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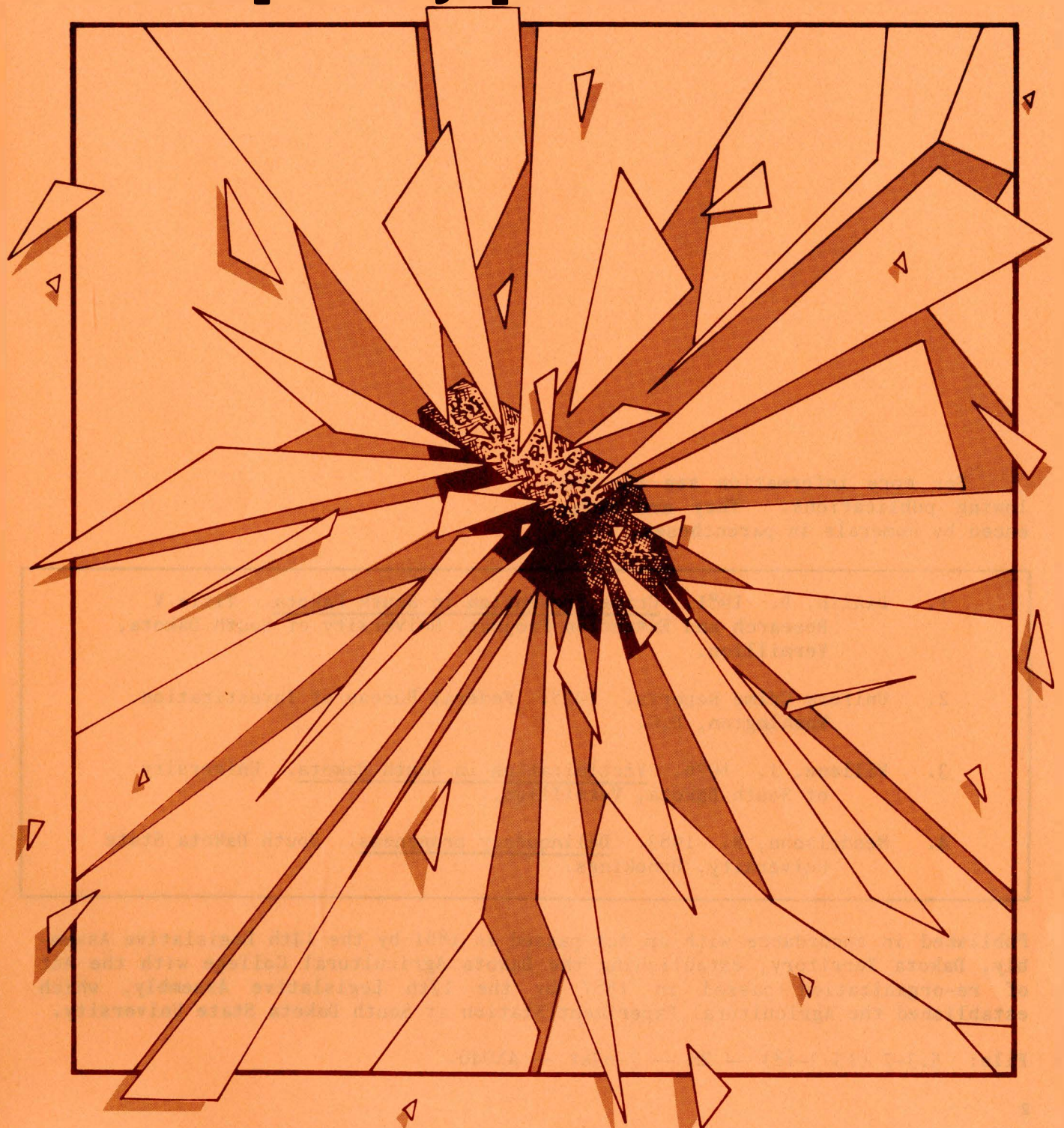
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For more information see the following publications. They are referenced by numerals in parentheses.

1. Dahlin, D. 1981. Crime Prevention in South Dakota. Title V Research and Extension Project, University of South Dakota, Vermillion.
2. Uniform Crime Reports. 1978. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D.C.
3. Villone, J. 1976. Victimization in South Dakota. University of South Dakota, Vermillion.
4. Mendelsohn, R. 1983. Delinquency proneness. South Dakota State University, Brookings.

