

Modifying School Curricula
to Promote the Resiliency of At-Risk Children:
A Case Study

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(ABSTRACT)

Resilient children are those who succeed in school and life even though they experience adverse conditions such as poverty, illness, or parental problems. Research on the topic identifies characteristics of these children, suggests ways to help them overcome adversity, and poses questions for further study. Using available current research on the subject, the writer examined a school setting to determine how well the staff was fostering success and helping children overcome the odds. Additionally, the researcher, along with a team of teachers using an action research method, modified a curriculum to meet the needs of at-risk children in order to foster success in a safe, comforting, and nurturing environment.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

Background

Serving in education as an elementary teacher and administrator for twenty-seven years and in a wide spectrum of environments from a very low socio-economic level to the wealthiest, I have always been intrigued by the fact that some children experience traumatic situations in their lives and, yet, somehow manage to overcome their difficulties and succeed in the classroom. I have speculated as to the factors that enabled them to strive forward rather than to surrender to their adversities.

Ten years ago, I began to notice an unusual or exceptional child whom I will call Frankie. He was just ten years of age, and his parents had just been through a bitter divorce. His father was involved with another woman twenty-five years older than Frankie's mother, and he and his eight-year-old sister, whom I will call Sue, were caught in the middle of the proceedings.

When the father moved out, Frankie and Sue stayed at home with their mother, who could not deal with the

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idea of having to raise the two alone. After a year passed, she decided to sell the house and all of her belongings, take a leave of absence from her job, and travel west to Colorado. In addition, she left the two children with their father for six weeks.

After this short fling to try to sort out everything, the mother returned, still disillusioned and bitter, and decided to buy a new house, thinking that this kind of change would make things better. She brought her children back to live with her, and, for almost a year, the situation and environment seemed to improve.

The mother, who was a registered nurse, began to realize that something was wrong with her physically. After numerous diagnostic tests and opinions from several doctors, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. The disease advanced very quickly with only a few brief periods of remission. The children soon became caretaker of their mother and the household.

On several occasions, I observed the children cooking, cleaning, and tending to the needs of their mother. During all of this time, their schoolwork did

not suffer as each earned honor roll grading period after grading period. They did manage to visit with a few friends in the neighborhood, but never at the same time because one would always have to stay home to take care of their mother.

For two years, the family managed to stay together, but then the mother became totally disabled, had to declare bankruptcy, and was placed in a nursing home--at the age of 39! The children were forced to move in with their father. Since Frankie was a high school junior, he chose to keep attending the same school until he graduated while Sue transferred to a school closer to her new house. Frankie had a job and had very little association with anyone his age. He never had the opportunity to do some of things other boys his age were doing: dates, proms, sports, and just "hanging out." He had only one real friend with whom he would spend some time and get out on occasion.

On his graduation day, Frankie visited the nursing home to show his mother what he looked like in his cap and gown. Despite all of the hardships, he graduated with honors and had been accepted to James Madison University. Presently a sophomore, he is

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majoring in chemistry and is making Dean's List each semester. Not able to afford the extra things that most college students have or experience, he studies hard and works part-time. Recently, he has been offered an internship at a large pharmaceutical company to work in research. Likewise, Sue has done well in school. She will graduate in June with honors and received early acceptance admission to James Madison University where she will join her brother.

As an observer of this scenario over the past several years, I am left in awe of what these two young people have been able to do with their lives. While my own child was thoroughly enjoying her teenage years and college life, these two fought for survival and overcame the odds. This whole scene caused me to wonder what it was or is that enabled these two to succeed despite so many hardships that they had faced growing up.

Consequently, I began to notice articles and books about the "resilient child" and now believe that Frankie and Sue are both classic examples of that phenomenon. The Random House Dictionary defines *resiliency* as "the power or ability to return to the

original form or position after being bent, compressed, or stretched" or, alternatively, "the ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like" (p. 1123). I was intrigued by success of such prominent figures as President Clinton, Maya Angelou, Oprah Winfrey, and former Presidential candidate and Senator Bob Dole, all of whom had similar stories of overcoming adversity. With a great resolve, I set out to find out as much as I could about the topic that had so piqued my interest.

As an educator, I have read extensively about at-risk children and have even been involved in programs that have proven to be helpful. Using the studies of at-risk children as the context of my topic, I narrowed the focus of my study to the resilient child.

Statement of the Problem

The label, "at-risk," can have many connotations, but the one certainty is that many at-risk children will become failures in school and, consequently, in society if some kind of intervention does not take place. Research shows that there is one group of at-

risk students who are known as resilient. The children seem to succeed in school and in life in spite of the adversity they have faced. It can be said that all at-risk children are not resilient, but all resilient children are at-risk. Emmy Werner (1992) states that "resilience and protective factors are the positive counterparts to both vulnerability, which denotes an individual's susceptibility to a disorder, and risk factors, which are biological or psychosocial hazards that increase the likelihood of a negative developmental outcome in a group of people" (p. 3).

At my school, sixty percent of the students are at-risk, a figure derived from the number of students who receive free or reduced-priced lunch. With these children come numerous problems that must be recognized and addressed prior to the beginning of instruction. Perhaps they did not sleep the night before because their parents were fighting. Perhaps the mother is drug dependent, and the oldest child had to wake up early to prepare breakfast and get all the siblings dressed for school. Maybe the family had been evicted, and the child doesn't know where he will

be going after school or if he will even have food to eat. There have been cases where the children have been locked up in a motel room overnight while the mother was working a night shift to provide for their needs.

Through this inquiry, I sought to describe ways that one school attempted to develop resiliency in at-risk children, including measures that were taken to help at-risk children succeed, and how the school was structured to foster success (the major premise of the school's mission statement).

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study were (1) to describe a program developed to create a more effective environment for the success of at-risk children and (2) to observe this process of change. Modifications to the current curricula were introduced in order to ascertain if the needs of these children, as described in the research, were being met.

Consistent with Fullan's concept of educational change, the study will inform other educators who seek to make a difference in the lives of at-risk children.

It will also examine whether or not teacher collaboration can improve the quality of a school environment. Fullan (1991) states that "if the teacher as an advocate can become skilled at integrating the change and change process, he or she can become one of the most powerful forces of change. Teachers working with other teachers at the school and classroom levels is a necessary condition for improving practice" (p. 139).

Theoretical Base

This study was guided by Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith's (1992) forty-year longitudinal study of resilient children on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. They studied 700 children born in 1955 and kept data on their whereabouts for forty years. In their research, they found that some succeeded in spite of growing up under adverse conditions. Werner noted that those children who overcame the adversities seemed to share the same characteristics or "protective buffers" as she called them.

With Werner's risk factors and protective buffers categories as determining factors, we identified the

children at the school setting for the focus of the study.

Areas of Interest

The following questions were the focal points for this inquiry:

- (1) *What did the teachers (the members of the study group) know about resiliency in children?*
 - *definition*
 - *risk factors*
 - *protective buffers*
- (2) *What did the teacher believe about the roles of the school and parents in developing the resiliency of at-risk children?*
- (3) *What existing practices in the school promoted resiliency and what changes occurred in those practices during the course of the study?*
- (4) *What evidence is there to indicate that the modifications made by the study group members in the established curricula promoted resiliency in the targeted students?*

- (5) *How did the teachers measure the success of their efforts in promoting resiliency in at-risk children?*
- (6) *What are the outcomes from this study which were beneficial to teachers and students?*

Definitions

- At-risk factors -- biological or psychosocial hazards that increase the likelihood of a negative developmental outcome (Werner, 1992, pp. 3-4). According to federal guidelines for free and reduced lunches, our school qualifies for Title I services. Children qualifying for the Title I services are often labeled at-risk because of their socio-economic level as well as problems that often occur as a result of their poverty--poor health, parental discord, foster care, or large families. Not all children who receive free or reduced lunches are at-risk, but conditions are present which cause adversity for them.
- Stressors -- same as at-risk factors (Werner, 1992, p. 3)
- Curriculum -- both the content of the instruction and instructional delivery of the content

- Resilience -- a track record of successful adaptation in the individual who has been exposed to stressful life events; also an expectation of continued low susceptibility to future stressors (Werner, 1992, p. 4)

- Protective factors or buffers -- that which modifies (ameliorates, buffers) a person's reaction to a situation that in ordinary circumstances would lead to maladaptive outcomes (Werner, 1992, p. 5)

Overview of the Dissertation

Because of my interest in children who succeed in spite of adverse conditions, I studied how one school created an environment to foster resiliency in at-risk children. The study was an action research project (Appendix A) written as a case study, using qualitative methods of research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

As I began my inquiry on the resilient child, I found the names of several researchers appearing most frequently: namely, Emmy Werner, a professor of human development, and Ruth Smith, a clinical psychologist. Werner completed a forty-year longitudinal study on children she termed as "resilient." Others frequently mentioned were Michael Rutter, Norman Garmezy, Ann Masten, E. J. Anthony, B. J. Cohler, Robert Slavin, Carl Rak, Lewis Patterson, Robert Barr, William Parrett, and Joanne Joseph, who are professors, psychologists, or psychiatrists. All have been interested in how a child overcomes adversity and achieves success in school, home, and community. The subjects of their research varied as some studied children from infancy to elementary age while others researched middle schoolers. Further studies by the above scholars examined adults who had achieved varying degrees of success. Barr, Parrett, and Joseph suggested programs and techniques to use in fostering resiliency in school-age children. The following is a review of related research which includes

characteristics of resilient children with studies supporting the evidence to ways to foster resiliency in such children.

Werner's Study

Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith led the major longitudinal study on resilient children in 1955 when they identified approximately 700 children on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, 420 of whom were born healthy and grew up in favorable environments that provided them with some measure of support. Werner chose Kauai for several reasons: the population had low mobility; the people were also covered by medical, public health, educational, and social services that compared favorably with communities of similar size on the U.S. mainland; and the opportunity to study cultural differences on child bearing and child rearing was there. Three out of four children came from one of the three major ethnic groups on the island--Japanese, Filipino, and the part and full Hawaiian; the remaining children were ethnically mixed. About one half of the cohort (54%) grew up in poverty. The fathers were semi- or un-skilled

laborers working on the plantations, and the mothers had not graduated from high school.

Assessments were conducted at each of the following five stages in the longitudinal study:

(1) Prenatal and perinatal--Public health nurses recorded the reproductive histories of the women who were to give birth in 1955 and interviewed them in each trimester of their pregnancy. A physician noted and monitored any complications during and after the pregnancy, and a second physician reviewed the reports for accuracy.

(2) Birth to age 2--Public health and social workers interviewed the mothers at home who rated their babies on temperamental characteristics such as activity level, ease of handling, and social responsiveness. They also reported on temper tantrums, feeding habits, and sleep patterns. The interviewers also inquired about stressful life events that may have occurred by age one. At age two, two pediatricians from Honolulu examined the children, and two psychologists from the University of Hawaii administered the Cattell Infant Intelligence Scale and measured self-help skills with the Vineland Social

Maturity Scale. The mothers' educational level, socio-economic status, and family stability were also noted at this time during home visits and interviews.

(3) Age 10--The researchers obtained information from records of local physicians, hospitals, the Department of Health, the Division of Mental Health Services, the Department of Social Services and Housing, and the Division of Special Services of the Department of Education. The field staff also interviewed the primary caregiver; the current teacher completed a questionnaire; and a clinical psychologist administered two group tests--the Bender Gestalt and the Primary Mental Abilities test. Children with learning and/or behavior problems received additional diagnostic testing. Public health nurses and social workers interviewed the mothers or another substitute. Again the family's socio-economic status, rating of educational stimulation, and emotional support were assessed.

(4) The eighteen-year-old--The study team reviewed educational, health, mental health, and social agency records which included police and family court records. They also gave group tests of ability

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and achievement. Each member of the 1955 cohort group was mailed a biographical questionnaire asking for educational status and plans, vocational status and plans, marital and health status, and stressful life events since the age of ten. Two psychologists studied the high-risk youth with serious coping problems through clinical interviews and personality tests versus a control group without problems. These youths also took the California Psychological Inventory and the Nowicki Locus of Control Scale. In the interviews there were questions dealing with the quality of family life, stressful life events, and interactions with their parents, and an evaluation of the help received from formal and informal sources of support such as siblings, peers, older friends, teachers, ministers, and other community members.

(5) Age 31-32--The field staff interviewed the cohort members and focused on developmental tasks of early adulthood such as job selection, marriage, leaving home, having children, civic responsibilities, and self-satisfaction. They also compiled community records from the local agencies. The individual's account of success and satisfaction with his life and

the status of the community records were determined for the rating of the adult adaption. Additionally, cohort members completed a Life Event Checklist, the Rotter's Locus of Control Scale, and EAS Temperament Scale for Adults.

Werner received followup data on 505 of the 614 surviving members of the 1955 cohort, a figure representing an eighty-two percent response rate. She also compiled a report on eighty-eight percent of the resilient high-risk participants and eighty percent of the high-risk youths who had records of delinquencies, mental health problems, and teenage pregnancy. Numerous grants from private and educational foundations provided financial support for this extensive study (1992, pp. 26-34).

What Werner (1992, p. 13) learned was that of the 200 identified with risk factors (such as parental psychopathology, economic hardship, divorce, or breakdown of parenting) 129 did not overcome their circumstances to gain a successful adult life. Early pregnancies, learning disabilities, delinquency, and mental health problems were noted as reasons.

Her study showed that seventy-two of the

remaining children seemed to become resilient and adapted successfully to their environments. Werner noted that they became competent young adults who "loved well, worked well, played well, and expected well" by the time they reached eighteen years of age (1992, p. 262). Having assessed each of them at birth and ages 2, 10, 18, and 32, she concluded that "protective buffers" helped each of them overcome adversity. The following "buffers" protected them by providing support, skills, and hope:

- at least average intelligence and reading on grade level;
- attractive, healthy, active, sociable with a pleasant personality that brings positive responses from family members as well as strangers;
- cuddly as a baby and not colicky, traits that encourage adult interaction and intellectual development;
- curious and interactive physically with the environment that lead to hobbies and interests being developed that could be shared with friends;

- available family and non-family members who provide unconditional love and encouragement;
- assigned responsibilities in a well-structured home environment that deems the child capable and trustworthy;
- internal locus of control that helps to develop good problem-solving skills.

Related Studies

In a different longitudinal study of inner London and Isle of Wight school children over a seven-year period, Michael Rutter (1979) determined through observations, interviews, and school records that students exposed to one of six risk factors (parental marital discord, low socio-economic status, overcrowding or large family size, parental criminality, maternal psychiatric disorder, placement in government care) fared as well as children with no factors while those with two or more stressors were ten times more likely to become severely emotionally disturbed. He (1983) formulated a buffering hypothesis that the availability of social support modified the effect of stressors, leading to less

damaging results. He concluded that "good experiences in the classroom could mitigate the effects of considerable stress at home."

Garmezy (1984) studied about 200 children from urban environments in mainland United States as well as children with congenital heart defects and physically disabled ones. He also examined competence as the dependent variable using multiple resources including academic success, classroom behavior, and interpersonal competence and emphasized a critical need to understand the impact of life experiences on children and the reasons why those experiences elicited such a range of responses in different individuals.

Results of several longitudinal studies (Garmezy et al., 1984; Rutter, 1983, 1985, 1986; Werner, 1984; Werner & Smith, 1982) delineate "perspectives on the critical developmental personality factors that distinguish resilient children from those who became overwhelmed by risk factors: (a) an active, evocative approach toward problem solving, enabling them to negotiate an array of emotionally hazardous experiences; (b) an ability from infancy on to gain

others' positive attention; (c) an optimistic view of their experiences even in the midst of suffering; (d) an ability to maintain a positive vision of a meaningful life; (e) an ability to be alert and autonomous; (f) a tendency to seek novel experiences; and (g) a proactive perspective" (Rak & Patterson, 1996, p.369).

Rak and Patterson also identified role models outside the family such as teachers, coaches, and counselors as potential buffers. A significantly higher number of resilient children were first born, recovered more quickly from childhood illnesses than their peers, and were remembered by their mothers as having been active and good-natured infants (Werner, 1986).

Other research concluded that "for some vulnerable children stressful events actually served to steel them against harm and to challenge them rather than to exacerbate their vulnerability. It appears that when stressful events do not overwhelm the ability to cope, the victory over adversity seems to enhance a sense of self-competence" (Rak & Patterson, 1996, p. 370).

Garmezy formulated a "set of three propositions, each of which relates stress, personal attributes, and competence to maladjustment" (Haggerty et al., 1994, p. 325). His first model is called the "compensatory"; the second the "challenge" (limited amounts of stress are seen as a "potential enhancer" of competence); and the third the "immunity-versus-vulnerability" in which personal attributes serve to dampen or increase the effects of stress.

Ann Masten (1990) studied poor children from elementary school to late adolescence. She found the most successful children have strong intellectual and problem solving skills.

McPartland and Slavin suggested that "success in early childhood years is a critical prerequisite for success in later schooling and ultimately in life" (p. 7). They found in a study of third grade children that those who come from a low socio-economic background, attend school with many other poor children, read at least one year below grade level, and have been retained have a near zero chance of graduating from high school.

Anthony and Cohler (as cited in Werner, 1992, p.

5) studied children in middle childhood and adolescence. Investigations beyond the second decade of life are still very rare. Anthony (as cited in Tarwater, 1993, p. 272) "proposed this analogy about children: There are three dolls, one made of glass, the second of plastic, the third of steel. If struck with a hammer, the glass doll shatters and the plastic doll is scarred. But the steel doll proves invulnerable, reacting on with a metallic ping." The question remains as to why some children are "invulnerable."

Joseph (1994, pp. 33-42) suggested the following ways to aid resilient children in development of skills and attitudes: "Help your child develop skills; help your child develop other hobbies and interests; help your child develop social skills and an 'other-orientation'; help your child become responsible; help your child develop coping skills; teach your child how to set and stick with goals; give your child a meaningful philosophy to live by; help your child develop an attitude of excellence; help your child become 'change skilled'; and provide your child with nurture, structure, and good role models."

