ability to put distance between themselves and the past (How to Survive, 1992). One of the ways that they are able to do this is to reclaim their lives through a talent that they are recognized for, mostly through youth organizations.

Extracurricular activities and responsibilities also allow students a chance to develop and enhance their social skills. By providing opportunities to develop and practice social skills, a teacher fosters resilient attributes by honing the ability to interact with others positively (Brodkin & Coleman, 1990).

It was demonstrated that school-based extracurricular or enrichment activities also allowed students to discover interests and hobbies (Christiansen, Christiansen, & Howard, 1997). Teachers who assisted students in developing these interests noted their strength areas and/or created opportunities to expand their talents or interests. It was recommended that teachers recognize students' strengths and encourage them to hone their assets through academics or other opportunities to help them achieve in the educational setting (LePage-Lees, 1997).

Involvement in extra curricular activities throughout the school years is important for keeping at-risk children engaged in prosocial activities. A review of research on resilient individuals indicated that these activities need to be available to at-risk youth at an early age and continue throughout their school years (Mundy, 1996). Prosocial activities often deterred high-risk youth from engaging in delinquent behaviors. When these programs ceased to exist, the at-risk children are well more apt to revert back to their antisocial activities.

Unfortunately, "at-risk" youth do not always independently join programs (McMillan & Reed, 1994). Rather, these children typically need to be encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. One has to be aware that these students won't necessarily join a club or organization on their own. Membership has to be personally encouraged. An example of this would be for adults to offer a personal invitation.

In addition to extracurricular activities, at-risk youth also need to be given opportunities to have responsibilities in school. When children are given responsibilities, research has found that the message of worthiness and capability is conveyed which can enhance one's self-esteem (Mundy, 1996). Many successful dropout prevention programs personalize the school experience by giving students responsibilities through high status roles such as tutoring younger students or volunteering (Fashola & Slavin, 1998).

One of the successful dropout programs reviewed created a tutoring program that was intended to expand confidence and satisfaction in "at-risk" middle and high school students by giving them the responsibility to tutor elementary students (Fashola & Slavin, 1998). Both the academic performance and self-concept of the students were improved because of the tutoring and training required to be a tutor. The training helped the students with both their tutoring skills and basic academic skills. In addition to building self-esteem and academic skills, tutoring also was believed to reduce the number of disciplinary concerns among at-risk youth.

Another successful dropout program encouraged student responsibility in school functions. This successful multicultural alternative middle school dropout prevention program allowed students to have the responsibility to set up the gym or auditorium for school functions, host activities for the community and families and tutor elementary students (Weir, 1996). These activities not only improved self-image, but also allowed children to expand their sense of belonging in the school environment.

Relationships

Most of the research on resilient youth indicated that these individuals developed bonds with at least one person in their lives. The presence of at least one person who was caring and supportive contributed to the resilient development of those who faced adversity (Benard, 1995). Through relationships, many students and teachers claimed that children were helped to cope with the adversity in their lives and learn more optimally.

Adult-child relationships. Mundy (1996) stated that the bond between the resilient children and caring adult enabled the child to get the attention and support that they needed. Mundy cited a study of incarcerated juvenile offenders in Florida who often attributed their failure to the absence of support and availability of someone to talk with them. In exploring resiliency, Dryden, Johnson, Howard, and McGuire (1998) conducted interviews with teachers and students who were from 32 schools within socioeconomically disadvantaged northern suburbs of Adelaide, South Australia. Relationships were the strongest and most persistent point discussed among both students and teachers. Both groups stressed the significance relationships played in getting through "tough times." It was talking and listening that was helpful with the children. Many students and teachers said that the relationships furnished the groundwork for influencing the students to engage themselves in learning. In addition to relationships with adults, children and the teachers talked about relationships with peers, although students emphasized the peer relationships more than the teachers did in helping to contribute to resiliency.

Another study indicated the importance of relationships in working with "at-risk" children. One case study of a resilient individual revealed that this individual

was able to thrive because there was someone who cared and who respected her (Tarwater, 1993). The child in the study finally came into an environment where she was able to have the space, safety, and freedom needed to blossom.