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South Dakota Youth: Delinquency-prone behavior

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The overall crime rate is increasing faster in suburban and rural areas than in the older core cities--and a disproportionate number of the nation's youth is involved in this increase and in property based criminal activities. This "youth involvement" is found in rural and urban areas.

In 1978, for example, juveniles in rural areas of the United States accounted for 36.4% of all arrests for "Part I" property crimes.¹ In South Dakota during that same year, the proportion was 53.3%; this is noteworthy because young persons 14-17 years of age constitute only about 10% of the state's total population. (1) South Dakota also has a higher arrest record for juveniles than is reflected nationally with rates of 261.4 versus 139.8, respectively, out of every 100,000 arrests.

The less serious crimes ("Part II" crimes)², demonstrate even more clearly this dubious "leadership" of certain rural youth. (1) A case in point is

vandalism. Between 1968 and 1978 vandalism in rural areas increased approximately 42%. In that same period, the "under 18" age bracket constituted more than 60% of the total number of arrests for vandalism. (2) In South Dakota, data collected as part of a statewide victimization study revealed that vandalism was the most frequent and the most costly (in dollars) of the crimes examined³ (3).

Nationwide statistics collected through the criminal justice system tell us a great deal about youth and their involvement in delinquency and crime. But what about our own youth in South Dakota? And the young people in our state who will not enter the criminal justice system but are involved in undetected delinquency acts? Who are they? How do they feel about themselves? What delinquency-prone behaviors do they admit to, given the opportunity to do so confidentially? What level of alcohol and drug use do they report?

Why certain youth "go bad" must wait on the answers to the above questions. The study reported in this bulletin presents some of those answers, from a spring 1982 survey of juniors

¹Part I property offenses include burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. Non-property offenses include criminal homicide, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

²Part II property offenses include arson, forgery, fraud, embezzlement, vandalism, and gambling. Non-property offenses include liquor/drug violations, prostitution, and status offenses.

³Other common offenses in rural South Dakota include theft, burglary, and assault.

and seniors in six high schools, one in each South Dakota planning district. The survey not only gives South Dakota percentages for certain "delinquent" activities by youth. It also targets certain categories of youth as "delinquent prone," categories that need special attention by adults.

Possessed of such information, school boards, administrators, teachers, law enforcement personnel, and court, community, and human service workers will be better prepared to identify and work with youth and to determine and alleviate the "why" of delinquency.

Reported findings are presented in rounded percentage form based on 1,077 youth who completed the questionnaire. Thus, totals may not equal 100%

Presentation of the results are in five areas; 1) self-concept, 2) self-reported delinquency-prone behaviors, 3) home environment, 4) a more detailed analysis of the relationship between self-concept and delinquency-prone behavior, and lastly, 5) some recommendations for action.

SELF-CONCEPT

Students were asked how they felt about themselves and how they thought others felt about them. In response to

Fig 1: Self-concept excerpt from questionnaire.

1. How sure are you that you know what kind of person you really are?

absolutely sure						not sure at all
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. What kind of person would you say your mother thinks you are?

very nice						not nice
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

each item, the student chose one of seven numbers or values (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) ranging from a "very positive" response (1) to a "very negative" response (7) (Fig 1). The results, presented in Table 1, group the questions into the following sections: family, teachers, peer group, and one's self. The percentage of individuals responding to each number in the positive/negative continuum (1-7) is indicated for each question.

Some interesting general observations come out in the findings. Students believe that the mother views him/herself as "nicer" than the father does. Few students would characterize their family as "never having" any conflict. They believe their parents are very interested in how they are getting along in school. Girls seem to "like" the respondent more than do boys. They think their teachers see them fairly positively. With regard to "self," they exhibited ongoing "self-change," probably the changing moods that parents often observe and remark on in their own family.

DELINQUENCY-PRONE BEHAVIORS

Delinquency proneness was measured by asking questions about the frequency with which the student had participated in various activities during the last

Fig 2: Self-reported behavior excerpt from questionnaire.

