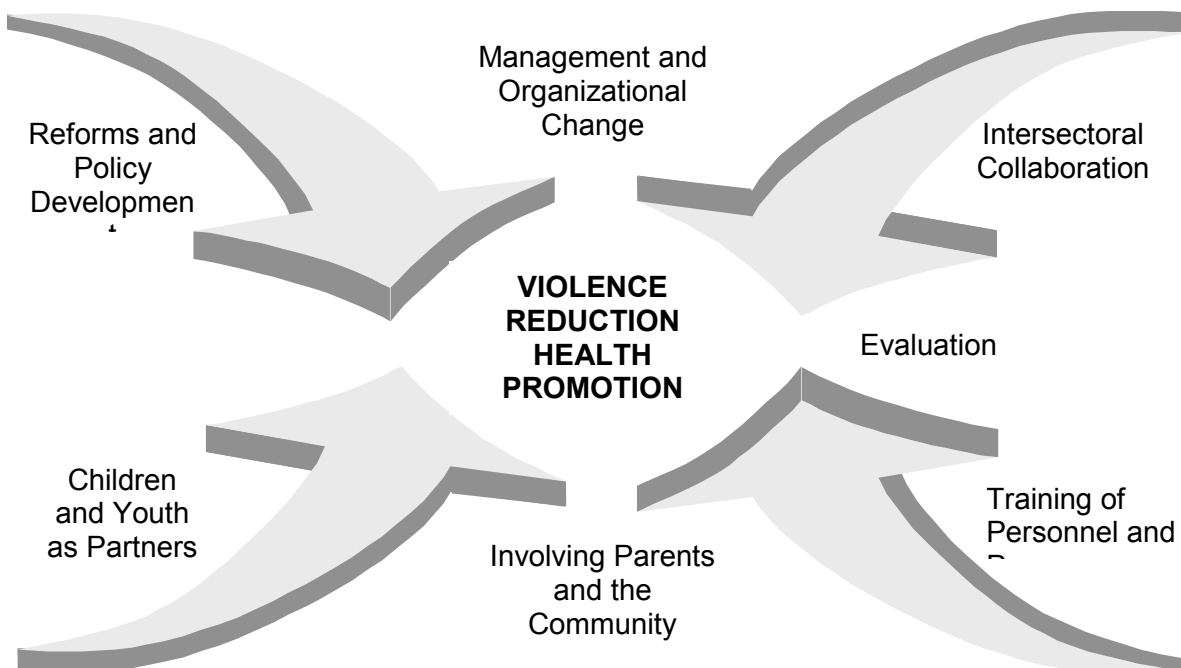


A VIOLENCE REDUCTION HEALTH PROMOTION MODEL

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study touches on a wide range of issues and involved the combined expertise of the Project Team. The completion of this study was due to our collective efforts and the generous funding provided by the Prairie Partners Community Foundation. Along the way to writing this report, the Project Team was assisted by many individuals.

We should particularly like to thank:

- the Action Committee Against Violence in Calgary, specifically Karen Walroth and the members of the Children and Youth sub-committee, for their support in accessing Calgary initiatives;
- the countless persons who spoke about violence and the prevention initiatives they knew about and took time out of their busy schedules to meet or send project materials for review;
- the resource contacts in the field of violence prevention that testified to the relevance of the review process undertaken by the Committee and thereby providing encouragement and validation of our efforts;
- the research assistance provided at different stages of the review process by Lynda Gardiner, Jeny Matthews, Deb Miller, San Patten and Roxanne Felix;
- the expertise of Heather Stronge in putting together the final document as well as Jay Daniels for his creative input.

This report represents the collective efforts of the Project Team as listed on the cover. Our work took place over a number of months with the ongoing contributions of Mary Lou Halliwell from the Prairie Partners Community Foundation, whom we wish to thank for her valuable assistance. The final recommendations are, however, solely those of the Project Team.

We welcome your comments directed to Dr. Billie Thurston in Community Health Sciences at 220-6940 or by e-mail at thurston@ucalgary.ca.

PREVENTING SPOUSE ABUSE: A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAM

After extensive review and evaluation of existing programs relevant to violence prevention, there is no one program that the Project Team is able to recommend. The programs reviewed in this study provide some promising practices but they represent only partial components of a truly comprehensive and collaborative violence prevention program. In fulfillment of the mandate provided by of the *Prairie Partners Community Foundation*, the Project Team has designed a comprehensive and collaborative anti-violence school program that currently does not exist. It is, however, built upon elements from several existing approaches as well as the collective wisdom of committee members. The goal in designing this program was to present the *Prairie Partners Community Foundation* with a project outline from which they can fund programs in a proactive way. Part I of this chapter presents the recommended option for a comprehensive and collaborative anti-violence school program. Part II presents a more detailed rationale for and elaboration of the program outline.

PART I: A COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-VIOLENCE SCHOOL PROGRAM

It is the recommendation of the Project Team that a comprehensive school-based anti-violence program be instituted as a means of reducing spouse abuse in the future. The comprehensive program would have four major components: instruction or curriculum programs; a school climate change emphasis; support services; and social support opportunities. The instruction and school climate program components would be under the active direction of the school as primary prevention activities. The social services and social support programs, secondary prevention activities, would draw upon existing community services. Further, the Project Team recommends the creation of a full-time advocate position for the comprehensive anti-violence school program. This advocate would be responsible for recommending program content and process to the involved schools and community groups and ensuring that implementation of the elements of the program would maintain the intent and integrity of the program as a whole.

Major Elements of a Comprehensive Anti-Violence School Program

The following major elements are derived from the Comprehensive School Health (CSH) model (Health Canada, 1999). This model builds upon known successes internationally in addressing disease and social-health problems (e.g., smoking).

- **Instruction:** Instruction enhances the empowerment of students through knowledge, attitudes, skill development, and behaviors associated with health and well being. To

really empower students, the curricula presented need to be developmentally appropriate and actively involve students in the learning process.

- **School Climate:** A school climate that supports a healthy and non-violent physical and social environment for students is best able to support and reinforce prosocial and prohealth behaviors. The school environment is regarded as a resource in the form of its policies and practices that support healthy child development and well being for all students.
- **Support Services:** Intersectoral collaboration, in the form of support services for students and families delivered within the school setting or through referrals from school personnel, strengthens the connection between community and school. Support services are targeted towards children or youth that already exhibit aggressive, violent and/or other problem behaviors that have been identified by the school. These children or youth are often labeled as “at-risk” of further violence and need specific program intervention to prevent further occurrence of violent behavior.

This Intersectoral collaboration reinforces the concept that violence prevention is a public issue that affects every community member. This type of collaboration ensures the use of common language and objectives across various agencies and community contexts in combating violence in schools and society. It also honors the understanding that there are many factors thought to be associated with the use of violence as a means of resolving conflict.