Summary

Researchers have used both quantitative and qualitative research designs in examining resilient children. Some have developed questionnaires to use to determine a child's status while others have developed ways to educate children while helping them to overcome their great odds. The majority of research is qualitative in nature. Case studies are used extensively as well as intensively examining specific groups of individuals labeled as "resilient." The only extensive quantitative research is the longitudinal study by Werner which helped to identify different traits and characteristics while following them for forty years. On the other hand, the qualitative research delved deeper into the separate traits and the reasons an individual overcame adversity. These findings helped to decide what can be done to build a successful life for particular persons.

The points of agreement for the researchers include the fact that resilient children have definite characteristics and their success in life depends on interventions that take place to help them overcome

their hardships. Those researchers who suggest ways to aid these at-risk children also agree on the successful interventions. Some suggestions for extending help include teaching them to problem solve, to become responsible, to develop an internal locus of control, and to have a significant other in their life.

These ideas were beneficial to my study because I used the characteristics of resilient children from Werner (1992) and selected Joseph's (1994) book as the focus for the study group. Her book offered a wealth of information on ways to foster resiliency and to get parents involved in their children's lives.

This study will be beneficial for educators of at-risk children because it tells how to identify as well as how to help those students overcome the odds against them.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to describe the development of a program to foster the resiliency of at-risk students at one school. According to Werner (1992), children need certain "protective buffers" to aid them when facing adversity:

- at least average intelligence and reading on grade level
- attractive, healthy, active, and sociable with a pleasant personality that brings positive responses from family members as well as strangers
- cuddly as a baby and not colicky--traits that encourage adult interactions and intellectual development
- curious and interactive physically with the environment that lead to hobbies and interests being developed
- available family and non-family members who provide unconditional love and encouragement
- assigned responsibilities in a well structured environment that deems the child capable and

trustworthy

- internal locus of control that helps develop good problem-solving skills

Educators can provide experiences that give at-risk children a chance to practice ways of becoming more independent and successful.

This inquiry focused on a group of teachers who examined and modified the established curricula to include opportunities for at-risk children to achieve success.

Setting

The setting for the inquiry was a primary (Pre-kindergarten--Grade 2) school in an urban community in southwest Virginia. The school enrolled 300 with approximately sixty percent of the students qualifying for free or reduced-priced lunch according to federal guidelines. The school staff included seventeen classroom teachers (two three-year-old pre-school classes, one four-year-old pre-school class, five kindergartens, five first grades, and five second grades), a librarian, a Title I specialist, three teaching assistants, a half-time guidance counselor,

and four itinerant teachers (art, music, physical education, and reading resource).

Our sister school is an intermediate school that houses grades 3-5 and is in close proximity. We share several services such as itinerant teachers, a DARE officer, and a guidance counselor. This sharing facilitates transition from one school to the other because we serve the same families.

Built in 1961, our school has seen its population change as younger families with small children have replaced the older families that used to live in the area. At least twenty additional students are added to our rolls each year.

Study Group Members

Four classroom teachers and a guidance counselor joined me, the principal, to form a study group. After serving in the same school system since 1968 as an elementary classroom teacher, I was named three years ago as principal of the school.

The four classroom teachers in the study group had taught from five to thirty years in primary education. All had taught at this school at least five

years. Three of the four teachers were in Master's degree programs (one in administration, one in guidance, and one in reading instruction). All four teachers taught the same grade level and had worked together as a team for two years at this level. Each served on various school committees, and one was a member of the PTA Board. Two served on our Site-based Council, and two were responsible for the school's extended instructional program which met twice each week for two hours.

The guidance counselor volunteered to participate out of her own interest for this study. She was assigned to the school for two and one-half days per week; the other half week was spent at our sister school. She served 550 students, but many of the students came from the same families. She was involved in the operation of our school, serving as a member of the Student Support Team and as school-wide volunteer coordinator. She taught guidance in each classroom weekly, conducting several small-group sessions and holding individual sessions as needed.

One other individual who played a role in this study was the cooperating teacher. She has taught at

the school for five years and teaches at the same grade level as the other four teachers in the study group. She chose not to participate in the formal study due to constraints of time and other obligations but agreed to make reports on a student in her classroom who was studied by the guidance counselor. Reports made by the cooperating teacher were evaluated along with the guidance counselor's documents, providing another source of input on the information regarding the same child.

Children

The study group agreed that all activities designed to build resiliency would involve every child in their classrooms, but that each of the teachers would target one at-risk child for special observation. Through observations they would attempt to determine how the resiliency-building activities affected the child's attitude, well-being, and progress in school.

Orienting Teachers to the Study

At a faculty meeting during the first week of

teacher inservice in 1997-98, I shared a "state of the school" message and focused on one issue that we would address for the year. Because sixty percent of our students have the potential to be at-risk, we wanted to ensure that we made changes in our school to help them achieve success. Accordingly, I invited teachers to participate in an action research project to support the development of resiliency among at-risk children. This would be accomplished through a study group that would focus on Joanne Joseph's book (1994), The Resilient Child. I previewed the Table of Contents for the staff and emphasized that participation in this activity was strictly voluntary and that identities of teachers and students would be confidential.

Four teachers (all from the same grade level) and the guidance counselor volunteered to participate in the study group. This concentration on one grade level was a happy accident because differences in curriculum across grades would not be a factor. After team membership was determined, I met with the team to explain the study groups, instructional activities, and data collection. Each teacher was asked to select

a student they would target for close attention using the "Identification of At-Risk Children" list (Figure 1), (discussed in detail later in this chapter in the section on instruments). Each child's progress was recorded using a feature list of behaviors characteristic of resilient children and recorded on the "Resiliency Scale" (Figure 2) (described later in this chapter in the section on instruments). The team met once a month throughout the school year. Topics the group studied ranged from an in-depth look at resilient children to ways to enhance teaching hobbies and special interests to ways of changing teaching strategies to ensure problem solving skills were being taught in a meaningful way. The topics were emergent, but each meeting included a debriefing and a sharing of concerns and ideas.

Each team member was asked to keep a journal of her thoughts about the behavior of her child, and I maintained a researcher's journal as well. Each teacher's journal recorded information on her child and was divided into the following sections: (1) Journal, (2) Problem Solving, (3) Leadership Opportunities, (4) Building Responsibility,

Identification of At-risk Students

Figure 1

Resiliency Scale for At-Risk Children

Rate behaviors on a scale of 1 - 5. The rating of 1 indicates that the child never displays any of the behavior. The rating of 5 indicates that the child consistently displays this behavior.

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often
5=consistently

Behaviors

Sociable with others _____

Curious about the environment _____

Responsible _____

Reads on grade level _____

Healthy _____

Internal locus of control _____

Has a hobby or special interest _____

Has a significant other _____

Change-skilled (good coping skills) _____

Attitude of excellence _____

Sets and meets goals _____

Observer comments:

Student number _____

Date _____

(5) Literature with Resilient Themes, (6) Hobbies/Interests, (7) Role Playing, (8) Conflict Resolution, (9) Parent Involvement, and (10) Words of Encouragement. The members made entries in their journals at least weekly and more often as appropriate.

I regularly observed activities in the teachers' classrooms and kept field notes documenting the use of activities intended to develop resiliency. I kept individual logs of meetings with students, parents, and study group members listing dates and topics with action taken, and I collected comments or notes sent home and copies of report cards.

The guidance counselor also observed in all classrooms and documented activities used to develop resiliency. Even though she observed these activities related to the purposes of this study throughout the year, she mainly taught conflict management skills to each child and his class.

The cooperating teacher made general observations about the child identified by the guidance counselor. These were used to check for similarities and differences.

I interviewed each team member twice--once in September and once in April--to gain an understanding of their knowledge of resiliency.

Children Targeted for Observation

The teachers who volunteered for the study were the main participants while their students were indirectly involved because of the changes that occurred in instruction. All at-risk children in each team member's classroom were identified at the beginning of October by using Werner's risk factor list (poverty, parental discord, stressful life hazards, parental or student ill health) (Figure 1).

From this list (see Figure 1) of at-risk children, those students with at least average intelligence as determined by the COGAT ability test were then assigned an identification number for reasons of confidentiality. Team members also were assigned identification numbers to match their targeted child and preserve confidentiality.

After this procedure was completed, teachers had a student targeted for observation. Modified teaching techniques were used with the entire class, but the

teachers and I paid special attention to the targeted children. The modification of the curricula designed to foster resiliency emerged from the study group discussions. These included increased activities in the areas of problem solving, using literature with resilient themes, role playing, creating leadership opportunities, helping to build responsibility, conflict management, and providing activities that could become hobbies or areas of special interest such as cooking, enhanced computer skills, arts and crafts, or reading for enjoyment. These activities will be discussed more completely in Chapter Four.

Emergent Research Design

This study was conducted as action research using the design model shown in Appendix A, lasted one school year, and was in the nature of a case study. Calhoun states, ". . . study what's happening at our school, decide if we can make it a better place by changing what and how we teach and how we relate to students and the community" (1994, p. 1).

This was also an emergent research design in which not all of the specifics were known in advance

(Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 174). Using action research, one discovers what needs to be changed through continuous trials. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that the purpose of a qualitative study is to "accumulate sufficient knowledge to lead to understanding" (p. 227). They also note that in emergent research design, data collection and data analysis are simultaneous and ongoing activities that allow for important understandings to be discovered along the way and then pursued in additional data collection efforts (Maykut & Morehouse, p. 174).

Provisions for Trustworthiness

This inquiry was conducted with the active involvement of a team of teachers; I was a participant observer. Notes and journals were kept individually and separately by all of us until they were collected at the end of the study in April. This procedure was followed to ensure that a single researcher's bias was less likely. The cooperating teacher, who was not a member of the study group, helped by keeping notes on Child #1. The guidance counselor targeted Child #1 for observation. The guidance counselor also observed

and kept notes on Children #2-5. This procedure provided two sources of information on each child, i.e., the teacher and the guidance counselor.

Data Collection Procedures

Except for the interviews in September and April and the "Assessing School Resiliency Building" surveys in October and April, the data were collected throughout the study (from September through April). Tape recordings of the study group meetings were transcribed and analyzed. Study group members maintained the journals that were collected in April. Records of parent conferences, dated notes, copies of report cards, and other pertinent data such as newsletters, records of doctor's appointments, records of student meetings with teachers, and number of referrals to the principal for behavior were also submitted. The journals proved to be an efficient manner for teachers to organize the information needed to complete the study.

Instruments

Selection and Construction

The following instruments were used in the study:

- *"Chart for Identification of At-Risk Children"*

Using Werner's (1992) list of characteristics for at-risk children, I developed a framework (Figure 1) in October for teachers designed to help them identify a child they would study for this project. These characteristics were identified by Werner as possible "stressors" in a child's life which could result in the child becoming at risk. "Average Intelligence" was included because Werner concluded the resilient children that she studied had average or above intelligence. I instructed teachers to choose a child with more than two areas marked to assure that children with the greatest need would be helped. I also believe the impact would be more evident in helping these children overcome the adversities they were experiencing.

- *"Resiliency Scale for At-Risk Children"*

Again using Werner's (1992) study as a guide, I developed a scale (Figure 2) for teachers to rate their individual children each month. These scales

were completed at the end of each meeting. We defined the behaviors on the "Resiliency Scale" in the following manner:

"Sociable with others"

- liked by other students
- gets along well with others
- shows care and concern for others
- is friendly

"Curious about the environment"

- is interested in what is happening in his environment
- discusses current events
- is alert to what is happening in the city, state, and world

"Responsible"

- brings in assigned work
- completes classroom tasks on time
- is able to be left alone and will not disobey the teacher
- will get the job done when called upon by the teacher

"Reads on grade level"

- scores on grade level as determined by a Running Record diagnostic test (Clay, 1993) which determines a child's reading level using a series of books with increasingly difficult passages

"Healthy"

- has no chronic physical ailments
- misses only a few days of school
- never complains about feeling poorly

"Internal locus of control"

- demonstrates that he is responsible for actions
- shows that he is in charge of what happens to himself
- can problem solve correctly when faced with a difficult task or situation

"Hobbies/interests"

- has a passion for something
- mentions his passion often
- participates in this activity during free time
- participates in the activity often, if outside

"Significant other"

- has someone who shows unconditional love

- has a lot of contact with this person
- speaks fondly of this person

"Change-skilled"

- can cope with a situation even if there are sudden changes in life
- appears to accept whatever happens to him and moves on
- does not dwell on how things used to be

"Attitude of excellence"

- takes pride in what he does
- strives to make good grades
- showcases best effort in the finished product
- wants to be the best at what he is doing

"Sets and meets goals"

- thinks of the future and makes plans to complete activity or strives to reach an attainable goal
- focuses on the future and does not stray until the goal is achieved

The teachers made independent judgments each month. They could not refer to previous records because they had been submitted to me. Therefore, their monthly ratings were unaffected by previous

ratings. This procedure was followed to facilitate unbiased analysis. In April, I compared the November rating to the April rating for changes: sorting them as positive change, negative change, or no change from fall to spring.

The guidance counselor completed rating scales not only for her targeted child each month, but she also completed one for each of the other targeted children in November and April. The cooperating teacher also completed a rating scale in November and April for the guidance counselor's targeted child.

Because two different teachers rated each child on the "Resiliency Scale," this method provided a source of triangulation concerning the observations of each child.

- *"Assessing School Resiliency Building"* survey by Henderson and Milstein (1996)

As a group we wanted to know what our school was doing to foster resiliency and what we could do to be better. A survey (Appendix C) by Henderson and Milstein (1996) designed to assess the students, staff, and school in the areas of (1) Prosocial Bonding, (2) Clear, Consistent Boundaries, (3)

Teaching Life Skills, (4) Caring and Support, ((5) High Expectations, and (6) Opportunities for Meaningful Participation was used (Henderson and Milstein, 1996).

This survey, based on previous research on resiliency, included three steps (increasing bonding, setting clear and consistent boundaries, and teaching life skills) that moved children toward resiliency and three additional steps (providing care and support, setting and communicating high expectations, and providing opportunities for meaningful participation) that continued to foster resiliency (Henderson and Milstein, 1996, pp. 11-14). The survey permitted easy analysis, interpretation, and use for decision making. The results could be collated quickly to provide an indication of what the team members believed about resiliency.

Each item in each area was rated on a scale of 1-4 with 1 being "very good" and 4 being "nothing is to be done." The scores for each area were totaled to obtain an overall assessment score rating student, staff, and school. We decided to complete the survey as a group by reaching a consensus for each item.

This task provided one avenue for sharing our thoughts on the subject of resiliency. We completed the survey in October and again in April.

- *"Pre- and post interviews"*

Interviews were conducted in September and April, audiotaped, and transcribed. The interviews were designed to help me rationalize the purpose of this study, which was to create a more effective environment for the success of at-risk children and to observe the process of change. The pre-interview questions were as follows:

- (1) *What do you hope to gain by participating in this study?*
- (2) *What are some of the methods you presently use to meet the needs of at-risk students?*
- (3) *What do you know about resiliency of at-risk children?*
- (4) *What are some things you would like to see happening at our school for these children?*

The following were post-interview questions:

- (1) *What did you gain by participating in this study?*
- (2) *How have you changed in fostering*

resiliency?

- (3) *What else would you like to see changed to help our children?*
- (4) *What instructional strategies have you changed after modifying the curriculum?*
- (5) *What measures can you show to prove gains in the resiliency of your at-risk student?*
- (6) *How have you included parents in this study?*
- (7) *What curricular modifications were helpful to you as a teacher?*
- (8) *How did your colleagues help you in this study?*
- (9) *How did the principal help you in this study?*
- (10) *Is the school doing a better job in meeting the needs of these children? How?*

These interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Teacher responses from these sessions were charted in raw data matrices to be used for analysis in answering the questions in my areas of interest. These matrices are included in Chapter 4.

- *Teacher journals*

Each teacher kept a journal to record her observations

divided into the following sections: (1) Journal, (2) Problem Solving, (3) Leadership Opportunities, (4) Building Responsibility, (5) Literature with Resilient Themes, (6) Hobbies/ Interests, (7) Role Playing, (8) Conflict Resolution, (9) Parent Involvement, and (10) Words of Encouragement. Werner's (1992) research had shown that these activities were important in building resiliency. The members made entries in their journals at least weekly and more often as appropriate. On the pages in each of the ten sections of their journals, they recorded the activity used to promote a given ability, the date it was employed, and the response of the child they had targeted for special attention (Figure 3). The structure helped teachers find the skills or activities they needed to teach and provided a reminder of the areas to be covered throughout the study. They recorded and dated their observations in the journal concerning changes, if any, that occurred. I sorted these observation logs by topics and analyzed them for the presence of similar themes.

- *My journal*

I kept the same journal as the teachers. This kept me

Teacher Journal Section Inserts

Problem Solving

Date	Lesson	Activities	Response
------	--------	------------	----------

Leadership Opportunities

Date	Lesson	Activities	Response
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Figure 3

focused in my classroom observations. I also maintained a research journal of my thoughts on the entire project. In addition, I kept a log of parent conferences listing date, reason for conference, and the outcome. In another section of my journal, I included agendas and transcriptions of the monthly study groups.

- *Monthly study groups*

The purpose of the monthly study group meetings was to discuss Joseph (1994) and to hear updates on activities implemented in the classrooms to promote resiliency. The study groups' outlines and agendas were as follows:

September -- I explained my interest in the topic and presented an overview of the study. I outlined the following components for the team members:

- Each teacher would have a pre- and post-interview.
- The at-risk students would be identified using a chart (Figure 1) adapted from Werner's (1992) study.
- The modifications of the curriculum were discussed.
- The whole class would participate in the

proposed activities, but only one child would be studied in depth.

- The materials to be purchased would be identified.
- Lesson plans would show a resiliency theme.

In addition, the teachers signed an informed consent for VPI and SU giving permission to include them in the study. They were to remain anonymous, and there would be no compensation.

I shared the book, The Resilient Child by Joseph (1994) with the team and a \$1200 Title I staff development grant to be used to purchase materials and supplies for the study. I explained Werner's (1992) longitudinal study in detail as well as the history of the federal government's labeling of children with needs. Key terms, including "underprivileged," "at-risk," and "resiliency," were defined.