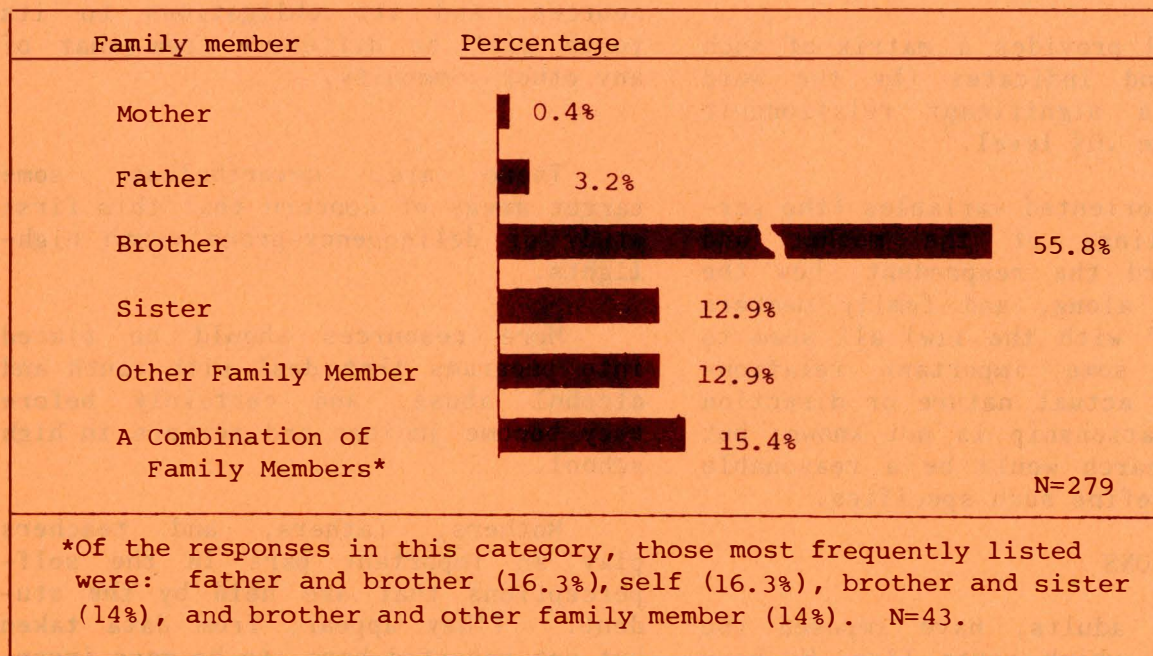
HOW MANY TIMES IN THE LAST YEAR HAVE YOU:

20. Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your parents or other family members. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. Stolen (or tried to steal) something worth more than \$50. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. Knowingly sold stolen goods (or tried to sell them). 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Fig 3: Who was "in trouble" with the law?



year. Beside each statement were numbers 1 through 7, referring to the response that best described their behavior for each item.

For purposes of this report, responses are shown as never, once, and more than once.⁴ The results, presented in Table 2, are grouped into sections that deal with vandalism, theft, physical violence, status crimes, public disorder, illegal services, drugs, and school behavior.

Some responses will evoke special concern. Of note: within the last year only 11% of the juniors and seniors had never used alcoholic beverages . . . 33% had never been drunk in a public place . . . 64% had never bought or provided liquor to a minor . . . 71% had never used marijuana.

Put in other terms: in the last year 9 out of 10 students had used alcoholic beverages (and more than once in most cases) . . . 2 out of 3 had

been drunk in a public place . . . 1 out of 3 had used marijuana . . . 1 out of 3 had provided liquor to a minor.

HOME ENVIRONMENT

Students in the survey identified who they were currently living with. Most individuals lived with both parents (78.6%); 9.9% lived with the mother only; 3.7% lived with the father only; 1.3% lived with a relative; and 4.5% resided in another living arrangement.

When asked if any family member was "in trouble" with the law, 27.8% answered "yes"; it was the brother over half of the time (56%) (Fig 3).

RELATIONSHIP OF VARIABLES

Is there a relationship between whether or not a family member has been "in trouble" with the law or whether one's teacher is perceived as viewing him/herself as nice or not so nice with

⁴Frequency by the seven responses is available upon request.

⁵Chi square statistical analysis is used.

such activities as alcoholic beverage use, skipping classes, etc.?

