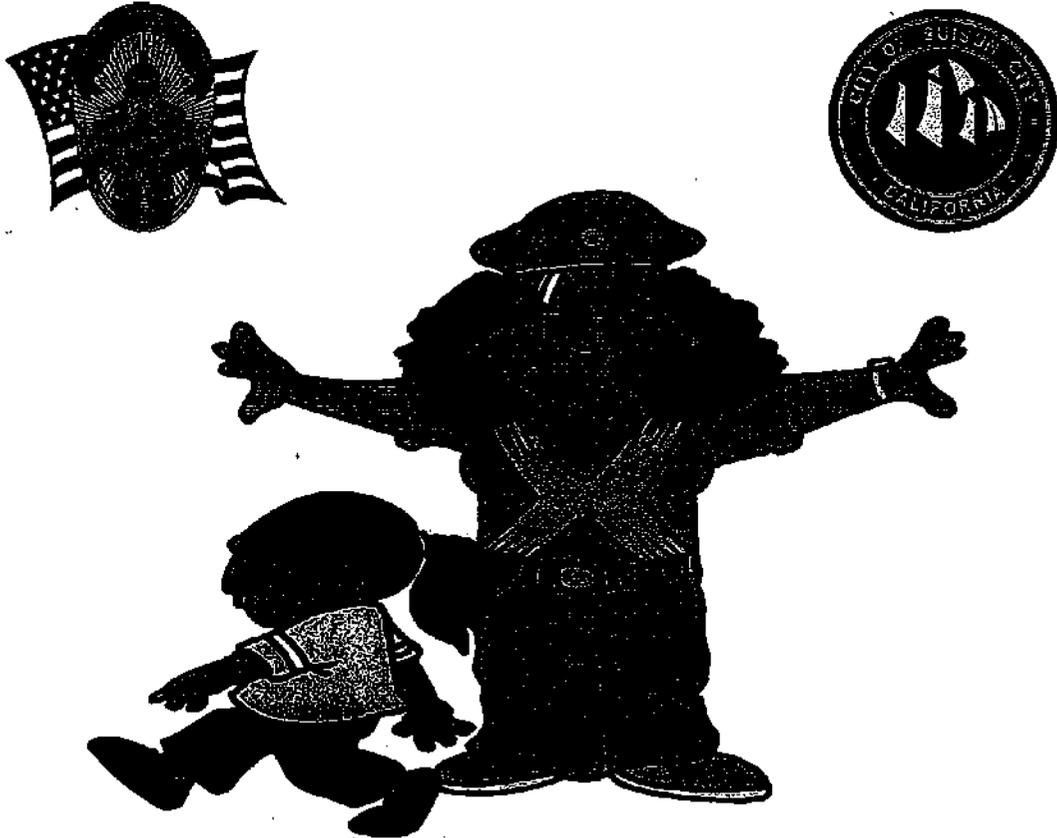


2001 Herman Goldstein Award
for
Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing

"Disorderly Conduct at Transportation Points""""



Submitted by:

Suisun City Police Department
Suisun City, California
May 1', 2001

Summary

Submission for the
2001 Herman Goldstein Award
"Disorderly Conduct at Transportation Points"

Summary

Introduction

Back in 1996 disorderly conduct on buses and at transit points was considered an acute problem that threatened the safety of students. Police officers were called on an average of twice a week to deal with issues related to this problem. Specific behaviors causing this problem were bullying, threats and intimidation by students towards other students. The bullying, threats and intimidation frequently was resulting in assaults, thefts and vandalism. Several arrests had been made and bus drivers were repeatedly having to return to the school site to disembark disorderly students. As a result the Suisun Police Department applied and received a problem-solving grant from the Department of Justice, COPS Office.

Scanning

The Suisun Police Department conducted a comprehensive study utilizing surveys, meetings and local crime trend statistics to determine what were the biggest safety concerns at school. A local research group was also contracted to assist with the bulk of the data collection. Most of the data collected was quantitative relying upon survey response from officers, students and staff at the local schools and the community at large.

Analysis

Analysis of the data collected revealed that parents were very concerned about incidents of school violence, especially since the Columbine H.S. shootings. The bulk of incidents occurred after

school, but began as conflicts during school and for the most part involved a core of "at risk" students. The absence of an after school program negatively impacted "latch key" students.

Response

Our response/action plan was developed to address the root of the problem and not the symptoms. To that end we focused on providing students with conflict resolution skills through two popular programs - Challenge Day and PeaceBuilders, coupled with our own forty five minute Anti-Bullying presentation. We also identified funding and other resources to reinvigorate the local after school program. Specialized training was provided to a core group of Student Conflict Managers so students could resolve problems at the lowest level possible.

Assessment

While some of our successes are more intangible in nature, statistical data on our tangible successes revealed a high level of satisfaction by parents, students and faculty. Statistical data includes a 38.5% increase in requests for peer mediation from our student conflict managers; and a corresponding 69.35% drop in incidents of disorderly conduct on the school buses.

Project Description

Submission for the
Herman Goldstein Award
"Disorderly Conduct at Transportation Points"
(Project Description)

Introduction

Back in 1996 disorderly conduct on buses and at transit points that service the students of Crystal Middle School was considered an acute problem that threatened the safety of students on a continual basis. Police officers were called on an average of twice a week to deal with issues related to this problem. Specific behaviors causing this problem were threats and intimidation by students towards other students. These behaviors were occurring as students rode across town to return from school. Once dropped off at the transit points, there were often large crowds of students from other middle schools and high schools that continued the intimidation which frequently was resulting in assaults, thefts and vandalism. Several arrests had been made and bus drivers were repeatedly having to return to the school site to disembark disorderly students.

These incidents were also occurring at a local transit pick-up point in the "Old Town" of Suisun that students walk to for transit pick-ups by the city bus. The pick-up point is located next to a small, convenience market that attracts a large number of students. The police department and the school were often receiving complaints from the local merchants because of the large crowds that were forming along with the subsequent fights, theft, vandalism and loss of local business. With large groups of students walking in the "Old Town", smaller groups of students were often arriving in the area to confront a given student or groups of students for the purpose of causing a

disturbance or fight. Some of the disturbances were gang related and all the fights were taking place in the "Old Town" area adjacent to the school and parks shortly after school was dismissed.

Students who were being victimized by this behavior were normally "latch-key" kids. These victimizations, if not immediately reported by merchants or neighborhood residents, were going unreported or were not reported until the parents arrived home hours later. Fear and intimidation had spread to the parks and neighborhoods where the transit stops were located, resulting in parents and elementary school students avoiding these areas during dismissal time (2:00-3:00p.m.) These disturbances were further exacerbated by the elimination of free busing and the reduction of total busing services since July 1995.

Additionally, the City of Suisun had an absence of recreational activities for middle school students to participate in after school. The programs that were available required monthly dues and were located across town which required students to bus or find other transportation from school immediately after dismissal. This presented a further drain on family resources and therefore many students were left without options at the end of the school day other than "hanging out" at transit points where other students congregated.

As a result of the above concerns, the Suisun City Police Department applied for a Problem-Solving Grant from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) in Washington, D.C. In September of 1998 a problem-solving grant was approved in the amount of \$90,000 to address the above problem. Suisun City was 1 of only 23 law enforcement agencies in the state to

receive one of these grants. The grant award amount was later increased to \$105,867.

The grant problem approved was "Disorderly Conduct at Transportation Points that Relates to a Specific Crime or Student Safety Problem."

Stipulations for accepting the above grant included addressing the problem by applying the law enforcement problem-solving model known as SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment), along with various progress reports and an evaluation of our efforts by an independent auditor.

POP Project Description: Below is a detailed description of our POP Project in the SARA Model Format.

Scanning

This step of the SARA Model for the most part was conducted during the grant application process and was based on input from the part-time school resource officer, city council members, school administrators, bus drivers and community groups. They all agreed this was a continual student safety issue that was going unresolved/undeterrred. Once the grant was approved we undertook a formal data collection and analysis effort to ensure the problem was supported by hard data. Data collected included:

- Interviews with School Administrators, School Resource Officer, Bus Drivers
- Focus Groups with Students and Residents
- Neighborhood Survey of 300 Residents

- Specialized Parent Survey
- Specialized Student Survey
- Review of Police Files (Calls for Service)
- School Bus Disciplinary Files

Analysis

Analysis of the data collected revealed the following:

Bulk of incidents occurred after school but stemmed from conflict during school hours
 88% of 300 parents surveyed were concerned about threatening behavior by students
 towards other students with 64.3% being very concerned (see 17 May Survey, sec IV)

- No *major hot spots* where incidents occurred but rather all over, not just the bus stops
- Desperate need for quality After School Programs that emphasize sports (school funding for intramural sports had been canceled)
- Desperate need for conflict management training (general populace & conflict managers)
- Small "At Risk" group of students were involved in bulk of conflicts
- School Resource Officer on campus had an immediate and positive effect on disorderly conduct
- Students/Parents were concerned over recent shootings at other schools
- Not all incidents were reported/cross referenced by staff and law enforcement

One "wannabe" gang was operating on campus

Response

Our response/action plan was developed to address the major problems identified in our data analysis as follows:

Off-Site Training for Student Conflict Managers: Since conflict resolution was identified as a deficient area, we applied grant funds to send 24 student conflict managers to a three day of site conflict management training and leadership course. Chaperones included representatives from the Suisun P.D. Our student conflict managers were now highly trained to mediate peer conflict and effected a significant increase in conflict resolutions. During the 98-99 school year they provided conflict resolution services to 97 students and during the 99-00 the number increased to 136 students.

Increase/Relocate Bus Stops: Increasing or relocating the drop off/pick up points for school buses was considered, however transportation officials were not open to moving or adding bus stops since they had been recently relocated to meet earlier community concerns.

Enhancement of "Yahoo After Two" After School Program: At the time this grant began the City was operating an under funded, under supervised "bare bones" after school program. The Suisun P.D. partnered with the Director of Community Services to develop what is now a more robust after school program (see memo at section IV) P.D. volunteers became involved by dropping by and taking part in informal pickup games. Officers also coached during various sporting events. Additionally, the Chief of Police requested and received \$25,000 in funding from the school district to fund this program for one additional year.

Additional Focus on the "At Risk" Community: Since our data analysis identified a core group of students most involved in disorderly conduct, it was easy to narrow our focus. A field trip to a

college basketball trip was set up for this core group of "at risk" students. The college game provided an extra bonus in that one of the players was a former "at risk" student at Crystal Middle School. He later went on to become a student conflict manager and enjoy success in high school and college. Additionally, we received support from a local businessman who provided free transportation to the game in the form of two stretch limousines. Each student was also given a T-shirt with the motto "Youth + Mentor = Achievement." Chaperones were a mix of police officers, school staff and the limousine company. The player spoke to the students after the game on his troubled past and how he overcame it to be able to play college ball. (see photos/article at section II)

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We were further able to concentrate on this core by sponsoring a Suisun City Traveling All Star Basketball Team. Most of the team was comprised from the above group, thus the coaching staff was able to work with them on a continual basis during practices and games.

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The above efforts were successful in a two-fold manner. First, by seeing the officers in a more positive light (coach, chaperone) rather than the normal "arrest" mode it was easier to establish a rapport. Secondly, since good behavior was a requirement for being eligible to play on the traveling team, the students were dissuaded from being involved in incidents of disorderly conduct. In the cases where they were involved in such incidents, it was easier to pull them aside

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during practice or while traveling to one of the games and counsel them.

P.D. Funds Challenge Day Training at all Suisun City Schools: Our data analysis identified a need for conflict resolution training as early in a student's schooling as possible. As a result we contracted with the Challenge Day Program to provide 8 Challenge Day events at our 4 schools (3 elementary and 1 middle school). Challenge Days are powerful, high-energy programs in

which youth and adult participants are guided through a series of experiential learning processes. The overall goals of the program are "to increase personal power and self esteem, to shift dangerous peer pressure to positive peer support and to eliminate the acceptability of teasing, oppression and all forms of violence." Appropriate conflict resolution skills are a recurring theme throughout the day's activities. Through a variety of games, trust building activities and presentations, students are given a unique opportunity to see themselves and the people around them through a whole new set of eyes. Over 800 students experienced the Challenge Day along with chaperones consisting of parents, teachers and police department personnel. Since not every student could receive this training we ensured our core groups of victims and offenders were in attendance. Follow up with each of the schools indicated the program initially had a positive effect as students were more empathetic and civil to each other. However, a need exists for a formal program that continues to reinforce the skills presented at the Challenge Day. (see article at section II)

Teacher Training on Gang Awareness/Early Y.D. of Problem Students: Our School Resource Officer now makes a presentation at the beginning of each school year to the staff and faculty at our four schools. They are made aware of the warning signs for gang involvement (graffiti on backpacks, tattoo's, manner of dressing, etc.) and disorderly conduct in general (i.e. continual visits to the front office, aggressive attitude/behavior, etc.) Additionally, he attends weekly staff/faculty meetings where incidents of disorderly conduct can be addressed in the proper forum and in a timely manner. Our DARE program also is built into the school's curriculum to further reinforce anti-violence themes.

P.D. Identifies Local Heroes: As part of an effort to highlight community partners, the Chief of Police began identifying individuals in the local community who had gone above and beyond the call of duty in supporting the department's efforts to work with the various schools. In December of 1999 the Mayor of Suisun City presented Mr. Robert Ashford with an Award of Excellence for his work with the student conflict managers of Crystal Middle School.

Problem-Solving Projects taken on by the Student Conflict Managers: To ensure our middle schoolers were "part of the solution", we assigned problem-solving projects to Crystal Middle School's Student Conflict Managers. After receiving training on applying the SARA Model to specific problems, they were divided into four groups and allowed to select from a list of campus concerns compiled by the administration and our data collection/analysis. The problems selected were: Graffiti, Disorderly Conduct on Buses, Disorderly Conduct After School and Incidents of Threats, Bullying and Intimidation. Students met weekly with advisors from the P.D. as they followed the SARA model process to completion, including development and administering their own surveys, interviews with staff, faculty, bus drivers and parents. Each group had to develop a final report and a power point presentation.(see sample in section H) Formal presentations were made at City Hall and attendees included our Chief of Police, City Council members and members of the School Board (see photos/article at section II). ,

Elimination of the "Wannabe" Gang: Our data analysis reflected the possible presence of a campus gang. When brought to the school administration's attention, they in fact were not aware of this "gang". Meetings were immediately set up with each parent and attended by our School Resource Officer. A determination was made these students were in fact simply mimicking a much older gang in an adjoining city. Most of the parents were in disbelief, but very grateful the

matter was brought to their attention and the gang was immediately disbanded.

