Alternatives to punishments that are cruel, discriminatory, and counterproductive.

ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION AND CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

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The problem of controlling unruly children in a school setting has a long history. One author (Riak, 1985) traced the debate on corporal punishment of school children back to the first century in Rome. Despite the age of the problem and great advances in seemingly more difficult domains, such as space travel and medicine, there is yet to be developed a foolproof, effective, and humane way of coping with the obstreperous school behavior. Two techniques still in use are blatantly inhuman and not only ineffective but counterproductive as well; corporal punishment and suspension. This article will briefly highlight the deficiencies of these approaches and problems they generate. Some promising alternative strategies that have been shown to reduce undesired school behaviors while enabling misbehaving students to maintain some dignity and continue their academic education will then be discussed. At the conclusion, the role of the school social worker in helping to implement these programs will be examined. Strategies for preventing disruptive activities in educational settings will not be reviewed as they are covered elsewhere in this volume.

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PROBLEMS WITH CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND SUSPENSION

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The arguments against corporal punishment in the schools are so persuasive that not one country in Continental Europe, East or West, permits it. The only country ever to reinstate corporal punishment after it had been removed was Nazi Germany (Riak, 1985). Corporal punishment is also forbidden in eight American states and in numerous cities, including Atlanta, Chicago, New Orleans, and New York (Van Dyke, 1986).

One of the most powerful arguments against its use is that it is inflicted disproportionately on black pupils, particularly on black males. The director of the Black Child Development Institute (Moore, 1987) estimated that black children are twice as likely to suffer corporal punishment than white children. This statement is supported by data collected nationally and locally. For example, a survey conducted by the U.S. Office of Civil Rights revealed that in 1978 through 1979 slightly more than 6% of blacks received corporal punishment compared to under 3% of whites, and males were punished approximately four times as frequently as females (Perry, n.d.). In Seattle, it was found that 52% of corporal punishments were inflicted on black students out of a total district enrollment of 21%. Further, the proportion of corporal punishment incidents involving black students increased between the years 1980 and 1983 (NASW, 1986).

Even if the application of corporal punishment were not racially biased, it is counterproductive and damaging to the child. Research has shown that teachers who corporally punish provide models of aggression for students to follow; corporal punishment in school teaches that physical outbursts are an acceptable way of dealing with conflict and that makes might right. There is also a correspondence between the amount and severity of corporal punishment at a school and the cost of

vandalism and theft of school property. In addition, the imposition of corporal punishment can result in decreased learning, poorer attendance, and in increased feelings of anxiety, helplessness, and alienation (NASW, 1986; Perry, n.d.).

SUSPENSION

The use of suspension appears to be as racially discriminatory as corporal punishment, with black children twice as likely to be suspended from schools as white children (Moore, 1987). In the 1979-1980 school year, 10% of the black students at the secondary level were suspended in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and 3% of the white students (Student Advocacy Center, 1987). It also appears from the school suspension figures in Ann Arbor that the use of suspension as a disciplinary technique is arbitrary and capricious. For example, in the 1980-1981 school year in Ann Arbor, there was a great difference in the percentage of black students suspended in the two large integrated high schools; in one building it was 32% and in the other is was 60%. During the previous school year, the figures were 15% and 38%, respectively, for the same two schools (Student Advocacy Center, 1982). These data support the Children's Defense Fund's (1975) assertion that the use of suspensions, the grounds for suspension, and the procedures for suspensions vary widely between school districts and, indeed, between schools in a single districts.

As with corporal punishment, the technique is dysfunctional even if suspensions were administered fairly in completely nonbiased fashion and only for serious reasons. The Children's Defense Fund (1975) report on school suspensions aptly summarizes the problem by stating that the procedure jeopardizes the pupils' prospects of securing a decent education and pushes the children and their problems into the street, thereby causing more problems for them and for the rest of the community. Suspension is particularly self-contradictory when

children are punished for school absences by prohibiting them from attending school for several more days (NASW, 1986).

Finally, both corporal punishment and suspension fail to deal with the problems underlying the truancy or disruptive school behavior. For example, neither procedure confronts the fact that there is often a mismatch between the middle-class expectations of the school and the cultural norms of subgroups of students; that many students, particularly those not college bound, find school tasks trivial and boring; and that schools are governed by the authoritarian imposition of rules against which many students rebel to assert some autonomy (Doyle, 1960; Pharr and Barbarin, 1981).