October -- The team examined Joseph's (1994) book, The Resilient Child, by previewing the Table of Contents and again examined Werner's (1992) study. With all pre-interviews completed, we discussed our knowledge of resiliency, reviewed "The Resiliency Scale for At-Risk Children" (Figure 2) and defined

terms so that all members would be working from the same understandings as they evaluated the children.

We completed the "Assessing School Resiliency Building" (Henderson & Milstein, 1996) survey (Appendix C) to determine if our school was meeting the needs of at-risk children. We compiled the results and developed a consensus of the team. Using information from Figure 1, the teachers identified the at-risk children that they were going to study.

November -- Each team member received a journal organized into the following sections: (1) Teacher Journal, (2) Problem solving, (3) Leadership Opportunities, (4) Building Responsibility, (5) Literature with Resiliency Themes, (6) Hobbies and Interests, (7) Role Playing, (8) Conflict Resolution Skills, (9) Parent Involvement, and (10) Words of Encouragement. The journal served as their means of recording information throughout the study, including journal entries once or twice weekly or whenever a pertinent issue was observed. As they taught lessons stressing the ten topics above, they were to date them, explain the objectives of the lessons, list activities, and write responses noted by the children

under study. Each member brought the journal to group meetings to share and brainstorm with the others. In addition, members shared journal articles on resiliency found in educational journals, newspapers, and magazines. We decided to give a school-wide parent workshop on "How Parents Can Help Children Cope through the Use of Nutrition, Exercise, and Relaxation." Beginning in November, each teacher completed the "Resiliency Scale" for her targeted child and submitted it to me at the end of each study group session.

December -- We discussed Chapter 1 ("Self-Esteem"), Chapter 2 ("Resilience"), and Chapter 3 ("Sizing Up Your Child") of Joseph's (1994) book, The Resilient Child, and the teachers shared thoughts on observed situations that were similar to examples in the book. We brainstormed ways we could help the children cope with their problems. Using their journals, the teachers shared their lessons and success stories.

We evaluated the evening November Parent Workshop on "How Parents Can Help Children Cope through the Use of Nutrition, Exercise, and Relaxation" and decided to

hold the next workshop during the school day in February 1998.

Each teacher completed the Resiliency Scale (Figure 2) for her child and submitted it to me.

January -- After receiving the \$1200 Title I grant and purchasing fifty books on the theme of promoting resiliency, the team members and I labeled the books (Appendix B). They were selected from a list suggested in Joseph (1994).

I delineated the goal of the team members to use the ideas from the books and to adapt them for their own classrooms. Since parent conferences were to be held in the near future, we decided that the role of parents would be a topic for discussion.

The teachers shared their journal entries and submitted their completed Resiliency Scales (Figure 2).

February -- We planned a parent workshop, "Discipline with Love," for February 13 and assembled several handouts on parenting styles, ways to praise children, and a list of books with the theme of resiliency (see Appendix B); we also discussed the importance of consistent reading to children in order

to have time together, to build character, and to provide suggestions for daily living. The workshop was open to all parents; one parent of one of the five targeted students attended.

The teachers shared their journal entries and submitted their completed Resiliency Scales (Figure 2).

March -- We discussed Chapter 7 ("Cultivating Social Skills in Your Child" and Chapter 8 ("Teaching Children to Make Good Decisions"). Teachers suggested ways to adapt these ideas in their classrooms, shared their journal entries, and submitted their completed Resiliency Scales (Figure 2).

Parental responsibility was again a theme of this meeting.

April -- The teachers shared their journal entries and submitted their completed Resiliency Scales (Figure 2). They commented that they kept each other in mind when they designed activities and, on occasion, combined classes to teach lessons. Post-interviews were to be finished that week. Using a consensus vote, the teachers completed the "Assessing School Resiliency Building" survey (Appendix C) by

Henderson and Milstein (1996).

- *Guidance counselor's notes on the four children other than her own targeted child*

The guidance counselor visited the room on a weekly basis and provided another source of information on the activities of each targeted child. She also included each targeted child in one of her small-group guidance sessions.

- *Cooperating teacher's notes on the guidance counselor's targeted child*

One teacher did not keep a journal since she was not part of the study, but she made observations periodically and kept notes from parent conferences and report cards. She did not divide her comments into separate sections. I asked her to write evaluations of the child in November, January, and April, discussing the child's academic progress, social skills, general behavior, and parent involvement.

- *Raw data matrices*

Teacher responses from interviews, journals, and study group meetings were charted into raw data matrices in order to organize the process of analysis and to

determine themes throughout the study and to illustrate certain assertions.

Time Matrix

This inquiry began in September 1997 and ran through April 1998. The following timeline (Table 1) provides dates for various activities. For example, the pre-interview took place in September 1997, and the post-interview was held in April 1998. The study group meetings took place once a month and lasted from one to two hours each. Entries with activities noted in the teacher journals were ongoing from September through April and were required at least weekly. Entries in my journal were also made during the entire study period. I made two scheduled observations for each teacher as required by school policy during which teaching strategies, classroom management, and curricula implementation were the focal points. During these observation periods that lasted from forty-five to sixty minutes each, I also noted the areas chosen by the group to modify--problem solving, responsibility, literature with a resilient theme, attitude toward excellence, curiosity about the

Table 1

Time Matrix for Study Components, 1997-1998

Study Components	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Pre-interview	+							
Post-interview								+
Chart for Identification of At-Risk Children	+							
Resiliency Scale			+	+	+	+	+	+
Study group meetings	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Assessing School Resiliency Building Survey		+						+
Entries in teacher journals ongoing			+	+	+	+	+	+
Entries in my journal ongoing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
My observations of teachers (scheduled)		+					+	
My observations of teachers & identified students ongoing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Parent conferences (scheduled)			+			+		
Parent conferences as needed	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Guidance counselor's observations ongoing			+	+	+	+	+	+
Cooperating teacher's observations ongoing			+	+	+	+	+	+

environment, sociability, health, goal setting, words of encouragement, parent involvement--for the at-risk children in the classrooms. I made two "walk throughs" of each classroom daily and at other times when relevant to the study. I also participated in parent conferences for each of the five targeted students at least once during the year. Other conferences were conducted as necessitated by parent concern or classroom problems.

The guidance counselor observed her targeted child and the targeted children of the other four study group members at least weekly throughout the year. The study group teachers as well as the regular classroom teacher made daily observations for the entire study period.

Parent workshops conducted by the study group members and me were held in November and February and were open to all parents in the school.

Methods of Analysis

Using the sources of data (transcripts from pre-and post-interviews, monthly Resiliency Scales, survey on Assessing School Resiliency Building, transcripts

from study group meetings, teacher journals and observations, guidance counselor's journal and observations, and my journal and observations), I conducted an analysis to answer the six questions posed as areas of interest for this study. Raw data matrices included in Chapter Four contain the pertinent data that were examined for themes. I also quoted from the data sources to illustrate certain assertions. The survey, "Assessing School Resiliency Building," was compared in October and April to determine how well the school was meeting the needs of at-risk children. I noted changes in improvement from the October to the April ratings.

I recorded the individual child's Resiliency Scales, completed monthly by each teacher. At the end of the study, I compared the ratings in November and April to see if any changes had occurred. Each child was rated on the Resiliency Scales twice--in November and again in April. The guidance counselor, cooperating teacher, and classroom teacher (study group members) rated the children.

From the teachers' journals, my journal and observations, and the guidance counselor's journal and

observations on our attempts to modify curriculum in the various topics, I extracted illustrative comments that related to each of the topics on which we were focusing our attempts to develop resiliency and organized them into tables according to the topics (see Tables 7-15). The comments reflect those actions that were taken to modify the curricula and do not represent a particular time of the year or any developmental activity.

Careful examination of all of the data sources helped me to determine the outcomes of this study and aided me in deciding what to report as my findings. The results of this study are reported in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter contains the findings based on an analysis of the data and is organized by areas of interest to the investigator expressed as questions. Each question is examined using the following sources of data: (1) pre- and post-interviews, (2) transcripts of study group meetings, (3) teachers' journals and sections from their journals, (4) guidance counselor's journal, (5) notes from the cooperating teacher who observed the same child as the guidance counselor, and (6) my journal. The "Resiliency Scale" (Figure 2) and "Assessing School Resiliency Building" (Appendix C) also provided evidence relative to each question. After analyzing the raw data matrices, I discuss the strands that emerged from the various data sources.

As a reminder, the following six questions were posed at the outset and will now be addressed:

(1) *What did the teachers (the members of the study group) know about resiliency in children?*

- *definition*
- *risk factors*

- *protective buffers*
- (2) *What did the teacher believe about the roles of the school and parents in developing the resiliency of at-risk children?*
- (3) *What existing practices in the school promoted resiliency and what changes occurred in those practices during the study?*
- (4) *What evidence is there to indicate that the modifications made by the study group members in the established curricula promoted resiliency in the targeted students?*
- (5) *How did the teachers measure the success of their efforts in promoting resiliency in at-risk children?*
- (6) *What are the outcomes from this study which were beneficial to teachers and students?*

Each question will now be addressed in turn.

Teacher Knowledge of Resiliency

- (1) *What did the teachers (the members of the study group) know about resiliency in*

children?

- *definition*
- *risk factors*
- *protective buffers*

As the first step, I interviewed the five participants to determine their familiarity with the term "resiliency." As shown in Table 2, three teachers (#1, #2, and #3) did not have a definition for "resiliency" as it pertained to at-risk children. They either had no idea what it was or they thought that it involved slow learners. Their responses ranged from "low ability students [having] emotional struggles" to those children having "more negatives than positives." Two teachers (#4 and #5) said that they had not heard of the term. I noted in my journal that, prior to the beginning of the study, three of the teachers had a general feel for what the term "resiliency" meant while two of them had no concept.

After the September group meeting and the explanation and discussion of Werner's (1982) longitudinal study in Hawaii, the teachers began to develop personal meaning for the term "resiliency," the definition, risk factors, and protective buffers

Table 2

Raw Data Matrix of Beginning and Ending Knowledge of Teachers about Resiliency by Teacher

Teacher	Knowledge of resiliency (pre-interview)	Knowledge of resiliency (post-interview)
#1	"Resiliency is a new term to me. They have a struggle that prevents them from learning or being their best. Low ability students [pause] sometimes have emotional struggles."	"I know the characteristics of resilient children, and I now make a conscious effort to foster skills that promote resiliency."
#2	"The first thing that comes to my mind is someone who is able to snap back from whatever it is."	"I assumed a resilient child was a slow learner, but now I know what to look for and how to identify them."
#3	"A child that has things against them but still manages to succeed in class. He has more negatives than positives."	"I enjoyed learning about the topic and now know the characteristics to look for. I enjoy using literature with resiliency as a theme."
#4	"I really have not heard of the term."	"This study made me focus on kids who were at-risk, and we need to help them overcome their problems. There are specific things we can do to help them take control of their own actions."
#5	"I haven't heard that much about students being 'resilient'."	"This study made me focus on life skills that children need to succeed and survive. So often we are busy with academics that we don't look at their problems in life."

for promoting resiliency in at-risk children by using Werner's (1992) criteria and explanations for each item. Consequently, at the first study group meeting in September we discussed the misconception that all at-risk children were low academically. They learned that resilient children should have at least average intelligence in order to survive.

In the April post-interviews, the study group members' knowledge of resiliency had changed. Teacher #1 reported that she recognizes characteristics of a resilient child and is now making "a conscious effort to foster skills that promote resiliency." Teacher #2, who said that she had "assumed a resilient child was a slow learner," reported that she now knows how to identify a student who is at-risk. Teacher #3 found that "using literature with resiliency as a theme" proved to be enjoyable to her. Teachers #4 and #5 found a new focus in helping those students who were at-risk. Teacher #4 realized that "there are specific things we can do to help them [at-risk children] take control of their own actions." Considering the whole child and the "life skills that children need to succeed and survive" became important for Teacher #5.

Evidence gained from an analysis of the reported changes in teacher knowledge of resiliency indicates that the level of awareness of the members of the study group increased during the course of the study. They acknowledged that they learned what characteristics to look for in their children and were able to apply that knowledge to the modification of their curricula in order to make a difference in the lives of these students.

I noted the teachers' knowledge of resiliency during the study group sessions. In September most of the members, such as #1 who said "Resiliency is a new term to me," were unfamiliar with the term. By the end of the study, they were discussing specific strategies to help foster the skills necessary in promoting resiliency. They stated in the study group meetings that this awareness was a result of reading and discussing each chapter of Joseph's (1994) book.

In my observations I also noted that there were specific strategies that were employed to promote resiliency. I saw literature used, children working on problem solving skills, children using the Talk-It-Out Corner, opportunities for leadership such as being

the leader in a cooperative group, and the use of many words of encouragement. These observations let me know that the information we were discussing was being practiced by the teachers.

In responding to the first question, there seems to be ample evidence that information used to promote resiliency in the classrooms changed the study group members' knowledge of the term from a conceptual idea to practicality and application of skills.

Teacher Knowledge Concerning the Roles of the School
and Parents in Developing the Resiliency of At-Risk
Children

(2) *What did the teacher believe about the roles of the school and parents in developing the resiliency of at-risk children?*

After determining what the teachers themselves knew about developing the resiliency of at-risk children, I focused on teacher knowledge of the roles played by school and parents.

When asked in pre-interview conferences (Table 3) about the school's role, the members of the study group responded in a variety of ways. Teacher #1

Table 3 Raw Data Matrix of School's Role for Meeting Needs of At-risk Children

Teacher	School's role (pre-interview)	School's role (post-interview)
#1	"I would like to have a way to quickly identify at-risk children and target activities and programs to fit their needs. Knowing who you are targeting is very important."	"We hold regularly scheduled student support meetings. They give a better perspective of what is going on with a child and the family. We are trying new ways to help motivate children."
#2	"We already have EIP (Extended Instructional Program) and counsel individual children, make home visits, and more community involvement. Parent training is essential for younger parents. "	"We are always looking for ways to benefit kids such as the PEACC reading program. EIP is great for additional learning after school. We target different groups of kids for different things."
#3	"We have star student, weekly reports--looking at positives rather than negatives."	"We started the 'Talk-It-Out' corner. We are coping with problem-solving skills. We are grouping different ways for different subjects. We have after-school programs, day care, EIP, and chess."
#4	"I would like to do more to reach parents. They seem to have a difficult time understanding what it means to be parents. Let parents become more involved. We need increased emphasis on conflict management skills."	"If a child is low academically, we seek additional help. We use the school nurse to keep on top of health issues. We use large and small group guidance. We meet often with the parents of children having difficulty."
#5	"Increased guidance lessons. Some children say things to let us know they are having trouble. We should 'adopt' them. We need films or videos, more books for children to read about others with similar problems, and role playing."	"We are focusing on the positives of children rather than the negatives such as Caught Being Good assemblies each month. We encourage children to do well. We have student recognitions and a nurturing atmosphere at school."

wanted "a way to quickly identify at-risk children" and to "target activities and programs to fit their needs." Other teachers commented more specifically on what they felt the school was now providing. Teacher #2 noted the "EIP (Extended Instructional Program) and counsel[ing of] individual children and home visits"; teacher #3 offered "star student" and "weekly reports." Teachers #4 and #5 reacted to the question by advocating more attention to parent involvement, calling for "increased emphasis on conflict management skills" and "increase guidance lessons" and "films or videos, more books for children to read about others with similar problems, and role playing."

In the post-interviews in April, the teachers (the members of the study group) were asked if they believed the school was now doing a better job of meeting the needs of at-risk children. The comments in Table 3 reflect a much greater knowledge of what the school did to develop resiliency. Teacher #1 noted the importance of "regularly scheduled student support meetings . . . [that] give a better perspective of what is going on with the child and the family." Teacher #2 added the PEACC reading program

as valuable benefit to children as the school began to "target different groups of kids for different things." Other initiatives by the school that addressed the needs of these children were the Talk-It-Out Corner, the after-school programs, EIP, chess, large and small group guidance, and "Caught Being Good" assemblies. Teacher #4 noted the value of "meet[ing] often with the parents of children having difficulty." Teacher #5 summarized the school's role well when she noted that "we [the school staff] encourage children to do well" and that "we have student recognitions and a nurturing atmosphere at school."

The shift in the insight of the teachers concerning the school's role changed dramatically from the pre- to the post-interviews. In the pre-interview the responses concerned mainly the child and his family while the post-interview comments focused on the whole child, especially in the area of academics. I noted in my journal that the school was complimented at a city-wide Special Education meeting for the regularity of student support meetings to help as many children as possible. During the monthly study group

meetings, the importance of the school in training parents to be more involved was stressed, and we began to realize that both the school and the parents needed to cooperate in providing the best learning environment for the children. At the November meeting, I surmised that "if I can get the parents on my side, the child's behavior and achievement will improve."

In analyzing evidence regarding teacher knowledge of the role of the parents in developing resiliency in at-risk children, I relied on the discussions in the monthly study groups as the major source of data for this inquiry. Comments from those meetings (Appendix D) indicate that the teachers were uncertain about the topic of resiliency such as indicated in Teacher #3's statement in September that resiliency "is a totally new topic for me." In April, Teacher #1 commented that "I know the characteristics of resilient children, and I now make a conscious effort to foster skills that promote resiliency."

Parent responsibility for the child's success became a topic of conversation at each month study group. The teachers shared the progress of their

students and indicated that they were involving the parents and guardians of the targeted children.

During the year the mothers of two of the five children were diagnosed with illnesses requiring surgery. The group brainstormed ways to help children cope during this time. The teachers mentioned at one of the study groups how pleased they were that the parents were visiting the school more often and sharing some of the home experiences with them.

Parents even wrote comments on the report cards such as "He is doing better at home also," "He is seeing Dr. Laplace for his self-esteem problem", "Keep in touch," and "She is starting to come out of her shell."

Comments from the post-interviews about knowledge of the parent's role in promoting resiliency (Table 4) indicate that, by the end of the school year, the teachers had become more keenly aware of the role of the parent. They cited interventions such as workshops, monthly conferences, student support meetings, and daily notices as important measures for the parent and teacher to take to ensure the success of the students.