- **Social Support:** Social support in such forms as role models, mentors, and family support encourage the active participation of key persons who can have a significant influence on students’ healthy, non-violent choices. These programs tend to be external to the school and voluntary in nature. They are based on the premise that building competence through such relationships would assist in buffering recognized risk factors for violent behavior.

Advocate for the Comprehensive Anti-Violence School Approach

- In order to fulfill the mandate of a comprehensive anti-violence school program, there would need to be a full-time program advocate.
- Accountability for implementation of the program would remain with the school and community but the advocate would play an essential role in holding the vision for the comprehensive and collaborative nature of the recommended program. This means that the advocate would work with but not for the schools while advocating for the program.
- The advocate would assist the school and community in strategic planning for the program and its components, such as anti-violence needs assessment, community capacity assessment, program implementation planning, and evaluation planning. The advocate would assist school personnel in setting anti-violence priorities and

contacting community resources that might deliver those parts of the overall program that are not teacher-delivered.

- The advocate would protect the integrity of the comprehensive program, that is, ensures that program components fit within overall program vision and are coordinated with other program components.
- The advocate would increase community capacity for anti-violence by building on support services and social support networks that already exist and collaborate with schools and community funding bodies to identify who in the community might deliver program components.
- The advocate would foster champions of anti-violence within the school sector.

Community Focus

- A comprehensive anti-violence school program is operated within a community of schools that covers grades K – 12. The elementary schools feed into the Junior High schools which in turn feed into a Senior High school. Within this community of schools there would be approximately 3 elementary schools; 2 junior high schools; and 1 senior high school.

Context

- A comprehensive anti-violence school program is located in a broader community where there are programs for healthy child development (0 to 5 years) as well as adult services that exist or are being developed. In particular there are programs in which various community sectors collaborate such as shelter programs, programs for perpetrators, as well as programs for child witnesses of spouse abuse and other forms of family violence. This represents one aspect of the community's capacity to nurture and sustain such a program.

Coordinated

- The comprehensive anti-violence school program would evolve over several years (i.e., staggered implementation) until it encompassed all grades from K to 12. This is a multi-faceted program where program components are appropriate to the developmental stages of the targeted children and youth.
- Coordination of the program across grade levels, developmental stages, and social contexts provides the children and youth with a consistent message about violence and alternative behaviors. Having a “common language” and norms across varied settings and years allows children and youth to build upon the foundations established

in previous years of the program (also by osmosis to parents and significant other adults).

Collaborative

- A comprehensive anti-violence school program is a collaborative effort among *students, teachers, school staff and administrators, parents, and community members* (that provide services out- and inside the schools).

Targeted Outcomes

- A comprehensive anti-violence school program will have the following outcomes as it creates an anti-violence culture:
 - Decrease in negative behaviors (e.g., fighting, hitting, verbal abuse);
 - Increase in prosocial behaviors (e.g., use of mediation or negotiation to resolve conflicts; communication skills);
 - Increase resilience in the face of victimization (e.g., identify abusive behaviors as the responsibility of the perpetrator); and
 - Increase bystanders' understanding that they are both part of the problem and part of the solution (e.g., bystanders identify bullying behaviors and seek help to resolve the situation).
- We believe that this pattern of change will lead to decreases in the perpetration of spouse abuse as well as decreased tolerance and increased help seeking behaviors for those who are victimized by spouse abuse.

Guiding Principles

- Spousal abuse has multiple causes. Prevention approaches to spouse abuse must be multi-dimensional as well. Educating children and youth within multiple social contexts to identify abusive behaviors and to choose non-violent solutions to conflict situations is a long-term prevention approach to spousal abuse.
- Behavior that is addressed within its social contexts (environments that support positive behaviors) leads to more behavior change and longer lasting change because a social environment is created where violence is no longer acceptable.
- Parents and communities need to be included in the anti-violence program in order to ensure that stakeholders from many social environments of the children and youth buy into the program and enable it to be sustained over time. This creates a culture of learning for the children and youth where consistent messages are conveyed.

- For schools to undertake a comprehensive anti-violence program there needs to be a social service context that supports this effort.
- A comprehensive anti-violence program needs to address a variety of topics in developmentally appropriate ways across the K to 12 grade levels.
- The chances of success are greater with a cumulative and evolving program. Each program component can have a small success upon which other program components build. This process leads to a greater chance of overall success.
- Children and youth need both skills and knowledge that will help them to identify when a behavior is abusive. That means that they need to be exposed to a number of specialized programs (e.g., child sexual abuse prevention).
- Linkages between past learning and new program learning need to be explicitly made. This method will reinforce the message delivered in each program and produce a cumulative effect.
- Programs that take gender roles into account are more likely to impact spouse abuse.
- Programs benefit from both rigorous process and outcome evaluations within a culture of evaluation.

Implementation

- Start with instruction and school climate programs as these are most directly under the control and auspices of the school. Collaborative efforts involving support services and social support programs would be implemented later.
- It would take 3 years for the comprehensive anti-violence program to be fully operational.
- Evaluation of the comprehensive program and its components would be part of the program from the very beginning. This would include both process and outcome evaluations.

Expected Timeframe of Short- and Long-Term Impacts

- It is anticipated that a reduction in the incidence of spouse abuse would be evident within a 5- to 10-year period.
- Immediate knowledge, skill development and behavior change outcomes would be evident within the 3 years it takes for the program to become fully operational. For example, statistically significant changes in the rate of dating violence or bullying

behaviors would be evident through accompanying evaluations within the first three years of programming directed at reducing these behaviors.

Integrated Effective Prevention Activities

- Prevention activities for a comprehensive and collaborative anti-violence school program, which would lead to the eventual reduction in incidents of spouse abuse, would choose program components from a suite of evaluated programs.
- *Primary prevention* aims for a reduction in the number of new cases of spouse abuse. Primary prevention activities include:
 - Conflict resolution skills training
 - Gendered relationships education
 - Standards of behavior created within the school climate
- *Secondary prevention* aims at early detection of partner violence or abuse with the hope that the individuals involved may make a more rapid return to wellness. Secondary prevention initiatives include:
 - Employee experiences (teachers, administrators, and other school staff)
 - Dating violence education
 - Specialized programs that assist in identifying and seeking help for abuse at home (elder abuse; spouse abuse; child sexual abuse; child physical abuse or neglect)
 - Community climate norms (e.g., anti-racism; gender)
- Conflict resolution education, in its various forms, is seen as necessary but not sufficient component in school-based violence prevention programming. Such programs can be important elements of a *comprehensive violence prevention and intervention approach* (Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1997; New England Comprehensive Assistance Center, 1996a). This model of violence prevention seeks to reach beyond the individual child or youth to change the total school environment and to influence the larger community norms towards non-violence and an appreciation of cultural and other differences (Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1997; New England Comprehensive Assistance Center, 1996a). Other elements besides conflict resolution education included in this type of comprehensive approach are school policy change, parent communication and training, as well as providing opportunities for students to participate in and contribute to the community.