P.D. Sponsored a Five Team Basketball League: Another point of contention among middle school students was the lack of intramural sports programs. Since school funding had been eliminated there were no after school sports teams. Initially we hoped to establish one team to represent Crystal Middle- School in local basketball leagues, however the turn out was so overwhelming we had to change our plans. Now, instead of one team the Suisun Police Department partnered with the local YMCA to create a five team Crystal Middle School basketball league. At \$300 per team entry we had to look for outside sources of funding and were successful in finding civic organizations in the community to sponsor our teams. No student was turned away and each player received a jersey and an award at the end of the season Off-duty policeman volunteered to serve as coaches and a season ending awards ceremony was later hosted by our Chief of Police. (see photos at section II)

P.D. Sponsored a Traveling All Star Team: When our city was invited to compete in regional competition, we again had to look for sponsors and found the McDonald's Corporation willing and able to sponsor our traveling all star team. As a by-product the bulk of team was comprised of our "at risk" students. These students traveled all over Northern California receiving attention in the local press. (see photos/article at section II)

Quarterly Meetings between Chief of Police and School Principals: A first of its kind forum in this area, the Chief of Police began meeting quarterly with the principals from our four schools. Issues ranging from traffic crossing guards to disorderly conduct are discussed at these meetings and followed up on until the concern(s) is resolved. Seven meetings have been held to date with the Mayor and District School Superintendent in attendance at the most recent meeting.

P.D. Funds PeaceBuilders Program: Feedback from our Challenge Days indicated a need for a follow up program to reinforce conflict resolution skills covered in the actual Challenge Day. As a result the P.D. spearheaded a city-wide effort to bring the nationally acclaimed PeaceBuilders Program to the four Suisun City schools. The PeaceBuilders Program is an inclusive program which creates a peaceful learning environment by reinforcing conflict management skills that in turn lead to reduced violent behavior and increased positive and thoughtful behavior. Our primary feeder elementary school has already become a PeaceBuilders school and in just a six month period suspensions have been reduced from a normal 30-35 to an all time low of 2. The P.D. is funding the middle school version of this program to begin in January 2001. We also are actively working with the district office and our city council to bring this program to the remaining two elementary schools in the very near future. (see article at section II)

P.D. Funds Intruder Alert Alarm System: Besides addressing the issue of disorderly conduct at transportation points, we also took a look at specific safety concerns. Our data analysis reflected a concern by parents and administrators over the lack of an intruder alert system at our four public schools. This concern came in the wake of the Columbine High School shootings. Once again funding was provided by local civic organizations. Harris Protection Systems donated the equipment and installation fees, while the emergency response buttons (\$1,700) were paid for by the Suisun City Police and Fireman's Booster Association. The buttons alert Harris Protection Systems who in turn alert the police. With these alarms now in place, help is as near as the push of a button.(see article at section II)

PeaceBuilders Program was implemented at Crystal Middle School in Jan 01 and had an immediate impact. The Principal reports that a noticeable decrease in incidents of threats, bullying and intimidation. We are currently tracking reported incidents of threats, bullying and intimidation to assess long term impact of this program.

Anti-Bullying Awareness Presentations were conducted at all four of our public schools. Approximately 4000 students student and faculty received a 45 minute presentation on how to best deal with incidents of threats, bullying and intimidation. The program also received television coverage in a special feature on the evening news and was also a front page article in the local newspaper.

Anti-Bullying Educational Pamphlets have been provided to each parent of a student attending one or our four public schools. The pamphlets have several helpful hints for parents and victims of bullying as well as hotline number an e-mail to seek further assistance.

P.D. continues to work with "At Risk" Community by sponsoring basketball teams in a local YMCA league. These teams mostly consist of "at risk" students who have been left off the rosters of several other teams due to nonconformance. P.D. staff are working with the team and have been able to reach out to them where other coaches could not.

Adult supervision in school yards has been made more visible by orange vests provided for all yard duties, hallway monitors, student/parent patrol etc. Originally, recommended by students at Crystal Middle School, the vest eliminate concerns students had that they could not recognize the yard duties from the students.

Assessment

It is important to note that an assessment for this particular type of grant is not necessarily based on a traditional measurement of "did the proposed solution work", but rather did the dept talent properly apply the SARA methodology to the grant problem. A favorable assessment using the above criteria was made by our independent evaluator in his final report. (see report at section V)

While some tangible measurements were possible, there were also several intangible benefits that are either not measurable at this time or not measurable at all. An example of an intangible would be the long term effects building better rapport with the local police department will have on a student's future conduct. Or what effect will the experience of Challenge Day have on a student's future conduct. We again called on our contractor to assess the more traditional impact of our response efforts.

Student Conflict Management Training: As mentioned earlier, the number of conflicts resolved by our highly trained student conflict managers increased from 96 in the 98-99 school year to 133 in 2000 - - a 38.5% increase!

P.D. YMCA Basketball League: Another successful response! Besides providing an activity for the students to participate in after school, students reported they improved their basketball skills, learned respect for themselves and their teammates and developed a sense of team/school spirit. Additional comments from the students included "it kept us busy, no time to get in trouble, and fighting went down." Parents echoed similar remarks with the most frequent comment being that students came home too tired to get into trouble on practice and game days. Better rapport was also established between our volunteer coaches (police officers) and the league participants. It is

also our belief the visibility achieved from this league directly contributed to the school district's decision to once again fund intramural sports programs at Crystal Middle School.

Challenge Days: Staff, faculty, parents and students interviewed all agreed the Challenge Days helped everyone with empathy building, self discipline and cognitive thinking. One particularly disruptive middle school-student actually broke down in tears and apologized to his peers for past bullying behavior. The only concern mentioned was the program is only one day and that is just not enough reinforcement.

Incidents of Disorderly..Conduct on Buses or at Transit Points: The number of citations after implementing our response plan dropped 69.35%. During calendar year 1998 a total of 137 citations were issued to Crystal Middle School Students, an average of 11.42 per month. From October 1999 to may of 2000 only 28 citations were issued for an average of 3.5 per month.

Suspension Data: Looking at suspension forms for Crystal Middle School to compare the school year from October 1998 through July 1999 with October 1999 through July 2000 there were actually some increases in disorderly conduct. Suspensions for fights causing physical injury increased from 4 to 6; suspensions for disorderly conduct went from 8 to 26; suspensions for fighting/battery went from 22 to 50. While these numbers may seem contrary to our program objectives we believe the increases can be attributed to several factors - students are now more willing to report incidents and school administrators are enforcing a zero tolerance policy. We also have found that disorderly conduct was cyclical based on a core group that passed through the middle school and then moved on to high school. Disorderly conduct is significantly down for period August 2000 to October 2000 and this is being directly attributed the last year's core group of "at risk" students moving on to high school.

PeaceBuilder's Program: A resounding success as evidenced by survey data below.

- 100% of yard duties/parent patrollers surveyed agreed on the effectiveness of the vests
- 90% of teachers and administrators recommend continuing the PeaceBuilder's Program
- 80,6% felt the PeaceBuilder's Program was perfect for addressing Bullying concerns
- 80% of teachers and administrators believe the PeaceBuilders Program was effective

Long Term Sustainment: Our goal since the start of this POP Project was to design it in such as way that once grant funds expired, the program would be dovetailed into existing programs and resources.. As so often is the case, once the grant funds disappear the problem-solving efforts share the same fate. Long term sustainment efforts include:

- The School Resource Officer will incorporate anti-bullying education as part DARE
 - Our Youth Services Officer will monitor anti-bullying hot line and web site
 - Quarterly Principal's Meeting with Chief of Police are continuing
- The department applied for and received a 3 year grant for a full-time SRO Position
- the city's various fund matches will be provided by the local school district
- P.A.L Committee is in final stages of application for formal status as P.A.L. Organization

**Submission for the
Herman Goldstein Award
"Disorderly Conduct at Transportation Points"
Agency and Officer Information**

1. At what level of the police organization was this problem-solving initiative adopted? Every *officer* in the Suisun City Police Department considers themselves a Community Policeman. We don't have a section or special assignments for community policing efforts. As a result the entire department adopted this problem-solving initiative.

2. Did officers or management receive any training in problem-oriented policing and/or problem solving before this project began or during its execution? All our officers attended a 24 hour community policing orientation course that went into great detail on community relations, problem-solving, use of the SARA Model and how to organize the community. Our grant manager, school resource officer and middle school conflict manager attended a basic SARA Workshop and the subsequent Response Conference hosted by the COPS Office.

3. Were additional incentives given to officers who engaged in problem-solving? Yes. We have developed a first of its kind incentive program that creates intermediate ranks between officer and sergeant, that includes a 5% increase in salary. One of the key components in obtaining these intermediate ranks is successful completion of a POP Project.

4. What resources and guidelines were used, if any, by police officers to help manage this problem-solving initiative? Our department was fortunate enough to receive a \$100k School-Based Partnership, Problem-Solving Grant from the Department of Justice.

5. What issues/problems were identified with the problem-oriented policing model or the problem-solving model? For one thing, it reinforced for our officers the importance of collaborating with the community in making a POP Project fully successful. We also identified shortcomings/challenges in our data collection ability and have purchase crime analysis software to aid in the process.

6. What general resources were committed to this project, and of those resources, what went beyond the existing department budget? Besides the problem-solving grant award of \$100k, we also received funds from local organizations like McDonalds, YMCA, our own P.O.A. and Citizen's Academy Alumni Association to fund basketball teams, alarm systems for the schools, t-shirts, travel expenses for our youth teams, etc.

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Supporting Documentation

Data Collection

2000 Report on Bullying, Threatening and Intimidation at
Crystal Middle School

By The Fairfield Research Group
April 2000

Introduction

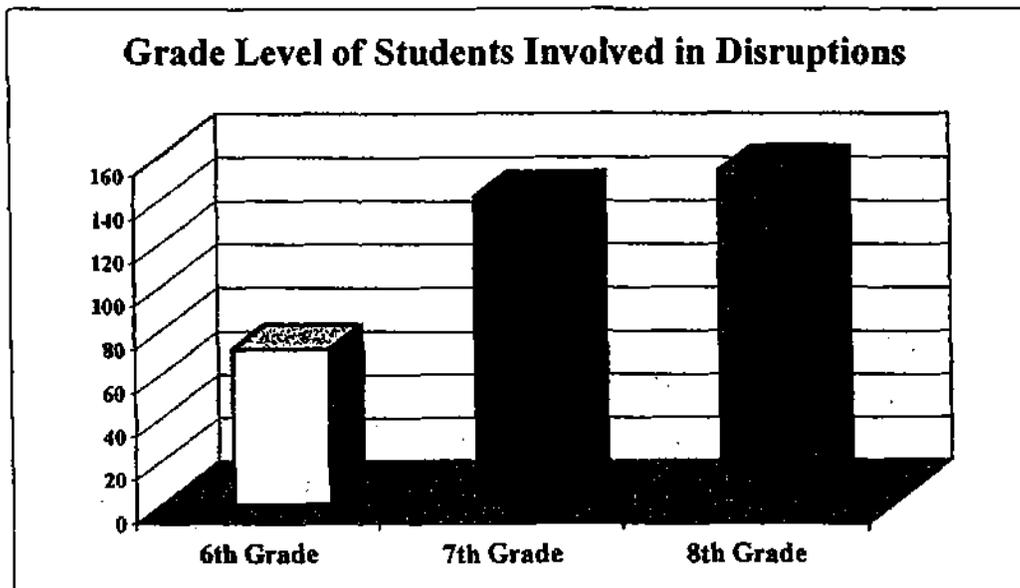
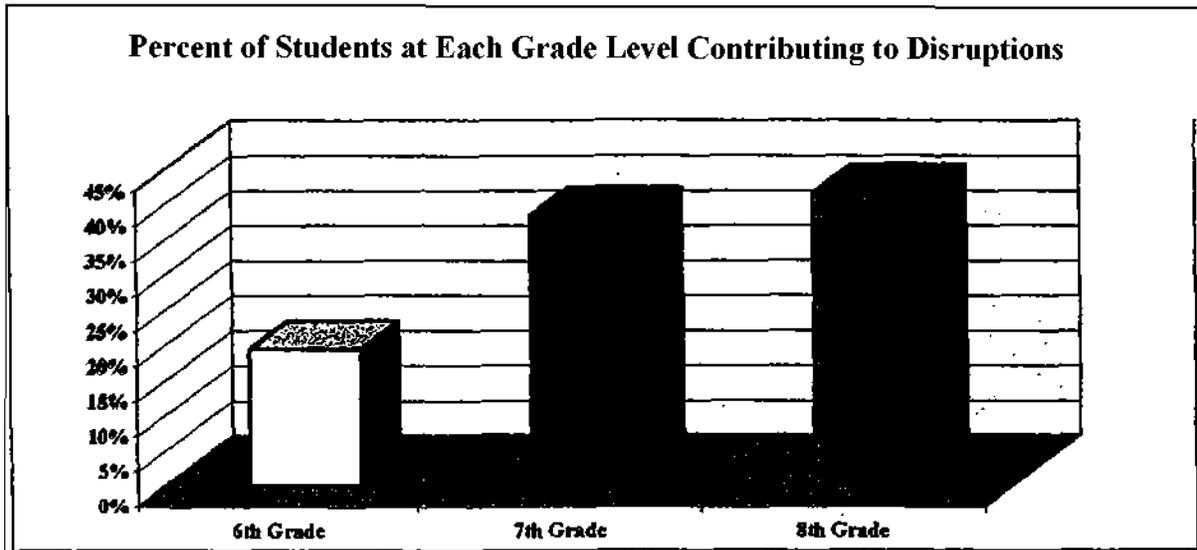
The data included in this report was gathered from students, teachers and staff members at Crystal Middle School and Crescent Elementary School. Focus groups, written surveys and personal and phone interviews were conducted to provide primary research. Secondary research from records of student disruptions at Crystal Middle School include 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Results of our research for the 2000 grant to study "Bullying, Threatening and Intimidation at Crystal Middle School" revealed that these behaviors often lead to fighting, assault, disruption and weapon violations on and off campus. Once we recognized the relationship between the behaviors and the consequences, we analyzed the suspension reports and tailored our questions to students, teachers and administrators to collect data.

