

THE REMOVAL OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT FROM
THE SCHOOL SYSTEM:
SOMETHING LOST OR SOMETHING GAINED?

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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ROBERT ROBIN McGRATH



**The Removal of Corporal Punishment From the School System:
Something Lost or Something Gained?**

By

Robert Robin McGrath

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ABSTRACT

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed a change in society that no longer accepted physical punishment of children at the hands of adults, whether the adult be the parent of the child or any other person acting "in loco parentis". This change resulted in corporal punishment being removed from schools in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador as legislated by law. A similar law currently exists in each of the provinces and territories in the country of Canada.

Research on the effects of corporal punishment has suggested that it has a negative impact on the growth of children mentally, emotionally, and socially. It is believed that this form of punishment did little to deter children from future acts of misbehaviour, nor did it meet the need of teaching more appropriate actions under similar circumstances. This physical action of corporal punishment is now considered to be an act of physical abuse.

The aim of this study was to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of school administrators regarding behaviour patterns of children since the removal of corporal punishment from the school system, and to get a better understanding of their attitudes and perceptions towards the alternatives to corporal punishment. The study was qualitative in design and used the open-ended interview technique. In total, there were fifteen school administrators interviewed.

The administrators interviewed in this study generally agreed that there has been a rise in the frequencies of inappropriate behaviours since the removal of corporal

punishment from the school system. There were several reasons that were suggested to explain this rise in occurrences of inappropriate behaviours, but few of those interviewed felt it was as a result of the absence of corporal punishment. Some of the reasons suggested for the rise included an increase in the number of single parent families, change in family structure, and change in society expectations.

The alternatives to corporal punishment were believed to be satisfactorily effective in the schools of several of the administrators interviewed, while several others felt they were not satisfactory. Despite the fact that there were several administrators who felt that the alternatives to corporal punishment were effective, all of those interviewed suggested that there needs to be a greater emphasis in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador to provide school-based personnel with more effective methods and resources of dealing with children who continuously misbehave in the classroom. This need stems from the belief that many children no longer respect, nor fear, the disciplinary actions that can be handed out by neither their parents, teachers, nor the law.

It is because of this weakness in the current methods of discipline that exist in Newfoundland schools that administrators fear for the safety of students and teachers if the trend towards an increase in inappropriate behaviours continues to persist. What is needed, they suggest, are more innovative disciplinary measures that can only be brought about as the result of greater financial and human commitment. The time for that commitment, they feel, is now.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Discipline has been a highly personal and emotionally charged issue in the education system within this century. Behavioral scientists and educators, such as Clarke (1984) and Prinsloo (1994), have struggled for years with what is the “ideal” form of discipline in schools. What has been agreed upon is that discipline, “...cuts across all aspects of our lives, and new concepts need to be carefully considered, tried out, and then modified according to each teacher’s feelings and the nature of the class and the students. The improvement of discipline is a task requiring the commitment of time and resources” (Hyman, 1997, p. 136). The struggle for concrete evidence and results on the various methods of discipline continues; time and resources have been made readily available, and progress is slowly being experienced.

The legal rights of children, the emergence of new policies on discipline, and increased public pressure for school policy accountability has had severe implications for educational practices in dealing with the disciplining of students. The Newfoundland and Labrador school system has searched for decades for the most effective way of dealing with student discipline.

Traditionally, parents have sent their children off to teachers to whom they have granted the authoritative position of **in loco parentis**, “meaning that parents give their

authority to teachers when children are sent to school" (Lundell, 1982, p. 6). This term was originally conceived of as the relationship of educator to pupil and the authority implied when treating disciplinary matters. This implied power and authority so that the teacher could properly restrain and correct students when required, and was perceived as essential in the education and training of students. While it is still critical in the disciplinary process, the concept of **in loco parentis** has undergone considerable modification, and thus, too, have the methods of disciplining students.

Many educators today have become limited in the options available in dealing with discipline problems in the school as compared to less than twenty years ago. A 1982 report (Lundell, 1982) on the levels of discipline for the era included ten of the most frequently used behaviour control methods. These included verbal reprimand, revoking privileges, corporal punishment, parent conference, detention, suspension, expulsion, psychological testing, counselling, and therapy. As the rights of the students increased over the years, due process for the student became essential and corporal punishment came under fire. This criticism of corporal punishment was ironic considering that a Supreme Court decision in the United States on April 19, 1977, just five years earlier, upheld the use of corporal punishment. At the time, the message of this court decision had a significant impact on schooling. While it was no longer legal to beat wives and sailors in the country, the law still allowed educators to strike students in an attempt to alter their behaviours (Lundell, 1982). Despite this earlier ruling, the move away from corporal punishment was welcomed by many, but it remains to be seen if the results have been positive.

Statement of the Problem

Background to the Study

Discipline continues to be in the forefront of concerns for administrators, teachers, parents, and local school boards. Principals are more likely to lose their jobs for failing to maintain discipline than they are for any other reason (Charles, 1996). In a survey conducted on teacher/principal opinions, almost a third of all teachers nationwide claimed that they have, at various points in their careers, seriously considered leaving the profession because of student misbehaviour (National Center for Education Statistics, 1987). This survey did much in bringing to the forefront the importance of future developments in school discipline.

Ideally, the goal of discipline was to "reduce the need for teacher intervention over time by helping students learn to control their own behaviour. When teachers apply various discipline techniques, they hope not only that misbehaviour will cease, but that students will internalize self-discipline and display it in the classroom and elsewhere" (Charles, 1996, p. 3). The concern about discipline is growing year by year. Recent studies of the education profession list discipline as a major problem with which teachers must contend and a significant factor in teachers leaving the profession. In fact, problems with discipline are believed to be responsible for the departure of 40 percent or more of new teachers from the education profession during their first three years of experience (Charles, 1996).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine whether the removal of corporal punishment from Newfoundland's schools has had a positive or negative influence on school discipline problems and overall school life. The study focussed on the alternative methods of discipline that administrators have used in place of corporal punishment, gaining an understanding of how effectively these methods have worked in achieving their intended purpose. The responses of administrators provided insight into how these alternative methods of discipline have fared in being perceived as a more or less appropriate means of dealing with students that continue to misbehave in the province's schools.

Significance of the Study

The effects of discipline on schooling have an impact on much more than the lives of those upon whom the disciplinary action is exercised. In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador recently, fewer and fewer students are dropping out of school in search of employment opportunities that do not require the acquisition of at least a high school graduation certificate. This trend is perhaps mainly due to the realization that the fishery no longer can sustain the numbers that it did less than a decade ago, along with the realization that the vast majority of occupations now available require a high school certification at the very least.

As a result of this trend, classrooms have been subjected to students who are in attendance because they need high school credits to meet the minimum requirements needed to be considered for employment, rather than for reasons of wanting to be

educated. The discipline problems that these students can be expected to create, along with those that the students who are interested in school create, are making it increasingly necessary that the methods used to treat these misbehaviours are effective. The results of this study may prove very beneficial in deciding on the future of discipline in schools. The majority of research conducted on this topic has been quantitative in nature. This qualitative approach may provide for greater opportunity to deduce meaning from the open-ended questions put before the participants. The research proposed in this study has potentially laid the groundwork for a future study that wishes to take a closer look at the success that administrators are experiencing in school discipline in the aftermath of the elimination of corporal punishment.

CHAPTER 2

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Research Design

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992) qualitative researchers “proceed on theoretical assumptions (that meaning and process are crucial in understanding human behavior, that descriptive data is what is important to collect, and that analysis is best done inductively) and on data collection traditions (like participant observation, unstructured interviewing, and document analysis). These provide the parameters, the tools, and the general guide of how to proceed.” (p. 55). The open-ended interview method is often looked upon as one of the most effective means of conducting educational research. Yin (1994) stated that most commonly “interviews are of an open-ended nature in which you ask key respondents for the facts of a matter as well as for the respondents’ opinions about events. In some situations, you may even ask the respondent to propose his or her own insights into certain occurrences and may use such propositions as the basis for further inquiry” (p. 84).

Best and Kahn (1993) see this open-ended format in which the subject is encouraged to answer in his or her own words at some length as being likely to provide greater depth of response. In fact, they suggest that this method is often superior to other data-gathering devices, in part due to the greater willingness of subjects to talk than to write, and secondly because this penetration exploits the advantage of getting beneath-the-surface reactions.

This study has utilized the open-ended interview as the primary method of data collection. Miller (1991) states that, "the interview can range from a highly structured situation with a planned series of questions, to a very informal talk with no structure except for some areas of discussion desired by the interviewer" (p. 159). Qualitative research, by way of the interview, permits the researcher to record and understand people in their own terms. Patton (1986) characterizes qualitative research as producing data which "consist of detailed descriptions of situations, events, people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts" (p. 22). Patton suggests that depth and detail emerge through direct quotation and careful description. The interview technique is one such method in seeking out this depth and description. As Patton (1986) reveals, "Direct quotations are a basic source of raw data in qualitative measurement, revealing respondents' level of emotion, the way in which they have organized their world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions" (p. 28). It is this insight that will allow for qualitative research, which has, as its main objective, a drive to understand the meaning of ones' experiences.

Site Selection and Access

The methods of discipline used in schools across the province of Newfoundland and Labrador vary from school board to school board and from school to school. The focus of this study was to determine if the alternatives to corporal punishment in these schools are regarded as being effective in the opinion of those who administer this discipline - school administrators. The administrators who were interviewed were randomly chosen from high schools in one of Newfoundland's school districts. Each of

these administrators had served as administrators both before the elimination of corporal punishment and after. A total of 15 school administrators were interviewed. Each interview session took place outside the physical setting of the school to provide for greater reflection and minimum interruption.

Data Collection

A qualitative approach serves best for the purposes of this study. Wiersma (1995) defined the role of this method as being done for the purpose of understanding social phenomena, the exact intention of this study. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) describe the interview as "a purposeful conversation, usually between two people . . . that is directed by one in order to get information" (p. 96). It is designed to basically find out what is on someone else's mind. Patton (1990) states that "the purpose of open-ended interviewing is not to put things in someone's mind, but to access the perspective of the person being interviewed" (p. 278).

This study posed open-ended questions to a selection of 15 school administrators who were chosen based on their suitability for the purposes of the research. The exact wording and sequence of questions were determined in advance. All interviewees were asked the same questions in the same order. All questions were worded in a completely open-ended format. The questions used included experience and behavior questions, opinion of advantage/disadvantage questions, knowledge questions, and background questions that elicit respondents' descriptions of themselves. Each of these is used in Patton's typology as outlined in LeCompte and Preissle (1993), and served best to meet the expectations and objectives of the study's purpose.

Patton (1986) prefers this method of interviewing because "the truly open-ended question does not presuppose which dimension of feeling, analysis, or thought will be salient for the interviewee. The truly open-ended question permits persons being interviewed to take whatever direction and use whatever words they want in order to represent what they have to say" (p. 213). Best and Kahn (1993) note that the preferred method for data collection is to tape record the interview if the respondent is willing. Each of the participants were asked to allow for the recording of the interview session so as to guarantee the reporting of their exact responses, a request to which each interviewee complied. Each taped session was then transcribed to permit easier analysis of the information gathered.

Prior to the actual interview sessions each participating school administrator was provided with a letter explaining the intended purpose of the study. The written consent of each participant was requested regarding the possible tape recording of each session. At this time the principals were reassured of total confidentiality to ensure that their identity would be protected. For that reason, each principal will be represented by the term "interviewee" only, and all audio recordings were used only by the researcher. Eventually, after all the data needed was transcribed, these tapes were destroyed. An effort was made to give meaning to and interpret the responses of the participants to get a more in-depth understanding of attitudes toward the alternatives of corporal punishment. This qualitative approach allowed more opportunities for interpretation than most of the studies previously conducted on this topic which have tended to be quantitative for the most part.

Major Research Questions

The major research questions that this study addressed were:

1. How do school administrators describe the influence that the removal of corporal punishment has had on school discipline?
2. Do school administrators perceive corporal punishment to be more effective or less effective than today's alternative methods of discipline?

The questions that were asked in the interview to seek out the responses to these questions included:

1. Has the frequency of inappropriate behaviors increased, decreased, or remained the same since the removal of corporal punishment from your school? Why?
2. Has the seriousness of inappropriate behaviors escalated since the removal of corporal punishment? Elaborate.
3. With the removal of corporal punishment from schools, has the attitude of students towards the consequences of inappropriate behaviors changed? If yes, in what ways?
4. Do the teachers of the school feel comfortable with the alternatives to corporal punishment? Explain.
5. In general, do the students who have been subjected to the alternatives to corporal punishment seem to have benefited as compared to those who were subjected to corporal punishment? Explain.
6. If given the opportunity, would you reinstate the use of corporal punishment in your school? Why or why not?

Data Analysis

In the opinion of Patton (1990), "the challenge [of qualitative inquiry] is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify the significant patterns and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data revealed" (p. 372). This stage of the research began once all of the taped sessions had been transcribed. The first step in analysing qualitative research involves organizing the data. Because the method being used in this study is that of an interview, the data was organized by grouping answers together across respondents. Once the data had been organized, the researcher described the viewpoints of participants. It was only after the data had been organized and described that the researcher began the most critical phase of the analysis process, interpretation. "Interpretation involves explaining the findings, answering "why" questions, attaching significance to particular results, and putting patterns into an analytic framework" (Patton, 1990, p. 375). The benefit of using open-ended interviews is that all respondents answer the same questions, thus increasing the comparability of responses. In addition, it facilitates organization and analysis of the data. This aided the researcher as an attempt was made to carefully interpret and report the findings of the study.

Best and Kahn (1998) bring attention to the importance of confidentiality in reporting research results where information has been gathered through the means of interviewing participants. They state that, "The ethical researcher holds all information that he or she may gather about the subject in strict confidence, disguising the participant's identity in all records and reports. No one should be in a position to threaten

the subject's anonymity nor should any information be released without his or her permission" (p. 43). It was the intended purpose of the researcher to conceal names, locations, and other identifying information so that the people who had been interviewed would have their identity protected. Prior to the actual interview session each of the respondents was provided with a written confirmation that all data would remain anonymous, ensuring them that their identity would be protected at all costs. In addition, the interviewees were guaranteed that all taped interview sessions would be destroyed once the necessary data had been transcribed.

