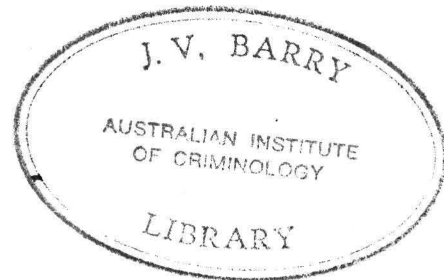
140422

Teaching and Learning about Personal Safety

Report of the Review of Protective Behaviours
in
South Australia



Bruce Johnson

Painters Prints
Adelaide
Australia
1995

Teaching and Learning About Personal Safety

Report of the Review of Protective Behaviours in South Australia

Author:	Bruce R Johnson
Cover Design:	Sophie Barr (age 7) with a little help from her dad, Andrew
Published by:	Painters Prints, Adelaide, Australia
Printed by:	Document Services, University of South Australia

ISBN 0 646 23914 7

© 1995 B. Johnson

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the author. Inquiries should be addressed B. Johnson, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, University of South Australia, Smith Road, Salisbury East 5109, South Australia.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 4

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 7

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW 8

CHAPTER 1: PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE: AN OVERVIEW
- Introduction 9
- Awareness of the Problem of Child Abuse 9
- Why Child Abuse is a Problem 9
- The Prevention of Child Abuse 10
- The Prevention of Child Abuse in South Australia 11
- Focus on School based Primary Prevention 13
- Summary 13

CHAPTER 2: PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA
- Introduction 15
- Selection of the Protective Behaviours Program 15
- Main Features of the Protective Behaviours Program 16
- Teacher Training 17
- Number of Teachers Trained 19
- Criticism of the Program 19
- The Decision to Evaluate the Program 20
- Need for an Independent Review 21
- Terms of Reference of the Review 21
- Stages of the Review 22
- Summary 22

CHAPTER 3: REVIEW OF LITERATURE
- Introduction 23
- Teaching about Personal Safety 23
  - Program Implementation 24
  - Factors Affecting Program Implementation 26
    - *Teachers Affective Responses* 27
    - *Teacher Development* 29
    - *School Context* 30
  - A Model of Teacher Thought and Action 31
  - Hypotheses about Teaching Protective Behaviours 32
- Learning about Personal Safety 34
  - Synthesis of International Research 34
  - Australian Research 35
  - Issues and Questions 38
    - *What program outcomes should be measured?* 38
    - *How should research be interpreted?* 38
    - *What factors influence personal safety learning?* 39
  - Hypotheses about Personal Safety Learning 41
- Summary 42

SECTION 2: TEACHING ABOUT PERSONAL SAFETY 43

AN INVESTIGATION OF TEACHERS' USE OF THE PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS PROGRAM

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY
- Introduction 44
- Choice of Survey Method 44
- Identification of Teachers Trained in Protective Behaviours 44
- Sample of Teachers 45
- Development of Questionnaire
  - Theoretical Considerations 46
  - Structure of Questionnaire 47

• Use of Teachers' Comments 48
• Assumptions about Teachers 48
• Trialling Questionnaire 50
Administration of Questionnaire 50
Analysis of Data 50
Summary 51

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS
Introduction 52
Description of Sample 52
Teachers' Use of the Program
• Patterns of Use 53
• School Level Differences in Patterns of Use 56
Accounting for Teachers' Use and Non Use of the Program
• Teachers' Reasons for Non Use of the Program 57
• Teachers' Reasons for Selective Non Use of the Program 57
• Teachers' Reasons for Teaching the Program in Detail 58
• Implementation Factors Affecting Teachers' Use 60
• Strategies to Promote the Teaching of the Program 62
Summary 63

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION
Introduction 65
Assumptions Guiding Interpretation 65
Interpreting Teachers' Use and Non Use of the Program
• Lack of Opportunity to Teach 67
• Low Curriculum Priority 67
• Support for Program Goals 68
• Application of the 'Practicality Ethic' 68
• Provision of Implementation Support 69
• Reliance on Training 70
Implications 70
What Can be Done
• Implementation Support 71
• Balancing Opportunities and Constraints 72
• Parent and Community Awareness 73
Summary 73

SECTION 3: LEARNING ABOUT PERSONAL SAFETY 74
AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENTS' PERSONAL SAFETY LEARNING

CHAPTER 7: METHODOLOGY
Introduction 75
Research Focus 75
Inherent Research Difficulties 75
Research Design 76
Identification of Participants
• Treatment Group 77
• Comparison Group 77
Recruitment of Participants 78
Sources of Data 78
Measures of Background Variables 78
Measure of Teachers' Use of Program 79
Measures of Student Outcomes 79
Development of Video Vignettes
• Storylines 80
• Use of Video 81
• Consultation - Phase 1: Storylines 82

- Consultation - Phase 2: Scripts 82
- Response to Advice 82
- Production of Final Video Vignettes 83
- Content of Video Vignettes 84
- Pre-school Variations 84

Development of Interview Protocol
- Formulating Questions 85
- Establishing Response Categories 86
- Trialling Interview Protocol 87
- Selecting and Training Interviewers 87

Ethical Considerations
- Issues related to Reporting Suspected Child Abuse 89
- Issues related to 'Informed Consent' 89
- Issues related to Potential Harm to Participants 92
- Education Sector Response 93

Consequences of Complying with Ethical Requirements
- Time Delays 94
- Reduced Scope of Study 94
- Low Participation Rates 94

Interviews 95
Analysis of Data 95
Summary 96

CHAPTER 8: RESULTS

Introduction 97
Description of Participants 97
Discrimination of Threats to Personal Safety
- Introduction 99
- Responses to Unsafe Incidents 99
- Responses to Very Unsafe Incidents 102
- Summary 104

Responses to Threats to Personal Safety
- Introduction 104
- Preventing Escalation 105
- Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviour as it Occurs 106
- Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviour after it has Occurred 107

Summary 109

CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION

Introduction 110
Children's Ability to Discriminate Threats to Personal Safety
- Introduction 110
- Identifying Physical Threats 110
- Identifying Sexual Threats 110
- 'Early Warning Signs' 111

Children's Responses to Threats and Maltreatment
- Rejection of Personally Assertive Strategies 112
- Use of Assertive Responses to Sexual Misbehaviour 114

Implications 115
Summary 116

REFERENCES 117

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child abuse is recognised as a major social problem in our community and a variety of initiatives aim to alleviate the problem. One approach has been to develop school based primary prevention programs directed at improving the abilities of children to avoid or resist abuse. The Protective Behaviours program is such a program. In South Australia, large numbers of teachers and child care workers have been trained to teach Protective Behaviours to children.

In 1992 the major education providers in South Australia decided to initiate a review of the Protective Behaviours program. The Review was conducted by Bruce Johnson, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, University of South Australia, in consultation with a committee of representatives of the Department for Education and Children's Services, Catholic Education Office, and Independent Schools Board.

The terms of reference of the Review reflected the interest of the commissioning groups in addressing both program implementation issues and program outcomes for students. Specifically, the Review of Protective Behaviours addressed the following questions.

1. What is the nature and extent of teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program in South Australian pre-schools and schools?
2. What factors affect teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program?
3. Are students who have been taught Protective Behaviours more able to identify unsafe situations than students who have not been taught Protective Behaviours?
4. Do students who have been taught Protective Behaviours have greater knowledge of personal safety strategies than students who have not been taught Protective Behaviours?
5. Do factors like the extent of parental reinforcement of the program, student age, gender, learning ability, and socio-economic status influence learning outcomes in Protective Behaviours?

The Review was planned in two linked stages. Stage 1, which was undertaken during 1993, focussed on teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program. Stage 2, which was undertaken during 1994, focussed on student outcomes.

A survey approach was selected to generate information about teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program. A questionnaire was developed, trialled, and administered to a stratified random sample of over 1,400 teachers who had been trained in Protective Behaviours. Based on the responses of 957 teachers, it was found that:

1. **Around 20% of teachers did not teach any part of the program.** Many of these teachers reported not having the opportunity to teach the program. Other factors like lack of support to implement the program at the school level also had some impact on their behaviour.
2. **Many teachers were selective users of parts of the program.** The most frequently used feature of the program was the first theme relating to children's right to personal safety. Ironically, the least taught features of the program ('Sexual Touching' and 'Physical Violence') address the very issues that prompted education and social welfare authorities to initiate programs like Protective Behaviours in the first place - the prevention of child sexual abuse and child physical abuse.
3. **There were few secondary teachers trained in Protective Behaviours, and of those who were trained, few implemented the program.** Lack of integration of the program within the mainstream secondary curriculum probably accounts for such low levels of use.
4. **Junior primary teachers used more features of the program and in greater detail than their colleagues at other levels.** Pre-school teachers were also strong users of the program, but chose not to teach several features of the program in detail (those sections on sexual touching and interpersonal violence, for example).
5. **Teachers' main reasons for teaching the program related to the perceived benefits of the program for children.** Strong values congruence with program goals was a feature of these teachers' decision making.

6. **Teachers' gave several reasons for not teaching parts of the program.** These included the perceived lack of reliability of some parents to meet the expectations of the program, the inability of some students to comprehend and implement particular strategies, and fear that parents might object to the detailed teaching of the program.
7. **Medium to high level use of the program was linked to the provision of school level support to implement the program.** However, surprisingly few teachers participated in local professional development activities related to the program, indicating a worrying over-reliance on pre-implementation training to prepare teachers to teach the program.

From this analysis several ways of promoting the wider teaching of personal safety programs like Protective Behaviours were suggested. It was concluded that increasing school level implementation support for teachers would be beneficial, particularly when linked with a locally negotiated commitment to embrace the over-riding rationale for school based personal safety education.

Investigating children's personal safety learning is difficult due to methodological and ethical constraints which are not normally applied to research on other aspects of learning. In this study, a non-experimental post-treatment comparisons design was used to generate data about the personal safety learning of two groups of children. Children were individually shown video vignettes that depicted other children in three escalating unsafe situations. The vignettes dealt with physical, emotional and sexual maltreatment. The children were questioned about their perceptions of threat in those situations, and asked to suggest appropriate strategies to deal with those threats. Data were analysed to discern any similarities and differences in the personal safety knowledge of children who had been taught the Protective Behaviours program and those in a comparable group who had not been taught the program.

It was found that:

1. **Protective Behaviours trained children more frequently identified feelings of fear in the sexually and physically unsafe scenes than Comparison children.** This was particularly so with younger children. However, age was a pervasive influence on children's responses to the sexual scene with about twice as many older children identifying fearful reactions than younger children.

2. **There were few differences between the responses of children in the Protective Behaviours and Comparison groups, or between children of different ages, in response to the very unsafe scenes.** The majority of children recognised the damaging impact of maltreatment on the victims.

3. **More Protective Behaviours trained children correctly recognised and named sexually inappropriate behaviour than Comparison children.** The biggest differences occurred in the two older age groups. However, younger children were much less able to recognise the sexual behaviour than older children.

4. **Most children did not suggest using the widely accepted personal safety responses - 'No', 'Go', and 'Tell' - to prevent the escalation of the physically and emotionally threatening situations to more serious levels.** Contrary to expectations, personally assertive responses were roundly rejected by most children in these situations in favour of socially based negotiation and conciliation processes. Regardless of whether children had been taught Protective Behaviours or not, these types of responses were preferred.

5. **Children's reactions to the sexually inappropriate behaviour were very different, however, with less children suggesting 'doing nothing' in this situation and many more (nearly three quarters of children) suggesting an 'accepted' personal safety strategy.** This was so for children in both the Protective Behaviours and Comparison groups.

6. **Once sexually inappropriate behaviour had occurred, more Protective Behaviours children in each age group suggested the appropriate personal safety strategy - 'Tell' - than did Comparison children.**

The results of this study reveal complex and, at times, perplexing insights into the thinking of children about personal safety issues. They serve to remind proponents of personal safety education that none of the concepts and strategies used in programs can be assumed to be learnt by all children. Children's responses to physical and emotional maltreatment, for example, were shown to be very different from their responses to sexual maltreatment. The findings do, however, give qualified support to the efficacy of the Protective Behaviours program and provide some evidence to support its essential rationale. While this limited outcome is probably less than that anticipated by Protective Behaviours advocates, it is, nevertheless, a major confirmation of the potential of programs like Protective Behaviours to mobilise children to act, in limited ways, to help prevent child sexual abuse. It is worth noting, however, that programs like Protective Behaviours rely on the willingness and ability of adults to act on behalf of children once they are told of possible maltreatment. If adults ignore the disclosures of children, or collude to silence them, children will continue to be placed at risk. Clearly, even in programs that focus on developing children's personal safety options, adults hold the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that our children are treated fairly and humanely.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the contribution made to this Review by members of the Consultative Committee established to represent the interests of the key stakeholders in the project - the Department for Education and Children's Services, Catholic Education Office, and Independent Schools Board. In particular, I sincerely thank Michael McVeity, Sandra Watkinson, Julie McTaggart, Dale Martin, John Dayman, and Sue Gordon for their unwavering commitment to the aims of the Review, their judicious counsel over matters of some controversy, and their skill and forbearance while working collaboratively with me. I have valued their support and loyalty throughout what was a long and arduous project.

I also extend sincere thanks to the many people both locally and in other States who reviewed proposed procedures for the research and offered useful suggestions to improve its quality. Of particular assistance were Associate Professor Helen Winefield, Professor Freda Briggs, and Kaye Johnson whose timely and encouraging advice was much appreciated.

The contribution of my many research assistants is also gratefully acknowledged. In particular, I thank Jeni Ingham for her expert management of the logistics of the large postal survey. I congratulate and thank members of my team of skilled and dedicated interviewers led by Sharon Fleming, Natasha Novaski, and Belinda Chapman for their sensitive and patient work interviewing many children.

I express my appreciation to the 957 teachers who spent considerable time and effort completing a difficult and complex questionnaire about their use of the Protective Behaviours program. The response by so many teachers confirmed my belief in the dedication and professionalism of the teaching profession.

I also acknowledge the courage and commitment of the 25 teachers who participated in the second stage of the research. Their public support of the proposed research methodology was instrumental in generating sufficient numbers of child participants to make the study viable.

I wish to thank the many children who took part in the study. To Kristie, Ashlyn, Annelise, Glenn, Stuart, Hannah and Cameron who 'trialled' the video vignettes and helped in the development of the interview protocol, I convey my appreciation. Their expert input ensured that the interview procedures used with other children were safe and age appropriate. I also thank the 321 children who shared their thoughts, feelings and opinions about personal safety situations during individual interviews. Their willingness to contribute was vital to the success of the research.

I wish to acknowledge the project management skills of Barry Couzner and Techsearch, the business arm of the University of South Australia. Their professional management of the personnel, financial and legal aspects of the project enabled me to concentrate on purely research issues.

The Criminology Research Council, Canberra, provided a significant proportion of the funding for this research. The Council's support of research of this type is appreciated and welcomed by child protection advocates across Australia.

Finally, I must thank Professor Kym Adey and my colleagues in the Faculty of Education at the University of South Australia for their support and forbearance.

SECTION 1

BACKGROUND

TO THE

REVIEW OF

PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS

IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

CHAPTER 1

PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE: AN OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Protective Behaviours program is a school based primary prevention program that aims to equip children with the knowledge and skills needed to deal with hostile and dangerous situations. It is a small but important part of a wider movement in the community committed to the reduction of child abuse and neglect. In this chapter, the program is placed within this wider context through a brief discussion of the problem of child abuse and the range of preventative responses that have emerged to deal with it.

AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM OF CHILD ABUSE

The publication of research describing the Battered Child Syndrome in the early 1960s, both in the U.S. and in Australia, began a slow process of public recognition of the nature and extent of child abuse in our community (Oates, 1993). The current incidence of child abuse in Australia (ie, substantiated cases) is about 9 cases per 1,000 children. Approximately 48,000 cases of child abuse are reported to Welfare authorities annually. In about half of these cases, abuse is substantiated (Angus and Wilkinson, 1993). However, most authorities acknowledge that these data reflect only a small proportion of the abuse that occurs in our community. Studies that seek to establish the prevalence of child abuse reveal considerably higher levels of abuse than indicated by reporting data. However, estimates of the prevalence of child abuse vary greatly due, in most part, to the application of different definitions of child abuse (Duerr Berrick and Gilbert, 1991). Even so, these studies suggest that child abuse may be many times greater than has been substantiated by incidence figures (Daro, 1993).

While debate rages over which set of figures should be used to establish the extent of the problem of child abuse, some commentators assert that overemphasising the incidence-prevalence disparities, or even the diverse range of prevalence statistics, diverts attention away from other important issues in the area of child protection. Finkelhor (1984), for example, suggests that precise figures are likely to be difficult and expensive to obtain, and ultimately of limited use to policy makers and service providers. He argues that the accuracy of data should be sufficient to make 'an unambiguous and persuasive case that the problem is widespread' (Finkelhor, 1984: 229). In Australia, at least, this has been convincingly established (see for example, Goldman and Goldman, 1986; Angus and Wilkinson, 1993).

WHY CHILD ABUSE IS A PROBLEM

Two arguments are often advanced to condemn child abuse. The most frequently used argument refers to the physical and psychological damage suffered by victims. The adverse initial and long term physical, social, and emotional effects of child abuse are comprehensively documented in the international literature (Woodward, 1990; Harter, Alexander, and

Neimeyer, 1988; Brown and Finkelhor, 1986; Finkelhor and Brown, 1986; Daugherty, 1986; Garbarino and Gilliam, 1980). The consequences of child *physical* abuse are more obvious than for other forms of abuse and range from bruising and broken bones to death. In the case of child *sexual* abuse, eight studies cited by Duerr Berrick and Gilbert reveal that most victims experience negative reactions, including

> responses of guilt, anxiety, anger and depression, as well as a profound sense of loss that is carried over into adulthood. Other reactions involve behavioural responses such as aggression, suicidal ideation, and self-mutilation. Child sexual abuse also appears to have an impact on sexual functioning later in life.
> (Duerr Berrick and Gilbert, 1991: 5-6)

It is generally accepted that the consequences of child abuse are so far reaching and serious that, on social and economic grounds alone, it cannot be ignored or tacitly condoned.

The second argument advanced against child abuse invokes moral principles based on conceptions of the rights of children (Eekelaar, 1986). In the Australian context, the moral denunciation of child abuse has recently been re-stated following Australia's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

> The Convention recognises the particular vulnerability of the young, the fact that they cannot be held responsible for their actions in the same ways as adults, and their need for special protection. ... Essentially the Convention endorses children's right to protection from abuse and neglect, from drug abuse and from sexual exploitation. ...
> (National Child Protection Council, 1993 [a]: 1)

Several commentators maintain that the championing of children's rights undermines parents' rights and 'family values' (Hallpike, 1989; Partington, 1989). Paedophile groups have also argued that the moral grounds for the application of prohibitions on adult-child sexual activity are tenuous and based on repressive rather than liberating ideals (for a counter-argument see Finkelhor, 1978). Despite these views, there is widespread endorsement, both socially and legally, of the moral grounds for opposing child abuse. These provide a strong rationale for initiatives aimed at preventing child abuse.

THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

Backed by moral and legal sanctions against child abuse, social welfare agencies have assumed increased responsibility for detecting and stopping child abuse (Yeatman, 1987). Most Australian states have passed legislation making the reporting of suspected child abuse compulsory for a wide range of people (Western Australia and the A.C.T. excepted). In the states which have Mandatory Notification, approximately two thirds of all substantiated cases of abuse are reported by mandated notifiers (Angus and Wilkinson, 1993). Initiatives that

focus on current abuse are often labelled as *tertiary prevention* efforts and are the most visible and urgently pursued.

While tertiary prevention initiatives are obviously needed to stop adults from exploiting and victimising children now, other strategies have been sought that address the issue of *primary and secondary prevention* to ensure that abuse does not occur in the first place (see Figure 1).

	PRIMARY PREVENTION	SECONDARY PREVENTION	TERTIARY PREVENTION
Definition	Primary prevention activities or programs aim to stop abuse before it starts, through broad based initiatives directed at populations of people	Secondary prevention activities or programs seek to identify and intervene in situations in which there is a high risk of children being abused	Tertiary prevention activities target those families, groups and individuals where abuse has occurred, and attempt to stop it recurring
Objectives	- to encourage the development of attitudes and behaviours that lead to a reduction in child abuse and neglect - to encourage non-violent and non-exploitative relationships between adults and children	- to identify high risk groups in the community - to provide services that target the underlying factors that lead to abuse in high risk groups (eg, stress inducing living conditions, parenting practices, drug and alcohol abuse, etc)	- to provide welfare services to cater for the needs of abused children and their families (eg, to stop abuse and to stop it recurring) - to enact legislation so that perpetrators of abuse are pursued through the legal system
Generic Prevention Initiatives	- communication strategies including mass media campaigns and special 'Child Protection Week' type events - personal safety programs for children which aim to empower children by giving them information, developing their skills, and identifying sources of help should they feel unsafe	- universal home visits by community nurses following birth of child to 'screen' for indicators of high risk of abuse - provision of parental support (respite care, self-help programs, volunteer support groups) for 'high risk' parents (eg, young single parents living in poverty, parents living with violent partners, etc)	- investigative and counselling services provided by the Department of Family and Community Welfare - offender programs which help offenders take responsibility for their abusive behaviour - services which enable children and adolescents to leave abusive situations (eg, refuges, foster care, residential care)

Figure 1: Levels of Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (based on National Child Protection Council, 1993 [a])

THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In South Australia, responsibility for co-ordinating the child abuse prevention and treatment efforts of medical, legal, welfare, law enforcement, and education agencies rested, until March 1995, with the South Australian Child Protection Council. The Council oversaw activity across the three levels of prevention and treatment (see Figure 2); primary prevention activities which aimed to prevent child abuse from occurring in the general population, secondary prevention efforts directed at preventing abuse in particular groups in society, and tertiary prevention and treatment initiatives which aimed to reduce the severity of the effects of abuse after it has occurred.

AGENCY	PRIMARY PREVENTION SERVICE	SECONDARY PREVENTION SERVICE	TERTIARY PREVENTION SERVICE
Health Commission	- Child, Adolescent and Family Health Service . parenting education - Community Health Centres . human relations education	- Child, Adolescent and Family Health Service . home visits by district nurse following birth of child . residential support centre for new mothers - Community Health Centres . counselling	- Child, Adolescent and Family Health Service . routine health examinations of children - Hospitals . child victim assessment and treatment - Community Health Centres . support groups for victims & non-offending family - Sexual Offenders Treatment and Assessment Program
Family & Community Services		- Metropolitan Offices . identification of children 'at risk' . counselling and family support	- Metropolitan Offices . identification of victims . residential & secure care for victims . child advocacy
Police	- 'Safety Beat' schools program . general & personal safety education - Media Campaigns . eg, linked with 'Operation Keeper'		- Metropolitan Stations . apprehension of suspected abusers - Special Operations . apprehension of suspected abusers - Victims of Crime Unit . support for victims
Correctional Services		- Parole Services . supervision of former offenders	- Prisons . incarceration of offenders
Education	- Personal Safety Education . Protective Behaviours . Health Curricula - Human Relations Education eg: . self esteem devel . conflict resolution . counter harassment programs . parenting education		- Mandatory Reporting . identification of suspected abuse . reporting to FACS
National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (SA Inc) (Non-Government)	- Public Awareness Campaigns . media advertising . special focus times - Child Protection Week - Research sponsorship		

Figure 2: Examples of South Australian Child Abuse Prevention Programs and Treatment Services (based on Martin, 1993: 3)

FOCUS ON SCHOOL BASED PRIMARY PREVENTION

Cowan writes that the paramount goal of primary and secondary prevention programs is to stop abuse from occurring in the first place, rather than counter-attacking after the damage has been done. Primary prevention, in particular, is an attractive alternative because it is 'more sensible, humane, pragmatic, and cost effective' than to struggle, however valiantly and compassionately, with the consequences of abuse (Cowen, 1983: 14).

Finkelhor's (1984) analysis of the preconditions for sexual abuse provides the theoretical framework for most primary prevention interventions. Briefly, Finkelhor's 'Four Preconditions Model' identifies three points at which preventative actions may stop an individual who is motivated to abuse from actually abusing a child. Firstly, interventions directed at strengthening the social and cultural norms which prohibit child abuse may help reinforce a range of internal inhibitors which overcome an underlying motivation to abuse. Secondly, interventions that lead to the increased monitoring of the behaviour of adults with children, and the closer supervision of children themselves, may provide the external inhibitors that prevent abuse. Finally, interventions which increase the capacities of children to avoid or resist abuse may ultimately protect children from being abused.

Duerr Berrick and Gilbert (1991: 7) argue that the identification of the potential 'victim population' (ie, children) as a strong source of resistance against the physical and psychological hazards that 'problem causing agents' present to them, was consistent with already established prevention strategies developed mainly by feminist campaigners against rape in the 1970s. They maintain that the subsequent development of 'anti-victimisation' programs for children was stimulated by 'a system of thought that promotes self-defense and the psychological empowerment of children' (Duerr Berrick and Gilbert, 1991: 12).

Due to the close and ongoing contact children have with schools during periods when they are statistically at high risk of being abused (Finkelhor, 1979; Angus and Wilkinson, 1993), schools were considered ideal sites for the delivery of prevention programs. An estimated 400-500 school based prevention programs were developed in the U.S. during the early to mid-1980s (Trudell and Whatley, 1988). Subsequently, all Australian State Ministries or departments of education either adopted an American program or undertook the development of local programs. The single most widely adopted program in Australia is Protective Behaviours (Flandreau West, 1984; 1989).

SUMMARY

Child abuse is recognised as a major social problem in our community. Since the mid-1980s a variety of efforts have aimed at alleviating the problem. While tertiary prevention and treatment services are urgently needed and utilised by the victims of abuse, there has been a growing recognition of the potential benefits associated with investing resources in primary

and secondary prevention. One approach has been to develop school based primary prevention programs directed at improving the abilities of children to avoid or resist abuse. The Protective Behaviours program is such a program and has been widely advocated for use in Australian schools since the mid-1980s.

CHAPTER 2

PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

INTRODUCTION

The Protective Behaviours program was initially developed in the U.S. in the early 1980s and brought to Australia in 1984. Compared with other American and Canadian programs developed at about the same time (eg, *Good Touches/Bad Touches, Talking about Touching,* and *You're in Charge* programs) it was not widely known or used in the U.S. In this chapter, the early history of the program is explored, its basic features are explained, the nature and extent of the teacher training process used in South Australia is outlined, and the rationale for its evaluation is given.

SELECTION OF THE PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS PROGRAM

By 1985, child protection issues were receiving increasing professional and public attention in most Australian states. In Victoria, for example, police statistics relating to reports of child sexual abuse revealed that 83% of reported cases involved a trusted friend or family member, thus calling into question the appropriateness of the Stranger-Danger program being used widely in schools at the time (Dwyer, 1990; Brown, 1986[a]). Similarly, in South Australia, the Task Force on Child Sexual Abuse raised public awareness of the problems of child abuse and neglect and led to the formation of a number of working parties within the social welfare and education bureaucracies (Briggs, 1989; Education Department of South Australia, 1986).

Within this climate of growing concern over the previously hidden phenomenon of child abuse, efforts intensified to develop educative strategies designed to give children the means of protecting themselves from violent and predatory adults, most of whom were known and trusted by them. Between April and July 1984, a group of professionals working in the area of child maltreatment in Victoria, met to evaluate a range of American and Canadian school based prevention programs.

> Through an exhaustive consultation process, the group reached consensus that the appropriate program for development in Victoria was Protective Behaviours. This program stood alone.
> (C.P.E.C.G., 1986: 2)

Independently of the Victorian group, the program was trialled in a primary school in Melbourne and a secondary school in Adelaide during late 1984 (Dwyer, 1990). According to Fraser (1991), one of the original advocates of educative prevention programs in Australia, an

early draft manuscript of the Protective Behaviours program was seen as 'the answer' to an increasingly urgent need to 'do something' about the problem of child abuse in Australia.

On the basis of this favourable evaluation of the draft program by the Victorian working group, and the endorsement of a local educator who had trained in Protective Behaviours in the U.S. during 1983, the Education Department of South Australia undertook to support the training of key professionals in Protective Behaviours. Flandreau West, the American author of the program, was brought to Australia for a number of workshops in Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and Canberra during April and May, 1985. Approximately 120 people in South Australia underwent 'intensive training' in the Protective Behaviours program at that time.

Following these initial training workshops, an appraisal of the Protective Behaviours program was undertaken by the Protective Behaviours Coordinating Committee for the Director General of the South Australian Education Department. The evaluation was undertaken 'in order to be able to make judgements about the worth of the program'. The results of the evaluation strongly endorsed the Protective Behaviours program. The evaluation report concluded that 'the program is worthwhile'.

> Teachers, parents, school counsellors, officers from other agencies have indicated enthusiasm for such a program to be included in the schools' curriculum... The Protective Behaviours program is manageable and fits with current teaching and learning practices.
> (Education Department of South Australia, 1985: 15)

In late 1985, the Education Department of South Australia endorsed the program for use in state schools, even though an assessment of alternative programs had not been undertaken (Briggs, 1992).

MAIN FEATURES OF THE PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS PROGRAM

The Protective Behaviours program, like many of its counter-parts, aims to equip children with the knowledge and skills needed to deal assertively with hostile and dangerous situations. The program is based on two core assumptions:

- that children need to be able to identify how they feel when they are in unsafe situations
- that children need to know how to enlist the help of other people when they feel unsafe.

The program uses the following five strategies:

1. Theme Reinforcement:- Two themes encapsulate the program's philosophical commitment to children's rights. The themes - 'We all have a right to feel safe all the time', and 'Nothing is so awful that we can't talk about it with someone' - are introduced and reinforced throughout the program using a range of teaching approaches.

2. Network Review:- Children are taught how to identify and maintain, through regular review, a 'network' or list of people to whom they could go for help if they ever felt unsafe.
3. Persistence Expectation:- Children are taught, through the continual reinforcement of the two themes, that they should tell someone if they are being maltreated and are feeling unsafe. The Protective Behaviours program proceeds one step further by emphasising the need for children to 'go on telling' until someone acts on their behalf to stop whatever it is that is making them feel unsafe.
4. One Step Removed Strategy:- The main teaching approach suggested in the program involves the use of hypothetical, non-personal scenarios that are designed to help children think about how to apply the principles of the program in an imagined situation. Children are encouraged to discuss appropriate actions in response to a wide range of threatening events. These events are described in terms that are personally distant from the children but, nevertheless, relevant to their experiences. By using the 'one step removed' strategy, teachers are able to introduce a variety of hypothetical situations in which children may be unsafe, without directly involving children in the class who may have experienced abuse or maltreatment in similar situations.
5. Protective Interrupting:- In order to protect children who have been abused from the possibility of further distress and embarrassment caused by public self-disclosure, teachers are encouraged to use the 'one step removed' strategy when discussing various kinds of abuse, and to 'protectively' interrupt children if they begin self-disclosing. The program suggests that teachers should encourage children who begin to disclose details of their abuse to 'tell' when they are likely to feel safer, that is, away from the inquisitive ears of the large group.