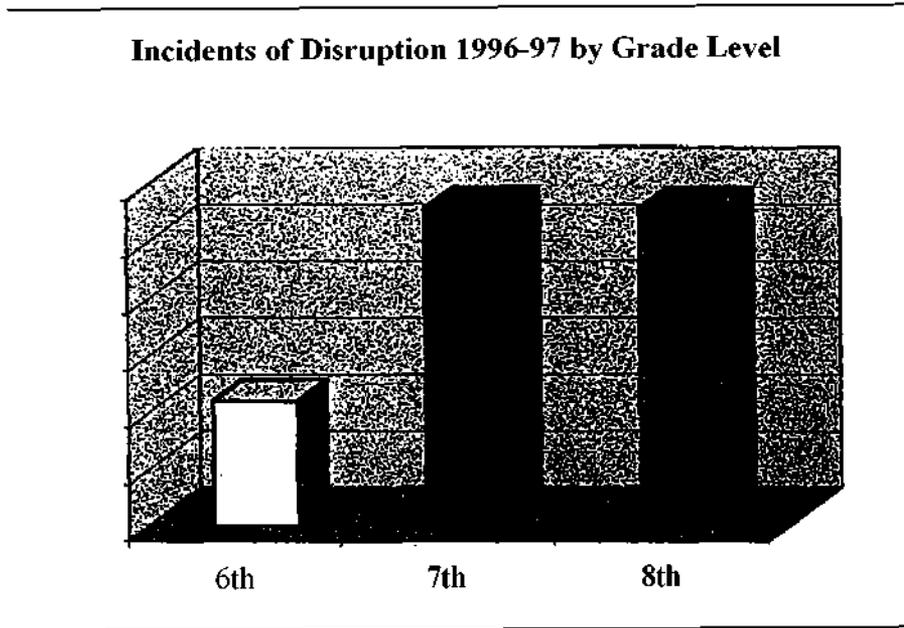
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During the school years beginning from 1996-97 to 1999-2000, the grade level of those involved in incidents of disruption, fighting/battery and weapons is broken down as follows:

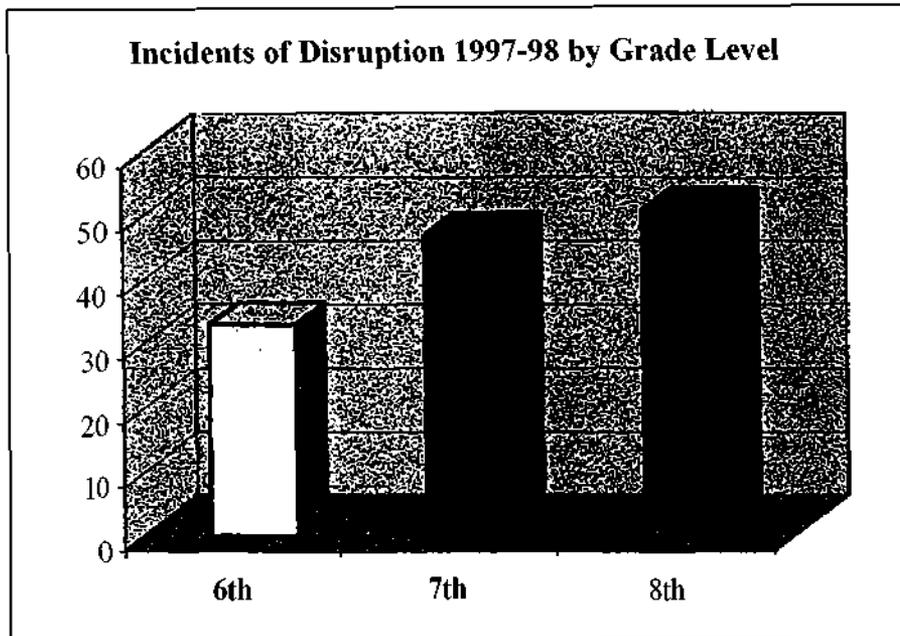
6^h graders were involved in 72 incidents (19.6%), 7th graders were involved in 142 (38.6%), and 8th graders were involved in 154 (41.8%).



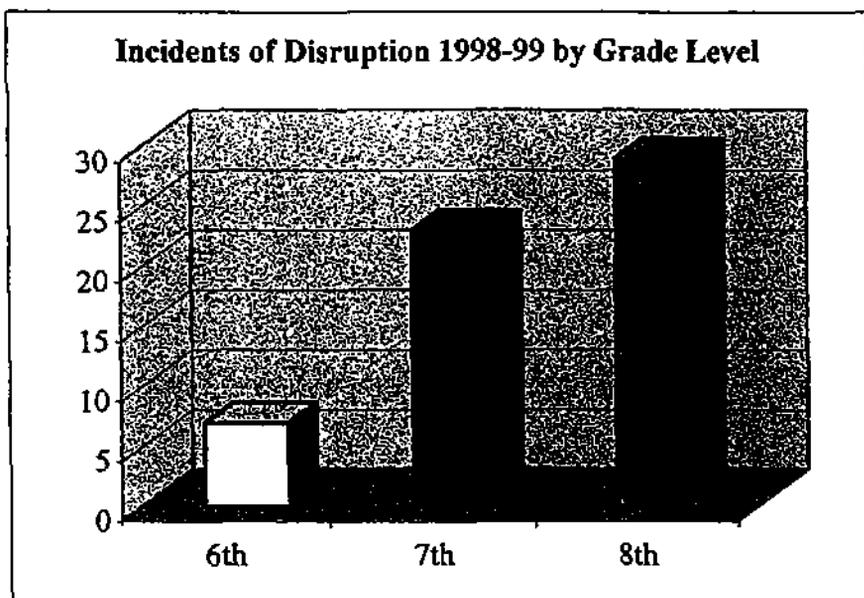
The following charts show the number of disruptions by grade level each year. In 1996-97 there were 22 incidents of disruption by 6th graders, 56 by 7th graders and 56 by 8th graders.



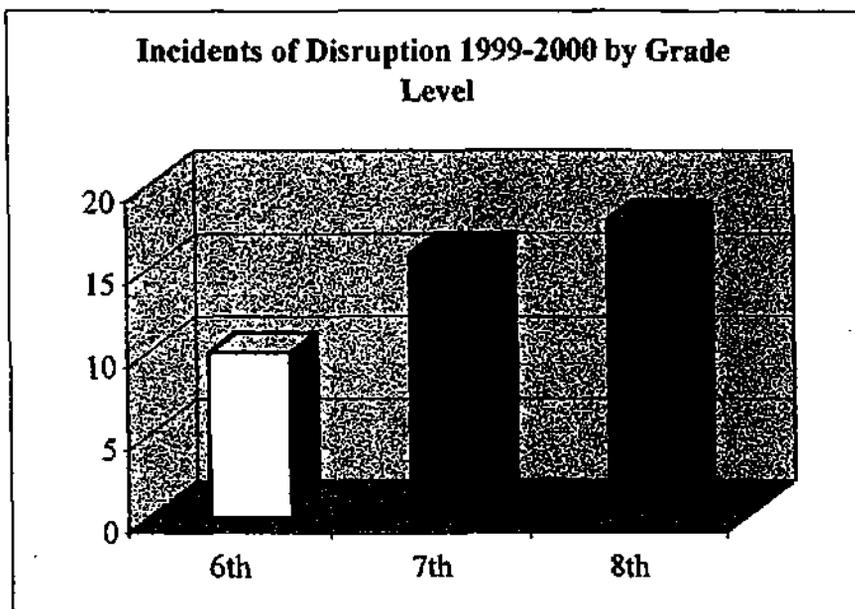
In 1997-98, there were 33 incidents of disruption by 6th graders, 47 by 7th graders and 51 by 8th graders.



In 1998-99 there were 7 incidents of disruption by 6th graders, 23 by 7th graders and 29 by 8th graders.

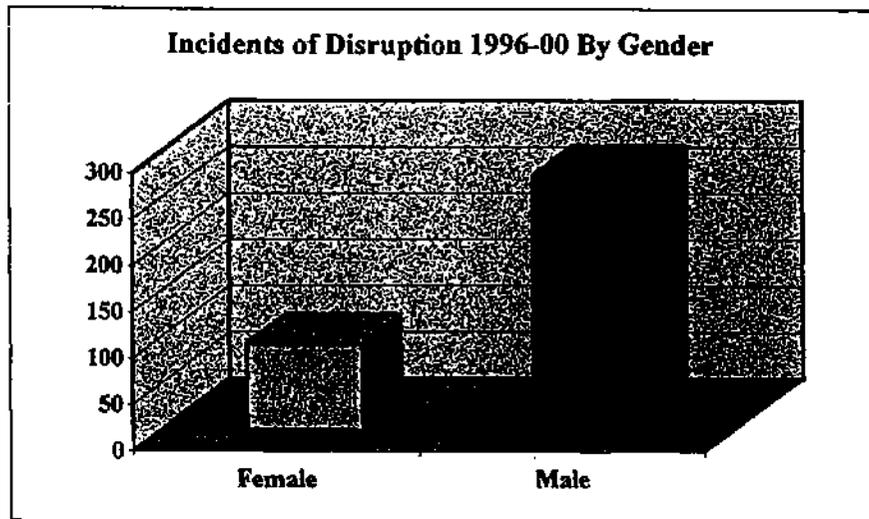


In 1999-00, there were 10 incidents of disruption by 6th graders, 16 by 7th graders and 18 by 8th graders.

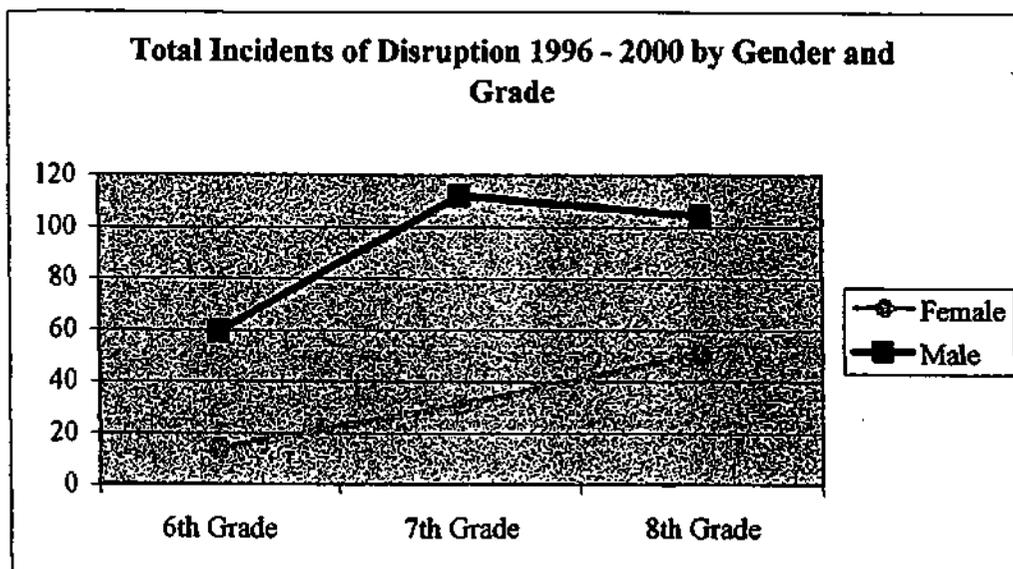


Although the number of incidents as a result of bullying, threatening and intimidation vary from year to year, the ratio of incidents by grade level remains much more constant with those at the 7th and 8th levels more likely to be perpetrators or victims.

The next category is segregated by gender. The number of males (275) is nearly three times higher than the number of females (93).

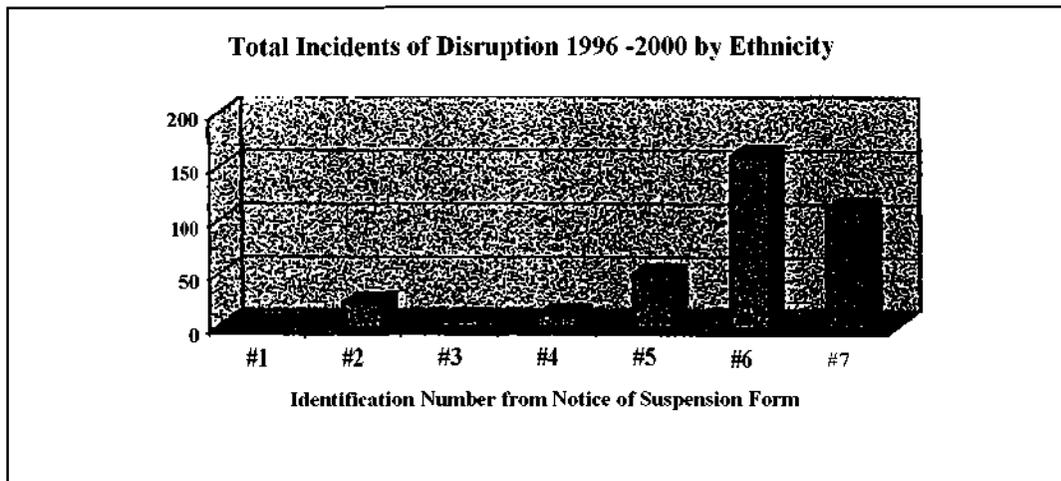


The data collected indicates that the ratio of females to males involved in disruptions increases as the students progress to higher grade levels. At the 6th grade level the number of males (59) to females (13) is approximately 4:1. At the 7th grade level the number of males (112) to females (30) remains approximately 4:1. At the 8th grade level the number of males (104) to females (50) drops to approximately 2:1.

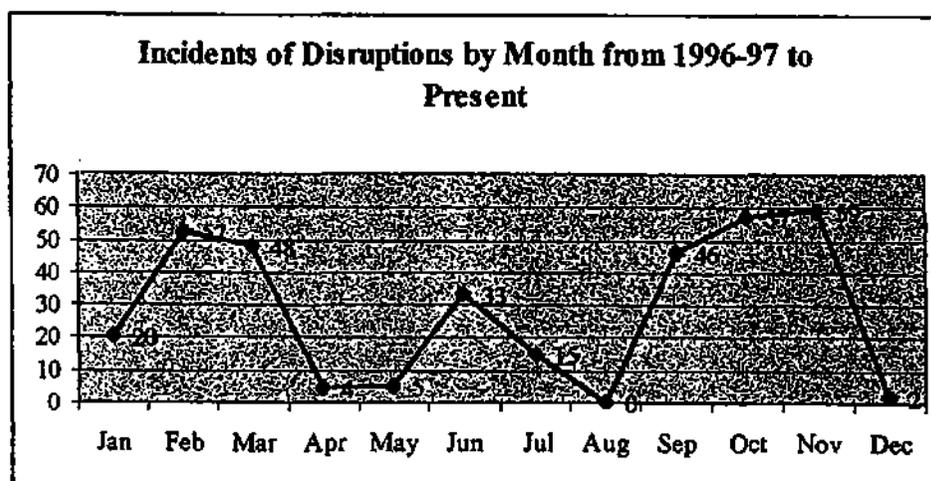


Ethnicity

The largest incidence of disruptions beginning with the 1996/97 school year involve members of the ethnic group identified on Notice of Suspension forms as #6 (161 incidents). The ranking of the rest of the groups is #7 (112 incidents), #5 (50 incidents) and #2 (23 incidents).