Patton (1986) states that "when struggling with the process of analysis it is helpful to keep in mind that the basic purpose of qualitative analysis is to provide useful, meaningful, and credible answers to the evaluation questions" (p. 327). Therefore the researcher made all attempts to consciously guard against subjectivity, which often leads to bias, unreliability, and irrational reporting of the research findings. Objectivity was exercised to ensure that the findings clearly reflected the responses of those interviewed, the subjects to whom this study was dependent upon.

Definition of Key Terms

Punishment can be defined by its effects: "It is a consequence which reduces the behavior which preceded or caused it. In other words, persons prefer to avoid aversive situations and doing things which will put them in an aversive setting. Thus, the only use of punishment is to reduce or eliminate behaviors. Punishment teaches what not to do" (Vockell, 1978, p. 11).

Corporal punishment is most commonly defined as the act of disciplining

students by inflicting physical pain as a penalty for offensive or improper behaviour (Buechler, 1989; Gaffney, 1997). More specifically, corporal punishment has been defined (Gaffney, 1997; Lundell, 1982) as any process which intentionally inflicts a physical hurt upon any part of a human body for the purpose of punishment or correction of the person or with the hope of deterring the same person, or others, from committing acts which necessitate his/her being punished or corrected. Basically, corporal punishment means the purposeful and intentional hitting of the student with a hand or stick with the purpose of inflicting pain or discomfort in an attempt to change an undesired behaviour. Corporal punishment is granted by authority to parents and therefore to school principals and teachers as they act 'in loco parentis'. "Authority is 'power over' and authority in school is conferred on teachers and principals twice - first through their roles and secondly through their knowledge. Authority gives teachers, and especially principals, explicit permission to use violence as a means of correction" (Thompson, 1994, p. 25).

Pain, then, may be defined as the essence of punishment, whether it be physical or mental. All forms of punishment that have been devised by man have the goal of inflicting pain or suffering upon the individual. This pain may sometimes be in the form of physical pain, while at other times it can be the infliction of psychical suffering. For the majority of punishments, pain is a combination of both physical pain and mental pain (Scott, 1974).

CHAPTER 3

SELECTED REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

History of Corporal Punishment in Schools

In the past, “parents and teachers have used punishment to motivate the young and to teach them to behave properly” (Charles, p. 32). The punishment that has been exercised in the schools of the country has been referred to as corporal punishment, a form of punishment long in existence and long supported. In fact, in early colonial America, “old world traditions and religious convictions made corporal punishment a way of life” (Paquet, 1982, p. 8). This punishment took on many forms. In most cases it consisted of applying a paddle to the backside of the misbehaving student (Rosen, 1997; Buechler, 1989; Prinsloo, 1994). Some schools required that the parent be present when punishment was being applied, although many were granted the right to apply this punishment without consultation with the parent because of their right to act “in loco parentis”. It was hoped that the punishment administered would have more than a short term effect, that “it would help to convey to the child what matters morally rather than just what others expect” (Munn, Johnstone & Chalmers, 1992). Corporal punishment was supported as a means of promoting respect for law and order, teaching good citizenship and acceptance of responsibilities, and an inexpensive way of encouraging wholesome learning and protecting life and limb. In addition, it was always readily available and easily applied (James, 1969).

Up until the last decade, the courts had upheld corporal punishment as a legitimate

means of disciplining students. While there had been many attempts to give constitutional protection to students against corporal punishment, the attempts for the most part failed and "in loco parentis" continued to be recognized and respected by the courts (Department of Educational Administration and Counselling, 1997). Principals argued that corporal punishment should be administered under certain circumstances and that much of the controversy surrounding the issue of corporal punishment could be avoided with adequate teacher training (Wright & Moles, 1985). The courts agreed, but suggested that if corporal punishment was to be used, then a policy should be in place that was consistent with statutory law, not cruel or excessive, and not malicious, that involved an appropriate instrument, left no permanent or lasting injury, and suited the age and sex of the child (Department of Educational Administration and Counselling, 1997). In Canada, these regulations were spelled out in Section 43 of the Criminal Code. Here it was instructed that "the striking of children must be reserved for 'correction' and must not be 'excessive'. It is left to the judgment of the teacher or principal to decide how much correction is necessary" (Thompson & Sharp, 1994, p. 25).

In recent years, the use of corporal punishment in homes, schools, prisons, asylums, and the armed forces has provoked widespread concern and publicity. The controversy over corporal punishment has a complex history which can be traced back hundreds of years. A look back at this history illuminates what society at the time considered to be "deviant" behavior, subject to punishment, and what it regarded as "normal" and therefore acceptable behavior. Also illuminated is what society considered to be acceptable measures of corrective punishment. Some of the more dramatic and

stunning court cases of the last decade in both Canada and the United States have hinged on what is acceptable and what is excessive in terms of limits to discipline.

In recent years, the Newfoundland courts have most often been highlighted with the abuse and violence children received at the hands of the Roman Catholic Christian Brothers. Once again, the defence in most of these cases claimed that the steps taken to correct these often unruly boys were steps that were necessary considering the nature of the boys in their care.

Studying the history of corporal punishment can reveal how societal attitudes toward violence, pain, discipline, and ultimately human nature have changed over time. In short, "the history of punishment can serve as a lens to illuminate major cultural changes in a society" (Glenn, 1984, p. 1). This paper brings to light the evolution of changing perceptions of society towards appropriate methods of punishment over time, eventually leading to the abolishment of corporal punishment in Newfoundland's schools.

Support for Corporal Punishment

Amid all the arguments in opposition to corporal punishment, there are those who posit that parents and teachers have the choice of either physically disciplining students on the one hand or spoiling them on the other. Many will agree that both have potential for extremely negative results; however, it is difficult to ascertain which technique is worse.

In the home and in the school, corporal punishment has long been used to help develop proper acts of conduct in students and children. In many cases teachers and parents declare that this method of punishment is the only method that can adequately

deal with problem children. The alternatives are often ineffective, totally disarming the educator and parent. The sad truth is that in many communities schools are no longer the safe havens where children learn, build social relationships, and prepare for the future as productive, successful adults. Increasingly, there is growing public recognition and concern about the toll violence is taking on students, teachers, and school administrators.

In one extreme case of an educator feeling totally disarmed (Madhere, 1998), a Baltimore, Maryland, high school principal ordered a mass suspension of 1200 students. The principal admitted that her actions were simply a "cry for help". This act brought to the forefront the breakdown of discipline in urban schools, particularly at the middle and secondary levels. There was an obvious need for more effective and comprehensive approaches to discipline than the alternative disciplinary strategies of detention, suspension, and expulsion. In the popular imagination, and in the minds of some politicians, the disappearance of the rod was lamentable. In their opinion, "schools were safer, more orderly places with more learning going on when teachers ruled with the ferule or the paddle" (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 21).

Others (Wright & Ollie, 1985; Abrahams, 1992) supported their stance, arguing that the abolition of corporal punishment would leave teachers powerless to control students, especially those who might otherwise threaten teachers. This attitude supporting the need for corporal punishment was strongly reflected in the home. This fact should not be surprising considering the traditional view taken by parents towards corporal punishment. In fact, study after study had shown that almost all Americans had approved of hitting children. Owens and Straus (1975) uncovered an amazing statistic

showing an 86 percent approval of corporal punishment in the home. A similar National Family Violence Survey revealed that 77 percent of the 2143 adults surveyed believed that spanking was normal and appropriate (Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz, 1980). More recently, the General Society Survey of 1470 adults found that 84 percent agree that, "It is sometimes necessary to discipline a child with a good hard spanking" (Lehman, 1989).

In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Martin and Baksh (1984) discovered that even students sometimes felt that corporal punishment was necessary at times to deal with the most disruptive of pupils. In the words of one student interviewed, "I think that the strap should be brought back because students seem to show less regard for property when there is no punishment except expelling. Most students, the hard cases, don't care if they get expelled very much due to the fact that they are failing and just dislike school," (p. 10).

Perhaps even more surprising is the fact that even the victims of corporal punishment themselves often prefer this form of punishment over alternative methods. To many, the one clear advantage of corporal punishment is that it often can be delivered immediately and quickly. Other means of discipline often take prolonged periods of time, so many students prefer to "go ahead and get it over with" (Vockell, 1978). In addition, he argues that physical punishment makes the most sense with children who are truly incapable of responding to any other form of punishment.

As for the concern of corporal punishment fitting into the category of what is to be considered humane in a school setting, Vockell (1978) claims that corporal punishment is not necessarily the worst way to punish children. Based upon his findings he reveals that,

“public ridicule from a parent or teacher is often viewed by children as being much more cruel than a privately administered spanking. As a matter of fact, with most older children, it's the humiliation aspect of a spanking that hurts more than the actual physical impact” (p. 109). The findings of Vockell have to weigh heavily on the minds of those studying the impact of corporal punishment on children because his reports reflect information gathered from the actual victims of corporal punishment - the children.

Arguments Against Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment has been a part of society for hundreds, even thousands, of years. Dating back to biblical times, this method of punishment has often been deemed appropriate and necessary. Supporters put forth the argument that the Lord, Himself, proclaimed that corporal punishment was acceptable. “Spare the rod and spoil the child” has been connected to Bible readings as much as has the ten commandments. Opponents argue this supposed support of corporal punishment in the Bible saying that, “There is no authority in the Bible for the corporal punishment of children with rod or otherwise, except in the Proverbs of Solomon. It is only Solomon who recommends child-beating. Never the Lord” (Newell, 1989, p. 14).

In the year 1699, a Scottish schoolmaster by the name of Robert Carmichael was found guilty for the murder of one of his scholars. Based on the records of the case, Carmichael gave the boy three successive beatings and in rage and fury, “did drag him from his desk, and beat him with his hand upon the head and back with heavy and severe strokes, and after he (the boy) was out of his (Carmichael) hands he immediately died” (Scott, 1974, p. 39). The jury found that the beating the boy was subjected to at the hands

of Carmichael was the cause of death. Carmichael was sentenced to seven stripes and banishment from Scotland for life.

The situation in the above case serves to reveal one of the dangers of corporal punishment. If punishment does not work immediately, "the punisher must increase the frequency, duration, and intensity of the punishment until it finally works. That is one reason why spanking, when ineffective, can escalate to severe abuse" (Hyman, 1997, p. 9). Unfortunately in the Carmichael case, the severity of the beating resulted in the death of a child, the most severe of punishments for an inappropriate action.

The world wide trend is toward abolition of corporal punishment in schools. Most civilized nations eliminated the practice within the last two hundred years. In the United States twenty-seven states forbid corporal punishment in schools. No state forbids parental spanking, while thirty-seven states prohibit foster parents from spanking (Hyman, 1997). The decade that saw the first major shift from corporal punishment occurred in the 1970's when, according to records filed by the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Education (Maurer, 1984), the number of paddlings were reduced by almost half. This major shift was accredited to negative publicity, court cases, heightened awareness of child abuse, and the example of thousands of successful school districts that act as demonstration projects. It was now important that society present itself as more professionalized and morally responsible for the duty of care owed its youth. The ways of the past were seen to have been primitive and there was reason for optimism that this trend should, and would, continue. All factors contributed to the eroding of the old acceptance of spanking as an appropriate penalty for disobedience and disruption.

Campaigns against corporal punishment of children date back to pre-Civil War America. Corporal punishment was carried out with such frequency and severity in those days that it would be instead termed physical abuse in modern society. However, at that time it was considered legally and morally acceptable. "The early nineteenth-century campaign against corporal punishment was not intended to eliminate all hitting of children. They merely wanted to define the dividing line between abuse and punishment" (Straus, 1994, p. 19). It has been this fine line between abuse and punishment that has caused such uncertainty both in the courts and in the home as to what is merely a parent/teacher right to discipline, as opposed to carrying out a violent act against another.

This new focus of corporal punishment as a form of abuse spread across Canada, and indeed, the rest of the world. A 1978 survey in Texas had found that only a third of the adult population had considered hitting a child with a belt or wooden paddle to be physical abuse. When the survey was repeated in 1991, almost half saw these acts as physical abuse (Straus, 1994). The reasons for this shift in thinking were obvious. The distinction between corporal punishment and physical abuse depends on whether the child is psychologically damaged, and research results were pointing to this consequence of corporal punishment. In most cases where a child is hit frequently, psychological problems such as severe lack of self esteem, severe aggression towards other children, anxiety, or withdrawal occur. The act of punishment then becomes an illegal act, an act of abuse.

Clearly, corporal punishment is both legal and violent in provinces or states that permit its use. "Compare the definitions of corporal punishment and violence and you

will see that all but one of the key elements are identical. Both are intentional, and in both cases the intention is to cause pain. The only difference is that violence also covers acts that cause injury. If parents cause an injury, the same act is no longer legal corporal punishment, it is physical abuse" (Straus, 1994, p. 7).

Opponents of corporal punishment claim that there is very little evidence showing that physical punishment promotes character development or produces lasting behavioral change. In fact, opponents claim that corporal punishment can be counterproductive by increasing rather than curtailing antisocial behavior in students (Buechler, 1989). These antisocial behaviors often include acts of avoidance. A person who has been physically punished is likely to avoid both, "the person who did the punishing if it seems that this punisher is likely to strike again, and (b) the situation in which the person was punished if it seems that more punishment will be incurred by sticking around" (Vockell, 1978, p. 23). This serves to complicate the problem now that the teacher has the responsibility or task of not only helping students unlearn the inappropriate behavior, but also of helping to recreate that feeling of being secure in the school environment.

The earlier research of James (1969) found similar attitudes of corporal punishment as an act of, and cause of, antisocial behavior, as it was seen as "a survival of an earlier barbaric age, a carry-over from the days of primitive savagery, ill-becoming the life of present day civilized man" (p. 8). Straus (1994) expanded on this perception of corporal punishment as archaic in stating that "corporal punishment is inconsistent with human values. Regardless of whether corporal punishment has any adverse effects, it contradicts humanitarian values and treatment" (p. 9). This attitude towards corporal

punishment reflects that of Scott (1974), who claims that corporal punishment is essentially an unconstructive penalty. At best, Scott feels that it, "can exercise no positive reformatory influence; at the worst, it may produce reactions which make the individual who receives it less willing, or less able, than he was before to lead an honest and useful life in the community" (p.xvi).