Table 3 provides a matrix of such variables and indicates (by the word "yes") if a significant relationship exists at the .05 level.⁵

Family oriented variables (the perceived feelings of the mother and father toward the respondent, how the family gets along, and family members "in trouble" with the law) all seem to demonstrate some important relationships. The actual nature or direction of this relationship is not known; but further research would be a reasonable course to define such specifics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We, as adults, have imposed the standards by which youth live. We have said, "This action is delinquent; that one is acceptable." Certainly, young people, by the time they are juniors and seniors in high school, are fast approaching adulthood themselves and must take some responsibility for their actions. Nevertheless, we must give every assistance possible to help them live by the standards we have deemed appropriate.

But in most communities that assistance that we can allocate to school and community youth programs or to human services is severely limited. How, then, should these limited funds be allocated? What priorities must be set?

First, the strengths and weaknesses of every community, its resources, and its obligations to its youth will be different from that of any other community.

There are, nevertheless, some target areas of concern that this first study of delinquency-prone youth highlights.

More resources should be placed into programs that deal with youth and alcohol abuse, and certainly before they become juniors and seniors in high school.

Mothers, fathers, and teachers play an important part in the self-perceptions that are held by the student. (They appear, from data taken but not reported here, to be more important than the student's own peers, at least in serious matters. Peers may be more important in matters of dress, hair styles, etc.) The influence of parents and of teachers should not be underestimated, but rather encouraged and implemented in clearly defined ways.

Targets for limited community resources should continue to be those youth who have had or are having "trouble" with the law. However, as this report shows, there are those youth who are "prone" to unlawful activity. Further research is called for, research which will pinpoint this group more clearly.

Table 1: Self-Concept

We would like to ask some questions about how you feel about yourself and how you think others feel about you.*

I. FAMILY

1. What kind of person would you say your mother thinks you are (Q10**)?

very nice	(1)	23%
	(2)	41%
	(3)	20%
	(4)	9%
	(5)	3%
	(6)	2%
not nice	(7)	2%
		MEAN (2.4)

2. What kind of person would you say your father thinks you are (Q11)?

very nice	(1)	20%
	(2)	38%
	(3)	21%
	(4)	9%
	(5)	5%
	(6)	2%
not nice	(7)	2%
		MEAN (2.6)

3. If your parents were to tell someone all about you, what type of comments would they make (Q12)?

very favorable	(1)	32%
	(2)	37%
	(3)	19%
	(4)	10%
	(5)	2%
	(6)	0.4%
very unfavorable	(7)	0.8%
		MEAN (2.2)

4. How would you characterize your family in terms of how everyone gets along with each other (Q17)?

never any conflict	(1)	3%
	(2)	22%
	(3)	28%
	(4)	24%
	(5)	12%
	(6)	7%
always conflict	(7)	3%
		MEAN (3.5)

5. Do you feel your parents are interested in how well you do in school (Q18)?

very much so	(1)	49%
	(2)	25%
	(3)	14%
	(4)	6%
	(5)	4%
	(6)	1%
Not at all	(7)	1%
		MEAN (1.9)

6. How often do your parents attend school activities (sporting events, parent-teacher conferences, etc.) (Q19)?

always	(1)	15%
	(2)	20%
	(3)	17%
	(4)	13%
	(5)	10%
	(6)	15%
never	(7)	10%
		MEAN (3.7)

II. TEACHERS

1. What kind of person would you say your teachers think you are (Q13)?

very nice	(1)	11%
	(2)	33%
	(3)	32%
	(4)	18%
	(5)	4%
	(6)	2%
not nice	(7)	1%
		MEAN (2.8)

2. If your teachers were to tell someone all about you, what type of comments would they make (Q14)?

very favorable	(1)	9%
	(2)	31%
	(3)	31%
	(4)	20%
	(5)	5%
	(6)	2%
very unfavorable	(7)	1%
		MEAN (2.9)

III. PEERS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. How much do boys like you (Q15)? | 2. How much do girls like you (Q16)? |
| great deal (1) 6% | great deal (1) 9% |
| (2) 27% | (2) 29% |
| (3) 33% | (3) 36% |
| (4) 22% | (4) 18% |
| (5) 7% | (5) 4% |
| (6) 2% | (6) 1% |
| not at all (7) 2% | not at all (7) 1% |
| MEAN (3.1) | MEAN (2.9) |
-