Table 4
Raw Data Matrix of Parent Involvement in this Study

Teacher	Parent involvement (post-interview)
#1	"Parent workshops, conferences where I pointed out things to work on as well as successes. Two things we discussed were to establish a routine and to read with children each day."
#2	"I had a conference with mom on a monthly basis. I also talked to her often on the phone. I know I could see her weekly if needed."
#3	"Parent workshops, conferences, student support meetings. I even talked to his doctor and his minister, who is his mentor. I have called his mother many times at home. His mother had to have surgery during the year, and this had an effect on him."
#4	"Parent workshops, conferences where I talked to parents who are very interested in his progress and behavior. I send home daily notices, and they sympathize with me as his teacher and support me."
#5	"Conferences. Mother is divorced and very concerned about his progress. He is having problems at home and it is hard for him to cope. She took him to the doctor and put him on medication for ADD. Mother was always cooperative."

Using all of the sources of data (my journal, teachers' journals, report cards, study groups, observations), I concluded that the value of parent involvement in a child's success was a dominant theme.

School Practices to Promote Resiliency

(3) What existing practices in the school promoted resiliency and what changes occurred in those practices during the study?

Using a survey by Henderson and Milstein (Appendix C), the study group members assessed the school for existing practices to develop resiliency. The survey was divided into six categories for assessment: (1) Prosocial Bonding; (2) Clear, Consistent Boundaries; (3) Teaching Life Skills; (4) Caring and Support; (5) High Expectations; and (6) Opportunities for Meaningful Participation. The categories are divided into responses for "student," "staff," and "school."

Responses to the "Assessment of the School's Attempts to Develop Student Resiliency" survey (Table 5) indicates the school was doing a number of things to build positive resiliency in October 1997 with a

Table 5

Assessment of the School's Attempts to Develop Student Resiliency (1 = high, 4 = low)

Categories	Oct. 97 rating	Apr. 98 rating	Change
<i>Prosocial bonding</i>			
Student with a caring adult	4	1	3
Student engaged in interest activities	3	2	1
Staff interaction	3	2	1
Staff involvement in vision and mission	1	1	0
Families bonded to school	3	2	1
School environment warm and inviting	2	1	1
TOTAL	16	9	7
<i>Clear, consistent boundaries</i>			
Student informed of expected behaviors	1	1	0
Student use of intervention process	3	2	1
Staff informed of expectations	2	1	1
Staff modeling of expectations	2	1	1
School discussion of expectations	2	1	1
Training of school community	4	3	1
TOTAL	14	9	5
<i>Teaching Life Skills</i>			
Student use of stress-management skills	3	2	1
Student engagement in cooperative learning	2	2	0
Staff cooperation	1	1	0

Table 5 (continued)

Categories	Oct. 97 rating	Apr. 98 rating	Change
Staff skills for effective teaching	1	1	0
School provision for skill development	3	2	1
School philosophy of lifelong learning	3	2	1
TOTAL	13	10	3
<i>Caring and support</i>			
Student experience of care and support	1	1	0
Student recognition	1	1	0
Staff appreciation	1	1	0
Staff recognition	3	2	1
School climate of encouragement	1	1	0
School resources distributed fairly	2	1	1
TOTAL	9	7	2
<i>High expectations</i>			
Student belief in success	2	2	0
Little or no student labeling or tracking	2	2	0
Staff belief in success	1	1	0
Staff reward for risk taking/excellence	1	1	0
School promotion of future growth	1	1	0
School promotion of "can do" attitude	1	1	0
TOTAL	8	8	0

Table 5 (continued)

Categories	Oct. 97 rating	Apr 98 rating	Change
<i>Opportunities for meaningful participation</i>			
Student involvement in service projects	2	1	1
Student involvement in decision making	3	2	1
Staff involvement in decision making	2	1	1
Staff engagement in organization	1	1	0
School community as a total resource	2	2	0
School emphasis on goals and risk taking	2	1	1
TOTAL	12	8	4

Note. A scale of 1 to 4 was used with 1 indicating "we have this together," 2 indicating "we've done a lot in this area, but could do more," 3 indicating "we are getting started," and 4 indicating "nothing has been done." Lower ratings indicate positive resilience building; higher ratings indicate a need for improvement.

^aThe ratings resulted from a consensus of the six members of the study group.

Adapted from Henderson, Nan and Mike M. Milstein (1996) Resiliency in schools: Making it happen for students and educators. Thousand Oaks: CA: Corwin, pp. 114-116.

rating of "1" or "2" in 25 out of the 36 categories. A low rating showed a positive resiliency activity while a high rating indicated a need to improve. The study group first completed the survey in October 1997, and again in April 1998. The ratings represent a consensus of the six members of the study group. "Caring and Support" and "High Expectations" were judged to be high in the first assessment, and the values in Table 6 showed that there was need for improvement, especially in the area of "Prosocial Bonding." Through discussion the group identified a need to make time for all participants to develop meaningful interactions with one another. The survey helped us to define the direction we should take in order to make the greatest impact on the lives of our students.

In April 1998 we again completed the survey. There was a pronounced change in the scores as "Prosocial Bonding" improved by 7; Clear, Consistent Boundaries" improved by 5; "Teaching Life Skills" improved by 3; "Caring and Support" improved by 2; and "Opportunities for Meaningful Participation" improved by 4. The improvement from October to April suggests

that the study group believed our school improved in promoting resiliency. We were able to develop a specific plan of action for the coming school session to concentrate on those areas showing the greatest need of improvement.

The survey determined that the school had some practices in place to promote resiliency even in October. Then, efforts to aid at-risk students as a constant focus in our study group sessions produced improvement in several areas according to the survey.

Modifications of Curriculum

(4) What evidence is there to indicate that the modifications made by the study group members in the established curricula promoted resiliency in the targeted students?

Because the teachers were not clear about the meaning of resiliency at the outset, they were given specific activities recommended by Werner for promoting resiliency. Because of the value of these activities to the at-risk students and the relative ease in incorporating these activities into the regular curricula, we decided to focus on the

following: (1) problem solving skills, (2) leadership opportunities, (3) building responsibility, (4) literature with themes of resiliency, (5) hobbies/special interests, (6) role playing, (7) conflict resolution techniques, (8) parent involvement, and (9) words of encouragement.

The team members kept a journal with sections for each area. As each teacher completed a lesson in which she utilized one of the activities for promoting resiliency, she completed an entry (Figure 3) and placed it into her journal under the specific category. At the end of the study, I made a simple count of all lessons used by the teachers to develop resiliency under a specific category (Table 6). While the simple counts for some lessons/attempts may seem minimal, in April I looked at the compilation of the total attempts to modify curricula.

Each category was described so that all of the team members would offer similar activities or lessons. Evidence was taken from the teachers' journals and observations, my journal and observations, and the guidance counselor's journal and observations (including that of the cooperating

Table 6

Simple Counts of Lessons/Attempts which Study Group Members Used to Develop Resiliency in the Classroom from October to April

Attempts by teachers	Tchr 1	Tchr 2	Tchr 3	Tchr 4	Tchr 5	Total
Problem-solving skills	2	4	3	5	6	20
Leadership opportunities	1	5	8	5	8	27
Building responsibility	1	3	3	5	3	15
Use of literature	15	11	13	13	13	65
Developing hobbies/interests	1	6	6	3	5	21
Role playing	2	4	4	2	5	17
Conflict resolution techniques	14	1	2	4	3	24
Parental involvement	4	6	3	4	7	24
Words of encouragement	6	3	10	4	11	34

teacher's comments on Child #1) to examine our attempts to modify curriculum in the various categories. I extracted comments that related to each of the topics on which we were focusing our efforts to develop resiliency and organized them into tables according to the topics (Tables 7-15). The comments describe those actions that were taken to modify the curricula. The tables for Question 4 are structured so that three sources of data are presented for each child.

In problem-solving skills (Table 7), the goal was to instill in the children a proactive belief that they could solve some problem they encountered each day. We used Myrna B. Shure's (1992) I Can Problem Solve for students in kindergarten and primary grades. In the pre-problem solving skills section of the book, the author introduced certain vocabulary to help students to express their feelings. In the other section of Shure's book, the children were given problem-solving skills using (1) alternative solutions, (2) looking at consequences, and (3) solution-consequence pairs. Shure suggested puppetry and role playing to help children experience

Table 7

Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Problem Solving)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 1--"She [Child #1] had to be constantly reminded to cool down before acting."/"There was a difference in the way she interacted with others from the beginning of the year until the end."	"Child #1 was referred to the office for confrontation with another child. She reacts quickly without thinking."/"I have not had Child #1 referred since January. I noticed her in the cafeteria smiling and interacting with others."	cooperating teacher--"She [Child #1] relies on me to solve her problems."/"She now tries to do things on her own."
Teacher 2--"When asked how she [Child #2] would solve the problem of being lost, she simply shrugged her shoulder with no reply."/"She now thinks about how to go about solving a problem. She offers suggestions rather than not commenting."	"Child #2 is extremely shy. It seems as if she is afraid of saying the wrong things."/"She was the leader in a group that was working on tangrams in math. She modeled the teacher asking questions, suggesting solutions, and giving everyone a turn."	"Child #2 does not want to talk even in a small group. She is very shy."/"She told me about using the Talk-It-Out Corner to solve a problem with a friend."
Teacher 3--"In a lesson on problem solving, he [Child #3] offered many solutions."/Today he was very eager to share solutions. He was so excited that he had a hard time waiting his turn."	"Child #3 and I talked about a stealing incident. He told me ways to improve his behavior."/"He told me he had not stolen for several months. He asked to bring his book bag to school again. We discussed ways to stay on the Good Citizen List."	"In our group, he [Child #3] shared ways for students to be successful. He wants everyone in his class to be a Star Student and has suggestions for ways each child can reach that goal."

Table 7 (continued)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 4--"My student [Child #4] was sent to the board to show the class how he solved the 'Problem of the Day.'"/"He did not chose to follow directions but agreed to the consequences that he helped to create."	"Child #4 was noted helping another student with a 'Problem of the Day.' He appeared proud to be able to help the other child."/"Today he was referred to my office for fighting in the boys' bathroom. They decided how they could solve the problem."	"He [Child #4] usually demonstrates positive problem solving skills and helps others when they need it."
Teacher 5--"In math today he [Child #5] was able to deduce a solution by eliminating possibilities."/I know you got the answer to the problem that way, but I did it a different way."	"Child #5 responded to the teacher's question and gave a correct response each time."/"When the class had to move to a different room due to renovation, child #5 suggested ways to pack and organize the room."	"Today he [Child #5] demonstrated the ability to think through a situation and problem solve some personal issues."

what would happen if.... The book also taught putting events into sequential order. Additionally, children were taught about the consequences of an action. The use of imagination helped small children practice situations that they might encounter.

The evidence in Table 7 indicates that Child #1 changed from having conflicts with others ("she had to be constantly reminded to cool down before acting") to the point where she was "interacting with others" in the cafeteria. Child #2 also progressed from the beginning of the year when she "simply shrugged her shoulders with no reply" to imitating the teacher "asking questions, suggesting solutions, and giving everyone a turn." Working well with problem solving was always an attribute of Child #3 who wanted "everyone in the class to be a Star Student and [had] suggestions for ways each child [could] reach that goal." Child #4 "usually demonstrate[ed] positive problem solving skills and help[ed] others when they need[ed] it." Child #5 was very perceptive in solving problems from "suggest[ing] ways to pack a room for moving" to "problem solv[ing] some personal issues."

For another category, Leadership Opportunities

(Table 8), the teachers let the children participate as classroom helpers or perform at assemblies, receive star student awards such as perfect attendance, and positive phone calls from their teachers. They also had the opportunity to lead the whole school in the Pledge of Allegiance. We had monthly "Caught Being Good" assemblies where the students are recognized for outstanding citizenship. Additionally, the teachers provided time for children to be leaders in the classroom in order to encourage a sense of pride.

Not all of the targeted children showed positive gains as a result of this type of modification. For example, Child #1, "happy when she was selected as a Star Student," demonstrated a tendency to "hang around adults rather than play with peers" and was characterized as "shy and lack[ing] social skills." Children #2, #3, #4, and #5 all displayed leadership qualities from "model[ing] the teacher by waiting for others to get quiet" to "keeping members of her group focused when solving the tangram" to leading the school in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Teaching the children to be responsible for their own actions (Table 9) was one strategy that we worked

Table 8
Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Leadership Opportunities)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 1--"She [Child #1] happy when she was selected as a Star Student."	"Child #1 is a follower rather than a leader. She waits on others to suggest what to do."	cooperating teacher--"Child #1 prefers to hang around adults rather than play with peers. She is shy and lacks social skills."
Teacher 2--"When playing Sight Word Bingo, she [Child #2] modeled the teacher by waiting for others to get quiet before calling a new word. She demanded to have listening ears in her group."	"Child #2 did an excellent job of keeping members of her group focused when solving the tangram. They listened to her directions."	"She [Child #2] led a group discussion on being fair. She insisted everyone have a chance."
Teacher 3--"He [Child #3] likes to read to the class and ask questions. He models me in what I say and how I wait for responses."	"Child #3 was reading to the class. Good expression. He corrected others when they didn't listen."	"He [Child #3] helped a student on the computer and didn't mind they they interrupted him to help them."

Table 8 (continued)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 4--"He [Child #4] led the school in the Pledge of Allegiance. He did an excellent job. He was very confident and proud of himself."	<p>"Child #4 helped in the lunch line when a student lost money. He acted quickly and stuck with it until the money was found."</p>	<p>"He [Child #4] likes to be the one in charge of our small group."</p>
Teacher 5--"He [Child #5] worked cooperatively in his group helping others when needed."	<p>"Child #5 helped a younger child to get on the bus when he dropped his book bag. He always waits for his sister to make sure she gets on the bus with him."</p>	<p>"In our small group on divorce, he [Child #5] made caring remarks to others and suggested what they could do when they felt sad."</p>

Table 9

Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Building Responsibility)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observation	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 1--"She [Child #1] always brings in her homework and enjoys doing it alone."	"She [Child #1] promptly returned an important paper that had to be signed. She commented, 'I told you I would bring it back today.'"	cooperating teacher--"Things are returned on time, and she [Child #1] loves receiving praise when she does this."
Teacher 2--"She [Child #2] missed EIP several times, and after speaking with Mom, she began to stay on a regular basis."	Today she [Child #2] reminded me to make sure her younger brother got his medicine because he had been sick.	"She remembers to come to our group weekly. She [Child #2] reminds others when it is time to go."
Teacher 3--"When he [Child #3] is line leader, he takes his job seriously. He models me and reminds others to obey the rules."	"He [Child #3] made sure he completed the assignment on Accelerated Reader. He is very determined to complete each step in the process."	"During this month he [Child #3] has begun to show ability to take responsibility for his own actions and behaviors."

Table 9 (continued)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observation	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 4--"He [Child #4] is not responsible for his own actions. He always blames another student, but he does show responsibility in bringing in things from home and taking things home from school."	"In a conference, Child #4 and I discussed ways to become responsible for our own actions. He admitted the incident was his fault, and we called his mother and let him tell her exactly what happened in the confrontation with another student."	"In class, we worked on being responsible citizens. He [Child #4] doesn't notice when he disrupts others."
Teacher 5--"He [Child #5] feels as if he has to make sure everyone is prepared for class. He loves to pass out supplies during the day."	"He [Child #5] turned in some lost money and was very concerned that someone might not have lunch money."	"We talked about roles of family members, and he [Child #5] seems to think that his little sister is a big part of his responsibility. Mom depends on him to help at home."

on daily. We included responsibility in the Star Students' initiative program where they take responsibility for behaving appropriately, bringing in assignments from home, completing classroom work, cleaning up after themselves, and completing projects they started--all characteristics of good citizenship.

Not all of the children under observation by members of the study group displayed responsibility consistently. Child #1 "always [brought] in her homework" and "loved receiving praise when she does [return things on time]." Child #2 liked to serve as a reminder for the teacher to "make sure her younger brother got his medicine" and for "others when it is time to go [to the group meeting]." Child #3 took his job as line leader seriously and showed "ability to take responsibility for his own actions and behaviors." However, Child #4 was "not responsible for his own actions" but became more aware after a discussion with the principal about "ways to become responsible for our own actions." Child #5 "felt as if he had to make sure everyone is prepared for class" and thought that "his little sister is a big part of his responsibility."

We modified the reading curriculum by including literature with the theme of resiliency (Table 10). The health curriculum included ways to eat healthy, to get proper exercise, and to relax for stress relief. One teacher used methods learned in a kinesiology workshop to teach children to focus on the task at hand. The use of literature was easily the most popular method for the teachers to foster resiliency because of its easy accessibility and "the teachers love[d] using the new books." We created a special section in the school library of books listed in Joseph's work and identified the theme on the front cover. For example, if a teacher wanted to teach a lesson on commitment, she could use The Little Engine That Could as the focus. The literature was integrated into the regular curriculum and proved to be very successful. Child #3 referred to a previously read book, Frog and Toad Are Friends when she discussed a problem with his teacher about getting along with a classmate. Child #3 learned that "it [was] hard being brave" when he "[rode] a big bike. . . but [he] felt great after [he] did it." He also enjoyed the time reading with his mentor. Child #4

Table 10
Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Literature)

Group members' journals/observation	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 1--"I [Child #1] do not lie to Mom. It is very important to tell the truth."	"The teachers love using the new books with resilient themes. They like how we labeled the theme on the outside cover so that they can readily use it when necessary."	cooperating teacher--"In SOCCER SAM, she [Child #1] offered suggestions on how she would have reacted."
Teacher 2 --"We [including Child #2] should try new things because we might like them."		"She [Child #2] enjoyed discussing FROG AND TOAD ARE FRIENDS because having friends is very important to her."
Teacher 3--"It is hard being brave. When I [Child #3] rode a big bike I was scared, but I felt great after I did it."		"He enjoys reading with his mentor each week. He [Child #3] likes the time together with just the two of them."