These features of the program are presented in the following teachers' manuals.

- *Protective Behaviours Manual* (commonly called 'The Blue Book') (1984).
- *The Basic Essentials: Protective Behaviours Anti-victimisation and Empowerment Process* (1989).
- *Safe Start Safe Future: An Integrated Curriculum Approach to Child Protection in Early Childhood Settings based on the Protective Behaviours Program* (1991).
- *Keep Safe* (1993).
- *The Right to Feel Safe* (1995).

Up until mid-1990, teaching manuals could only be purchased by teachers who had undergone appropriate training in the program.

TEACHER TRAINING

Negotiations between the Education Department of South Australia and the author of the Protective Behaviours program resulted in agreement about the nature and scope of training

required by teachers before they could teach the program in state schools. Support teachers were appointed to most metropolitan and some country districts to train other teachers in the program. A minimum of six hours of training was necessary for certification as a trained Protective Behaviours teacher. The training schedule closely followed that modelled by Flandreau West in her original workshops and included sessions on:

- definitions of child abuse and neglect
- statistics on reported cases of abuse and neglect; statistics on the prevalence of abuse
- the 'Discount Continuum', a conceptualisation of the denial of child abuse and neglect
- the two themes
- networks
- the use of 'What if ...' situations
- the use of role play
- classroom climate and teaching styles
- 'victim language'
- assertiveness
- indicators of abuse
- verbal abuse, sexual abuse, and domestic violence
- sexual harassment
- barriers to implementation of program and how to overcome them
- role of parents and the school community.

A range of teaching approaches was used. A strong emphasis was placed on activity-based small groupwork in which participants were encouraged to confront the issues under review while, at the same time, remaining emotionally 'safe'. Trainers modelled a number of the key strategies used in Protective Behaviours (eg, 'protective interrupting', and role playing 'what if ...' situations) as well as demonstrating how to teach about sensitive areas of the program like sexual abuse. Discussion and reflection times were programed in all sessions to provide participants with opportunities to question and probe what was being presented. Participant evaluation of the training experience also took place.

Following the initial six hours of training some teachers were encouraged to undergo a further six hours of training to prepare them as Protective Behaviours trainers. This 'train-the-trainer' model was endorsed as a relatively quick, simple, economical and effective means of training a large number of teachers. The beguilingly simple rationale for the training approach is best expressed by Brown (1986[b]):

> In order to train someone to teach Protective Behaviours, all that is necessary is for the person to assimilate and internalise the themes of the program, and to practise using the strategies. I would therefore train representatives from all different learning environments in the same manner ...
> (Brown, 1986[b]: 151)

Brown's initial optimism about the simplicity and efficacy of the training approach was not shared by experienced Protective Behaviours support teachers (McVeity, 1990). The following measures were taken by the Education Department of South Australia to ensure that training met minimum requirements:

- the development of specific guidelines about the pre-requisite training, knowledge, skill and commitment needed by accredited trainers
- setting the minimum training time for teachers at 12 hours and for trainers at 18 hours
- developing an accreditation data base of all trained personnel
- publishing explicit expectations in relation to school based training in the Education Gazette
- encouraging Protective Behaviours trainers to review their training methods.

Following internal reviews of their approaches to training during 1990, Protective Behaviours support teachers modified both the content and timing of their training sessions (McVeity, 1992). Prior to this time, however, the Flandreau West model of teacher training was followed closely.

NUMBER OF TEACHERS TRAINED

Despite the best efforts of Protective Behaviours support staff, the de-centralisation of much of the management and co-ordination of Protective Behaviours training during the late 1980s led to a diversification and fragmentation of efforts to establish and maintain accurate records of the number of teachers who were trained in Protective Behaviours. At the end of 1992, incomplete records were retrieved from former regional offices of the Education Department of South Australia and from key training staff in the Children's Services Office. A data-base of trained teachers was compiled. This revealed that approximately 8,000 teachers in South Australia were trained in Protective Behaviours from 1985 to 1992, with most receiving training in the period 1987-90 (for more details see Chapter 4 - Methodology).

CRITICISM OF THE PROGRAM

Because of the ideological orientation of the program, it is not surprising that the program has been critically scrutinised by individuals and groups who hold opposing values positions. The most vehement public criticism of the program occurred in Victoria and South Australia. In stinging critiques of the program and the generic features it shares with other school based primary prevention programs, Arndt (1988), Partington (1989), Hallpike (1989), and Yates (1990) challenged the foundations of the program. Briefly, they were critical of the program for the following reasons.

- It is based on a 'radical' feminist ideology of personal 'empowerment' that repudiates traditional family values defining parents' and children's rights and responsibilities.

- It places too much responsibility on children to avoid or resist abuse. Adults should be responsible for the protection of children.
- It encourages children to distrust members of their own families. This distrust builds barriers between children and their fathers, in particular.
- It teaches all children to be concerned about their personal safety when only a small minority of children needs to be wary.
- It destroys children's innocence.
- It makes children afraid and anxious.
- It confuses children about appropriate and inappropriate touching. Many children label 'normal' touching (warm hugs and cuddles, or washing) as 'bad touching'.
- It confuses abuse with mild corporal punishment and, as a consequence, challenges parents' right to discipline their children by smacking them.
- It teaches children to rely on their 'early warning signs' to help them determine good from bad, rather than on what they are told is right or wrong, good or bad.
- It leads to an increase in unwarranted accusations of abuse.
- It presents complex concepts that are beyond most children's understanding.
- It is based on unsubstantiated assertions that have never been thoroughly researched or evaluated.
- Its proponents are zealots who fail to reply to criticism of the program.

In South Australia, criticism of the program reached a height in mid-1990 with the publication, in the daily press, of several largely negative articles on the Protective Behaviours program. In reply, the Director General of Education, the Director of Catholic Education, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Family and Community Services wrote a joint letter to the editor of *The Advertiser*, fully endorsing Protective Behaviours as a program of 'substance and effect' (*The Advertiser*, 30th August, 1990). They cited 'local research' to substantiate their claim despite the paucity of published research in the area.

Australian criticism of the Protective Behaviours program did not occur in isolation from a growing body of opinion critical of similar programs in the United States. In the U.S., Kraizer (1986), Wurtele (1987), Krivacska (1990) and Daro (1990) identified serious flaws in the conceptualisation of many school based prevention programs, and cautioned against raising public expectations about the capacity of school based prevention programs to achieve their often ambitious aims.

THE DECISION TO EVALUATE THE PROGRAM

In this climate of growing uncertainty about the efficacy of the Protective Behaviours program, the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on Child Protection Policies, Practices and Procedures in South Australia 'heard various reports' about the Protective Behaviours program, some of which were negative. In its Report to Parliament, the Committee noted that

> the program is being assessed and updated and recommends that the Education Department continues to consult with parents and to involve them in the program.
> (Parliament of South Australia, 1991, Recommendation 26: 3)

Following the publication of the Committee's Report, the Education Department of South Australia appointed a State Project Officer for Child Protection who was given responsibility, 'as a priority', for initiating a 'review of the Protective Behaviours program'. When the South Australian Child Protection Council was informed of the Education Department's decision to proceed with a review, representatives of the other Education providers in the state indicated that their organisations (Catholic Education Office, Independent Schools Board, and Children's Services Office) would participate in and support such a review (South Australian Child Protection Council Minutes, 26th February, 1992).

NEED FOR AN INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Representatives of the Education Department of South Australia, Children's Services Office, Independent Schools Board, and Catholic Education Office met in March 1992 to establish the terms of reference for the Protective Behaviours Review. Due to the level of public and political interest in the Protective Behaviours program, and the nature of criticism directed at the program, these representatives decided that the proposed Review be undertaken by an independent researcher without ties to the program or the four education agencies. Techsearch, the business and consultancy arm of the University of South Australia, was engaged to use its tendering process to identify and employ a suitably qualified researcher. It selected Bruce Johnson, Senior Lecturer in Education, University of South Australia, to conduct the Review.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE REVIEW

The terms of reference of the Review reflected the interest of the commissioning groups in addressing both program implementation issues and program outcomes for students.

Specifically, the Review addressed the following questions.

1. What is the nature and extent of teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program in South Australian pre-schools and schools?
2. What factors affect teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program?
3. Are students who have been taught Protective Behaviours more able to identify unsafe situations than students who have not been taught Protective Behaviours?
4. Do students who have been taught Protective Behaviours have greater knowledge of personal safety strategies than students who have not been taught Protective Behaviours?
5. Do factors like the extent of parental reinforcement of the program, student age, gender, learning ability, and socio-economic status influence learning outcomes in Protective Behaviours?

STAGES OF THE REVIEW

The Review was planned in two linked stages. Stage 1, which was undertaken during 1993, focussed on teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program. Stage 2, which was undertaken during 1994, focussed on student outcomes.

SUMMARY

The Education Department of South Australia followed the lead of Victorian child protection experts in selecting the Protective Behaviours program for use in South Australian schools and pre-schools. The program shares many of the generic features of other school based prevention programs, being committed to 'empowering' children so that they can use personal safety knowledge and strategies to avoid or resist victimisation. The Education Department, along with the Children's Services Office committed considerable human resources, particularly between 1987 and 1990, to an inservice teacher training program which resulted in large numbers of teachers and child care workers receiving training to teach the Protective Behaviours program to children.

During 1992 the major education providers in South Australia agreed on the terms of reference for a Review of the Protective Behaviours program. The critical climate in which the decision was made to conduct the evaluation influenced the construction of the terms of reference of the Review and the way it was managed independently of the major stakeholders in the program.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

In the interests of simplicity and clarity, research about the teaching of personal safety programs is dealt with, in this chapter, separately from research about the impact of programs on children's learning. This separation allows insights from a diverse range of fields to be synthesised and applied to the problems under investigation. The search for relevant literature transcended traditional discipline and subject boundaries to encompass research in the following areas:

- child abuse prevention
- personal safety program design
- program evaluation
- program implementation
- teacher development
- school change
- child development
- child psychology

Both Australian and international research was accessed. However, due to the scope of the literature, the review presented here is necessarily selective. In the case of much of the overseas research, details of specific program evaluations and studies are not given. Rather, the broad implications of the findings of these studies are summarised to guide the conceptualisation of the Review and to provide the basis for a rigorous analysis of its outcomes. Greater detail is provided on the results and implications of Australian research in the area as these were considered more relevant and significant to the South Australian context.

TEACHING ABOUT PERSONAL SAFETY

While many parents teach children about personal safety, schools are considered ideal sites for the systematic delivery of programs designed to teach children how to recognise unsafe situations and what to do to avoid being being hurt. In the United States, school based programs vary in length (from one-off sessions to 10+ weeks of intensive instruction), use a variety of materials and media (puppets, stories, video, student workbooks, plays, comics), employ a variety of teaching approaches (rote learning of safety 'rules', role play, guided rehearsal, problem solving, direct instruction), and use a variety of presenters and facilitators (outside visitors, actors, child protection specialists, teachers). In Australia, however, fewer programs are used in schools, and classroom teachers have almost exclusive responsibility for the teaching of programs like Protective Behaviours. Consequently, the knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills of teachers in this area are of prime interest to those concerned with school

based abuse prevention strategies. Due to this interest, literature was reviewed that revealed insights into teachers' use of new curricula generally, and personal safety curricula in particular, and what factors help and hinder them during the implementation process.

a) Program Implementation

Given the widespread adoption of personal safety programs in schools, there is surprisingly little research into the nature and extent of use of the programs by teachers. Most research focuses on the impact of programs on children's learning without reference to issues of program implementation by teachers. However, some insights into the thinking and instructional decision making of teachers can be gleaned from the international and Australian literature.

A reading of the wider literature on the implementation of educational innovations generally, reveals that it is a problematic area. In his influential treatise on the processes of educational change, Fullan (1982; 1991) critiques what he calls 'faulty assumptions and ways of thinking' about how reforms can be 'installed' in schools. Drawing on a comprehensive body of research on the implementation of planned educational change in schools since the 1960s, Fullan systematically exposes the flawed thinking behind many attempts to introduce new programs in schools. In the process, he provides a succinct list of realistic and unrealistic assumptions about the implementation of new programs in schools. He suggests that the 'realities of implementation' (Fullan, 1982: 91-2) should be confronted by accepting that:

- implementation of new programs involves a certain amount of ambiguity, ambivalence, and uncertainty.
- implementation consists of some transformation or continual development of initial ideas, rather than the faithful replication of a program in different settings.
- effective change takes time. It is a process of 'development in use'.
- implementation will only be effective under conditions which allow people to react, to form their own position, to interact with other implementers, to obtain technical assistance.
- lack of implementation is often due to the complex interaction of number of factors: value rejection, inadequate resources to support implementation, insufficient time elapsed.
- implementing change is a frustrating, discouraging business.

These observations provide a wider view of the issues related to teachers' implementation of personal safety curricula like Protective Behaviours. They permit a new appraisal of what can be expected of teachers confronted with the task of operationalising these programs. In short, they provide an alternative to the 'hyper-rational' (Wise, 1977), input-output models of program use which have implicitly informed much of the thinking about school based child abuse prevention initiatives.

In a major independent evaluation of the Protective Behaviours program and a derivative called Personal Safety (Crime Prevention Education Consultancy Group, 1989), Dwyer reports concerns about program implementation (Dwyer, 1990). In focussing on the 'process of program implementation', Dwyer builds a strong case against the premature examination of program outcomes. She describes implementation research as the 'logical precursor' to research that is concerned with the impact on children of primary prevention programs.

> This evaluation ... starts with the assumption that child empowerment will follow if a child receives the program in positive conditions. However, the process by which the program is provided cannot be assumed to be fully in place, given early indications that the adult 'gatekeepers' may find the teaching of the programs initially challenging.
> (Dwyer, 1990: 5)

Using survey and interview approaches, Dwyer found that both programs had made a significant impact on teachers and school communities - 'a high level of support and interest in both programs was expressed by ... many schools' (Dwyer, 1990: 6). Dwyer also found that

> many teachers encounter some initial challenges in implementing the program/s. ... This issue, combined with very busy curricula and a perception of an overall increase in the areas over which teachers are expected to take responsibility, can lead to a situation where the program is taught in a largely ad-hoc way. ... Teachers who are supposed to be teaching it delay the systematic teaching of the program, or avoid addressing the more sensitive areas.
> (Dwyer, 1990: 6)

Similar concerns over program implementation were raised by Morrissey (1989) in an earlier South Australian study. Using focus group interviews, Morrissey investigated teachers' views of the Protective Behaviours program and whether or not they actually taught it.

> The impetus for this project came from my concern that although many teachers and other school based people in the Southern Area had been trained in the Protective Behaviours program (approximately 500 at that time), relatively few people, it appeared, were actually implementing it in classrooms. I was curious to explore this apparent situation, and .... to research the reasons for this situation.
> (Morrissey, 1989: 1)

Morrissey confirmed that many teachers had not implemented key features of the program in their classrooms; rather, selective use of parts of the program seemed to be quite common.

In early 1990, Hudson undertook a questionnaire study to investigate teachers'

> attitudes towards the teaching of the Protective Behaviours program within the classroom. In particular, it is concerned with those factors that work against implementation and those factors which facilitate implementation.
> (Hudson, 1990: 1)

Preliminary analyses of Hudson's data revealed that more than half of the 61 teachers surveyed had never implemented any part of the program with any class following training. Furthermore, only a quarter of the teachers were teaching the program at the time of the survey.

Prompted by these findings, Johnson undertook an in-depth interview study involving 35 Protective Behaviours trained teachers in six schools in the northern suburbs of Adelaide (Johnson, 1991; 1992; 1994). A semi-structured interview protocol was employed to elicit information about teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program, their decision making about the program, and the range of factors that affected their teaching of the program. Despite undergoing training and having the opportunity to teach the program, some teachers (8 of the 35 teachers interviewed) had never used any aspects of the program with their classes. Only 3 teachers reported using the *complete* program. The majority of teachers (24 of the 35 teachers interviewed) were selective users of parts of the program. Most often omitted from the Protective Behaviours program were sections dealing with unwanted sexual touching, domestic violence, and networking. These sections were seen to be quite sensitive compared with other aspects of the program and, as such, were considered to be 'difficult' to discuss or deal with in the classroom. On the basis of these revelations, Johnson tentatively warns that 'it cannot be assumed that primary prevention programs are implemented by teachers in ways that are consistent with program design' (Johnson, 1994: 259).

School based research by Briggs (1990) at the same time revealed similar patterns of selective use of the Protective Behaviours program by teachers in eight Adelaide Junior Primary schools.

In a broader survey study in New South Wales, Chesterton, Johnston, and Sanber (1992) examined the extent to which people trained in Protective Behaviours - mostly teachers, social workers, and police officers - 'have been able to use their training' (Chesterton, et al., 1992: 30). They report that 35% of the 286 teachers who responded to their survey had not used their training at all, or had used it to a limited extent.

In summary, these studies challenge the view that teachers, who have been trained to teach personal safety programs like Protective Behaviours, implement them with a high degree of uniformity, at the same time and at the same rate. They point to the naivety and simplicity of assuming rapid, highly consistent implementation of programs following training. In doing so, they demonstrate the need to explore more fully the 'dilemmas, ambivalences, and paradoxes' of the implementation process (Fullan, 1991: 350).

b) Factors Affecting Program Implementation

Woodward (1990) reviews the work of several international researchers with an interest in teachers' responses to personal safety curricula during the implementation process. She concludes that many teachers feel 'overwhelmed and unprepared for the responsibility' of

teaching personal safety programs (Woodward, 1990: 45). Woodward identifies a smorgasbord of issues that may contribute to this, including the following:

- fear of adverse parental reaction to programs
- concerns about possible unintended negative effects on children
- emotional reaction to, and denial of, the 'unsavoury reality' of child abuse
- training that is too brief and superficial to address teachers' concerns
- lack of school-level support to implement programs
- inadequate liaison with outside child protection agencies.

Trudell and Whatley (1988) list similar issues of concern for teachers. As some of these are revealed in Australian research into the implementation of the Protective Behaviours program, they will be discussed more fully under the following sub-headings.

Teachers' Affective Responses

It is widely recognised that the issues surrounding the physical, sexual and emotional maltreatment of children by adults are disturbing, confronting, and at times controversial. It isn't surprising, then, that programs designed to prevent the victimisation of children expose sensitivities about parents' and children's rights, child rearing practices, interpersonal violence, and exploitative forms of sexual expression involving children. Many teachers, both as professionals with child welfare responsibilities and as members of the wider community, share feelings of ill-ease when issues of child abuse are raised (Levin, 1983; Johnson, 1994). Indeed, teachers' close and intensive personal involvement with children probably makes the issue of child abuse even more poignant and disturbing for them than for other members of society who do not work with and care for children on a daily basis. The affective responses of teachers to the broader issues related to child abuse and its prevention have been found to impact significantly on their decision making about personal safety curricula.

Morrissey (1989) found that teachers' personal concerns about aspects of the Protective Behaviours program affected their decisions about what parts of the Protective Behaviours program they taught.

> Many people are afraid to implement the program due to lack of confidence, lack of school support, fear of the personal nature of the program, [and] not knowing how to adapt the program to their classroom.
> (Morrissey, 1989: 23)

In particular, she found that teachers were often reluctant to use the program because:

- the program requires 'use of self' and this threatens some people
- they fear damaging the teacher/student and teacher/parent relationship
- they fear talking about the material contained in the abuse sessions

- they lack confidence in their ability to teach the program in a positive way
- they fear their own experiences of abuse will surface

(Morrissey, 1989: 10)

The relationship between essentially personal concerns and those connected with school and classroom contexts is made clear in Morrissey's study. Morrissey points to the importance of these personal perspectives in affecting teachers' decision making about whether or not to teach parts of the program.

Similarly, Johnson (1994) reports that the

> personalisation of the decision to teach the Protective Behaviours program seems to be a key explanatory factor in understanding widespread selective use of the program.
> (Johnson, 1994: 266)

He details a process, linked to a training policy that encouraged teachers to 'keep themselves emotionally safe', that inadvertently 'gave permission' to teachers to use personal justifications to omit aspects of the program that they found 'difficult, 'upsetting' or 'painful'. While he is critical of the lack of *professional* justifications in teachers' decision making, Johnson acknowledges the personal difficulties experienced by some teachers. He writes that,

> It would be easy to criticise teachers and to depict them as overly conservative laggards who mindlessly oppose curriculum change in the area of child protection. However, reading the transcripts of their interviews reveals the depth of concern most teachers have for their pupils and for their well-being. Yet their attempts to reconcile these concerns for their pupils' welfare with their own sensitivities and difficulties coming to grips with the realities of child abuse make tortuous reading. Many teachers seem to agonise over the issues, and experience considerable personal difficulty coping. Many recognise the dilemma they face and express guilt and a sense of personal failure over their reluctance to teach sections of the program.
> (Johnson, 1994: 264)

Briggs and Hawkins (1994[a]: 225) are less accepting of the personal reasons given by teachers to account for their selective use of the program. They accuse teachers of 'negligence' in avoiding teaching those aspects of personal safety programs 'involving adult misbehaviour and issues to do with sexuality', due to 'insufficient confidence'.

These accounts are consistent with more general analyses of the cognitive and affective dimensions of teaching (Nespor, 1987; Munby, 1982). However, they only detail teachers' overt personal justifications of selective use of programs like Protective Behaviours. Perhaps of greater importance are the largely *implicit* beliefs and taken for granted assumptions of teachers about such fundamental issues as the incidence of child abuse and the efficacy of school based prevention programs. Furthermore, they under-emphasise experiential and contextual factors associated with particular schools which may significantly constrain or support the teaching of

the program. To further explore these factors, a review of some of the literature on teacher development and school change was undertaken.

Teacher Development

There is a vast literature on the professional development of teachers and its impact on a range of school and student outcomes, including program implementation. Studies of teacher learning have established the importance of several principles of effective teacher development (Department for Employment, Education and Training (DEET), 1988; Queensland Board of Teacher Registration, 1991). There is general consensus that teachers seem to learn best when:

- they participate voluntarily in training and development activities.
- they participate in programs to improve their professional competence.
- theoretical issues are linked to classroom practice. In this sense, the professional development activities are contextualised within the real world of the practitioner. Teachers have opportunities to focus on issues relevant to their own classrooms and children's learning, and to use theoretical frameworks and others' experiences to help them formulate their own responses.
- the knowledge and expertise of teachers is respected and used.
- programs are well spaced over time. This allows teachers to address concerns about new roles and practices, and their impact on students. In other words, term-long programs enable teachers to accommodate and apply new ideas incrementally in their own setting at their own pace.
- programs are systematic, inter-related, and rigorous. Teachers should be encouraged to read between sessions, conduct classroom investigations, and report findings to their learning group.

(Barnett, Johnson, and Badger, 1992: 34)

There is also general endorsement of the view that

> Teachers **can** change their teaching practices if they are provided with quality professional development opportunities.
> (Barnett, Johnson, and Badger, 1992: 34)

Fullan is similarly convinced that teacher professional development can significantly influence the outcome of school reform initiatives (Fullan, 1990). However, rather than focus on aspects of externally provided 'training' for teachers, Fullan places far greater importance on school level interactions and peer relationships that help teachers develop 'new meanings, new behaviours, new skills, and new beliefs' (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991: 77).

> The quality of working relationships among teachers is strongly related to implementation. Collegiality, open communication, trust, support and help, learning on the job, getting results, and job satisfaction and morale are closely interrelated.
> (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991: 77)

While Fullan and his supporters have recently warned of the dangers of embracing strange mutations of these socio-professional processes ('contrived collegiality' being one) (Hargreaves and Dawe, 1990; Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992; Smyth, 1993; Johnson and Moraw, 1994), the power of school level support mechanisms in bringing about changes in teaching practices is now widely recognised.

These analyses, with their focus on school level collegial activity during the arduous implementation process, bring into question the efficacy of technical, largely non-social, pre-implementation 'training' approaches to teacher development. In so doing, they seriously undermine confidence in the capacity of training strategies and techniques to transmit the pre-determined knowledge and skills presumed to be needed to 'operationalise' new programs and methodologies. However, in their quest to assert the power of teachers to act collectively in the interests of sound educational and social reform, they run the risk of under emphasising the power of contextual factors to limit or expand teachers' 'decision making space' (Smith, 1984). Clearly, any comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of program implementation should include these factors as well.

School Context

There is a growing body of research which suggests that the organisational and cultural climate of schools acts in very powerful ways to either promote or inhibit the implementation of changes. There is also abundant evidence that school principals play an important role in defining and shaping the organisational conditions necessary for effective implementation, conditions such as the development of shared goals and clear plans to reach them, collaborative work structures and climates, and the provision of adequate resources (Leithwood and Montgomery, 1982; Barth, 1990; Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991). However, attempts to 'engineer' these conditions for single innovations without addressing more fundamental features of school climate and organisation, inevitably fail (Fullan, 1990). Leithwood's work, for example, points to the need for principals to use very broad strategies to transform the culture of the school towards a stronger improvement orientation. He and Jantzi (Leithwood and Jantzi 1990, quoted in Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991: 161-2) suggest that principals need to:

- use a variety of means to stimulate cultural change
- value and promote staff learning
- talk frequently and seriously about shared and contested norms, values and beliefs
- share power and responsibility for school improvement.

None of this complex new literature supports a view of principals as educational managers who follow superficial 'recipes' to provide 'support' for program implementation. The organisational processes related to successful school and classroom change are deep, powerful, and resistant to such short term manipulation.

c) A Model of Teacher Thought and Action

These revelations - a greater appreciation of teachers' affective responses to change initiatives (particularly controversial ones), an emerging understanding of how teachers learn best, and a growing appreciation of the complexity of schools as social organisations - contribute to a more elaborate view of the change process than previously conceived. However, their different origins and intellectual traditions make the task of integrating them quite difficult. Clark and Peterson (1986) attempted to do this to try to make sense of two diverse research perspectives. Firstly, the dominant process-product research paradigm in educational research with its pre-occupation with teacher action. Secondly, a newly emerging paradigm which seeks to uncover the previously hidden thought processes occurring 'inside teachers' heads' (Clark and Peterson, 1986: 257). While they developed their model of 'teacher thought and action' primarily to provide a framework for a review of research on teachers' thought processes, it is useful in depicting the relationships between some of the more salient influences on program implementation identified above.

Clark and Peterson's model depicts hypothesised relationships between teachers' actions in the classroom, their thought processes, and a range of 'opportunities and constraints' in their professional environment. The three domains in their model neatly relate implementation outcomes (Teachers' Actions and their Effects) to school level and other support factors (Opportunities and Constraints), and to teacher decision making (Teachers' Thought Processes).

However, Clark and Peterson's model assumes that these relationships are reciprocal; they reject the assumption, typically held by process-product researchers, that causality is unidirectional. They assume, for example, that teachers' thinking and decision making influences their actions, **and** that their actions, in turn, influence their thinking.

> Rather than representing the direction of causation as linear, we think that it is more accurate to represent the direction of causation as cyclical or circular.
> (Clark and Peterson, 1986: 257)

While having the same reductionist faults of most theoretical models, Clark and Peterson's model serves as a synthesising tool that enables a clearer view of suggested relationships between factors drawn from diverse research perspectives. Furthermore, by incorporating contextual factors - elements within schools which constrain or stimulate teacher action and thought - the model draws on research in the burgeoning fields of program implementation, school leadership, organisational change and teacher professional development briefly reviewed above.

In the context of the Review of Protective Behaviours in South Australia, the model was used to depict groupings of factors that were of interest in an analysis of teachers' use of the program (see Figure 3).

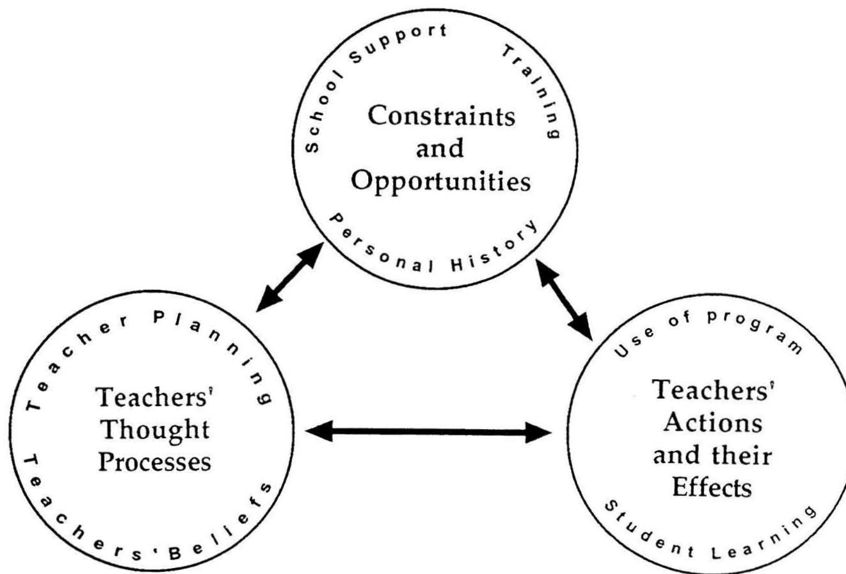


Figure 3: A Model of Teacher Thought and Action (Adapted from Clark and Peterson, 1986: 256)

More specifically, the model was used to focus attention on:

- Opportunities and Constraints
    - School Context
        - nature and extent of support for teaching of program
    - Training in Protective Behaviours
        - reasons for undertaking training
        - type of course delivery experienced
        - extent of consultation
        - extent of extra training
    - Personal history
        - contact with abused children
        - personal memories of abuse

- Teachers' Thought Processes
    - Beliefs about Child Abuse
        - beliefs about prevalence of child abuse
        - theories and beliefs about the causes of child abuse
        - beliefs about the efficacy of school based prevention programs
    - Decision Making about Program
        - reasons for deciding not to use program or for using it in limited way
        - reasons for deciding to use program in detailed way

- Teachers' Actions and their Effects
    - Teaching of Protective Behaviours
        - use of five features of program
        - extent of detail taught
    - Student Learning in Protective Behaviours

d) Hypotheses about Teaching Protective Behaviours

The process of synthesising the literature briefly reviewed here, provided opportunities to speculate about which factors may be important in shaping the implementation of Protective Behaviours. Given these general insights, and the more specific findings of past studies of teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program, the following hypotheses were tentatively advanced:

Teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program is selective and varied.

An overwhelming body of research suggests that teachers very rarely implement new programs uniformly across all schools. Program implementation is more realistically viewed as a variable process that involves some transformation and on-going development of initial ideas, rather than the pure replication of a set program in all settings. Past qualitative, and small scale quantitative research into teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program suggests that this was likely to be the case with the implementation of the program more generally in South Australian schools.

Teacher decision making about the program is complex; personal issues and beliefs intertwine with teacher development issues, and school support issues in influencing teachers' decisions to teach or not teach the program.