IV. SELF

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. How sure are you that you know what kind of person you really are (Q1)? | 4. "Some days I like the way I am. Some days I do not like the way I am." Do your feelings <u>change</u> like this (Q4)? |
| absolutely sure (1) 13% | yes, definitely (1) 25% |
| (2) 39% | (2) 19% |
| (3) 25% | (3) 17% |
| (4) 14% | (4) 14% |
| (5) 7% | (5) 8% |
| (6) 2% | (6) 11% |
| not sure at all (7) 1% | definitely not (7) 5% |
| MEAN (2.7) | MEAN (3.1) |
| 2. How often do you feel mixed up about yourself, about what you are really like (Q2)? | 5. Everybody has some things about him which are good and some things about him which are bad. Are more of the things about you (Q5): |
| always (1) 3% | very good (1) 6% |
| (2) 8% | (2) 27% |
| (3) 18% | (3) 35% |
| (4) 20% | (4) 27% |
| (5) 22% | (5) 4% |
| (6) 25% | (6) 1% |
| never (7) 5% | very bad (7) 1% |
| MEAN (4.4) | MEAN (3.0) |
| 3. Do you feel like this: "I know just what I'm like. I'm really sure about it?" (Q3) | 6. "I am no good." Do you ever feel like this (Q6)? |
| yes, definitely (1) 6% | always (1) 1% |
| (2) 16% | (2) 3% |
| (3) 22% | (3) 13% |
| (4) 21% | (4) 15% |
| (5) 16% | (5) 17% |
| (6) 10% | (6) 27% |
| definitely not (7) 7% | never (7) 22% |
| MEAN (3.8) | MEAN (5.1) |

7. "There's a lot wrong with me."
 Do you ever feel like this (Q7)?

always	(1)	2%
	(2)	7%
	(3)	14%
	(4)	17%
	(5)	20%
	(6)	26%
never	(7)	14%
	MEAN	(4.8)

9. How happy are you with the kind
 of person you are (Q9)?

very happy	(1)	14%
	(2)	38%
	(3)	26%
	(4)	13%
	(5)	5%
	(6)	2%
very unhappy	(7)	0%
	MEAN	(2.6)

8. "I think I am no good at all."
 Do you ever feel like this (Q8)?

always	(1)	2%
	(2)	4%
	(3)	7%
	(4)	13%
	(5)	15%
	(6)	27%
never	(7)	32%
	MEAN	(5.5)

Percentages based on N=1,077.

*Question sequence has been reordered (from original questionnaire -- "Survey of Student Attitudes and Behaviors") for this discussion.

**Question number from questionnaire.

Table 2: Delinquency proneness

We would like to ask some questions about the frequency with which you may have participated in various activities during the last year.*

HOW MANY TIMES IN THE LAST YEAR HAVE YOU:		Never	Once	More than once**
I. VANDALISM				
1.	Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your parents or other family members (Q20***).	70%	16%	13%
2.	Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to a school (Q21).	69%	17%	13%
3.	Purposely damaged or destroyed property that did not belong to you (not counting family or school property) (Q22).	64%	18%	17%
4.	Thrown objects (such as rocks, snowballs, or bottles at cars (Q26).	45%	14%	40%
5.	Broken into a building or vehicle (or tried to break in) to steal something or just to look around (Q49).	86%	7%	6%
6.	Broken into equipment sheds or other farm buildings on someone else's property (Q53).	92%	3%	4%
7.	Vandalized (destroyed for the heck of it) buildings, equipment, fences, etc. on someone else's land (Q54).	82%	8%	8%
II. THEFT				
1.	Stolen (or tried to steal) something worth more than \$50 (Q24).	89%	5%	5%
2.	Stolen (or tried to steal) things worth between \$5 and \$50 (Q47).	81%	9%	9%
3.	Stolen (or tried to steal) things worth \$5 or less (Q30).	59%	20%	21%
4.	Stolen money or other things from your parents or other members of your family (Q37).	64%	15%	20%
5.	Stolen (or tried to steal) something at school, such as someone's coat or gym shoes from a classroom, locker, or cafeteria, or a book from the library (Q48).	82%	10%	8%
6.	Stolen money from others at school (Q60).	95%	2%	2%
7.	Taken a vehicle for a ride (drive) without the owner's permission (Q42).	84%	10%	6%
8.	Avoided paying for such things as movies, bus rides, and food (Q45).	70%	10%	19%
9.	Taken library or school books without chcking them out (Q60).	64%	16%	19%
III. PHYSICAL VIOLENCE				
1.	Attacked someone with the idea of seriously injuring him/her (Q31).	81%	9%	10%
2.	Been involved in gang fights (Q32).	86%	7%	7%
3.	Hit (or threatened to hit) other students (Q39).	53%	15%	31%
4.	Hit (or threatened to hit) a teacher or other adult at school (Q38).	91%	5%	4%
5.	Hit (or threatened to hit) one of your parents (Q40).	86%	8%	6%