As the graph below shows, incidents of disruption occurred most frequently in the fall and winter months, peaking in November (59 incidents) and followed by October (57 incidents). February ranks third (52 incidents), followed by March (48) and September (46).^{(46).i}



ⁱ Crystal Middle School follows a year round calendar. School is not in session April-May, August and December.

Socio-economic

Thirteen of 32 (40.6%) of the students in the five focus groups conducted between March 1, and March 31, 2000, identified as being victims or perpetrators of bullying, threatening or intimidation, came from families with either no father (nine students), no parent (two students) or a weaker relationship with the father (two students). Surveys completed by . teachers at Crystal Middle School in 1999, and Crescent Elementary School in 2000 also cite lack of parental involvement and support as a characteristic of "at risk" students.

Forty percent of the students (147 of 368) who were suspended between 1996 and the present were involved in one-time disruptions. The other 60% were multiple incidents by the same students. According to both the perpetrators and victims of the student focus groups, many of the incidents were precipitated by, or continuations of, previous incidents of disruption.

Focus group questions intended to segregate the victims from the offenders yielded ambiguous information. Many of the students characterized themselves as victims despite statements that indicated they were offenders. The offenders in some cases were victims in others and vice versa. The point is that many of the disruptions are ongoing as the result of incomplete resolution of earlier incidents.

Bullying, threatening and intimidation were highest in areas students congregated and were cited as buses and bus stops, the cafeteria, locker rooms (boys' and girls') the "A" building and "B" building, and near the bleachers.

Students in the focus groups identified as both victims and offenders were often noticeably physically larger or smaller than many students, especially males.

Focus groups and interviews with students yielded the following information. 40% of the time, students cited talking, taunting or teasing as behavior that led to fighting and/or intimidation. 60% of the time, students said that physical contact (pushing, kicking, grabbing, punching) led to fighting and/or intimidation.

Interviews and surveys of administrators, teachers, school psychologists and school personnel identified the following reasons for bullying, intimidation and threatening behaviors.

- The majority of the school faculty and administration (29%) responding to the survey felt parental involvement was the most influential factor in student behavior.

Other reasons cited were:

- Anger at teachers
- + Lack of resources to know how to act differently
- Lack of respect for others and their property

- Alienation from peers
- Boredom or depression
- + Proving their grounds
- Frustration and poor communication skills
- + The media demonstrates that violence is the way to go when you are upset
- Low self esteem; aggressive behavior role-modeled to child
- Inability to control anger
- Responding physically to verbal insults
- Students who have difficulty following game rules out on the playground get in fights with students who argue with them
- Lack of knowing how to listen

Interviews and reports from Fairfield Suisun School District bus drivers indicated that, in their opinion, most of the behavior problems were the result of vulgar and abusive language, disrespect for others, and disregard for rules.

Conclusion

The who, what, where, when, why and residual effect questions reveal the following information about both the victims and the perpetrators:

- Predominantly male
- Older (7th and 8th graders)
- Physically larger or smaller than average students
- Lack of consistent parental involvement
- The behavior comes from low self-esteem, physical contact, sustained teasing or taunting, frustration, poor communication skills, and "put downs" or public humiliation
- The highest number of incidents occurred between classes, after school, and during the months of February, March, September, October and November
- Incidents occur in the cafeteria, at the bus stop (on and off campus), on the buses, and outside the locker rooms during P.E.
- The residual effect is repeated incidents by the same students (victims and perpetrators)

"Congress has defined an "at risk student" as one who -- because of limited English proficiency, poverty, race, geographic location, or economic disadvantage - faces a greater risk of low educational achievement or reduced academic expectations." ²

"Researchers are discovering that behavior such as taunting, teasing, name-calling, pushing, hitting or spreading rumors at an early age can produce adults who are anti-social and violent."

In the opinion of the teachers and administrators we interviewed, intervention programs that started early (1st to 4th grade), and continued through high school, provided the best opportunity to reduce bullying, threatening behavior and intimidation. Other state and national intervention programs we studied shared this opinion.

² "From at Risk to Excellence", article from The National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. Volume 1, Number 1.

³ "More Attention Paid to Bullying at Schools". Article Wichita Eagle, November 4, 1999.

Suisun City Police Survey

May 17, 1999

By The Fairfield Research Group

The Fairfield Research Group

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Fairfield, CA 94533
707-427-0460

Methodology

The data used in this study are based on 300 telephone interviews with adult registered voters in Suisun City.

The interviews were conducted Monday through Sunday between April 3, and April 10, 1999.

A random selection was made from the list of registered voters and respondents were screened to insure that they were 18 years of age or over.

The study was designed and analyzed by The Fairfield Research Group, and interviewing was conducted by The Fairfield Research Group.

Suisun City Police Department Survey

Two hundred of the three hundred respondents (66.6%) to the survey reported having seen graffiti in Suisun City in the last six months. Of the 66.6% that saw the graffiti, 155 (77.5%) had seen it on multiple occasions, and 65 (32.5%) saw it five or more times. Fewer males (24.6%) reported not seeing graffiti in the last six months, than females (38.8%). Of the total who said they saw graffiti, the highest number reported seeing it at businesses near the railroad tracks (28.9%), followed by Highway 12 (23.7%), bridges and overpasses (13.7%) and Old Town Suisun (10.5%). The ratios regarding location were similar for both men and women. 52.3% of the respondents believe graffiti is a bigger problem now than 5 years ago, and 86.7% were concerned about graffiti, including 60% that were very concerned about it. Of the 8.3% that said they had reported graffiti to any Suisun City department, 76% reported being satisfied with the response time. A smaller margin of females (61.9%) were more likely to be very concerned by graffiti than men (57.9%), although a majority of both sexes was very concerned. A nearly equal number of men (50.8%) and women (53.8%) agreed that graffiti was a greater problem today than five years ago.

Thirty six respondents (12%) had seen threatening behavior by students in the last six months. Of those witnessing threatening behavior by students, 41.7% recalled it being near school bus stops. Although 12% may not seem significant, the number is relatively high considering the sampling size, the probable short duration of disturbances, and the simultaneous coincidence of time, location, and student participation necessary for the disturbances to be witnessed. Nearly twice as many respondents, 71 (24.3%) reported second hand knowledge of threatening behavior by students, and 78.3% of those polled felt student behavior was worse than five years ago although the last statistic is likely to have been influenced by recent publicity surrounding the attack by students on other students in Littleton, Colorado last month. 88.3% of the respondents were concerned about threatening behavior by students towards other students, with a big majority (64.3%) being very concerned. Of the 43 residents that said they reported incidents of student disturbances to the Suisun City police department, 88.4% were satisfied with the response time. 15.1 % of the males and 9.8% of the females responding to the survey said they had seen or heard of threatening behavior by students in the last six months. More females (24.9%) than males (22.2%) reported knowing another person who was a victim of threatening behavior by students. Females (70.5%) were also more likely to respond that they were very

concerned by threatening behavior than males (56.5%). Both males (76.2%) and females (80.4%) agreed that threatening behavior by students was a bigger problem today than five years ago. A majority of males (57.1%) and females (61.3%) were very satisfied with Suisun City police service, and a majority of males (66.7%) and females (63.6%) were aware of the Suisun City Police Department's community policing programs.

Over half (52.4%) of the respondents had one or more people 18 or under living with them. A teen center (36%) and sports program (35.7%) were virtually tied for popularity with those polled for after school programs. The majority indicated that Friday was the best day for the program (41.3%), and the highest number (23.7%) felt that the program should last until 6 p.m.

City services were rated in the next section of the survey. Only 12.3% of those polled had used the City's web site, mainly due to lack of awareness. A big opportunity exists for an awareness campaign for residents and students to promote the use of the web site. Police services received very high ratings. 91.7% of those surveyed were satisfied with police services, and an extremely high 59.7% were very satisfied. 65% of those surveyed also were aware of community policing programs.

When the results of the survey were cross matched with home ownership, opinions were nearly identical. The only significant differences were in reporting graffiti and student disturbances, where homeowners were 33% more likely to report incidents as non-homeowners. Also, twice as many non-homeowners as homeowners in the survey were single.

Student Disruptions at Crystal Middle School

October 11, 1999

by

The Fairfield Research Group

Introduction

This report is the result of over 150 hours of primary research with over 370 people. The results are based on personal interviews with the principal, assistant principal, school counselor and DARE officer at Crystal Middle School, FSUSD bus drivers, residents of Suisun City, written surveys completed by teachers, the campus monitor, attendance clerks and custodian at Crystal Middle School, a focus group of male students at Crystal Middle School, a focus group of female students at Crystal Middle School, a focus group of Neighborhood Watch block captains, a focus group of students cited for disrupting school buses, interviews with supervisors of the Yahoo After 2 program, and a telephone survey of 300 Suisun City residents. Secondary data includes information from Suisun City police documents, a written survey of Crystal Middle School students, a written survey of Crystal School parents, information from the Fairfield Suisun Unified School District and other documented sources. The data was collected between March 1999, and October 1999.

Executive Summary

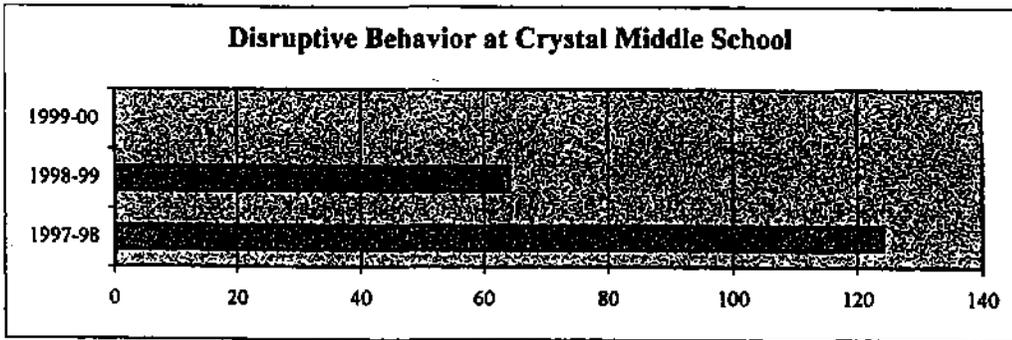
Incidents of violence at Crystal Middle School decreased by over 50% during the last two years. The research indicates three factors contributed to the decline: the presence of a police resource officer and two intervention programs, Yahoo After 2, and Peer Counseling.

The participants involved in disruptions were predominantly male, and eighth graders. Focus group research indicates that participants were often larger than average size or smaller than average size but physical statistics were unavailable to further confirm the data. Incidents of disruption were most likely to occur on Monday and Wednesday, and in the fall and early spring. The disruptions were most likely to occur after 11 a.m. when students were completely awake. Fighting on campus was most likely to occur on the playground, while fighting off campus was most likely to occur at one of the parks located by bus stops, on the bus, or at the marina across from the Port of Call store. Fights often started as the result of taunting, name-calling or minor physical contact that escalated. Sports events were sometimes the source of a fight. The overall trend of disruptions at Crystal School is very positive, but a few areas might be reviewed for further opportunities to reduce or prevent disruptions.

- u **Increase the scope of conflict management training.** Start training students at elementary school level to manage conflicts. In all three focus groups with students, the majority identified their parent or guardian as the person they admired most. This makes parents strong candidates to teach by example. Provide conflict management training for them, or at the very least make them aware of the strong effect their behavior has on their son or daughter. The "Healthy Start" program in the Sacramento City Unified School District provides a community approach by offering a referral program of community agencies that provide health, mental health, social and other support services to students and their families. Train teachers in conflict management and to recognize "at risk" students, especially the teachers students identified as ones they like and feel comfortable talking with. Offer awareness and training programs over the internet. Create a relationship between parents, students and the community to keep at risk students from "falling through the cracks"
- o **Continue and increase the current programs for the resource officer, Yahoo After 2, and Peer Counseling.** Increase the level of communication in all three programs by establishing a routine meeting with everyone involved in student disruptions, including the student peer counselors, Jeremy Crone, Tom Manglona, Bob Ashford, and Bonnie Okamura, and document the meetings. The meetings can be used to identify and alert each of the participants about problems or potential problems. Establish routine and specific reports to identify and measure components that will improve each program's effectiveness.

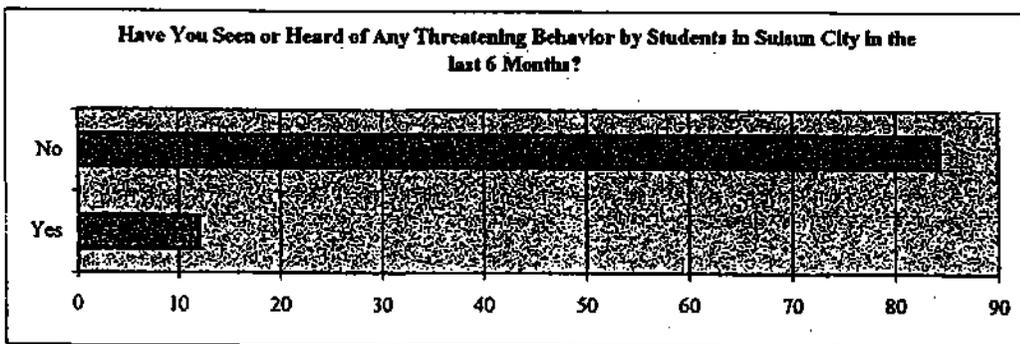
- o **Begin tracking victims and perpetrators at elementary school level and follow them through high school.** Increase the number of criteria used to describe students involved in disruptions to find common characteristics. The school psychologist can help with some of the psychological identifiers other identifiers include physical characteristics like height and weight. Develop programs to work with victims as well as perpetrators. One of the references points out that it is the "acting up" student that gets the attention, while others remain hidden in the classroom because it is the "squeaky wheel" that gets the most attention.
- **Be prepared.** Several students mentioned a recent shooting in which a young man familiar to many of them was killed. Develop a crisis manual to follow in case something like this or worse happens. All four schools in Suisun City share the school psychologist. If something happens, he or she may not be able to make a timely visit to all students at each school. Minimal psychological training for key staff members students feel comfortable talking can help students work through a traumatic incident.

Research based on surveys of Suisun City teachers, students, parents, residents and analysis of statistical summaries, indicates student disruptions at Crystal Middle School are declining. Statistical research, summarized in the graph below, shows student disruptions decreased 51.6% at Crystal Middle School from 1997 to 1998 and no incidents have occurred during the first two months of the 1999,¹ The disruptions we analyzed are categorized as "causing physical injury, disruption, or fighting and battery".