Table 10 (continued)

Group members' journal/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 4--"He [Child #4] can always pick out the moral in a story and relate it to his life."		"We read STONE SOUP, and he [Child #4] talked about sharing and how it helps when everyone works together."
Teacher 5--"He [Child #5] said he would feel guilty if he was Frederick. He has a sense of caring for others."		"He [Child #5] talked of reading with his sister and discussing the author's purpose like he does in school."

liked to "relate it [the moral] to his own life" and discussed sharing after reading the book, Stone Soup. Child #5 read with his sister and liked to "discuss the author's purpose like he [did] in school."

The teachers used each other as resources in trying to develop hobbies and special areas of interest (Table 11). Often they would have guest speakers visit their classes or plan demonstrations of certain topics. One teacher had each child explain how to do something in front of the class. This exercise was most enjoyable for the children and helped each student to follow directions, to speak clearly, and to understand what it is like when someone needs extra time to learn. The parents were involved in helping their child get organized. The lessons ranged from making origami flowers to preparing a tossed salad.

The interests of the observed children varied. Child #1 enjoyed family-oriented activities while Children #2 and #3 liked reading; #2 said "she wanted to be a teacher just like her teacher." Making things, arts and crafts, were important for Children #4 and #5 who made a project on native Americans (#4)

Table 11

Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Hobbies/Interests)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 1--"I [Child #1] like to help to keep things clean and am good at it."		cooperating teacher--"She [Child #1] is interested in things that would be fun to do with her family. She enjoys time with her cousins."
Teacher 2 --"She [Child #2] has a great interest in reading. She wants to read a lot just like her friend."	"She [Child #2] and another student were on the rug reading together. She looks up often and mimics the other child."	"She [Child #2] always seems to observe others and wants to be like them. She said she wanted to be a teacher just like her teacher."
Teacher 3--"He [Child #3] enjoys skating and reading."	"He [Child #3] particularly shows interest in the Accelerated Reader on the computer. He mentioned that he had completed seventeen books."	"He [Child #3] likes to see how many books he can complete in Accelerated Reader."

Table 11 (continued)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 4--"He [Child #4] enjoys working with his hands. He brought in a piece of artwork that made out of a box."	"He [Child #4] showed me the project he made on Native Americans. Quite artistic!"	"He [Child #4] always draws me a picture to hang on my door. He takes time to do it and is very proud of his work."
Teacher 5--"He [Child #5] enjoys making things to give to him family members. He said he is always making gifts for Mom and Dad."		"He [Child #5] told the group how his mom felt better when he gave her a gift."

and gifts for Mom and Dad (#5).

Role playing (Table 12) was one way to help experience how someone else feels and how to react in various situations. When the children role played, they were actively engaged in learning. All of identified children with the exception of Child #3 became very involved in these kind of activities. Child #1 proved to be a star in the school play as "she really got into the role." Child #2 liked taking the part of characters in a book, but "stood behind another child and barely sang" in the school play. Children #4 and #5 performed very well in the school play; #4 is "very dramatic in all situations" and #5 "is very careful about not leaving out any details." On the other hand, Child #3 was "very self-conscious" and "shy" and did not "enjoy role playing."

One of our guidance counselor's roles was to teach the beginning stages of peer mediation and conflict resolution (Table 13) using the Dinosolve, a commercial program featuring dinosaurs. We also added weekly guidance seminars where children were taught how to problem solve.

Discipline techniques were altered as students

Fostering resiliency 100

Table 12

Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Role Playing)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 1--"She [Child #1] gave a very convincing performance and appeared to enjoy being in front of the room."	"She [Child #1] enjoyed performing in the play. Actions were terrific. She really got into the role."	cooperating teacher--"She [Child #1] likes to act out characters in stories."
Teacher 2 --"She [Child #2] loved playing in CAPS FOR SALE by walking around the room with several hats on her head."	"She [Child #2] stood behind another child and barely sang."	"We acted out how enemies could become friends. She [Child #1] showed great sensitivity and care for others."
Teacher 3--"He [Child #3] doesn't enjoy role playing. He is very self conscious. He says it is silly."	"He [Child #3] was very shy at the play and tended to hide behind the others."	"He [Child #3] did a good job showing the class how to talk it out with someone else."

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Table 12 (continued)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 4--"He [Child #4] played a bear in the holiday play and did an excellent job."	"At the play he [Child #4] was very confident, projected beautifully, and was beaming when his family members congratulated him at the end of the play."	"He [Child #4] is very dramatic in all situations. At times he even carries it to extremes. He is excellent at pretending to be sick so that he can call Mom.'
Teacher 5--"During health, he [Child #5] acted out healthy habits and explained each step. He is very careful about not leaving out any details."	"He [Child #5] stood tall and sang loudly at the play. He waved to a family member."	"In a Dinosolve lesson, he [Child #5] acted out a lesson on throwing food in the cafeteria. He always worried about hurting someone else's feelings."

Table 13
Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Conflict Resolution)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 1 -- "She [Child #1] always knows the correct thing to do but sometimes forgets to do it when in a situation with another child."	"She [Child #1] and another student did an excellent job talking it out over a name calling incident. They both left my office laughing together."	cooperating teacher-- "She [Child #1] is picky towards others but when reminded, she can work things out by herself."
Teacher 2 -- "She [Child #2] is very shy and needs privacy when talking it out with others. She is able to resolve personal problems without the teacher's help."		"She [Child #2] demonstrated how to solve a problem at home with a sibling. She liked being in charge of a younger brother and helping him make the right decision."
Teacher 3 -- "He [Child #3] does not have to use conflict resolution in the class. He is very likable and walks away from confrontations."	"When brought to my office as a witness to a fight, he [Child #3] was very close lipped and offered very little information."	"In our group, he [Child #3] talked about how he felt unhappy when he disagreed with family members. He said he usually gives in first."

Table 13 (continued)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
<p>Teacher 4--"Since he [Child #4] is active in the classroom, he tends to get into situations often with others. He almost enjoys having to talk it out with others because he thinks he can be in charge."</p>	<p>"In my office, he [Child #4] rarely takes the blame but accuses others. He can eventually be convinced that if he was where he should be, the incident would not have occurred."</p>	<p>"We have many discussions on ways to resolve conflicts in a non-violent way. He [Child #4] knows how but has to be reminded often."</p>
<p>Teacher 5--"He [Child #5] responds well to Dinosolve. He doesn't like it when anyone is angry with him."</p>		<p>"He [Child #5] told me he that his sister and he use Dinosolve to solve problems at home."</p>

were required to cool off and talk out problems. If the situation was too severe, then an adult intervened. She directed the students to take charge of their behavior by discussing what they did wrong and developing alternative ways to deal with the problem as opposed to being reprimanded or taking no action. We also informed parents of the situation so that they felt included and could take whatever action at home they deemed appropriate. Even though all of this action took a lot of time, the long-term benefits were worthwhile.

Each classroom had a "Talk It Out" corner with the Dinosolve steps to conflict resolution: (1) Stop and think; (2) Cool off; (3) Listen; (4) Talk it out. As a result, we had children telling teachers that they have a problem and needed to go to the "Talk It Out" corner. This practice saved a lot of referrals to the principal's office as the children began to take responsibility for their actions. During one incident involving two students in an argument, the others suggested that the two go to the corner to "talk it out."

In the beginning of the study, the counselor

noted that one of the identified children was having difficulty getting along with others. She worked very diligently with her through individual, small group, and whole class counseling to help work out some of the frustrations she was experiencing. In April, she noted that the identified child had been chosen as a "Star Student of the Month."

Child #1 was seen as "picky towards others but when reminded, she [could] work things out by herself." The conflict resolution modifications helped #2 be able to "resolve personal problems without the teacher's help." Child #3 was observed to be one who "walks away from confrontations" and "usually {gave} in [to family members]" when they disagreed. Child #5 responded well to Dinosolve and revealed that "he uses Dinosolve to solve problems at home."

The modification of curriculum to include more parent involvement (Table 14) was of great interest to the team members. This became a topic of conversation at a study group meeting, and the recorded comments reflected a recognition that increased student success came with a greater involvement of the parent in

Table 14
Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Parent Involvement)

Group members' journals/observations	Researcher's journal	Guidance counselor's observation
Teacher 1--"I can see the pressure the parents put on her [Child #1] to do well."	"The parents came in very angry about grades on her [Child #1] report card. After an explanation of the grading system, they were very calm and left content."	cooperating teacher--"The parents are very involved and check everything [for Child #1]."
Teacher 2 --"Her [Child #2] mom always responds to my calls and does what I suggest to help."	"Her [Child #2] parents came in because of concern about her progress. I explained she was in a heterogeneous group this year. They want extra help for her to bring up her grades."	"Mom talked with me about her [Child #2] grades, and I offered suggestions for how she could help at home."
Teacher 3--"The mother is more involved with him [Child #3] than the father. She is the one that always comes when called."	"Mom came in because she was concerned about his [Child #3] stealing. She asked for help."	"The DARE officer and I talked to the mother and assured her that we would monitor the child [#3] on a regular basis."

Table 14 (continued)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 4--"Mother is very interested in his [Child #4] progress. She requested a daily progress sheet to come home for her to sign and return."	"I noted that he [Child #4] frequently pretends to be sick so that he can call his mother from the office. He seems much better after talking with her."	
Teacher 5--"Mother is very cooperative and concerned about his [Child #5] lack of progress. She will take him to the doctor for ADD exam."	"I talked with his [Child #5] mother on the phone, explaining the medication process."	

school activities. Child #1's parents put a lot of "pressure . . . on her to do well" and "[were] very involved and check[ed] everything." Child #2's parents kept in touch with the teacher on a regular basis and sought "extra help for her to bring up her grades." The role of the parent became very important for Child #3 when his mom asked for help because of his stealing. The DARE officer and teacher had to monitor the child regularly and stay in touch with the mother. Child #4's mother "requested a daily progress sheet for her to sign and return" and had to calm her son frequently when he called home from school after pretending to be ill. The teacher of Child #5 and the mother corresponded frequently because the mother was "very cooperative and concerned about his lack of progress."

The teachers found that it was difficult to express encouraging words (Table 15) to one student in a class of twenty without doing it for all of them. Primary teachers encourage their students almost constantly during the whole school day, and this category required that they chose specific times when they felt their words of encouragement meant something

Table 15
Raw Data Matrix Concerning Modifications of Curriculum
(Category: Words of Encouragement)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 1-- "She [Child #1] needs a lot of reassurance that she is doing okay."	"She [Child #1] showed me a paper with a '100' on it. She was very proud of the sticker I put on it."	cooperating teacher-- "She [Child #1] comes up to me often to see if she is working correctly. After I say yes, she is fine and completes her work."
Teacher 2 --"I have to say often 'You can do it' because of her [Child #2] lack of self-confidence."	"I noted the teacher stays close to [Child #2] her and assures her often that it is correct."	"She [Child #2] is not comfortable being the first one to offer an answer. Often others respond and then she is willing to offer her answer."
Teacher 3--"We use high five's for encouragement. He [Child #3] knows when I give him one, he has succeeded."	"I praised him [Child #3] in the cafeteria for improved behavior. He told all those around him of our conversation."	"We have a code word to let me know that he [Child #3] is doing okay. When he is having a difficult time, he shows it with his whole body, and I know that we have to talk."

Table 15 (continued)

Group members' journals/observations	My journal/observations	Guidance counselor's journal/observations
Teacher 4--"He [Child #4] is very huggable and has to be encouraged often."	"I noticed that the teacher seems to be near him [Child #4] wherever they might be within the building. They hug often, and he smiles when they do."	"He [Child #4] enjoys school and enjoys being correct. He loves to be praised and receive tangible rewards."
Teacher 5--"I have learned that when he [Child #5] isn't smiling, he needs an extra word of encouragement. That is when I go to talk to him to see how I can help."	"The teacher and student [Child #5] have a special bond. He smiles when she is near and often walks up to her for reassurance. She responds willingly without reprimanding."	"I know I have to have close contact with him [Child #5} before he responds to me. My proximity seems to provide a comfort zone for him."

very special to the child.

Child #1 needed "a lot of reassurance" and was "fine and completed her work" after being told she was working correctly. Child #2 had to have constant encouragement and displayed a "lack of self-confidence" unless assured by her teacher. The teacher said Child #3 responded well to praise in the form of "High Five's" or special words. He used a special body language to let the counselor know when he was having a difficult time. Child #4 also had to be encouraged often and "love[d] to be praised and receive tangible rewards." When Child #5 was not smiling, his teacher knew that he needed "an extra word of encouragement," thus creating a special bond between the teacher and him.

In their summary comments at the final study group meeting in April, the members agreed that this study will be very helpful to other educators who work with at-risk students. We planned to share our study with the rest of the staff next fall (1998) and to help them to determine ways to develop resiliency in at-risk students (see Appendix D).

Using current literature and realizing success of

trial-and-error methods have been sources of personal satisfaction for the team members. They also found that the extra attention did not require extra time from the regular curricula as it could be integrated in the programs and that all children benefited from their efforts. They concluded that each student, whether at-risk or not, could benefit from exposure to good literature, conflict management strategies, and socialization skills. There is always the possibility that each student some day may need to call upon "protective buffers" in time of need. Our study group hopes to be able to provide the mechanisms for all students to cope and be resilient in such situations.

Measuring Success

- (5) *How did the teachers measure the success of their efforts in promoting resiliency in at-risk children?*

For the purposes of this study, the members of the study group used Joseph's (1994) The Resilient Child: Preparing Today's Youth for Tomorrow's World as a guide. Each teacher maintained a journal that had the following divisions: (1) Personal Journal;

(2) Problem Solving; (3) Leadership Opportunities; (4) Building Responsibility; (5) Literature on Resiliency; (6) Hobbies/Interests; (7) Role Playing; (8) Conflict Resolution; (9) Parent Involvement; and (10) Words of Encouragement. After identifying students to be studied, each teacher made entries in her journal according to the category featured. The response sheets included the date, lesson, activities, and the child/teacher response(s). These forms helped the teacher to evaluate the success of the lessons and to plan for future ones.

On the first Friday of each month (October-April), the group met formally to discuss the book as well as to share the progress of the study. We also planned parent-involvement activities and made suggestions to each other on solving problems.

Teachers shared successful lessons, as well as how they were growing professionally and becoming better team players. At the end of each study group session, each teacher completed the "Resiliency Scale for At-Risk Children" (see Figure 2). This practice provided a means of noting responses to the modified curricula. The information from these scales was

compiled into a single table for each identified child for the months from November through April (Tables 16-20).

In order to compare the data from the scales, I had the cooperating teacher complete a "Resiliency Scale" in November and again in April on Child #1. This information is recorded in Table 21. In addition, the guidance counselor completed the same task on Children #2-5. These data are reported in Tables 22-25. Because she was not the children's regular classroom teacher, the guidance counselor did not rate them in the areas of "Reads at grade level" or "Has a hobby or special interest."

After completing the tables, an analysis was done that charted positive, negative, or no changes in the child from November to April. Table 26, a summary of the data in Tables 16-20, revealed that there were more positives than negatives in those behaviors that promote resiliency for Child #1. While Child #2 did not show any significant change according to the guidance counselor, she did so according to the teacher, Child #3 exhibited positive changes for both. Child #4 exhibited a contradiction as he displayed

Table 16

Behavior of Targeted Child by Month--Child #1 (as rated by the teacher)

Behaviors	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Sociable with others	2	3	3	3	4	4
Curious about environment	3	2	3	3	3	4
Responsible	2	3	4	4	3	3
Reads at grade level	3	3	4	4	4	4
Healthy	4	4	4	4	4	4
Internal locus of control	3	3	4	4	3	3
Has a hobby or special interest	3	2	2	2	3	3
Has a significant other	3	3	2	3	3	4
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	2	3	3	3	3	3
Attitude of excellence	2	2	3	4	3	3
Sets and meets goals	2	3	4	4	3	3

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

Table 17
Behavior of Targeted Child by Month--Child #2 (as rated by the teacher)

Behaviors	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Sociable with others	2	3	3	4	4	3
Curious about environment	3	4	4	4	4	3
Responsible	4	3	4	3	4	3
Reads at grade level	1	3	2	4	4	5
Healthy	5	5	5	5	5	5
Internal locus of control	2	2	3	3	3	3
Has a hobby or special interest	2	3	3	3	4	4
Has a significant other	2	5	4	3	4	4
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	2	3	3	3	3	4
Attitude of excellence	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sets and meets goals	3	3	3	3	3	3

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

Table 18
Behavior of Targeted Child by Month--Child #3 (as rated by the teacher)

Behaviors	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Sociable with others	5	3	3	3	4	4
Curious about environment	4	5	5	5	5	5
Responsible	4	4	4	3	3	5
Reads at grade level	5	5	5	4	5	5
Healthy	4	4	4	3	3	4
Internal locus of control	2	4	3	3	4	4
Has a hobby or special interest	3	3	2	2	4	4
Has a significant other		3	2	1	1	3
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	3	5	4	4	3	4
Attitude of excellence	4	4	3	2	2	5
Sets and meets goals	2	4	3	2	3	4

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

Table 19
Behavior of Targeted Child by Month--Child #4 (as rated by the teacher)

Behaviors	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Sociable with others	5	4	4	4	4	4
Curious about environment	4	5	4	4	4	5
Responsible	4	4	4	3	3	3
Reads at grade level	4	4	4	4	5	5
Healthy	5	3	4	3	4	4
Internal locus of control	4	4	4	4	3	3
Has a hobby or special interest	5	5	5	4	4	4
Has a significant other	5	4	4	4	4	5
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	4	4	4	3	3	3
Attitude of excellence	4	4	4	3	4	4
Sets and meets goals	4	4	4	4	3	3

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

Table 20
Behavior of Targeted Child by Month--Child #5 (as rated by the teacher)

Behaviors	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Sociable with others	5	5	5	5	4	5
Curious about environment	5	5	5	5	5	5
Responsible	3	2	3	3	4	5
Reads at grade level	3	3	5	4	3	4
Healthy	5	5	5	3	4	5
Internal locus of control	3	2	3	3	3	5
Has a hobby or special interest	4	5	5	4	4	5
Has a significant other	3	3	4	4	4	5
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	3	3	3	4	3	5
Attitude of excellence	2	3	3	3	3	5
Sets and meets goals	3	3	3	3	3	5