Given the complexity of the implementation process, it was thought unlikely that strong, linear causal explanations of teachers' implementation behaviour would be identified. It was considered more likely that a complex web of interconnected factors is linked to implementation outcomes.

School level support during the implementation process promotes teacher use of the program.

Despite the complexity of the implementation process, it was thought likely that some factors would emerge as important influences on teachers' use of the program. Given the emphasis in the literature on school level interactions and peer relationships, it was thought likely that these would emerge as an important influence on program implementation, together with other school level supports.

Personal concern with the sensitivity and controversial nature of many of the issues addressed in the program inhibits teachers' use of the program.

Qualitative studies have suggested a strong link between teachers' personal concerns about the program, and their subsequent decisions not to teach parts of it. It was thought that these sensitivities prompt some teachers to omit those sections of the program that are perceived to be controversial and/or personally difficult to confront.

Teachers at pre-school and junior primary levels teach the program in less detail than teachers at other levels.

Pre-school and junior primary teachers may consider some personal safety knowledge and strategies to be inappropriate for young children. In particular, it was thought that specific reference to sexual maltreatment may not occur at these levels.

LEARNING ABOUT PERSONAL SAFETY

a) Synthesis of International Research

The rapid proliferation of school based personal safety programs in the 1980s occurred largely without the benefit of thorough research into the effectiveness of the programs in achieving their aims with children. Commentators have criticised the largely unquestioned acceptance of key components of personal safety programs and their assumed efficacy in promoting children's personal safety skills (Trudell and Whatley, 1988; Krivacska, 1990; Duerr Berrick and Gilbert, 1990). For example, Krivacska is particularly scathing in his criticism of prevention programs that

> appear to be based on personal prejudices, opinions or beliefs, and are reinforced by pseudo-scientific program evaluations.
> (Krivacska, 1990: x)

He believes that a collective 'desperation to do something (or perhaps more importantly, anything) to prevent sexual abuse' has inhibited the 'reasoned scientific evaluation of prevention and its effectiveness'.

Duerr Berrick and Gilbert (1991: 12) echo Krivacska's concerns with an apparent lack of commitment to program evaluation, suggesting that there is a 'huge zone of uncertainty' between the intent of personal safety programs and the achievement of recognisable outcomes. Duerr Berrick and Gilbert (1990) maintain that child sexual abuse prevention efforts are part of a 'righteous cause' invested with 'ideological fervour'. They assert that

> the ideological commitment to empower children, which endowed the movement with resolution and unity, also deprived it of a certain resiliency that might have encouraged more serious consideration of research evidence...
> Duerr Berrick and Gilbert (1990: 29)

Such criticisms are symptomatic of deep ideological divisions in the field of child protection that are frequently revealed when research 'evidence' from evaluation studies of prevention programs is interpreted and commented upon.

Reviews of the international literature (Tutty, 1994; Carroll, Miltenberger, and O'Neil 1992; Chesterton, et al., 1992; Dwyer, 1990; Wurtele, 1987; Finkelhor and Strapko, 1987; Reppuci and Haugaard, 1989) reveal sometimes contradictory evidence about the impact of school based personal safety programs on children. Identifying program design or policy implications from this complex body of research is extremely difficult due to the tentative status of much of the research reviewed.

However, it is possible to discern a number of tentative conclusions about school based personal safety programs that have relevance to the Review of Protective Behaviours in South Australia. They provided a theoretical context in which factors associated with the use and impact of the program could be investigated. Briefly, the international literature suggests that:

- school based personal safety programs frequently increase students' knowledge of prevention concepts, although gains are usually small (frequently 1-2 point scores) (Finkelhor, 1994; Lawrie and Stewart, 1993).
- children retain knowledge over time, although some retention loss seems inevitable (Briggs and Hawkins, 1994[b]).
- student age and developmental stage influence learning outcomes, with older children demonstrating greater knowledge of prevention concepts and strategies than younger children (Tutty, 1994).
- children as young as 4 years old can learn some prevention concepts although results are equivocal about which particular concepts present difficulties for young children (Tutty, 1994).
- results are equivocal about the influence on learning outcomes of student background factors like gender, self esteem, family socio-economic status, and parental teaching of prevention concepts (Wurtele, et al., 1986; Hazzard, et al., 1991; Briggs and Hawkins, 1994[b]; Lawrie and Stewart, 1993).
- despite initial fears that prevention programs would increase student anxiety (Krivascka, 1990; Trudell and Whatley, 1988), prevention programs do not appear to cause adverse side effects (Carroll, et al., 1992; Hazzard, et al., 1991).

b) Australian Research on the Impact of Protective Behaviours

Several of these general themes can be detected in a number of small scale and largely unpublished studies of the impact of the Protective Behaviours program in Victoria, South Australia, and the Australian Capital Territory.

Early evaluations of the program were produced by two schools which trialled the program in 1984 (Killen, et al., 1984, and Ryszczak, 1984, quoted in Australian Protective Behaviours Network, 1989, and Dwyer, 1990). Both studies used pre and post tests of student knowledge acquisition and attitude development. Both reported positive outcomes related to the teaching of the Protective Behaviours program; students were reported to have developed more self confidence, new knowledge about the likely sources of personal danger, and new skills that enabled them to 'use their networks' when they needed help.

A larger questionnaire study (32 teachers and 455 students) was conducted in 1986 to evaluate the trialling of the Protective Behaviours program in the Australian Capital Territory. Again, the results of the evaluation were positive.

> ... teachers were able to successfully implement the program in their schools, and the majority of students were able to acquire the knowledge and skills that would enable them to 'keep themselves safe'.
> (Australian Protective Behaviours Network, 1989: 6)

A quasi-experimental study was undertaken during 1987 and early 1988 by a specially funded group from the Parks Community Health Service and Parks District Office of the Department for Community Welfare in Adelaide's western suburbs. The project aimed 'to initiate and evaluate Protective Behaviours Training for adolescents in the Parks area' (Newton and Wade, 1988: 6). Using two male and female control groups and two experimental groups with approximately 10 adolescents in each, the effects of the Protective Behaviours program were measured using pre and post tests of knowledge acquisition. Results of the study indicated that the experimental groups scored significantly higher than the control groups. However, informal feedback from the experimental groups which had undergone Protective Behaviours training suggested that aspects of the program needed to be modified 'so that it would be more understandable to the students as well as making the repetitive aspects of the program more interesting' (Newton and Wade, 1988: 3).

Another early study of the Protective Behaviours program raised questions about the capacity of the program to achieve its stated aims, particularly with young children. In a highly critical report, Fogl and Prior (1989) concluded that

> from both teacher reports and children's responses, it is clear that the content of Protective Behaviours is too abstract for nine-year olds to learn...
>
> This evaluation suggests that the uncritical adoption of the same Protective Behaviours program for all children of all ages (as is presently the case) is inappropriate. It also points to the fact that teachers need support throughout the teaching of the program, so that it is taught in its entirety. When this is done with children of Grade 5 and above, there is a good indication that the exercise may be worthwhile.
> (Fogl and Prior, 1989: 12-13)

By far the most thorough and influential studies of the Protective Behaviours program were undertaken by Briggs in collaboration with Herbert, and later with Hawkins (Briggs and Herbert, 1989; Briggs, 1990; 1991; Briggs and Hawkins, 1994[a], 1994[b]). In a series of related studies in South Australia and New Zealand, Briggs and her colleagues interviewed more than 400 children aged between 5 years and 8 years to investigate their understanding of the concept of 'unsafe feelings', and their ability to suggest personal safety strategies when presented with hypothetical 'unsafe' scenarios. Comparisons were made between children's scores obtained from initial and follow-up interviews and between the scores of children who had been taught the Protective Behaviours program in South Australia and those who had been taught a program called *Keeping Ourselves Safe* in New Zealand.

Briggs' findings are startling (Briggs, 1991). She establishes that young children's concept of 'unsafe' varies between ages five and eight, with younger children showing unexpectedly high levels of personal fearlessness. When they disclose instances of feeling afraid, children frequently focus on threats from 'monsters', wild animals, and ghosts, rather than from

humans. As a consequence, Briggs criticises personal safety programs - like Protective Behaviours - that rely on children developing and becoming aware of feelings of fear (their 'early warning signs'). She concludes that

> it is unlikely that the identification of 'unsafe feelings' can be relied upon as an efficient means of avoiding sexual abuse, least of all if the abuse involves sexual fondling in the context of an otherwise affectionate relationship.
> (Briggs, 1991: 65-6)

Briggs also raises questions about young children's ability to differentiate between 'good' and 'bad' secrets, their willingness to 'tell' adults if they feel unsafe, and adults' willingness to support children who might disclose abuse. Briggs points to the gross power inequalities inherent in adult-child relationships to explain some children's acquiescence when faced with unwanted adult behaviour. She writes that

> An alarming 22% [of New Zealand participants] said they could not count on parental support. ... Some children were very pragmatic about their own lack of power. They knew that parental intervention depended on the identity of the offender and if it was a grandparent, close relative or family friend, parents defended the adults. In these circumstances, some 7-8 year olds adopted a victim stance, rationalising that, as their position worsened when they said 'No', it was easier to 'put up with' the unwanted adult behaviour.
> (Briggs, 1991: 69)

Briggs was among the first researchers in Australia to raise these kinds of issues and to seriously challenge the efficacy of the Protective Behaviours program. While a staunch supporter of school based child protection programs, Briggs has consistently argued for Australian programs which have the following characteristics:

- the provision of explicit and precise teaching materials
- a tightly structured program
- the provision of school level support to teachers
- the use of developmentally appropriate concepts, language and teaching methods
- the integration of personal safety and personal development programs
- strong and ongoing parental involvement in programs
- whole school adoption, implementation and reinforcement of programs

Briggs and Hawkins point to a number of these design and implementation features that are associated with the New Zealand *Keeping Ourselves Safe* program to account for its judged superiority over the Protective Behaviours program (Briggs and Hawkins, 1994[a]).

c) Issues and Questions

This brief review of the literature on children's personal safety learning raises a number of broader issues that have relevance to the Review of Protective Behaviours in South Australia.

What program outcomes should be measured?

The obvious reply to this question links outcomes measures to program goals. If a program aims to improve children's ability to identify 'unsafe' situations, then this should be the focus of evaluations of the worth of the program. However, the application of this evaluation truism has led to an almost exclusive focus on children's knowledge and ability related to threats to their *sexual* safety. This is due to the exclusion of other forms of abuse prevention from most North American curricula. A consequence of this almost exclusive focus on sexual abuse prevention is that most of the international literature on the evaluation of school based abuse prevention programs contains little of direct relevance to the prevention of other forms of abuse. In short, the international literature is clearly deficient in providing even rudimentary data about the nature of school aged children's ability to deal with situations in which they are physically or emotionally at risk.

A key question relevant to the Protective Behaviours program is:

- Do children use similar personal safety knowledge and strategies in situations in which the nature of the threat is different (ie, sexually threatening versus physically threatening)?

The very different dynamics of each form of abuse raise questions about the transferability of personal safety knowledge and skills between different situations of abuse.

Another issue being debated in the international literature relates to the worth of measures of student knowledge acquisition compared with measures of actual behaviour change (for a fuller discussion see Measures of Student Outcomes in Chapter 6). While some researchers are reconciled to a position articulated well by Briggs and Hawkins (1994[a]) - that behavioural change is unlikely to occur without knowledge - many still lament the absence of 'real, hard data' on the 'actual benefit' of prevention programs (Carroll, et al., 1992). The effect of this critical search for evidence of behavioural change in children following exposure to prevention programs has been to caste an unnecessarily sceptical shadow over the worth of intermediate measures of student knowledge growth and skill development. In few other educational fields have such hard evaluative criteria been applied.

How should research results be interpreted?

Many researchers and commentators interpret the results from evaluation studies without reference to educational research into student learning and performance in other areas of the curriculum and, as a consequence, apply very high benchmarks of success to prevention programs. Gains in student knowledge are variously described as 'rather modest' (Gilbert,

Duerr Berrick, LeProhn, and Nyman, 1989), or 'disappointing' (Briggs and Hawkins, 1994[a]). Both advocates and critics of school based prevention efforts frequently fail to appreciate the complexity of the problem of child abuse, the intricacies of child development and human learning, and the socially constructed values that underpin evaluations of the worth of educational initiatives. An unfortunate consequence of this is the simplistic and unsophisticated interpretation of much prevention research in the search for 'a simple solution to a complex social problem' (Trudell and Whatley, 1988).

What factors influence personal safety learning?

A multitude of factors influence learning - developmental stage, socio-cultural background, experience, prior learning, motivation, self esteem, ability to concentrate and stay on task, explicitness of instruction, concreteness of learning activities, and so on. While it would seem reasonable to assume that these factors influence student learning in the area of personal safety as much as they do in other areas, the results from international studies are mixed. However, of particular interest in the area of abuse prevention is the influence on learning of children's cognitive and moral development, and relationships with authority figures (Tutty, 1994).

Tensions between competing views of child development permeate the wider psychological literature as well as the abuse prevention literature. Some writers and researchers (Krivacska, 1990; Duerr Berrick and Gilbert, 1990) devote considerable space to descriptions of the developmental stage theories of Piaget (1932/1965) and Kohlberg (1983) in order to demonstrate the inappropriateness of teaching some personal safety concepts to young children. Others are more sceptical about the pervasiveness and power of these stages in children's thinking (Braine, Pomerantz, Lorber, and Krantz, 1991). In reviewing several studies that focus on the cognitive demands associated with learning personal safety concepts, Tutty (1994) provides a useful summary of several studies that link under eight year old children's cognitive development with their personal safety learning. She concludes that

- young children do not learn personal safety concepts that are presented in an abstract rather than in a concrete specific manner.
- young children need information presented in clear simple terms with many familiar examples. Information needs to be overt and explicit, rather than implied.
- young children have difficulty understanding concepts that require flexibility of thinking.
- young children rely on visual messages more than verbal messages.
- young children need short sessions with considerable repetition.

(Tutty, 1994: 181)

Research into children's perception of authority is also salient. As many of the personal safety strategies taught in school based programs require children to make judgements about whether or not to ignore or oppose the wishes of an adult, research in this area is considered critical to prevention efforts. Opponents of personal safety programs use the work of Piaget (1932/1965)

to describe children's perception of authority. They suggest that children's perception of authority is limited by a simple and unilateral view of adults as socially powerful, infallible authorities. According to this view, parents, for example, are not only perceived to be all knowing and all powerful, but also the sole source of children's moral knowledge (Laupa, 1991). However, the view that age and, perhaps, size and physical power command the compliance of children is not supported by more recent research (Braine, et al., 1991).

Damon (1977) found that even young children have more complex conceptions of authority than the simple view that they must comply with the powerful.

> For example, authority has boundaries; parental authority cannot extend to immoral acts, or to areas seen to be under the child's personal jurisdiction, such as choosing one's friends.
> (Braine, et al., 1991: 829)

Damon also found that children generally comply with adult requests because adults are seen as having the right to make rules, subject to the constraints on immoral (ie, 'wrong' or 'unfair') acts and those which are considered 'children's business'. In situations that are deemed to be immoral - when someone may be harmed, or a moral sanction (against stealing, for example) is breeched - children tend to base their decision to comply or defy an authority figure on the moral legitimacy of the rule, rather than on the right of an adult to make rules. Subsequent research by Tisak and Turiel (1984), Laupa (1991), and (Braine, et al., 1991) suggests that

> both the traits of the authority figure and the specific situation in which the authority's commands are given affect even young children's perceptions of legitimacy and obedience. Children's behaviour (even pre-schoolers') in moral situations is guided by a universal code of conduct, not the person imposing the rules; in socio-conventional situations the reverse is true.
> (Bogat and McGrath, 1993: 653)

These findings confirm that most children comply with adult authority in everyday situations due to their acceptance of the right of adults, like parents and teachers, to make rules. Afterall, most adult directives aim to teach children how to behave in socially accepted ways in particular situations (Bogat and McGrath, 1993: 652). However, the revelation that even young children can delineate limits to adult authority provides some justification for interventions designed to strengthen children's ability to identify adult behaviours that breach moral codes of conduct. Such interventions would have greater impact if they stressed that specific behaviours - sexual misconduct and severe physical punishment, for example - have no moral legitimacy (Briggs, 1991; Bogat and McGrath, 1993).

This newly emerging literature on children's perceptions of authority is diluting the influence of earlier developmental theories in analyses of personal safety programs. However, many unanswered questions arise when it is linked with other research into child abuse. For example, when victims of child sexual abuse are asked to describe the tactics used by perpetrators to ensure their compliance (Berliner and Conte, 1990), they mention the use of

essentially *non moral*, social justifications for involvement (ie, 'It's O.K. - I'll teach you about these things', or 'I need to know that you are developing and growing well'). By framing abusive behaviours in social-conventional terms, and not moral terms, perpetrators avoid provoking resistance from children who may have otherwise judged the behaviour from a moral perspective. Also, the interplay between punishment avoidance and children's sense of morality needs to be further explored, as many children probably comply with authority through fear of the consequences of defying it, even when they believe that complying breaches a moral code.

Research undertaken by Mayes, Gillies and Warden (1993) into children's compliance with familiar adults and strangers further emphasises the vulnerability of children. As expected, they found that children comply most with familiar adults and least with stranger adults. The researchers express 'some concern' that the responses of more than half of the six and eight year olds in the study indicated compliance with a stranger. Compliance fell to around one third with ten year old children. However, they also found that compliance rates differed slightly depending on whether adults made requests (most compliance), offers (least compliance), or demands of children (Mayes, Gillies and Warden, 1993: 9). Again, these findings suggest a more complex perception of authority and legitimacy by children, than previously thought.

d) Hypotheses about Personal Safety Learning

As was the case with the review of literature on program implementation, the process of reviewing the body of literature on children's personal safety learning provided opportunities to speculate about the possible outcomes of the Protective Behaviours program. The terms of reference of the Review required comparisons between children who had been taught the Protective Behaviours and those who had not. The two areas of comparison were children's ability to identify unsafe situations, and their knowledge of personal safety strategies. Within the parameters set by these terms, it was hypothesised that:

Children who are taught Protective Behaviours more frequently identify unsafe situations than comparison children.

The balance of research suggests that children who receive personal safety instruction are better able to identify and name threats to their safety than are those who are not. However, in most comparative studies, differences between groups are relatively small, suggesting that findings need to be interpreted with some caution.

Children who are taught Protective Behaviours more frequently suggest appropriate personal safety strategies ('No', 'Go', 'Tell' strategies) to deal with unsafe situations than comparison children.

Again, a considerable body of research suggests that children who receive personal safety instruction know more about personal safety strategies than other children. Differences are usually small. Of interest here is also the range of alternate strategies suggested by children when faced with threats to their safety. Some research into children's perceptions of authority

suggests that children use other less confronting ways of dealing with threats posed by adults than the frequently taught personal safety strategies.

Older children more frequently identify unsafe situations than younger children.
Developmental factors reportedly influence young children's ability to use their feelings to identify unsafe situations.

Older children more frequently suggest appropriate personal safety strategies ('No', 'Go', 'Tell' strategies) to deal with unsafe situations than younger children.
Similarly, younger children are thought to be more accepting of adult authority and more compliant. Consequently, they are thought to be less inclined to take assertive personal safety action that involves defying adult authority.

Apart from age and treatment effects, other factors do not significantly influence the ability of children to identify unsafe situations or suggest appropriate personal safety strategies ('No', 'Go', 'Tell' strategies) to deal with unsafe situations.
The evidence is equivocal about the impact on learning of factors like student gender, socio-economic background, and extent of parental reinforcement of personal safety concepts.

SUMMARY

The terms of reference of the Review called for an analysis of program implementation by teachers, and an assessment of the impact of the Protective Behaviours program on aspects of children's learning. Because of this dual focus, the review of relevant research was necessarily far reaching. The review of literature on program implementation identified a complex range of personal and systemic factors which impact on teachers' decision making about new programs. Some of these have already been found to affect teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program.

Evaluations of school based personal safety programs, both in Australia and overseas have confirmed that they can improve children's personal safety knowledge. However, methodological difficulties and the application of very strict evaluative criteria have raised concerns over the credibility of much of this research. Recent attempts have been made to integrate and apply more generic research (eg, related to children's perceptions of authority) to child abuse prevention research.

Both bodies of literature provided an understanding of the theoretical issues raised by the Review, and provided an insight into some of the difficult methodological problems associated with research in this area. The review of literature also stimulated several hypotheses about the possible impact of the Protective Behaviours program on teachers' personal safety teaching, and children's personal safety learning.

SECTION 2

Teaching About Personal Safety

AN INVESTIGATION

OF

TEACHERS' USE

OF THE

PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS PROGRAM

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

To generate information about teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program, a teacher questionnaire was developed and sent to a sample of teachers. In this chapter, the choice of a survey method is justified, and details are provided about the size and characteristics of the teacher sample used in the study. The content and structure of the teacher questionnaire is outlined. Information is also provided about how the questionnaire was distributed to, and retrieved from, teachers across the state. Finally, a brief description is given of the data analysis procedures that were used to summarise and compare teachers' responses to questionnaire items.

CHOICE OF SURVEY METHOD

Patton (1990) argues that the choice of a research methodology should be strongly influenced by the nature of the questions the research intends to address. When the purpose of an investigation is to establish and confirm broad patterns of understanding across large groups, then statistically oriented survey methods are most appropriate. As Patton suggests, the application of a

> paradigm of choices rejects methodological orthodoxy in favour of *methodological appropriateness* as the primary criterion for judging methodological quality. ... The paradigm of choices recognises that different methods are appropriate for different situations.
> (Patton, 1990: 39)

The terms of reference of the Protective Behaviours Review required that a systems-wide perspective on the program and its impact on teachers and children be pursued. This 'big picture' is useful for those who want to transcend the idiosyncratic and particular, to develop insights that have meaning and relevance across many schools and apply to many teachers. Because of the nature of the research questions posed when the Protective Behaviours Review was established, a quantitative survey methodology was adopted in Stage 1 of the Review.

IDENTIFYING TEACHERS TRAINED IN PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS

Once a decision was made to use survey methods to establish the extent of use of the Protective Behaviours program by teachers in South Australia, it was necessary to target a group of teachers to participate in the study. The most obvious group to identify was the pool of teachers who had been trained to teach the program between 1985 and 1992. Unfortunately, no up-to-date or consistent records of teacher training had been kept centrally by the Education Department of South Australia, the largest employer of teachers in the state. Some centralised records of trained pre-school personnel were held by the Children's Service Office, but these

were incomplete and needed to be supplemented by regional records. The other two education agencies, due to their recent involvement in Protective Behaviours, had not yet initiated record keeping procedures to account for those teachers who were trained to use the program. In January 1993, as a first step in compiling a data base of trained teachers, the following agreements were made with the four education groups:

1. The Education Department of South Australia agreed to supply all available lists of teachers who had attended training sessions conducted by Protective Behaviours trainers in the various education regions of the Department from 1985 to the end of 1992.
2. The Children's Services Office agreed to up-date its already existing data base of trained personnel by including data from regional areas and from recent training events.
3. The Catholic Education Office and Independent Schools Board agreed to survey their schools requesting information about teachers who had been trained to use the program.

Some regions of the Education Department had a mixture of rough handwritten 'training rolls' that had been completed by participants on the day of their training, and more formal lists of trained teachers organised on a yearly and sometimes locational basis. Other regions simply supplied trainer maintained personal records of who had attended various training activities conducted in local centres. On the basis of these sketchy and partial records, a data base of trained teachers employed by the Education Department was painstakingly compiled. Where possible the following information was entered in the data base:

- teacher's name
- Departmental identification number
- teacher's sex
- teaching level
- year of training
- location of training
- name of teacher's school when trained
- location of school (Adelaide north, country South East, etc)

The completed Education Department data base contained information on 6,889 teachers who had been trained to use the program between 1985 and 1992. Added to this sizeable group of teachers was information supplied about 605 pre-school teachers, 457 Catholic Education teachers and 140 teachers teaching in Independent schools. The total pool of teachers in South Australia who had been trained to teach Protective Behaviours was 8,091, representing approximately 40% of the 19,000 teachers teaching in South Australian pre-schools and schools.

Sample of Teachers Trained in Protective Behaviours

To generate a representative sample of teachers to participate in the Protective Behaviours Review, the data base was organised into the following strata:

- Year of training
- Teaching level
- Location of training
- Sex of teacher.

The data base was then divided randomly into five identically stratified samples (n = 1,618 in each). One sample was randomly selected to be the main source of participants in the study.

As the sources of information on which the data base was compiled were, in some cases, seven years old, some inaccuracies in the data base were inevitable. The most likely inaccuracy was the present location of teachers, as considerable teacher movement had occurred, particularly after the introduction of required transfers by the Education Department of South Australia in 1990. Not knowing the present location of teachers was identified as a serious problem that would impact negatively on the response rate that could be achieved in the study. Consequently, permission to access employers' records of teachers' current school location was sought and given in April 1993. The school location of all teachers identified in the randomly selected sample was then determined from employers' computer files. In cases where teachers were no longer teaching in any school at that time (on leave, resigned, deceased, etc.), they were removed from the sample and replaced with teachers from identical strata in one of the other samples.

Subsequent communication with schools established that 171 teachers whose location had been confirmed by computer records, were, in fact, not teaching at the designated schools, and could not be located. These teachers were removed from the sample, and not replaced by other teachers due to time constraints during June and July 1993. The final sample consisted of 1,447 teachers, which was approximately 18% of the identified population of teachers trained to teach Protective Behaviours.

DEVELOPMENT OF QUESTIONNAIRE

a) Theoretical considerations

While the terms of reference focussed the Review in certain ways, other theoretical considerations also shaped the research. The Review drew heavily on previous qualitative research into teachers' experiences with, and perspectives on the Protective Behaviours program (Johnson 1991; 1992; 1994). A comprehensive review of the literature relevant to program implementation further informed the development process. These theoretical considerations gave direction and coherence to the process of designing a questionnaire capable of generating data about teachers' thinking and decision making about the Protective Behaviours program and their use of it.

b) Structure of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained questions about:

- Training in Protective Behaviours
  - reasons for undertaking training
  - type of course delivery experienced
  - extent of consultation
  - extent of extra training
- In-School Support for Protective Behaviours
  - nature and extent of support
  - views on future support needs
- Use of Protective Behaviours
  - use of program in two time periods: this year and two years after training
  - use of five features of program
  - extent of detail taught
  - reasons for deciding not to use program or for using it in limited way
  - reasons for deciding to use program in detailed way
  - external constraints limiting detailed use of program
- Views on Child Abuse
  - beliefs about prevalence of child abuse
  - theories and beliefs about the causes of child abuse
  - beliefs about the efficacy of school based prevention programs
- Contact with Abused Children
  - extent of contact with children who may have been abused
- Personal Background and Experience

Teachers were required to answer most questions in five of the six sections of the questionnaire. However, in the section about teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program, a branching format was used to structure questions relevant to teachers with diverse experiences with different aspects of the program (see Figure 4). This was necessary due to the multi-faceted nature of the Protective Behaviours program and teachers' hypothesised varied use of it.

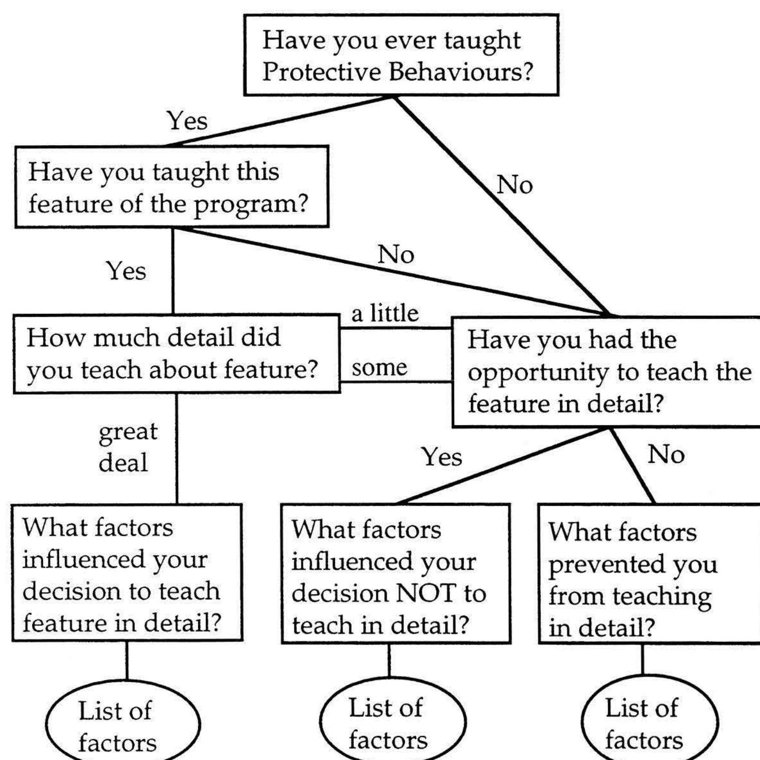


Figure 4: Generic Structure of Section C: Use of the Protective Behaviours Program

This generic structure was used to generate data on teachers' current and past teaching of five core content areas of the program. These were identified by teachers in the interview study and by a panel of Protective Behaviours experts. The five core features of the program, and three levels of detail identified within each, are outlined in Figure 5. The questionnaire concluded with an open-ended invitation for teachers to write comments on any of the issues dealt with in earlier sections of the questionnaire.

d) Use of Teachers' Comments in the Questionnaire

Earlier qualitative research by Johnson (1991, 1992, 1994) produced many highly relevant and interesting comments by teachers about the Protective Behaviours program and a range of issues related to child protection and teachers' role in preventing child abuse. This rich source of teacher thinking and deliberation was used in this investigation to identify:

- teachers' reasons for undertaking training in Protective Behaviours
- the range of school-level training and development activities undertaken by teachers
- the most frequently mentioned features of the program
- the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program
- the diverse ways teachers used features of the program
- the range of factors that influenced teachers' decision making about the program
- teachers' beliefs and theories about the causes of child abuse, its prevalence in the community, and teachers' role in preventing it.

By using teachers' comments as items in the questionnaire, the content validity of the instrument was strongly enhanced. However, this was done at the expense of design simplicity and accessibility.

e) Assumptions about Teachers

The decision to proceed with the development of a complex and challenging questionnaire was based on several assumptions about the ability and willingness of teachers to actually complete a difficult questionnaire. Briefly, it was assumed that:

- most teachers would be able to cope with the demanding nature of the questionnaire. As a consequence, the usual constraints on questionnaire length, conceptual complexity, and level of demand were not applied.
- most teachers would be challenged by the content of the questionnaire and would be motivated to complete it.
- despite the length of the questionnaire, most teachers would 'make the time' to complete it. However, it was accepted that some teachers would resent the time and intellectual demands presented by the questionnaire and refuse to participate in the research.