Suite of Programs

- A suite of prevention programs is needed to create a comprehensive approach to the reduction of domestic violence through school-based programming. The programs fall within the four major categories of instruction, school climate, support services, and social support programs.
- Overall, the programs aim to influence perpetrator, victim and bystander experience.
- The types of programs need to be repeated at different grade levels, K to 12, in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- **Instruction** programs examined by the Project Team included conflict management, anti-bullying, gendered relationships and dating violence.
- Instruction programs not examined in this project but which may enhance anti-violence efforts include self-esteem building, child sexual abuse prevention, domestic abuse education, and alcohol and drug abuse prevention programs.
- **School Climate** programs were either general in scope or directed towards changing bullying behaviors in particular.
- **Support Services** programs were instruction programs that targeted children and/or youth that were designated as having several risk factors for violence. These instruction programs focused on conflict management, dating violence, or witness/victim of abuse trauma.
- **Social Supports** programs focused on developing mentor relationships or supporting parents/families of children and youth that were assessed as at-risk of violence.
- Table 1.1 presents the programs examined by the Project Team that have substantial evidence of effectiveness. When appropriate, programs that demonstrated a moderate level of effectiveness evidence are indicated as promising. However, these programs need to be evaluated using a control or comparison group before any confidence can be placed in their effectiveness. Gaps in programs at the three levels of education are indicated.

Table 1.1 Suite of Programs with Substantial Effectiveness Evidence

INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS	ELEMENTARY (K – 6)	JUNIOR HIGH (7 – 9)	SENIOR HIGH (10 – 12)
Conflict Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Second Step</i> program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Second Step</i> program ▪ <i>Working Towards Peace</i> (Lion’s Quest) program 	There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for managing conflict.
Anti-Bullying	<p>There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Bullying at School</i> program showed promise 	<p>There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for reducing bullying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Bullying at School</i> program showed promise 	There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for reducing bullying.
Gendered Relationships	There were no programs examined that had gendered content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Safe Dates</i> program ▪ <i>Healthy Relationships</i> program 	There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for instruction in gendered relationships.
Dating Violence	There were no programs examined that had dating violence content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Safe Dates</i> program ▪ <i>Healthy Relationships</i> program 	There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for instruction in dating violence.
SCHOOL CLIMATE PROGRAMS	ELEMENTARY (K – 6)	JUNIOR HIGH (7 – 9)	SENIOR HIGH (10 – 12)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>PeaceBuilders</i> program ▪ <i>Bullying at School</i> program showed promise 	<p>There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for school climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Bullying at School</i> program showed promise 	There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for school climate change.
SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS	ELEMENTARY (K – 6)	JUNIOR HIGH (7 – 9)	SENIOR HIGH (10 – 12)
Conflict Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>PATHS</i> program ▪ <i>Taming the Monster Within</i> program showed promise ▪ <i>Families and Schools Together</i> program show promise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Conflict Resolution</i> program ▪ <i>Aggressors, Victims and Bystanders</i> program ▪ <i>Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents</i> program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents</i> program

Child Witness/Victim of Abuse Trauma	There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for child witness/victim of abuse influence change. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Trauma/Grief Focused</i> program showed promise 	There were no programs examined that had a youth witness/victim of abuse influence focus.	There were no programs examined that had a youth witness/victim of abuse influence focus.
Gendered Relationships or Dating Violence	There were no evaluated programs examined that had gendered relationships or dating violence content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>STAR</i> program ▪ <i>Youth Relationships</i> program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>STAR</i> program
SOCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS	ELEMENTARY (K – 6)	JUNIOR HIGH (7 – 9)	SENIOR HIGH (10 – 12)
Mentors	There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence involving mentors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Trauma/Grief Focused</i> program showed promise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>STAR</i> program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>STAR</i> program ▪ <i>SAGE</i> program showed promise
Parents/Families	There were no programs examined that had a substantial level of effectiveness evidence working with parents/families. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>FAST</i> program showed promise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>STAR</i> program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>STAR</i> program

PART II: RATIONALE for a COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-VIOLENCE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Theoretical Foundation of the Health Promotion Model

Theory as well as research is necessary to inform decision-making regarding the content and process of program design and implementation. Social learning theory and the risk-focused paradigm are the most frequently cited theoretical frameworks for violence prevention. However, other models and theory (e.g., ecological model; developmental theory; health promotion model) are needed to conceptualize violent behavior within the social and developmental contexts in which it occurs (Williams, Guerra & Elliott, 1997).

The comprehensive anti-violence school program proposed by the Project Team has been designed from a public health perspective. This perspective can be conceptualized as a biopsychosocial approach with a strong prevention orientation (Corvo, 1997). Public health models (e.g., health promotion), with an understanding of potential socio-environmental risk factors, provide another way of viewing youth violence. The health promotion perspective encompasses changing individual behavior but does so within the context of their everyday life and with a strong emphasis on societal structure and policy. The focus of change is most often at the community or population level of intervention. The broader context of this perspective is reflected in the Ottawa Charter action strategies and determinants of health of the health promotion model. Five action strategies, known as the Ottawa Charter actions, involve building healthy public policy, creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal skills, and reorienting health services. Determinants of health are personal, social, economic and environmental factors (e.g., income and social status, social support networks, education, working conditions) that influence the health status of individuals and of whole populations (see Appendix A for definitions). These action strategies and determinants of health reflect the community and population focus of the model.

Assumptions of the Health Promotion Model

The underlying assumptions of a health promotion model include:

- A central characteristic of biomedicine is a focus on the individual, whereas, a determinants of health approach has a much stronger basis in societal structure and policy.
- Health promotion is characterized by five action strategies (Ottawa Charter) that include individuals.
- Knowledge of risk and protection factors enables health promoters to develop programs that enhance resilience and minimize risk.
- Population attributable risk is an important concept of risk factor analysis;

- Population-wide approaches have as a goal the changing of some norms of an entire community.
- Health promotion program planners must deal with targets and market segmentation.

It is important to recognize that all young people need support and education (i.e., primary prevention efforts) about relationship issues, safety and conflict management. Some students will need secondary-level prevention or support services to deal with the aggressive and violent behavior that is already being exhibited. Prevention efforts should be clearly categorized into primary prevention and secondary-level or support services.