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

Table 21
Change in Behaviors in Targeted Child Between November and April (cooperating teacher)

Child #1

Behaviors	Nov	April	Change
Sociable with others	2	3	+
Curious about environment	3	3	0
Responsible	3	4	+
Reads at grade level	4	5	+
Healthy	5	5	0
Internal locus of control	3	4	+
Has a hobby or special interest	1	1	0
Has a significant other	5	5	0
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	2	3	+
Attitude of excellence	4	5	+
Sets and meets goals	3	5	+

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

- (+) positive change
- (-) negative change
- (0) neutral or no change

Table 22
Change in Behaviors in Targeted Child Between November and April (guidance counselor)

Child #2

Behaviors	Nov	April	Change
Sociable with others	3	4	+
Curious about environment	2	3	+
Responsible	2	3	+
Reads at grade level			
Healthy	4	4	0
Internal locus of control	3	3	0
Has a hobby or special interest			
Has a significant other	4	4	0
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	3	3	0
Attitude of excellence	3	3	0
Sets and meets goals	2	3	+

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

(+) positive change

(-) negative change

(0) neutral or no change

Table 23
Change in Behaviors in Targeted Child Between November and April (guidance counselor)

Child #3

Behaviors	Nov	April	Change
Sociable with others	3	4	+
Curious about environment	3	4	+
Responsible	2	4	+
Reads at grade level			
Healthy	4	5	+
Internal locus of control	1	4	+
Has a hobby or special interest			
Has a significant other	2	4	+
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	2	4	+
Attitude of excellence	2	5	+
Sets and meets goals	2	5	+

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

- (+) positive change
- (-) negative change
- (0) neutral or no change

Table 24
Change in Behaviors in Targeted Child Between November and April (guidance counselor)

Child #4

Behaviors	Nov	April	Change
Sociable with others	4	5	+
Curious about environment	4	5	+
Responsible	3	4	+
Reads at grade level			
Healthy	4	5	+
Internal locus of control	2	3	+
Has a hobby or special interest			
Has a significant other	4	4	0
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	2	4	+
Attitude of excellence	3	5	+
Sets and meets goals	3	4	+

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

- (+) positive change
- (-) negative change
- (0) neutral or no change

Table 25
Change in Behaviors in Targeted Child Between November and April (guidance counselor)

Child #5

Behaviors	Nov	April	Change
Sociable with others	3	5	+
Curious about environment	3	4	+
Responsible	3	4	+
Reads at grade level			
Healthy	4	5	+
Internal locus of control	3	4	+
Has a hobby or special interest			
Has a significant other	3	4	+
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	3	4	+
Attitude of excellence	4	5	+
Sets and meets goals	4	5	+

Behavior Rating Scale:

1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=often 5=consistently

- (+) positive change
- (-) negative change
- (0) neutral or no change

Table 26 Change in Behaviors of Targeted Children Between November and April (as rated by the teachers)

Behaviors	Child #1	Child #2	Child #3	Child #4	Child #5
Sociable with others	+	+	-	-	o
Curious about environment	+	o	+	+	o
Responsible	+	-	+	-	+
Reads at grade level	+	+	o	+	+
Healthy	o	o	o	-	o
Internal locus of control	o	+	+	-	+
Has a hobby or special interest	o	+	+	-	+
Has a significant other	+	+	+	o	+
Change-skilled (good coping skills)	+	+	+	-	+
Attitude of excellence	+	o	+	o	+
Sets and meets goals	+	o	+	-	+

- (+) positive change
- (-) negative change
- (0) neutral or no change

many negatives for the classroom teacher, but many positives for the guidance counselor. This may indicate that he prospered under the individual attention in counseling sessions that the counselor provided. Finally, Child #5 demonstrated positive changes for both the teacher and counselor. Each member of the study group realized that strategies that worked for one child may not prove successful for another.

Beneficial Outcomes of the Study

(6) What were the outcomes from this study which were beneficial to teachers and students?

In answering the final question, I considered the remarks that the members of the study group offered in their pre- and post-interviews (Tables 27-30) and in their journals and journals. Combining those with my own personal observations and personal journal, I noted that the following strands ran through the comments and gave coherence to the study:

- Curricular modifications that promote resiliency benefit all children, not just the ones "at-risk."

Table 27

Raw Data Matrix of Outcomes Helpful to Teachers

Teacher	Helpful outcomes (post-interview)
#1	"Journaling. I love to put my thoughts on paper. Also the observations of the others on the team. I got ideas from them to use with my identified child."
#2	"The Talk-It-Out corner was helpful (Dinosovle). The Self-Talk Control sheet from a team member was helpful because it places the responsibility on the child for his own actions. The problem-solving book was too simplified for my students."
#3	"The literature was great. I liked the problem-solving book. Conflict resolution strategies (Dinosolve) was good. My child is not involved with any conflicts because he gets along with everyone. They all like him."
#4	"I worked hard in building responsibility. I tried to hold him accountable for his actions. I wanted him to learn that he was in charge of himself."
#5	"I enjoyed the lessons on problem solving. I also like the role playing activities and the new literature that the school purchased. My child loved to listen to the stories and group discussions. He would re-read the books we talked about."

Table 28
Raw Data Matrix of Modifications Used for At-risk Children Pre/post Resiliency Study

Teacher	Instructional strategies used (pre-interview)	Curricular modifications (post-interview)
#1	"more quality time, individual help, warm fuzzies [pause] help child to stay focused rather than to concentrate on outside situations [pause] I feel good about our school and staff expectations for meeting students' needs."	"presenting lessons on conflict resolutions [pause] I used books with resilient themes in guided sessions."
#2	"I have not identified at-risk children as of yet. In previous years, they receive remediation, more one-on-one attention, pull-out services, and EIP (extended instructional program)."	"I feel the training we had was similar to TESA. The lessons I taught had to be amplified even more. I like the immediate feedback from the children. I also used proximity to children as a strategy to keep their attention."
#3	"Small groupings, communications with parents, using outside resources, and modifying lessons by differentiating the instruction."	"Planning in problem solving. We held class meetings if a problem occurred. We brainstormed ideas to find solutions if the problem involved more than one or two children. If it involved only one or two, they went to the 'talk-it-out' corner."
#4	"Showing a genuine caring and interest individually and getting to know families is crucial."	"I had to split children to make smaller groups and had to modify lessons for different ability groups. I had a conflict committee in the room. I also used books with resiliency themes, and we talked about the ideas in the stories."
#5	"Teach lessons on feelings and proper management of feelings. For individual help, I have used small groupings, peer tutoring, referral to student support teams, or give them extra help in reading and/or math."	"I used the 'I Can Problem Solve' book for lessons. I also used puppets for role playing. The books with resilient themes are great to teach specific lessons. I like the way we labeled each book according to the theme."

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Table 29 Raw Data Matrix of What Teachers Wanted to Gain from this Study from Beginning to Ending

Pre/post interview question 1 -- What do you hope to gain from this study?

Teacher	Desire to gain (pre-interview)	Actual gain (post-interview)
#1	To gain insight into various strategies to use with students who are at-risk."	". . . the collaboration among team members; . . . the sharing of ideas and brainstorming ways to help children."
#2	"To be able to look at individual children. To help find strengths and weaknesses as a whole child."	"Being able to put our ideas in order. Learning that a resilient child is not a slow learner [pause] being able to focus on one child for several months."
#3	"To gain knowledge of what resiliency is and what you can do to motivate [pause] so we can help children make greater strides."	"Learning about what resiliency is [pause] learning that a child can go through a traumatic situation and still succeed and that there are certain things a teacher can do to help."
#4	"To gain knowledge about our children and their needs."	"Focused on at-kids who were at-risk [pause] Interventions to get them on task and stay focused. A self-control sheet for students and parents helped them to internalize these ideas."
#5	"To find out more about the resilient child, to be able to identify them, and to find ways to help them."	"Got me to focus on life skills kids need. Educators often don't take time to look at other problems. Kids learned that it is important how we treat others. Practicing new words helped them to verbalize feelings and get them out in the open."

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Table 30
Raw Data Matrix on Help Gained from Colleagues and Principal during Study

Teacher	Help from colleagues (post-interview)	Help from principal (post-interview)
# 1	"Meeting together was very good. Sharing ideas with each other proved very helpful to me. Since I am not connected with any grade level, I felt more connected to a team this year."	"She provided the opportunity for us to study together. She was our cheerleader. She gave us her perspective from the whole school."
# 2	"Sharing of ideas was great. Monthly meetings helped me to stay focused on the task. I used ideas from my colleagues, and they worked for me, too. Talking it out makes it more natural for children to grow."	"She made us more aware of the qualities and characteristics of resilient children. She can help us keep the home involved."
# 3	"Being able to talk with them was good. We learned to look for similarities. Sharing of ideas was good. I liked the handouts we gave to each other."	"She provided time for our monthly meetings. She prompted questions that made us think. Purchasing new materials for us to use was helpful for our children."
# 4	"I enjoyed the parent workshops. Everyone's handouts were helpful to me. I enjoyed the monthly study groups. We never have time to talk with our colleagues at school."	"Kept us focused on the study. She can help us financially by purchasing more classroom materials to be used with the children."
# 5	"I enjoyed the group discussion. The handouts were excellent. The nurse did a great job on the nutrition unit. The relaxation demonstrations were good to use with children also. I also liked the chart, ABCs of Citizenship."	"She can help by having more opportunities for parent involvement. She can also purchase additional materials for teachers to use. More resilient literature would be helpful as well."

- The personalizing of instruction so that a closer bond develops between the teacher and child is an important factor in promoting resiliency.
- The importance of parent involvement in the child's education can never be underestimated.
- The provision of time for teachers to share ideas is quite valuable in a school setting.
- The activities involving problem solving, showing leadership, building responsibility, developing hobbies and interests, role playing, and resolving conflicts that were taught to promote resiliency can help any child succeed.

While these themes unified the study, specific benefits resulted in a number of ways. The promotion of resiliency through the use of literature with resilient themes was the most frequently used modification and a powerful way to provide safeguards for children at-risk. Teacher #5 used the books because they were "great to teach specific lessons" and she liked "the way we labeled each book according to the theme." She also noted that her identified child "loved to listen to the stories and group discussions" and "would re-read the books we talked

about." Other students enjoyed hearing the stories read to them and checked out the books in the special section of the library. After attending workshops, parents asked for certain literature from the list prepared from Joseph's (1994) book. At the February parent workshop, one parent commented that she had read some of the books when she was a child, and now she is reading the same to her own children.

The teachers concluded that the extra time they spent to make a difference in a child's life really did help. They learned that those "protective buffers" identified in Werner's (1992) study were extremely important in considering the total child and providing the consistent support and care to make lifelong learners. Teacher #3 learned that "a child can go through a traumatic situation and still succeed and that there are certain things a teacher can do to help."

Teacher collaboration was another beneficial outcome of the study. Frequent comments included the "collaboration of team members," "the sharing of ideas and brainstorming ways to help children," "enjoyed the group discussions," and Teacher #4 specifically noted,

that, until the monthly study groups, "we never have time to talk with our colleagues at school." The teachers took the time to read current literature and use that as a basis of discussion for what is best for children. They often shared ideas about how to stress building responsibility. For example, one of the teachers designed a "Self-Talk Control" form (Figure 4) that disruptive students had to complete and have their parents sign and return to the teacher. Teacher #2 liked it because it "place[d] the responsibility on the child for his own actions." Soon the other teachers adopted the form as well. The use of statements on the form beginning with "I" made it more personal than the school's Code of Conduct that is posted in each classroom.

Parental involvement also provided benefits in that the children felt good to see their parents at school and the parents became more comfortable within the school setting. Parents learned how to help their children at home and became more positive allies with the teachers in dealing with difficult situations. Those teachers that visited homes and attended sports activities of their students noted a marked difference

"Self-talk Control"

Write the following sentences in your best *cursive handwriting*. Have your parents sign and return this sheet tomorrow.

1. I will take charge of my behavior.
2. It's my responsibility to _____.
3. It's up to me to try my best.
4. I can control my behavior.
5. I'm responsible for how I act and behave in a situation.
6. I may not be able to control someone or something else, but I can always control my own reaction to whatever happens.
7. I accept responsibility for my experiences.
8. I want to cooperate with my teacher and my classmates.
9. I know what I can do.
10. Failure is successful if we can learn from it.

adapted from The Resilient Child by Joanne M. Joseph

Student signature _____

Parent signature _____

Date _____

Figure 4

in the attitude of those children and sent a strong message for interest in the total child.

The personalizing of instruction or the interaction between teacher and child was very successful. One teacher noted that her whole class seemed so close to each other. When two students moved, they actually cried and have kept in touch with each other. Teacher #3 used class meetings to "brainstorm ideas to find solutions if the problems involved more than one or two children." They realized that caring makes a difference in their own lives.

The curriculum that included Dinosolve proved to be successful school-wide. The students were trained to use non-violent methods to solve conflicts. Teacher #3 reported that her identified student "is not involved with any conflicts because he gets along with everyone" since he became familiar with the conflict resolution strategies in the book.

Another beneficial outgrowth was the use of conflict management techniques that were adopted school-wide. Students learned to talk out disagreements and to say, "I don't like what you did

[or said] to me: it hurt my feelings." The ability to verbalize feelings of anger was very important in training children to behave in a non-violent manner. Because of the success we are having, our guidance counselor has been asked to speak on the topic at other schools in the district as well as at civic organizations and churches.

The teachers also expressed satisfaction for being able to present to various groups, allowing them the opportunity to speak to adults. They were able to grow professionally and personally given these chances.

Even though the study focused on five identified students, all of the participants commented in the study group that the whole class benefited--not just at-risk children. Since the majority of the planned activities promoting resiliency involved all children, these types of curriculum modifications were worthwhile.

Summary

This study group found ways to modify a school's curricula in order to promote resiliency in its at-

risk children. The study group team consisted of the investigator (the principal) and five other team members (four classroom teachers and one guidance counselor). After reviewing Werner's (1992) longitudinal study of at-risk children in Hawaii, each team member targeted one child for an in-depth study.

Monthly meetings were conducted during which the study group members discussed Joseph's (1994) book, The Resilient Child. Ten categories of activities designed to promote resiliency were identified, and each team member kept a journal in which she recorded information concerning the use of these activities.

Using the various sources of information, I examined the data by considering six questions. The results of my findings were reported in these six areas of interest: (1) Teacher Knowledge of Resiliency, (2) Teacher Knowledge Concerning the Roles of the School and Parents in Developing the Resiliency of At-Risk Children, (3) School Practices to Promote Resiliency, (4) Modifications of Curriculum, (5) Measuring Success, and (6) Beneficial Outcomes of the Study.

The study group members and I concluded that (1)

curricular modifications that promote resiliency benefit all children, not just the ones "at-risk;" (2) the personalizing of instruction so that a closer bond develops between the teacher and child is an important factor in promoting resiliency; (3) the importance of parent involvement in the child's education can never be underestimated; (4) the provision of time for teachers to share ideas is quite valuable in a school setting; and (5) the activities involving problem solving, showing leadership, building responsibility, developing hobbies/interests, role playing, and resolving conflicts that were taught to promote resiliency can help any child succeed.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purposes of this study were to describe a program developed to create an environment that fostered the success of at-risk children and to observe this process of change. I introduced modifications to the current curricula in order to ascertain if the needs of the these children, as described in the research, were being met. The study was a qualitative one in which the activities were presented as a case study.

Fostering resiliency in the at-risk children at my primary school was an interest of mine because I had seen many children face adversities during my years as an educator. Some seemed to survive and perform well in school in spite of many adversities while others did not. I wanted to learn how to help those who could be helped. After sharing this interest with my faculty, I invited them to join me in a more thorough examination of this phenomenon.

Four regular classroom teachers (all from the same grade level) and the guidance counselor agreed to

participate in the study. Our goal was to modify the current curricula in order to promote resiliency in at-risk children. Prior to the beginning of the study, I interviewed each study group member to determine her knowledge of the term "resiliency." We decided to meet the first Friday of each month as a group from September through April. During the first group meeting in September, I explained in detail Werner's (1992) longitudinal study in Hawaii on resilient children. She described the risk factors of these children as well as the "protective buffers" that helped them overcome the adversities they faced.

I also introduced the study group members to the book The Resilient Child by Joseph (1994) that would serve as the focus for our study group meetings each month. The plan was to discuss different chapters from the book at each meeting and to develop strategies to promote resiliency that could be used with our own children. Each teacher was asked to select a student for close attention from the "Identification of At-Risk Children" list (Figure 1) to observe throughout the year. Each child's progress was measured by a feature list of behaviors

characteristic of resilient children and recorded on the "Resiliency Scale" (Figure 2). We also planned to hold two parent workshops (one in November and one in February) to be outgrowths of our group discussions.

Using Werner's (1992) "protective buffers" as a guide, we determined the following modifications that the teachers would introduce throughout the year: (1) Problem Solving, (2) Leadership Opportunities, (3) Building Responsibility, (4) Literature with Resilient Themes, (5) Hobbies/ Interests, (6) Role Playing, (7) Conflict Resolution, (8) Parent Involvement, and (9) Words of Encouragement.

I received a \$1200 Title I grant that we used to purchase materials to support the study. These included fifty books with resiliency as the theme, books for teachers featuring problem-solving lessons, and books and posters that addressed the skill of conflict resolution.

In order for the study group members to keep their data in an orderly fashion, I designed a journal for each person that was divided into sections for each of the areas as well as one for journal writing. Each section had inserts where the teacher listed the

lesson for the topic, the activities used, the date, and the identified child's response to the lesson. They wrote personal comments about the study in the journal. I also kept a journal where I recorded my observations of the identified children and their teachers' interactions with them.

In September, I conducted a pre-interview and followed that with a post-interview in April to determine growth of each member's knowledge of resiliency and the progress of promoting it at our school. Additionally, I used the "Assessing School Resiliency Building" scale by Henderson and Milstein (1996) with them as another source of data. The members completed the scale in October and again in April, and the values on the survey resulted from a consensus vote of the six members of the study group.