Numerous studies by Bandura (cited in Lundell, 1982), an authority in the field of social learning, indicate that many aggressive behaviors are learned through modelling, and he believed that the violence used in corporal punishment would foster aggressive acts. He believed that when a child saw an adult punish another person in a physical manner for violating a rule, then the child is learning that this behavior is appropriate (Lundell, 1982). This modelling behavior becomes especially serious when teachers use such overtly aggressive tactics as spanking, hitting, and verbal abuse as their punishment techniques. It is because of this learned behavior opponents argue that corporal punishment should be removed from schools. They claim that this aggressive means of dealing with misbehavior modelled violence and did little to promote proper problem-solving skills (Richardson & Evans, 1994).

The research shows that it is this modelling that has been a main driving force in the survival of corporal punishment as a method of disciplining. People's own childhood experiences - whether or not their parents hit them - heavily influence their later attitudes of the use of physical punishment. Despite the fact that the authority figures who administer this punishment tend to use this treatment as a way to achieve a morally correct end, it carries a powerful message that it is okay to use physical violence, and this

message tends to carry over to adulthood. One example shows that a Swedish opinion poll in 1981 revealed that 41 percent of those who had been physically punished believed that it was necessary to use it in bringing up children, compared with only 11 percent out of those who had not been hit by teachers or parents (Newell, 1989).

Miller (1990), another prominent authority in the field of social behaviors, presented results that were very similar to the findings of Bandura. She argued that as long as schools inflict punishment on students for their "own good", they destroy the child's sense of self worth and their mechanisms for understanding that such punishment is wrong (Thompson & Sharp, 1994). The children grow up believing that punishment is not only right, but also that it is necessary. Miller found that even those children who were "controlled" through the use of corporal punishment were not transformed into better behaving students and were very difficult to direct through any other means than physical punishment. Unable to show aggression in return to the teacher or principal administering the punishment, the children then internalize the anger which will eventually be recycled in their treatment of others (Thompson & Sharp, 1994; Charles, 1996). In this case the student often became angry or blamed the individual responsible for the punishment rather than examining personal responsibility for the problem. Therefore, according to Glasser (cited in Jones & Jones, 1998), punishment allows the student to project blame rather than to accept responsibility for their behaviors. At the same time, their feeling of powerlessness leads to further complications because when students perceive that they have little power and influence, they often react by becoming more aggressive (Warner, Weist & Krulak, 1999). This finding corresponds with the

findings of Glasser (1988), who discovered that 95 percent of all student discipline problems in schools are caused by students' lack of power and that misbehavior is an attempt to gain some sense of power.

Not only does the violent treatment of the student create a high degree of anger, but it also proves to the student that school is a negative place (Rosen, 1997). This finding coincides with that of Short (1994), who found that, "corporal punishment is costly to children who are punished. Corporal punishment increases alienation and anxiety in children and decreases interest in and commitment to the school" (p. 84). This effect, in turn, may then lead to the creation of such a climate that corporal punishment was originally used to remedy.

Gaffney (1997) conducted a study of preservice teachers on the topic of corporal punishment that casts some interesting light on teacher attitudes towards corporal punishment. He found that the majority of his participants were against permitting the use of corporal punishment in schools. Those who did feel that this method of punishment was acceptable felt that it should be used as a last resort and should only be administered with the parents' permission. However, these same participants indicated that they would not administer physical punishment to their own children. They felt that corporal punishment did not teach respect, did not lead to the development of character, did not deter aggression in students, nor did it better prepare pupils to live in society. These teachers seemed to cling to this "last resort" as justification that they were dealing with the problem no matter how ineffective their method seemed to be.

The findings of James (1969) produced results that pointed to corporal

punishment as a failure of the teacher's competence in maintaining acceptable classroom management. The articles reviewed in this study depicted corporal punishment as a crutch to support poor teaching. Comments resurfaced regularly from teachers in the classroom that corporal punishment was not an alternative needed by good teachers. It was found that to some "corporal punishment was an admission of fear and insecurity on the part of those who used and advocated it. Such persons were incapable of handling pupils' problems in constructive ways. Corporal punishment was used by them in an effort to compensate for their own weaknesses" (p. 10). Even outside the school, James suggested, corporal punishment was due to an adult's desire to force his way upon the child, to relieve their own feelings of confusion and anger. Viewed in this light, corporal punishment is a failure on the part of teachers. Ritchie (1981) mirrored this claiming that, "Corporal punishment is an assault on the dignity of the individual and an offensive act against the dignity of the teaching profession. Quite simply, it is unprofessional behavior" (p. 86).

Most teachers mean well when they administer punishment. They believe punishment is the best way to motivate students to behave properly. When the disobedient behavior ceases for a period of time prior to punishment, they are often convinced into thinking that the punishment was successful in its purpose. However, when teachers become aware of the long-range effects of punishment on students, they naturally want to learn more respectful methods of motivating students to behave properly (Nelson, Lott & Glenn, 1997).

The long term results of punishment are, for the most part, rebellion or

compliance. Compliance may seem like a good thing, but the underlying effects often include lowered self esteem, reduced confidence, and blind obedience. Nelson, Lott and Glenn (1997) posit that:

Some students who are punished comply. However, their behavior is often motivated by the fear of getting into trouble instead of the desire to cooperate out of respect for self and others. Other students openly or passively rebel in response to punishment. In any case, punishment creates the development of an external locus of control instead of an internal locus of control based on self-discipline and social interest. (p. 102)

Another concern for those who opposed the use of corporal punishment are the number of inconsistencies involved in its application. Results indicated differences by sex and age in the frequency of both meting out and receiving punishment. The use of corporal punishment was found to be much more frequent and severe as the age of the child increased (Clarke, 1984). Richardson and Evans (1994) also found inconsistencies in the exercising of punishment, claiming that it was indiscriminatorily applied to black males in elementary schools and those with learning/mental/behavioral disabilities.

Summary

There have been many findings in the last two decades which have given rise to a new look at the real value of corporal punishment. Most of these findings suggest that corporal punishment is an outdated, archaic, inhumane means of dealing with problems in the home or school. Straus (1994) found that the immediate effect of corporal punishment was indeed to stop misbehavior, but the long term effect usually resulted in increased chances of more inappropriate behaviors and acts of delinquency, and later in life, depression, child abuse, wife beating, and even impaired learning. Due to such

findings it was suggested that it is not more important to make children pay for what they have done than to learn from what they have done. Punishment often only leads to negative self-evaluation, and if a child is constantly the recipient of punishment, he or she is likely to form a very negative self concept (Vockell, 1978). This in turn often leads to retaliatory behaviors when an opportunity arises where there is a less chance for reprimand (Vockell, 1978). Corporal punishment temporarily suppresses behavior, it does not teach new behavior (Hyman, 1997).

Perhaps the most damaging of findings on corporal punishment was the realization that this method of discipline was often not used as a last resort, for which it was initially intended. Studies suggest that corporal punishment is often the first punishment for nonviolent and minor misbehaviors (Hyman, 1997). In essence, the strap had become a substitute or replacement for all other sources of discipline in many cases, evolving as a way to deal with the matter in a quick and supposedly effective manner. This was disturbing to researchers such as Nelson, Lott and Glenn (1997), who declared that in order to make children feel better we do not need to make them feel worse with such drastic means of discipline.

The evidence and arguments against corporal punishment began to mount and gain support from society as a whole. It was realized that with corporal punishment the punishment ceases when the pain stops hurting. Corporal punishment was not serving to reduce instances of misbehavior. Alternatives were needed; alternatives that were more humane, modern, and effective.

Alternatives to Corporal Punishment

A reflection on most of the recent literature on corporal punishment would seem to suggest that corporal punishment normally should not be used because so many other effective ways are available to eliminate undesirable behaviors. The common theme to alternatives begins with the approach teachers take in the direct disciplining of students in their classrooms. Research has found that, "Teachers must take the first step to eliminate humiliation and punishment in order to create an environment that is nurturing, respectful, and conducive to learning" (Nelson, Lott & Glenn, 1997, p. 103). Bolstering this view, Vockell (1978) concludes that the only sure way to insure humane treatment of children is to develop attitudes of love and concern for children.

As a step towards the treatment of punishment, most researchers would agree that the one best method is prevention. An environment where students are subjects of positive reinforcement lends itself to prevention. In such an environment children are treated in such a way that they experience pride in themselves both intrinsically and extrinsically. They are taught that appropriate behavior brings with it certain privileges and rewards. That is not to say that there has to be a constant material reward for compliance. To the contrary, children learn that good behavior is rewarding in itself as they come to enjoy themselves at school.

At times when punishment is deemed necessary, for it to be effective, Vockell (1978) concluded that the child should see that it is the behavior that is being punished and not the self. The punisher can aid in this aspect by specifying the behavior that is being punished and by punishing as soon as possible after the misbehavior. The

punishment should be matched with the severity of the misbehavior and should be in conjunction with the reinforcement of an alternate behavior. In this way the teacher will be teaching what to do, as well as what not to do. It was concluded that if corporal punishment in schools was declared to be cruel, inhumane, degrading, and against the constitutional rights of children, educators would have to undergo a paradigm shift in their views of school discipline (Prinsloo, 1994). A sad realization lay in the fact that, according to Brophy and McCaslin (cited in Jones & Jones, 1998):

Teachers receive rather limited training in classroom management and their responses to student misbehavior tend to be a loosely connected management, and their responses to student misbehavior are often tacit ideas about coping with chronic student behavior problems, based on common sense and personal experience, rather than well-articulated theories learned through formal education. (p. 275)

Findings converge on the conclusion that teachers who approach management as a process of establishing and maintaining effective learning environments tend to be more successful than teachers who emphasize their roles as authority figures or disciplinarians. It is inevitable that teachers will be expected to assume their roles as symbols of authority in schools and must require their students to conform to certain rules and procedures. However, these rules and procedures are not ends in themselves. They are a means by which the classroom may be organized as an environment that supports learning, which is the purpose for which schools were established in the first place. As learning institutions, "it seems contradictory that children who have difficulty would be punished rather than receive instruction in how to behave more productively" (Jones & Jones, p. 277).

The research findings of Brophy (1998) also suggest that many of the discipline

problems teachers experience in the classroom are due to failures in their management techniques. He claimed that the key to successful management is the teacher's ability to maximize the amount of time that students spend on task, actively engaged in academic activities. Management skills in the art of making transitions between activities were also looked upon as an essential prevention to classroom behavior disruptions and student misconduct. These periods of time free from instruction are often the most unstructured periods in an average school day and often lend themselves to inappropriate behaviors. Brophy felt that an effort to minimize these short minutes of exemption from instruction would bring about a decrease in the instances of student misbehavior.

In general, arguments about the effects of corporal punishment were based upon philosophical, political, logical, psychological, moral, legal, pedagogical, sociological, and theoretical grounds. Richardson and Evans (1994) proposed eleven different alternatives to physical punishment. Among these eleven alternatives were: nonacknowledgement of disruptive behavior and reinforcement of appropriate behavior; signal interference; proximity control; interest boosting; tension reduction through humour; hurdle helping; program restructuring; direct appeal; the use of routine to provide security; and positive student removal from the classroom. It was also recommended that teacher-education programs provide behavior-management courses.

Pressman and Weinstein (1990) had constructed a similar list of alternatives four years earlier suggesting suspensions for ten days or less; long-term suspensions and expulsions; disciplinary transfers; inschool suspensions; and extracurricular activity exclusions. Radin (1988) constructed a list of her own, making the recommendation that

the school social worker be used to help implement more humane strategies of discipline. She felt that strategies such as timeout procedures, assignment to alternative schools, use of peers and parents, and social and cognitive skill training were alternatives that could replace corporal punishment while maintaining the purpose of correcting students' misbehaviors.

Maurer (1984) proposed alternatives to corporal punishment that were similar to those offered by other researchers. 'Time out' was suggested as a means to remove the child from the immediate scene of the incident. This moment of isolation gives the child an opportunity to cool down from the incident and a chance to reflect upon the action which led to the reprimand. Token economy, a system whereby tokens were handed out for good behavior to be cashed in for some reward or privilege later, was also successful. This form of prevention ranked high with encouraging the child with enthusiasm in times of good behavior.

In cases where approaches such as time out and token economy do not work, Hyman (1990) suggests that withdrawal of privileges should be used to discipline students for unacceptable behavior. If this method does not adequately deal with the situation, detention and in-school suspension may be tested. When the matter persists beyond this stage Hyman notes that the matter is quite serious. That is the time to call in the school psychologist, not hit the student or psychologically demean him or her for the misbehavior.

One particular case which turned out to adequately deal with misbehaviors exempt corporal punishment was experienced at Silver Ridge Elementary School in Washington.

This particular school had a problem with disobedient students mocking the mild penalties administered for violating rules. The administration of the school introduced a proactive method to curb misbehavior called "Meaningful Work". This approach was based on the belief that students who misbehave often lack a sense of meaning and power in school. To address the problem these students were given the responsibility of a certain chore varying from raising the flag to helping out in the cafeteria. Interestingly, when the students' basic needs of feeling important were met, misbehavior was decreased or eliminated (Wise, 1998). It had been proven that alternatives to corporal punishment can work.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Open-ended interviews formed the basis of obtaining data for this qualitative study of the attitudes and perceptions of principals and vice-principals towards the removal of corporal punishment from the school system in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. These interviews also served to give an insight on their evaluation of the alternative methods of discipline introduced as a result of the removal of corporal punishment from the classroom. This chapter presents and analyses the interview data collected from the fifteen interviewees.

Organization of Interview Data

Open-ended interviews were held with fifteen administrators from the junior and senior high school divisions. All individuals interviewed were interested and knowledgeable with regards to corporal punishment and its impact on the classroom setting both before and after its removal from the school system. Not all of the interviewees answered the questions in the exact order as they appear on the interview schedule. This was because some of the interviewees provided much more in-depth responses to some of the questions as compared to others, resulting in some questions being answered before they were formally asked.

Analysis of Interview Data

Interviews were conducted with fifteen administrators from the junior high and high school divisions. The interviewees were all either principals or vice-principals. The

interviews were approximately one hour long.

Research Question #1

Has the frequency of inappropriate behaviours increased, decreased, or remained the same since the removal of corporal punishment from your school? Why?