In a Crystal School teacher survey, 51% of the teaching staff said they thought student disturbances decreased the last 12 months and 49% believed there was no change. None of the teachers thought disruptions were increasing.²

In a survey of 52 students at Crystal School, 98.1% said they felt safe on the way to school, and 92.3% said they felt safe going home. In a survey of parents of Crystal School students, 91% said they thought their child was safe on the way to school and 86.3% said they thought their child was safe on the way home from school.³ When Suisun City residents were asked whether they had seen or heard of any threatening behavior by students in Suisun City in the last 6 months, 84.3% reported no.⁴



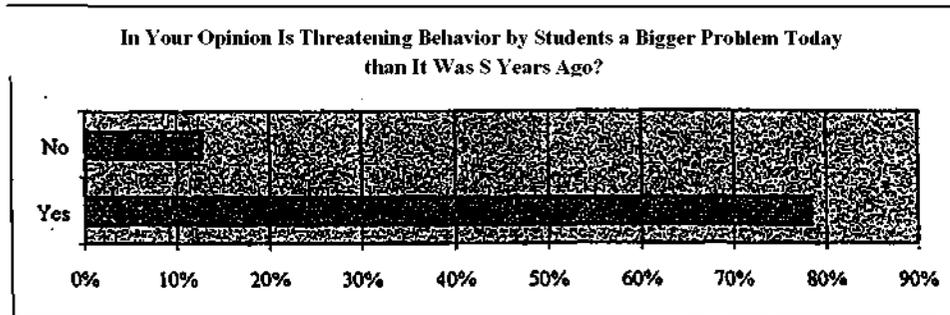
¹ Analysis of Crystal Middle School disruption incident database by Fairfield Research Group, October 6, 1999.

² Crystal Middle School Survey of Teachers, Fairfield Research Group, September 7, 1999.

³ Crystal Middle School Parent Survey, by Juan Camacho, March 3, 1999.

⁴ Suisun City Police Department Survey, 1999, Fairfield Research Group, April 3-10, 1999.

78.3% of the respondents to the same survey agreed however, that student disturbances were a bigger problem today than five years ago.



Our research suggests that three factors contributed to reduce disruptions or eanYlpus:

- Adding a resource officer from the Suisun City Police Department
- a Providing an after school activity program
- o Providing a peer counseling program

A focus group of block captains in Suisun City said adding a resource officer (Jeremy Crone) "really reduced the number of fights". Among the responses from teachers at Crystal School to the question, "What do you think is the best policy/response to student disturbances", were the following:

- "Officer Crone is the best at intervention, no other has proved effective."
- "Keep Officer Crone on campus."
- "Police intervention. If gang related, zero tolerance."

In addition to the police resource officer, two intervention programs are in place at Crystal Middle School - Peer Counseling and Yahoo After 2. More data is needed to conclusively prove the intervention programs reduce disruptions, but comments from the teacher survey and the steady decline of disruptions on campus indicate a correlation. The comments by teachers that student disruptions stem from "alienation of peers", "lack of resources to know how to act differently" and "lack of skills in handling tense situations" are addressed in conflict management coaching conducted in peer counseling. The teachers responses to " **What do you think can be done to prevent student disturbances?**" such as "school wide activities to focus energies on school sponsored sports, pet clubs, drill teams, etc.", "keep students engaged", and "activities to occupy time", are addressed by Yahoo After 2.⁶

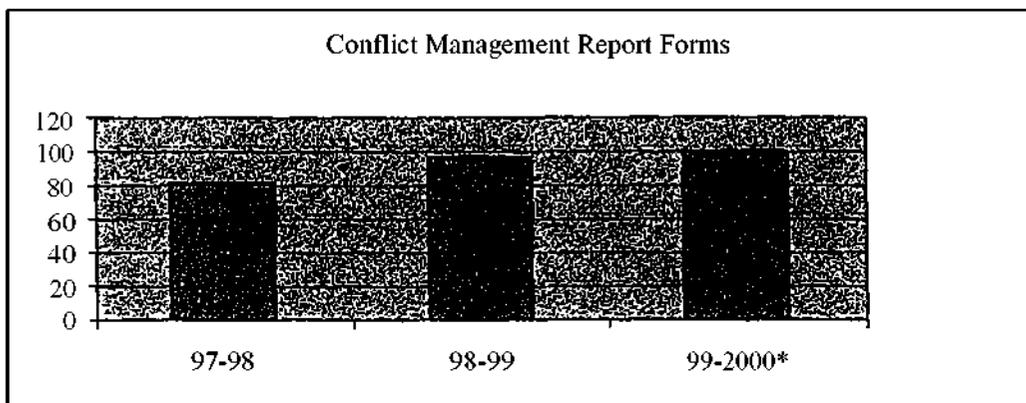
Prospective student peer counselors are selected from applications reviewed by Bonnie Okamura, Student Counselor, Mr. Ashford, Student Recognition Coordinator and student peer counselors from the prior school term. The students are then trained to counsel their peers on conflict management. Crystal School utilizes two peer counselor training programs. The Fairfield Suisun Unified School District program is a one-day training. A privately run program called ROPES training is held for two and a half days. ROPES

⁵ Neighborhood Watch Block Captain focus group, March 23, 1999.

⁶ Crystal Middle School Survey of Teachers, Fairfield Research Group, September 7, 1999.

training is employed when funding is available. It focuses on team building in addition to teaching listening skills, taking and keeping control, staying objective and cause and effects of conflicts. The program provides 8th grade peer counselors with a certificate of participation at their promotion ceremony, and all the volunteers attend a picnic during the school year, and a year-end party.⁸

Bonnie feels that of all the FSUSD schools involved in peer counseling, Crystal School's program is utilized the most. Follow up forms are turned in after a conflict management session. Bonnie then reviews the resolution forms. The following graph summarizes the forms turned in for the last three years. In 1997, 81 forms were submitted, in 1998, 97 forms were turned in, an increase of 19.7%. The 1999 number is 30 to date, which if it continues at the current rate will result in 100.



Students referred for conflict management may voluntarily attend, or they may be asked to attend by teachers.

The "Yahoo After 2" school program started in 1997 and provides study time and activities when classes are over. According to Linda Taylor Suisun Recreation Coordinator, the first year of the program had the most discipline problems. She said one of the groups of students involved in disruptions has graduated, and the other kids do not cause problems because they are familiar with the program and its primary coordinator at the school, Tom Manglona. In addition to managing Yahoo, Tom teaches math and social studies. He stated that about 70% of the participants in Yahoo are male. He also said that about 50% of the students are there to work on academics, the other 50% for sports, Tom's opinion is that younger students involved in the program do better academically than the younger students not in the program.⁹ Students with no academic or social probation may participate in the Yahoo program, although Bonnie Okamura, Crystal School Counselor, felt that all students needed the opportunity to participate in the program.

¹ Memo from Bonnie Okamura, September 15, 1999.

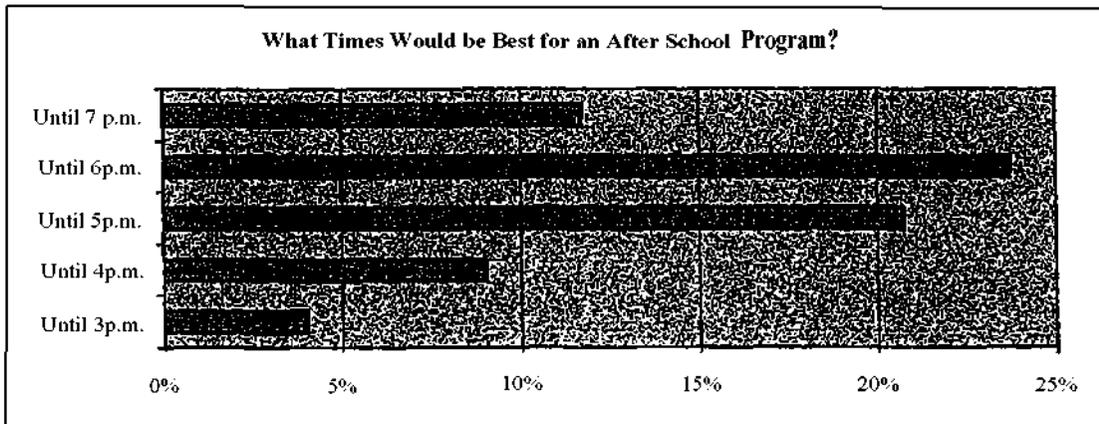
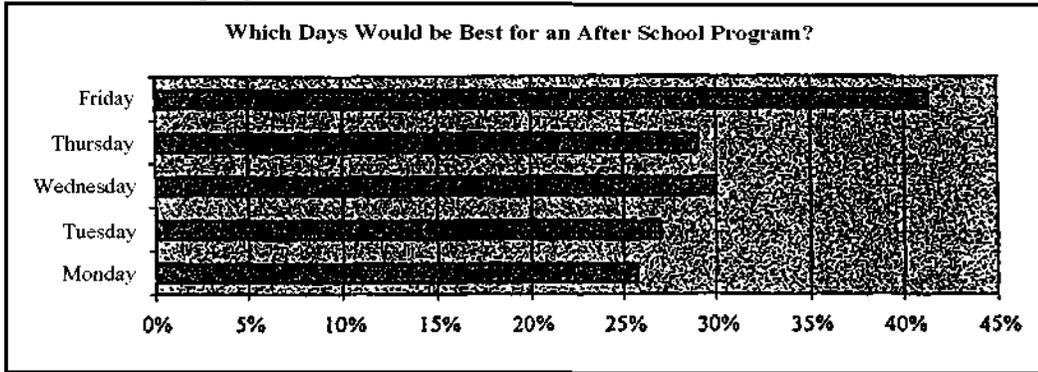
⁸ Interview with Ronnie Okamura, October 4, 1999

⁹ Interview with Linda Taylor, Suisun Recreation Coordinator, September 27, 1999.

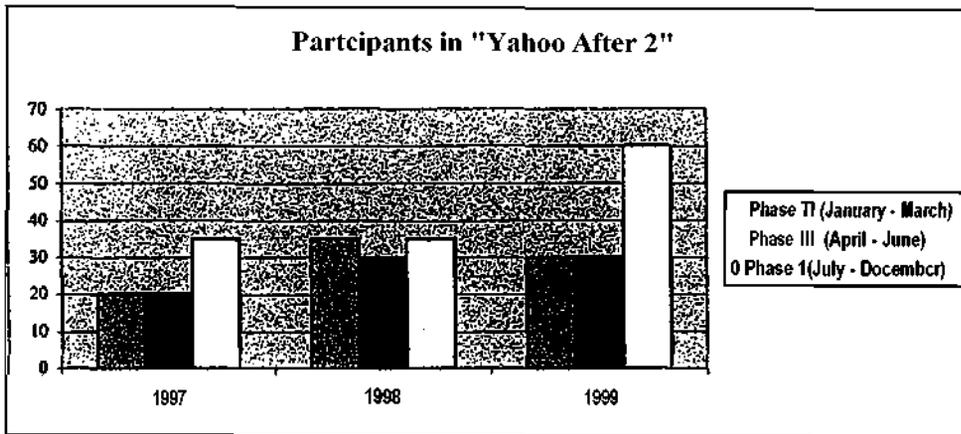
^{io} Interview with Tom Manglona, September 27, 1999.

In 1999, the students in Yahoo were separated by grade level to tailor the program to each grade's specific needs. The 1999 participation level for Phase I is an estimate. Tom's goal for Phase I is to begin an organized sports program. He feels that organizing the sports program into teams with uniforms and a game schedule will increase participation by at least 100%.

Surveys of Suisun City residents listed Wednesday and Friday as the best days for after school programs. They also said that after school until 5p.m. or 6p.m. was the best time for after school programs.



¹ Suisun City Police Department Survey 1999. Fairfield Research Group April 3-10, 1999.

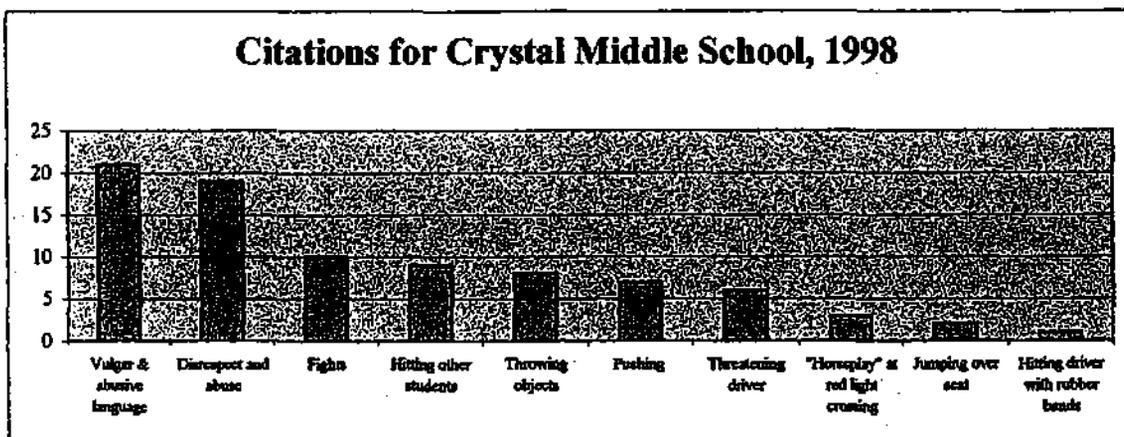


A focus group with male students who participated in YA2 but no longer did, cited reasons they dropped out:

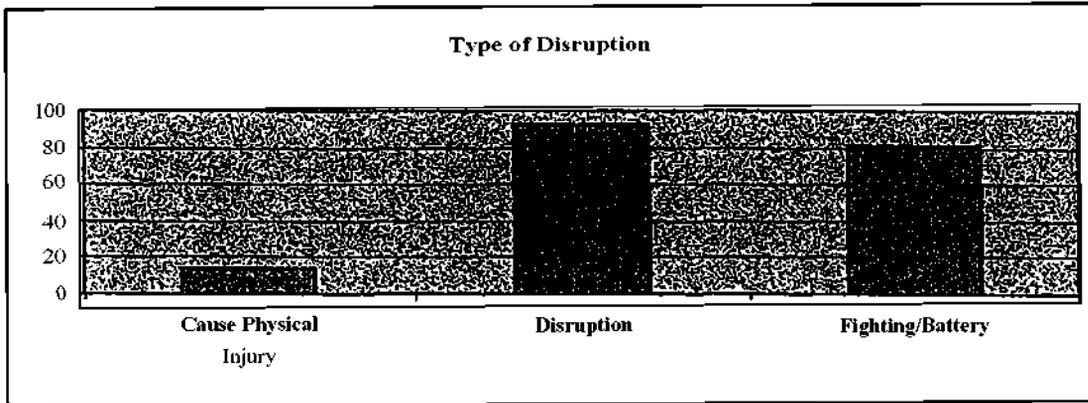
- 1) They thought that instead of being able to participate immediately in sports activities, they had to spend an hour (from 2pm to 3pm) waiting for sports activities to begin. Upon further investigation, although some changes were made to the program, students are able to use the gym at 2p.m.
- 2) Music was no longer played. (Tom Manglona said this was the result of "inappropriate rap music" being played).¹²

Disruptive Behavior

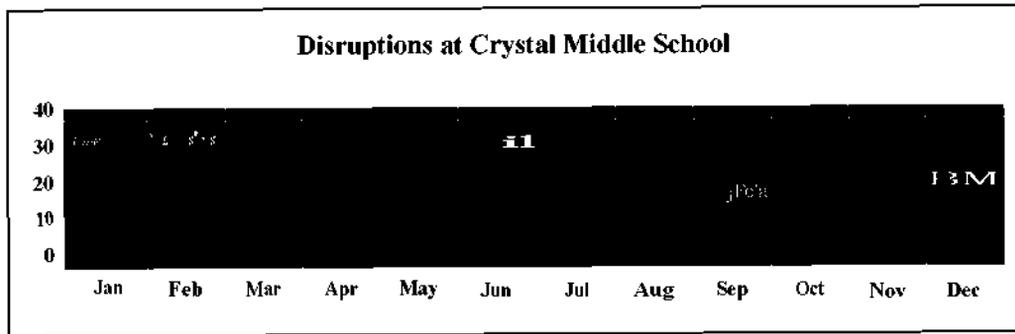
The following graph breaks down the frequency of disruptions in 1998 on FSUSD buses by type of occurrence.