At the end of each study group session, each teacher completed a "Resiliency Scale" for her identified child. The guidance counselor also completed a scale on Children #2-5 in November and April. A cooperating teacher completed scales on Child #1, the identified child of the guidance counselor. Having two scales for each identified

child increased the accuracy of the data. In April I examined the differences in behaviors from the November to the April scales to determine if there had been a positive change, a negative change, or no change in the behaviors promoting resiliency.

In order to provide data for the study, I also audiotaped and transcribed the interviews and the study groups. The comments and thoughts from the teachers' journals as well as those from my own journal provided further insight and facilitated my search for themes or patterns in our attempts to foster resiliency.

Conclusions

The conclusions that I reached as a result of this study are reflected in the following answers I derived for the six questions representing my areas of interest:

- Teacher Knowledge of Resiliency

Evidence about teacher knowledge of resiliency clearly indicates an increase in the level of awareness of the members of the study group so that the term became one of practicality and application of

skills in April rather than a conceptual idea as it was in September. The members of the study group learned the characteristics of resiliency and were able to apply that knowledge to the modifications of curricula in order to make differences in the lives of children.

- Teacher Knowledge about the Roles of the School and Parents in Developing Resiliency in At-Risk Children

The shift in insight of the study group members regarding the school's role changed dramatically from the beginning of the study to its end. In September they were mainly concerned with the ways to provide remediation; in April they focused on the whole child and particularly on his academic achievement. Student support meetings, programs that meet the needs of children, after-school programs, student recognitions, and parent involvement in school activities became even more important for them in ensuring the success of their children.

By the end of the year, the study group members had become more acutely aware of the role of the parent in the success of the child. They cited interventions such as parent workshops, monthly

conferences, student support meetings, and daily notices as essential measures to ensure success. Using all of the sources of data, I noted that parent involvement with the child and the school was a dominant strand throughout the study.

- School Practices that Promote Resiliency

Using Henderson and Milstein's (1996) survey, "Assessing School Resiliency Building," the study group members determined the practices already in place in October by looking at the following categories: (1) Prosocial Bonding; (2) Clear, Consistent Boundaries; (3) Teaching Life Skills; (4) Caring and Support; (5) High Expectations; and (6) Opportunities for Meaningful Participation. These were divided into sub-categories for rating by the students, staff, and school as a whole.

The October survey indicated that the school was doing a number of things to build positive resiliency. For example, we rated high in "Caring and Support" and "High Expectations." This survey helped to determine the direction we took in order to make the greatest impact on the lives of our students.

The results of the survey completed in April

affirmed that our school had improved in the promotion of resiliency. Furthermore, from the data we were able to develop a specific plan of action to continue our progress by focusing on those areas that showed the greatest need for improvement: training of the school community and using the school community as a total resource.

- Modifications of Curriculum to Promote Resiliency

Because the teachers were not clear about the meaning of resiliency at the beginning of the study, I introduced them to Werner's (1992) study that presented specific strategies for promoting resiliency. We decided to focus on (1) Problem Solving, (2) Leadership Opportunities, (3) Building Responsibility, (4) Literature with Resilient Themes, (5) Hobbies/ Interests, (6) Role Playing, (7) Conflict Resolution, (8) Parent Involvement, and (9) Words of Encouragement because of their value to at-risk children and the relative ease of incorporating them into the regular curricula.

After clearly defining each of the topics, the members of the study group attempted similar activities or lessons. They described each of these

in their journals, denoting the particular activity, the date, and the response(s) of the identified children as well as their personal reactions.

Using current literature and realizing success of trial-and-error methods were sources of personal satisfaction for our study group members. They determined that the extra attention to the identified topics did not require extra time from the regular curricula. Consequently, all children benefited from the integration of these strategies into the regular programs.

The conclusion of the group was that each student, whether at-risk or not, profited from exposure to good literature, conflict management strategies, and socialization skills. Any child may some day need to call upon a "protective buffer." Our study group hoped to be able to provide the mechanism for all students to cope and be resilient in adverse situations. We deduced that not all at-risk children are resilient, but all resilient children are at-risk.

- Measuring Success of Efforts to Promote Resiliency

By utilizing the "Identification Chart for At-Risk Children," each member of the study group

identified a single child who demonstrated multiple at-risk factors for individual study. By completing a "Resiliency Scale" on that child at the end of each study group session, the members were able to correlate a resilient behavior with a specific modification to the curriculum. The information from these scales was then compiled into a single table for each identified child from November through April.

In order to triangulate the data from the scales, I had the cooperating teacher complete a scale in November and again in April on Child #1. This was then compared to the data from the guidance counselor who had identified that particular child for study. In addition, the counselor completed the same task on Children #2-5.

After completion of the tables, I analyzed the data to chart positive, negative, or no changes in the children from the first scales in November to the last ones in April. This comparison revealed that there were more positives than negatives in those behaviors that promote resiliency in Child #1. While Child #2 did not show any significant change for the guidance counselor but did for the teacher, Child #3 revealed a

positive change for both the counselor and teacher. Child #4 proved to be a contradiction as he showed many negatives for the classroom teacher but many positives for the guidance counselor, an indication that he may have prospered from the individual attention that the counselor provided in her sessions. Finally, Child #5 demonstrated positive changes for both the teacher and counselor.

While each member of the study group realized that strategies that worked for one child may not prove successful for another, they concluded that they made a positive difference in the resilient behaviors of four of the five identified children.

- Beneficial Outcomes of the Study

The data reveal five significant themes or strands lending coherence to the findings.

The first of these strands was that changes in the curriculum to promote resiliency benefit all children, not just the ones "at-risk." The importance of personalizing instruction to develop a closer relationship between teacher and child and the value of parent involvement in all aspects of a child's education are two other important strands. The fourth

strand is the growth of teacher professionalism enhanced by the opportunities for the teachers themselves to have a specific focus, to share ideas, and strive for a common goal. Lastly, the value of teaching all children strategies in problem solving, showing leadership, building responsibility, developing hobbies/interests, role playing, and resolving conflicts provide life-long learning tools for achieving success was demonstrated.

While these strands emerged as the binding agent for the study, there were other specific outcomes that proved beneficial for the children and teachers. The more frequent use of literature with a resiliency theme provided relevance to the lives of the children. They read or heard the stories and could make the connection with something that may be happening in their own lives. Closer relationships developed between the teacher and the child, thus causing a more positive change in the child's attitude toward school.

Teacher collegiality grew as the members of the study group searched for answers to how they could promote resiliency in their children. Little, as cited in Barth (1990), stated that collegiality is

present when the adults in schools "talk about practice. . . observe each other engaged in the practice of teaching and administration. . . engage together in work on curriculum by planning, designing, researching, and evaluating curriculum. . . [and] teach other what they know about teaching, learning, and leading" (p. 31). This quote perfectly describes what happened in my school with the members of the study group.

Other benefits included the examination of the whole child by the teachers in an attempt to get to know him as a person and not as a test score or grade and the increased awareness of the benefits of parent involvement. The members of the study group learned that the more the parent is involved the better chance the child has for growth.

Discussion and Recommendations

Developing the skills that enable at-risk children to overcome adversity and thus succeed is not a mission that can be completed and evaluated in a few months. Werner's (1992) study lasted forty years, and even though we saw positive changes in the behaviors

of our identified children, we know that we need to follow their progress over the next several years to determine if we made a lasting difference. Even though the study-group members can now identify the characteristics of at-risk children and do know strategies that provide "protective buffers" and promote resiliency, I recommend that the entire staff receive training in promoting resiliency. The activities that the study-group members used would help all of our students to face adversity and succeed.

Using a group of teachers from the same grade level (and using the same curricula) for the study was a powerful tool for team building. They kept each other in mind when they tried new lessons, they brainstormed for new ideas, and they shared in the successes and failures. For me as the leader of this study group, the community of learners that bonded together to complete this project provided a source of pride, a sense of accomplishment, and an inspiration that we can and do make a difference in the lives of the children we teach.

In retrospect, there may have been a potential

bias in the ratings because of the involvement of the teachers in the project. However, the teachers attempted to provide sound judgments from a "teacher" perspective.

While Werner (1992) concluded that there were "protective buffers" that enabled at-risk children to overcome adversity and Joseph (1994) suggested activities to promote resiliency, my research took their ideas and tested them in a classroom environment. In conjunction with Werner's and Joseph's findings, my study provides a base for other school leaders interested in this type of change for at-risk students.

As a result of my analysis of the data, I have concluded that this study raises additional questions in need of research. Recommendations include that future researchers explore the practice of implementing only two or three curricular modifications to promote resiliency. While the data support the positive changes that were evident in the targeted children during the period of study, I believe that a greater impact on their lives would result if the modifications were implemented over a

period of several years. Following targeted children through several years of elementary school would provide more precise data on the differences made.

I would like to acknowledge that this study was really about the process of change which was brought about through the teachers' intellectual engagement in the project while they were becoming a community of learners. The interaction, sharing, and thinking together are necessary to foster change and implement a program such as this one, which is a social-cognitive process.

Future researchers should explore the impact of modifications to the curricula made by the whole school staff rather than by a group similar to the five teachers from the same grade level who participated in this study. I would propose a setting where the children had the same teacher for more than one year to determine their growth in using the skills to promote resiliency that they had learned the previous year. Perhaps another study would include the involvement of a school and social agencies in setting up the "protective buffers" for pre-schoolers. The fact that these youngsters are so impressionable

might lead to greater success in promoting resiliency. A comparative study on the basis of gender and ethnicity might provide some interesting outcomes for educators.

Another related area for more serious exploration is that of teaching conflict resolution skills to small children. It might prove interesting to see if the knowledge of this kind of strategy at the primary age makes a difference in avoiding the presence of violent behavior later in life. Finally, a study on the academic success of children who model their teachers is an interesting concept to be considered.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH DESIGN

STEP 1

Identify teachers interested in studying how to develop resiliency in at-risk students.

STEP 2

Identify at-risk children in participating teachers' classrooms.

STEP 3

Meet monthly in study groups.

STEP 4

Try modified instructional strategies.

STEP 5

Evaluate results of trials and repeat steps 3, 4, and 5 as often as needed.

STEP 6

Report to entire faculty.

APPENDIX B

STORIES WITH RESILIENT THEMES

Accepting Oneself

Preschool

- Frandsen, Karen. *Michael's New Haircut.*
Ginsburg, Mirra. *The Chick and the Duckling.*
Kasza, Keiko. *Pig's Picnic.*
Leaf, Munro. *The Story of Ferdinand.*
Lionni, Leo. *The Biggest House in the World.*
Peet, Bill. *The Spooky Tail of Prewitt Peacock.*

Grades K-

- Brown, Marc. *Arthur's Nose.*
Brown, Marc. *Arthur's Eyes.*
Freeman, Don. *Dandelion.*
Koda-Callan, Elizabeth. *The Magic Locket.*
Sharmat, Marjorie. *What Are We Going to Do About Andrew?*
Sheehan, Patty. *Kylie's Song.*

Challenge/Survival

Preschool

- Graham, Margaret. *Benji's Boat Trip.*
Martin, Charles. *Island Rescue.*
Parnall, Peter. *Stuffer.*
Purdy, Carol. *Iva Dunnit and the Big Wind.*
Scheller, Melanie. *My Grandfather's Hat.*

Grades K-2

- Aliki, *We Are Best Friends.*
Aliki, *The Two of Them.*
Birmingham, John. *Grandpa.*
Christiansen, Candace. *Calico and Tin Horns.*
Sharmat, Marjorie. *Big, Fat, Enormous Lie.*
Tejima. *Fox's Dream.*

Commitment

Preschool

Campbell, Alison, and Julia Barton. *Are You Asleep, Rabbit?*

Carle, Eric. *The Very Busy Spider.*

Freeman, Don. *Corduroy.*

Kraus, Ruth. *The Carrot Seed.*

Piper, Walter. *The Little Engine That Could.*

Williams, Vera. *A Chair for My Mother.*

Grades K-2

Coville, Bruce and Katherine Coville. *The Foolish Giant.*

dePaola, Tomie. *The Art Lesson.*

Isadora, Rachael. *Ben's Trumpet.*

Lionni, Leo. *Matthew's Dream.*

Palocco, Patricia. *Chicken Sunday.*

Steig, William. *Brave Irene.*

Conflict Management

Preschool

Carle, Eric. *The Grouchy Ladybug.*

Hazen, Barbara. *Gorilla Did It.*

Lakin, Patricia. *Don't Touch My Room.*

Rey, H.A. *Curious George.*

Robertus, Polly M. *The Dog Who Had Kittens.*

Seuss, Dr. *The Cat in the Hat.*

Grades K-2

Blaine, Marge. *The Terrible Thing That Happened at Our House.*

Cherry, Lynne. *Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest.*

Jones, Rebecca. *Matthew and Tilly.*

Sharmat, Marjorie. *Sometimes Mama and Papa Fight.*

Stinson, Kathy. *Mom and Dad Don't Live Together Anymore.*

Viorst, Judith. *I'll Fix Anthony.*

Control

Preschool

Bingham, Mindy. *My Way Sally.*

Cole, Joanna. *Bully Trouble*

Peet, Bill. *Pamela Camel.*

Polette, Keith. *The Winter Duckling.*

Sendak, Maurice. *Where the Wild Things Are.*

Stoltz, Mary. *Storm in the Night.*

Grades K-2

dePaola, Tomie. *Michael Bird Boy.*

Hoffman, Mary. *Amazing Grace.*

Simon, Norma. *I Was So Mad!*

Sondheim, I. *The Boy Who Could Make His Mother Stop Yelling.*

Udry, Janice. *Let's Be Enemies.*

Wilhelm, Hans. *Tyrone the Horrible.*

Decision Making

Preschool

Brenner, Barbara. *Rosa and Marco and the Three Wishes.*

Cole, Joanna. *Bony-Legs.*

Keats, Ezra. *A Letter to Amy.*

Lionni, Leo. *Fish is Fish.*

Lord, John, and Janet Burroway. *The Giant Jam Sandwich.*

Slobodkina, Esphyr. *Caps for Sale.*

Zolotow, Charlotte. *Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present.*

Fostering resiliency 164

Grades K-2

- Burton, Virginia. *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel.*
Carrick, Donald. *Harald and the Giant Knight.*
Steig, William. *Dr. DeSoto.*
Viorst, Judith. *Alexander Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday.*
Ward, Lynne. *The Biggest Bear.*
Wood, Audrey. *Heckedy Peg.*

Exercise/Nutrition

Preschool

- Berenstain, Stan, and Janice Berenstain. *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food.*
Carle, Eric. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar.*
Ehlert, Lois. *Growing Vegetable Soup.*
Schade, Charlene. *Move with Me One, Two, Three.*
Suess, Dr. *Green Eggs and Ham.*
Sharmat, Mitchell. *Gregory the Terrible Eater.*

Grades K-2

- Aliki. *Keep Your Mouth Closed, Dear.*
Ehlert, Lois. *Eating the Alphabet.*
Hoban, Lillian. *Bread and Jam for Frances.*
Moncure, Jane. *The Healthkin Food Train.*
Munsch, Robert. *Something Good.*
Rhodes, Janis. *Nutrition Mission.*

Getting Along

Preschool

- Cohen, Miriam. *Best Friends.*
Cosgrove, Stephen. *Fanny.*
Gertz, Susanna. *Frog, Duck and Rabbit.*
Marshall, James. *George and Martha.*
Sharmat, Marjorie. *The 329th Friend.*
Viorst, Judith. *Rosie and Michael.*

Grades K-2

Aardema, Verna. *Why Mosquitos Buzz in People's Ears.*

Cohen, Miriam. *See You Tomorrow, Charles.*

Lionni, Leo. *Frederick.*

Lionni, Leo. *Swimmy.*

Lobel, Arnold. *Frog and Toad Are Friends.*

Steig, William. *Amos and Boris.*

Adapted from Joseph, J. (1994). The resilient child: Preparing today's youth for tomorrow's world. New York: Insight Books, Plenum Press.

APPENDIX C

Assessing School Resiliency Building

Evaluate the following elements of school resiliency building using a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 indicating "we have this together," 2 indicating "we've done a lot in this area, but could do more," 3 indicating "we are getting started," and 4 indicating "nothing has been done."

Prosocial Bonding

- Students have a positive bond with at least one caring adult in the school.*
- Students are engaged in lots of interest-based before-, after-, and during-school activities.*
- Staff engages in meaningful interactions with one another.*
- Staff has been involved in creating meaningful vision and mission statements.*
- Families are positively bonded to the school.*
- The physical environment of the school is warm, positive, and inviting.*
- TOTAL SCORE**

Clear, Consistent Boundaries

- Students are clear about the behaviors expected of them and experience consistency in boundary environment.*
- Students use an intervention process ("core" or "care" team) that helps them when they are having problems.*
- Staff is clear about what is expected of them and experience consistency of expectations.*
- Staff models the behavioral expectations developed for students and for adults.*
- The school fosters an ongoing discussion of norms, rules, goals, and expectations for staff and students.*
- The school provides training necessary for members of the school community to effectively set and live by behavioral expectations.*
- TOTAL SCORE**

Teaching Life Skills

- Students use refusal skills, assertiveness, healthy conflict resolution, good decision making, and problem solving, and healthy stress-management skills most of the time.*
- Students are engaged in cooperative learning that focuses on both social skills and academic outcomes.*
- Staff works cooperatively together and emphasizes the importance of cooperation.*
- Staff has the interpersonal skills necessary to engage in effective organizational functioning and the professional skills necessary for effective teaching.*
- The school provides the skill development needed by all members of the school community.*
- The school promotes a philosophy of lifelong learning.*
- TOTAL SCORE*

Caring and Support

- Students feel cared for and supported in the school.*
- Students experience many types of incentives, recognitions, and rewards.*
- Staff feels cared for and appreciated in the school.*
- Staff experiences many types of incentives, recognitions, and rewards.*
- The school has a climate of kindness and encouragement.*
- Resources needed by students and staff are secured and distributed fairly in the school.*
- TOTAL SCORE*

High Expectations

- Students believe that they can succeed.*
- Students experience little or no labeling (formally or informally) or tracking.*
- Staff believes members can succeed.*
- Staff is rewarded for risk taking and excellence (e.g., merit pay).*
- The school provides growth plans for staff and students with clear outcomes, regular interviews, and supportive feedback.*
- An attitude of "can do" permeates the school.*
- TOTAL SCORE*

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Opportunities for Meaningful Participation

- Students are involved in programs that emphasize service to other students, school, and the community.*
- Students are involved in school decision making, including governance and policy.*
- Staff is involved in school decision making, including governance and policy.*
- Staff is engaged in both job-specific and organizationwide responsibilities.*
- Everyone in the school community (students, parents, staff) is viewed as resources rather than problems, objects, or clients.*
- The school climate emphasizes "doing what really matters" and risk taking.*
- TOTAL SCORE**

- OVERALL ASSESSMENT SCORE** (total of each of the six sections)

Student _____ (total of the first two scores in each section)
Staff _____ (total of the second two scores in each section)
School _____ (total of the last two scores in each section)

Range of scores: overall, 36-144; each section, 6-24; students, staff, and the school, 12-48. Lower scores indicate positive resilience building; higher scores indicate a need for improvement.