A little over half of the administrators interviewed felt the frequency of inappropriate behaviours increased after the removal of corporal punishment from the school system, while all of the others felt that it had remained the same as before the removal of corporal punishment. Those who felt that there had been an increase said that the increase was mainly in such inappropriate behaviours as fighting, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse of both teachers and other students, sassing teachers, and damaging school property or the personal properties of other students. The majority of those who felt that there had been an increase in the frequency of inappropriate behaviours suggested that this increase could not be credited to the removal of corporal punishment. The reasons for this were varied. Some of these included:

"None of today's kids were around when corporal punishment was being used. In fact, I doubt if many of them would know what corporal punishment was if you asked them. Because they never saw the strap being used I don't think that their increase in inappropriate behaviours can be attributed to the removal of the strap"

" We had kids who were in trouble every couple of days when we did have corporal punishment in the school. So I certainly wouldn't say that it is because

we got rid of corporal punishment. If it didn't control behaviours in the first place how can it be responsible for an increase in inappropriate behaviours?"

"If you were to size up today as compared to ten or fifteen years ago, even in our school back then there were other methods being used to deal with problems. The strap was seldomly used. We often found it just as much an intimidation factor to hit a desk or let a roar out. That would usually be enough. So the strap was not a controlling factor in the first place."

Many of those who were interviewed felt that an increase in inappropriate behaviours was more likely the result of changes such as an increased awareness, or change in the rights of students. Some of those interviewed claimed that children have become more aware of their rights through the various forms of media and feel that they have the "right" to not be disciplined in a physical manner. The interviewees claimed that children often use this knowledge as a form of intimidation at home and in the school to remind those in authority that they are "untouchable". The following quotes reveal the growing concerns of the interviewees in relation to this trend:

"They are up to date on their rights. They are up to date on our rights. They know that with one quick call Social Services, which is now known as Health and Community Services, will be in to investigate."

"In recent years I can see that parents feel threatened. The kids tell them that they'll go to Social Services. They'll tell the parent that they don't have the right to talk to them in a certain way. Parents say that if they tell the child they'll do this or that with them if they continue to misbehave the child threatens Social Services. So there is an intimidation factor. Parents will tell you that they can't handle the children at home."

"Kids in school now know the system better, the legal system. They hear about court cases where rulings have gone against parents and teachers where punishment has been a physical reprimand. They will let you know real fast that they know what is and is not allowed to happen to them."

One of the interviewees added that parents, in addition to the students, are often the ones who come to defend the child against certain forms of punishment on the grounds of the students' rights. The interviewee seemed frustrated at the notion of a parent opposing the school in the schools' attempt to correct a child for some wrong doing. The interviewee claimed that this was something that did not exist in the school community years ago, at least not to any great extent. It was stated that many parents have assumed the roles of "lawyers" as they first challenge the teacher and then the administration. If they get no satisfaction here they often go further to the school board or even the law. There were concerns that parents perhaps contribute to the increase in inappropriate behaviours because they often tend to defend the actions of their child no

matter how severe these actions are. Several interviewees explained that many of these children are doing the same things at home and because of this their parents do not see a problem with the child's acting out in school. They felt that this defence on the part of the parents sends a very negative message to the child concerning the inappropriateness of their behaviours. One administrator expressed disgust at one particular incident:

" Then you had the parent of the one who had downloaded the way to make a pipe bomb on the Internet come on the news and say that she felt that her son should not have been suspended! This in the same month as massacres in Alberta and Colorado! She should have been thankful that a student in the States had contacted the Canadian authorities before something tragic could have happened. And she defended her child by saying that he was doing no harm, that the school board was over reacting! What kind of message did he learn from this?"

Several of the interviewees made reference to court cases where they knew of teachers who had been threatened with court action for the most minor of physical contacts which resulted in charges of both physical and sexual assaults. A number of those interviewed also noted that because students are now seen to have so many rights that there is a danger that a student or group of students could fabricate a story which could very easily destroy a person's professional career. One of those interviewed related a case which almost made it to the trial stage:

"I know of a case outside our board where a teacher flicked somebody on the hand like you would flick a buddy and there was a threat of court action over it. This

was a very respected person in the religious community who had his reputation and job put on the line because of a disobedient student with a parent who over reacted. It has gone too far."

Many of the interviewees also attributed the increase in student acts of disobedience to a change in society and the home. It was felt that many of today's parents don't parent in the same way that parenting was carried out years ago. As one of the interviewees responded, "The way in which they are reared, or not reared at home, has a lot to do with it."

There seemed to be a general consensus amongst the administrators that in years past parents were in much greater control of their children at home, and because there was greater control over kids at home there was a more firm approach to discipline than there is today. Several of the respondents noted that if students were disobedient in the school years ago, the support for the school from the home was there. As one of the interviewees responded:

"One time you would get dealt with at home for being dealt with at school. You could always count on parents to reinforce the idea that misbehaviour would not be tolerated."

Several of the respondents replied that many children become problems in school today because many mothers are now having children at a younger age and are living as single parents. These single parents were said to be ill prepared for the requirements of raising children on their own, and because of this weakness, it was suggested that it was

easier for these parents not to deal with acts of inappropriate behaviours at home than it would be to deal with them. For this reason, it was felt that many children come to school misbehaving because they had not felt consequences for these actions at home. It is important to note that in explaining further, most respondents clarified that these single parents were not merely avoiding their parenting duties due to lack of interest or lack of responsibility, but were instead so overwhelmed with other duties of parenting that discipline was often too mentally and physically draining for most to adequately address on a consistent basis. One administrator shared a personal experience:

"We dealt with a Grade Seven student with whom we had been having a lot of behaviour problems like not doing homework and acting out in class. The mother said that it was a lot easier to give in to him than to deal with his behaviours. The father is not a part of the family and she was just finding it too difficult to deal with."

Another of the interviewees echoed this dissatisfaction with the lack of parent support in the disciplining of children:

"I think that parents need to take greater ownership of their kids. They expect us to discipline their kids because they don't want to have to go through the trouble of having to do it. I think that I would like to see more parental ownership and involvement in the type of discipline that is handed out and making sure that if a student is sent home, suspended for a day or two, for example, that the situation at home corresponds to the situation that we put the student in. In other words, don't let the student spend the day home going around on the three-wheeler."

Several of the interviewees made specific reference to the common "unstructured family" that they saw as contributing to an increase in student misbehaviour. There was a concern for how much time children spend in the home without an adult present. It was felt that many parents spend much of their time out of the home for social reasons and not for necessary reasons such as employment commitments. It was pointed out that many Newfoundland communities have a very high unemployment rate, with even the highest employment rates probably ranking very low as compared to the rest of Canada. Thus, reasons for leaving the home might not be for employment commitments for the vast majority of parents.

It was felt that because many parents spend a small portion of their time in the home "parenting", that many of the children that come to school are being "reared" on the streets. It was noted that this would not be acceptable years ago as parents would not want neither themselves nor their children to be looked down upon with disrespect in the community as either poor parents nor poorly reared children. The interviewees expressed the belief that parenting was a responsibility that was held in high esteem in years gone by, and that that esteem has given way to a more relaxed approach to child upbringing.

The respondents in the survey also expressed a concern with the current "trend" of looking upon high school children as adults and the problem of parents granting these teenagers the privileges of adults. As one interviewee said:

"It seems as though there is an attitude in society these days that kids need to grow up real fast. It's almost as if they graduate to adulthood much earlier. The big problem with this is that they are given the privileges of an adult in many

cases, while at the same time they are still these young, immature children."

Many of the other interviewees responded in a similar fashion mentioning that children these days are exposed to far too much at a much too early age. This exposure, it was often felt, gave children the inappropriate notion of themselves as adults who are above the rules of the school.

It was felt that because the school in many cases no longer has the support of the home in its attempt to discipline children, that the "hands of the administration were tied" as to how to effectively deal with these students who are constant discipline problems. These administrators who felt that they were lacking parent support were most often the same administrators to express this helplessness in dealing with problem children.

Several of the interviewees felt that the frequency of inappropriate behaviours has remained the same before and after the removal of corporal punishment from the school system. They were clear in stating that they did not know if corporal punishment, or the absence of it, should have caused any real change in the frequency of student misbehaviours. What each of them did claim, however, was that they felt that students probably have refrained from causing more problems for teachers because of a respect that they have come to feel for their teachers.

Three of the respondents in particular felt that students today see their teachers put a great deal of effort in their own personal time to student activities such as choir, sports teams, concerts, student leadership, and after-school technology clubs. Out of this added effort they felt came a respect for the teachers' commitment to them and their community. It was noted that back as recently as fifteen years ago there were very few, if

any, extracurricular activities for students to become involved in. One respondent claimed that teachers tend to work more "with" students now, and that the students show their gratification by not causing the teachers grief in the sense of dealing with behaviour problems. It was felt by these respondents that today's relationship is healthier and makes for a better school climate. One interviewee in particular was very proud of the accomplishment made in their school:

"I see boys here who I would suspect would have been trouble years ago. In those days school didn't have much to offer these kids. Today they are captains of basketball teams or running intramural programs. It's great to see them become leaders in the school. They know that the younger kids look up to them. They commit. The commitment that they learn carries over to their school work. You know you're doing something right when you got Grade Twelve boys looking for tutoring in the evenings so that they can keep their grades up to stay on a team. I find that when you can hook them with any activity it will usually pay off in the classroom."

Of the fifteen people interviewed almost each one made specific reference to corporal punishment in a male context, and none of those interviewed made any reference to females being subjected to the "strap" or other means of corporal punishment. There was one interesting story where one of the interviewees recalled the earliest years of teaching where there was a clear distinction of who was subjected to corporal punishment. The background to the story presented a school that was in dire need of

addressing its discipline problems. The interviewee painted a mental picture of the actions taken:

"So what I did the very first month that I was there was go on a rein of terror. So I kept a record. It was interesting. The first month that I was there I strapped forty young fellows. They didn't come near me after a while. I used the strap day in and day out. In the last month I only had to strap two fellows who hadn't gotten the message."

Several more of the interviewees shared stories of how they had used the strap on "boys" in the years before the use of the strap was prohibited. They commented on how many of the "boys" in school now, who they feel would have been the ones to be strapped years ago, are not causing troubles because they are so involved with school life in ways other than an academic sense. Once again, there was no reference made to female students.

Research Question #2

Has the seriousness of inappropriate behaviours escalated since the removal of corporal punishment? Elaborate.

Two small groups of administrators felt that the seriousness of inappropriate behaviours had not escalated since the removal of corporal punishment from the school system. It was interesting to note that each of these provided two very different reasons as to why there had not been an increase in the seriousness of misbehaviours. One of the

two groups felt that children who were consistent discipline problems in schools years ago were often children who were offered very little from the school in terms of opportunities to educate oneself. These interviewees felt that school years ago was a place where students went to "do their books", and when they either didn't do their books because of lack of interest, or because they didn't know how to do them, they were subsequently punished with the strap. As one interviewee stated:

"Like you were strapped for such things as not knowing your work. There was nothing taken into consideration with regards to the ability of the child. Everyone had to be sort of the same, if one person knew it then everyone had to know it. There was no room taken into consideration for individual differences. That's probably why the dropout rate was higher in those days too."

This person felt that we avoid this same problem these days because of the resources that we have available in our schools in terms of the teachers who are specially trained to deal with children who achieve success at a slower rate than the average child. Teachers in the school system today were said to be more in tune with the disabilities that often serve as obstacles in a child's learning. It was suggested that because teachers are now better educated on the various disabilities that students may experience that they usually take actions to have the appropriate supports put in place. This interviewee said that the child would then refrain from inappropriate behaviours traditionally caused mainly by confusion because they were incapable of doing their work.

The second group that felt that the seriousness of inappropriate behaviours had not escalated attributed this more so to the individual skills of teachers and administrators,

than to what schools had to offer children. One person from this group replied that universities provided very little training years ago for how teachers could develop a rapport with students. Universities and veterans in the classroom alike were basically thought to promote a relationship of strict authority between administrators, teachers, and students. This respondent felt that schools were often very unfriendly, impersonal places to be. Another added that because of this lack of training there was often a great inconsistency in the use of the strap. The interviewee confessed:

"I know that there were certain times of the day, of the week, the month, that corporal punishment would be the first option on my mind. There were days that you would get so sick of certain individuals that it was easier to haul out the strap and give them a quick ten slaps on the hand. We weren't trained any better. We didn't have a knowledge of other methods that could just kick in as instinct. There were times when I had the time available to stand back and cool off before I acted, and these were the days when I usually found better ways to deal with the problem."

It was felt that teachers in schools today are, for the most part, those who were not in school when the strap was being used, and are teachers who avoid escalating behaviour problems because they have developed interpersonal relationships with the students. These people believed that students often rebelled in the past because of a hatred for teachers and the school. This hatred, they felt, was now being replaced with a respect because of the effort teachers have made in building a friendlier relationship with

students.

All of the remaining respondents felt that there has been an escalation in the seriousness of inappropriate behaviours since the removal of corporal punishment from the school system. The inappropriate behaviours which they saw a rise in included such things as putting off stink bombs, physical assaults, hazing, inappropriate language in addressing other students and teachers, malicious damage, and bomb threats.

Several of the interviewees noted that inappropriate behaviours such as fist fighting have always existed in schools, but the severity and boldness in regards to today's acts were something that they saw as being new. Three of the interviewees shared stories of incidents that occurred in their schools within the last few years. Each commented that this newest trend in school violence was more severe than what they were accustomed to in years gone by for a number of reasons. A few of these include:

"I mean you always heard of fights. We still have fights here, but believe it or not, most of it is the girls now! They just up and clock one another. We had one who up and broke another girl's nose. Just walking down the corridor and POP! That kind of stuff used to be unheard of. At least years ago they would wait until lunch time or after school and go settle things off of the school grounds. They would control it that much."

"What I certainly see more of is a rise in the more malicious acts of damage around the school. Students have less respect these days for the property of the school and for the property of others. They even destroy their own materials.

They know their parents will replace it the next day. If they don't respect what they own themselves, how can they respect what is belonging to someone else?"

Others felt that the seriousness has escalated because the children that are in their schools today are exposed to so much more than were children of years ago. One commented on how kids ten years ago didn't know what a stink bomb was because they never had the exposure to the malls in St. John's.