Feature of Program	Extent of Content Taught		
	A Little	Some	A Great Deal
Right to Feel Safe	- frequently repeat theme: 'We all have the right to feel safe' - explain what it means in a variety of ways - display theme	-> plus - talk about 'early warning signs - distinguish between safe and unsafe situations	-> plus - present many situations where children can describe their 'early warning signs' - teach about 'personal emergencies' - link with children's rights - link with school rules - apply to child-adult relations
Tell	- informal talk about feeling unsafe and who students could tell	-> plus - formally identify a Network but not notify adults on Network	-> plus - inform parents of network - contact adults on Network - practise contacting adults - reinforce persistence
Sexual Touching	- focus on uncomfortable touching (poking and pinching)	-> plus - identify 'private parts' - talk about body ownership	-> plus - integrate aspects of sex education - discuss sexual touching - discuss OK/not OK adult-child touch - practise saying 'No'
Physical Violence	- discuss child-child physical violence (fighting, bullying) - discuss ways of reducing violence	-> plus - identify violent situations out of school - discuss ways of staying safe	-> plus - discuss OK/not OK adult-child physical action (punishment) - discuss adult violence - discuss ways of staying safe when adults are violent - practise personal safety strategies
Problem Solving	- present 'what if ...' about minor problems	-> plus - use examples from manual - develop and present other situations	-> plus - link with other problem solving approaches - introduce problems involving adults and children - use role play or other behaviour rehearsal strategies to practise what to do in unsafe situations

Figure 5: Content of Features of the Protective Behaviours Program

Experience with other large scale surveys involving South Australian teachers suggested that these were reasonable assumptions and that a response rate within the 60%-70% range could be achieved (Adey, Oswald, and Johnson, 1991; Oswald, Johnson, and Adey, 1991; Barnett, Johnson, and Badger, 1992; Oswald, Johnson, Whitington, and Dunn, 1994).

f) Trialling the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was trialled using two groups of respondents. One group consisted of five people with expertise in Protective Behaviours; all were experienced 'trainers' with an intimate knowledge of the purposes of the Review. The second group consisted of fifteen teachers who were trained in Protective Behaviours but who had diverse interest in, and commitment to the program.

Modifications were made to the questionnaire based on feedback from both groups. The most significant changes were made to the descriptions of parts of the Protective Behaviours program used in the section of the questionnaire designed to assess teachers' use of the program (Gordon, 1993[a]).

ADMINISTRATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

In the final weeks of Term 3, 1993, the questionnaire was posted in personally addressed envelopes to 1,447 teachers identified in the study sample. Teachers were asked, in a covering letter, to complete the questionnaire and return it in an addressed freepost envelope by the end of Term 3. Six weeks after the initial distribution of questionnaires, follow-up phone calls were made to teachers who had not returned their questionnaires. Two weeks after this, non-respondents were sent a letter by facsimile reminding them of the importance of the study and inviting them to complete and return their questionnaires as soon as possible.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Numeric data from the questionnaire were analysed using the statistics package, SPSS for the Macintosh. As much of the information supplied by teachers in the questionnaire was in the form of categorical data, a simple non-parametric test of significance - the chi-square test - was selected to determine whether different frequencies of responses between selected groups of teachers were a function of sampling error (ie, non significant), or unlikely to be a function of sampling error (ie, significant). The responses of teachers at different schooling levels were compared using the cross tabulations procedure. This produced contingency tables containing frequency counts for responses to various items in the questionnaire by teachers within these groups. In this way, differences between response rates were able to be compared and tested for their significance. In most cases, the results of these cross tabulations are presented in the following chapter in modified contingency tables.

Teachers' written comments were analysed using the text analysis program NUD•IST.

SUMMARY

A survey approach was selected to generate information about teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program. A questionnaire was developed, trialled, and administered to a stratified random sample of over 1,400 teachers who had been trained in Protective Behaviours. The questionnaire was long and complex, reflecting the demands of the terms of reference of the Review for a comprehensive, systems-wide analysis of teachers' use of the program, and the factors which influence program use. Analyses of data from the questionnaire were intended to provide a clear picture of the response patterns of groups of teachers who completed the questionnaire.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

The aims of Stage 1 of the Review of Protective Behaviours were to determine teachers' use of the program, and to identify which factors were important influences on their teaching behaviour. In this chapter, data are presented from a large and complex survey of teachers which was undertaken in South Australia during the second half of 1993. Descriptive data on the returning sample of teachers are given to demonstrate the representativeness of the sample. The patterns of use of the program by teachers are presented and an analysis is given of the reasons for differences in program use by various groups of teachers. Finally, teachers' suggestions to promote the teaching of the program are summarised.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

A total of 957 teachers returned completed questionnaires, representing a response rate of 66.1%. The sample of respondents was 79% female and 21% male.

In most aspects, the distribution of teachers in the population of trained Protective Behaviours teachers (n = 8,091) and the returning sample (n = 957) is closely matched. Table 1 shows that teachers who were trained in different years are represented in very similar proportions in both the population and returning sample.

Table 1: Year of Training of Teacher Population and Sample

Year of Training	Percent of Population (n = 8,091)	Percent of Sample (n = 957)
1985	1.6	3.9
1986	5.0	6.9
1987	18.3	15.0
1988	23.0	19.9
1989	18.7	18.9
1990	12.2	16.5
1991	7.9	9.7
1992	6.3	5.4
1993	0.7	0.7
Unknown	6.2	3.1

Similarly, the geographic distribution of teachers in the sample is very similar to that of teachers in the population of trained Protective Behaviours teachers (see Table 2).

There are difficulties, however, in comparing the composition of the population and sample according to teaching level, due to a lack of information and precision in the original sources used to compile the population data base. For example, it was not possible to assign a teaching

Table 2: Geographic Location of Teachers

Location	Percent of Population (n = 8,091)	Percent of Sample (n = 957)
Western Suburbs	10.4	12.2
Eastern Suburbs	7.4	10.7
Northern Suburbs	24.7	24.5
Southern Suburbs	20.1	17.3
Country	32.2	32.6

level to 15% of the population, as this information was missing from original records (see Table 3). Similarly, it was not possible to distinguish between pre-school teachers, junior primary teachers and primary teachers teaching in CPC-7 Primary schools. Consequently, the 'primary' level category in the population statistics is inevitably inflated by the inclusion of unidentified pre-school and junior primary teachers. Because of these factors, it is reasonable to assume that the sample statistics for teaching level are more accurate and reliable than those for the population which were based on incomplete data. Table 3 also clearly shows that the Protective Behaviours program has not penetrated secondary schools to the same extent that it has at other levels.

Table 3: Teaching Level of Teachers

Teaching Level	Percent of Population (n = 8,091)	Percent of Sample (n = 957)
Pre-school - Junior Primary	22.7	52.3
Primary	53.8	37.9
Secondary	8.5	7.9
Unknown	15.0	1.9

TEACHERS' USE OF THE PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS PROGRAM

a) Patterns of Use

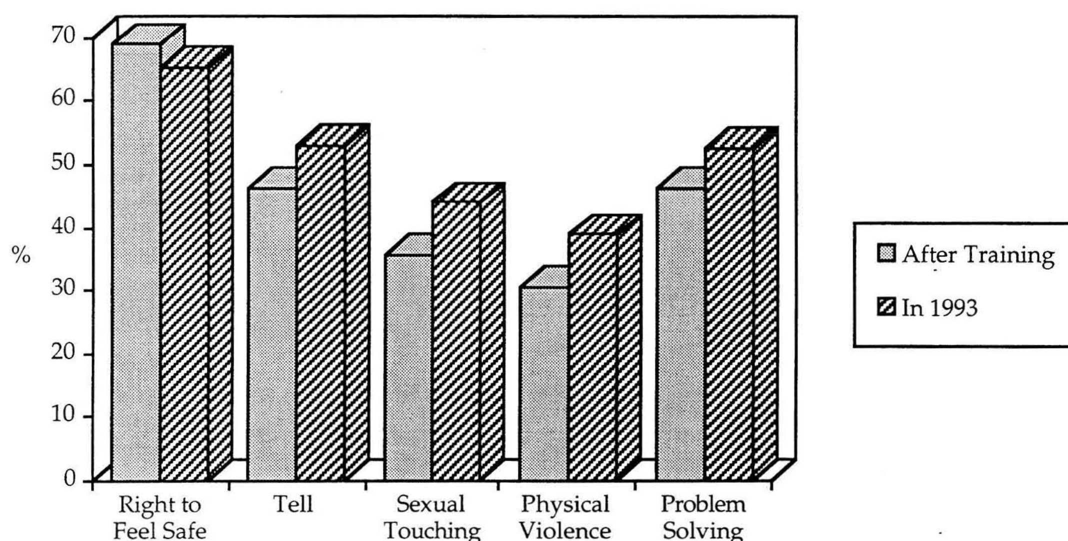
In order to generate precise information about teachers' use of particular features of the program, teachers were asked to respond to questions about their use of five features of the Protective Behaviours program. These five features (with abbreviations used in Tables and Charts below) were:

- First Theme (Abbreviation = 'Right to Feel Safe')
  - explanation and reinforcement of theme: 'We all have the right to feel safe'
  - identification and labelling of 'early warning signs'
  - declaring 'personal emergencies'
- Second Theme (Abbreviation = 'Tell')
  - explanation and identification of personal 'network'
  - reinforcement of 'persistence expectation'
  - identification of personal safety strategies
- Uncomfortable and Confusing Touching (Abbreviation = 'Sexual Touching')
  - explanation of 'body ownership'
  - identification of 'private parts'
  - identification and application of personal safety strategies

- Physical Violence
  - identification of types of physical violence
  - identification and application of personal safety strategies
- 'What if ...' problem solving strategy (Abbreviation = 'Problem Solving')
  - identification and discussion of hypothetical, unsafe situations
  - identification and application of personal safety strategies

Teachers' use of these five features of the program after training and during the survey period is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Percent of Teachers Using Features of Program



More precise data on the *extent* of use of the five main features of the program are presented in Table 4. Teachers were allocated to one of five 'non use/use' categories for each of the features of the program. The first category contains teachers who indicated that they had never taught any aspect of the Protective Behaviours program. As teachers in this group were directed away from further questions about specific features of the program, they constituted a constant 'non use' group for each feature (20.8% of all teachers). The second 'non use' group in each feature contains teachers who did not use that particular feature but used other features. In 1993, this group of selective 'non users' varied from a low 13.8% of teachers for the 'Right to Feel Safe' feature, to a high 40.4% of teachers who did not teach the 'Physical Violence' feature. This group, together with the constant 20.8% of teachers who made up the 'never used' group, constitute the total 'non use' group for each feature.

Users of the program were divided into three levels of use depending on the extent of detail taught for each feature.

It is interesting to note that teachers' use of four of the five features of the program was higher in 1993 than in periods following training. A strong positive correlation between past and current use (Pearson correlation coefficient $r = .52$, $p < .01$) indicates that teachers who used the

program after training tended to continue using the program through to the present time. Similarly, teachers who did not use features of the program after training, also tended not to teach the program during 1993.

Table 4: Percent of Teachers' Using Features of the Program Following Training and in 1993 (n = 957)

Feature of Program	Extent of Use	Following Training	In 1993
Right to Feel Safe	Never used any P.B.	20.8	20.8
	Non use this feature	10.3	13.8
	Non use total	**31.1**	**34.6**
	A little use	9.4	8.5
	Some use	32.5	26.9
	Great deal of use	27.0	29.9
	Use total	***68.9***	***65.4***
Tell	Never used any P.B.	20.8	20.8
	Non use this feature	32.9	26.2
	Non use total	***53.7***	***47.0***
	A little use	6.8	11.5
	Some use	19.1	19.3
	Great deal of use	20.4	22.2
	Use total	***46.3***	***53.0***
Sexual Touching	Never used any P.B.	20.8	20.8
	Non use this feature	43.3	35.3
	Non use total	***64.3***	***56.1***
	A little use	8.0	8.8
	Some use	17.8	23.9
	Great deal of use	9.9	11.2
	Use total	***35.7***	***43.9***
Physical Violence	Never used any P.B.	20.8	20.8
	Non use this feature	48.7	40.4
	Non use total	***69.5***	***61.2***
	A little use	5.6	8.5
	Some use	14.8	17.6
	Great deal of use	10.1	12.7
	Use total	***30.5***	***38.8***
Problem Solving	Never used any P.B.	20.8	20.8
	Non use this feature	30.0	26.5
	Non use total	***53.8***	***47.3***
	A little use	9.2	9.7
	Some use	16.6	17.1
	Great deal of use	20.4	25.9
	Use total	***46.2***	***52.7***

The most widely taught feature of the program was the first theme relating to children's right to personal safety, with about two thirds of all teachers indicating that they taught this feature in 1993. Conversely, the least taught features of the program were those sections dealing with personal and domestic violence, and confusing and uncomfortable touching.

b) School Level Differences in Patterns of Use

Significant differences exist between patterns of program use by teachers at different school levels (see Table 5). Junior primary school teachers taught more of the program and in greater detail than their colleagues at other levels. Pre-school teachers also taught the program comprehensively but not in as much detail as junior primary and primary teachers. This is particularly so with the two least taught features overall; only four to six percent of pre-school teachers reported teaching about personal and domestic violence, and confusing and uncomfortable touching in detail. Finally, low participation levels and low overall use rates by secondary teachers confirm that the program has had minimum impact at secondary level.

Table 5: Percent of Teachers at Different School Levels Using Features of the Program (n = 939; Missing Cases = 18)

Feature of Program	Extent of Use	Pre-school (n = 190)	Junior Primary (n = 310)	Primary (n = 363)	Secondary (n = 76)
Right to Feel Safe	Never used any P.B.	11.6	13.2	27.3	43.4
	Non use this feature	-	10.1	-	34.3
	Non use total	***11.6***	***23.3***	***27.3***	***77.7***
	A little use	17.9	6.1	6.6	3.9
	Some use	40.5	29.0	22.9	6.6
	Great deal of use	30.0	41.6	24.2	11.8
	Use total	***88.4***	***76.7***	***73.7***	***22.3***
Tell	Never used any P.B.	11.6	13.2	27.3	43.4
	Non use this feature	25.3	22.0	26.4	39.5
	Non use total	***36.3***	***35.2***	***53.7***	***82.9***
	A little use	27.4	11.3	5.2	2.6
	Some use	20.5	20.3	20.9	6.6
	Great deal of use	15.5	33.2	20.2	7.9
	Use total	***63.7***	***64.8***	***46.3***	***17.1***
Sexual Touching	Never used any P.B.	11.6	13.2	27.3	43.4
	Non use this feature	36.8	32.3	34.7	39.5
	Non use total	***48.4***	***45.5***	***62.0***	***82.9***
	A little use	22.1	8.1	4.4	1.3
	Some use	25.8	33.5	19.6	5.3
	Great deal of use	3.7	12.9	14.0	10.5
	Use total	***51.6***	***54.5***	***38.0***	***17.1***
Physical Violence	Never used any P.B.	11.6	13.2	27.3	43.4
	Non use this feature	45.8	39.1	37.7	39.6
	Non use total	***57.4***	***52.3***	***65.0***	***83.0***
	A little use	16.8	7.7	5.8	3.9
	Some use	20.0	19.7	17.6	6.6
	Great deal of use	5.8	20.3	11.6	6.5
	Use total	***42.6***	***47.7***	***35.0***	***17.0***
Problem Solving	Never used any P.B.	11.6	13.2	27.3	43.4
	Non use this feature	23.1	22.3	27.0	39.6
	Non use total	***34.7***	***35.5***	***54.3***	***83.0***
	A little use	22.1	7.4	6.6	3.9
	Some use	21.1	20.3	16.0	2.6
	Great deal of use	22.1	36.8	23.1	10.5
	Use total	***65.3***	***64.5***	***45.7***	***17.0***

ACCOUNTING FOR TEACHERS' USE AND NON USE OF THE PROGRAM

a) Teachers' Reasons for Non Use of the Program

When asked to indicate their reasons for not teaching any parts of the program, about two thirds of teachers in the 'non use' group indicated that they had not had the opportunity to teach the program due to circumstances largely beyond their control (not having access to a class to teach, being a specialist teacher, being in a school which did not have a policy on the teaching of the program, etc.) (see Table 6).

Only 18.6% of this group (or only 3.9% of the total sample) indicated that they actively chose not to teach the program, even though they had the opportunity to teach the program.

Table 6: Teachers' Reasons for Complete Non Use of the Program

Reason for Non Use	Percent of Teachers (*n* = 199)
Limited class teaching time	25.6
Too mobile moving from school to school	9.5
Someone else taught it to class	12.1
P.B. not part of school's curriculum	17.1
Chose not to teach P.B.	18.6
Other non-specified reason	17.1

b) Teachers' Reasons for Selective Non Use of the Program

Teachers who did not teach particular parts of the program in detail were asked to identify the reasons for their decisions. For three features of the program ('Tell', 'Sexual Touching', and 'Problem Solving') there was strong agreement among teachers about their main reasons for not teaching those features of the program (see Table 7).

With the exception of pre-school teachers, over 80% of teachers in the selective 'non use' group cited doubts about the willingness and capacity of adults to act on child disclosures, as the main reason for not teaching about 'Tell'. In the case of pre-school teachers, their reasons centred on the age related inability of their young students to understand concepts like networking, and to actually select appropriate adults for a support network. In the case of 'Sexual Touching', about two thirds of teachers in the selective 'non use' group indicated that there was no need to be explicit about these matters, and that this was the reason why they did not teach that part of the program in detail. Interestingly, 72% of junior primary teachers and 59% of pre-school teachers also cited possible parental objections as a factor in their decision making.

In the other two areas of the program ('Right to Feel Safe', and 'Physical Violence'), there was generally less agreement amongst teachers about their reasons for selectively omitting these features. In both cases there was some support for reasons linked to encroaching on 'family matters' (over 40% of junior primary and primary teachers in relation to teaching about inappropriate adult to child physical actions, and between a quarter and a third of teachers in

relation to teaching about children's 'right' to personal safety). However, other reasons attracted considerably less support from teachers.

Table 7: Comparison of Teachers' Reasons for not Teaching Features of the Program

Feature of Program	Reason not Taught	Pre-school	Junior Primary	Primary	Secondary
Right to Feel Safe		(n = 57) %	(n = 68) %	(n = 65) %	(n = 7) %
	- Students carried away with 'Rights'	17.5	23.5	24.6	14.3
	- Parents might object	33.3	26.5	23.4	14.3
	- Students not understand	43.9	31.9	31.3	42.8
	- Too simplistic	5.2	1.5	23.4	28.6
	- Too idealistic; irrelevant	12.3	9.0	9.4	-
Tell		(n = 103) %	(n = 110) %	(n = 91) %	(n = 10) %
	- Students too young to understand	78.6	67.3	30.8	10.0
	- Students unable to select Network	71.9	62.4	40.7	22.2
	- Adults not act if told things by student	57.0	82.6	88.7	84.6
	- Parents object - 'going behind backs'	43.6	50.0	43.9	33.3
	- Don't know enough about Networks	43.6	49.0	36.4	11.1
	- Not fair on students to make them 'tell'	26.0	25.7	21.3	44.4
Sexual Touching		(n = 124) %	(n = 160) %	n = 121) %	(n = 9) %
	- Felt embarrassed	25.0	41.5	39.7	22.2
	- Unsure how to teach sensitive issues	42.7	56.5	48.3	28.6
	- Parents might object	59.0	72.8	54.1	42.8
	- Prefer non-sexual example of touching	74.2	68.5	59.5	57.1
	- No need to go into detail	62.6	71.6	67.9	63.2
	- May upset student victims of abuse	20.2	24.0	25.8	42.8
	- Worried if student disclosed abuse	24.1	24.1	35.5	28.6
	- Teaching about sex not part of P.B.	26.0	31.2	27.0	33.3
Physical Violence		(n = 105) %	(n = 132) %	(n = 132) %	(n = 10) %
	- No need - few students abused	25.2	21.4	36.4	30.0
	- Worried students disclose abuse	14.3	14.9	17.8	40.0
	- May upset student victims of abuse	20.8	23.8	33.3	55.5
	- Uneasy 'intruding' in family business	34.3	41.7	46.2	40.0
	- Unrealistic for children to resist adults	28.8	17.4	16.9	40.0
	- Worried students accuse parents	25.5	27.1	35.5	40.0
Problem Solving		(n = 77) %	(n = 100) %	(n = 84) %	(n = 8) %
	- Disliked use of hypothetical situations	27.4	19.2	33.4	37.5
	- Preferred using actual experiences	80.5	75.0	69.0	62.5
	- Worried about frightening students	57.6	58.1	49.4	50.0
	- Too complex and sensitive	45.3	44.4	48.9	25.0

c) Teachers' Reasons for Teaching the Program in Detail

Teachers who taught parts of the program in detail were also asked to identify the reasons for their decisions. Most teachers in the 'detailed use' group believed in and generally endorsed the rationale for the Protective Behaviours program. That is, their reasons for teaching the program were related to the perceived benefits of the program for children. For example, between 78% and 90% of teachers who taught about 'Sexual Touching' in detail, did so because

they believed that such explicit and detailed teaching could help children protect themselves against threats to their sexual safety (see Table 8).

Table 8: Comparison of Teachers' Reasons for Teaching the Program in Detail

Feature of Program	Reason Taught in Detail	Pre-school	Junior Primary	Primary	Secondary
Right to Feel Safe		(n = 71) %	(n = 148) %	(n = 98) %	(n = 9) %
	- Linked to counter harassment program	45.1	62.2	61.2	66.7
	- Believed students need control of lives	76.3	76.0	77.0	77.8
	- Believed students need to be aware of threats	66.2	66.2	58.2	77.8
	- Believed students need to be aware of 'early warning signs' when unsafe	84.2	74.8	77.3	66.7
	- Believed in children's 'Rights'	86.7	88.6	78.6	88.9
Tell		(n = 53) %	(n = 120) %	(n = 99) %	(n = 8) %
	- Saw advantages of support network	55.7	80.0	70.7	87.5
	- Believed students capable of selecting right people for network	21.2	47.9	41.2	50.0
	- Felt confident teaching networking	37.0	58.8	46.3	75.0
	- Believed in reinforcing idea that children shouldn't keep 'bad' secrets	69.8	82.0	72.2	75.0
	- Believed that adults would be responsible if children disclosed	74.0	66.7	54.2	50.0
Sexual Touching		(n = 16) %	(n = 61) %	(n = 67) %	(n = 8) %
	- Believed students ought to know	56.3	60.7	62.3	75.0
	- Felt comfortable discussing sexual matters with students	35.7	45.9	30.3	71.4
	- Thought students could cope with sensitive issues like sexual touching	14.3	27.7	44.6	75.0
	- Felt confident of stopping disclosures in class	30.8	47.5	49.2	75.0
	- Believed teaching could help children protect themselves	78.6	92.1	79.1	85.7
Physical Violence		(n = 23) %	(n = 78) %	(n = 60) %	(n = 7) %
	- Believed could teach alternatives to physical violence	52.2	78.2	68.3	85.7
	- Believed parents wanted children taught how to deal with threats	39.1	64.5	54.2	57.1
	- Linked to behaviour management	54.5	76.3	74.6	57.1
Problem Solving		(n = 48) %	(n = 113) %	(n = 103) %	(n = 8) %
	- Thought easiest part of program to use	43.8	41.6	28.2	-
	- Thought good teaching strategy	70.9	73.4	66.7	55.5
	- Believed hypotheticals better than real life examples	50.0	50.0	44.9	50.0
	- Encouraged students to consider many options	76.5	83.8	78.2	88.9

Similarly, high proportions of 'detailed use' teachers at junior primary and primary levels (more that 70% and 82% respectively) believed that establishing a network of supportive adults could reinforce the idea that children shouldn't keep 'bad secrets' but tell someone on their network.

Other frequently cited justifications for teaching the program also related to the philosophical foundations of the program. There was widespread endorsement of the concept of children's rights (close to 90% in all except the primary group), as well as for the related idea that children should learn to exercise some control over what happens to them in life (around 76% in all groups).

Of less importance to these teachers were reasons relating to their competence and confidence to teach the program. Only 30% of primary teachers, for example, indicated that they taught problem solving strategies because they found such approaches easy to teach. Around the same proportion of primary teachers indicated that one of the reasons they taught 'Sexual Touching' was because they felt 'comfortable' dealing with such issues. Conversely, the majority of teachers in the 'detailed use' group indicated that their personal 'comfort' did not influence their decision making in this area.

An apparent paradox was revealed between the responses of teachers in the 'detailed use' group and those of teachers in the selective 'non use' group. Pre-school teachers in the 'detailed use' group were less inclined to select reasons that referred to the abilities of their students, than were their colleagues at other school levels. Only 21% of pre-school teachers compared with 48% of junior primary teachers indicated that evaluations of the ability of their children - in this case their ability to select appropriate people for their network - influenced their decision making. This was not the case in the selective 'non use' group where pre-school teachers, more than other teachers, linked judgements of the ability of their students to their decision making about aspects of the Protective Behaviours program.

d) Implementation Factors Affecting Teachers' Use of the Program

Teachers' reasons for deciding to use or not use features of the Protective Behaviours program provide a rich source of insight into the overt decision making of teachers. However, they only partially help explain teachers' use and non use of the program. A consideration of other factors related to the training experiences of teachers, and the nature and level of school-level support received, is needed to complete the analysis.

Teachers were asked to rate their level of motivation to undertake training in Protective Behaviours, their level of satisfaction with their training, and whether or not they undertook extra training beyond the minimum expected by employing authorities. They were also asked whether their school had developed clear plans for the implementation of the program, and whether their principal supported and promoted the acceptance and implementation of these plans. Finally, they were asked to indicate the extent to which they took part in school level professional development activities like planned observation of another teacher, discussions with other teachers, and so on.

Correlations between these implementation factors and use of the Protective Behaviours program are shown in Tables 9 and 10. There was no relationship between teachers' use of the program and any of the training factors. There was a surprisingly high level of consistency in teachers' responses to questions relating to their training. For example, only 2.4% of teachers were dissatisfied with their Protective Behaviours training with the vast majority of them being satisfied to some, or great extent (84.6%). Similarly, there was relatively little variability in teachers' responses to questions about being consulted over their training (72% of teachers weren't consulted at all).

Table 9: Correlations between Use of the Program and Training Variables

Variable	2	3	4	5
1. Use	.05	.05	.06	.08
2. Motivation to train		.05	.06	.13*
3. Consulted about content of training			.54*	.04
4. Consulted about organisation of training				.10*
5. Satisfaction with training				

* p < .01

Correlations between use of the program and school support factors were all positive and statistically significant, although relatively small (Pearson correlation coefficients ranging from $r = .25$ for additional training and use, to $r = .12$ for visiting another school and use of the program; $p < .01$; $n = 957$) (see Table 10). These factors were also highly inter-correlated, suggesting that school level implementation activities were often linked, rather than 'one-off' events. Teachers who participated in staff meeting discussions about teaching the program, for example, were also highly likely to have read literature about the program ($r = .79$), participated in curriculum writing activities ($r = .69$), and undertaken extra training activities ($r = .35$).

Table 10: Correlations between Use of the Program and School Level Support Factors

Variable	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Use	.12*	.14*	.21*	.17*	.15*	.12*	.17*	.21*	.17*	.20*	.18*	.17*	.19*
2. Clear plans		.60*	.27*	.34*	.20*	.16*	.27*	.27*	.17*	.31*	.21*	.16*	.22
3. Principal supports plans			.31*	.41*	.22*	.25*	.30*	.33*	.24*	,36*	.26*	.24*	.29*
4. Bought resources				.33*	.24*	.16*	.28*	.27*	.19*	.37*	.23*	.19*	.24*
5. Discussed at meetings					.49*	.42*	.63*	.69*	.79*	.62*	.62*	.41*	.55*
6. Observed other teacher						.36*	.46*	.39*	.32*	.47*	.41*	.39*	.41*
7. Visited other school							.42*	.42*	.36*	.39*	.33*	.27*	.41*
8. Discussed with Advisor								.52*	.49*	.62*	.52*	.41*	.57*
9. Wrote parts of curriculum									.47*	.62*	.55*	.35*	.47*
10. Planned workshops										.49*	.45*	.29*	.42*
11. Read literature											.63*	.46*	.55*
12. Listened to expert												.32*	.48*
13. Team taught													.40*
14. Joined support group													

* p < .01

The relationship between these factors and teachers' use of the program can be demonstrated in another way. Approximately two thirds of teachers who received various forms of in-school

support linked to the program were identified as medium to high level users of the program (see Table 11). This is in contrast with teachers who did not receive support. On average, only 40%-45% of these teachers achieved medium to high levels of use of the program.

Table 11: Implementation Factors Affecting Teachers' Use of the Program

Implementation Factor	Percent of Teachers Identifying Factor (n = 957)	Percent of Group Identified as Non-Low Level Users	Percent of Group Identified as Medium-High Level Users
Training			
- Highly motivated to attend training	35.8	37.3	62.7
- Highly satisfied with training	26.2	39.2	60.8
- Participated in extra training	26.2	34.6	65.4
School Level Support			
- School had clear implementation plans	58.8	41.8	58.2
- Principal promoted implementation plans	30.1	33.0	67.0
- School purchased extra teaching resources	65.5	42.4	57.6
- Participated in discussions about using P.B.	34.1	38.0	62.0
- Observed other teacher teaching P.B.	17.3	33.7	66.3
- Visited other school to discuss P.B.	10.2	32.7	67.3
- Discussed P.B. with Support Teacher	22.9	34.2	65.8
- Undertook curriculum writing for P.B.	23.9	31.4	68.6
- Read literature relevant to P.B.	34.6	36.6	63.4
- Listened to outside 'expert' talk on P.B.	27.9	34.8	65.2
- Team-taught P.B. with another teacher	20.4	32.3	67.7
- Joined group to support teaching of P.B.	18.1	29.5	70.5

What is also clear from these figures is the fairly small proportions of teachers who actually received school level support to implement the Protective Behaviours program. While two thirds of teachers reported that their school purchased extra teaching resources to support the teaching of the program, and nearly 60% reported that their school had a clear plan for the implementation of the program, only about a quarter of teachers, on average, participated in school level professional development activities related to the program. The most common activities undertaken by teachers were participation in discussions about the program, and reading literature relevant to the program. More practical and practice oriented activities like team teaching the program with another teacher, or observing another teacher using the program were undertaken by less than 20% of teachers.

e) Strategies to Promote the Teaching of the Program

Teachers were asked to rank three strategies which they believed would promote the wider teaching of the Protective Behaviours program. The most frequently cited strategies related to the development of more detailed and specific curriculum materials (47.3% of teachers), and the provision of more school level training and development (46.8% of teachers), although the most common first ranked strategy involved making Protective Behaviours a compulsory part of every school's curriculum (see Table 12). There was also considerable support for broad based community education in the area of child protection.