EFFECTIVE, HUMANE, ALTERNATIVE DISCIPLINARY STRATEGIES

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In-school suspension (ISS) overcomes the major shortcoming of traditional suspension because it does not deprive students of an educational experience. In its simpler form, ISS requires a regular classroom equipped with pencil sharpener, scratch paper, dictionary, and a teacher, astute paraprofessional, or other business-like adult (Maurer, 1984). The students who have been assigned to ISS report to that room at the start of the school day. They bring books and homework, or are given assignments by their regular teachers. The day is spent concentrating on academic work. Students do not leave until the end of the school day; lunch is brought in and eaten at the desk. The adult supervisor answers questions related only to the school assignments and does not engage in any other conversation with the pupils (Maurer, 1984).

A more elaborate form of in-school suspension, developed in a Missouri high school (Stessman, 1986), contains all of the elements described above but, in addition, includes readable self-help packets for the students on value clarification,

decision making regarding the specific infractions leading to their suspension, and study skills relevant to the students' courses. Packets are lengthier for more serious infractions. In conjunction with packets, other materials such as film strips, tapes, and audiovisual material may be used in the in-school suspension room. When a student is assigned to ISS, an administrator completes a chart indicating the packets the student is to work on and information about the nature of the offense. The ISS monitor also sends a form to the classroom teacher who assigns work to be completed by the pupil. Near the end of ISS, which typically extends from 3 to 10 days, the monitor schedules an appointment for the student with the school counselor who reviews the material completed in the nonacademic self-help packets to obtain information for the conference. A Saturday School option is also available to prevent truanting pupils from missing further classwork. When the ISS program was evaluated before the addition of the Saturday School, the results revealed that repeated suspensions decreased by 25% and the total number of suspensions decreased by 20%. With the implementation of the Saturday School, it is anticipated that the reduction in suspensions will be cut by nearly one-third (Stressman, 1986).

TIMEOUT PROCEDURES

Timeout is an abbreviation for time away from positive reinforcement. It is a management technique for the immediate handling of a disruptive, potentially explosive situation and can be easily implemented. There is a substantial amount of data demonstrating the effectiveness of the procedure on a wide variety of students in various settings (Powell and Powell, 1982). However, if not applied properly the procedure may violate the child's human rights as well as rights to a proper educational program (Maurer, 1984).

The essential components of an appropriate and effective timeout procedure are (1) the environment must change from one in which reinforcement is available to one where it is not;

(2) the behavior to be changed must not be self-reinforcing, such as daydreaming or masturbating, since these behaviors can be continued at the timeout site; (3) timeout procedures should not be employed if it takes too much time or energy to put the child in the timeout site; (4) timeout should not involve placement in environments that deprive children of sensory stimulation or subject them to discomfort; (5) the length of timeout periods should be thought of as a maximum of a minute per age of the child; and (6) timeout is best accomplished when the children involved see a need for it and use timeout to regain control of themselves (Powell and Powell, 1986; Maurer, 1984).

To implement a timeout procedure, the disruptive behavior must be operationally defined, and an appropriate timeout area must be selected. Clear signals telling the child when to go to the timeout site and when to return must be determined, and back-up procedures must be established for typical timeout problems such as the child needing to go to the bathroom. As with all disciplinary techniques, timeout must be frequently and regularly evaluated to determine if modifications, minor or drastic, are necessary (Powell and Powell, 1986). Continual review is particularly essential for this procedure because it lends itself so readily to abuse, such as placing students in dark closets or in empty refrigerator cartons for extended periods of time.

ASSIGNMENT TO AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

The development of alternative schools has become increasingly popular in recent years as evidence accumulates that placing disruptive secondary school pupils in a different educational context can lead to improved behavior, more positive attitudes toward school, and enhanced learning (Gold and Mann, 1984; Trickett et al., 1985). For example, in Philadelphia there are almost 120 alternative programs of which 26 are directed at students who have had disciplinary problems in school or who have become alienated from the

regular school program (Children's Defense Fund, 1975). The different context typically is a small unit where all the students and teachers know one another, there is a relatively low pupil-teacher ratio and a warm relationship between instructors and students, and the curriculum is individualized to accommodate the academic needs of each student. Some alternative schools are located in separate buildings.