Several made reference to the tragedy at Columbine High in Colorado, where two students opened fire on their classmates with assault rifles killing twelve before turning the weapons upon themselves. It was noted that the severity had not reached this height in Newfoundland, but many did cite incidents that have occurred in Newfoundland, none of which occurred in their own schools. They admitted a fear of these acts of violence creeping into their schools. They noted how when incidents such as Columbine make international headlines many students learn of new "copy cat" ways of getting attention. One mentioned how shortly after this incident a bullet was found in a Newfoundland school. They brought light to the fact that there was a dramatic increase in the number of bomb threats in Newfoundland schools in the aftermath of Columbine. It was expressed that this was something new to Newfoundland as a province, let alone the schools of the province.

Other incidents such as hazing and gang type attacks were also believed to be a fairly new phenomena. Two interviewees mentioned how they saw similar incidents spring up in their school after the local news stations had covered stories of such cases at

Beaconsfield and at a school in Central Newfoundland. They felt that teens seeking attention copied this behaviour, proving to their peers that they were tough and were not afraid of facing criminal charges. As one respondent said:

"It's almost as if they do these things to show that they are macho. They need to prove themselves. They need to prove that they can top what some other person did. Each time the severity of the act has to increase if it is to prove something."

Once again attention was brought to the idea that many of the children in schools today are acting out in more severe ways because their parents have lost control in the home, something which the interviewees said did not exist even back ten years ago. It was felt that because of this weakness in the home that many children do not know appropriate behaviours. It was suggested that parents need to keep a closer check on their children to ensure that they are in touch with what their children are doing. It was felt that if parents and the school do not work as a team then children will be confused because of the inconsistency between home rules and school rules. One interviewee said that if parents don't cooperate to turn the behaviours of their children in that particular school around, then it would be quite possible that several of those children could possibly find themselves in reform school.

One interviewee commented on an incident that occurred in their school earlier in the year:

"We were in contact with Social Services and their hands are tied with a lot of this stuff too. We had the parents call the school and say that they could not handle

the child at home. They asked us for help. As parents they were saying that they couldn't handle the situation. That tells you a lot about those parents and what is going on in their home."

Comments about how the home is very much to blame for this increase in violent behaviours often touched upon the topic of respect. There seemed to be a consensus that children in the upper grades no longer have a respect for their teachers or school like they once were said to have had. It was suggested that children often do not have respect for the school, the home, their parents, the law, or the church. One interviewee carried this a little further stating that students today "fear nothing".

There was a perception amongst the administrators that, overall, there has been an increase in severe inappropriate behaviours, but many felt that this was more so in the bigger school communities of the province. Some felt that this may be caused by the difference in relationships which they believe to exist between parents and teachers in small towns as compared to parents and teachers in the larger towns. It was felt that there was a closer connectedness between the school and the home in smaller communities which resulted in parents being more willing to help the school. It was suggested that there was a whole issue of community pride involved. One interviewee said that parents in the smaller communities knew of the extra after school hours teachers in their communities put into their children. It was felt that because they appreciated this added effort that they committed to these teachers and the school in their efforts to have everyday matters run as smoothly as possible. As one interviewee commented:

"You see these little communities have very little to offer the kids. We give them somewhere to go. Neither the parents nor the students would want to see teachers stop giving of their time because so and so is making it too difficult. You won't get that attitude in the bigger areas. I think that is why many teachers in the bigger schools don't want to put as much time back into the school after hours."

It was felt that what many of the smaller schools see as being a major discipline problem would be categorized as only minor incidents in the bigger schools. One administrator joked that if the problems that schools in areas like St. John's ever came to their school that they, "wouldn't know what hit them."

Directly connected to this belief was the response from administrators that amalgamation plays a part in the escalating of inappropriate behaviours. Several of those interviewed currently hold positions in schools which have gone through the amalgamation process. These administrators admitted an increase in the escalation of inappropriate behaviours, but they reasoned that this should be expected since the number of students in their schools had almost doubled. It was suggested that it is a matter of common sense that if the student population increases that there are bound to be more severe behaviours.

As a result of these interviews it was clear that many of the administrators were frustrated with the way in which the courts handled the most severe misbehaviours. Several of the interviewees shared stories of incidents that had happened in their school and expressed disappointment with the way in which the legal system dealt with the

matter. One explained how a student who was a constant cause for disruption carried his antics to the point of hitting one of the teachers in the school. The matter was handed over to the courts and the judge's decision was a very small number of hours of community service and a condition that the boy stay in school. Another commented how one of their students had been found trafficking drugs on school grounds. As in the case before mentioned, there was a sentence of community service and a condition that the teen return to school, a sentence that was not felt to match the seriousness of the crime.

In both cases the interviewees expressed confusion that a judge could send the accused in each case back to an environment where they posed a severe threat to teachers and students. Both felt that the courts should have acted in a much more stern manner, perhaps even sentencing the youths to a period of time in a correctional center. The message that students were getting from the court sentences, they felt, was that criminal activities are prohibited in schools, but the punishment for these activities only amount to a slap on the wrist.

One interviewee felt that it would be wiser to deal with any future incidents of this nature within the walls of the school because it was suggested that the actions of the law only gave a perception of weakness in the legal system. This interviewee explained that when children can return to school a few days after being apprehended with drugs on school property with a smile on their face bragging how neither the school nor the courts could do anything with them, a very negative image of the actions that can be taken is presented to the entire school population. If anything, it was felt, it gave the child a feeling of being "above the law". This same administrator noted that it would be

impossible to not hand these issues over to the proper authorities because of the severe implications the acts of these delinquents could have upon the entire school population.

It was also felt that the policies that had been put in place by some of the province's school boards may contribute to escalation of inappropriate behaviours. It was noted that certain policies have been put in place to protect the well-being of certain students. One policy that was discussed was the policy on failing students. It was explained that a policy had been passed whereby no student could be held back in a particular grade for more than one year. The policy was meant to protect slower achieving students from being paired with students of a much younger age because of their incapability to meet the minimum requirement of that grade. It was noted that many of the children who were constant discipline problems in their schools knew of this policy and abused its intended purpose. One interviewee commented:

"I had a student this year miss three days in a row of school. I called the mother looking for an explanation. Her response was that the student had failed the year before and the mother couldn't get the student to go to school because the student knew that she couldn't be kept back two years in a row. This was only a Grade Nine student! The responsibility is then on you to fix the problem!"

Of the fifteen interviewees there was a significant number who also felt that exposure, exposure in the form of the different media that children have access to, had a definite impact on their behaviours. The forms of media most often referred to include television shows, movies, and video games. There was a great concern for the amount of

violence children are exposed to in the movies and video games that almost all children were believed to be familiar with. Several of the administrators admitted that they, as parents, experience this problem all of the time as they make an effort to prevent their own children from being exposed to this violence. It was suggested that a person would have a great deal of difficulty in obtaining animated movies which did not display acts of aggression or violence. There was mention of such children favourites as *The Lion King*, *Pocahontas*, and *A Bugs Life*, all of which model violent acts.

The violence that children are exposed to in movies was also said to be a common theme in television programs that are aired early in the evening for the purpose of child viewing. One interviewee commented:

"Any child who sits in front of the t.v. at supper time is usually watching *Bart Simpson*. The language and humour on that show is unbelievable. Then they watch this *Beavis and Butthead*. All you got to do is take a good look at who their heroes are. How can they stop themselves from hurting each other if they spend two hours a day watching this wrestling? They are getting the idea that all of this stuff is real and that these behaviours are acceptable. Parents should really take the time out to see what their children are watching. I think many of them would get a big surprise."

After each of the interviewees had expressed their opinion on the escalation of inappropriate behaviours, almost every individual made reference to a lack of school and community resources available to help them in their struggle in dealing with these

problem students. It was suggested that because of the shortage of resources teachers and administrators have at their disposal in schools, that both groups of professionals are expected to assume the role of social worker, councillor, philosopher, parent, doctor, priest, and nurse. Even in cases where these services were available, there was an attitude that the people in those positions were often "swamped" with a workload of cases which dated back for some time.

Consequently, several of the administrators admitted that the children who often cause constant problems in their schools have deep rooted problems that need to be dealt with by people who have been professionally trained to deal with these types of problems. There was a sense of desperation that they could only deal with these children on a day-to-day basis. One interviewee expressed a feeling of sympathy towards children with "backgrounds", children who need advising and professional treatment. There was a sense of understanding as to why these children continue to get into trouble on a consistent basis. As one interviewee stated:

"There's one particular case of a child in our school that has been banged around from community to community, from foster home to foster home. Apparently this fellow has been physically abused, and has inflicted physical abuse himself. This is a lonely child. No matter how hard they are, we have to remember that they are only children. I talk to this boy quite regularly. He gets into trouble quite often. He needs help beyond what I can give him. The boy needs attention. He's going to get it one way or the other. As a society we need to make sure that these children get the attention that they need before it is too late."

Question #3

With the removal of corporal punishment from schools has the attitude of students towards the consequences of inappropriate behaviours changed? If yes, in what ways?

Of the fifteen administrators who were interviewed there were several who felt that the attitudes of students have changed for the better since the removal of corporal punishment from the school system. There were three main reasons given for the positive change in attitude. One of the three reasons was because it was felt that there now exists a better relationship between teachers, administrators and students. One respondent felt that it was not the removal of the strap, but instead an appreciation of the respect that teachers share with students, that has brought on a better school climate. This administrator felt confident that this respect was then carried with the student out into society, a result that was not said to be achieved with the use of the strap.

It was suggested that the main reason that the attitudes of students who would have normally caused trouble may have changed for the better is because they now realize the importance of school in their lives. Attention was drawn to the high unemployment rate being experienced in almost all Newfoundland communities. As one interviewee commented:

"Today they see that these little communities have very little to offer in terms of employment. You see fifteen years ago the average young fellow was only waiting in school for the age that he could quit and go fishing in the boat with his father. Most of the girls were in school knowing that when they got out they were

most likely going to be a house wife. There was nothing wrong with either of these roles, and there were definite exceptions. But today they see their fathers barely hang on in the fishery. They see their older brothers and sisters move away to the mainland looking for jobs. We don't even have pick and shovel jobs these days. The kids need an education."

One of the interviewees brought attention to the employment possibilities that have disappeared from our province in the last ten years, including the American naval bases, fish plants, the armed forces, and the rich Labrador mining industry. Each was seen as nonexistent or drastically reduced from its time of high production not long ago. It was said that teens years ago waited in school until they reached Grade Eight, the year that most were officially old enough to drop out, to gain employment in either of these industries, an opportunity that no longer exists.

Another of the interviewees recalled how boys who had quit school in their high school grades went on to make a good living fishing. This interviewee felt that some of these dropouts who gave up academics for the fishing life or carpentry actually made a better living financially than they had themselves. However, the interviewee noted that these were times that were prosperous in the fishing industry and when jobs were plenty, jobs that required no formal education. It was suggested that parents do not allow their children to quit school today because they realize that without an education a child has almost no opportunity for employment, manual labour jobs were said to be very few, and that the fishing industry all but collapsed. As one interviewee commented:

"They see their families struggling. The oil industry has not turned us into the booming province that everyone had thought it would. Even then, with Hibernia in full swing at Bull Arm, the kids noticed that very few local Newfoundlanders had the skills to get a job there. The school is their ticket. They see that now. They are taking this business of looking at career opportunities much more seriously at a much younger age. Without a graduation certificate they are in dire straits."

The third reason why attitudes of students were believed to change for the better was because of the accountability administrators, teachers, and peers place upon their students and classmates for proper behaviours. One interviewee said that because the majority of kids in the school system today are well behaved and academically achieving, the others who consider acting out "come on side" because they don't want to stand out as the trouble maker or the one to "rock the boat". Another commented that teachers must play their part in the maintaining of a well controlled environment by consistently monitoring and correcting student misbehaviours. There was one of the interviewees in particular who offered praises for the conduct of today's children:

"When you consider the mobility that kids have today where a kid thinks nothing of leaving home on Friday evening and going to St. John's for a weekend, and when you consider the proximity that they always have to things that are less good for human growth, like drugs and booze, when you consider all of that and look at kids at the school level I think they are pretty darned good."

Accountability was mentioned in the response to this question in the sense of being accountable for actions taken in any discipline situation. It was noted that all teachers and administrators have a need to "have a witness present and be able to justify their actions" because of the challenges that often come from parents.

The issue of accountability was usually accompanied by a reference to consistency. Many of the interviewees stated that if students are to be "kept on track" then there must be consistency, consistency within the school and between the school and the home. At school it was felt that there has to be a "belief" in what the school stands for. One interviewee said:

"Consistency is the key point. There has to be belief in it, you have to live it, there has to be nothing false about it. The other thing I should mention is that teachers have a major responsibility too. There has to be a sense of ownership. We have to strive to make the school be what we want it to be. You can't do that if you don't have ownership, if you don't have commitment."

The greatest want for consistency was seen as needed between the home and the school. Several of the interviewees claimed that students are corrected for their inappropriate behaviours at school and are not dealt with at home, resulting in confusion for proper means of conduct at school. It was commonly felt that many children act out at home without suffering consequences for their actions. The interviewees made reference to stories where they had sought out the cooperation from the home and were

not supported in their efforts. The feeling was that without this support the school was "fighting an uphill battle", a battle that they were most likely to lose. One of the interviewees referred to this once tight bond between the home and the school as one of "trust", a bond that was felt to have weakened. As one commented:

"At home the parents don't discipline and they often want this carried over in the school. We know as professionals that many children aren't being disciplined at home and therefore that makes our job that much tougher. When you go to a parent in that situation the parent is almost helpless in dealing with it. Some parents certainly need parenting skills. They've got to be tougher themselves on their kids."

Others commented on how parents supply their children with the best of clothes, food, and supplies as acts of care and love. Despite this great show of care it was felt that many parents are doing an injustice to their children in the long run by not correcting them when they are wrong and by defending their actions when it is clear that the child has acted in an inappropriate way. One of the interviewees said that this is very evident in today's society as parents are more likely to question the acts of the administration and not support the penalties handed down by the school. One interviewee in particular seemed especially frustrated with this lack of support from parents. The interviewee shared this story:

"I had a serious issue that I dealt with this year. It had to do with the Grade Nine class. I went into the class and I laid it on the line about how upset I was. I raised

my voice and told them that if I could find out who was responsible for the problem they would be given their walking papers for a few days. We had parent night a few nights after and one parent expressed great dissatisfaction with me for raising my voice in a class where his child was. Here I was trying to look out for his child's safety and welfare, and trying to impress upon the kids that this is a serious thing, and the father came in all upset! This is the kind of thing we are dealing with."