Teachers need to convey a caring attitude toward all of their students to facilitate a sense of belonging in the classroom. Sims (1997) interviewed six individuals who participated in Project Choice, a dropout prevention program. One individual interviewed defined caring as getting attention, which she received through Project Choice. This caring attitude created a sense of belonging.

A sense of belonging contributed to students staying in school. Sims (1997) interviewed one of the participants in Project Choice who stated that he lacked a strong family connection but was able to get his emotional support from any staff person when he needed help. Another participant in this program said that due to the caring attitudes of the staff and the belief they had in him, he complied more often in living up to high expectations, rather than being very stubborn as he had been in the past.

Teachers are in an excellent role to facilitate the development of bonds with needy children (McMillan & Reed, 1994). Success with resilient individuals was, in part, attributed to the school staff that played a personal role in their lives. "Students need teachers who are respectful, caring, honest, patient, open-minded, and firm" (p. 7). Anderson and Pellicer (1998) found that an essential ingredient to successful students and schools was the way teachers interacted with the students. The students who felt they were valued and treated with respect and dignity were found to be more resilient. These students reported that their teachers took the time to know them.

Schools have been able to improve their dropout rates by implementing strategies that promote bonding. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) reported that schools with low dropout rates share some common characteristics (Ingersoll & LeBoeuf, 1997). The bond between students and teachers was stronger as a result of smaller class size, one-on-one work with students, utilizing teaching methods that hooked students into learning and by becoming personally committed to helping students. In a review of effective programming within secondary and elementary schools, Slavin and Fashola (1998) observed that personalization between students and teachers was a common theme among various programs. Many of the programs used small-group instruction or mentoring to develop connections among students.

Mentoring is one strategy schools can use to personalize school settings and make connections with students. Mentoring has been found to be crucial in giving children who are "at-risk" the support they need to succeed (Christiansen, Christiansen, & Howard, 1997; Fashola & Slavin, 1998). As a result of their findings, schools have implemented mentoring programs or small group interventions.

Establishing relationships through mentoring "at-risk" students contributes to lower dropout rates and better grades. Testerman (1996) reviewed an advisor/advisee program that teachers from Lely High School in Naples, Florida implemented in response to negative results from a nationwide study that found that dropouts' perceptions of the degree of concern that teachers had for them were poor. The advisee/advisor program paired teachers with "at-risk" students who had grade point averages of 1.5 or less. At the end of the 21 weeks, the experimental group had 24%

less dropouts than the group with no advisor/advisee relationship. Many other positive changes were noted such as improved grades and friendlier and happier students.

Many successful mentoring programs have helped to produce an increase in confidence, academic achievement, learning development, appropriate behaviors being displayed, and satisfactory adult/child relationships. Through a review of literature on successful mentoring programs for potential dropouts, Syropoulow (1996), highlighted some of the outcomes that mentor programs have attained:

- Self-esteem and confidence were improved.
- An attainment of "learning" took place in mentor programs that focused on a particular subject matter.
- Many mentor programs designed for at-risk youth were designed to help students achieve academically and stay in school.
- Some programs attempted to change behavior.
- Mentors and mentees each benefited from the mentoring experience by their satisfaction they got from each other.

To reiterate the importance of mentoring programs, Syropoulow (1996) cited a study conducted by the National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE). NAPE categorized model dropout prevention programs based on particular criteria. Next to academic improvements, the second most frequent element of successful dropout prevention programs included mentoring.

Successful mentoring programs include guidelines that are fundamental in making their programs effective for at-risk individuals. In a discussion of the successful Friends of Children Mentoring Program, Priem (1997) found that the program included some key elements:

- Mentors started working with the students at a young age.
- Mentors had small caseloads of mentees to reach each one effectively.
- Mentors had positive expectations for each of the children to encourage a belief in themselves.
- Mentors had a long-term commitment to the youth (10 years minimum).

Guetzloe (1997) reviewed the similarities and differences of four mentoring programs. The most important theme common to all of the mentoring programs studied was the existence of a positive relationship between an older individual and the youth that needed support.