	<u>Never</u>	<u>Once</u>	<u>More than once**</u>
6. Used force (strong-arm methods) to get money or things from other students (Q44).	94%	3%	3%
<u>IV. STATUS CRIMES</u>			
1. Run away from home (Q27).	86%	9%	4%
2. Lied about your age to gain entrance or to purchase something, for example, lying about your age to buy liquor or get into a movie (Q28).	31%	11%	57%
3. Skipped classes without an excuse (Q50).	41%	17%	42%
<u>V. PUBLIC DISORDER</u>			
1. Carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocket knife (Q29).	87%	3%	9%
2. Been loud, rowdy, or unruly in a public place (disorderly conduct) (Q41).	38%	16%	45%
3. Been drunk in a public place (Q46).	33%	12%	53%
4. Made obscene telephone calls, such as calling someone and saying dirty things (Q52).	72%	12%	15%
<u>VI. ILLEGAL SERVICES</u>			
1. Knowingly bought stolen goods (or tried to buy them) (Q23).	85%	6%	9%
2. Knowingly sold stolen goods (or tried to sell them) (Q25).	89%	4%	6%
3. Sold marijuana or hashish ("pot", "grass", "hash") (Q33).	91%	3%	6%
4. Sold hard drugs, such as heroin, cocaine, and LSD (Q34).	96%	1%	3%
5. Bought or provided liquor for a minor (Q43).	64%	9%	27%
<u>VII. DRUGS</u>			
1. Used alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, or hard liquor) (Q55).	11%	5%	82%
2. Used marijuana ("grass", "pot", "hash") (Q56).	71%	8%	20%
3. Used "hard drugs" (cocaine, "coke"; heroin, "smack, horse"; LSD or other hallucinogens) (Q57).	92%	3%	4%
4. Used amphetamines ("uppers") or barbituates ("downers") (Q58).	88%	4%	8%
<u>VIII. SCHOOL BEHAVIOR</u>			
1. Cheated on school tests (Q35).	18%	22%	60%
2. Skipped classes without an excuse (Q50).	41%	17%	42%
3. Been suspended from school (Q51).	87%	7%	5%

Percentages based on N=1,077.

*Question sequence has been reordered (from original questionnaire -- "Survey of Student Attitudes and Behaviors") for this discussion.

**Responses 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7 are considered "more than once".

***Question number from questionnaire.

Table 3: Does a significant relationship exist between variables?*

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable					
	Lied About Age (Q28)**	Avoided Paying For Things (Q45)	Been Drunk in Public Place (Q46)	Skipped Classes Without Excuse (Q50)	Used Alcoholic Beverages (Q55)	Used Marijuana (Q56)
How often mixed up (Q2):	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sure you know what you are like (Q1):	-	-	-	-	-	-
Happy with the kind of person you are (Q9):	-	-	-	Yes	-	-
Mother thinks you are (Q10):	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Father thinks you are (Q11):	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Teacher thinks you are (Q13):	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes
How much do boys like you (Q15):	Yes	-	Yes	-	Yes	-
How much do girls like you (Q16):	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
How family gets along (Q17):	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes
Parental interest in school (Q18):	-	-	-	Yes	-	Yes
Currently living with (Q62):	-	-	-	Yes	-	Yes
Any family member in trouble with the law (Q63):	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*at the .05 level -- chi square analysis.
**Question number from questionnaire.