A recent longitudinal, well-controlled investigation of three alternative secondary school programs concluded that school behaviors, grades, and attitudes toward school improved significantly for most of the participating students (Gold and Mann, 1984). There was little change in the behavior and attitudes of a relatively small number of students, however, who were assessed on entry into the program as unusually depressed or anxious. It appears that such students need some other type of intervention. Rather than attempting to screen them out initially, the researchers suggested using the alternative school program per se as the diagnostic tool because it is very difficult to assess depression and anxiety accurately, particularly within a school setting. If these students do not improve despite their satisfaction with the alternative program, a search for other types of intervention can then be made. The feature of the alternative schools that appeared to be most responsible for the change in the nondepressed, nonanxious student was its flexibility, that is, the taking into account the individual pupil's needs, fears, abilities, and mood in conducting the daily business of education. The investigators conclude that flexibility led to attachment to the school and hence to a decline in disruptive behavior (Gold and Mann, 1984).

Although there is a potential danger of stigmatization when disruptive students are grouped together, the labeling problem does not appear to be a serious one for most alternative schools. Rather, the ethos of alternative programs seems to be highly appealing to many adolescents. For example, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, students who were estranged from the largely college-oriented curriculum have frequently requested

permission to attend the alternative school originally established for serious "trouble makers" in the district.

BEHAVIOR CONTRACTING

A contract implies that each party desires something from the other and there is an open agreement upon an equitable exchange. Written contracts spell out what is expected between two people and, as used in schools, are signed by students who have misbehaved and their teachers or administrators. Such documents have been shown to be effective in reducing suspension rates (Children's Defense Fund, 1975) perhaps because behavior contracts reduce emotional conflict between teacher and student by redefining the relationship as business arrangement (McFadden, 1986).

In a New Jersey middle school, an individualized, on-the-spot contract is used as an alternative to suspension for such offenses as cutting classes or fighting among students (Children's Defense Fund, 1975). The principal agrees not to suspend the student and the student agrees not to repeat the offense. Great seriousness surrounds the signing of the contract, which is officially "notarized" by the imprint of a formal seal. In the first three years of contract writing, almost no students broke them and suspensions were sharply reduced (Children's Defense Fund, 1975).

Specific procedures for employing the behavior contract are spelled out in *Spare the Rod?!* (NSAW, 1986). They include the following: (1) The teacher states the problem and gives the student a concrete reason why the behavior causes a problem. (2) The teacher and student brainstorm about alternatives to the behavior and what can be done to help the situation improve. (3) The student and teacher decide upon which alternative to try and discuss the possible consequences of the contract not working. They then agree upon one consequence. (4) The teacher and student agree to evaluate and possibly renegotiate the contract after a given time period. (5) A contract is written and each party receives a copy. The contract

specifies what is expected of each individual, and the penalty for not fulfilling the contract. To have validity, the contract must be feasible and neither member must feel abused.

The implicit assumption underlying the above procedures is that the teacher agrees to engage in some behavior that is desired by the misbehaving student. Examples of such "bargaining chips" are not provided in *Spare the Rod?!* but could include providing some type of token that can be exchanged for a reward at the end of the week such as extra time in the gym. The teacher's offering in exchange for improved student behavior could also be activities that will assist the pupil in the task accomplished, for example, providing tutorial help (McFadden, 1986).

USE OF PEERS

The use of peers to control disruptive pupils has much merit because adolescents are particularly sensitive to, and respectful of, peer pressure and peer evaluations. In addition, it has been pointed out that many sixteen- to eighteen-year-old pupils have adult responsibilities after school and should assume a large role in maintaining order in their own schools (Children's Defense Fund, 1975).

One technique involving peers is the use of a student discipline committee divided into at least two subcommittees: one to help the teacher physically remove troublemakers from the class and another to conduct class lessons if the teacher has to leave the room on discipline matters (NASW, 1986). Another subcommittee could draft a behavior contract that might be agreed to by the disruptive student and the teacher. In this way, the advantages of contracting and peer input can be combined. The same subcommittee could also draft behavior contracts for pairs of students who frequently antagonize one another or fight and thereby disturb an educational session. Behavior contracting need not be confined to school authorities and pupils.