Peer relationships. In addition to fostering child-adult relationships, nurturing relationships among peers also contributed to the resilient child. Peer relationships played an important role in the healthy development of children. Through his experience as a high school principal, Krovetz (1999) observed that many students felt alienated and embarrassed if they were not in the “in” crowd in school. The students who were not in this group felt disjointed from the school. In a case study of a resilient individual, Miller and Fritz (1998) identified the focus of the individual as the desire to be affiliated with the other students instead of being identified as a “special education student.” Integrating “prosocial” youth with at-risk youth helped to deter antisocial behavior among the at-risk population (Mundy, 1996). Incorporating peer learning activities in the classroom has helped to foster resilience through relationships among children (Berliner & Benard, 1995). This is accomplished through cooperative learning and mixed ability groups as well as restructuring a larger school into teams of a smaller number of students. Limiting class size is another factor that should be taken into account when trying to facilitate relationship establishment.

The development of interpersonal skills must be emphasized within the school. Mundy (1996) indicated that in order to improve relationships, prevention programs should focus on social skill development of "at-risk" youth. Skills such as anger management, conflict resolution, friendship making, and etiquette should be included in such programming.

Other Effective School Interventions

Teachers have much to offer in the area of nurturing resiliency in classroom programming. In a recent study, teacher interventions contributed to a low level of behavior problems in an elementary school. Results of this study indicated that low levels of problem behaviors in the classroom were attributed to effective teacher interventions (Hovland, Smaby, & Maddux, 1996). Teachers of children who are at risk can use a variety of tools to help them to succeed academically.

In order to promote resiliency, schools must use a multitude of approaches that help children to succeed (Christiansen et al., 1997). In addition to meeting student needs through high expectations, opportunities, and relationships, the following section gives a brief summary of some of the other specific effective practices or programs that schools have implemented in promoting resiliency among at-risk youth.

Truancy. Many youth are "at-risk" of school failure because of attendance problems. Consistent attendance among "at-risk" youth is necessary for academic success. One school implemented a separate school within a school to remedy the problem of attendance. As a principal, Krovetz (1999) found that classroom instruction was unrelated to many of the lives' of students who were considered asocial. Many were lacking in reading skills or were bored with the way the classes

were presented. Many quit attending school regularly because they were continually belittled by the teachers for assignment incompleteness, performed poorly, had low grades, or lacked a sense of belonging. To help resolve the students' lack of attendance, Krovetz implemented a unique program in his school. The students came to school from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM each day. The "typically absent" students came to school on time each day and actively participated in the learning process. These students told Krovetz that they finally felt like they belonged somewhere since they attended with similar students and each student was connected to a caring and supportive adult.

Schools can identify and provide for the truancy needs of "at-risk" youth through effective approaches in meeting their needs. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) outlined "promising approaches" to combat truancy that included team approaches, truancy centers, community assessment centers and alternative schools (Ingersoll & LeBoeuf, 1997). The needs of the child were examined more closely by finding the reasons that children missed school and then trying to ameliorate the problem. Schools played an important part in this process by providing for the various needs of students.

Many students attend school more regularly when their physical, social, and emotional needs are met. Educational institutions need to collaborate with community agencies to effectively meet students' needs especially services that are out of the academic realm. Many school programs have had limited access to community agencies that provided a multitude of services for at-risk needs. Although not directly related to the classroom environment, Bush and Wilson (1997) explored how one school district linked their schools to various community services to reduce classroom

problems. In meeting the needs of high-risk youth, services that included mental health, medical care, general counseling, and crisis interventions were made available within schools. The intent of the Dallas programs was to facilitate students' learning in school by helping with non-academic problems; this supports the notion that there is a direct link between social, emotional, and physical health and academic functioning.

Future connections. Making connections to the future contributed to resilient youth. The OJJDP reported that schools should try to prevent students from dropping out by implementing programs that focus specifically on future competence and success. This can be implemented through school-to-work programs or career and academic programs (Ingersoll & LeBoeuf, 1997). Through their reviews of successful dropout and college attendance programs, Slavin and Fashola (1998) identified a common theme, which was the connection programming made to a future within the student's reach.

It is important to tie the future to programs for dropout prevention and/or post-secondary education (Sims, 1997). Project Choice, the successful dropout prevention program, mentioned earlier, accentuated college campus visits and prepared students for the expectations in post-secondary academics.