Major Elements of the Health Promotion Model

The health promotion model is proposed as the collaborative, comprehensive approach to violence prevention preferred by the Project Team. This health promotion model can be applied to any setting including schools. The Comprehensive School Health (CSH) framework can provide a model that does not ignore risk factors but is much more multifaceted and comprehensive. This model of prevention planning and development is similar to the structured planning models reviewed. The CSH model features multiple components: curricula, a healthy school climate, support services and social support (Health Canada, 1999).

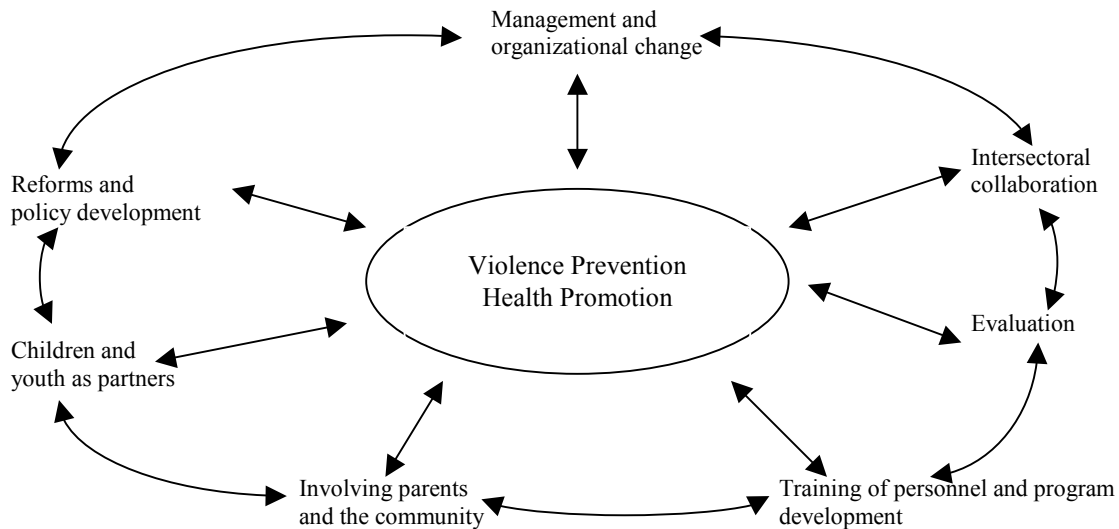
The following guidelines were adapted from the findings of the first conference of the European Network of Health Promoting Schools (1997). The following seven issues represent the major elements (see Figure 1.1) essential to a health promoting approach to youth violence prevention. Projects should reflect an understanding of these elements and how they will address these issues.

1. Management and Organizational Change

Management and organizational change reflects the belief that youth violence prevention takes place in the context of the school community as well as family and society. This attitude is congruent with a 'learning' rather than a teaching model. Children and youth learn not only by instruction by the role models provided within the school. The way in which the school is organized and managed should reflect a values-in-action approach. Values consistent with a health promotion model include equity, participation, empowerment, collaboration and consideration of the sociocultural environment. Management style and practice that is consistent with and supportive of these values will help to create a school culture that promotes non-violence.

Knowing that individual change happens within the context of community (family, group, society) and is reinforced by community factors, violence prevention programs should reflect this understanding in the participation of the whole school community and outreach to the broader community.

Figure 1.1 Essential Components of a Violence Reduction Health Promotion Model



2. Involving Parents and Community

Collaboration with parents as well as the community is essential to health promotion in the school setting. Aggressive and violent behavior must be understood within a social context. Many violence prevention programs focus primarily or exclusively on developing personal skills and coping behaviors outside of the social contexts (e.g., family, community, society) in which these behaviors take place. Change at the individual level is necessary but not sufficient. Collaboration with parents and community stakeholders can promote community and parental empowerment and provide students with greater consistency among the various environments in which they learn and live.

It must be recognized that the school cannot do everything in promoting health and preventing violence. It is essential that parents and the community share ownership of the initiatives that take place within the school context. Parent needs as well as those of the students should be integral to prevention planning. School staff will find it challenging to “engage parents from across the whole spectrum of the community” in order to ensure that the needs of all are voiced (European Network of Health Promoting Schools, 1997, 23).

Many school-based programs are based on broad assumptions about the role and ability of teachers and the school system to prevent violence. While schools indeed have a captive audience of students over important formative years, economic pressures over the past decade have eroded the public education system to ‘bare-bones’. Assumptions about the broad role of schools and school-based programs can tend to disenfranchise

other community sectors (e.g., healthcare, mental health) and even parents or families from their vital participation in solution development and evaluation.

In Calgary, the Mayor's Task Force on Community and Family Violence (1998) has identified the need for a coordinated community approach to youth violence prevention and intervention. The Task Force recognized that coordinated services for women leaving abusive relationships are now available, but that the areas of youth-related services lack a collaborative, coordinated approach.

3. Children and Youth as Partners

Children and youth need to be full partners in the prevention of violence. It is too easy to see students as the object of prevention efforts and not involve all students in the recognition of the problem and solution approaches. Students should be actively involved in advising school officials of what violence is occurring and what violence prevention suggestions might work. Partnering with children and youth is an empowerment strategy that can lead to youth-centered services.

It is important that we consider what can actually be expected for children to accomplish? Violent and aggressive behavior of children and youth can best be viewed as modeling societal norms. Therefore, they should not become scapegoats for social norms that accept violence as a part of conflict management. Responsibility for change should not be only at the level of children.

4. Reforms and Policy Development

Reforms and policy development at the school and school system level provide the milieu in which school staff as well as students work together to prevent and reduce violent behaviors. Creating a safe and nurturing school climate does not happen without the shared values of parents, teachers, school administrators and students being reflected in school policy and practice. Policy change is one way to recognize that contextual and system change is essential to support personal change efforts.

The prevention model features multiple components (e.g., curricula, a healthy school climate, support services and social support). If the proposed project is addressing just one of these components, it should be indicated where that component fits within the comprehensive prevention model. A healthy school climate includes school norms that respect students and reinforce positive behaviors while establishing that violence; aggression and bullying are unacceptable behaviors.

Before a comprehensive anti-violence program is initiated, school personnel need to be aware of the politics of implementation that they may encounter in their school and community. A climate of respect and consultation is key to preventing violence. If students, parents, and staff feel a sense of community and ownership in the school, they

are more likely to work with each other rather than against each other. Violence prevention will best be served by understanding what these key stakeholders see as the important violence issues to be addressed. It should not be assumed that every program or program component that comes into the school community will be welcomed. For example, gender-based or dating violence programs may not be readily accepted in communities that do not recognize or challenge traditional gender-related social norms.