Table 12: Strategies to Promote the Teaching of the Program

Strategy to Promote Teaching of Protective Behaviours	Percent of Teachers Ranking 1st (n = 957)	Percent of Teachers Ranking 2nd (n = 957)	Percent of Teachers Ranking 3rd (n = 957)	Percent of Teachers Ranking 1 - 3 ($\Sigma > 100\%$)
- Make P.B. compulsory part of curriculum	27.3	6.3	5.2	38.8
- Employer provide more training	12.0	13.5	9.3	34.8
- Provide more training at school level	19.5	15.2	11.5	46.2
- Develop more detailed and specific curriculum materials	14.5	19.0	13.8	47.3
- Develop 'workbooks' for students	3.7	8.6	7.1	19.4
- Produce video support resources	1.8	6.3	7.5	15.6
- Appoint specialists with expertise in child protection	6.1	7.5	7.9	21.5
- Develop information kits on child protection for parents	2.5	8.0	11.4	21.9
- Mount community campaign about child protection	9.2	13.9	18.9	42.0
- Other	3.4	1.7	7.4	12.5

Interestingly, there were only two areas in which teachers who were medium to high level users of the program differed from low level users and non users of the program. Medium to high level users supported mandating the program in greater numbers than non users and low level users (56% - 44% split). On the other hand, the direction of support for the appointment of specialist child protection teachers was reversed with a greater proportion of supporters coming from the non user and low level user group (33% - 67% split).

SUMMARY

The results presented here establish that patterns of use of the Protective Behaviours program by teachers in South Australia vary considerably. A complex web of non use, selective use and detailed use of the five features of the program by teachers has been outlined. This complexity of use challenges assumptions about the presumed homogeneous implementation of the program in South Australian schools. It also complicates the analysis of factors which account for variability in teachers' use of the program. At the risk of oversimplifying what are complex issues, the results of Stage 1 of the Review of Protective Behaviours are summarised below:

1. **Around 20% of teachers did not teach any part of the program.** Many of these teachers reported not having the opportunity to teach the program. Other factors like lack of support to implement the program at the school level also had some impact on their behaviour.
2. **Many teachers were selective users of parts of the program.** The most frequently used feature of the program was the first theme relating to children's right to personal safety. Ironically, the least taught features of the program ('Sexual Touching' and 'Physical Violence') address the very issues that prompted education and social welfare authorities to initiate programs like Protective Behaviours in the first place - the prevention of child sexual abuse and child physical abuse.

3. **There were few secondary teachers trained in Protective Behaviours, and of those who were trained, few implemented the program.** Lack of integration of the program within the mainstream secondary curriculum probably accounts for such low levels of use.
4. **Junior primary teachers used more features of the program and in greater detail than their colleagues at other levels.** Pre-school teachers were also strong users of the program, but chose not to teach several features of the program in detail (those sections on sexual touching and interpersonal violence, for example).
5. **Teachers' main reasons for teaching the program related to the perceived benefits of the program for children.** Strong values congruence with program goals was a feature of these teachers' decision making.
6. **Teachers' gave several reasons for not teaching parts of the program.** These included the perceived lack of reliability of some parents to meet the expectations of the program, the inability of some students to comprehend and implement particular strategies, and fear that parents might object to the detailed teaching of the program.
7. **Medium to high level use of the program was linked to the provision of school level support to implement the program.** However, surprisingly few teachers participated in local professional development activities related to the program, indicating a worrying over-reliance on pre-implementation training to prepare teachers to teach the program.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results of the teacher survey are discussed from a values position that seeks to balance 'top-down' views on program implementation (the 'fidelity' perspective) with 'bottom-up' views (the 'adaptation' perspective). Teachers' use and non use of the program is explained in terms of a complex interaction between opportunities and constraints at the school level, and teachers' often personal decision making about the program. The implications of the findings are briefly discussed. Finally, some suggestions are advanced to promote the wider use by teachers of personal safety programs like Protective Behaviours.

ASSUMPTIONS GUIDING INTERPRETATION

When responding to questions about their use of features of the Protective Behaviours program, teachers revealed diverse patterns of use and non use, with significant differences emerging between teachers at different school levels. It is clear that all aspects of the program have not been faithfully replicated in all of the classes of teachers trained in Protective Behaviours.

Interpreting and commenting on the implications of the varied patterns of use and non use of the program necessarily involves some level of reconciliation between two competing conceptions of program implementation, the 'fidelity' orientation, and the 'adaptation' orientation (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977).

The 'fidelity' orientation conceives of implementation as a relatively simple and rational process of program replication in classrooms across entire education systems. It is assumed that the rationale and aims of the program to be implemented are mostly uncontested and that the process of operationalising elements of the program is largely technical and mechanistic. Those who hold this view of implementation often invoke the rationale for the program as the pre-eminent reason why teachers should implement it. The orientation has a strong positivistic and managerial heritage characterised by certainty and confidence in the 'goodness' of the program to address particular educational or social problems. Finally, this conception of implementation has an implicitly censorious and deficit view of those who 'fail' to implement the program as it has been designed. Non implementing teachers are seen as 'resisters', who lack commitment and professional responsibility.

An alternate view of program implementation has evolved from naturalistic studies of the implementation process that have revealed its complexity, uncertainty, and unpredictability. Diversity of outcomes is accepted as an inevitable consequence of the plurality of teachers and schools, and an opportunity to engage in critical discourse about teaching and curriculum

alternatives. Those who hold this view of implementation reject certainty and confidence, and refuse to accept single solutions to what they perceive to be complex problems. They promote context relevant, tentative and provisional strategies that 'stimulate critical reflection about and collective change in practice' (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992: 5). Finally, this conception of implementation places greater emphasis on the capacities of teachers to develop and evolve better practices from a given start (like a common program), rather than simply installing what are seen as tentative initial suggestions for action.

These quite different orientations to program implementation provide two competing frameworks for the interpretation of teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program. Neither, however, is really fair to all of the stakeholders in the research - those responsible at the systems level for the development of policies and programs which seek to address the problem of child maltreatment, and those at school level who make numerous professional judgements about curriculum content, organisation and approach. A balance between the 'top-downness' of the fidelity perspective, and the 'bottom-upness' of the adaptation perspective needs to be reached.

In seeking to achieve this balance in the Review, it was necessary to articulate a number of assumptions which underpinned the interpretation of the data collected during the Review. It was assumed that:

- the prevention of child maltreatment - the over-riding rationale for the Protective Behaviours program - is a morally, socially and professionally defined responsibility of teachers. As a consequence, the values position assumed in the Review was that there are moral and professional imperatives on teachers to be familiar with and largely embrace the basic rationale for personal safety education (a 'fidelity' perspective).
- features of the Protective Behaviours program (and any other school based personal safety program) are challengeable, and open to question, given the fallible status of most curricula. As a consequence, the values position assumed in the Review was that teachers' evaluations of, and modifications to the program are potentially useful and valuable (an 'adaptability' perspective), so long as they do not entail a rejection of the basic rationale for personal safety education (a 'fidelity' perspective).
- seeking to *understand* teachers' thinking and decision making and the factors that influence it was likely to contribute more to the prevention of child maltreatment (an 'adaptability' perspective), than were narrow judgements of the purity of program implementation (a 'fidelity' perspective). As a consequence, the values position assumed in the Review was that explanation was, in most cases, more appropriate than approbation or criticism.

These fundamental assumptions were used as an interpretive and evaluative framework when considering teachers' use of the Protective Behaviours program.

INTERPRETING TEACHERS' USE AND NON USE OF THE PROGRAM

a) Lack of Opportunity to Teach

The finding that one in five teachers who were trained in Protective Behaviours did not ever teach it, appears, on the surface, to be a very disappointing outcome. While research in other areas of the curriculum has revealed similar levels of non use of programs after training (see Barnett, Johnson, and Badger, 1992), considerable time, effort, and expense went into training probably more than 1600 teachers who subsequently never taught the program formally.

Teachers' reasons for not teaching the program at all were quite salient - most indicated that they didn't have the opportunity to teach it because of a variety of factors that were largely beyond their control. While these explanations have some face validity, it could be argued that the lack of direct benefit for children confirms the wastefulness and futility of training so many teachers who didn't have general class teaching responsibilities.

A more lateral view of the potential indirect benefits of this training for other teachers has some plausibility. For example, many of those in the 20.8% non use group were specialist teachers, librarians, student counsellors, and school principals who, potentially at least, could have played a strong, supportive role sustaining the efforts of colleagues who were teaching the program. Several teachers explained this role in their written comments on their questionnaire.

A breakdown of the membership of the non user group makes this interpretation problematic, however. For example, twice as many primary teachers as junior primary teachers were non users of the program. These large differences suggest that more fundamental factors may have operated to inhibit program use apart from the stated explanations focussing on lack of teaching opportunities. These will be explored in more detail below.

b) Low Curriculum Priority

One of the most striking features of the analysis of program use, is the very low level of use in secondary schools. With only about 700 secondary teachers trained in Protective Behaviours, and a use rate by those of around 20%, the program is virtually non-existent in high schools.

The reasons for this lack of adoption at secondary level can probably be traced to curriculum organisation and priorities, rather than to individual teacher discretion about teaching personal safety to adolescent students. Before the National Statements and Profiles included personal safety education within Health and Physical Education, Protective Behaviours lacked a connection to the formal, well established secondary curriculum. In some secondary schools it was included in pastoral care programs, while in others it was more formally taught in conjunction with health units to do with drug education, and human sexuality. Tenuous links were also made between the program and counter harassment initiatives. However, it appears that the program has never been embraced as an essential part of one of the 'mainstream' subjects in the secondary curriculum. The obvious implication of this is that most early

adolescents in our secondary schools do not receive specific and detailed teaching about how to identify and avoid sexual exploitation, or physical and emotional victimisation, just at a time when 13-15 year old girls, in particular, are at greater risk of sexual abuse than other age groups (Angus and Wilkinson, 1993).

The lack of systematic teaching of personal safety strategies and concepts at secondary level may be alleviated by wider dissemination and incorporation into the mainstream curriculum (via Band C of the National Curriculum Statement on Health and Physical Education) of the relatively new *Keep Safe* program (introduced in South Australia in 1993). However, experience with the Protective Behaviours program, particularly at other schooling levels, suggests that local support mechanisms will be needed during the implementation of the program. Curriculum materials and resources are necessary, but not sufficient, ingredients for successful program use.

c) Support for Program Goals

At other levels of schooling where teachers have greater discretionary power over curriculum matters, use of the program is considerably higher. At Junior Primary and pre-school levels, in particular, around two thirds of teachers use three of the five main features of the program. An analysis of teachers' reasons for teaching the program revealed strong support for the philosophical foundations of the program. This is significant as the program promotes many previously marginalised views about childhood, and the rights and status of children in society. For example, the program encourages children to assert their rights to sexual, physical and emotional well-being, often over the rights of parents and teachers. It challenges the mostly implicit rules which require children to defer to adult authority, and accept it unquestioningly. In short, the program challenges strongly held beliefs about authority relationships in schools and families. Yet many teachers who taught the program overtly endorsed these values and used them to justify their teaching of it. They appeared to have made a decision - *in principle* - to teach the program.

d) Application of the 'Practicality Ethic'

Teachers who didn't teach some parts of the program - the selective non users - were generally less philosophical and principled in their decision making. They seemed to be concerned with a more pragmatic but very important issue - program utility. In other words, they were more concerned about whether on not the program 'worked' in practice. For example, a significant group of teachers (around 80% of selective non users of 'Tell') questioned the efficacy of networking because of doubts about the reliability of adults to act appropriately when contacted by a child. Similarly, many pre-school teachers doubted the ability of their children to set up and use a network of trusted adults. In both cases, considerations of the likely practicality and usefulness of a key strategy in the program influenced their decision not to teach it.

This may be an example of the operation of what Doyle and Ponder (1977) term 'the practicality ethic' in teacher decision making. Doyle and Ponder suggest that many teachers ask at least three basic questions when evaluating new programs.

- Are program requirements congruent with the needs and abilities of those who will use it?
- Is it clear what is required?
- Are the personal costs in terms of time, energy, and threat worth it?

In the case of selective users of Protective Behaviours, many appear to have decided that parts of the program were not congruent with the abilities of parents and young children. They also provided insights into the operation of the third factor - personal cost - when citing possible adverse parental reaction to the teaching of sexual matters. These teachers (72% of junior primary and 69% of pre-school teachers in the selective non use group) may have decided that teaching about sexually sensitive and at times controversial content wasn't worth the personal anxiety of coping with hostile parents. They preferred to omit detailed references to sexual misconduct rather than suffer parental criticism.

While Doyle and Ponders' analysis is helpful in partially understanding teachers' decision making, it really begs the question of why some teachers applied these evaluative criteria and others apparently did not? Or, more specifically, why a sizeable group of teachers apparently over-rode these practical concerns and endorsed Protective Behaviours as a matter of principle. Dichotomising teachers into two groups - believers and sceptics - tends to end the debate about what shapes teachers' values and beliefs, and imply an inevitability about teachers' behaviour that isn't warranted.

e) Provision of Implementation Support

This view isn't supported by the data either. An analysis of the impact of implementation support received by teachers suggests that factors in teachers' school contexts influenced their teaching behaviour and, in all probability, their beliefs about the value of personal safety programs as well. About two thirds of teachers who received school support to implement the Protective Behaviours program went on to be medium to high level users of the program. In contrast, only around 40% of teachers managed to achieve medium to high level use *without* school level implementation support. If the 'true believers' hypothesis was accepted, approximately equal proportions of teachers would be expected in the medium to high use group - perhaps around 40% for both the supported and non supported groups. Clearly, school level implementation support has some impact on teachers' use of the program, beyond that which can be explained by the 'true believers' hypothesis.

It is conceivable that many teachers in the group that received school support did not initially believe in or endorse the philosophical underpinnings of the program, but nevertheless later used the program in a detailed way. Although there is no way to track this retrospectively in

the data, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) give some insight into a possible reciprocal relationship between behaviour change and belief change. They write that

> the relationship between changes in behaviour on the one hand, and changes in beliefs or understanding on the other requires careful consideration. It seems that most people do not discover new understandings until they have delved into something. In many cases, changes in behaviour precede rather than follow changes in belief. ... We see then the relationship between behavioural and belief change is reciprocal and ongoing, with change in doing or behaviour a necessary experience on the way to breakthroughs in meaning and understanding.
> (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991: 91)

The role of school level implementation support, then, is to help teachers go beyond their initial, probably privately made assessments of the congruence, clarity, and cost of the program, and 'delve' into it to learn more about using it in practice. Commitment to the philosophy and rationale of the program may follow.

f) Reliance on Training

Despite the importance of school level support during the arduous process of program implementation, the extent of support for teachers of Protective Behaviours was generally low. While about 60% of schools had clear plans to implement the program, only between 20% and 30% of teachers participated in activities designed to help them achieve those plans. This lack of school level activity probably reflects a misplaced faith in the potency of pre-implementation training in Protective Behaviours. While the vast majority of teachers were satisfied with their six to twelve hours of training, it wasn't sufficient to enable a significant number of them to teach the program.

This finding reinforces, yet again, the application of 'faulty assumptions and ways of thinking' (Fullan, 1982) about the ways new programs can be introduced in schools. Despite a welter of evidence about the importance of the *process* of implementation, many people still believe that pre-implementation training adequately prepares teachers to teach new programs like Protective Behaviours. The results of this study suggest that this belief is overly rational and naively simplistic. While it might be easier, cheaper and quicker to continue supporting a change strategy which denies the difficulty and complexity of program implementation (Johnson and Moraw, 1994), such a policy guarantees failure. The consequences for teachers of such a policy are bad enough - probable censure and blame for low program use - yet the consequences for children are potentially worse with many being denied personal safety education.

IMPLICATIONS

The implications of the findings of Stage 1 of the Review are fairly serious. The revelation that many teachers have chosen not to, or have been unable to, implement the program means that many children in our schools and pre-schools do not receive detailed and thorough personal

safety education. If more teachers are to embrace the program, or derivatives of it, a number of issues of contention amongst teachers need to be resolved. These issues relate to

1. *Program utility.*

   Many teachers justifiably want to know whether the program 'works'. Without an endorsement that its rationale is valid, many teachers will probably be reluctant to teach it.
2. *Age appropriateness.*

   Some teachers have expressed concerns over whether some of the concepts and strategies (networking in particular) used in the program are suitable for their children.
3. *Explicitness required.*

   Some teachers have questioned the need for explicit and detailed teaching of those aspects of the program about sexual matters, or about adult violence.
4. *Parental and community support.*

   A cursory glimpse at the reasons given by some teachers for not teaching parts of the program suggests that the problem is not all theirs - concerns about serious and damaging parental and community disapproval, for example, place teacher decision making about the program in a wider social context.
5. *Nature and level of support needed to implement the program.*

   Many teachers reported that they did not receive any support to teach the program after training, despite evidence that school level support is linked to program implementation.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

a) Implementation Support

About half of teachers suggested that providing more school level support and more detailed curriculum materials would help promote the teaching of the program. Both suggestions reflect practical concerns about the nature and level of support needed to teach the program in depth.

One means to encourage the development and proliferation of curriculum support materials in the area of personal safety would be to use existing mechanisms for the publication of examples of current 'good practice'. The popular *Windows on Practice* series, for example, provides a model for the development of a range of quality resources to support the teaching of personal safety (see Golding and Todd (1994) for an example in this area). Using the principles of Protective Behaviours and other personal safety programs as an underlying framework, these initiatives could provide practical suggestions about how to teach key personal safety concepts and strategies. By abandoning the idea that the principles and strategies of Protective Behaviours need to be embodied in one *official* document, the current 'good practice' of many teachers in the area of personal safety can be harnessed.

The development of a range of materials would address several of the issues of contention raised by teachers who were selective users of the program. For example, they could provide practical examples of approaches that alleviate concerns about the age appropriateness of sections of the program. Also, they could ease teachers' concerns about the lack of clarity of the program.

Curriculum support materials will not, however, solve all implementation difficulties - the experience of decades of expensive centralised curriculum development testifies to this (see Johnson, 1983). Teachers need support at the local level as they grapple with the day to day difficulties associated with doing something new and challenging. Teachers readily identified the provision of school level implementation support as an important ingredient in the implementation equation. Again, there are local examples of how good practices at the school level can be shared more widely (see Education Department of South Australia, 1989). By presenting exemplars of effective local staff development activity in the area of personal safety, it may be possible to address one of the serious deficiencies in the implementation of Protective Behaviours revealed by this Review.

b) Balancing Opportunities and Constraints

These two practical strategies can be seen as interventions to increase the 'opportunities' available for teachers to develop greater expertise in the area of personal safety teaching. However, many teachers also recognised a need to apply overt pressure to reinforce the importance of the rationale for Protective Behaviours. Nearly 40% of teachers surprisingly endorsed a suggestion to mandate the teaching of Protective Behaviours. With the adoption of the national curriculum framework which contains specific reference to the teaching of personal safety skills, this has effectively been done in South Australia. However, as this study has shown, program adoption does not ensure program *implementation*. What is more important is the *local* negotiation of agreed expectations about the teaching of personal safety. As Fullan and Stiegelbauer write

> both pressure and support are necessary for success. We usually think of pressure as a bad thing, and support as good. But there is a positive role for pressure in change. There are many forces maintaining the status quo. During the change process interaction among implementers serves to integrate both pressure and support. ... Pressure without support leads to resistance and alienation; support without pressure leads to drift or waste of resources.
> (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991: 91)

By participating in negotiations about the implications of accepting the over-riding rationale for personal safety education, teachers will be under pressure *from their peers* to utilise a range of support mechanisms to address their teaching in the area.

c) Parent and Community Awareness

Some teachers revealed that one of their reasons for not teaching features of the program was concern over possible adverse parental reaction to the program. It isn't surprising, then, that 42% of teachers believed that increasing public awareness about the aims and approaches used in the program would contribute to the wider teaching of the program. While public education about the prevention of child abuse is a priority of the National Child Protection Council, local action by schools to inform parents about issues of personal safety can effectively mobilise support for school based prevention. Recent community reaction to the attempted abduction of several children in the southern suburbs (June, 1995) demonstrates continued public concern over child safety. By linking school personal safety programs to the wider movement to help prevent abuse, parent and community education can reduce the gap perceived by some teachers to exist between program goals and community expectations.

SUMMARY

Evaluation is a value-laden enterprise. In the case of the Review of Protective Behaviours, it was necessary to articulate a values position that took account of the socially, morally and professionally implied responsibility of teachers to contribute to the prevention of child abuse, while, at the same time acknowledging the inevitability of local adaptation of prevention initiatives by teachers. Within this context, explanations of teacher decision making were pursued to identify a range of opportunities and constraints that affected teachers' use of the program. From this analysis several ways of promoting the wider teaching of personal safety programs like Protective Behaviours were suggested. It was concluded that increasing school level implementation support for teachers would be beneficial, particularly when linked with a locally negotiated commitment to embrace the over-riding rationale for school based personal safety education.

SECTION 3

Learning About Personal Safety

AN INVESTIGATION

OF

STUDENTS'

PERSONAL SAFETY LEARNING

CHAPTER 7

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

As was revealed in the review of literature, there are many methodological difficulties associated with assessing children's personal safety learning. In this chapter, key methodological decisions are described and justified to establish the credibility of the research approach adopted. The development of an innovative way to assess children's personal safety learning is outlined. As this approach stimulated debate about the ethics of research in this area, several ethical issues are also discussed. Finally, details are provided of the response categories used to code students' responses to questions about their personal safety knowledge.

RESEARCH FOCUS

Stage 2 of the Review focussed on the impact of the Protective Behaviours program on children's personal safety learning. In particular, the terms of reference of the Review required comparisons to be made between children who had been taught Protective Behaviours and those who had not. The two key areas of comparison were:

- children's ability to identify unsafe situations
- children's knowledge of personal safety strategies

These requirements reflected an interest in the relative abilities of children to identify clues or 'unsafe messages' in dangerous or potentially dangerous situations and to take action to promote their personal safety. They also reflected a concern to more closely evaluate the Protective Behaviours program to determine whether the program - which appeared intuitively sound - was actually effective in promoting personal safety learning.

INHERENT RESEARCH DIFFICULTIES

The simple focus of the research hid many methodological and ethical difficulties related to research into children's personal safety. Chesterton, et al., (1992: 26) suggest that conducting evaluations of school based prevention programs is problematic because of:

- difficulties identifying suitable control or comparison groups
- difficulties identifying and defining independent and dependent variables due, in part, to ambiguity over program goals
- an over-reliance on proximal measures of knowledge acquisition rather than on measures of actual behaviour change
- the contaminating influence of unrecognised factors during the treatment phase of evaluations
- the lack of pre-existing assessment measures that are valid and reliable

- the use of small samples
- the lack of long-term follow-up or repeated measures

To this list can be added a increasingly large range of difficulties which arise from the application of strict ethical standards designed to:

- ensure that parents are adequately informed to give or withhold permission for their children to be involved in sensitive research about personal safety
- ensure the safety of children involved in sensitive research
- protect researchers and Universities from legal action arising from research activity

All of these difficulties had to be addressed in designing Stage 2 of the Review. This involved numerous compromises between what was ideal from a research perspective and what was possible, given the ethical and logistical constraints operating during the Review.

RESEARCH DESIGN: NON-EXPERIMENTAL POST-TREATMENT COMPARISONS

Daro (1993) provides a strong argument promoting the use of experimental and quasi-experimental approaches when evaluating prevention programs. She advocates the formal random assignment of subjects to treatment and control groups, and pre and post-treatment testing of subjects on a variety of measures using highly reliable and valid standardised instruments. She suggests that, due to the social and political sensitivity of prevention efforts that focus on children, only the 'very highest research standards' are likely to be acceptable to policy makers and funding authorities.

However, such methodological strictures ignore the frequently complex reality of applied social research. While the search for methodological rigour is on-going and necessary, the conditions are rarely present in social and school settings that allow the application of experimental and quasi-experimental research designs. Such was the case in Stage 2 of the Review. It was not feasible, given time and financial constraints, to identify a representative group of children who had *never* been taught Protective Behaviours (a requirement for a pre-treatment measure), but whose teachers were trained to teach the program *and* were prepared to teach the program in depth during a 10 week period in 1994 (a requirement for a post-treatment measure). However, it was possible to identify two similar groups of children who differed in one significant way - one group had never been taught the Protective Behaviours program, while the other had teachers who had been identified as high level users of the Program in Stage 1 of the Review. A non-experimental post-treatment comparisons design was accepted as a less authoritative but more feasible means of generating data than more 'pure' experimental approaches.

Identification of Participants

a) Protective Behaviours Participants (the potential 'Treatment' Group)

Based on their responses to the Teacher Questionnaire used in Stage 1 of the Review, 71 teachers were identified as 'High Level Users' of the Protective Behaviours program (their combined past use and current use of the program was scored at greater than 25 of a possible 30 points). These teachers were invited, by letter, to participate in Stage 2 of the Review. Because of the demanding and searching nature of the proposed second stage of the Review, it was anticipated that only a small number of teachers would volunteer to participate. A total of 27 teachers returned consent forms to proceed to the next stage. Fifteen of these teachers, spread across different year levels and locations, were finally selected for the study. The 15 classes that these teachers taught contained the potential 'treatment' group of approximately 400 students (see Table 13).

Table 13: Age of Children in Participating Classes (with potential number of students in brackets)

	Age of Children		
Location	4-8 Year Olds	9-12 Year Olds	13-16 Year Olds
City	6 classes (~ 150 ch)	5 classes (~ 130 ch)	1 class (~ 30 ch)
Country	2 classes (~ 50 ch)	1 class (~ 30 ch)	
Total	8 classes (~ 200 ch)	6 classes (~ 160 ch)	1 class (~ 30 ch)

b) Non-Protective Behaviours Participants (the potential 'Comparison' Group)

Once classes of potential 'treatment' students were identified, 'matching' non-Protective Behaviours classes in nearby schools were identified as potential sources of 'comparison' students. For example, once a Year 6 class in an Independent primary school in a socio-economically well-off southern suburb of Adelaide was identified as a source of 'treatment' students, a Year 6/7 class in a neighbouring Independent primary school (close proximity and similar socio-economic status) was identified as a potential source of 'comparison' students. Similarly, two classes in schools in neighbouring Riverland towns were 'matched' using the same process.

When approached, some teachers of 'comparison' classes were reluctant to participate in the study. This was particularly evident at several country schools and city pre-schools. Teachers' reasons for refusing to participate included concern for the well-being of their students, apprehension over possible adverse parental reaction to the research, and concern over the disruptive effects of the research on class organisation and curriculum offerings. As well as prolonging the search for suitable participants, teacher reluctance to participate in the study resulted in several 'treatment' classes being 'unmatched' by appropriate 'comparison' classes. A lower number of 'comparison' participants was an unavoidable consequence.

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

Meetings were held with teaching staff and parents in over 30 schools and pre-schools to explain the purposes of the research, the procedures to be used, and to secure parental consent for participation in the research (for a fuller discussion of this process see ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS below). A total of 321 students (194 in the Protective Behaviours Group and 127 in the Comparison Group) in 24 different schools and pre-schools were recruited to participate in Stage 2 of the Review.

SOURCES OF DATA

To generate data about children's personal safety knowledge as well as a range of personal and background features that might influence the acquisition of that knowledge, three principal data sources were identified - the children, their teachers, and their parents. Figure 7 summarises the sources of data for the 10 factors largely derived from an analysis of the terms of reference of the Review.

Factors	Source of Data
• Nature and extent of Teachers' use of Protective Behaviours	Teacher
• Child's exposure to Protective Behaviours	Teacher
• Child's exposure to other school based safety programs	Teacher
• Child's overall learning ability	Teacher
• Socio-economic status of child's family	Teacher
• Child's level of assertiveness	Teacher
• Child's emotional stability	Teacher
• Parental teaching of personal safety	Parent
• Child's ability to identify unsafe situations	Child
• Child's knowledge of personal safety strategies	Child
• Descriptive information about child (age, sex, year level)	Child

Figure 7: Sources of Data collected during Stage 2 of the Review

MEASURES OF BACKGROUND VARIABLES

The main source of information on a range of individual child variables was a simple questionnaire in which teachers rated each student on a Lickert-type scale for such things as assertiveness and fearfulness. They also rated the exposure of each child to the Protective Behaviours program during 1994 and in past years, and their exposure to other 'victim resistance' initiatives like counter harassment programs, assertiveness programs, and 'stranger danger' sessions. The parents of participating children also completed a simple questionnaire about their teaching of personal safety concepts and strategies at home. Response rates of 88.4% for the teacher-completed questionnaire (n = 281) and 71.4% for the parent questionnaire (n = 227) were achieved.

Measure of Teachers' Use of the Protective Behaviours Program

Protective Behaviours teachers were recruited to participate in the study because they had been identified as 'high level users' of the program during Stage 1 of the Review, in 1993. To confirm that these teachers actually taught key features of the program to the children in their 1994 classes, all 15 teachers maintained a detailed 'Reflective Journal' in which they recorded

- descriptions of what they taught in Protective Behaviours, including actual lesson plans, resources, and modifications to course outlines
- reflections on why they taught the program as they did
- observations of the outcomes of the program

(Dobbins, 1994)

These Journals were used to establish that all students who were included in the Protective Behaviours group had, in fact, been taught the program in detail within a two month period prior to being interviewed. They also provided valuable insight into teachers' curriculum decision making to complement information gained during Stage 1 of the Review.

Measures of Student Outcomes

There is considerable debate in the literature on child protection about which outcomes should be measured to determine the efficacy of prevention initiatives (see Krivacska, 1990; Briggs and Hawkins, 1994[a]). Some researchers have attempted to assess actual behavioural changes in children following participation in prevention programs by observing the children's reactions when confronted by threats to their safety (Poche, Brouwer, and Swearingen, 1981; Fryer, Kraiser, and Miyoshi, 1987). However, these researchers have been stridently criticised on ethical grounds for covertly placing children in unsafe situations with little regard for their well-being. As a consequence, nearly all recent evaluation studies have limited outcomes measures to assessments of children's personal safety knowledge.

By far the most common means of assessing personal safety knowledge has been through the development and application of pen and paper student questionnaires. Saslawski and Wurtele (1986), for example, designed the 'Personal Safety Questionnaire' to evaluate changes in children's knowledge about sexual abuse, and Hazzard, Webb, Kleemier, Angert, and Pohl (1991) developed the 25-item 'What I Know About Touching Scale' for the same purpose. While Daro (1993) argues strongly for the repeated use of reliable standardised measures like the 'Personal Safety Questionnaire', there were considerable disadvantages associated with their use in Stage 2 of the Review. These disadvantages included the:

- use of American terminology
- limited focus on sexual abuse to the exclusion of physical and emotional abuse
- over reliance on acquired literacy skills
- simplicity (increasing the likelihood of ceiling effects with older children)

Because of these disadvantages, pen and paper standardised measures were not used in Stage 2 of the Review to measure students' personal safety knowledge.