Academic support and study skills. Many effective programs provided academic assistance through enhancement of study skills or support with the mainstream coursework. The key reason that students dropped out was because of failing grades and the belief that their efforts did not have an effect on academic progress. The Fashola and Slavin (1998) study evaluated successful dropout prevention or college attendance programs for "at-risk" students. All programs

provided some sort of academic assistance for students through small group or individual help. Instead of receiving traditional remedial instruction, support focused on basic study skills and current course content to help students stay current in their studies. This indicated that support with both study skills and academic content is more beneficial than attending remedial instruction.

Alternative teaching. Successful schools also facilitated learning through a variety of activities that involved active student participation. In a study of four high achieving schools, Anderson and Pellicer (1998) found that most of the in class activities were varied and were participation and movement orientated; rarely did they find the use of worksheets as an everyday occurrence. The curriculum was integrated across both subject areas and academic abilities. The lessons were presented in a thematic manner. Another common theme was that the teachers aligned what was taught with the state tests of basic skills.

Teachers promoted resiliency by incorporating effective practices into their lessons. Pasternack and Martinez (1996) researched effective strategies for classes in correctional educational programs that promoted resiliency. For lesson planning, the following were suggested:

- Connect to the students by personalizing the course content. By doing this, teachers showed that they cared by increasing connections with students and made the learning interesting and meaningful.
- Incorporate cooperative learning with small-groups. This helped students to develop their social and communication skills, responsibility, empathy, and ability to make decisions.

- Activate the students' thinking and feeling by presenting controversial and emotional topics. This not only helped students to gain more of an understanding of the content area but also assisted them in learning to work through constructive conflicts by a peaceful means.
- Allow practical application of the content material being taught. Applying the subject material learned allowed students to develop a deep-seated meaning through projects designed for the students themselves or in helping others.
- Stress the positive and challenge students to change the negative. This helped students to realize that they can make a difference and defeat the feelings of hopelessness or helplessness.

Giving the class an active role in making decisions within the classroom contributed to resilience. Through the Project Resilience interviews, Bickart and Wolin (1997) found that specific practices contributed to resilient individuals. The following were strategies that were utilized to encourage social and academic competence among at-risk youth:

- Students were involved in evaluating their own work and in making goals for themselves.
- Students played a role in developing standards for their work.
- Students had many opportunities to work with peers collaboratively.
- Students worked to solve classroom problems through participation in classroom meetings.
- Students were allowed to make choices.

- Students were in classrooms organized as a community to promote the child's feeling of being connected.
- Students contributed to making rules for the classroom.

Pasternack and Martinez (1996) also indicated that similar choice making strategies developed resiliency in "at-risk" youth. Their study concluded that when teachers provided opportunities for students to make their own choices and experience the natural consequences, they helped students develop responsibility for one's self. Another way to enhance this development was to utilize systematic conflict resolution processes. Conflict is inevitable in life and should not be suppressed by the teacher, but worked out in a healthy way.

Another school program contributed to student resiliency by promoting adult-child relationships, a safe school atmosphere, future job skills and through contributions to others. Research indicated that Communities In Schools (CIS) was effective in nurturing student protective factors (Cantelon & LeBoeuf, 1997). The program was a collaboration of many agencies that worked with the school in meeting the needs of youth that were "at-risk" of dropping out. The successful program contributed to the resilience of individuals by facilitating all four of the following needs:

- Personal one-on-one relationship with a caring adult
- Safe place to learn and grow
- Marketable skill to use upon graduation
- Chance to give back to peers and the community. (p. 2)

Dropout prevention programs need to appeal to the students. In her interviews, Sims (1997) learned that too often these students were lured into other activities that seemed to be much more "fun." This program implemented events such as picnics,

field trips, family dinners, and softball tournaments to be able to compete with activities or events (antisocial activities) that tended to breach the contract for being able to stay in the Choice Program.

Interventions for at-risk students need to be implemented at an early age and continue throughout students' school years. In the Sinclair, Christenson, Evelo, and Hurley (1998) study of a program designed to test the effectiveness of the Check and Connect Interventions, students stayed in school longer and earned more credits than students whose interventions ceased in the ninth grade even though their school and behavior performance did not change significantly when compared to the control group. This study suggested that programs need to be inclusive at all developmental levels especially during early school years.