On a more microscopic level, peers have been used as "managers" at an elementary school (Millman et al., 1985). In this procedure, a peer is recruited for a child making grossly inappropriate comments in class. The "manager" is instructed to approach the child when the disruptive behavior is exhibited, tell the individual that the "manager" does not like him or her when those words or statements are made, and then move away until the appropriate behavior stops and more acceptable behavior is exhibited. In addition, if the unruly child complies with the teachers request for more appropriate comments, the "manager" returns to that child's desk and offers praise. This procedure proved to be remarkably effective in eliminating remarks related to sexual or bathroom themes made by a nine-year-old student. The peer "manager" technique should be particularly powerful when the misbehaving child is very sensitive to peer approval and the pupil chosen to serve as "manager" has high status in the classroom.

USE OF PARENTS

There are at least two promising strategies in which parents play a crucial role in handling disruptive students. One technique is used in Washington, DC, where the elementary school formed a Parents Action Discipline Committee composed of 11 parents (NASW, 1986). The group meets at the school and handles all problems arising out of classroom behavior. Children who misbehave are brought before the Committee to tell their side of the story. Minor problems are handled on the spot; more serious problems involve parent conferences. It is not clear what options the Parent Committee has if the child is perceived as the guilty party. One promising choice would be to convey this decision to the student and teacher and leave them to develop a behavior contract to remedy the problem.

The second strategy in which parents participate in pupil management is typically a component of a behavior modifi-

cation program and involves obtaining home support for an in-class reinforcement schedule. In one application of this approach, several young children who had repeatedly exhibited aggressive behavior received brightly colored stickers and verbal reinforcement in school for each predetermined period when they did not exhibit the targeted aggressive behavior. If a pupil earned a preestablished number of stickers at school, that individual earned the right to exchange the stickers at home for a prespecified privilege. Any stickers earned above the required number were considered a bonus for which the child received praise from the parent and expanded privileges. The parents were asked to record whether privileges were given each day and to return the card to school the next day. It was found all of the children, who were four and six years of age, showed a clear decrease in aggressive behavior (Goff and Demetral, 1983).

In another form of the strategy, daily report cards were sent home to parents of students tailored to the misbehavior of the individual pupils who were eight to eleven years of age (Millman et al., 1985). Typical problems were talking out in class and noncompletion of homework. Students were instructed to give the cards, which contained ratings of their behavior, school work, and home work, to their parents each evening. The teachers signed the cards and if necessary, explained the reasons for the grade. Parents were asked to read the cards, complement the child for good ratings, and constructively address areas needing improvement. The system was found to be very effective in reducing boisterous behavior in the classroom.

One advantage to employing parents in effort to control disruptive pupils is that the procedure increases the attention the child gets at home, which may in itself promote change (Millman et al., 1985). The major weakness, not discussed by those reporting the good results, is that the technique runs the risk of eliciting parental punishment, possibly physical punishment, of the child for behaviors deemed undesirable by the teacher. Not all parents accept the principle that granting and withholding of rewards is a powerful strategy for changing

children's behavior. Thus parental understanding of the process involved is an essential element of this approach.

SOCIAL/COGNITIVE SKILLS TRAINING

The primary goals of cognitive training in social interventions are to increase children's ability to control their impulses and to help them obtain rewards for nonaggressive behavior (Barth, 1986). One of the best-articulated and best-tested efforts to teach aggressive children self-management and interpersonal problem-solving skills is called the Think Aloud Program (Camp and Bash, 1981). A very brief summary of this plan will highlight the major aspects of the social/cognitive skill training approach. The Think Aloud Program includes activities to generate alternative responses to provocative stimuli, understand cause and effect, evaluate consequences of possible actions, and understand the feelings or perspectives of others. Research suggests that such programs can help improve the performance of highly aggressive elementary school children (Barth, 1986). However, this technique when used alone does not have the power to reduce aggression in adolescents, probably because diminished impulse control is not the sole cause of their aggressive behaviors. Social/cognitive skill training must therefore be used along with other strategies at the secondary school level (Barth, 1986). When this linkage does occur, the results can be very beneficial.