5. Intersectoral Collaboration

When considering the school as a health promoting setting, developing linkages between the school and community organizations is fundamental. This intersectoral collaboration draws upon the collective knowledge and resources of community organizations in order to enrich the school in its health promotion endeavors.

6. Training and Program Development

Empowerment at the individual level is an important guiding principle for a health promotion approach. This reflects the understanding that children and youth require knowledge, skills and behaviors that allow them to have an appropriate level of control over their own decisions and behaviors. Essential to accomplishing this objective is that teachers, other school staff and/or community members who engage in program delivery have opportunities for training both prior to and during the project. Besides training in how to deliver the program, teachers need to learn how to integrate violence prevention into their own practices as well as into the regular curriculum. Modeling respect and conflict resolution skills in the day-to-day occurrences of school life will reinforce the use of these skills and their application for the students.

An important issue that emerges is whether programs and initiatives should be directed towards the entire student population or at-risk sub-populations. This is articulated in the debate over whether to focus on individuals and risk factors, or population-wide change. In the projects reviewed, nearly one-third targeted children or youth deemed by the program planners to be at greater risk of perpetrating or being victimized by violence rather than the general student body. When programs are intended to intervene with ‘at-risk’ populations, attention to labeling or stereotyping issues should be given during program design and implementation phases. Left unintended, these issues can produce unintended consequences from programs and should be assessed.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

When projects are developed by a coalition of community partners, the involvement of all partners should be clearly specified not only in the program planning but also in its implementation and evaluation. Accountability for program activities and outcomes (to students, parents and the community) resides with the all coalition partners.

Completing an audit or needs-assessment is an important step in developing prevention programming and in understanding some of the barriers to implementation. Opportunities should be given during the needs audit for the stakeholders to indicate their priorities for prevention initiatives. In conducting a comprehensive school audit or needs assessment, it is important to include gender-based and dating violence questions in the assessment protocol.

A *School Needs-Assessment* or *Audit* administered before a comprehensive anti-violence school program is initiated can help in determining community capacity and perceived school need. The following type of questions can focus attention not only on acts of violence but also on victim experience.

- What are the effects of violence experienced by students?
- How much violence is there in the school?
- Where does the violence take place?
- Who is involved?
- Who do students tell about the violence they see or experience?
- How do students feel about the violence in and around their school?

Some needs-assessments have been developed for specific forms or expressions of youth violence (e.g., bullying). These assessments use language that is specific to the violent behavior they seek to address through specific programs. A comprehensive school audit would expand upon these specific forms to include a wide variety of violent behaviors and focus on perpetrator, victim and bystander experiences. Community members, school staff and parents should be part of the needs-assessment along with all students. The needs-assessment may take the form of a pencil-and-paper questionnaire and/or interviews.

Monitoring of program implementation is an important part of evaluation. Programs set out implementation plans but these often need to be adapted to suit the current situation. High staff turnover, student attrition, and scarce resources are all examples of factors that can affect program implementation and outcomes. In order to understand what works, it is important to know in detail what was actually done.

Determine what indicators would be appropriate to demonstrate whether identified problems were solved. For example, school nurse visits may not be the best indicator of a reduction of violence in the playground. At best this type of indicator may give a rough approximation and is dependent upon accurate assessment of the reason for the visit to a school nurse. Record keeping can be cumbersome and time-consuming, so it is important that appropriate resources are allocated. Whenever possible, it would be enlightening to know the proportion of actual prevention of new cases of violence versus reduction of violent incidents by persons who have previously been known to be aggressive.

Questions that will help direct this exploration include:

- Under what circumstances are these programs effective?
- Do they have lasting impact?

- What curriculum content areas are essential?
- What is the minimum number of sessions?
- How many years of booster sessions are necessary?
- Are programs differentially effective with different groups of students (high-risk, low-risk)?

The following questions, adapted from the health promotion evaluation framework by Thurston and colleagues (1998), provide an excellent summary of the elements that need to be evaluated from a health promotion perspective:

- Does the project focus beyond individuals?
- Is violence addressed in the context of social and environmental factors?
- Is empowerment a key guiding principle?
- Is the project sensitive to power relationships among the individuals and groups involved?
- Are steps taken to ensure that the project is accessible (e.g., geographically, financially, culturally and functionally)?
- Are multiple sectors (health care, social services, transportation, environment, education) involved in planning, implementing and evaluating the project?
- Are multiple partners involved in the project?
- Does the project demonstrate awareness of other related projects in the school, community and field of violence prevention?
- Is evidence (i.e., other evaluations, published literature, theory, experience) presented to support the choice and effectiveness of the project's activities?
- Does the project's development demonstrate that the local context was taken into account?

It is important to evaluate secondary impacts such as significant consequences, whether intended or unintended, that may have occurred as a result of the prevention initiatives. This may involve assessing the process as well as the outcomes of the program and its impact on the participants, parents and school staff.

When analyzing data, it is important to assess not only the main effects of the program on all students who participate but to also evaluate the impact of the prevention initiative on different subgroups of participants (e.g., gender, income, setting characteristics such as rural versus urban). The question explored in these types of analyses is what works for whom and under what conditions.

Evaluations that adhere to rigorous standards would include pre- and post-test, control group designs, with adequate sample size, appropriate statistical tests of significance, and outcome data that measured violent or aggressive behavior. Rigorous qualitative process and outcome evaluations would also be appropriate.

Collaborative programs – what's working well together? With the emerging emphasis on integrated, multifaceted, community-based prevention approaches, we need to explore new evaluation methods for assessment. Comprehensive school and community

initiatives are difficult not only to implement but also to study using experimental or quasi-experimental research methods. Projects that compare two programs, groups, methods of delivery (e.g., long versus short format/duration; at-risk versus normative) can enhance our understanding of with whom and under what conditions programs are effective. If these types of evaluations are well planned and executed, they will clarify many as yet unknown program variables.

There is a need to create a “culture of evaluation” for violence prevention programs. Without a culture of evaluation, programs run the risk of wasting time, money, opportunities and the good will of students, teachers, parents and community members. It is only within this culture of evaluation that we can answer all of the following questions:

- What works?
- For whom?
- Under what conditions?
- At what cost?

It is important to acknowledge that within any collaborative effort there may not be the expertise to accomplish all aspects of the program and evaluation. Many community agencies get bogged down in attempts to collect, analyze and interpret data from the project. For example, one program contacted for this review had collected data throughout the five years of the program but did not have the resources and knowledge to analyze the data collected. There may indeed be boxes of information sitting on shelves that could add to our understanding of what works and what does not work.

Forging functional partnerships between researchers and service providers as well as addressing the dynamics of collaboration in those partnerships will be essential to effective evaluation processes. School personnel and community organizations often do not have the expertise to create, carry out and disseminate evaluations of their programs. Forging partnerships with researchers is one way to expand the collaboration process and pool resources.