There were many of the interviewees who commented that the strap often served to keep misbehaviours under control because of the fear that it instilled in students. This was especially believed to be the case with younger students. Many of the administrators admitted having to use the strap very rarely in the junior high grades, especially Grade Seven. One interviewee pointed out that these younger children are more fearful, more fearful of loud noises, loud bangs, and just visually seeing the strap.

The strap was also felt to be quite effective with the child who seldom misbehaved. Administrators said that these children were more often afraid that the home would find out that they had gotten in trouble than they were of the strap. Many commented that at one time children would "get a beating for getting a beating". One of the respondents recalled how some of these normally well behaved children would "rather take any punishment than to have the principal call home". Another said that the student who had been strapped was often in fear that as a result of talk in the community the word would get to their parents that he/she child had been strapped at school. This was

considered to be a matter of shame for the parents, a matter that would not go unpunished.

For most students control was not difficult to maintain. It was generally felt, however, that corporal punishment accomplished very little in terms of deterring the inappropriate behaviours of the "hard-core offenders". Some felt that the strap only served as a "scar of war" that was worn with pride. One interviewee said:

"It was almost like a battle scar, you wore it proudly. There were certain bragging rights. You took thirty straps on the hand and were able to laugh at it."

Another added:

"There were lots of boys that had the attitude that there was no way that the strap was going to make them cry. It was almost a challenge between the boys to see who could take the most straps and who wouldn't cry. When they didn't bawl it was a big thing amongst their peers."

The main reason why the strap did little to deter the actions of the "hard core offender", one interviewee explained, was because this type of student usually does not think about what they are doing, they act "on the spur of the moment". It was felt that they often act this way because this is the way that they have learned to act in their homes and in society. It was felt that this is how they often see their own parents act, they have not been taught to think of alternatives. One interviewee said that these kids usually act knowing that they may have to "face the music" later, and if the music happened to be the strap, then "so be it".

Several of the administrators felt that because the strap has been removed as a

form of disciplining, many students have begun "playing the system". One of the interviews claimed that this trend was especially filtering down to the younger grades. It was said that:

"It is getting more serious at a younger age. I think that in the next six or seven years that that is going to evolve into the older student. I think that they will carry that up with them. It's almost like they're graduating to the harder stuff at a much younger age. They know there's only so much we can do with them."

Another interviewee said that these children who know how to play the system know that in schools it is "hands off". This respondent said that kids know what can be done, both in terms of actions administrators take and in terms of legal actions they can take in response to these actions. This same respondent explained that it is good that students are aware of their rights and the methods of punishment that schools can take, but it was also felt that the "pendulum has gone too far the other way".

A second interviewee had a similar concern with regards to the "rights" children feel they have in schools. This person referred to how children in school today feel that they have a right to challenge teachers on issues where and as they please. This was said to be an attitude that did not exist some ten years ago. There were stories of students challenging teachers to make them do their work, make them do their homework, or make them come to school. One interviewee said that it was once necessary to call home concerning a matter that had occurred at school with a student. That student challenged the administrator for reasons why the parent was contacted. The student claimed that he

was an adult and what happened to him at school was not the business of his parents. In a return call to the parent regarding this challenge, the parent asked the administrator not to tell the child that they had been in contact for a second time out of fear that the child would be angry. The interviewee said that this is an attitude that has only evolved in the last ten years in their school.

There were concerns that if the attitudes of children who consistently cause problems continue to worsen then the school will not be able to adequately deal with these children. One interviewee went so far as to say that the methods of discipline in place to deal with these problem children are often looked upon as a joke in the eyes of these students. In this person's opinion it was felt that many students welcome a suspension because they do not want to be in school to begin with. The administrator explained that many of the children who caused problems at their school were students who want to quit but could not because their parents were forcing them to go to school in hopes that they would develop skills to enter some secondary school of training. The term that was used to refer to the duty of teachers with respect to these students was one of "babysitting". It was felt that they did not want to learn and were serving as disruptions to the school.

In addition to concerns of needing improvements to deal with the increasing disruptive behaviours of these students, one administrator expressed a fear for the potential of just how far these acts could escalate. The interviewee commented:

"I can see me now trying to strap a student. They'd have something for us.

Corporal punishment wouldn't work against these big young fellows. You'd

probably end up with a smack in the face yourself. Then you'd be told that the child has the right to defend himself. If we went back to corporal punishment we would lose total control."

As with question #2, many of the interviewees repeated their opinion that many schools are in need of more resources. It was interesting to note that the administrators from the larger schools complained that resource people such as student assistants and school counsellors were available in numbers that were much too small to deal with the large number of students who they felt required the aid of these resources. At the same time, the administrators from the smaller schools tended to complain that these resource people were often shared between their school and other schools. Due to this reality, they said that these resource personnel were capable of spending far less time than was necessary in their schools.

The issue of children playing the court system also surfaced in response to this question, as it did for question #2. Additional examples were given of children who had gotten into trouble with narcotics and liquor only to be given a sentence of probation from the courts. Several respondents explained that they had cases of children in their school who they believe may be best served in an institution for delinquents. At the same time, one claimed, they wondered to what extent would the inappropriate behaviours have to be carried out, and for how long, before both the Department Health and Community Services, formerly known as Social Services, and the courts decide that incarceration is needed for these children. It was felt that the courts are especially "out

of touch" with just how much of a threat these "delinquents" can be in the school system.

In addition to a shortage of resource personnel to attend to the individual needs of these students who often cause discipline problems, it was felt that the removal of certain courses that were once offered in schools may attribute to the inappropriate behaviours of some students. It was felt that program planning has become more geared towards the students who may often be considered the "normal, average" students, meaning those students who rarely cause problems and who usually experience average or above average levels of achievement. One interviewee stated:

" We expect everyone to be suited to the same classroom settings and then we have set up the curriculum where focus is stressed towards achievement, it's geared towards the sciences and technology. That's where you get the bang for your buck. We no longer have courses in place for these underachievers. Wood working is gone, shop is gone. Hands-on manipulative kinds of activities are gone. The frustrations of some of these kids in our school system can be easily understood. Oftentimes they act out because they are victims of the system we have placed before them."

Question #4

Do the teachers of the school feel comfortable with the alternatives to corporal punishment? Explain.

The responses of the fifteen administrators interviewed gave an insight as to what methods of discipline are being used in schools now that corporal punishment has been

removed from the classroom for some fifteen years. As one of the interviewees commented, it is important to note that corporal punishment as a means of disciplining students was used very seldomly, if at all, in the years leading up to its removal. The main reason given for this was the change in society's attitude towards this treatment of school aged children in this manner. Based on this clarification, it is important to note that the alternatives to corporal punishment were not necessarily introduced to the school system only after the removal of corporal punishment as many were present several years before. Nevertheless, these methods did serve to take the place of corporal punishment as the most severe of punishments for misbehaviours, and are thus regarded as such.

The alternatives to corporal punishment that were most often referred to by the interviewees included such treatments as detention, time out, expulsion, removal of privileges, suspension, counselling, and sit down sessions with the administrators of the school. Detention was most commonly defined as the act of keeping children behind after school with the granted permission of the parent. The length of detention time was said to range anywhere from ten minutes to an hour. Time out was referred to as moving the disruptive child to an isolated part of the classroom or outside the classroom at some teacher determined part of the school where they were to remain quiet until such time that the teacher could deal with their behaviour. Expulsion, the act of removing a child from the school for an extended period of time with the approval of the school board, was looked upon as perhaps the most severe action that the school has as an alternative. It is important to note here that several of those interviewed suggested that this disciplinary measure is "almost impossible" to put into effect because:

"We are responsible by legislation for the education of our children. We haven't looked at alternate ways of educating these kids outside the regular school system. The government does, yes, owe everyone the right to an education, but it stops short at saying that we owe them the education through the regular school setting. Expulsions are almost non-existent. We need to remove some of these kids from the school setting because they are detracting from the effectiveness of that system to the extent that they are hurting children who can meet the expectations put upon them, expectations of both academics and behaviours."

Removal of privileges usually meant being denied the opportunity to participate on a school team, a club, or some other form of extracurricular activity. Suspension usually was looked upon as the removal of a student from the school environment from a period of one to three days. Counselling referred to sessions with a school guidance councillor. "Sit down sessions" with the schools administration generally meant going to the principal or vice principal's office to discuss the action which resulted in the student being removed from the classroom in the first place.

The complexity of each of these alternatives were said to vary. Time out and the removal of privileges were actions that were said to rest in the hands of the individual classroom teachers as options. One of the interviewees felt it necessary to note that physical education classes and music classes are not classes that students should be removed from because they are subjects of study in a student's education, contrary to popular belief in many instances. "Sit down sessions" with the principal were said to

usually come as the result of teacher contact with the principal regarding some student. All administrators stressed the need for having a witness present. Counselling was an action that most often required the granted permission of the student's parent, as was detention. Suspension and expulsion were the more complex of the alternatives involving contact with the school board, parents, and potential contact with Health and Community Services or the legal system.

The response to this question resulted in three different opinions as to the sense of confidence that teachers are believed to have in the alternatives to corporal punishment. Almost half of the respondents believed that teachers are comfortable with the alternatives. It was felt that contrary to what many people are said to believe, that many of the teachers of the time did not support the use of corporal punishment in dealing with children. These administrators, in fact, felt that the strap often served more as a deterrent from teachers bringing students to the principal's office than it did as a means of deterring negative student behaviours. One of the interviewees shared a story where this obviously was the case:

"I remember a colleague of mine telling a story about a teacher who brought a student to the principal's office to be dealt with. After hearing the case that the teacher had against this young fellow the principal figured it was serious enough an issue to use the strap. When the principal hauled out the strap it was the teacher who started to bawl instead of the young fellow. She felt worse for having it dealt with in this way than the student did for having it as his punishment. It hurt her more. He said she never brought another student to him in the office

again."

It was felt that corporal punishment had as its foundation the idea of fear, and fear was not seen as something that these respondents felt their teachers needed to use in ensuring an overall smooth running of the school. One respondent attributed the success of today's methods of alternatives to corporal punishment to the stress being placed upon prevention rather than reaction, which was not the case at one time. It was felt that the majority of teachers in the school system today rely more on methods of modifying behaviours. This interviewee claimed that the success in this approach lies in the effort on the part of teachers to gain a greater understanding of each child's situation both in and out of school. This understanding of where children are coming from often results in the system being more supportive of the disruptive child than it is on being "heavy" on the child.

Another interviewee claimed that this was often made easier because of the generally small community size of most Newfoundland areas allowed teachers the opportunity to know the parents of school children on a more personal basis. As this interviewee noted:

"The teachers feel comfortable contacting parents on an issue because they usually know the parents on a personal level. They often went to school with the parents, and in many cases often taught the parents of the students. I know every parent of every student in this community. I know every parent of every parent in this community. You get to know where people are coming from, you get a sense

of their home life. I guess that gives you a little advantage in knowing when to ease off on certain kids or knowing when to give them that little extra care and support."

This interviewee said that at one time this bond between home and community once existed all over Newfoundland. This bond, the interviewee felt, is now constantly threatened by amalgamation, families moving for economic reasons, and breakup of the family unit at an ever increasing rate.

Many administrators felt that the emphasis on a shift from reaction to inappropriate behaviours, to an emphasis on prevention of inappropriate behaviours, affects the extent to which teachers feel comfortable with the alternatives to corporal punishment. Practices that aid in this approach to prevention included such things as giving students sheets daily to be filled out by their teachers showing that the student was on time for class, that they were well behaved, and cooperative. Students who are not successful in getting the subject teacher to give their signature stay after school in a detention type setting under the supervision of an assigned teacher. In this case the teachers were said to be very cooperative because the effort resulted in better class control and less disruptions for all teachers involved.

Another of the interviewees stressed the importance of putting the responsibility of good behaviours back in the hands of the students. It was felt that students need to be accountable for their actions, and when these actions do not comply with what is expected of them in the school, a negative reinforcement must be administered. This interviewee claimed that when students repeatedly cannot measure up to the expectations

placed upon them by the school, then it may be time for the student to be removed from the school setting. Before this could happen, however, it was felt that all measures must be taken to deal with the issue in a manner that does not reach the extent of student removal from the school. The interviewee said:

"We're trying to put measures in place where these kids realize that the responsibility is on their shoulders. They have to see that they have to toe the line. They have to see that we're doing basically all we can for them and that if they can't comply with our rules then maybe it's time that they move on to someplace else."

The relationships that existed between teachers and students was also said to be an important factor in teacher's successes in dealing with students. Almost all of those who responded that they felt the teachers of their school were comfortable with the alternatives to corporal punishment felt that their teachers had invested in getting to know the children out of the context of classroom work. Opportunities for this were said to be greater today because of the increase in extracurricular activities that occur at most schools. These activities were said to give the opportunity for teachers to build a rapport with the students, a rapport that was said to give the students an opportunity to see the teacher as more of an ordinary person, a person who the kids could more easily relate to. It was not felt that such interactions create a danger for students becoming disrespectful of teachers, but instead were opportunities for a new respect, a respect that would carry over into the classroom. One administrator expressed a strong commitment to this effort,

claiming that each year as administrator an effort is made to get to know every Kindergarten child so that a relationship can develop from the first experiences in school, a relationship that will grow as the child continues his/her education.

It was generally felt that this move from gaining a respect out of a respect for the individual, rather than a respect of the authority position, is one that many professions are striving for. As one respondent commented:

"Now take the RCMP and the clergy and all these positions, they're trying to become more known and respected for what they do and who they are, as opposed to being feared. They are trying to become more visible in schools. They want to be seen where they will create a relationship where they will not be feared, where they will not be misunderstood, where the students can understand that these people are there to help us, that they are our friends, not to be feared as cops, the narks, whatever. Perceptions are changing."

One respondent felt that the teachers at their school were comfortable with the alternatives to corporal punishment because they knew that they were not alone in the event of applying discipline. The interviewee responded:

"The important thing for the teacher, from my experience as a teacher and as an administrator, is to know that if they have a problem then there is someone who they can get to deal with it. If the principal puts it back on them, telling them that it is their problem, then that creates tremendous frustration. It's been my experience, even before I became an administrator, that a problem could be taken

to the principal and he would deal with it. Then it relieves the frustration. There is a lot of consolation for teachers in knowing that if they got somewhere to go with a problem, rather than having to try and handle it by themselves, then they can cope with it."