Another method of assessing children's knowledge of prevention has been the use of hypothetical 'What if...?' written vignettes (see, for example, Grober, Bogat, and McGrath, 1991). In several studies (Saslawski and Wurtele, 1986; Miltenberger and Thiesse-Duffy, 1988), vignettes were used to depict a predetermined set of circumstances about which children were asked to offer a range of alternate ways of dealing with the problems presented. In these cases, vignettes were used to simulate reality by providing a controlled stimulus to a wide variety of children (Carifio and Lanza, 1989). Most commonly, vignettes are presented in narrative form. However, other media including audio and video tape, and computer animation have been used (Hazzard, et al., 1991).

What is attractive about vignette methodology is the capacity it gives researchers to control and manipulate variables. For example, the age and gender of characters can be varied, and the intensity of the situation or series of events can be changed while keeping other dimensions of the vignette constant. Variations in subjects' responses can be attributed to changes to the stimulus variables or to differences in subjects' knowledge, gender, and/or age. Because of these advantages it was decided, in Stage 2 of the Review, to develop a number of vignettes to assess children's ability to identify unsafe situations, and to suggest appropriate personal safety strategies to deal with those situations.

DEVELOPMENT OF VIGNETTES

a) Storylines

Because the terms of reference of the Review did not limit the assessment of student responses to situations involving only one form of maltreatment (as is the case with most American research), it was decided to prepare vignettes that dealt with the three major types of child maltreatment - physical, sexual and emotional. 'Storylines' were developed which traced the escalation of interactions between children and various adults, from situations of little overt threat through two levels of increasing threat and overt maltreatment ('unsafe' and 'very unsafe' situations). The gender of the perpetrators of the maltreatment in the first two situations was assigned by taking into account differences in perpetrator gender in child abuse incidence data (Angus and Wilkinson, 1993). A male was depicted as the perpetrator in the sexually unsafe story, while a female was depicted as the perpetrator in the physically unsafe story. In the emotionally unsafe scenario a male and a female teacher were described belittling the efforts of two students.

Four variations of each vignette were proposed. In each vignette the age and gender of the child 'victim' was changed to create the following variations:

- Variation 1: Young Male (aged about 6 or 7)
- Variation 2: Young Female (aged about 6 or 7)

- Variation 3: Older Male (aged about 12 or 13)
- Variation 4: Older Female (aged about 12 or 13)

Apart from these variations every other detail in the vignettes was kept constant. The intention was to present children with a 'same age - same sex' version of each vignette. For example, junior primary boys participating in the study would be presented with variation 1 of each vignette, junior primary girls would be presented with variation 2, and so on. It was thought that children would more closely identify with the thoughts and feelings of the children in the vignettes if they were their own age and gender.

b) Use of Video

In some studies (Saslawski and Wurtele, 1986; Briggs, 1991), hypothetical vignettes were presented to children verbally and/or in written form. However, the pioneering work of Hazzard et al. (1991) provided the impetus to consider the use of video as the medium of presentation in Stage 2 of the Review. The use of video had several advantages over written or narrative approaches. For example,

- vignettes could be presented in a consistent and standardised way
- children would not need advanced literacy skills
- the medium was familiar and accessible to even young children
- visual presentation could enhance realism and add credibility to the vignettes

However, it was this final feature of video presentations that prompted careful consideration of the likely impact of the video vignettes on children involved in the study. In modifying the three 'storylines' for video script development, a number of considerations were taken into account. These included:

- keeping each vignette relatively short and uncomplicated.
- minimising the level of *visible* overt physical and sexual violence to that necessary to clearly portray unsafe situations without creating unwarranted fear in children. There was also a desire not to provide children with strong visual models of violent and abusive behaviour which they could imitate.
- portraying child victims as individuals who do not provoke or invite maltreatment, even through non-deliberate transgressions (eg, accidentally spilling food, or accidentally striking someone who then retaliates with greater force). There was a desire not to encourage 'victim-blaming' through the presentation of 'mixed message' scenarios.
- portraying perpetrators as the initiators and escalators of maltreatment.
- minimising visible victim reaction to maltreatment so that subjects would not be led in their thinking about possible personal safety responses.

These considerations reflect the difficulties associated with producing video vignettes about something as sensitive as child maltreatment. Because of professional and community sensitivity

over child abuse generally, and more particularly, the use with children of a video in which unsafe situations are displayed, widespread consultations were undertaken to canvass reactions to the proposed methodology.

c) Consultation - Phase 1: Storylines

An outline of the research proposal and a copy of the revised video vignette storylines were distributed to 6 Protective Behaviours specialists in South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria, inviting critical comment. All commented favourably on the value, scope and rigour of the proposed approach. However, there was general concern about the explicitness of the vignettes and their potential to provoke fear and anxiety in both the children who acted in the vignettes and in the children who subsequently viewed them (Gordon, 1993[b]; Davies, 1993; Melican, 1993; McDonald and McPhee, 1993).

Two international experts in the field were also consulted ((Hazzard, 1993; Briggs, 1993). Both specifically endorsed the directness of the approach and provided detailed written advice on the wording and sequencing of questions that could be posed to determine children's responses to each vignette.

d) Consultation - Phase 2: Scripts

Following these initial consultations, a professional script writer was commissioned to develop full scripts of the three vignettes. A draft script was written in early June 1993. Meetings with professional film makers followed. Stylistic techniques were discussed as ways of lessening the overt visual impact of the vignettes while still conveying the essential 'unsafe' features of each scene.

A further round of consultation was initiated following the final re-drafting of the scripts in late June 1993. Copies of the scripts were sent to a wide cross-section of individuals and specialist groups with expertise in child protection issues, instructional media and/or child development. Written and verbal responses were received from 15 individuals and 2 organisations.

The advice from those consulted was varied and, at times, contradictory. However, it demonstrated the potential for professional and community controversy over the use of video vignettes to assess children's ability to identify unsafe situations, and to suggest appropriate personal safety strategies to deal with those situations.

e) Response to Advice

A strong criticism of the vignette scripts was that they were still too explicit. It was argued that showing children explicit images of violent and/or sexual activity would induce a range of negative responses in the children, including displays of anxiety and fear. This criticism exposed an essential dilemma confronting researchers working in the prevention field. On the one hand, the need to evaluate children's responses to unsafe situations required that they be exposed to

some elements of those situations, while on the other, the well-being of the children could not be jeopardised.

In response to this criticism, the scripts were re-examined and changes made to reduce the level of visual explicitness in the vignettes without compromising the original intent to convey clear messages of 'unsafeness' to the children. This lead to a major change in the physical maltreatment vignette with final images of a child injured by a fall omitted from the script.

f) Production of Final Video Vignettes

The videos were produced by a professional film making group using professional actors during August and September 1993. Even though the children acting in the videos were professional actors, the following safeguards were used to ensure their well-being while making the videos:

- all were thoroughly briefed about the content of each vignette
- the parents of younger actors were encouraged to attend shooting sessions
- a trained social worker with experience in child counselling attended all shooting sessions
- a child care worker supervised the children when they were not required on set.

None of the child actors reported any adverse reaction to their participation in the production of the video vignettes.

The completed video vignettes were shown to senior officers of the Education Department, Children's Services Office, Catholic Education Office and Independent Schools Board. With the exception of officers from the Children's Services Office who did not endorse the use of the videos with pre-school children (see h) Pre-school Variations below), approval was granted to use the vignettes in Stage 2 of the Review with school children from the State, Catholic and Independent School systems.

g) Content of Video Vignettes

A brief outline of the content of each vignette is presented in Figure 8.

Type of Maltreatment	Scenes		
	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3
Physical	A child enters a brother's messy bedroom to look for a ball. While looking for the ball he/she hears the crash of a broken plate in the kitchen. A caregiver is heard to complain that the mishap happened because someone 'let the cat in'. The child leaves the bedroom to investigate. He/she then sees an exasperated caregiver picking up the pieces of a broken saucer from the kitchen floor.	Child returns to the bedroom to look for the ball. He/she picks up a pile of clothes from the floor in a corner of the room and puts them by the bed. The caregiver sees this from the corridor and wrongly accuses the child of making a mess in the room. The caregiver shouts at the child ('How many times have I told you not to come in here and mess up your brother's room? How many times?'). She grabs the child by the shoulders as she shouts.	The caregiver continues to question the child over the messy room. The child quietly denies making the mess. In a moment of exasperation, she pushes the child away from her. While still focussing on the caregiver, a muffled bang is heard. It is implied that the child hits his/her cheek on something as he/she falls after being pushed away. The caregiver looks concerned as the child is shown holding his/her face.
Emotional	Two students (one male and one female) are shown working in a classroom. Their teacher asks them to bring their work out for her to see. The children leave their desks and hand their work to the teacher who routinely looks over it.	The teacher becomes angry after looking at the work. She asks, 'What sort of work do you call that?' but answers her own question by saying that she does not tolerate 'rubbish' in her room. The children look hurt and humiliated by the teacher's comments, but say nothing.	The teacher rips the children's work from their books and calls over another teacher from an adjacent area. He examines the work, agrees with the first teacher's comments, and suggests that his younger students might like to give their opinions of the quality of the work. The two children are paraded before the younger class and asked to 'show' their work. The class laughs at the children's efforts. The final scene shows both children looking sad and hurt.
Sexual	A child is shown watching T.V. with a female baby sitter. The doorbell rings and a young adult male enters the room. He greets his friend (the baby sitter) and sits on the same double lounge chair as the child watching T.V. He smiles and asks after the well-being of the child.	The phone rings and is answered by the baby sitter. She returns to get a magazine and says that she will be talking on the phone for about ten minutes. She leaves the room. The visitor asks the child about the T.V. program but appears more interested in looking at the child. He compliments the child on his/her haircut and the smoothness and softness of his/her skin. The child looks puzzled and moves slightly away from the visitor.	The visitor touches the child's face and hair and says that he would like to touch him/her 'all over'. He reassures the child that 'you will like it too'. The next frame is taken from behind the lounge with both the child and visitor sitting together with their backs to the camera. The visitor appears to be moving his hand to touch the child inappropriately, although this is not shown explicitly. The final scene focuses on the visitor moving slightly away from the child as he reminds the child that what happened was '... our little secret, remember ... '.

Figure 8: Outline of Content of Video Vignettes

h) Pre-school Variations

After long and protracted discussions with pre-school teachers, social workers, and senior officials of the Children's Services Office, an impasse was reached in late 1993 over the use of the video vignettes with 4 year old pre-school children. While representatives of the pre-school sector still wanted 4-5 year olds to be included in the study, there was considerable concern over the explicitness of the vignettes and the appropriateness of the school based emotional maltreatment vignette in particular. A number of different media were suggested to present 'unsafe' situations to younger children (puppet plays, narrative vignettes, cartoons) but were

rejected because comparisons between the personal safety responses of younger and older children - based on quite different stimuli - would not have been possible.

In January 1994 it was decided that the only way to include 4-5 year old children in the study *and* allay pre-school workers' concerns about the explicitness of the video vignettes was to produce new pre-school videos which followed the same format as the other videos but featured younger children in more familiar settings. Key features like the escalation of 'unsafeness' through three scenes, perpetrator gender, and the male-female variations were retained. Even the same adult actors were used in the same roles in two of the three new vignettes. Very briefly, the main differences were:

Physical Maltreatment

- the adult to child maltreatment centred around an hair brushing incident rather than the 'messy room' incident in the main vignette. The final 'very unsafe' scenes in both videos depicted an adult pushing a child who falls and hurts his/her face.

Emotional Maltreatment

- the scene takes place in a pre-school setting rather than school setting. The adults who belittle and humiliate the children are two parents rather than teachers.

Sexual Maltreatment

- the vignette begins differently with the perpetrator being introduced as a visitor from interstate (rather than the friend of a babysitter). The 'very unsafe' scene is shorter and simpler. It shows the adult looking and perhaps touching 'down there' (inferred rather than depicted) under the pretense of wanting to inspect the child's chicken pox spots. The visual expressions on the faces of both perpetrator and victims in both vignettes are very similar.

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVIEW PROTOCOL USING VIDEO VIGNETTES

The vignettes were designed to be presented to individual children during a one-to-one interview conducted by a skilled interviewer. To ensure consistent treatment across interviews, a precise interview protocol was developed to prescribe a set sequence of questions and to facilitate consistent recording of children's responses. This involved the following stages.

a) Formulating Questions

As the aim of Stage 2 of the Review was to assess children's ability to identify unsafe situations and suggest personal safety strategies appropriate for those situations, the following questions were framed to elicit responses from children after they had seen each scene of each vignette:

Safety Discrimination Questions

- How do you think the boy/girl is feeling?
- What makes you think that?

Personal Safety Strategies Questions

- What would you say or do if that was you?
- What do you think the boy/girl could say or do now?

These questions closely resemble those posed by Hazzard, et al., (1991) and Briggs (1991) in their vignette studies. When asked to evaluate these questions, both Hazzard and Briggs independently suggested that a further series of questions be designed to elicit responses about children's actual use of personal safety strategies in the past. They suggested that the following questions could be posed after the final ('very unsafe') scene:

- Have you ever been in a situation like this?
- What did you say or do?

Because these questions invite disclosures of past maltreatment, they pose an ethical dilemma for researchers who have conflicting responsibilities to maintain research confidentiality and fulfil mandatory notification requirements. While the questions have the potential to uncover valuable information about children's *actual use* of personal safety strategies, their potential to uncover undetected abuse makes their use ethically problematic. As a consequence of advice received from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of South Australia, questions relating to the retrospective use of personal safety strategies were not included in the interview protocol (for a fuller discussion of reporting issues see Ethical Considerations below).

b) Establishing Response Categories

Theoretical considerations dictated that certain key student response categories be included for each of the questions. For example, responses to the questions about personal safety strategies had to include a range of behaviours that nearly all prevention programs identify as 'appropriate' - behaviours like telling a person to 'stop' doing things that the child does not like ('Assert'), moving away from the person ('Escape'), and enlisting the help of another responsible adult ('Tell'). Other hypothesised responses included suggesting no action, trying to explain the child's point of view ('Rationalise'), and suggesting efforts to conciliate and compromise with the adult ('Appease').

In relation to the Safety Discrimination Questions, of theoretical interest was the extent to which children linked feelings of fear with perceptions of threat, as the Protective Behaviours program and other personal safety programs rely on children making such a link and then acting on their 'early warning signs'. Consequently, one of the 'feelings' response categories identified for the Safety Discrimination Questions was 'Afraid'. Other response categories ranged from fairly neutral perceptions (feeling 'O.K.'), through to quite predictable responses that reflected the child's reactions after being maltreated ('Hurt').

When considering the reasons for children's choices, of prime interest was whether they focussed on the behaviour of the children in the unsafe situations, or on the threatening behaviour of the adults. Underpinning this interest were broader issues related to 'victim blaming' and the apportionment of responsibility for maltreatment. Consequently, four response categories were proposed to identify children's reasons for labelling others' feelings as they did.

c) Trialling Interview Protocol

Having determined these broad response categories, a draft Interview Protocol was trialled with 7 children aged between 5 and 11 years to:

- assess the appropriateness of the questions, especially with young children
- identify any adverse reactions by the children to the final (and most explicit) scene of each vignette
- assess the appropriateness of the pre-set responses to each of the questions

During trial interviews, all children coped well with both the content of the videos and with the questions linked to key scenes within them. However, it became clear that interviewers found it very difficult to attend to the children during the interview and to simultaneously categorise their responses in the general pre-determined categories. The most common difficulty seemed to be interpreting highly specific responses and categorising them quickly using only very general labels. To reduce this *in situ* coding demand on interviewers, typical responses to each question were generated during trialling and recorded as response options in the final Interview Protocol. Interviewers then simply had to identify the response that was closest to the one given by a child and record its number in an appropriate box in the Protocol. These 'raw responses' were then re-coded by computer using the re-coding schedule outlined in Figure 9.

d) Selecting and Training Interviewers

Ten final year University students were recruited as interviewers. All were female, all had worked extensively with children in school settings, all had undertaken Mandatory Notification training, and all had been trained to teach the Protective Behaviours program.

The interviewers attended a full-day training session at which the research methodology was explained, the video vignettes were shown and discussed, and the 'final' Interview Protocol was analysed and slightly revised. Participants role-played interviews to become familiar with the interview protocol and to practice following it consistently while coping with the demands of operating video equipment. They also developed procedures to 'debrief' children who gave inappropriate or potentially dangerous responses to the vignettes (eg, 'I'd get a gun and kill him!'). Finally, the interviewers underwent a 'refresher' course on aspects of Mandatory Notification (for a fuller discussion of reporting issues see Ethical Considerations below).

Outcome Measure	Examples of Student Responses	Response Categories
1. Ability to identify victims' feelings in 'unsafe' and 'very unsafe' situations. Protocol Question (after child views 'unsafe' and 'very unsafe' scenes): *'How do you think the boy/girl is feeling now?'*	• I don't know • I'm not sure	1. Don't Know
	• Not bad • Alright • OK • Fine	2. O.K.
	• Sad • Bad • Awful	3. Upset
	• Frightened • Scared • Unsafe	4. Afraid
	• Mad • Annoyed • Angry	5. Angry
	• Injured • Sore • Humiliated • Hurt	6. Hurt
2. Ability to identify why situations are 'unsafe' and 'very unsafe'. Protocol Question: *'What makes you think that?'*	• I don't know • I'm not sure	1. Don't Know
	• Child did something wrong • Child deserves it	2. Child's behaviour
	• Adult shouts • Adult blames • Adult says weird things	3. Adult's verbal comments
	• Adult pushed • Adult hurt child • Adult touched private parts	4. Adult's behaviour
3. Ability to suggest personal safety responses to 'unsafe' and 'very unsafe' situations. Protocol Questions: *What would you say or do if that was you?* *What do you think the boy/girl could say or do now?*	• I don't know • Nothing	1. No Action
	• Try to explain • Say want to discuss • Explain not your fault	2. Rationalise
	• Cry • Apologise or say sorry • Offer to change/be good/do better • Make a deal	3. Appease
	• Ask to stop • Say - Stop it, I don't like it! • Shout back - interrupt	4. Assert
	• Get free • Move to another seat • Leave room • Run away	5. Escape
	• Call out for help • Ring parent • Tell an adult	6. Tell

Figure 9: Re-coding schedule for Student Responses

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical approval for the Review had been sought, and received in June 1992, from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of South Australia (H.R.E.C.). However, as significant changes had been made to the original research plan, particularly with the detailed development of the video vignettes, a new application for ethical approval was lodged with a re-constituted Committee on 3rd September 1993. At its meeting on September 14th, the Committee rejected the new application. Between September 1993 and August 1994, the Principal Researcher and the Committee undertook protracted negotiations to clarify issues of ethical concern, and to develop procedures to ensure that the research was conducted in ways that the Committee accepted as ethical. Figure 10 summarises the issues of concern and the compromises reached to resolve them.

Three issues were of most concern to the Ethics Committee.

a) Issues Related to Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

In the re-application for ethical approval, procedures to deal with suspected cases of child abuse were outlined. It was acknowledged that some disclosures of child abuse were likely (Briggs, and Hazzard reported disclosures by 3-4% of the children they interviewed) and that this possibility posed a dilemma for interviewers and researchers associated with the Review. However, it was argued that, in the interests of any children who may have been the victims of abuse, all suspected cases of abuse would be reported to welfare authorities.

> Usually, in studies involving human subjects, researchers are ethically bound to maintain the confidentiality of information provided by participants. In the proposed study, this principle will apply to all information except that relating to suspected instances of past and/or on-going abuse involving subjects. In cases of suspected child abuse, legal and moral concerns about the well-being of the child supersede conventional research ethics concerning subject confidentiality.
> (Johnson, 1993: 7)

In reply, the Committee questioned whether or not researchers working in schools were legally required to 'directly report' suspected cases of abuse (H.R.E.C., September 22nd, 1993: 2). Subsequent legal opinion was contradictory (Assistant Crown Solicitor, 1993; Baker O'Loughlin, 1993) and complicated by the imminent presentation to Parliament of the Children's Protection Bill which proposed changes to mandatory notification requirements. The subsequent passage of the Bill confirmed the legal status of researchers as mandated notifiers, but not before considerable time and energy had been spend investigating the issue. The Ethics Committee was also concerned about the difficulties that could arise if children made false allegations against parents or teachers, particularly if parents or teachers were not aware of researchers' reporting obligations.

Issues of Concern raised by Ethics Committee	Negotiated Compromises
Doubts over ethics of submitting children to procedures that lack validity. Use of non-experimental research design questioned.	• Committee accepted that non-experimental designs are widely used and approved in educational research.
Research procedures may harm children by inducing fear and anxiety.	• Under principle of 'Informed Consent' parents encouraged not to give permission for child to participate if they feared adverse reaction • Interviewers to be alert to signs of distress • Interviews to be terminated if child distressed • Counsellors to be available to work with distressed child • Teacher to de-brief children after interview and refer any distressed children for counselling
Unethical to show children scenes of child abuse	• Video vignettes modified so that scenes accepted by Committee as 'unsafe' but not abusive
Children may infer that minor issues of personal safety inevitably escalate into major issues	• Interviewers to de-brief children pointing out that escalation is not inevitable
Children may feel pressured by interviewer to give the 'right' answers	• Interviewers trained not to 'lead' student responses
Procedures for notification of suspected abuse not clear	• Legal position of researcher as Mandated Notifier clarified • Interviewers trained to recognise signs of abuse • Education Department guidelines for dealing with accusations against teachers clarified • Parent Information Sheet and Consent Form to contain explicit reference to responsibility of researcher as Mandated Notifier
Parents who refuse to allow their child to participate in study may be suspected of mistreating child by teachers	• Teacher Consent Form to contain statement that teachers agree not to speculate about parents' reasons for withholding consent
Parents who do not view video vignettes may not be sufficiently informed to decide issues of consent	• All parents to be given opportunity to view video • Specific written information about nature of video to be provided in addition to Parent Information Sheet • Parents to decide if they have sufficient information to make decision
School documents and teacher records cannot be accessed by researchers without parental permission	• Parent Consent Form to contain specific statement giving permission to researcher to access school and teacher records
Specific questions relating to possible past maltreatment may increase unwarranted allegations of maltreatment	• Questions to be removed from interview protocol

Figure 10: Summary of Ethical Issues Raised by the Ethics Committee

While legal opinion suggested that researchers who notified 'in good faith' would not be liable if accusations proved to be false (Baker O'Loughlin, 1993), the Committee recommended that parents, in particular, be specifically informed of researchers' mandatory notification obligations, before allowing their children to be involved in the study (H.R.E.C., October 20th, 1993: 2-3).

The Committee further believed that the proposed questions about children's retrospective use of personal safety strategies would increase the number of unwarranted allegations by children about past maltreatment. It requested that these questions be omitted from the interview protocol.

It also requested that slight modifications be made to the final scene of the sexual vignette to render it clearly 'unsafe' rather than possibly 'abusive'. With these changes, the Committee was satisfied that 'potential notifiers' (interviewers and other researchers working on the Review) would interpret the behaviours depicted in the final scenes of all three vignettes as not abusive but as 'unsafe' (H.R.E.C., October 20th, 1993: 1-2). Clearly, the Committee wished to avoid

> the potential encouragement of reports of abuse, considering the harm this might cause to the community if those reports turn out to be unwarranted because the behaviour depicted [in the videos], and translated into personal experience by the child and reported, is not abusive within current law.
> (H.R.E.C., October 20th, 1993: 1)

b) Issues Related to 'Informed Consent'

Throughout negotiations with the Ethics Committee questions of what constituted *informed* consent were debated in the context of the proposed study. While it was agreed that the principle of informed consent was the ethical cornerstone of the proposed research, there was disagreement over the nature and extent of information needed by parents to be sufficiently 'informed' to make a decision about their child's involvement. Standard ways of providing information were suggested (access to a printed information sheet and the opportunity to attend an information session), but were rejected as inadequate by the Committee. Legal advice was sought on the issue by the Committee (Baker O'Loughlin, 1993). This advice urged caution as

> the potential at least exists with research of this kind that the University will find itself having to defend a negligence claim by proving that its research methods were reasonable and that appropriate (and *appropriately informed*) consent had been given. (emphasis added)
> (Baker O'Loughlin, 1993: 6)

In accepting the legal imperative to proceed cautiously, the Committee suggested that

- parents be *required* to watch the video vignettes and attend an information session before giving consent

- parents be *required* to read a full description of the content of each vignette before giving consent
- parents be specifically informed of the researchers' legal obligations as mandated notifiers before giving consent
- parents be given a 'cooling-off' period before giving consent during which time they could discuss the research with 'a family member or friend'
- *both* parents be required to give consent

It was counter-argued that

> *requiring* parents to view the video (or to do anything else) before giving consent, is untenable given the status of parents in schools..... The culture of schools and the shared expectation that parents largely decide for themselves the nature and extent of information they need, suggests that any attempt by researchers working through schools to alter such a fundamental aspect of the parent-school relationship would alienate many parents.
> (Johnson, 14th October, 1993: 3)

Ultimately, compromises were reached over the first and last measures suggested by the Committee (parents were 'encouraged' but not 'required' to view the video, and one parent could give consent). However, fulfilling the other requirements involved

- holding a public meeting at each of the 24 schools and pre-schools involved in the research to explain the research, show the video, and to discuss issues of concern
- distributing a detailed 1000 word Research Information brochure to parents
- distributing a 750 word description of the content of the vignettes to parents
- distributing, having parents sign, and then retrieving a 9 item, 300 word Research Consent Form

These extremely thorough measures of ensuring *informed* consent were more stringent than those usually required for research involving children in school settings.

c) Issues Related to Potential Harm to Participants

Throughout the development of the video vignettes care was taken to minimise the risk to children viewing the vignettes. Advice on the issue of potential harm to participants was mixed and often reflected the wider, often ideological, debate about the impact of television and video images on children's social and emotional development.

Ethical deliberations on the issue were again informed by legal advice. It was established that researchers had a legal 'duty of care' towards participants in the research (Baker O'Loughlin, 1993). Consequently, the following procedures were negotiated with the Ethics Committee to safeguard the emotional well-being of participants both during and after their interview:

- Instructing interviewers to be alert to signs of distress in children during interviews
- Instructing interviewers to terminate an interview if a child became distressed
- Arranging for counsellors to be available to work with distressed children
- Providing assistance to teachers to de-brief children after their interviews

It was also agreed that parents be actively encouraged to consider the emotional impact on their children of participating in the study and to exercise their informed consent carefully.

Education Sector Response

Each of the participating school systems had undertaken independent and lengthy deliberations about the ethical appropriateness of the second stage of the Review. When the University Ethics Committee rejected the re-application for ethical approval, the Associate Director-General of Education in South Australia wrote to the Committee assuring it that

> the procedures and safeguards planned to guarantee the ethical basis of this project have been accepted and approved by the Education Department ... and the other participating groups...
>
> ... all ethical considerations have been debated and acted on to ensure, as much as is possible, the safety and welfare of all participants in the second stage of the research.
> (Wallace, 24th September, 1993)

Similarly, the Director of the Catholic Education Office wrote to the Committee

> to assure you that safeguards for children involved with this research have been ... examined closely and acted upon.
> (White, 24th September, 1993)

These responses to the Committee's decisions confirm that the education community in South Australia did not share the Ethics Committee's concerns over the conduct of the research. In applying less legalistic codes of ethics, the major education providers in the State reaffirmed their trust in, and commitment to, long established mechanisms of parental consultation and decision making about issues of propriety in schools. The Ethics Committee, on the other hand, chose to accept cautious legal advice on these issues. Fear of possible litigation, despite the absence of any precedents in reported Australian cases (Baker O'Loughlin, 1993), tended to over-ride considerations of the social and educational benefits of conducting searching research into the prevention of child abuse.

CONSEQUENCES OF COMPLYING WITH ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

The requirements of the University of South Australia's Ethics Committee were considerably more stringent than those guiding the ethical conduct of similar research carried out by Hazzard and her colleagues in Atlanta, Georgia (Hazzard, 1993). Complying with these ethical requirements had several consequences for the study.

a) Time Delays

The implementation of Stage 2 of the Review was delayed by more than 6 months due to the protracted nature of negotiations over ethical issues. The commissioning and funding agencies expressed frustration at the lack of progress of the project during this time. Furthermore, teachers who had been identified as 'high level users' of the program in 1993 and had agreed to participate in the study during Term 4 1993, had to recast their teaching plans for the year and commit to new arrangements for 1994 subject to the granting of ethics approval. Many teachers expressed frustration and annoyance at these delays.

b) Reduced Scope of Research

The Ethics Committee's refusal to allow children to be asked key questions about their past use of personal safety strategies seriously limited the scope of the research. Researchers were denied the opportunity

> to address one of the most important, yet unanswered questions in sexual abuse prevention research. That is, do children actually use these strategies?
> (Hazzard, 1993: 1)

If current ethical constraints continue to be applied to research in this area, the community may never know if children *actually use* personal safety strategies and if they are effective. Such fundamental and socially important information needs to be collected to better inform child protection initiatives.

c) Low Participation Rates

Participation rates by children in Stage 2 of the Review were low. Approximately 810 children were identified as potential participants based on class numbers submitted by their teachers. However, only 321 children received parental permission to take part in the research. Participation rates for the Protective Behaviours group and the Comparison group were 50.5% and 29.8% respectively, with an overall rate of 39.8%.

Although hard data are not available on parents' reasons for refusing to allow their children to participate in the research (interviewers, the principal researcher, and teachers were even required not to speculate about this by the Ethics Committee), it is probable that many parents responded to the cautious messages conveyed about the research in written materials and during parent meetings by taking the conservative option to withhold consent.

There is some anecdotal evidence gleaned from participating in 24 Parent Meetings to suggest that something as amorphous as 'group confidence' played a part in parental decision making. The way groups of parents interpreted and responded to the cautious caveats required by the Ethics Committee seemed to be pivotal in achieving satisfactory participation rates. At schools where a few parents were publicly positive about the importance of the research and the capacity of their children to cope with the research process, participation rates were often high.

Teacher endorsement of the research, despite the cautions, was also important in establishing the kind of climate in which parents felt confident enough to give consent. Conversely, where one or two parents responded to the research proposals by publicly expressing their misgivings, group confidence seemed to fall dramatically with most parents deciding on a 'it's not worth the risk' exclusion option. In short, the way groups of parents responded to the detailed information provided during meetings seemed to be a more important determinant of participation rates than did individual and private parental deliberation.

THE INTERVIEWS

Individual interviews were finally conducted with a total of 321 children in 24 schools and pre-schools between August and December 1994. Interviews took place in private but familiar rooms at the children's schools or kindergartens. Interviews lasted between 25 and 35 minutes.

Two procedures were used to reduce the likelihood of cross-contamination between children who had been interviewed and those who were waiting to be interviewed:

- interviewers worked in teams of up to 5 or 6 at each school to conduct multiple interviews in a short time period. This meant that, for most classes, all participants were interviewed during a 2 hour period not spanning recess or lunch breaks. Opportunities for student exchanges about the research were kept to a minimum.

- at the conclusion of each interview each child was asked not to discuss the video or questions - if he or she had the opportunity - 'until everyone has had the chance to see the video for themselves'.