Professional Development and Collaboration

It takes more than knowledge of what works to foster resilience, it also requires that schools must develop resiliency within staff members before implementation within the student body. In order to promote resilience among the students that we teach, schools must foster resiliency among the school staff (Krovetz, 1999). Krovetz, a former school principal, demonstrated that this has been done in the following manner:

- Intellectual stimulation for teachers was provided.
- The voice of the teacher was valued within the school community.
- Staff and students were able know each other better by working together.
- Time was regularly made for school staff to get to know each other and share ideas, concerns and successes.

This last strategy was reiterated in the Berliner and Benard (1995) study that found that teacher collaboration needed to be supported and conducted within the school to help with student achievement.

Training and support is essential for school staff who work with an at-risk population. If teachers are expected to contribute to making relationships with at-risk students, they need to be provided the tools to do so (McMillan and Reed, 1994). In an examination of a middle school model aimed at raising the academic skill of students where there were a large number of students who were at risk for failing, teacher training was noted to contribute to the effectiveness of implementing the programs (Useem, 1998). Support in the classroom and the opportunities to train within specific content areas were noted to be very valuable in contributing to teaching proficiency by the teacher participants.

Training for those who work with at-risk adolescents was shown to be effective in fostering resiliency through still another study. In a project intended to promote resiliency, a team of social workers assisted with substance abuse prevention personnel in programming for at-risk adolescents (Kaplan, Turner, Norman, & Stillson, 1996). The social workers emphasized the following skill development for staff: self-efficacy, realistic appraisal of the environment, social problem-solving skills, promoting a sense of direction, adaptive distancing for personnel, and establishment of warm and supportive environments. The study concluded that building relationships with each other as well as their students and collaboration among teachers was imperative to fostering resiliency in young people.

The success of school programming is dependent upon those who implement the programs. Ross, Smith, Slavin, and Madden (1997) reviewed Success For All

(SFA), a program designed to promote academic success among at-risk students.

They found that the success and longevity of school implemented programs depend on the competence and eagerness of school staff to execute it effectively.

Another study demonstrated significant improvements in student behavior as a result of effective staff training. In the Dubas, Lynch, Galano, Geller, and Hunt study (1998), teachers were effectively trained to nurture a child's resilient development as they made significant improvements in promoting resiliency among at-risk 4-year-olds. The children learned to engage in non-violent problem solving, decision making, prosocial behavior and self-control. Again, this demonstrated that teachers fostered resiliency not only by the implementation of the effective learning strategies, but also through staff development.

On schools have demonstrated the ability to nurture protective factors, which promote resiliency. One can not assume, however, that if they do all of these things that all students will be "fixed." Krovetz (1999) stated that promoting resiliency is a "long-term project." It is about the things that are done each and every day with the underlying conviction of valuing students that improve or protect the lives of children.

Resiliency building needs to focus on at-risk youth throughout all developmental ages. Teachers have to facilitate resiliency by focusing on at-risk youth as much as they do the rest of the student population. Resiliency changes over time so schools need to ensure that resiliency building starts in the early school years and continues.

Schools have the responsibility to examine their own practices to ensure that resiliency is being fostered within the curriculum, teaching, school atmosphere and

...often when a series of studies have been done to determine the effectiveness of a particular principle or idea, the results are in conflict. However, in this paper we have seen that the studies in this chapter are showing that by using various models, resiliency can, in fact, be implemented to the benefit of inner teachers and students.

Chapter III

CONCLUSION

Although facilitating protective factors will not necessarily guarantee a child will succeed, the research strongly suggests that this plays a key part. Protective factors enhance resilience among at-risk individuals. By holding high expectations, providing opportunities for activities and responsibilities, nurturing relationships, implementing other alternative learning practices, and through professional development and collaboration, schools have demonstrated the ability to nurture protective factors, which promote resiliency. One can not assume, however, that if they do all of these things that all students will be “fixed.” Krovetz (1999) stated that promoting resiliency is a “long-term project.” It is about the things that are done each and every day with the underlying conviction of valuing students that improve or protect the lives of children.

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activities. Often when a series of studies have been done to determine the effectiveness of a particular principle or idea, the results are in conflict. However, in this paper we have seen that the studies are consistent in showing that by using various tools, resiliency can, in fact, be implemented to the benefit of better teachers and

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