Another interviewee echoed this concern:

"If you got a principal who likes to close his or her office door and let you survive as a teacher throughout the day, or a principal who is run by the parents, then you are in trouble. The schools with the best discipline are the schools where the staff and administration work together. If the teacher gets little support then they will not be comfortable, whereas if they were, they would."

This interviewee claimed that teachers at her school were well aware of the support that parents and administration were willing to give to efforts undertaken by the school with regards to the children of the school, whether that be positive undertakings such as a school trip, or negative tasks such as dealing with a problem student. This interviewee stressed the importance of creating a relationship with parents where the contacts with home are not always of a negative tone. It was felt that in far too many cases the school only contacts the home for reasons that do little to improve the home's enthusiasm for the school. This administrator said that the teachers of the school had taken an approach to contact parents and congratulate them on a job well done with a test or to publicly thank them for their support at a sporting event or other such activities. It was believed that these efforts bring parents on side and create a positive image of the

school as an institution with a human touch, with a real caring for the individual. Once this relationship has been developed, it was explained, parents, teachers and administrators can effectively work together in dealing with any difficult child in the most appropriate manner.

Despite the optimism of those who felt that the teachers of their schools were comfortable with the alternatives to corporal punishment, they were, nevertheless, outnumbered by those who felt that the teachers of their schools were not satisfied with the alternatives. This group of administrators who claimed feelings of discontent on their staff were divided into two groups, those who said that their staff are "definitely unsatisfied", and those who said that their staff are "merely coping".

The interviewees who felt that their staff members were for the most part unsatisfied with the alternative methods of discipline felt that this was the perception of their teachers for a number of reasons. One commented:

"Teachers today are more trained in dealing with student misbehaviour, but the alternatives to corporal punishment such as detention, expulsion, and time out do not always work. Teachers experience many occurrences of misbehaviour, most often repeat offenders."

Another of the respondents appeared to have a very strong opinion to this particular question. This interviewee responded:

"What do we have? All we have is a suspension, either in school or out of school. They want that! A lot of parents and children think that is a holiday. They don't

look upon those as a punishment. You see, when we send a kid home who has been suspended, the parents allow that kid to do what he wants during the day instead of keeping him in the house. We got one case here where a child threatened to kill another person. We suspended the student for thirty to forty days. This child is a danger to everyone inside the school. We send him home, the parents are frightened to death of him. He has everybody's number. The criminal system can't deal with him. They send him back to us. The court put the fox back in the chicken coop. They only come back to cause more chaos. Then we have to do up special contracts for that student regarding their behaviours. We have to revise our courses so that we can make them pass the grade. We make their program fool proof. They know that, and they use it to their advantage. That's work for us because of something that the student did that the courts wouldn't deal with. We had to deal with it. If we don't, all we can hear is that the system failed them!"

The other group which felt that the teachers of their school were not satisfied with alternatives to corporal punishment said that despite the dissatisfaction with the alternatives, their teachers were coping. One respondent explained that the alternatives can work, but only with the support from the home. For example, the interviewee felt that a suspension can work if the experience is made an unpleasant experience by the parent. As the interviewee explained, the school's impact on how a suspension is served "ends at the point where the child is sent home into the care of the parents". This

administrator told of cases where repeat offenders were sent home for a few days in the hope that a strong message would be sent to the home and the child. After a short time of bargaining with their parents the children are allowed outdoors for the day while all of the other children of his/her age are in class. This administrator revealed the frustration this causes teachers and the lack of faith they have in taking measures such as suspending students. The teachers feel that for many of these children a more negative sentence would be to not suspend them and have them spend their time in the school.

This inconsistency with how much of an impact that students feel as a result of the disciplinary measures seemed to be the main reason for the discontent with the alternatives. One thing that administrators knew the strap was accomplishing was the feeling of pain, a pain which they hoped would serve as a deterrent, a pain which is not evident in many of today's methods of discipline. Some of the respondents commented that at times they have heard the comment that the strap would best serve some of the children in their school. They sometimes felt that even the threat of the strap would serve the purpose as an alternative. The general consensus among these administrators was that the teachers in their system feel they have too few effective alternative methods of disciplining children. As one commented:

"There are very few alternatives left out there in terms of dealing with students with inappropriate behaviours. The alternative methods of discipline are satisfactory if you can work your way through them. When you run out of those, when you have tried everything, what else do you try? That's when the frustration sets in. One of the things that we do is document the student's

behaviour, we monitor it. You have a student who is emotionally or behaviourally disturbed. Then you look for student assistant time, and we all know where we are with that. Where do we go?"

Another interviewee stated that teachers are coping, but that there needs to be a more focussed effort at putting in place a more consistent and effective means of dealing with difficult students. This respondent was concerned with the fact that oftentimes teachers are not satisfied with the different forms of discipline that are handed out because sometimes in administration the type of penalty that a student gets or the punishment that a student gets often doesn't fit the crime and therefore a teacher may view the administration as not supporting them on the issue. At times they feel the administration wasn't tough enough and at others too tough, and therefore they are sometimes disenchanted with the whole process of punishment and discipline. To deal with this problem it was felt that a more structured means of dealing with students needs to be developed. In the words of the interviewee:

"Maybe we need to be more structured in how we discipline our students in the sense of if a student does this, then this is what the consequence is going to be.

Maybe we need some kind of policy."

As the interviewee continued to discuss this possibility as a means of dealing with the inconsistencies in discipline he/she stopped to think on what they had suggested. After a moment of thought it was then concluded that this did seem to be an adequate solution in theory, but in practice:

"No matter what policy you put in place you're always going to come up against an issue that doesn't actually fall into the policy. Then what do you do?"

After further reflection on the question the interviewee said that no matter what policy is implemented and no matter how much support the school gets from the administration, the teachers, or the parents and community, just how effective any plan will be will depend upon the individual who is administering the disciplinary measure. Drawing upon many years of experience in the field of teaching, the interviewee offered these words of "wisdom":

"Discipline itself emanates from the strength of the individual in the classroom or in the school. You can have the strap in your classroom and use it everyday, but still not have good discipline. There are people who have to roar and bawl out the whole day to get discipline, but don't get it. Someone else can go in, and just by their presence, just walking into the classroom, students know that they have to be on cue and they have to get down to work."

One of the administrators who was interviewed for the purpose of this study compared the alternative methods of dealing with corporal punishment in Newfoundland with the alternatives that he experienced recently in another province of Canada. Upon reflection of the situation in Newfoundland, the interviewee had this to say:

"I think we're short on innovative ways of dealing with kids and probably it's time now that we looked at ways of dealing with kids when they commit serious inappropriate offences against the system and against the people who work in the

system. We have got to look at ways of removing children from the regular classroom for short or long term. We haven't done that very effectively in Newfoundland."

The interviewee then went on to explain his personal experience of what he felt was a much more innovative and effective means of dealing with these children. In that system, it was explained, the school district had put in place an alternate school which usually had a student population anywhere from fifteen to twenty students. All attending students were students who had difficulty in complying with the rules of the regular school system. The interviewee clarified that this initiative was the initiative of the school district in an attempt to protect the learning situation of the other students and to make an attempt to salvage the education of these particular students.

To enter this school, a student is recommended by the school administration for removal from the normal school classroom. At a formal hearing the child can represent himself/herself, or can have a parent or guardian speak on their behalf. A panel that consisted of the Social Services coordinator, a member of the district office, and two principals from a school elsewhere within the district decides whether this alternate school is the best solution for guaranteeing the education of the child and the smooth operation of their community school. If a decision is made that the child will attend this alternate school the child can, after a period of time at this school, apply to the same panel for reinstatement to the community school. The interviewee felt that this system was superior to any alternate means of discipline in Newfoundland.

In reflection of the responses of the interviewees, there also seems to be a split in

the perceptions of administrators with regards to the effect that the experience of the teacher can have in how satisfactory they feel the alternatives to corporal punishment are. Surprisingly, it was felt that younger teachers are perhaps more comfortable with the alternative methods of disciplining students. For one thing, it was felt that these younger teachers in the profession grew up in a time when there was a changing of the public perceptions of violence. One interviewee commented that the late 1960's and the 1970's were times of anti-violence demonstrations and calls for world peace, perhaps making the late twenty to late thirty year old teachers much more sympathetic towards students who were administered corporal punishment. In the late 1970's and early 1980's it was noted that public concerns had been raised with problems of abuse at various religious institutions, residence schools, and foster homes. It was felt that because of the public outcry during the younger teachers' lives that they came to prefer other forms of discipline.

Another suggestion was that any teacher who is not at least in their late thirties could not have been in a school where corporal punishment was an option and therefore came to rely on other means of disciplining students. Corporal punishment has been removed from Newfoundland schools some fifteen years and teachers introduced to the system are most likely familiar with the concept from their own days of schooling. Administrators felt that these teachers entered the profession with a much greater resource of alternatives than did teachers years ago, which they felt was mainly due to improved methods learned at the university level. As one interviewee commented:

"They seem to be more skilful at getting the cooperation of the kids. They have a

better training than any of us ever had. I hear of the courses they do in university now, they seem to be much different than what we were exposed to. I think an emphasis has been placed on the more practical issues, and again, they are much more involved in activities with the students. They have a knack that many of us older people in the field don't have. That is why I think it is good to have a good mixture of young and old staff members. This young generation of teachers have a skill, and I don't know if it's a skill that can be taught. At the same time, the older teachers have an experience that can't be taught either. A balance of both is healthy for the school."

The older teachers in the profession were said to place a sense of worth in corporal punishment for what they thought it could accomplish. Several interviewees commented that the older teachers often recall how the strap put the "fear of God" in some students. They refer to the age when these teachers were part of a profession where respect was demanded and forced. There was a value on corporal punishment in the school, the community, and the home. One interviewee made reference to this belief:

"Corporal punishment was only effective in a time when society generally bought into it. There was a belief in it. I have no ill thoughts about any teacher who ever used the strap on me, and I think that although I'm not proud that I used the strap, that the people who I used it on are really good friends of mine today and we can laugh about it, but that was because society bought into it. Those kids expected it the same as they expected a good meal when they got home from school. It was

not an undignified thing. It was accepted. Historically, in Newfoundland, a lot of parents judged teachers on how strict they were, and if a teacher wasn't able to administer corporal punishment they weren't given much in the way of validation in the community. They would be considered rather weak and it would be said that the kids ran the show."

It was suggested that because these teachers did come through a system where this was the belief that they have a difficult time in placing faith in alternatives that they see to be taking the control out of the hands of the teachers and placing it into the hands of the students and their parents. As one of the interviewees noted:

"I think the older teachers in my school miss it to a certain extent. They came up in a system and taught for many years in a system where they had this action at their fingertips for dealing with the hardest of cases. They miss that."

Question #5

In general, do the students who have been subjected to the alternatives to corporal punishment seem to have benefited as compared to those who were subjected to corporal punishment? Explain.

All the interviewees, with the exception of three, claimed that they were sure that students who are dealt with in alternate ways to corporal punishment benefit over those who were once subjected to corporal punishment. A common theme referred to by these respondents was how the alternatives are much more "humane" than was corporal

punishment. It was felt that corporal punishment almost removed the humanness of the administrator for the period in which corporal punishment was being used. Some commented that they hated to use the strap because of the very fact that they had to use it on young children who they now felt could have been dealt with in a better way.

While most of these administrators used the strap on a frequent basis up to fifteen years ago, almost all feel that they now have in existence better methods of dealing with children who are discipline problems, despite the fact that it has already been reported that most are not satisfied with the alternative measures of discipline in their school today. Although none of the interviewees admitted it, it seems as though most feel that corporal punishment was very much outweighed by negatives over positives.

One of the interviewees reasoned this more humane approach in this way:

"I think they get more out of being talked to and being reasoned to than they did out of being strapped. You come off looking more like a human being instead of looking like an animal. At one time we believed that the strap was fine. It was in a sense a free for all because an effort wasn't being made to take it to the next level, which was the interpersonal level, and the reasoning part of "Why not? Why shouldn't we be doing this?" It was a losing situation for everyone. Now we have learned of ways to deal with students where we don't lose their cooperation. That doesn't mean that we let them off with things, it means that now they learn more and understand more where we are coming from. We don't injure, we try to teach a different way. We don't beat it into them, we reason with

them."

One of the interviewees felt that this human approach should begin when children are in the stages of their early school life. This interviewee referred to this policy as "protective love" and explained that it didn't mean that at no time would the administration outwardly show the student their discontent with incidents of inappropriate behaviours, but instead meant that there would be a conscious effort to maintain at least a healthy balance of correction and love shown to even the most difficult of children to deal with.

Another of the interviewees explained that the more humane touch in dealing with students is time-efficient in the long run even though corporal punishment could be administered in only a few minutes. This administrator felt that by getting to know children and showing them a caring approach, teachers can eliminate the possibility of inappropriate behaviours in most and can curb the number of incidents of inappropriate behaviours in others. The interviewee recalled how much administrative time in years past were spent "bawling out" and strapping children who had misbehaved. In this person's view very little was accomplished because the same children caused problems on a continuous basis.

Now, the interviewee says, more time is spent in schools on praising children and trying to get to the root of their problem. The need for this was explained in the following way:

"We need to connect with each child, not only as a student, but also as an

individual. When we do the kids appreciate us more, the parents appreciate us more, and I think we appreciate ourselves that much more too for what we accomplish."

Another noted that many of the children coming to school have problems at home that make their cases more complex and fragile to deal with. This interviewee said:

"We don't need to compound their problems. I think that every time we go to discipline a child we should stand back and realize that they are only children. Even the Grade Twelves are kids. We need to remember that.. Show each child that they are special in their own way. Let them see that they bring something special to the school. When you can do that you are running a good ship. It takes time and patience, but once you get it you see that it is well worth the effort. Respect lasts for a much longer time than fear does. It brings a more permanent change in behaviour."

Another interviewee added:

"We have many kids in need. I don't mean in need of food or clothes, although that is often the case. I mean a need for some stability and love in their lives. Society has changed. Our role has changed. Kids need to be able to see the school as a place where they come to learn, where they are safe, where they count as an individual."

It was noted by one of the interviewees that it is not enough to talk to children about their misbehaviours. It was felt that to be truly effective a teacher or administrator

must use any conversation with a child regarding inappropriate behaviours to suggest alternate courses of action to the one the child chose. This interviewee suggested that to tell a child that their actions were not acceptable does little in leading to a better choice the next time. It was felt that children who act inappropriately have not learned from their surroundings that such actions are not acceptable. It then becomes the role of the school to reason with these children better behaviours, better solutions. It was suggested that an administrator or teacher dealing with these children help the child see how they handled the situation, and to offer advice such as, "Here's what you did, here's how you should have handled it..."