Children's responses to questions relating to the video vignettes were entered on a record sheet for later analysis. Interviewers audio-taped the first 5 interviews they conducted to enable consistency checks to be made by independent judges.

Interviewers reported that none of the 321 children interviewed appeared to be upset or anxious either during the interview or immediately after. No reports were received from teachers or parents about adverse reactions by children to the interviews.

None of the children interviewed disclosed past or present abuse, although one child provided enough information about the possible abuse of a sibling to justify making a report to the Department of Family and Community Services.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data from the Teacher and Parent Questionnaires and the student interview protocols were entered on computer for analysis using the statistical data analysis program SPSS. The terms of reference of the Review called for comparisons to be made between the responses of students

who had been taught the Protective Behaviours program, and those of students who had not been taught the program. The following procedures were followed to analyse the data:

- students' raw responses were re-coded to reduce the range of responses to 4-6 categories for each of the three outcome measures.
- using these re-coded categories, cross tabulations were calculated comparing the responses of the Protective Behaviours and Comparison groups while controlling for student age, sex, assertiveness, fearfulness, socio-economic status, and extent of parental teaching of personal safety concepts. The chi square test of significance for nominal data was used with the acceptable level of significance set at $p < .01$.

SUMMARY

Investigating children's personal safety learning is difficult due to methodological and ethical constraints that normally don't apply to research on other aspects of learning. In this study, a non-experimental post-treatment comparisons design was used to generate data about the personal safety learning of two groups of children. Children were individually shown video vignettes that depicted other children in three different unsafe situations. They were then questioned about their perceptions of threat in those situations, and asked to suggest appropriate strategies to deal with those threats. The development of this innovative methodology proved to be controversial and led to protracted negotiations with a University ethics committee over several aspects of the research before permission was given for the research to proceed. Data were analysed to discern any similarities and differences in the personal safety knowledge of children who had been taught the Protective Behaviours program and those in a comparable group who had not been taught the program.

CHAPTER 8

RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research was to compare the personal safety abilities of children who had been taught Protective Behaviours with those of a group of children who had not been taught the program. Interest focussed on their ability to identify clues or 'unsafe messages' in dangerous or potentially dangerous situations, and to suggest action to promote personal safety in those situations. In this chapter, the background features of the two groups of children are described. Their responses to two levels of threat are presented to compare their abilities to discriminate threats to personal safety. Age differences in response are also detailed. Finally, children's suggestions about how to act in these kinds of situations are compared.

DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Of the 321 children who were interviewed in the study, 53% were female and 47% male. Approximately 60% of the children belonged to classes which had been taught the Protective Behaviours program with the remaining 40% coming from classes which had not been taught the program. The age distribution of the two groups is shown in Table 14 .

Table 14: Comparison of Student Age Groups

Age Group	P.B. Group (n = 194)	Comparison Group (n = 127)
4-8 Year Olds	43.7	38.3
9-12 Year Olds	40.4	44.2
13-16 Year Olds	15.9	17.5

Teachers' ratings of students' socio-economic status are shown in Table 15. The distribution of ratings is closely matched except for a slight over representation of socio-economically 'well-off' children within the Comparison group.

Table 15: Comparison of Teacher Ratings of Students' Socio-economic Status

Socio-economic Status	P.B. Group (*n* = 194) %	Comparison Group (*n* = 127) %
Very Poor	1.7	1.0
Poor	11.0	10.3
Average	65.7	55.7
Well-off	16.0	30.9
Very Well-off	5.5	2.1

Mean scores of both groups were compared for composite teacher measures of student assertiveness, fearfulness, and exposure to personal safety curricula. Similarly, mean scores were compared for composite measures of parent teaching of personal safety concepts. Results are shown in Table 16. These demonstrate that the two groups differed on only one measure - exposure to school based personal safety curricula. On all other measures, both groups achieved very similar scores (small differences are not statistically significant), suggesting that the original 'matched' sampling design was not seriously compromised by differential participation by students from both groups. Fortunately, the self selecting mechanisms operating in both samples (largely unknown factors influencing parents' willingness to give informed consent) did not produce non comparable groups.

Table 16: Comparison of Group Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Teacher and Parent Rated Variables

	Protective Behaviours Group		Comparison Group	
Variables	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1. Assertiveness	10.6 (n = 181)	3.1	10.1 (n =96)	3.3
2. Fearfulness	7.7 (n = 180)	2.9	7.8 (n = 96)	2.7
3. School Exposure to Personal Safety Teaching	10.0* (n = 178)	3.1	5.5* (n = 98)	2.3
4. Home Exposure to Personal Safety Teaching	22.6 (n =146)	4.4	21.8 (n = 79)	4.2

* $t = 13.74$, df = 248, $p < .000$

However, these data do not establish the representativeness of the participating sample as no data were collected from the identified pool of potential participants. The unexpectedly high levels of reported parental teaching of personal safety concepts in both groups lend support to speculation that only parents who were informed about, and comfortable with, child protection

issues permitted their children to participate in the study. As a consequence, generalising the findings of the study to wider groups of children should proceed cautiously.

It is also important to note that, in all of the analyses reported below, there were no significant differences in children's responses based on children's assessed assertiveness, fearfulness, or exposure to home personal safety teaching. This was probably due to the narrow range of scores for these factors in both groups. Without significant variability within and between groups on these measures, no inferences could be made about their relationship to personal safety outcomes. The only significant differences occurred between the responses of children in the Protective Behaviours and Comparison groups, and between children in different age groups.

DISCRIMINATION OF THREATS TO PERSONAL SAFETY

a) Introduction

One of the central aims of personal safety programs is to develop children's ability to recognise threats to their safety. Being able to discriminate between safe and threatening situations is seen as a logically pre-requisite skill to the development of personal safety strategies. Children's ability to identify low level threats to their safety, in particular, is considered important. If children are able to perceive these low level threats then they may be better able to implement personal safety strategies to avoid harm. In the Protective Behaviours program children are taught to recognise and then act on what are assumed to be naturally occurring responses to threats to safety - their 'early warning signs'.

In this study, children were shown 'unsafe' and 'very unsafe' incidents and asked to identify how the children involved in the incidents felt. They were also asked why they thought the children felt that way. Unlike other studies in which children were asked specifically to label situations as 'safe' or 'unsafe' (Hazzard, et al., 1991), the intention here was to provide children with opportunities to articulate any feelings which might be associated with perceptions of 'unsafeness'. Results are presented comparing the responses of the two research groups to the 'unsafe' incidents, and then to the more overt 'very unsafe' incidents.

b) Responses to Unsafe Incidents

Between 85% and 90% of children suggested that the children shown in the 'unsafe' incidents felt negative (upset, angry, afraid) about what had happened (see Table 17). However, students' responses differed considerably, depending on the nature of the 'unsafe' incident shown. Feelings of fear and apprehension were more common responses to the physical and sexual incidents than to the emotionally unsafe incident.

Perhaps of more interest are the differences in responses between the Protective Behaviours and Comparison groups. These are most pronounced in response to the physically 'unsafe' incident, with about 34% of Protective Behaviours students citing feelings of fear and

apprehension compared with only 13.5% of Comparison students. These differences are even more significant for the youngest age group, with over 40% of the children in the Protective Behaviours group indicating fearful responses compared with only 4% of Comparison children of the same age (see Table 18).

Table 17: Comparison of Feelings Identified during 'Unsafe' Incidents (*n* =319; Missing Cases = 2)

	'Unsafe' Incidents					
	Physical		Emotional		Sexual	
Feelings	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)
1. Don't Know	8.8	13.5	8.2	10.3	10.4	13.5
2. OK	-	-	1.0	0.8	4.7	1.6
3. Upset	40.4	49.2	52.3	47.6	23.7	31.0
4. Afraid	34.2	13.5	13.5	10.3	45.6	38.8
5. Angry	16.6	23.8	14.8	15.8	13.5	11.9
6. Hurt	-	-	10.0	15.1	2.1	3.2

Table 18: Age-based Comparison of Student Responses to Physically 'Unsafe' Incident (*n* = 303, Missing Cases = 18)

	Age Groups					
	4-8 Year Olds		9-12 Year Olds		13-16 Year Olds	
Feelings about Physically Unsafe Incident	PB (*n* = 80)	C (*n* = 46)	PB (*n* = 74)	C (*n* = 53)	PB (*n* = 29)	C (*n* = 21)
1. Don't Know	6.3	6.8	5.4	13.2	6.9	9.6
2. OK	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Upset	28.6	65.2	55.4	41.5	41.4	47.6
4. Afraid	41.3	4.3	28.4	18.9	34.5	19.0
5. Angry	23.8	23.9	10.8	26.4	17.2	23.8
6. Hurt	-	-	-	-	-	-

In the case of potential sexual threats, the influence of age on students' ability to identify feelings of fear and apprehension was pervasive. Around 55% of older children compared with about 25% of young children recognised signs of fear in children exposed to low levels of sexual threat (see Table 19). While the differences between the responses of the Protective Behaviours group and the Comparison group were quite large, most of the variability can be

traced to differences between the two groups in the 4 to 8 year old group. Protective Behaviours trained younger children, in particular, seemed a little more attuned to the sexual dynamics of the mildly threatening situation than their age cohorts in the Comparison group.

Table 19: Age-based Comparison of Student Responses to Sexually 'Unsafe' Incident (n = 303, Missing Cases = 18)

	Age Groups					
	4-8 Year Olds		9-12 Year Olds		13-16 Year Olds	
Feelings about Sexually Unsafe Incident	PB (n = 80)	C (n = 46)	PB (n = 74)	C (n = 53)	PB (n = 29)	C (n = 21)
1. Don't Know	7.8	17.8	8.2	5.7	6.9	-
2. OK	10.0	2.1	1.4	1.9	-	-
3. Upset	32.2	52.1	16.2	17.0	24.2	28.6
4. Afraid	30.0	19.5	62.2	54.6	51.7	52.4
5. Angry	20.0	8.5	9.3	15.1	10.3	14.2
6. Hurt	-	-	2.7	5.7	6.9	4.8

However, anecdotal evidence provided by interviewers about the response patterns of some younger children gives cause for caution in the interpretation of this data. Interviewers reported that some young children misinterpreted the actions and motives of the adult perpetrator in the sexually unsafe scene, due to a lack of understanding of the sexual nature of his overtures. For example, one interviewer (I) described the consistent but 'wrong' attribution of fear by one child (C - male, age 7 years, Year 2, Protective Behaviours class) who was more concerned with the possible consequences of watching a forbidden television program than with threats to his sexual safety.

Vignette #3: Unwanted Touching Scenario

Scene 1: 'Nice to see you'

I: How do you thing the boy is feeling?

C: A bit worried.

I: What makes you say that?

C: He [the adult in the video] might tell the boy's mum that he watched a TV program that he shouldn't.

Scene 2: 'The first move'

I: How do you think the boy is feeling now?

C: Scared because he [the adult] might tell the baby sitter that he is watching what he shouldn't.

I: Really?

C: The boy couldn't know if he could trust the man. He might get punished.

I: What do you think the boy could say or do now?

C: He could say, 'Are you sure you won't tell about the TV program?' Or he could say, 'How do I know that I can trust you?'

I: What would YOU do or say if that was you?

C: 'I hope you don't tell about the TV show.' .... I'd own up if I got into trouble.

Scene 3: 'That will be our little secret'

I: What do you think happened?

C: He's trying to get the boy to be his friend.

I: How do you think the boy is feeling now?

C: I don't know. .... Worried, maybe.

I: What makes you say that?

C: The boy doesn't know if the man will tell the baby sitter he's watching TV. He shouldn't give any more information because the big boy [the adult] would know more about him to tell the baby sitter.

I: What do you think the boy could have said or done differently?

C: He should have owned up and said he couldn't watch the TV show.

I: What would you have done or said if that was you?

C: Owned up.

I: What would you do or say now if that was you?

C: After I owned up I'd say a program to watch and I'd ask to stay up to watch this program instead of the other one.

I: What would be the best thing to do or say?

C: Own up.

Once 'locked-in' to his explanation of the behaviour of both the child and adult, the respondent persisted with logical and highly consistent responses. As these 'crossed-message' responses were 'accurately' recorded by interviewers in response categories provided, they remain embedded in the aggregated data for the 4-8 year olds shown in Table 19. As a consequence, their face validity is somewhat questionable.

c) Responses to Very Unsafe Incidents

After children had replied to questions about the slightly unsafe incident in each vignette, they were shown the final scenes in which child maltreatment occurred (a child was pushed by an adult and obviously injured, two children were publicly humiliated, and a child was inappropriately touched sexually). Again, children were asked to identify the feelings of those who had been maltreated. Additionally, children were asked to explain what they thought had happened in the sexual incident.

Most children said that the victims of physical and emotional maltreatment felt 'bad', 'hurt' and/or 'humiliated' (see Table 20). There were few differences in response patterns between children in the Protective Behaviours group and the Comparison group. Furthermore, few age or sex differences were evident, although younger students were more inclined to label victims' feelings as 'bad' or 'sad' rather than use more precise terms like 'injured' 'hurt' or 'humiliated'. Clearly, the visual messages conveyed in the final scenes of the physical and emotional maltreatment vignettes were strong enough and unambiguous enough for the vast majority of children - even young children - to identify and label as negative and hurtful.

Table 20: Comparison of Feelings Identified during 'Very Unsafe' Incidents
(*n* =319; Missing Cases = 2)

	'Very Unsafe' Incidents					
	Physical		Emotional		Sexual	
Feelings	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)
1. Don't Know	4.7	11.1	13.0	11.1	14.5	16.7
2. OK	-	-	-	-	2.1	0.8
3. Upset	40.9	36.9	38.9	39.7	19.2	31.0
4. Afraid	15.5	7.7	7.8	3.2	46.1	33.3
5. Angry	16.1	12.6	12.3	10.3	16.5	15.8
6. Hurt	22.8	31.7	28.0	35.7	1.6	2.4

This was not so in relation to the sexual incident. When asked to explain what had occurred in the scene, only about half of the children specifically identified the incident as overtly sexual (see Table 21). However, a greater proportion of Protective Behaviours children were able to correctly label the behaviour as sexual, with a smaller proportion than that for the Comparison group not being about to say what had happened.

Table 21: Comparison of Students' Identification of Sexual Touching
(*n* =319; Missing Cases = 2)

Student Identification of Sexual Touching	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)
1. Don't Know/ Not Sure	22.8	35.8
2. Non-sexual touching	22.8	19.8
3. Sexual touching	54.4	44.4

Of far greater significance than personal safety teaching was the impact of students' age on their ability to identify inappropriate sexual touching (see Table 22). Around 71% of children

in the two older age groups correctly identified the sexual incident compared with only 25% of the younger group. This highly significant difference was one of the largest revealed in the study.

Table 22: Age-based Comparison of Students' Identification of Sexual Touching
(n = 303, Missing Cases = 18)

	Age Groups					
	4-8 Year Olds		9-12 Year Olds		13-16 Year Olds	
Student Identification of Sexual Touching	PB (n = 80)	C (n = 46)	PB (n = 74)	C (n = 53)	PB (n = 29)	C (n = 21)
1. Don't Know/ Not Sure	38.7	54.4	8.1	24.5	3.4	4.8
2. Non-sexual touching	35.0	21.7	17.6	18.9	6.9	23.8
3. Sexual touching	26.3	23.9	74.3	56.6	89.7	71.4

d) Summary

Children's reactions to the vignettes varied depending on the nature of threats depicted. The sexually and physically unsafe scenes provoked most fear. Protective Behaviours trained children more frequently identified feelings of fear in these situations than Comparison children. This was particularly so with younger children. However, age was a pervasive influence on children's responses to the sexual scene with about twice as many older children identifying fearful reactions than younger children.

In the very unsafe scenes the majority of children recognised the damaging impact of the maltreatment on the victims. There were few differences between the responses of children in the Protective Behaviours and Comparison groups, or between children of different ages. However, there were significant differences in children's ability to correctly identify and label sexually inappropriate behaviour.

More Protective Behaviours trained children correctly recognised and named the behaviour than Comparison children, with the biggest differences occurring in the two older age groups. However, younger children were much less able to recognise and label inappropriate sexual touching than older children.

Responses to Threats to Personal Safety

a) Introduction

After children were asked questions about their perception of threat in the vignettes, they were asked to project themselves into the situations and suggest what they could 'say or do' in those situations. In the case of the low level threats, the purpose of the question was to elicit responses which would indicate knowledge of personal safety strategies linked to preventing an escalation of the situations to levels where maltreatment might occur. In the very unsafe

situations, the questions had two slightly different purposes. One was to elicit personal safety strategies related to dealing with maltreatment as it occurred. The second aim was to elicit personal safety strategies related to dealing with maltreatment after it had taken place. Students' responses in these three areas - preventing escalation, dealing with inappropriate behaviour as it occurred, and dealing with inappropriate behaviour after it had occurred - are presented below.

b) Preventing Escalation

Students' suggestions to prevent threatening situations escalating to situations where inappropriate behaviour might occur are presented in Table 23. Perhaps the most surprising feature of these results is the low frequency of responses for the most promoted personal safety strategies - 'assert' (say 'No!'), 'escape' (leave, run away), and 'tell' (get help from an adult). In the school based, emotionally unsafe situation, 90% of children rejected these kinds of strategies and suggested taking no action (around 30%), or conciliatory action (around 60%) intended to appease the source of threat. Interestingly, around 23% of younger children compared with only 4% of older children suggested one of the typical personal safety strategies.

Table 23: Comparison of Personal Safety Responses to Prevent Escalation in all Unsafe Scenes (n =319; Missing Cases = 2)

	All 'Unsafe' Scenes					
	Physical		Emotional		Sexual	
Student Response (See Figure 9, p. 88)	PB (n = 193)	C (n = 126)	PB (n = 193)	C (n = 126)	PB (n = 193)	C (n = 126)
1. No Action	22.3	23.0	32.6	22.0	11.9	18.3
2. Rationalise	11.4	16.7	12.4	14.3	43.5	41.3
3. Appease	30.1	34.1	44.0	53.2	15.0	14.3
4. Assert	25.3	19.8	3.6	4.0	9.3	5.6
5. Escape	10.4	6.3	5.2	6.3	19.7	20.6
6. Tell	0.5	-	2.1	-	0.5	-

In the physically threatening situation involving a parent, about 36% of Protective Behaviours children compared with 26% of Comparison children suggested one of the accepted personal safety strategies. Many more children in both groups again chose conciliatory actions. About 32% of the young children suggested taking no action, compared with around 12% of older children. Appeasement strategies ('apologise', 'offer to be good') were favoured by more younger children than those in the older age groups.

Finally, in the sexual situation nearly 30% of Protective Behaviours children suggested one of the accepted personal safety strategies. Slightly less Comparison children also suggested these

strategies. The most favoured 'accepted' personal safety strategy with both groups was to leave the room. However, there was a significant age difference in responses, with only 10% of young children suggesting leaving, compared with 29% of older children. The most commonly suggested strategy (40% of all children) was to 'rationalise' ('say they want to talk', 'try to explain') with the threatening person.

c) Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviour as it Occurs

Children's suggestions for dealing with inappropriate behaviour are shown in Table 24. In the cases of emotional and physical maltreatment, the responses of both groups of children are very similar. In the face of considerable adult power, more children suggested taking no action compared with the earlier less threatening scenes. For example, nearly half of the children suggested taking no action during the humiliating final scene of the school vignette, compared with less than 30% of children who suggested no action during the earlier less threatening scene. Significant numbers of children also suggested persisting with conciliatory and appeasing strategies (around 40% of children in the case of physical mistreatment, and 30% of children in relation to emotional humiliation).

Table 24: Comparison of Responses to Deal with Inappropriate Behaviour in all Very Unsafe Scenes (*n* =319; Missing Cases = 2)

Student Response	All ' Very Unsafe' Scenes					
	Physical		Emotional		Sexual	
	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)	PB (*n* = 193)	C (*n* = 126)
1. No Action	31.7	30.2	48.2	48.5	23.3	23.0
2. Rationalise	19.2	25.4	5.7	9.5	0.5	-
3. Appease	21.1	21.4	22.8	27.8	1.6	-
4. Assert	17.6	11.1	8.3	1.6	45.6	46.8
5. Escape	10.4	11.9	11.9	10.2	26.4	27.8
6. Tell	-	-	2.1	2.4	2.6	2.4

In the case of sexual mistreatment the inclination towards no action or appeasement is significantly reversed with nearly three quarters of children suggesting either an assertive response, or an escape strategy. Response patterns for both the Protective Behaviours group and Comparison group were very similar. However, an age breakdown reveals large differences between younger and older children (see Table 25).

Table 25: Age based Comparison of Responses to Deal with Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour (n = 303, Missing Cases = 18)

Student Response	Age Groups					
	4-8 Year Olds		9-12 Year Olds		13-16 Year Olds	
	PB (n = 80)	C (n = 46)	PB (n = 74)	C (n = 53)	PB (n = 29)	C (n = 21)
1. No Action	36.2	39.1	12.1	5.7	3.5	9.5
2. Rationalise	-	-	1.4	-	-	-
3. Appease	-	-	1.4	-	6.9	-
4. Assert	40.0	45.7	52.7	52.8	51.7	47.6
5. Escape	22.5	13.0	28.3	39.6	34.5	38.1
6. Tell	1.3	2.2	4.1	1.9	3.4	4.8

Younger children were more likely to suggest no action than were older children, although a significant proportion of the younger age group (around 60%) suggested one of the 'accepted' personal safety strategies.

d) Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviour after it has Occurred

Once inappropriate behaviour had occurred in each situation, the children were asked to suggest what they would 'do or say, now that it has happened'. Their responses are shown in Table 26. In the first two situations involving physical and emotional maltreatment, surprisingly few children suggested the 'accepted' personal safety strategy of telling a trusted adult about the maltreatment. While more Protective Behaviours children suggested this strategy than Comparison children, differences were small.

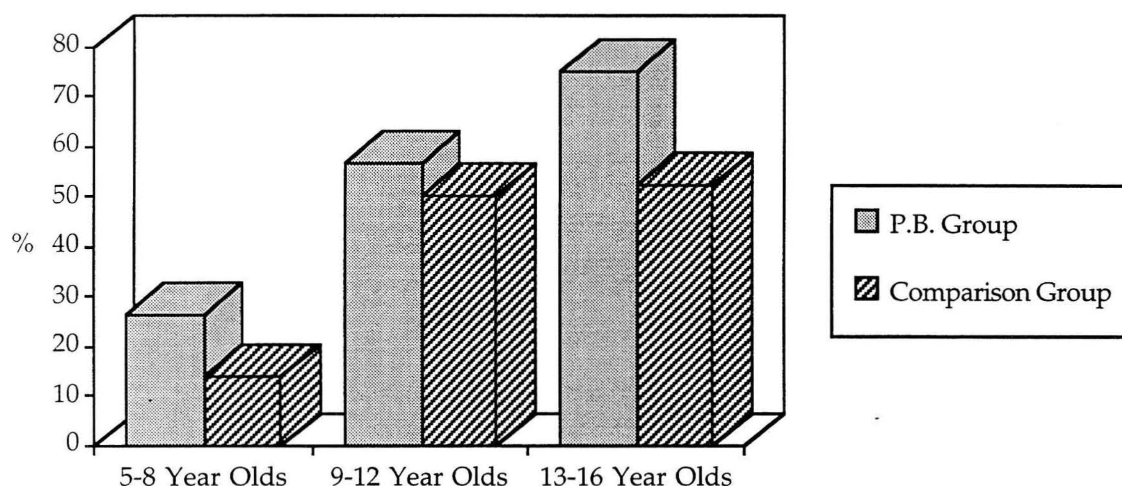
Table 26: Responses to Deal with Inappropriate Behaviour after it has Occurred (n = 275)*

Student Response	All 'Unsafe' Scenes					
	Physical		Emotional		Sexual	
	PB (n = 158)*	C (n = 117)*	PB (n = 158)*	C (n = 117)*	PB (n = 158)*	C (n = 117)*
1. No Action	27.8	36.4	42.1	44.7	17.0	31.9
2. Rationalise	14.6	14.4	14.0	4.1	6.3	8.4
3. Appease	23.4	22.0	19.1	30.6	0.6	-
4. Assert	6.3	6.8	5.1	-	8.2	6.7
5. Escape	16.5	14.5	5.7	10.7	17.0	16.0
6. Tell	11.4	5.9	14.0	9.9	50.9	37.0

* Does not include Pre-school students (ie, 4 year olds) who were not asked this question.

Significant differences were evident in children's responses after the sexual incident. Overall, the children were much more prepared to 'tell' about the sexual incident than they were about the other two incidents. This was particularly so for Protective Behaviours children (see Figure 11).

Figure 11: Percent of Students Who Suggested 'Telling' after Sexual Incident



Important age based differences in responses are shown in Table 27. Younger children were much more likely to do nothing after the sexual incident than older children. However, two thirds of the Protective Behaviours younger children compared with only a third of Comparison children chose one of the 'accepted' personal safety strategies.

Table 27: Age based Comparison of Responses to Deal with Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour after it has Occurred (n = 273; Missing Cases = 2)*

Student Response	Age Groups					
	5-8 Year Olds		9-12 Year Olds		13-16 Year Olds	
	PB (n = 53)*	C (n = 43)*	PB (n = 74)	C (n = 53)	PB (n = 29)	C (n = 21)
1. No Action	30.2	55.8	13.5	18.5	3.6	14.3
2. Rationalise	7.5	16.3	6.8	5.6	3.6	-
3. Appease	-	-	1.4	-	-	-
4. Assert	11.3	2.3	6.8	7.4	7.1	14.3
5. Escape	24.5	11.6	14.9	18.5	10.7	19.0
6. Tell	26.4	14.0	56.8	50.0	75.0	52.4

* Does not include Pre-school students (ie, 4 year olds) who were not asked this question.

SUMMARY

From the complex and, at times, perplexing array of data on children's perception of, and responses to, threats to their personal safety, the following findings emerged as the most salient.

1. **Protective Behaviours trained children more frequently identified feelings of fear in the sexually and physically unsafe scenes than Comparison children.** This was particularly so with younger children. However, age was a pervasive influence on children's responses to the sexual scene with about twice as many older children identifying fearful reactions than younger children.

2. **There were few differences between the responses of children in the Protective Behaviours and Comparison groups, or between children of different ages, in response to the very unsafe scenes.** The majority of children recognised the damaging impact of maltreatment on the victims.

3. **More Protective Behaviours trained children correctly recognised and named sexually inappropriate behaviour than Comparison children.** The biggest differences occurred in the two older age groups. However, younger children were much less able to recognise the sexual behaviour than older children.

4. **Most children did not suggest using the widely accepted personal safety responses - 'No', 'Go', and 'Tell' - to prevent the escalation of the physically and emotionally threatening situations to more serious levels.** Contrary to expectations, personally assertive responses were roundly rejected by most children in these situations in favour of socially based negotiation and conciliation processes. Regardless of whether children had been taught Protective Behaviours or not, these types of responses were preferred.

5. **Children's reactions to the sexually inappropriate behaviour were very different, however, with less children suggesting 'doing nothing' in this situation and many more (nearly three quarters of children) suggesting an 'accepted' personal safety strategy.** This was so for children in both the Protective Behaviours and Comparison groups.

6. **Once sexually inappropriate behaviour had occurred, more Protective Behaviours children in each age group suggested the appropriate personal safety strategy - 'Tell' - than did Comparison children.**

CHAPTER 9

DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

The results of Stage 2 of the Review were, in some instances, unexpected. In this chapter, the results are interpreted from several competing perspectives to demonstrate the tentativeness of our understanding of children's perception of, and capacity to deal with, threats to their personal safety. It is demonstrated that some assumptions about the efficacy of school based personal safety programs may be ill-founded. More positively, it is also demonstrated that some findings of the study point to the likely and unlikely sources of child resistance to various forms of child abuse. As a consequence, qualified support is given to the efficacy of the Protective Behaviours program in justifying its essential rationale.

CHILDREN'S ABILITY TO DISCRIMINATE THREATS TO PERSONAL SAFETY

a) Introduction

A tenet of the Protective Behaviours program is that children need to be aware of, and use, their 'early warning signs' to recognise threatening situations. The ability to do this is considered to be necessary before children are able to implement strategies to protect themselves against threats to their safety. Clearly, if children don't know they are in danger, they can't do anything to avoid it. While the simple logic of this basic premise of prevention programs is attractive, the results from this study suggest that several factors intervene to influence children's discrimination of threats to their personal safety.

b) Identifying Physical Threats

Children were more able to link feelings of fear to threats to safety when the nature of the threats were physical or sexual. When the threat was less overt and centred on emotional well-being, children more accurately described feeling 'upset' rather than 'afraid'. However, there were significant differences in responses to the physically unsafe incident by Protective Behaviours and Comparison children. Younger Protective Behaviours children, in particular, were more able to differentiate between generally 'bad' feelings and more particular feelings of fear and unsafeness. This may be an important distinction as it suggests a more finely tuned ability to link feelings of fear (as distinct from 'bad' or 'sad' feelings) with threatening behaviour. It may also indicate that Protective Behaviours children have a wider and more precise 'feelings' vocabulary than other children.

c) Identifying Sexual Threats

In the case of the sexual threats, age differences were also pronounced, with younger children being less able to identify the threatening aspects of the sexual scenario. While the relative

sexual ignorance of children under eight may be linked to an unknown blend of developmental and social influences, it makes them more vulnerable to sexual threats than older children.

This finding presents parents and teachers of younger children (ie, under eight year olds) with a serious dilemma. Should parents and teachers continue to socialise young children in ways that contribute to their sexual ignorance and innocence (Jackson, 1982), or should they embrace teaching and training approaches that are more open and explicit about sexual matters? Given the widely accepted adult view of childhood as a period of simplicity and innocence (particularly in relation to sexual matters), it is unlikely that many teachers or parents will actively argue for greater explicitness and openness. However, by refusing to concede that younger children may need to know more about sexual matters for their own safety (Briggs, 1991), proponents of the 'innocence in childhood' view inadvertently cancel younger children out of the abuse prevention equation. In the case of child sexual abuse, innocence may increase vulnerability. If this is acknowledged and accepted as a consequence of the social construction of childhood innocence, then adults may be able to provide improved surveillance of children to compensate for limitations in children's perception and understanding of sexual misbehaviour. However, if it is not recognised, many parents and teachers may complacently assume that their non-specific homilies about 'keeping yourself safe' actually give young children the knowledge and skills to resist sexual exploitation. This research, and that conducted by Briggs and her associates, suggests that this assumption has little empirical backing.

