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Bridging the Gap Between School and the Street

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What's Missing 'Someone Get Rid of the Bees'

- Are we addressing the 'root cause' of problem behavior in the class room?

- PREVENTION
  - We are not likely to prevent poverty, but can we work towards preventing problem behavior in our classrooms
- Do we have programs (in and out of the classroom) to assist those in need:
  - Yes
- Do we have enough:
  - No
- Can we do more: ????

ON THE STREET

- Kids 'on the street' are likely to have (3xs) the rate of MH issues than kids in the 'general population'
- Kids on the street are (5xs) more likely to be incarcerated than their rural counterparts.
- Over 75% of crimes are committed by high school drop outs
- 20% of OSS is the result of 'insubordination'
- 20% of OSS is for fighting
- Less than 5% of OSS is for weapons or drugs
- Higher the poverty rate in the school the high the rate of OSS.
- I can find NO literature that indicates that OSS is an effective intervention for problem behavior.

Statistics

- 1 in 5 students are likely to have a MH Dx.
- 75% to 80% of children with MH issues do NOT receive services.
- Approximately 50% of students age 14 and older who are living with a mental illness drop out of high school. On the street, closer to 75%.
- 75% of all problem behaviors in school are exhibited by 15% of the students.
- 70% of those students have some MH Dx.
- Of children ages 9 to 17, 21 percent have a diagnosable mental health or addictive disorder

Environmentally Beaten Up

- Poverty
- Hunger
- No Hugs
- Sexual Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Unsanitary Conditions
- Lack of Sleeping areas
- Fear of Being Beat Up
- Changing Schools/Homes

Environmentally Beaten Down "Toxic Stress"

- No love
- Being Preyed upon
- No way to Study
- Mom on drugs
- Mom on alcohol
- No paternal figure
- Many Many Paternal Figures
- No Hugs (the wrong hugs)

Code of the Street

- NEVER appear weak or vulnerable
- You are either prey or predator
- Always hang with a group (or gang)
- Strike first when ever possible
- Never let anybody get away with anything
- School will not keep you safe on the street

Mental Health and the Behavior

Disorder	Implication
▸ Depression	▸ Little interest in school work ▸ Increase in refusal behavior ▸ Excessive absences
▸ Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	▸ No boundaries ▸ Impulsive and uninhibited ▸ Lack receptive communication ▸ Low frustration threshold ▸ Short term memory deficits
▸ PTSD	▸ Impulsive, Impatient, ▸ Easily confused

Mental Health and the Behavior

Disorder	Implication
▸ ADHD	▸ Little ability to manage energy ▸ Memory deficits ▸ Little emotional control ▸ Poor social skills ▸ Inability to concentrate
▸ Bipolar Disorder	▸ Changes in mood and energy ▸ Impulsive and uninhibited ▸ Difficulty concentrating ▸ Low frustration threshold ▸ Short term memory deficits ▸ Poor social skills

In The Classroom

- Remember, Street Kids will not be going home to study, do home work, or work on projects.
- Each student will require a specific method of teaching to assure they learn.
- The very behavior that keeps these kids alive on the street is the very behavior that gets them in trouble in school.

In the Class Room

- Know who your street kids are
- Have a plan to <u>reward their desirable behavior</u>
- <u>Focus on positive behavior</u>
- Punishment will NOT work with these kids
- Do not call them out in front of peers
- Make arrangements for home work to be done in school
- Are students involved in the 'Rule Making' process?

In the Class Room

- Before you 'react' to a problem behavior ask yourself: Why did this behavior happen? What will the student get from exhibiting this behavior?
- Then make sure you do NOT reinforce the problem behavior.
- In Elementary School are we TEACHING appropriate social and emotional skills or are we relying up incidental learning??

In the Class Room

- DO NOT set the student up for failure.
- NEVER speak down to the student. Always speak as though they CAN do it.
- Rely on a Functional Assessment of problem behavior to develop appropriate interventions.
- Break assignments and tests into amounts comparable to the students attention.
- Establish just a few, clear and realistic expectations (Rules).
- Do NOT punish for behavior that is directly the result of a disability/disorder.

Discipline

- Does your discipline method teach appropriate or replacement behavior?
  - Will the process teach an alternative to the problem behavior?
- Does the discipline reduce problem behavior?
  - Are discipline decisions data driven?
  - Are we keeping data and does the data indicate progress is being made?
- Does the discipline focus on academics?
  - Does the discipline remove the student from the learning environment?

In the School

- Are students involved in establishing 'Expectations'?
- Are students involved in determining consequences for meeting expectations?
- Are students involved in determining consequences for violating expectations?
- What other student committees does your school have?

In the School

- Do students know the expectations?
- Are these taught?
- Is reinforcement applied more frequently than punishment?
- Are students greeted upon arrival to class?
- Are students involved in decision making?
- Are students given responsibilities, in and out of school?
- Do students BELIEVE staff care for them?

What Needs to Happen

- School
  - A look at the rules
  - Educational workshops
  - Begin in session teaching (a behavior class) in kindergarten
- Church
  - Who is in our youth groups
  - Are we community oriented
- Community
  - Clubs
  - Organizations
- Police
  - Community relations
- Volunteers
  - University students
  - You and Me

‣ THE BEATINGS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL THE MORAL IMPROVES !

REFERRENCES

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