For example, when a cognitive/social skill training program supplemented a special class for frequently suspended students, it was found that they received significantly fewer fines for aggressive behavior than the control group who were classmates in the token economy program but did not receive the supplementary component (Feindler et al., 1984). The training program consisted of ten sessions during which the group members learned three skills: (1) behavioral control, (2) social problem solving, and (3) cognitive self-control (Barth, 1986). The behavioral control component gave students skill and a rationale for suppressing aggressive responses. For example,

they learned to insert a brief time delay between the provoking event and their reaction. They also learned noncombative verbal strategies for handling conflict, such as fogging or partially agreeing with the opponent. The social problem component involved specifying the problems, identifying alternative responses, listing consequences for each response, implementing alternatives, and evaluating outcomes. The cognitive self-control skills included self-instruction ("I'm going to ignore this and stay cool."), reinterpretation of the provocative stimuli, and self-evaluation during and after the conflict situation. Role plays with actual provocative peers and authority figures allowed the students to practice their social and cognitive skills and helped them to generalize these skills to out-of-class experiences (Barth, 1986).

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER IN IMPLEMENTING ALTERNATIVES

School social workers are properly concerned about school policies that interfere with the optimum development of all students in a school system, are discriminatory, and/or violate pupils' basic right to an education (Allen-Meares et al., 1986; Hancock, 1982; Radin, 1975; Winters and Easton, 1983). Thus there is no question about the appropriateness of their advocating for the drastic reduction, if not complete elimination of suspension and corporal punishment in school systems. However, change cannot be brought about merely by advocating for their termination. School personnel will surely ask how disruptive students can be controlled without these techniques. Thus the first task for school social workers concerned about the issues is to be thoroughly familiar with alternative strategies. These approaches should be discussed in detail with administrators responsible for recommending policy changes to the board of education. Further, since administrators are sensitive to the fears and concerns of the teaching staff, it is essential that material on alternatives to

suspension and corporal punishment be broadly disseminated throughout the school system. School social workers in conjunction with other members of the pupil personnel staff should then hold workshops for groups of teachers interested in exploring one or more of the alternatives suggested. Further strategies for achieving change in a school system are beyond the scope of this article but it is critical that school social workers locate and collaborate with allies, professional and nonprofessional, both within the school system and in the broader community in any effort to terminate corporal punishment and suspension.

The functions school social workers are ideally suited to perform in each alternative will be discussed in terms of the eight interventive roles played by social workers in school settings and described by Allen-Meares and colleagues (1986). Table 1, incorporating this framework, contains the seven alternative strategies in one column and the relevant school social worker roles in a second column.

A brief description of the roles, adapted from the portrayals by Allen-Meares et al. (1986), will be given before their use in-school suspension, timeout, and so on will be discussed. In the *enabler* role, the worker facilitates the accomplishments of the student, parent, or school staff member by giving support and helping the individual to accomplish goals that he or she has established. In the *consultant* role, the school social worker offers assistance to a help-seeker who is experiencing difficulties in performing professional functions and is less knowledgeable about some aspects of the task than the school social worker. In the *broker* role, the social worker links needed resources with the student, parent, or a member of the school staff. *Collaboration* involves participation by individuals who have different but equally valuable contributions to make; it denotes an exchange of information that results in joint problem-solving efforts. As a *mediator*, the social worker provides a problem-solving service to two individuals who are in conflict in an attempt to facilitate resolution of the conflict. In the *teacher* role, the school social worker provides the

TABLE 1
School Social Worker Roles in Alternatives to Suspension and Corporal Punishment

Alternatives	School Social Worker Roles
In-school suspension	enabler, consultant, broker, collaborator, manager, advocate
Timeout procedures	enabler, consultant, broker, advocate
Assignment to alternative school	enabler, consultant, broker, advocate
Behavior contracting	enabler, consultant, broker, mediator, advocate
Use of peers	enabler, consultant, broker, teacher, manager, advocate
Use of parents	enabler, consultant, broker, teacher, advocate
Cognitive/social skill training	enabler, consultant, broker collaborator, advocate

student, parent, or school staff member with new information necessary for coping with a problem at hand, and assist the individual in practicing the new behaviors or skills. As a *manager*, the school social worker plans, implements, and evaluates a program and often functions as a coordinator of that service. Finally, as an *advocate*, the school social worker's role is to achieve some desired end for the client by engaging in activities such as debating, bargaining, negotiating, and manipulating the environment on behalf of the client, typically a low-power or vulnerable individual.