A counter argument to the 'innocence in childhood' view advocates specifically teaching young children about sexual misbehaviour, and what to do if they encounter it (Briggs, 1991). The finding in this study that children who had been taught Protective Behaviours were more able to identify and label inappropriate sexual touching, gives credence to the suggestion that specific teaching in the area can raise children's awareness of sexual threats. If nine to twelve year old children's ability to discern sexually inappropriate behaviour is enhanced by explicit instruction about sexual personal safety, then a case can be mounted to be more explicit with even younger children. As Briggs (1991) argues, it is probably the social induced limitations of younger children that *require* the use of more concrete and explicit teaching approaches, if they are to become more aware of the possibility of sexual threats.

d) 'Early Warning Signs'

The findings suggest that some children in the study used feelings - 'early warning signs' - to discern potential threats to personal safety. It was found that students' awareness of feelings of fear was generally heightened when confronted by mildly threatening physical and sexual behaviour, if they had undergone training in Protective Behaviours. This challenges earlier research (Briggs, 1991) which found that younger children report few fears for their personal safety, and rarely experience the 'early warning signs' considered crucial in the discernment of

danger. The results suggest, however, that the emergence of 'early warning signs' in response to danger is not 'natural' (ie, inevitable), or universal. Many children probably don't feel fear in situations that are clearly threatening from an adult perspective. Gordon (1995) believes that children are often 'socialised out' of paying attention to their 'early warning signs' by well meaning adults who seek to reduce children's 'natural' fearfulness. She believes that children learn to ignore their early warning signs.

Whether Gordon's or Briggs' explanations are accepted, the implication for personal safety education is that children probably need specific and direct teaching about what types of situations are dangerous and threatening, to supplement teaching which focuses on the use of 'early warning signs'. While the use of 'early warning signs' is likely to benefit many children, alternate teaching strategies may be required for those children who, for a variety of largely unknown reasons, have poorly developed abilities to identify and label threats to their personal safety.

CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO THREATS AND MALTREATMENT

a) Rejection of Personally Assertive Strategies to Prevent Escalation

Perhaps the most intriguing finding of the study was that most children did not suggest using the widely accepted personal safety responses - 'No', 'Go', and 'Tell' - to prevent the escalation of threatening situations to more serious levels. Contrary to expectations, personally assertive responses were roundly rejected by most children in favour of socially based negotiation and conciliation processes. This was particularly so for the physically and emotionally threatening situations. Regardless of whether children had been taught Protective Behaviours or not, these types of responses were preferred.

These findings can be interpreted from two diverse and somewhat contradictory perspectives. On the one hand, they may be seen to confirm that children recognise and accept that adults have legitimate authority over them in most social situations. On the other hand, the results may indicate that many children have learned quite sophisticated ways to the deal with adult power by using negotiation, conciliation, and compromise.

The first explanation draws on research into children's perception of the nature and legitimacy of adult authority over children. In the low threat situations depicted in the video vignettes, the adults may have been perceived by the children to have legitimate authority over them. Non compliance with the adults in these cases would contravene the implicit social rules guiding acceptable child-adult relationships, and risk possible punishment by the adults. Hence the preference for responses likely to appease threatening adults. This continued even when the behaviour of the adults became even more dangerous. In fact, more children suggested 'doing nothing' in the very unsafe physical and emotional situations than in the earlier less threatening scenes. According to this explanation, very strong social rules defining

the power and authority of adults in relation to children were applied by the children in the study. This account suggests that the children recognised and apparently accepted the very real limits to child 'empowerment' within the strongly controlled sub-cultures of the family and the school.

If this account is accepted, the challenge to personal safety educators lies in engaging children, parents, and other adults in further debate about the underlying power dynamics within schools and families that work to legitimise and prohibit certain kinds of behaviours in those social settings. Such radical questioning would challenge the 'rights' of adults to behave in ways that frequently harm children, and perhaps help children to redefine their 'rights' in those situations. While such critical discourse is bound to be controversial and politically unpopular, particularly in conservative circles, it will be necessary if the full ramifications of Australia's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are to be understood. By challenging and redefining the 'social rules' of conduct by which children (and adults) judge the legitimacy of adult authority, such debate may promote a safer and fairer social environment for children.

The second explanation of children's preference for conciliatory responses suggests that they may be influenced by the social teaching children receive at school. Since the mid 1970s children's social learning has been an important focus of attention in many junior primary and primary schools. Applying the work of the Humanistic 'interpersonal skills' movement of the late 1960s, many teachers have been teaching communication and social skills since the early 1980s (see Michelson, 1983; Hargie, 1986; Rogers, 1989; NSW Department for School Education, 1990). These social skills programs are often supplemented by more specific teaching in conflict resolution (see Kreidler, 1984; De Bono, 1985; Cornelius, 1989; Tillet, 1991; Stephen, 1993). More recently, there has been a strong move, particularly in South Australian junior primary and primary schools, to teach the principles and skills of collaboration and cooperation. Collaboration is promoted as both an effective way of learning (see Hill and Hill, 1990; Hill and Hancock, 1993), and as a more efficient and fairer way of sharing work in schools (see McRae, 1994; Hargreaves, 1994). These initiatives have changed the teaching and learning cultures in many schools and classrooms. By encouraging children and teachers to 'work together', to resolve problems through 'mediation, negotiation and conciliation', and to actively cooperate in achieving mutually agreed upon goals, these initiatives may have influenced the types of responses given by the children in the study. In short, it may be that the strength and consistency of the 'social skills - conflict resolution - cooperative learning' movements have supplanted the assertive and 'empowering' messages inherent in the Protective Behaviours program. Children's responses to initial threats, at least, seem to be more consistent with the processes of social negotiation than with the principles of assertive empowerment.

b) Children's Use of Assertive Responses to Sexual Misbehaviour

Children's reactions to the sexually inappropriate behaviour were very different from their responses to non-sexual maltreatment. For example, less children suggested 'doing nothing' in the very unsafe sexual situation and many more (nearly three quarters of children) suggested an 'accepted' personal safety strategy. These findings can be explained from an adult-child authority perspective as well. Damon (1977) found that children saw adult authority as bounded in areas where a moral sanction might be breeched. In these situations, children wer more likely to challenge the legitimacy of adult authority and to resist it.. This may have happened in relation to children's evaluation of the behaviour of the adult in the sexual scene of the vignette. The children may have identified the sexual touching as a breech of a widely accepted and known moral prohibition relating to adult-child sexuality. Protective Behaviours children and Comparison children responded in similar ways, suggesting that the social prohibition against adult-child sexual behaviour may be known by most children, regardless of their participation in personal safety programs.

This interpretation of children's responses to sexual misbehaviour is complicated by the age and social status of the perpetrator of the misbehaviour in the video vignette. Unlike the perpetrators of the physical and emotional maltreatment - a parent and two teachers - the perpetrator in the sexual scene was a late adolescent male (18 or 19 years old) who was the friend of the baby sitter looking after the child victim. It could be argued that he had less authority than the parent and two teachers due to his younger age, lack of positional status, and social remoteness from his victims. The children may have found it easier to resist this lesser authority, hence their more assertive responses to his sexual advances. However, it is not known whether children in the study took account of the age and social position of the perpetrators in the three cases of maltreatment, and varied their responses according to their perception of the strength and legitimacy of the authority in each. While Laupa (1991) suggests that children do make judgements about the legitimacy of authority on the basis of adult status, knowledge, and social position, further research is needed to better understand the dynamics of children's perception of adult-child authority. This uncertainty limits confidence in the hypothesis that children's more assertive responses to sexual maltreatment were due to the transgression of a moral, rather than social, rule governing adult-child interactions.

While the complexities of children's thinking about, and response to, threats from adults remain largely unexplored, one positive finding of the study relates to children's suggested responses to inappropriate behaviour once it had occurred. While children's responses after physical maltreatment were generally more assertive than before, their responses after sexual maltreatment were influenced by their exposure to the Protective Behaviours program. More Protective Behaviours children in each age group suggested the appropriate personal safety strategy - 'Tell' - than did Comparison children. This significant finding suggests that children can be actively encouraged, through participation in a school based personal safety program,

to enlist the support of adults to intervene to stop sexual maltreatment. While this limited outcome is probably less than that anticipated by Protective Behaviours advocates, it is, nevertheless, a major confirmation of the potential of programs like Protective Behaviours to mobilise children to act, in limited ways, to help prevent child sexual abuse. It is worth noting, however, that the success of the 'tell' strategy relies on the willingness and ability of adults to act on behalf of children once they are told of possible maltreatment. If adults ignore the disclosures of children, or collude to silence them, then the strategy will fail and children will continue to be placed at risk. Clearly, even in programs that focus on children's personal safety options, adults hold the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that our children are treated fairly and humanely.

IMPLICATIONS

These are important findings. One the one hand, they confirm the children's acceptance of authority relationships that cast them in relatively powerless roles in situations deemed to be legitimately governed by adults; in this case non-moral situations at school and at home. On the other hand, they show a fairly widespread identification by the children in the study of the limits of adult authority in situations where moral principles may be seen to apply. As a consequence, they point to the likely and unlikely sources of child resistance to various forms of child abuse.

From this short discussion, it is evident that further research is needed to better understand children's perceptions of adult authority and power, and their use of social strategies to deal with it. In the mean time, however, it may be useful for teachers and parents to

- continue debating the power dynamics within schools and families that set the 'social rules' about child-adult relationships. In this way, the 'taken-for-granted' norms and assumptions defining the scope of adult authority will be subjected to scrutiny, and critically evaluated from a child personal safety perspective.
- work out ways to help children accommodate and use social negotiation, and personally assertive social problem solving strategies. For example, it may be helpful to further develop a continuum of responses that acknowledges the value of social negotiation strategies, but which provides children with assertive options should problem resolution strategies fail (a reconsideration and expansion of Johnson's (1991) 'graduated responses to sexual harassment', for example).
- openly acknowledge the limits to children's power. While working towards a reconceptualisation of child-adult power relationships, child protection advocates also need to realistically acknowledge the limitations of abuse prevention strategies that rely on victim resistance. Such an acknowledgment will serve to remind adults with primary child care responsibilities of the need for on-going close monitoring of children's safety, and their ultimate responsibility for the safety of our children.

SUMMARY

The results of this study revealed complex and, at times, perplexing insights into the thinking of children about personal safety issues. They serve to remind proponents of personal safety education that none of the concepts and strategies used in programs can be assumed to be learnt by all children. Children's responses to physical and emotional maltreatment, for example were shown to be very different from their responses to sexual maltreatment. The findings do, however, give qualified support to the efficacy of the Protective Behaviours program and provide some evidence to support its essential rationale. Children who had been taught Protective Behaviours were more able to discern threats to their safety, and were more likely to suggest using personal safety strategies when sexually maltreated, than were Comparison children. Age differences compounded these analyses, though, with younger children exhibiting generally less awareness and personal safety initiative. Although differences between the Protective Behaviours and Comparison group were important, children in both groups shared similar views on how to respond in physically and emotionally damaging situations. In both instances, the powerful dynamics defining adult-child authority relationships inhibited children's advocacy and use of assertive personal safety strategies.

REFERENCES

Adey, K., Oswald, M., & Johnson, B. (1991). *Discipline in Schools - Survey No.1: Teachers in Metropolitan Schools*. Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Angus, G., & Wilkinson, K. (1993). *Child Abuse and Neglect in Australia 1990-91.* Child Welfare Series No.2, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra: AGPS.

Arndt, B. (1988, 15th June). Hazards of making children wary. *The Age.*

Assistant Crown Solicitor (1993). Legal Advice on Definition of Mandated Notifiers.

Australian Protective Behaviours Network (1989). *Our Future Together.* Collection of papers from Protective Behaviours National Conference, Canberra, May 1989.

Baker O'Loughlin (1993). Legal Advice on Definition of Mandated Notifiers.

Barnett, J., Johnson, B., & Badger, L. (1992). *Evaluation of LLIMY: An Evaluation of a Literacy Inservice Program for Teachers.* Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Barth, R. (1990). *Improving Schools from Within: Teachers, Parents and Principals Can Make a Difference.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Berliner, L., & Conte, J. (1990). The Process of Victimization: The Victims' Perspective. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 14, 29-40.

Berman, P., & McLaughlin, M. (1976). Implementation of Educational Innovation. *Educational Forum*, 40(3), 344-370.

Bogat, G., & McGrath, M. (1993). Preschoolers' Cognitions of Authority, and its Relationship to Sexual Abuse Education. *Child Abuse and Review*, 17, 651-662.

Braine, L., Pomerantz, E., Lorber, D., & Krantz, D. (1991). Conflicts with Authority: Children's Feelings, Actions, and Justifications. *Developmental Psychology*, 27(5), 829-840.

Briggs, F. (1989). Personal communication, May 1st, 1989. Adelaide: South Australian College of Advanced Education.

Briggs, F. (1990). *Evaluation of the Protective Behaviours Program in Eight Education Department Junior Primary Schools: Checking Retention Rate after Nine Months.* Report No. 2. Adelaide: South Australian College of Advanced Education.

Briggs, F. (1991). Child Protection Programs: Can they Protect Young children? *Early Child Development and Care*, 67, 61-72.

Briggs, F. (1992). Personal communication, February 19th, 1992. Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Briggs, F. (1993). Advice on Proposed Video Vignette Methodology - Review of Protective Behaviours. September 20th, 1993. Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Briggs, F., & Hawkins, R. (1993). *Follow-up data on the effectiveness of 'Keeping Ourselves Safe' when used with children of 5-8 years.* Report to New Zealand Police Law Related Education, Wellington.

Briggs, F., & Hawkins, R. (1994[a]). Choosing Between Child Protection Programmes. *Child Abuse Review*, 3, (Special Issue).

Briggs, F., & Hawkins, R. (1994[b]). Follw up Study of Children of 5-8 years Using Child Protection Programmes in Australia and New Zealand. *Early Child Development and Care,* 100, 111-117.

Briggs, F., & Herbert, C. (1989). *Evaluation of the Protective Behaviours Program in Eight Education Department Junior Primary Schools.* Report No. 1. Adelaide: South Australian College of Advanced Education.

Brown (Fraser), V. (1986[a]). *Protective Behaviours: The Victorian Committee Program.* In R. Snashall (Ed.), Proceedings of National Conference on Child Abuse, Canberra.

Brown (Fraser), V. (1986[b]). Protective Behaviours: Anti-Victim Training. Paper presented at the 6th International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect, Sydney, Australia.

Brown, A., & Finkelhor, D., (1986). Impact of Child Sexual Abuse: A Review of the Research. *Psychological Bulletin,* 99(1), 66-77.

Carifio, J., & Lanza, M. (1989). On the Need to Use Control Vignettes in Social Science Research. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the New England Research Organisation, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, April 1989.

Carroll, L., Miltenberger, R., & O'Neil, H. K. (1992). A Review and Critique of Research Evaluating Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs. *Education and Treatment of Children,* 15(4), 335-354.

Chesterton, P., Johnston, K., & Sanber, S. (1992). *Child Abuse Prevention Program Evaluation Protective Behaviours Program.* Report to the New South Wales Child Protection Council. Sydney: Australian Catholic University.

Clark, C., & Peterson, P. (1986). Teachers' Thought Processes. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Third Handbook of Research on Teaching.* New York: MacMillan.

Conte, J. (1986). Evaluating Prevention Education Programs. In M. Nelson & K. Clark (Eds.), *The Educator's Guide to Preventing Child Sexual Abuse.* Santa Cruz: Network Publications.

Conte, J., Rosen, C., Saperstein, L., & Shermack, R. (1985). An Evaluation to Prevent the Sexual Victimisation of Young Children. *Child Abuse and Neglect,* 9, 319-328.

Cornelius, H. (1989). *Everone Can Win: How to Resolve Conflict.* Brookvale, NSW: Simon and Schuster.

Cowen, E. (1983). Primary Prevention in Mental Health: Past, Present and Future. In R. Felner, *Preventive Psychology: Theory, Research and Practice.* New York: Pergamon Press.

Crime Prevention Education Consultancy Group. (1989). *Personal Safety.* Melbourne: Globe Press.

Damon, W. (1977). *The Social World of the Child.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Daro, D. (1990). *Child Assualt Prevention Programs: Separating Fact from Fiction.* Paper presented at the 8th International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect, Hamburg, Germany.

Daro, D. (1993). *Evaluating Programs.* Presentation at the Fourth Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Brisbane, Australia.

Daugherty, L. (1986). What Happens to Victims of Child Sexual Abuse? In M. Nelson & K. Clarke (Eds.), *The Educator's Guide to Preventing Child Sexual Abuse*. Network Santa Cruz: Network Publications.

Davies, J. (1993). Personal Correspondence. Sydney: New South Wales Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group.

De Bono, E. (1985). *Conflicts: A Better Way to Resolve Them*. London: Harrap.

Department for Community Welfare. (1986). *Child Abuse: Guidelines for Professionals*. Adelaide: Government Printer.

Department for Employment, Education and Training (DEET). (1988). *Teachers' Learning*. Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service.

Dobbins, R. (1994). *Reflective Journal Writing*. Commissioned paper, Review of Protective Behaviours. Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Doyle, W., & Ponder, G. (1977). The Practicality Ethic in Teacher Decision Making. *Interchange*, 8(3), 1-12.

Duerr Berrick, J. & Gilbert, N. (1991). *With the Best of Intentions: The Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Movement*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Dwyer, G. (1990). *An Evaluation of the Protective Behaviours and Personal Safety Programs in Victorian Primary Schools*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

Education Department of South Australia, (1985). *The Report of the Introduction of the Protective Behaviours Program in South Australia*. Adelaide: Unpublished Report.

Education Department of South Australia, (1986). Progress Report on the Steering Committee on Child Abuse. Memo to the Director General of Education. Adelaide.

Education Department of South Australia, (1988). *Education Gazette*, 16(27), 14 October.

Eekelaar, J. (1986). The Emergence of Children's Rights. *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 6(2), 161-182.

Finkelhor, D. & Strapko, N. (1987). Sexual Abuse Prevention Education: A Review of Evaluation Studies. In D. Willis (Ed.), *Child Abuse Prevention*. New York: Wiley.

Finkelhor, D. (1978). What's Wrong with Sex Between Adults and Children? Ethics and the Problems of Sexual Abuse. In J. Cook & R. Bowles (Eds.), *Child Abuse: Commission and Omission*. Ontario: Butterworth and Co.

Finkelhor, D. (1978). What's wrong with sex between adults and children? Ethics and the problems of Sexual Abuse. In J. Cook & R. Bowles (Eds.), *Child Abuse: Commission and Omission*. Ontario: Butterworth and Co.

Finkelhor, D. (1979). *Sexually Victimised Children*. New York: The Free Press.

Finkelhor, D. (1984). *Child Sexual Abuse - New Theory and Research*. New York: The Free Press.

Finkelhor, D., & Brown, A. (1986). Initial and Long-Term Effects: A Conceptual Framework. In D. Finkelhor (Ed.), *A Sourcebook on Child Sexual Abuse*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Flandreau West, P. (1984). *Protective Behaviours - An Anti-victimisation Program*. Madison, WI: Protective Behaviours, Inc.

Flandreau West, P. (1989). *The Basic Essentials: Protective Behaviours Anti-victimisation and Empowerment Process*. Adelaide: Essence Publications.

Fogl, D., & Prior, M. (1989). *Evaluation of the Protective Behaviours Program for the Prevention of Child Abuse.* Unpublished research paper. Melbourne: Department of Psychology, La Trobe University.

Fraser (Brown), V. (1991). Personal Communication during the Sixth National Protective Behaviours Conference, Adelaide, September 3rd.

Fryer, G., Kraizer, S., & Miyoshi, T. (1987). Measuring Children's Actual Reduction of Risk to Child Abuse: Use of the Simulation Technique. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 11, 181-185.

Fullan, M. (1982). *The Meaning of Educational Change.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M., & Miles, M. (1992). Getting Reform Right: What Works and What Doesn't. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 73, 745-752.

Fullan, M., with Stiegelbauer, S. (1991). *The New Meaning of Educational Change.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Garbarino, J., & Gilliam, G. (1980). *Understanding Abusive Families*. Lexington: Lexington Books.

Gilbert, N., Duerr Berrick, J., LeProhn, N., & Nyman, N. (1989). *Protecting Young Children from Sexual Abuse: Does Pre-school Training Work?* Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Golding, C., & Todd, F. (1994). *Protective Behaviours through Drama: A Program to Integrate Aspects of Drama, Protective Behaviours, Health and Personal Development*. Windows on Practice Series, No. 72. Adelaide: Department for Education and Children's Services.

Goldman, R., & Goldman, J. (1986). *Australian Children's Sexual Experiences within the Family.* Paper presented at 6th International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect, Sydney, Australia.

Gordon, S. (1993[a]). Trialling of Protective Behaviours Review Questionnaire. Personal correspondence, June 4th, 1993. Adelaide.

Gordon, S. (1993[b]). Personal communication. Adelaide: Childrens Services Office.

Grober, J., Bogat, G., & McGrath, M. (1991). *Preschoolers' Problem-solving in Sexually Abusive and Non-abusive Situations.* Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Seattle, Washington, April, 1991.

Guest, M. (1988). *Collection of Student Evaluations of Protective Behaviours.* Unpublished research report. Melbourne: School of Education, Chisholm Institute of Technology

Hallpike, M. (1989). Family Surveillance: Replacing Parents. *Quadrant*, 29-34.

Hargie, O. (1986). *A Handbook of Communication Skills*. New York: New York University Press.

Hargreaves, A., & Dawe, R. (1990). Paths of Professional Development: Contrived Collegiality, Collaborative Culture, and the Case of Peer Coaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 6(3), 227-41.

Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (1992). *Understanding Teacher Development.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Harter, S., Alexander, P., & Neimeyer, R. (1988). Long-Term Effects of Incestuous Child Abuse in College Women: Social Adjustment, Social Cognition and Family Characteristics. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 56(1), 5-8.

Hazzard, A. (1993). Personal communication, April 30th, 1993. Atlanta, Georgia: Department of Pediatrics, Emory University School of Medicine.

Hazzard, A., Webb, C., Kleemeier, C., Angert, L., & Pohl, J. (1991). Child Sexual Abuse Prevention: Evaluation and One-year Follow-up. *Child Abuse and Neglect,* 15, pp. 123-138.

Hill, S., & Hancock, J. (1993). *Reading and Writing Communities: Cooperative Literacy Learning in the Classroom.* Armadale, VIC.: Eleanor Curtin Publishing.

Hill, S., & Hill, T. (1990). *The Collaborative Classroom: A Guide to Cooperative Learning.* South Yarra, VIC: Eleanor Curtin Publishing.

Hudson, J. (1990). *A Study of Protective Behaviours in Northern Schools.* Unpublished research paper. Gawler: Department for Family and Community Services.

Human Research Ethics Committee, (1993). Correspondence with Principal Researcher, Protective Behaviours Review. Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Jackson, S. (1982). *Childhood and Sexuality.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Johnson, B. (1984). Reject, Dilute or Modify: The Uncertain Fate of New Curricula. *Pivot*, 11(4), 40-43

Johnson, B. (1991). Why Some Teachers Don't Teach Protective Behaviours. Paper presented at the Sixth National Protective Behaviours Conference, Adelaide, September 3rd.

Johnson, B. (1992). Teachers' Deliberations About Protective Behaviours. Paper presented at 22nd Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Ballina, New South Wales.

Johnson, B. (1993). Correspondence with Human Research Ethics Committee, University of South Australia. Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Johnson, B. (1994). Teachers' Role in the Primary Prevention of Child Abuse: Problems and Dilemmas. *Child Abuse Review,* 3, 259-271.

Johnson, B., & Moraw, H. (1994). Teacher Development: Deprofessionalising Teachers? *South Australian Educational Leader*, 5(7), 1-7.

Johnson, B., (1983). A Study of Factors that Affect Curriculum Implementation. Unpublished Master of Education Thesis. Bedford Park: Flinders University of South Australia.

Johnson, K. (1991). *CounterCourse: Countering Sexual Harassment.* Adelaide: Windows on Practice Publication.

Kleemeier, C., Webb, C., & Hazzard, A. (1988). Child Sexual Prevention: Evaluation of a Teacher Training Model. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 12, 555-561.

Kohlberg, L., Levine, C., & Hewer, A. (1983). *Moral Stages: A Current Formulation and Response to Critics.* Basel: Karger.

Kraizer, S. (1986). Re-Thinking Prevention. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 10, 259-261.

Kreidler, W. (1984). *Creative Conflict Resolution: More than 200 Activities for Keeping Peace in the Classroom.* Glenview, ILL: Scott, Foresman.

Krivacska, J. (1990). *Designing Child Sexual Abuse Programs.* Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Laupa, M. (1991). Children's reasoning about Three Authority Attributes: Adult Status, Knowledge, and Social Position. *Developmental Psychology,* 27(2), 321-329.

Lawrie, E., & Stewart, A. (1993). An Evaluation of Personal Safety Education Programs in Schools. Paper presented at the Fourth Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Brisbane, July 12-15th.

Leithwood, K., & Montgomery, D. (1992). The Role of the Elementary School Principal in Program Improvement: A Review. *Review of Educational Research,* 52(3), 309-39.

Levin, P., (1983). Teachers' Perceptions, Attitudes, and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect. *Child Welfare,* 62 (1).

Martin, D. (1993). Child Protection in South Australia. Paper presented at the Fourth Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Brisbane, July 12-15th.

Mayes, G., Gillies, J., & Warden, D., (1993). *'Stranger Danger' - The Development of Children's Understanding and Constructs.* Final Report to the Economic and Social Research Council, Swindon, U.K.

McDonald, D., & McPhee, L. (1993). Personal communication, 12th June 1993. Hobart.

McGrath, M., & Bogat., G. (1995). Motive, Intention and Authority - Relating Developmental Research to Sexual Abuse Education for Preschoolers. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology,* 16(2), 171-191.

McVeity, M. (1990). Personal communication, October. Adelaide: Education Department of South Australia.

McVeity, M., (1992). Personal communication, October. Adelaide: Education Department of South Australia.

Melican, B. (1993). Personal communication, 11th June 1993. Melbourne.

Michelson, L. (1983). *Social Skills Assessment and training with Children: An Empirically Based Handbook.* New York: Plenum Press.

Miltenberger, R., & Thiesse-Duffy, E. (1988). Evaluation of Home-based Programs for Teaching Personal Safety Skills to Children. *Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis,* 21, 81-87.

Morrissey, P. (1989). *Research Project in Protective Behaviours.* Unpublished research paper. Adelaide: Social Work Service, Southern Area Education Office, Education Department of South Australia.

Munby, H. (1982). The Place of Teachers' Beliefs in Research on Teacher Thinking and Decision Making, and an Alternative Methodology. *Instructional Science,* 11, 201-225.

National Child Protection Council. (1993[a]). *Information Kit: National Strategy to Prevent Child Abuse.* Canberra: National Child Protection Council.

National Child Protection Council. (1993[b]). *Preventing Child Abuse: A National Strategy.* Canberra: National Child Protection Council.

Nespor, J. (1987). Teacher Beliefs and Teaching Practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 19(4), 317-328.

New South Wales Department for School Education. (1990). *All Together Now Games to Help Interpersonal Skills (K-3)*. Ryde, NSW: Resources Services.

Newton, A., & Wade, T. (1988). *An Evaluation of the Protective Behaviours Program for Adolescents in the Upper Western Region of Adelaide.* Angle Park, S.A.: Parks Community Health Service/Parks District Office of the Department for Community Welfare.

Oates, K. (1993). Child Abuse and Neglect in the Australian Context. *International Journal of Protective Behaviours*, 1(1), 15-20.

Oswald, M., Johnson, B., & Adey, K. (1991). *Discipline in Schools - Survey No.2: Teachers in Country Schools.* Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Oswald, M., Johnson, B., Whitington, V., & Dunn, R. (1994). *Discipline in Independent Schools: A Survey of Teachers*. Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Parliament of South Australia, (1991). *Select Committee Report on Child Protection Policies, Practices and Procedures in South Australia.* Government Printer, Adelaide.

Partington, G. (1989). Schools and Child Abuse. *The Australian Quarterly*, 276-281.

Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods.* Beverley Hills: Sage Publications.

Piaget, J. (1932/1965). *The Moral Judgment of the Child.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. (Originally published in 1932).

Poche, C., Brouwer, R., & Swearingen, M. (1981). Teaching Self-Protection to Young Children. *Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis*, 14, 169-176.

Queensland Board of Teacher Registration. (1991). *Towards a Learning Community*. Toowong: Queensland Board of Teacher Registration.

Reppuci, N., & Haugaard, J. (1989). Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse, Myth or Reality. *American Pyschologist:*, 4(1), 1266-1277.

Richards, L. & Richards, T. (1993). *NUD•IST - Qualitative Data Analysis Program for Macintoshes.* Melbourne: Replee P/L, La Trobe University.

Rogers, O. (1989). *Communication Workshop*. London: Heinemann.

Saslawsky, D., & Wurtele, S. (1986). Educating Children About Sexual Abuse: Implications for Pediatric Intervention and Possible Prevention. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, 11(2), 235-245.

Smith, D. (1984). *A Study of Teachers' Curriculum Planning and Decision Making.* Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Sydney.

Smyth, J. (1993). Teacher Collegiality: Is it Another Way of Controlling Teachers? In A. Reid & B. Johnson (Eds.), *Critical Issues in Australian Education in the 1990s.* Adelaide: Painters Prints.

South Australian Child Protection Council. (1992). *Minutes of Council Meetings.* Adelaide.

Stephen, H. (1993). *Conflict Resolution with Young Children*. Watson, ACT: Australian Early Childhood Association.

Tillett, G. (1991). *Resolving Conflict: A Practical Approach*. South Melbourne: Sydney University Press.

Tisak, M., & Turiel, E. (1984). Children's Conceptions of Moral and Prudential Rules. *Child Development*, 55, 1030-1039.

Trudell, B., & Whatley, M. (1988). School Sexual Abuse Prevention: Unintended Consequences and Dilemmas. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 12, 103-113.

Tutty, L. (1992). The Ability of Elementary School Children to Learn Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Concepts. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 16, 369-384.

Tutty, L. (1994). Developmental Issues in Young Children's Learning of Sexual Abuse Prevention Concepts. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 18, 179-202.

Wallace, M. (1993). Letter to Human Research Ethics Committee, University of South Australia, September 24th, 1993. Adelaide: Department for Education and Childrens Services.

White, G. (1993). Letter to Human Research Ethics Committee, University of South Australia, September 24th, 1993. Adelaide: Catholic Education Office.

Wise, A. (1979). Why Educational Policies Fail: The Hyperrationalisation Hypothesis. *Curriculum Studies*, 9(1), 43-57.

Wolfe, D., MacPherson, B., Blount, R., & Wolfe, V. (1986). Evaluation of a Brief Intervention for Educating School Children in Awareness of Physical and Sexual Abuse. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 10, 85-92.

Woodward, J. (1990). *Evaluating the implementation of the Keeping Ourselves Safe Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education Programme*. Unpublished Master of Education Thesis, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Wurtele, S. (1987). School based Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs: A Review. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 11, 483-495.

Yates, B. (1990). The Protective Behaviours Program. Unpublished paper. Adelaide.

Yeatman, A., (1987). The Politics of Child Abuse. Paper presented at the Conference *The Social Context of Child Abuse*, Parks Community Centre, Adelaide.