Dissemination of program and evaluation information is essential in order to inform public policy and promote effective prevention efforts (Williams, Guerra & Elliott, 1997). As part of the program proposal, there should be a clear dissemination plan. All too often, program evaluations remain within the agency or organization. It is important that programs add to the general knowledge base about what works and what does not.

The knowledge base relevant to violence and violence prevention is fragmented. It is evident, from the literature reviewed for this study, that dating violence was treated as a distinct area of prevention from bullying or aggressive behaviors in and around school. School violence and community violence are generally presented as discrete subject matters, as are youth and adult violence. This type of fragmentation has led to separate bodies of information that are more difficult to access. What has been learned in one body of research may potentially provide important insight and knowledge into other problem areas. Many of the risk and resilience factors identified in the research targeting youth violence address important factors cited in other areas of research.

Suite of Programs

The following Tables present the suite of 60 programs examined in this project organized according to three criteria: 1) *level of research evidence*; 2) *targeted audience*; and 3) *type of program content*. The 60 school-based prevention programs have first been sorted according to the level of empirical evidence for effectiveness. This decision was based upon the Project Team's commitment to make recommendations for a program in violence prevention with children and youth that would have a long-term impact on the rate of spouse abuse.

- 1) The projects reviewed for this study have been categorized according to four levels of research evidence that were adapted from a classification scheme used by the Amhurst H. Wilder Foundation (Monsey, Owne, Zierman, Lambert, & Hyman, 1995).

Level-I: Programs with a Level-I designation are projects that have used a control or comparison group research design and measured behavior outcomes that have been assessed as providing a substantial level of effectiveness evidence for reducing violent behaviors.

Level-II: Programs with a Level-II designation are projects that have used pre- and post-test comparisons but did not use a control in their research design. These studies measured behavior outcomes and were assessed as providing a moderate level of effectiveness evidence in reducing violence.

Level-III: Level-III programs are projects that used pre- and post-test comparisons but did not use a control in their research design. These studies did not measure behavior outcomes but did measure changes in knowledge, attitude, and/or skill development. They were assessed as providing a moderate level of effectiveness evidence in changing attitudes, knowledge and/or skills that may influence violence.

Level-IV: Programs with a Level-IV recommendation are based on evidence from experts in the violence prevention field but where these recommendations had not yet been systematically tested

- 2) There were *three primary targeted audience* groups: elementary school children (**E**); junior high school youth (**JH**); and high school youth (**HS**). Many of the 60 projects in this study evaluated their program using just one targeted audience, while a few assessed the effectiveness of their program with students from more than one target audience did.
- 3) There were *three types of program content* reflected in the projects in the study: gender-based; general; and structured planning content.

General Content: These programs were instruction or curriculum oriented programs that addressed violence issues without including gender-based content or school climate change.

Gender-based Content: These programs had specific program content related to gender issues such as gender stereotyping, gendered attitudes that support violence, and gender inequality.

Structured-Planning Content: Programs with a structured planning content emphasized addressing school environment issues and were conducted on a school-wide rather than a class by class basis.

Table 1.2 presents the 21 programs that have instruction or curriculum as their major prevention activity. Eight of the programs have gender-based content, while the other programs have a general content. The target audience is indicated for each study. Those programs that have been evaluated using a Level-I methodology provide the most reliable data about program effectiveness. The first five programs listed in Table 1.1 fit into the category of providing substantial evidence of effectiveness.

Table 1.2 Programs Using Instruction as the Major Prevention Activity

INSTRUCTION Empowerment of students through knowledge, attitudes, skill development, and behavior change.	E	JH	HS	PROGRAM CONTENT
LEVEL-I RESEARCH STUDIES				
Safe Dates (Foshee et al., 1998; #21; Level-I) Less psychological, sexual violence and physical violence perpetration in prevention group		X		Gender-based
Healthy Relationships (Safer, 1998; #50; Level-I) Girls <u>but not boys</u> reported using less physical violence, less psychological abuse and less passive-aggressive tactics at post-test		X		Gender-based
Second Step (Grossman et al., 1997; #26; Level-I) Observations indicated that physical aggression (e.g., hitting) decreased for Second Step group but increased among control group	X	X		General
(Harris, 1995; #28; Level-I) Prevention/control design but did not look at reduction of violence but increase in prosocial behaviors	X			
(Leidy et al., 1998; #38; Level-I) <u>Did not significantly decrease negative interaction strategies</u> but significantly increased positive interaction	X			
(Taub, 1998; #56; Level-I) Teachers reported a significant decrease in antisocial behaviors and increase in prosocial behaviors – independent observations were less clear	X			

PeaceBuilders (Krug et al., 1997; #34; Level-I) Significantly fewer visits to the school nurse recorded for prevention group; <i>school environment emphasis</i>	X			General
Lions-Quest/ Working Toward Peace (Laird & Syropoulos, 1996; #35; Level-I) Significant decrease in violence-related referrals, aggressive behaviors, and increased prosocial		X		General
LEVEL-II RESEARCH STUDIES				
Second Step ((Bergsgaard, 1997; #5; Level-II) Pre-post design – <u>only trends were noted in reducing incidence of overt conflict in the target classes</u>	X			General
LEVEL-III RESEARCH STUDIES				
Skills for Violence Free Relationships (Krajewski et al., 1996; #33; Level-III) Attitude and knowledge (control group)		X	X	Gender-based
Teen Dating Relationships (Lavoie et al., 1995; #37; Level-III) Knowledge and attitudes			X	Gender-based
Creating Peaceful Learning Environments (Cameron et al., 1998; #9; Level-III) Some evidence that programs change intermediary factors; <i>General and at-risk populations</i>		X	X	General School Climate
A.S.A.P. (Jaffe et al., 1992; #31; Level-III) Knowledge and awareness of violence in total sample increased significantly; Gender differences reported were that at follow-up, <u>males reported some changes in an undesired direction</u> while females did not (Sudermann & Jaffe, 1993; #55; Level-III) Knowledge, attitudes and behavioral intentions changed – <u>senior male students did not report significant changes with the program</u> , though male and female junior students and female seniors did			X X	Gender-based
Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents (Enger, Howerton & Stepp, 1994; #17; Level-III) Pre-post prevention/control group design – increase in knowledge		X		General
Reach Out to Schools (Taylor, Williams & Laing, 1998; #57; Level-III) Significant increase in self-control and other attitude and skill domains after 2 years of program but only <u>trends at one year</u>	X			General
LEVEL-IV RESEARCH STUDIES				
Safe and Caring Schools (Alberta Teacher's Association, 1999; #1; Level-IV) Proposed impact study of behaviors as well as knowledge, attitude and skill changes	X	X	X	General Structured- Planning