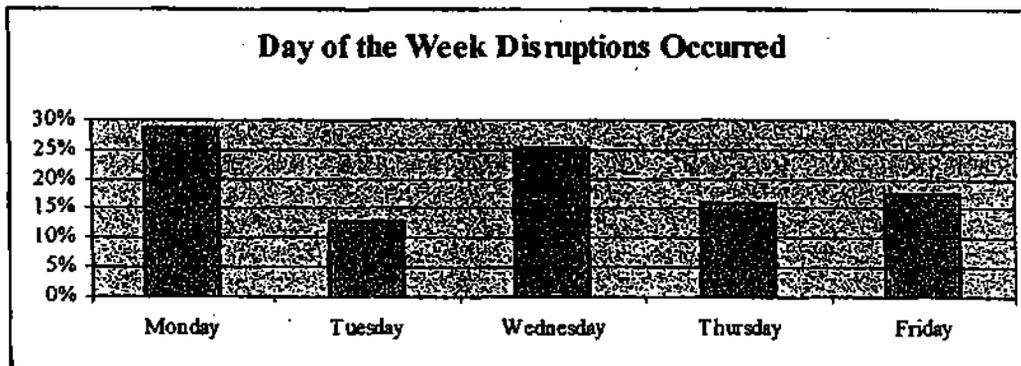
¹² Focus group with Crystal Middle School students, October 4 1999.



Data from documented campus disruptions identified months and days with the highest rate of occurrences. Disruptions at Crystal Middle School are sorted by month in the next graph.



The graph shows that disruptive behavior peaks in February and March, then peaks again in September, October and November. When incidents of disruption were sorted by the day of the week they occurred, Monday and Wednesday had the highest frequency.

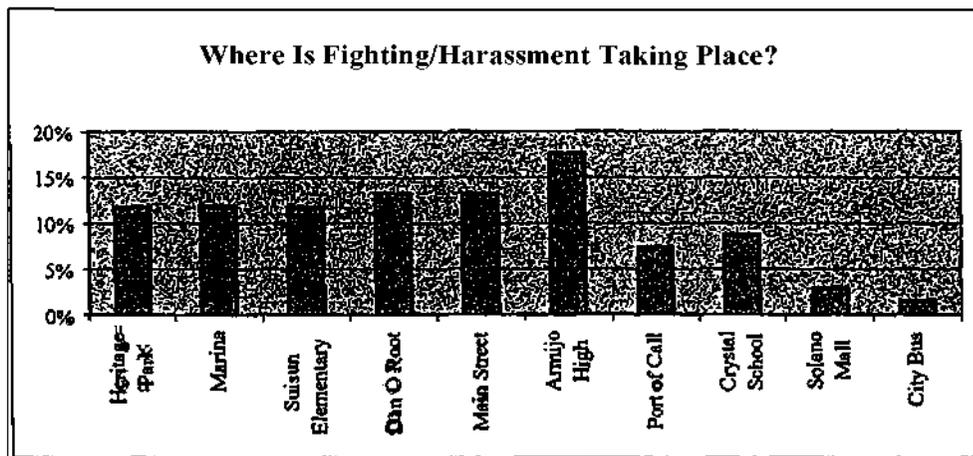


In interviews with students, the consensus was that disruptive behavior usually occurred after 11 a.m. because most students were too tired in the morning to "play around".¹³

¹³ Focus groups with Crystal Middle School students June 14, June 20, and October 4, 1999.

Students were also more likely to engage in disruptive behavior after school when they could leave campus and avoid the risk of school suspension. 33.3% of the teachers responding to this question said disturbances were most likely to occur after school.¹⁴ A long term (12 years) Fairfield Suisun Municipal bus driver who was familiar with routes used by Crystal Middle School students further substantiated this by summarizing: "The serious incidents normally take place during pickups after school. In the mornings, kids are not as active, probably because they are sleepy".¹⁵

Focus groups of students at Crystal Middle School stated that disturbances off campus tend to take place at bus stops, neighborhood parks, and the Marina across from the Port of Call.¹⁶ Neighborhood Watch block captains, bus drivers, and residents verified these locations as off campus areas where disruptions take place. 17.3% of the Crystal teachers said student disruptions were likely to occur at bus stops. The student focus groups said that fighting off campus is less likely to result in suspension because identification of participants is difficult and witnesses are not present. FSUSD bus drivers confirmed lack of identification as a key factor in where a disruption occurs.¹⁷ The next graph shows responses from a student survey asking the location of fighting or harassment.



Another area of student disruptions is the school bus. At a focus group with students suspended from riding the bus, students said that among the reasons disruptions are likely to occur on the buses is that the driver cannot focus on supervising students while driving, substitute drivers cannot identify students, and occasional overcrowding.¹⁸

The students most likely to be cited for disruptive offenses at Crystal Middle School are male, and in the 7th or 8th grade.

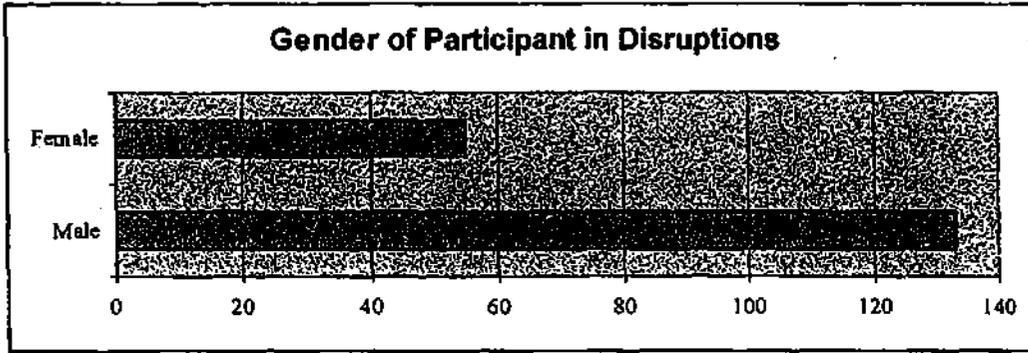
¹⁴ Crystal Middle School Survey of Teachers, September 1999.

¹⁵ Interview with Twila Yocum, bus driver for Fairfield Suisun Municipal Transit System, by Juan Ca nacho and Jeremy Crone, July 30, 1999.

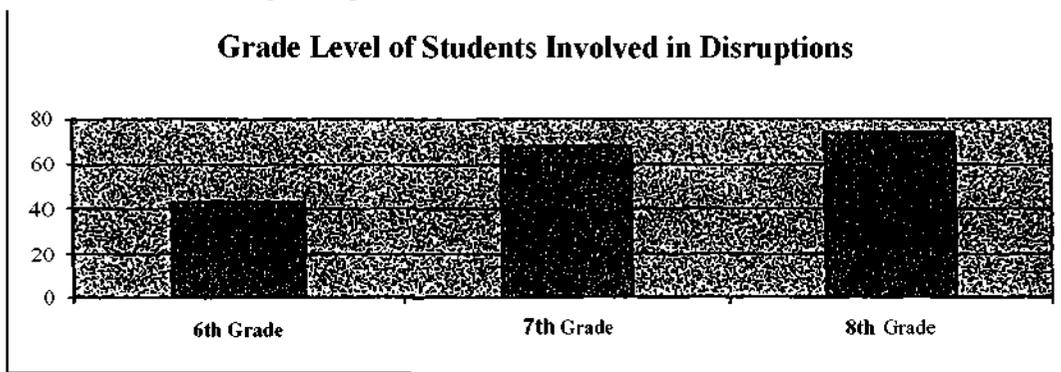
¹⁶ Focus groups with Crystal Middle School students June 14, June 20, and October 4, 1999.

¹⁷ FSUSD Bus driver interviews, September 13 1999..

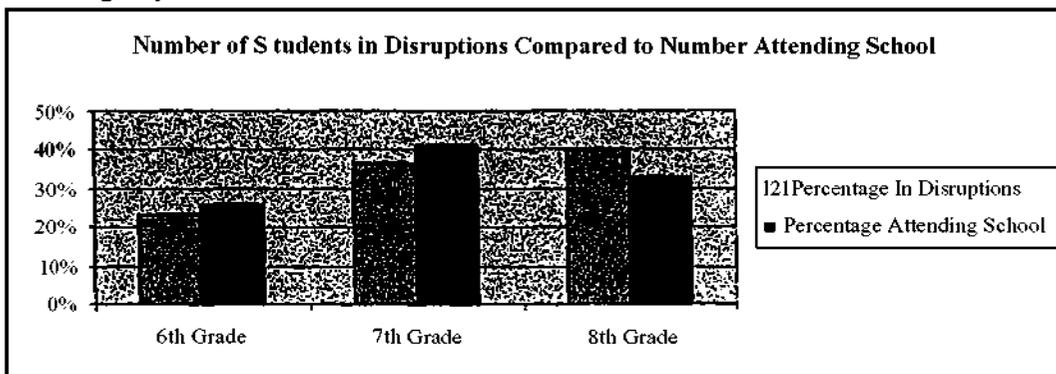
¹⁸ Focus group with Crystal Middle School students, October 4 1999.



As the graph above illustrates, male participants in disruptions at Crystal Middle School outnumbered female participants over two to one.



Most of the students involved in disruptions were 7th and 8th graders, which contradicts one member of the female focus group who said lower grade level students are more likely to get into disturbance situations than higher-grade level students. She said that younger kids "don't respect" the older kids sometimes, implying that older kids need to be treated with respect by the younger kids. As the graph below illustrates, the percentage of 6th graders involved in fights is much higher than the percentage of 8th graders attending Crystal School.



Of the 128 disruption incidents documented between July 1998 and April 1999, 39% were attributed to 11 students that averaged 4.5 disruptions each. Bonnie Okamura, Crystal School Counselor, Linda Taylor, Suisun City Recreation Supervisor, and FSUSD

bus drivers said they believed disruptions were cyclical, and could be associated with particular groups of students passing through Crystal School.

When I asked the members of the male focus group if any of them had been involved in disturbances, the biggest and two smallest said they had been. Two of the participants said that the most recent disturbances they could recall started during school sports activities. Larger and smaller kids, kids involved in sports activities, gang wannabes, younger kids. When teachers were asked whether they sensed any gang activity at Crystal Middle School, 20% said yes and 80% said no. Focus groups of students agreed, although one of the groups mentioned the "Little Smoke" gang as a spin off of the "Ken Smoke" (sic) gang. Linda and Tom said that they saw no evidence of gang activity among the Yahoo program's participants.

According to Jon Sandoval: "Children may ultimately exhibit violent or socially deviant behaviors when they are unable to deal with "their problems. Daily pressures and crises can overwhelm children. Feelings of isolation, peer pressure to use drugs and alcohol, hormones going haywire - all of these factors combined at a key developmental period in young lives can form a ticking time bomb for adolescents if the warning signs are not detected and addressed, Sandoval warns.

"Lack of intervention comes at a huge cost to society," Sandoval says. "Kids who resort to acts of physical violence as adolescents are often the same people who end up in the nation's criminal system as adults."²⁰

According to the Crystal School staff, "name calling, insults, and teasing" often escalate into disruptions. 23% of the teachers cited lack of parental guidance as a contributory factor in student disruptions, and 19.3% of the teachers cited saving face in front of their peers as a factor.²¹ When discussing the issue as part of a focus group, students mentioned fights started by "name calling (especially if it insults a family member), and pulling the hair on the back of each others heads as a form of teasing. The male focus group also mentioned fighting during sports activities, especially in close games. The female focus group mentioned jealousy over relationships leading to fights.

¹⁹ Focus group Crystal Middle School October 4, 1999. (The word "Ken" is probably a mistaken spelling of the word "Kin")

²⁰ Defusing School Violence, Jon Sandoval, Professor, U.C. Davis, UC Davis Magazine, Vol. 17. No. 1 pg. 18.

²¹ . Crystal Middle School Survey of Teachers, September 1999.