As Table 1 suggests, the school social worker functions as an enabler in all of the alternative programs on the assumption that the school system does not have any of the alternatives in place as yet but has agreed to establish them. The administrator assigned the task of creating the new program will need support finding ways to alter the school environment to achieve that goal. The school social worker whose expertise includes the social functioning of individuals groups, as well as the dynamics of social systems, is well equipped to play that role. In addition, for in-school suspension and assignment to alternative school, the social worker may play the role of enabler with some disruptive students, providing direct service. To elaborate, in-school suspension with self-help packets calls for a conference with a counselor at the completion of ISS. The school social worker may well serve that function until the program becomes well established and thereafter with chronically disruptive pupils. Alternative school programs may also need the direct services of a social worker to meet with students who appear to have unusual adjustment problems. The Gold and Mann (1984) study indicated that depressed, anxious pupils were not helped in the alternative programs investigated. Perhaps if supplementary casework or group work services are provided to those individuals, the alternative school experience will be more successful.

The role of consultant also transcends the type alternative program. Some difficulties are likely to emerge in the implementation of any of the alternatives and staff conducting the programs will surely need advice and supplementary information about coping with the most difficult students. School social workers who by virtue of their training and experience are particularly knowledgeable about the social and emotional problems of disruptive pupils and how to deal with them are well suited to meet this need. Teachers using parents in behavior modification programs and confronted with a mother or father who fails to cooperate may be especially desirous of consultation with school social workers because of their

unique expertise in work with families (Radin and Welsh, 1984).

The role of broker is relevant to all of the alternative approaches inasmuch as detailed information about similar programs across the country would be extremely helpful as guides for activities to undertake and to avoid. In addition, because of their specialized knowledge of resources in the community (Radin and Welsh, 1984), school social workers are valuable assets to alternative school programs, which typically need many items not readily provided by the school system.

The social work role of collaborator is particularly important to in-school suspension programs and cognitive/social skill training. To locate or modify this instructional material, or to create new comparable content, school social workers will have to collaborate with other members of the pupil personnel staff and with the staff administering the alternative program so that their knowledge and efforts can be combined and coordinated. As they stimulate one another's thinking, synergy may be attained where the group product surpasses the sum of the individual contributions.

The mediator role is clearly essential to the success of the behavior contracting alternative as there are likely to be times when the teacher (or administrator) and disruptive student cannot agree on the terms of the contract. In such instances, the social worker's skills in mediating conflicts should be of great assistance in resolving the differences.

Social workers do not often play the role of teacher but this function is particularly important when using peers or parents as the alternative technique employed. If pupils are to be trained to help peers develop behavior contracts with teachers, school social workers should take on the task. Administrators and teachers are too closely identified with authoritarian roles in the school to function as guides for pupils trying to maintain some autonomy in negotiations with those same individuals. Social workers are also ideally suited to playing the teacher role with parents who are serving as members of a disciplinary committee. There is much to be learned about the norms of the

staff and the students, and staff expectations for students, before parents can serve effectively as decision makers concerning disciplinary matters. There may also be cultural differences between parents and a disruptive student, which should be clarified before hearings are held. School social workers' knowledge of family dynamics and the school as a social system provide an excellent background for the teaching role in this alternative. That background is also valuable in teaching confused or reluctant parents how to participate in a behavior modification program developed to control their aggressive child in the classroom.

It is possible that school social workers will be asked to plan and evaluate some of the alternative programs alone or in collaboration with others. The most likely candidates are the in-school suspension and the cognitive/social skill training programs. The school social worker may also be asked to administer the latter program. In performing these functions, the social worker will be playing the role of manager.

Finally, although this discussion assumed the school had agreed to implement at least one of the alternative programs, there is always the danger that its opponents will continue to work for its demise. Thus the school social worker must not relax or relinquish the role of advocate. Parents with children in the program are likely to be particularly interested in efforts to support its existence. This does not suggest that social workers should not be open minded and sensitive to changes that may be needed. But it does imply that the allies who collaborated in creating the alternative should maintain their network and be ready to remobilize if it appears that minor problems are being used as an opportunity to terminate the program.

CONCLUSION

School social workers perceive themselves to be advocates for children yet often find themselves working in settings with disciplinary techniques that are cruel, racially biased, in

violation of pupils' rights to an education, and ineffective in terminating the undesirable behaviors. One of the reasons social workers have felt so helpless in these school systems is that they did not have a body of information readily available that could be used to persuade school authorities to consider alternative humane strategies with a much greater likelihood of reducing disruptive behavior. It is hoped that this article will partially meet that need and help empower school social workers and educators to act upon their beliefs about the dignity of all human beings and the rights of dependent children.

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