Rhode Island Teen Dating Violence Prevention Program (Silverman et al., 1998; #53; Level-IV) Knowledge and attitudes – pre-post control group design; <i>General and at-risk population</i>		X		Gender-based
Gender Violence Prevention Program (Fineran, 1998; #20; Level-IV) Results not yet available – evidence would be at moderate effectiveness level			X	Gender-based
SMART Talk (Bosworth et al., 1996; #6; Level-IV) Only baseline data reported for pre-post control group design – substantial level of evidence		X		General
Resolving Conflict Creatively (DeJong, 1993; #15; Level-IV) CDC funded outcome evaluation – evidence will be a substantial effectiveness level	X	X		General
Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways Program (Farrell, Meyer & Dalhberg, 1996; #19; Level-IV) No published outcome results available – evidence would be at moderate effectiveness level		X		General
Alternatives to Violence Educational Program for Youth (Gougeon, unpublished; #24; Level-IV) Outcome evaluation began in January 1999 – effectiveness level would be moderate or intermediary		X		General
Peer and Community Leader Education (Wiist, Jackson & Jackson, 1996; #58; Level-IV) Randomized experimental design but no outcome data reported in available sources		X		General
Lives at Risk (Lane-Reticker et al., 1996; #36; Level-IV) Process evaluation only		X	X	General
No Punching Judy Program (MacRae & Freeman, 1993; #39; Level-IV) Process evaluation only	X			General
Group Discussion Program (Allan, Nairne & Majcher, 1996; #2; Level-IV) No evaluation mentioned	X	X		General
Loving and Hurting Program (Junior League of Calgary, 1994; 32; Level-IV) No evaluation done, though suggested evaluation would be at Level-III			X	Gender-based

There were 13 programs that addressed school climate change as either a primary or secondary prevention activity (see Table 1.3). Five of the programs (8; 13; 46; 47; 52) addressed the problem of bullying behaviors and victimization, while the other eight programs (6; 9; 10; 12; 34; 40; 43; 45) focused on positive as well as negative behavior change. Only one program was assessed as providing Level-I evidence (34) and one at Level-II (46). The other programs were assessed as Level-IV as there was no rigorous data to support their effectiveness.

Table 1.3 Program Strategies for Changing School Climate

SCHOOL CLIMATE Policies and practices that support healthy child development and well being for all students.	E	JH	HS	PROGRAM CONTENT
LEVEL-I RESEARCH STUDIES				
PeaceBuilders (Krug et al., 1997; #34; Level-I) Significantly fewer visits to the school nurse recorded for prevention group	X			Structured-Planning
LEVEL-II RESEARCH STUDIES				
Bullying at School (Olweus, 1994; #46; Level-II) Anti-bullying program showed significant changes in antisocial behaviors such as vandalism, fighting and truancy	X	X		Structured-Planning
LEVEL-III RESEARCH STUDIES				
Creating Peaceful Learning Environments (Cameron et al., 1998; #9; Level-III) Some evidence that programs change intermediary factors; <i>General and at-risk populations</i>		X	X	General Structured-Planning
LEVEL-IV RESEARCH STUDIES				
Safe and Caring Schools (Alberta Teacher's Association, 1999; #1; Level-IV) Proposed impact study of behaviors as well as knowledge, attitude and skill changes	X	X	X	General Structured-Planning
SMART Talk (Bosworth et al., 1996; #6; Level-IV) Only baseline data reported for pre-post control group design – substantial level of evidence		X		Structured-Planning
Dare to Care Bully-Proofing (Calgary Family Services, 1998; #8; Level-IV) Will measure the number of incidents of reported bullying in the school (pre-post test design)	X	X		Structured-Planning
Comprehensive Violence Prevention (Orphinas et al., 1996; #45; Level-IV) Outcome data not reported in available sources – had potential for substantial effectiveness level	X			Structured-Planning
Bully Proofing Your School (Danis & Porter, 1997; #13; Level-IV) Bully-proofing program - Student reported physical bullying reduced from 29% pre-test to 20% at post-test and to 15% at end of second year of program. Exclusion behaviors and verbal bullying were also reduced. <u>There was no indication that statistical analyses beyond descriptive statistics were performed</u>	X	X		Structured-Planning
Anti-Bullying (Pepler et al., 1996; #47; Level-IV) Teachers' behavior changed – <u>small but significant undesired change in number of children who bullied, no change in willingness to stop peers bullying</u>	X			Structured-Planning
Changing School Norms Model (Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1997; #12; Level-IV) Needs assessment/ audit provided	X	X	X	Structured-Planning

Unlearning Violence Model (Minnesota Department of Education, 1995; #40; Level-IV) State-wide planning model	X	X		Structured-Planning
Creating Safe and Drug-free Schools Model (New England Comprehensive Assistance Center, 1996; #43; Level-IV) State guide to safe and drug-free schools	X	X		Structured-Planning
Tackling Bullying Model (Sharp & Smith, 1994; #52; Level-IV) Needs assessment included	X			Structured-Planning
Peace Heroes Program (City of Calgary, 1998; #10; Level-IV) Motivational award program – city-wide	X	X	X	Structured-Planning

The nineteen programs presented in Table 1.4 targeted “at-risk” populations. These at-risk groups were identified using a number of factors with aggressive or violent behavior being the most dominant. These children and youth were felt to require support services beyond those of the general population of students in order to reduce the incidence of future violence.

Table 1.4 Support Services Strategies Targeting At-Risk Children and Youth

SUPPORT SERVICES	E	JH	HS	PROGRAM CONTENT
Intersectoral collaboration in the form of support services for students and families delivered within the school setting or through referrals from school personnel strengthens the connection between community and school and reinforces the concept that violence prevention is a public issue that affects every community member.				
LEVEL-1 RESEARCH STUDIES				
STAR (Anger, 1998; #4; Level-I) Less likely to use negative behaviors in conflict situation		X	X	Gender-based
Youth Relationships (Pittman, Wolfe & Wekerle, 1998; #48; Level-I) Use of coercive tactics with dating partners significantly decreased		X		Gender-based
Conflict Resolution (Cochrane & Saroyan, 1997; #11; Level-I) <u>No significant change</u> in level of occurrence of fights, arguments, and problem conflicts		X		General
PATHS (Greenberg & Kusche, 1998; #25; Level-I) Teachers (but not parents) reported significant changes in externalizing behaviors and total adaptive functioning	X			General
Aggressors, Victims and Bystanders (Slaby, Wilson-Brewer & DeVos, 1994; #54; Level-I) <u>Trends in the desired direction for behavioral intentions and some self-reported behaviors, but none for self-reported anti-social behavior</u>		X		General