²² Focus groups with Crystal Middle School students June 14, June 20

**Crystal Middle School
1999-2000 Programs Follow-up Survey**

Conducted by
The Fairfield Research Group

Data Collection

Between May 27th and July 15^h, the Fairfield Research Group conducted personal interviews, focus groups and telephone interviews with staff, students and parents of students enrolled at Crystal Middle School for the Suisun City Police Department. The purpose of the interviews was to gather information regarding three programs implemented at Crystal School this year. The programs were:

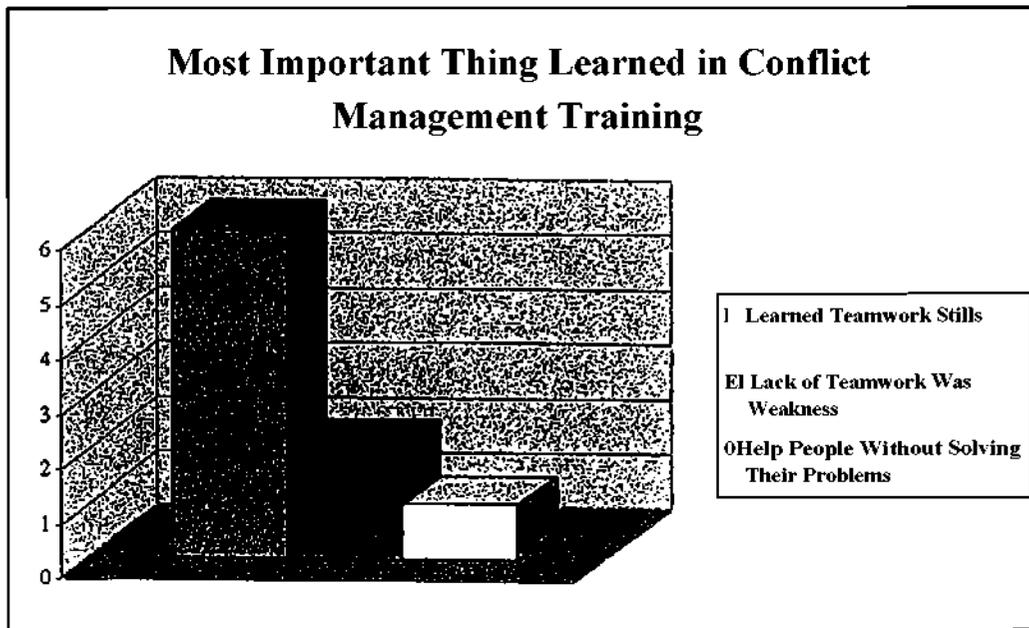
- **Student Conflict Management Training**
- **Challenge Day Training**
- **Sponsored YMCA Basketball Program**

Student Conflict Management Training

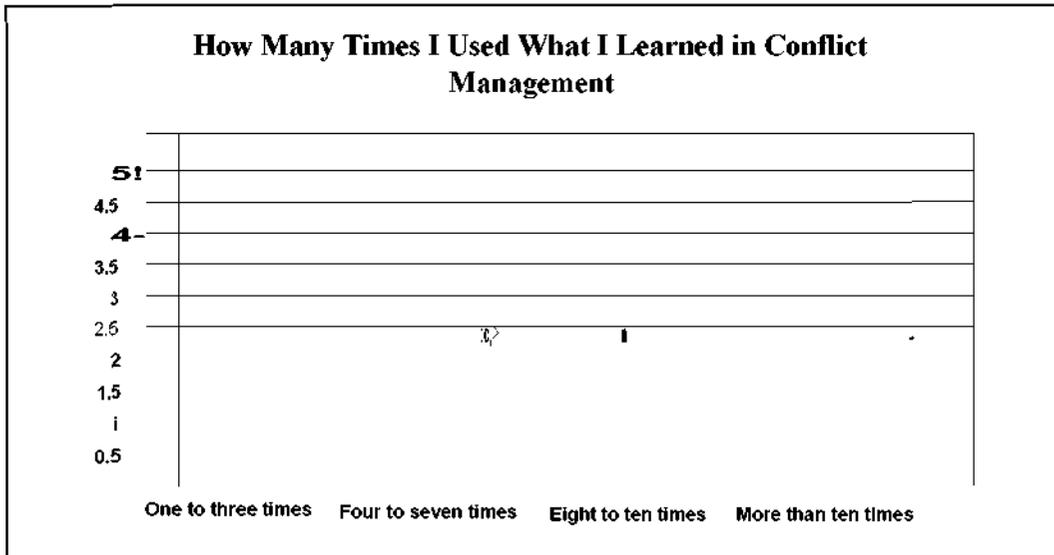
Conflict Management Training took place in October of 1999. Conflict Resolution forms from Crystal Middle School showed the number of conflicts resolved increased from 96 in 1999, to 133 in 2000, up 38.5%.

Personal interviews with 9 of the 13 (53%) of the students that participated in the program yielded the following results:

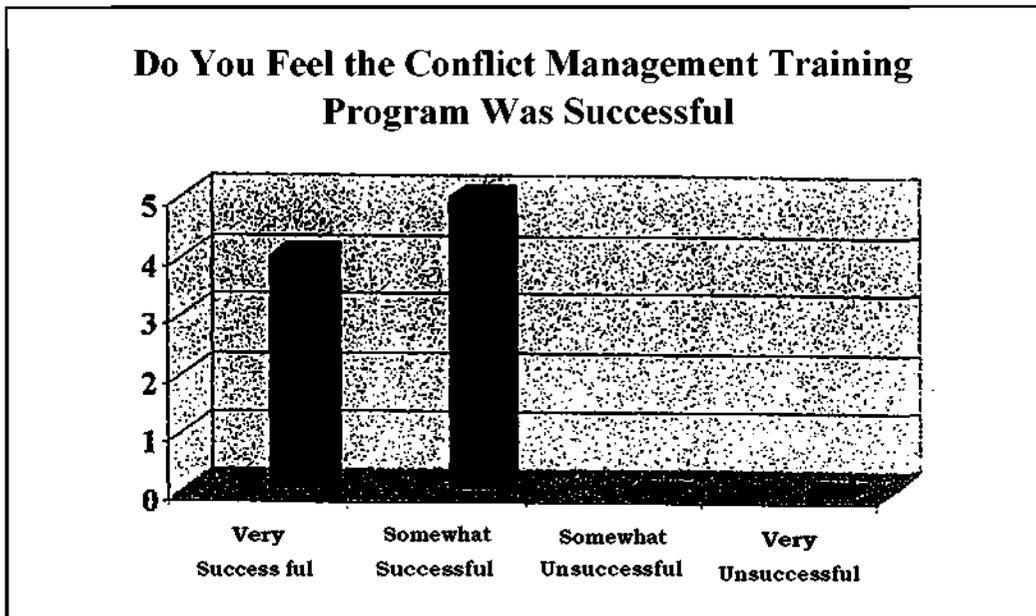
When asked, "What was the most important thing you learned in the Conflict Management Training Program", 6 students responded: "teamwork and working together". 2 students stated, "Lack of teamwork had a negative effect on the program." 1 student said that "learning to help people without solving their problems" was the most important experience of the program.



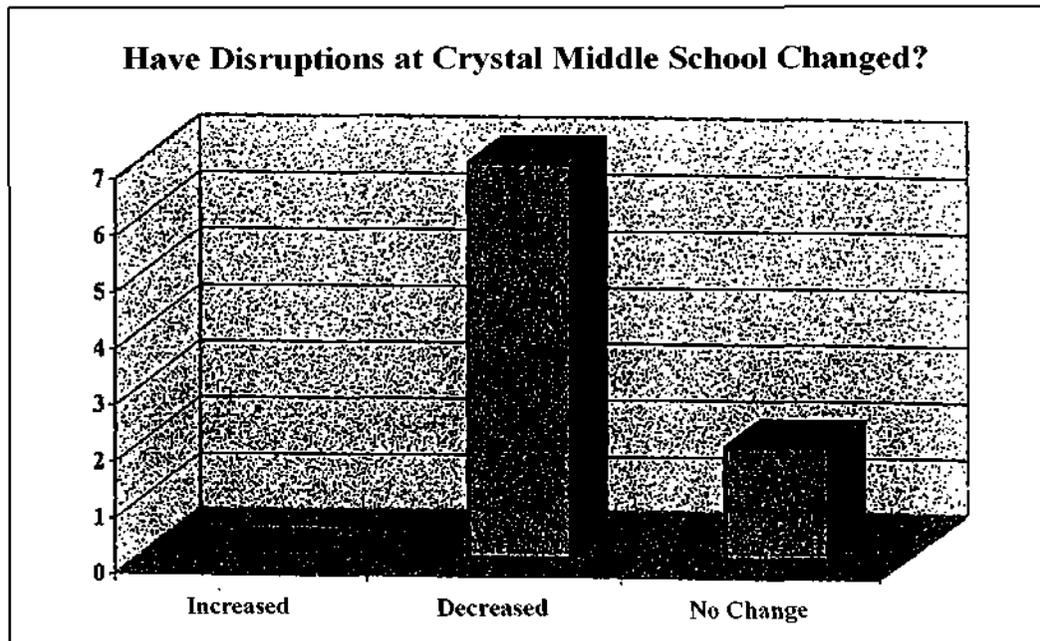
Question 2 asked the students how many times they personally used what they learned from the program this year at school. Of the 9 students, 5 said they used what they learned 1-3 times, 1 said it was used 4-7 times, 1 said it was used 8-10 times, and 2 students said they used it more than 10 times.



When asked whether they thought the Conflict Management Training was very successful, somewhat successful, somewhat unsuccessful or very unsuccessful, 4 students thought the program was very successful and 5 thought it was somewhat successful.



The last question we asked the students who participated in the program was whether they thought the number of incidents of disruption at Crystal Middle School changed after they finished the program. Even though the program was intended to provide a method of resolving conflicts as opposed to reducing them, 7 students thought incidents of disruption decreased, 2 felt there was no change and 0 thought incidents increased.



According to Crystal Middle School Counselor, Bonnie Okamura, one of the things to come out of the Conflict Management Training was that many of the students who might have been reluctant to discuss conflicts with an adult were willing to let peers help them. She also stated that the program was not intended to reduce conflicts, but to provide an alternative resource for students to use after a conflict took place. Bob Ashford, Student Recognition Coordinator at Crystal School, thought the program was excellent, but felt that it had not reduced incidents of disruption. Karen Snell, Vice Principal at Crystal School, said the program was "excellent" and succeeded in strengthening the students' sense of community.

YMCA Basketball Program

Thirty-four students participated in the Crystal Middle School basketball program; which started in March and went through May. The co-educational program consisted of four teams at Crystal School with 7 to 10 students per team. The teams practiced twice a week from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. with games on Saturdays. They played other teams in Northern California. According to one of the coaches, Ron Leaks, not only did the students learn basketball skills, they learned respect for themselves and other players, and developed a sense of team/school spirit. He said it gave the students something positive to do.

He also said that due to conflicting schedules with other activities at the YMCA, alternative locations needed to be explored.

Nine students participated in the interviews regarding the basketball program. Every student we spoke with enjoyed the program. The first question they were asked was what the most important thing they learned from the program was. Answers included improving game skills, teamwork, competition, and making friends. When asked what they thought they might change about the program, the most common answer was to separate into male and female teams. Some of the female students felt that their skill levels were not adequate enough to enable them to compete with males.

When asked how the program affected their relationship with other students, most of the participants responded that it helped them develop better relationships with other students, created stronger bonds with established friends, and made them more likely to meet other students. Additional comments from students concerning the program included "no time to get in trouble", "kept me very busy", "fighting went down", and "do the program longer".

We spoke with 14 of the participants' parents. The parents felt overwhelmingly that the program benefited the students. One of the most frequent comments was that it kept the students busy and that the students were too tired to get into any trouble *on* practice and game days. They also appreciated that the students learned to stay focused and that they were required to maintain their grades in order to participate in the program. A few parents also said that it helped their child's interpersonal relationships and that they "learned to get along". One parent stated that he felt the program would "benefit the students mainly while they were in it". Another parent commented that lack of transportation limited the number of students in the program. Two parents also said they felt the program should not be coed, while a third parent said it was good. Two of the parents indicated their impression that incidents of disruption at Crystal Middle School were down. Of the fourteen parents we spoke with, six attended one or more games.

Challenge Day

According to Karen Snell, Vice Principal at Crystal School, the Challenge Day went well. Besides helping the students, teachers were able to refer back to it during subsequent tracks. She stated that one of the main benefits was that it helped "build a family in the classroom." One concern Snell voiced about Challenge Days, echoed by Bonnie Okamura, Counselor at Crystal School, was that it was just one day. Although originally this program was scheduled to be two days, it was scaled back to one. She described the day as intensely emotional and felt a second day could have helped students discuss their feelings.

Bob Ashford, Student Recognition Coordinator, also agreed that Challenge Day was highly effective. In his opinion, the students learned about self-discipline, how to

empathize and some basics of cognitive thinking. He also felt that the number of incidents of disruption were about the same as last year. Juan Camacho, Grant Manager with the Suisun City Police Department, echoed Okamura's opinion of the emotional intensity of Challenge Day. Camacho provided the example of a disruptive student who addressed his peers during the program and apologized in tears for his insensitive behavior.

Two of the students who participated in Challenge Day felt that the program was successful. They mentioned the "sense of community" they gained from Challenge Day and the strong emotional effect the program had on them.

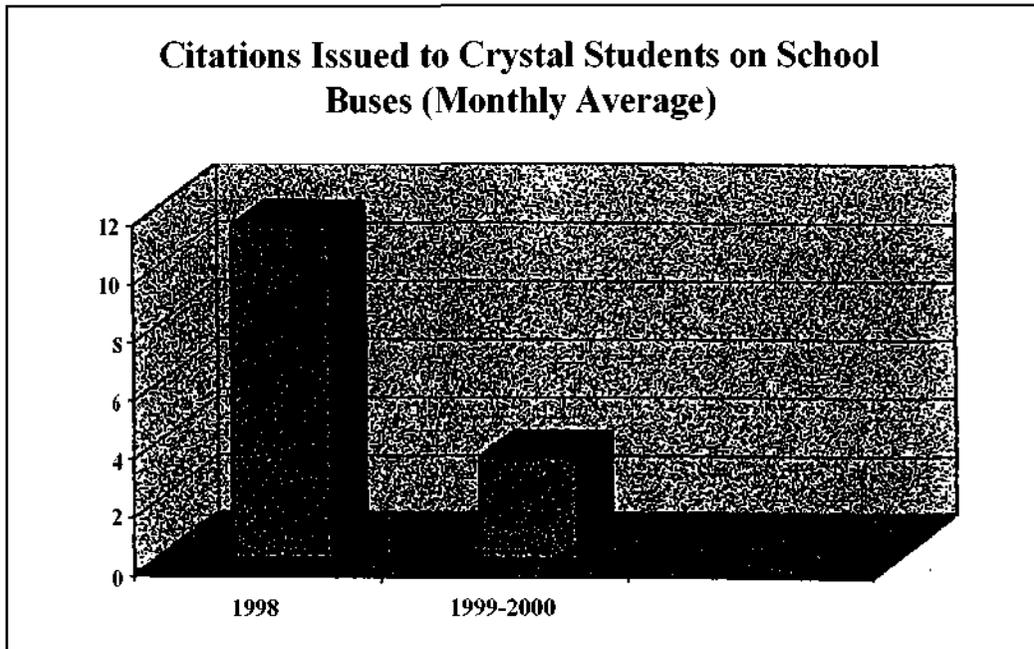
Bonnie Okamura said that she would have preferred to have time to discuss the effect of Challenge Day with the students, either individually or in small groups. Her opinion was that this sort of 'debriefing' would help students understand what they had experienced. She said that benefits of the program might last longer if there was more time to probe students' feelings afterwards and renew its principles. In her opinion, the effects of Challenge Day lasted about two months.