Henderson, Nan and Mike M. Milstein (1996) Resiliency in schools: Making it happen for students and educators. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, pp.114-116.

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OCTOBER SURVEY

Assessing School Resiliency Building (October, 1997)

Evaluate the following elements of school resiliency building using a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 indicating "we have this together," 2 indicating "we've done a lot in this area, but could do more," 3 indicating "we are getting started," and 4 indicating "nothing has been done."

Prosocial Bonding

- 4 *Students have a positive bond with at least one caring adult in the school.*
 - 3 *Students are engaged in lots of interest-based before-, after-, and during-school activities.*
 - 3 *Staff engages in meaningful interactions with one another.*
 - 1 *Staff has been involved in creating meaningful vision and mission statements.*
 - 3 *Families are positively bonded to the school.*
 - 2 *The physical environment of the school is warm, positive, and inviting.*
- 16 TOTAL SCORE

Clear, Consistent Boundaries

- 1 *Students are clear about the behaviors expected of them and experience consistency in boundary environment.*
 - 3 *Students use an intervention process ("core" or "care" team) that helps them when they are having problems.*
 - 2 *Staff is clear about what is expected of them and experience consistency of expectations.*
 - 2 *Staff models the behavioral expectations developed for students and for adults.*
 - 2 *The school fosters an ongoing discussion of norms, rules, goals, and expectations for staff and students.*
 - 4 *The school provides training necessary for members of the school community to effectively set and live by behavioral expectations.*
- 14 TOTAL SCORE

Teaching Life Skills

- 3 *Students use refusal skills, assertiveness, healthy conflict resolution, good decision making, and problem solving, and healthy stress-management skills most of the time.*
- 2 *Students are engaged in cooperative learning that focuses on both social skills and academic outcomes.*
- 1 *Staff works cooperatively together and emphasizes the importance of cooperation.*
- 1 *Staff has the interpersonal skills necessary to engage in effective organizational functioning and the professional skills necessary for effective teaching.*
- 3 *The school provides the skill development needed by all members of the school community.*
- 3 *The school promotes a philosophy of lifelong learning.*
- 13 **TOTAL SCORE**

Caring and Support

- 1 *Students feel cared for and supported in the school.*
- 1 *Students experience many types of incentives, recognitions, and rewards.*
- 1 *Staff feels cared for and appreciated in the school.*
- 3 *Staff experiences many types of incentives, recognitions, and rewards.*
- 1 *The school has a climate of kindness and encouragement.*
- 2 *Resources needed by students and staff are secured and distributed fairly in the school.*
- 9 **TOTAL SCORE**

High Expectations

- 2 *Students believe that they can succeed.*
- 2 *Students experience little or no labeling (formally or informally) or tracking.*
- 1 *Staff believes members can succeed.*
- 1 *Staff is rewarded for risk taking and excellence (e.g., merit pay).*
- 1 *The school provides growth plans for staff and students with clear outcomes, regular interviews, and supportive feedback.*
- 1 *An attitude of "can do" permeates the school.*
- 8 **TOTAL SCORE**

Opportunities for Meaningful Participation

- 2 Students are involved in programs that emphasize service to other students, school, and the community.
 - 3 Students are involved in school decision making, including governance and policy.
 - 2 Staff is involved in school decision making, including governance and policy.
 - 1 Staff is engaged in both job-specific and organization-wide responsibilities.
 - 2 Everyone in the school community (students, parents, staff) is viewed as resources rather than problems, objects, or clients.
 - 2 The school climate emphasizes "doing what really matters" and risk taking.
- 12 TOTAL SCORE

72 OVERALL ASSESSMENT SCORE (total of each of the six sections)

Student 27 (total of the first two scores in each section)

Staff 19 (total of the second two scores in each section)

School 26 (total of the last two scores in each section)

Range of scores: overall, 36-144; each section, 6-24; students, staff, and the school, 12-48. Lower scores indicate positive resilience building; higher scores indicate a need for improvement.

Henderson, Nan and Mike M. Milstein (1996) Resiliency in schools: Making it happen for students and educators. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, pp.114-116.

APRIL SURVEY

Assessing School Resiliency Building (April, 1998)

Evaluate the following elements of school resiliency building using a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 indicating "we have this together," 2 indicating "we've done a lot in this area, but could do more," 3 indicating "we are getting started," and 4 indicating "nothing has been done."

Prosocial Bonding

- 1 *Students have a positive bond with at least one caring adult in the school.*
- 2 *Students are engaged in lots of interest-based before-, after-, and during-school activities.*
- 2 *Staff engages in meaningful interactions with one another.*
- 1 *Staff has been involved in creating meaningful vision and mission statements.*
- 2 *Families are positively bonded to the school.*
- 1 *The physical environment of the school is warm, positive, and inviting.*
- 9 *TOTAL SCORE*

Clear, Consistent Boundaries

- 1 *Students are clear about the behaviors expected of them and experience consistency in boundary environment.*
- 2 *Students use an intervention process ("core" or "care" team) that helps them when they are having problems.*
- 1 *Staff is clear about what is expected of them and experience consistency of expectations.*
- 1 *Staff models the behavioral expectations developed for students and for adults.*
- 1 *The school fosters an ongoing discussion of norms, rules, goals, and expectations for staff and students.*
- 3 *The school provides training necessary for members of the school community to effectively set and live by behavioral expectations.*
- 9 *TOTAL SCORE*

Teaching Life Skills

- 2 *Students use refusal skills, assertiveness, healthy conflict resolution, good decision making, and problem solving, and healthy stress-management skills most of the time.*
 - 2 *Students are engaged in cooperative learning that focuses on both social skills and academic outcomes.*
 - 1 *Staff works cooperatively together and emphasizes the importance of cooperation.*
 - 1 *Staff has the interpersonal skills necessary to engage in effective organizational functioning and the professional skills necessary for effective teaching.*
 - 2 *The school provides the skill development needed by all members of the school community.*
 - 2 *The school promotes a philosophy of lifelong learning.*
- 10 TOTAL SCORE

Caring and Support

- 1 *Students feel cared for and supported in the school.*
 - 1 *Students experience many types of incentives, recognitions, and rewards.*
 - 1 *Staff feels cared for and appreciated in the school.*
 - 2 *Staff experiences many types of incentives, recognitions, and rewards.*
 - 1 *The school has a climate of kindness and encouragement.*
 - 1 *Resources needed by students and staff are secured and distributed fairly in the school.*
- 7 TOTAL SCORE

High Expectations

- 2 *Students believe that they can succeed.*
 - 2 *Students experience little or no labeling (formally or informally) or tracking.*
 - 1 *Staff believes members can succeed.*
 - 1 *Staff is rewarded for risk taking and excellence (e.g., merit pay).*
 - 1 *The school provides growth plans for staff and students with clear outcomes, regular interviews, and supportive feedback.*
 - 1 *An attitude of "can do" permeates the school.*
- 8 TOTAL SCORE

Opportunities for Meaningful Participation

- __1__ Students are involved in programs that emphasize service to other students, school, and the community.
- __2__ Students are involved in school decision making, including governance and policy.
- __1__ Staff is involved in school decision making, including governance and policy.
- __1__ Staff is engaged in both job-specific and organization-wide responsibilities.
- __2__ Everyone in the school community (students, parents, staff) is viewed as resources rather than problems, objects, or clients.
- __1__ The school climate emphasizes "doing what really matters" and risk taking.
- __8__ TOTAL SCORE

_51__ OVERALL ASSESSMENT SCORE (total of each of the six sections)

Student __19__ (total of the first two scores in each section)

Staff __14__ (total of the second two scores in each section)

School __18__ (total of the last two scores in each section)

Range of scores: overall, 36-144; each section, 6-24; students, staff, and the school, 12-48. Lower scores indicate positive resilience building; higher scores indicate a need for improvement.

Henderson, Nan and Mike M. Milstein (1996) Resiliency in schools: Making it happen for students and educators. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, pp.114-116.

APPENDIX D

Member Comments from Monthly Study Groups

September

Principal: "I am interested in this topic because having worked with children for the past thirty years, I have noticed there are some who survive and do well in spite of their home life."

Teacher 1: "I am excited to get started because I feel this information will definitely help me in dealing with children and their parents."

Teacher 2: "This might be something that can help me with children in EIP (Extended Instruction Program)."

Teacher 3: "This is a totally new topic for me."

Teacher 4: "I thought all at-risk children were in the first quartile."

Teacher 5: "I think the children need to be trained in areas other than academics. We need to help the whole child."

October

Principal: "All children could be at-risk, but not all at-risk children will be resilient."

Teacher 1: "One child told me a teacher had told him that he would end up in jail some day, and he was determined she would never be right."

Teacher 5: "We never know what we say or do will affect a child. When I see children I have had in the past, they tell me about things we did that were fun or something I said that had meaning for them."

November

Principal: "I know if I can get the parents on my side, the child's behavior and achievement will improve."

Teacher 1: "I presented at the Parent University this past Saturday, and we had just a handful of parents."

Teacher 2: "It is going to be easy to talk to the mother of my child because she comes to school twice a week to pick her up after school."

Teacher 3: "I always have to talk to the stepmother, but I want to meet the father and get him involved in decisions also."

Teacher 4: "Parents must be involved in their child's education. Teachers cannot do it all."

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December

- Principal: "I read an article discussing supposedly shy children. Often they do not talk because at home when they open their mouths, they hit by an abusive parent, so the quietness carries over to all adults."
- Teacher 1: "It affects their learning as well as eating and sleeping habits."
- Teacher 2: "Parents don't realize that kids can be stressed out."
- Teacher 3: "I talk to my children's parents about things that cause stress."
- Teacher 4: "My child complains a lot lately and feels like he must call his mom. I wonder why he is so insecure and needs to contact his mom."
- Teacher 5: "I realize now that the more stressed out a child is, the less they learn."

January

- Principal: "I am creating a section in the library to put all the books with resilient themes. We are going to put a label on each book and write the theme on the outside cover of the book. This will help you when you need to choose a book on a particular theme."
- Teacher 1: "Oh, I see several books I know I need to use. this will help with the section on literature in our journals."
- Teacher 2: "I saw a man from NC on television who was in favor of spanking because he believes kids are out of control. Some parents are in favor of it, and some parents are afraid of being charged with child abuse." "I know of a dad that has to spend weekends in jail because his child reported him."
- Teacher 5: "I have had parents tell me that their children say they will report them if they spank them."

February

- Principal: "As we plan for the parent workshop on 'Discipline with Love,' let's talk about and hand out things that will be helpful to our parents."
- Teacher 1: "I am going to talk about ways to handle a difficult child and offer suggestions on how to be specific when you are telling a child he will be punished. You must do what you say you are going to do. Following through is so important."
- Teacher 2: "I will discuss how to communicate effectively with our children. We should talk with them, not at them."
- Teacher 3: "Positive discipline is my topic. These are things that are useful in my classroom as well."

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Teacher 4: "My topic will be effective parenting and how their health and attitudes affect the child."

Teacher 5: "I am going to talk about different parenting styles."

March

Principal: "This is the most intense chapter in the book so far. There are actual examples of how to help children problem solve or deal with change or what to do if you feel sad."

Teacher 1: "I agree with the author that we need to start training children early on how to cope with difficult situations. Then they can build on this as they get older."

Teacher 2: "We need to train children to make choices. Look at difficult situations and decide what might be best."

Teacher 3: "Many at-risk children have low self-esteem. We need to train them to hold their heads high and be proud of themselves."

Teacher 4: "My child acts like an adult because he is around so many."

Teacher 5: "Role playing is a great way for me to train children in social skills."

April

Principal: "Thank you for keeping me focused. I can tell from your conversations as well as my observations of you in the classroom that you have learned things that will help make a difference for our children."

Teacher 1: "We need to teach our children to express themselves appropriately. They need to find words to describe how they feel. There are words other than happy or sad."

Teacher 2: "I think the information we have learned would be helpful to members of our staff and other educators."

Teacher 3: "I was fussing the other day, and a child told me to go to the 'Talk It Out Corner'."

Teacher 4: "My child has a difficult time expressing his feelings. He is still acting before thinking."

Teacher 5: "My child and I talked about dealing with a loss. It is so hard for him to put things into words. His body language always told me whether he was up or down."

APPENDIX E

STUDY GROUP AGENDAS

Study Group Agenda Items
September 15, 1997

Explanation for researcher's interest

Explanation for study

- teacher (pre/post interviews)
- identification of students
- modifications of curriculum
- whole class involved but only one student studied in depth
- materials to be purchased

Informed consent for teachers to sign

- anonymous throughout study
- no compensation
- 45 recertification points

Book, The Resilient Child, by Joanne Joseph

\$1200 Title I grant proposal for staff development

Identification of at-risk students

Resiliency Scale to be completed for each monthly meeting

Implementation of school-wide conflict management program, Dinosolve, by guidance counselor

Possible modifications of curricula

- problem solving
- hobbies

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Explanation of Werner's study

- ages 2, 10, 18, 30
- 700 studied--250 at-risk--70 became resilient

Resiliency -- long-term effect / may not see results
this year

Federal government labels

- underprivileged
- at-risk
- new term, resilient

Thanks for volunteering

Encourage researcher and keep her focused!

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Study Group Agenda Items
October 3, 1997

Werner's study revisited

Pre-interviews completed

Examination of The Resilient Child

Definitions of terms on Resiliency Scale

Completion of "Assessing School Resiliency Building"
survey as group activity

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Study Group Agenda Items
November 4, 1997

Teacher journals (journal plus categories)

Parent Workshop plans -- November 17

Newsletters

Resiliency Scale checklist

Principal magazine (October, 1997) articles on
resiliency

Needed purchases

Parent University

Conflict management

Thanks

Assignment for December meeting -- read Chapters 1, 2,
3, and 6 (Parent Workshop)

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Study Group Agenda Items
December 13, 1997

Group discussion

Chapter 1 "Self Esteem"
Chapter 2 "Resilience"
Chapter 3 "Sizing up Your Child"
Chapter 6 "Teaching Children to Cope: The Role
of Relaxation, Nutrition, and
Exercise"

Evaluation of November Parent Workshop

journal topics -- sharing session

Resiliency scale

Thanks

Assignment for January meeting -- Chapters 4 and 5

Fostering resiliency 183

Study Group Agenda Items
January 16, 1998

Purchase of books with resilient themes -- labeling of themes

Group discussion

Chapter 4 "Promoting Self Esteem and Resilience:
The Role of Parenting"

Chapter 5 "Stories: A Natural Way to Teach
Resilient Values and Attitudes"

Sharing successes

Resiliency Scale

Thanks

Assignment for February -- prepare presentation for
Parent Workshop on February 13

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Study Group Agenda Items
February 13, 1998

Parent Workshop organization, Discipline with Love,
handouts

Library -- section on resiliency

Sharing successes

Resiliency scale

Thanks

Assignment for March meeting-- Chapters 7 and 8

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Study Group Agenda Items
March 13, 1998

Group discussion

Chapter 7 "Teaching Children to Think
Constructively"

Chapter 8 "Teaching Children to Make Good
Decisions"

Resiliency Scale

Thanks

Assignment for April -- Chapters 9 and 10

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Study Group Agenda Items
April 3, 1998

Group discussion

Chapter 9 "Cultivating Social Skills in Your
Child"

Chapter 10 "Summing It All Up"

Sharing successes

Resiliency Scale

Post-interviews

Parent Workshop -- May 30 -- "Teaching Children to
Make Good Decisions"

Did we make a difference?

Sharing study with staff next year

Complete "Assessing School Resiliency Building" survey
as a group activity

THANKS!!

VITA

Sandra S. Clemmer

Birthdate and place

August 19, 1947; Staunton, Virginia

Education

Robert E. Lee High School, Staunton, Virginia		1965
B. S. Early Childhood Education	Radford University	1969
M. S. Elementary Education	Radford University	1982
Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies	Virginia Tech	1997
School Leader's Doctoral Program	Virginia Tech	
Ed. D. Educational Administration		1998

Teaching / Administrative Experience

- Grade 3 teacher, Virginia Heights Elementary (Roanoke City) 1969-71
- Kindergarten teacher, Mason's Cove Elementary (Roanoke County)
Summer, 1969 Summer, 1970
- Grade 4 teacher, Oakland Elementary - Chapter 1 (Roanoke City) 1971-74
- Summer Starters teacher, Oakland Elementary (Roanoke City) Summer, 1973
- Substitute teacher, K-6 Oakland Elementary (Roanoke City) 1974-78
- Kindergarten/Grade 4 teacher, Crystal Spring Elementary (Roanoke City) 1978-79
- Grades 2 & 4 teacher, Fishburn Park Elementary (Roanoke City) 1979-91
- Teacher on Special Assignment (1/2 day administration/
1/2 day teaching)
Forest Park Elementary Annex 1991-92
Virginia Heights Elementary Annex 1992-93
Morningside Elementary Annex 1993-94
Wasena Elementary Annex 1994-95
- Principal, Round Hill Primary School (Roanoke City) 1995-1998
- Principal, Round Hill Montessori School (Roanoke City) 1998-
present

Sandra S. Clemmer