<p>Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents (DuRant et al., 1996, #16; Level-I) Both prevention program groups reported significant decreases from pre- to post-test in fighting but not avoidance of violence</p> <p>(Farrell & Meyer, 1997, #18; Level-I) <u>Trend for boys to have lower violent behavior scores but not girls compared to control</u></p> <p>(Hausman, Spivak & Prothrow-Stith, 1995; #29; Level-III) Knowledge and attitudes; General content</p>		X		General
		X		
		X	X	
LEVEL-II RESEARCH STUDIES				
<p>FAST/ Families and Schools Together (Alliance for Children and Families, 1998; #3; Level-II) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant decrease in overall behavior problem scores as reported by parents and teachers </p>	X			General
<p>Taming the Monster Within (Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary, 1998; #7; Geisbrecht, 1997; #23; Level-II) Gains in behavior and social interaction with aggressive group but <u>not with normative</u></p>	X	X	X	General
<p>Trauma/Grief-Focused (Murphy, Pynoos & Boyd, 1997; #41; Level-II) Reported significant decreases in aggressive externalizing behaviors according to teacher ratings (pre-post)</p>	X			General
LEVEL-III RESEARCH STUDIES				
<p>TeenPEACE (Schut, Worley & Powell, 1998; #51; Level-III) Knowledge and attitude</p>		X	X	Gender-based
<p>Healthy Relationships (Wolfe et al., 1995; #59; Level-III) Attitudes, beliefs, communication skills increased as did social action – control group pre-post design used</p>		X		Gender-based
<p>Creating Peaceful Learning Environments (Cameron et al., 1998; #9; Level-III) Some evidence that programs change intermediary factors; <i>General and at-risk population</i></p>		X	X	General Structured-Planning
<p>Early Start / Absenteeism Prevention Program (Gentile, 1998; #22; Level-III) Significant reduction in absentee rate (school days missed) and tardiness</p>	X			General
LEVEL-IV RESEARCH STUDIES				
<p>Rhode Island Teen Dating Violence Prevention Program (Silverman et al., 1998; #53; Level-IV) Knowledge and attitudes – pre-post control group design; <i>General and at-risk population</i></p>		X		Gender-based
<p>Project Dove Program (Darling, 1998; #14; Level-IV) Outcome data not yet available but will be at moderate effectiveness level</p>		X		General
<p>Healthy Transitions (Haynie, Alexander & Walters, 1997; #30; Level-IV) Formative evaluation only – level of outcome effectiveness would be substantial as control group used</p>		X		General

Non-Abusive Futures for Adolescents at Risk (Non-Abusive Futures for Adolescents at Risk, unpublished; #44; Level-IV) Data collected but not analyzed – would be at moderate or intermediary effectiveness level			X	General
SAGE (Ringwalt et al., 1996; #49; Level-IV) Reports only baseline data – evidence would be at moderate effectiveness level			X	General
FASSA Program (YWCA of Calgary, 1998; #50; Level-IV) Changes in the desired direction were indicated for both aggressive behaviors and prosocial behaviors though no attempt was made to test for significance	X			General

Programs that include an emphasis on role models and/or family support are included in Table 1.5. Targeted role models included parents, school staff, mentors, business or other community members.

Table 1.5 Social Support Programs

SOCIAL SUPPORT Social support in such forms as role models, mentors, and family support encourage the active participation of key persons who can have a significant influence on students' healthy, non-violent choices.	E	JH	HS	PROGRAM CONTENT
LEVEL-I RESEARCH STUDIES				
STAR (Anger, 1998; #4; Level-I) Less likely to use negative behaviors in conflict situation		X	X	Gender-based
LEVEL-II RESEARCH STUDIES				
FAST/ Families and Schools Together (Alliance for Children and Families, 1998; #3; Level-II) ▪ Repeated measures (pre-post) design	X			General
Trauma/Grief-Focused (Murphy, Pynoos & Boyd, 1997; #41; Level-II) Reported significant decreases in aggressive externalizing behaviors according to teacher ratings (pre-post)	X			General
LEVEL-III RESEARCH STUDIES				
Early Start / Absenteeism Prevention Program (Gentile, 1998; #22; Level-III) Significant reduction in absentee rate (school days missed) and tardiness	X			General
LEVEL-IV RESEARCH STUDIES				
Anti-Bullying (Pepler et al., 1996; #47; Level-IV) Teachers' responses to bullying changed – <u>small but significant undesired change in number of children who bullied, no change in willingness to stop peers bullying</u>	X			Structured-Planning
In-School Mentoring Program (Neidballa, Sieppert & Unrau, 1998; #42; Level-IV) Post-test only design – improved attitudes and school-related variables	X			General

Alberta Mentoring Foundation for Youth Program (Halferty & Fouts, 1997; #27; Level-IV) Post-test only results of mentoring program – attitudes, school-related behaviors		X		General
Bully Proofing Your School (Danis & Porter, 1997; #13; Level-IV) Bully-proofing program - Student reported physical bullying reduced from 29% pre-test to 20% at post-test and to 15% at end of second year of program. Exclusion behaviors and verbal bullying were also reduced. <u>There was no indication that statistical analyses beyond descriptive statistics were performed</u>	X	X	X	Structured-Planning
Comprehensive Violence Prevention (Orphinas et al., 1996; #45; Level-IV) Outcome data not reported in available sources – had potential for substantial effectiveness level	X			Structured-Planning
Dare to Care Bully-Proofing (Calgary Family Services, 1998; #8; Level-IV) Will measure the number of incidents of reported bullying in the school (pre-post test design)	X	X		Structured-Planning
Project Dove Program (Darling, 1998; #14; Level-IV) Outcome data not yet available but will be at moderate effectiveness level		X		General
SAGE (Ringwalt et al., 1996; #49; Level-IV) Reports only baseline data – evidence would be at moderate effectiveness level			X	General
FASSA Program (YWCA of Calgary, 1998; #50; Level-IV) Changes in the desired direction were indicated for both aggressive behaviors and prosocial behaviors though no attempt was made to test for significance	X			General
Creating Safe and Drug-free Schools Model (New England Comprehensive Assistance Center, 1996; #43; Level-IV) State guide to safe and drug-free schools	X	X		Structured-Planning
Tackling Bullying Model (Sharp & Smith, 1994; #52; Level-IV) Needs assessment included	X			Structured-Planning
Safe and Caring Schools (Alberta Teacher's Association, 1999; #1; Level-IV) Proposed impact study of behaviors as well as knowledge, attitude and skill changes	X	X	X	General Structured-Planning

The following chapters will provide a background for the evidence upon which the Project Team made its recommendations for a comprehensive anti-violence school program.