Addendum to Crystal Middle School Follow-up Survey

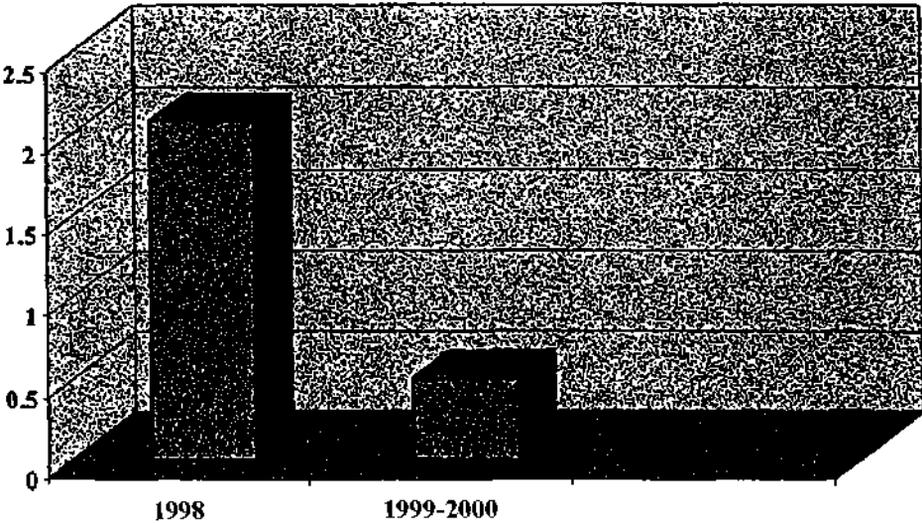
Data that was not available at the time of the follow up report was used to compile the following information.

Transportation

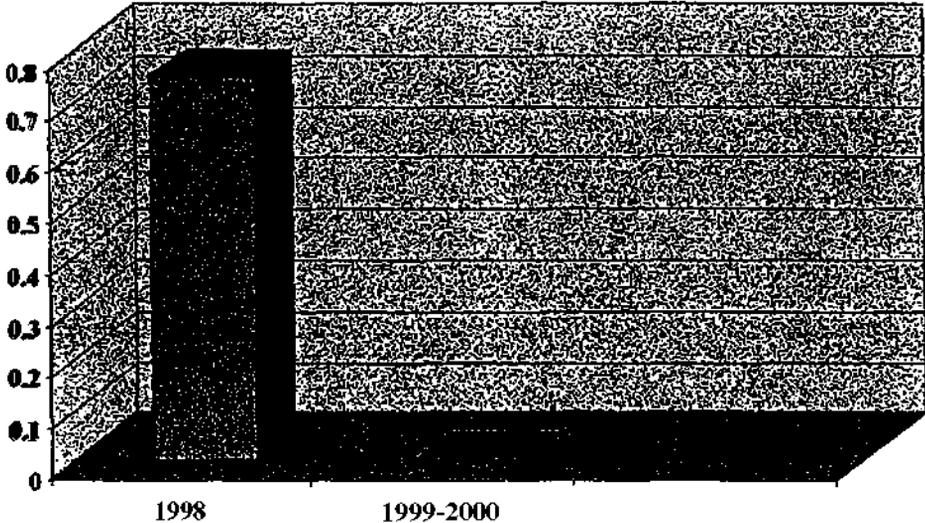
We compared records from the Transportation Department of the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District for citations issued to students riding the buses. The number of citations after implementing the conflict programs at Crystal Middle School dropped 69.35%. During the 1998 calendar year, a total of 137 citations were issued to Crystal Middle School students, an average of 11.42 citations per month. From October 1999 through May of 2000, only 28 citations were issued, an average of 3.5 per month. Disregard for the rules fell from an average of 2.08 per month to .5 per month. Fighting dropped from .83 incidents per month to .63 per month, and hitting other students went from .75 per month to 0.



Monthly Citations for Disregarding Bus Rules

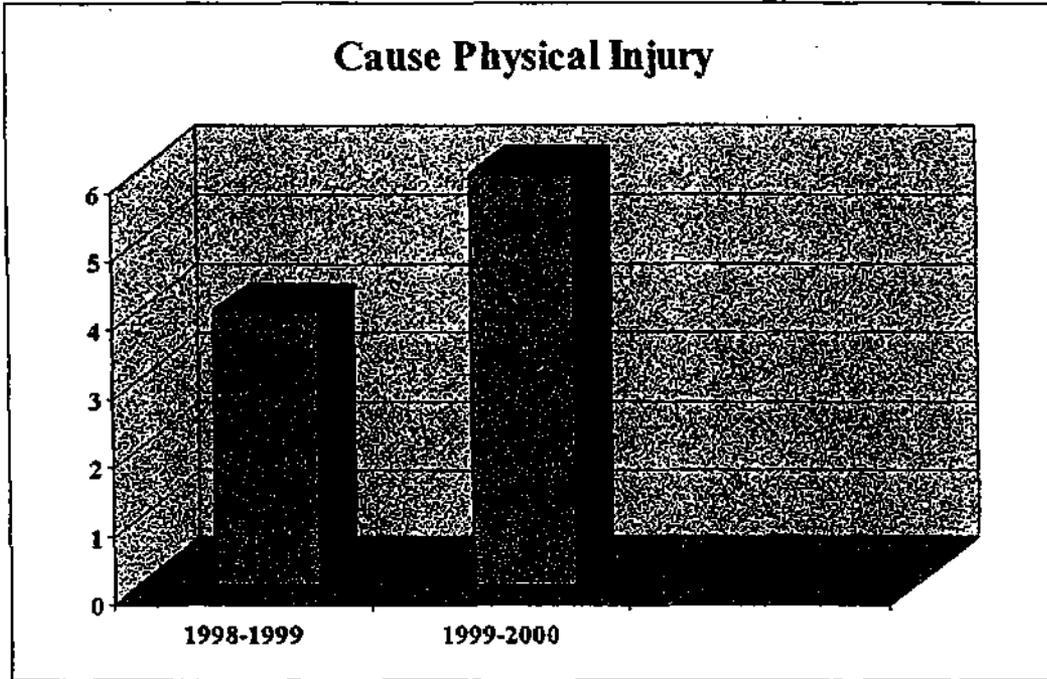


Monthly Citations for Hitting Students on Bus

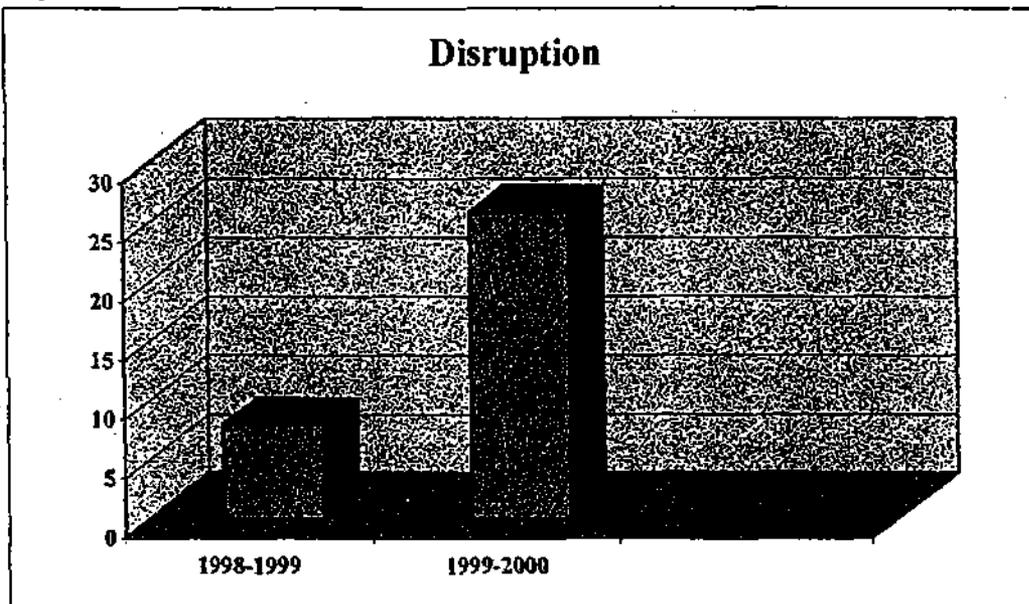


Suspension Forms

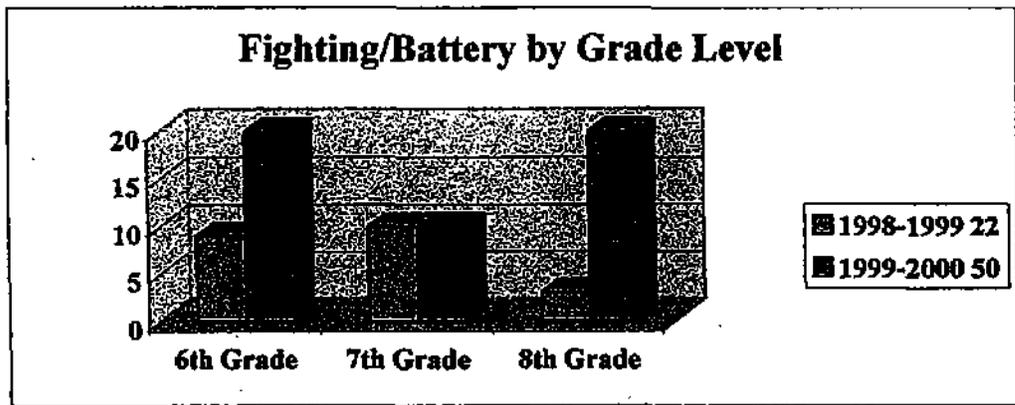
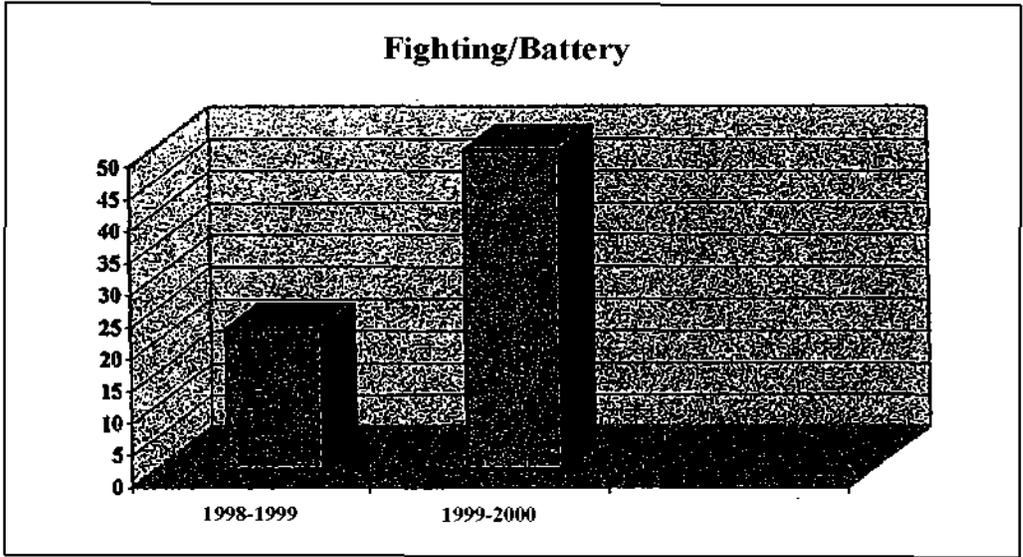
We also used suspension forms for Crystal Middle School to compare the school year from October 1998 through July 1999 with October 1999 through July 2000. The number of suspensions increased for "causing physical injury" increased from four in 1998-99, to 6 in 1999-00.



Suspensions for disruption increased from 8 in 1998-1999, to 26 in 1999-2000.



Finally, suspensions for fighting and battery increased from 22 in 1998-1999, to 50 in 1999-2000.



As the above chart shows, a much greater percentage of 6th and 8th grade students were suspended for fighting and battery in 1999-2000, than in 1998-1999.

MEMO

To: Mick Jessop, Director
Recreation & Community Services

From: Tom Manglona

Subject: Status Report: Crystal Middle School, After-School Program

Mick,

Here is the report you requested on the "Yahoo! After 2:00" Program at Crystal Middle School. Let me know if you need more information.

Program Staff:

- **Myself**
- **Ms. Michelle Zunino**, recreation leader
 - Michelle is a Senior at Vanden High School and lives in Vacaville.
 - She will attend Solano College this Fall.2000
 - Will be available to be with the program for the next school year also.
 - She has been with the program since April 24, 2000.

Program Hours:

- The program is scheduled Monday -Friday from 2:00 - 5:00.
- The kids report to my classroom (A14) by 2:10pm.
- Some are active in other campus clubs and report to the gym at 3:00pm.
- We assist school staff at dances and Family Math Night.

Program Activities:

- Homework assistance in Rm. A14
- Basketball/Soccer in the gym.
- Basketball on the blacktop
- Softball 1 Soccer on the grass
- Movies and popcorn in Rm. A14

Program Attendance:

1. Mondays: no activity bus available *afterschool*
 - 2:00-3:30pm, 10-15 kids
 - 3:30-4:00pm, 5-7 kids
2. Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday : with an activity bus available
 - 2:00-2:45pm, 20-25 kids
 - 2:45-3:30pm, 30-35 kids (additional kids from other clubs, etc)
 - 3:30-4:00pm, 5-10 kids (neighborhood kids)
3. Fridays: *No activity bus available*
 - 2:00-3:30pm, 10-15 kids
 - 3:30-4:00pm, 5-7 kids

CURRENTLY ON WEDNESDAY MORNINGS AT CRYSTAL

- 7:30 -8:45 a.m. Gym opens and kids sign in
- 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. Shag ball in the gym
- 8:00 - 8:50 a.m. Two, half court basketball games, usually 4 teams on each half of court. Each game is 10 minutes, with both teams coming off and 2 new teams going on. If we have an odd number of teams, winner stays on for 2 games then off.
- 8:00 - 8:50 a.m. Outdoor basketball games and a baseball game.
- 8:30 - 8:55 a.m. Breakfast.

We have been fortunate to have acquired approximately 12 gloves to use, plus a couple of bats. We use the 9" soft touch baseball (the one we use for T-ball).