Several interviewees saw the need to teach children self-control and self-discipline. By discussing the problem with the child it was felt that there is a greater chance in helping children discover ways to express their angers in a more socially acceptable manner. This approach, it was felt, is more effective than a strapping because it is handled in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. It demonstrated to the child that the school was not the enemy, but was rather a community of individuals who were interacting in hopes of preparing children for life after school.

The perception of school as "enemy" was commonly referred to as the attitude of children towards the school after they had had corporal punishment administered upon them in many cases. As one interviewee stated:

"The strap didn't work. The kids were out of control. It made them worse. If it worked we wouldn't be strapping them every two or three days, which we were.

The only effect that it had was that the student walked around hating us for what

we had done to them. They'd be wondering if there was any way that they could get back at us."

This notion of how corporal punishment created fear for the moment, but later subsided to a drive for revenge, upon reflection, seemed to be particularly bothersome for some of the interviewees. One of the interviewees admitted that the benefits of taking a few minutes a week to talk to children now accomplishes what it was hoped the strap would. The interviewee said that he feels comfortable in estimating that these "friendly minutes" serve to maintain a good relationship between the school and at least ninety per cent of it's students, and that the control that resulted from this is far greater than the control that corporal punishment achieved.

In referring to the hate that often emanated from the use of the strap in schools years ago, one administrator felt it was necessary to explain this hate with a drastic example. The interviewee recalled:

"I remember that the board I was in before this one we had a case where this one young fellow who was probably an "A" student got in trouble. This fellow got in trouble on a very seldom occasion. Anyway, the rougher boys were giving him a hard time because they said he was a wimp and told him that he would cry when he was strapped. The teacher happened to hear him say that he would not cry, no matter how hard or how often he was strapped. He was more or less putting on the tough outer image to try to prove that he wasn't a wimp. The teacher told the principal what she had overheard and the principal wanted to punish this fellow

for his defiance. I think the actual intention was to keep this fellow from becoming a hard ticket like the fellows who were tormenting him. Anyway, he didn't cry. The principal kept on strapping him until he finally passed out on the ninety-seventh strap! He quit school two weeks after. Nobody can convince me that the strap wasn't responsible. That's the kind of story that people are going to jail for these days. So they should. There was too great a potential for things to get out of hand."

Despite the large number of interviewees who felt that the alternatives to corporal punishment have benefits that cannot be matched by corporal punishment, there were those who cautioned that the validity of this response would depend upon the individual child being disciplined. For some of these problem children, it was explained, fear is needed in order to achieve compliance with the rules of the school. Two in particular commented:

"Many of these alternatives do not work for everybody. For some the strap would be good if it were used in moderation."

"I think that some of the kids who were strapped it helped. It depends on the individual. I can see that the fear element is not there anymore. The vast majority of kids don't fear anything anymore. At least when the strap was there, there were still elements of fear there. That is gone. There was a fear for being held accountable for what you had done. There was something good about that."

There were two of the interviewees who felt that there can be even greater benefits for children who often cause disturbances if proper resources were provided. One referred to the Pathways program which allows for a more unstructured learning environment where there is for some students a more relaxed or better suited environment for them to go to pursue what they need to pursue. It was also felt that an adequate number of student aids would greatly reduce the frequency of inappropriate behaviours in schools.

The second interviewee called upon the government to provide resources that could help deal with the issue of inappropriate behaviours in the home, where it was often believed the causes of these actions are rooted. It was felt that once the school identifies students as high risk children, resources should be put in place in the home to help parents dealing with the unique parenting issues that these children create. It was pointed out that the courts and Community and Health Services are very reluctant to remove a child from a home so they should therefore provide resources for these parents. This respondent felt that a lack in parenting skills sometimes causes, and often increases, the problems which these children experience and create. In the opinion of this interviewee this is mainly because:

"Parents can basically do what they want and there is no expectations of their parenting responsibility. Parenting has turned into maybe giving kids the basic needs. That is negligence, and when we make a report on that, that goes nowhere."

Based upon this misfortune for the case of the child, this interviewee felt that this need is

the most demanding in reducing the frequencies of inappropriate behaviours in the classrooms of Newfoundland.

Question #6

If given the opportunity, would you reinstate the use of corporal punishment in your school? Why or why not?

In total, fourteen of the fifteen administrators interviewed said that they "definitely would not" reinstate the use of corporal punishment in their school if given the chance. There were many different reasons given as to why they would not like to see a return of corporal punishment. The most common reason stated why corporal punishment is no longer needed or valued is because it was believed that it taught the children nothing of any worth.

One interviewee admitted that corporal punishment was valued so much in their school because it was a "quick and easy" way of dealing with children who were creating trouble in the school. This interviewee now sees the negative argument that can be made against this reasoning because it is now recognized that corporal punishment only gave a short term, non-permanent means of dealing with issues. In other words, it worked for the moment. Because of this treatment and the violence that is often attached with corporal punishment, this interviewee referred to this method of discipline as "barbaric". Adding to this idea, another respondent said that we have come to prohibit the beating of animals, criminals, and adults, and in light of this, questions how we could ever permit the beating of children.

Another interviewee felt that although corporal punishment taught nothing of any value to children, it did teach them that the only way to deal with their problems is to beat and hit back. This respondent said:

"Kids are the product of their surroundings and their circumstances. It would be a terrible step backwards to show them that the solution for dealing with problems is to hit. Sadly enough that was the way it was in schools years ago. And I don't necessarily think that that was because of the teachers and the principals. They grew up with this type of justice and they were ill prepared in university, the few that had a university education, to deal with issues of discipline in any other way."

There were also recollections of the very negative effects that fear brought to the school. One interviewee commented how the right to use corporal punishment was sometimes abused, or used too excessively in some cases. This administrator recalled how some of the students in the school dreaded to come to school because they had either witnessed or heard of "the strap". Other children were said to try and avoid contact with the administration at every opportunity, a tendency which was believed to be the result of the administrators connection to the strap.

Another common response to this question was, "What would we need it for?" One interviewee said:

"I wouldn't see the need for it. If you need to use the strap then you wonder what it is that you haven't got. What would compel you to say that you need the strap? There would have to be something missing there somewhere."

A second interviewee looked at the potential for danger that corporal punishment brought into the school as the main reason why corporal punishment should not be reinstated. The respondent explained this danger in the following way:

"I can see a real danger in it for the school, losing it's effectiveness. See the worst thing about corporal punishment is that when that doesn't work what do you do then? You've already used up the most drastic way of dealing with the issue. Do you hit them harder? Instead of the hand is it across the head? How far does corporal punishment go? Is it a punch in the face? It's all corporal punishment. It's all inflicting pain as a means of gaining control. It is all very violence oriented."

It was suggested by one administrator that when answering this question that all respondents should answer as if they were the parents of these children who were receiving corporal punishment. Through the eyes of a parent this administrator felt that all other interviewees would agree that there are better methods of dealing with children than through the use of corporal punishment. From the interviewees own personal opinion:

"Speaking as a parent, I wouldn't like to see my child coming home after being physically handled in school. I would like to think that the school could handle my children in a better way than by beating them to get them to get them to comply with the rules of the school. What would you like to happen to your own child? You have to look at it through a human lens. What would you like to

happen to yourself or your own?"

It appears as though several of the administrators who were interviewed have "changed the lens" through which they look upon corporal punishment due to their response that many of them felt that they would no longer have the "heart" to administer it to children, no matter how severe the inappropriate behaviour. They felt that as a society we have progressed far beyond the practice of corporal punishment. It was pointed out that there are other avenues that can be explored in trying to deal with these children who cause serious disruptions. Although many of these same people had earlier in the interview addressed a concern about the lack of accessibility and ineffectiveness of many of these resources, they nevertheless felt that the effect that any had would be no more harmful than were the consequences of corporal punishment. One interviewee commented:

"I would think that we have moved past corporal punishment as a society and as a fraternity, or whatever you want to call the education system. We have come to the point where if our immediate alternative methods don't work there are other departments and other resources that can be brought in to deal with the situation. For too long what has been going on in schools has been separate from what's going on in social work, has been separate from what's going on in the justice system, has been separate from what's going on in other community groups. I think that for the troubled child there has to be more of a sharing between all of these groups."

It was also felt that the family has to come on stream in helping the school and the other available resources in dealing with children who frequently re-offend. There was a concern that parents need to take more ownership in the discipline of their children. One interviewee said that in far too many cases parents have washed their hands of the discipline issue and have left that task be the responsibility of the school and the courts. The interviewees called on the parents to show greater support for the actions that they have taken on students for their inappropriate behaviours. Administrators feel that if parents make penalties such as detentions and suspensions one that is negative for the child, then the long term gain is much greater than that of corporal punishment.

It was suggested by several respondents that parents need to start "parenting" when their children are at a young age. It was pointed out that if parents wait until children graduate to the more serious inappropriate behaviours to "parent", then the child has already learned that there are no consequences for their actions. Consistency was also stressed if children are to have a clear understanding of what conduct is acceptable.

These interviewees stressed a concern for what is being deemed acceptable in the home and in society. There was one interviewee who became very unsettled when discussing this issue. It was clear that the respondent felt very frustrated with the attitude of the home and the community. The frustration was expressed in the following words:

"We sent home one child because he swore in the classroom. He told a teacher to f--- off. We suspended him. His mother came into us like a lunatic. Her feeling on the incident was "Big deal, why don't you get with the f--- ing 90's." I must have missed something in society! When did this become acceptable?! It doesn't

go over in my house, I can guarantee you that."

As an indication of just how much society has relaxed in its attitude towards delinquent behaviours, one interviewee shared the contents of an article that had been read in a newspaper:

"Last week in the States there was a law passed in one of the states that students from Grade One to Grade Three had to address teachers as "Sir" or "Mam". The law had to tell them that they have to show respect for their teachers! Now that says a lot about parenting and society."

It was clear from these interviews that many of the respondents felt that the change in society towards the topic of discipline has swung from one extreme to another. They believed that at one time discipline was too often administered and was too often severe. Now many believe that disciplinary measures are used too infrequently and is often too minor when it is exercised. Because of this several of the interviewees felt that there needs to be a greater effort to equip teachers, administrators, and parents with more effective, but less violent, means of dealing with children. It was noted that teachers coming out of university in recent years have received a better training as to how to discipline students, but there remains to be discovered a truly effective plan of discipline that will work in almost all cases. One interviewee raised the concern that:

"It is the serious problems that we are having a lot of difficulty dealing with. The average problems can usually be dealt with in an effective way by the teacher or

administrator. The more serious problems are becoming more violent. We need to come up with some innovative way of dealing with these kids."

Another of the respondents added:

"I would like to see schools get tougher with students who are constantly causing disruptions in classrooms. Corporal punishment wasn't a cure, but neither are any of the alternatives we use today. I don't know if there is a cure, but I certainly hope studies can come up with more effective methods than we have today."

As was reported, a total of fourteen interviewees responded that they would not reinstate the use of corporal punishment in classrooms if given the choice. There was one interviewee who felt that there may still be a place for corporal punishment in schools. This respondent said it would be a tough decision to make because the alternatives to corporal punishment have not worked and at least corporal punishment would serve as a deterrent for most of the children most of the time. This interviewee reasoned the decision in this way:

"I think it would be okay as a last resort. I think there does need to be an element of fear from time to time for the hardest tickets. I know that society looks down upon corporal punishment, but for the people my age that I hear talking about how they were strapped, I never hear them say anything was wrong with it. If anything I hear them say that it was the only way that they could be handled in

school. It would seem to me that it certainly did them no harm. They very rarely say that the strap should not have been used. I'm not saying that I like the strap, but maybe it does have a place in the school."

In one of the interviewees concluding comments a request was made that the following statement be included in this report as an indication of how society in general feels about corporal punishment. This statement does, in the interviewees opinion, reflect the concerns for corporal punishment and where this issue should progress:

"Corporal punishment in the future should only exist in the context of a folklore of the past. It should not be forgotten because it was a tradition, and we need to benefit from our traditions and move on. We have to have a serious investment of financial resources and human resources to deal with the issue of alternate measures of disciplining. The question then becomes, "Is it worth it?" Well what is an education worth? That is something that our government and education system is going to have to answer."

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the findings that were gathered through the use of the interview sessions conducted with fifteen junior and senior high school principals or vice principals. A discussion of the findings of the study regarding corporal punishment and the alternatives to corporal punishment is provided. Conclusions on the findings are drawn with regards to the present situation and the future of discipline in the school system. Based upon these conclusions recommendations for future studies and policy development on corporal punishment are suggested.

SUMMARY

The following summary will give a brief look at responses to each of the six interview questions and will relate those findings to the findings of the research literature.

Question #1

Has the frequency of inappropriate behaviours increased, decreased, or remained the same since the removal of corporal punishment from your school? Why?

More than half of those interviewed felt that the frequencies of inappropriate behaviours had increased since the removal of corporal punishment from their schools. Most of these administrators did not feel that this rise was the result of the removal of corporal punishment. It was suggested that the increase of inappropriate behaviours was more likely the result of increased student rights, and decreased teacher/administrator

rights, in the classroom. Many of the administrators felt that society has become very sensitive to the rights of children and how they are treated by adults. This physical treatment that once existed has now become looked upon as a form of abuse (Straus, 1994), an abuse that would no longer be tolerated in the school nor the home. It was suggested that many children use this sensitivity as an intimidation factor in the home and in the school as a threat that they will report any person who tries to treat them in a physical manner to the proper authorities.

Adding to this frustration of dealing with the extreme change in attitude towards student rights, administrators claim that parents have become very judgmental and defensive in how the school chooses to deal with their delinquent child. Several of the interviewees shared stories that exemplified the parent as "lawyer", clearly showing how the support from the home has dwindled. At the same time, many noted how parents have lost control of these children in the home. It was felt that parents are not helping their own cause, nor the cause of the school, in defending their children when they act out against the rules which have been put in place to ensure the protection of, and smooth running of, the school.

It was widely believed that parents do not "parent" anymore. Contributing to this, many administrators felt, was the increasing number of single parent families, families where neither parent is employed, and families with both parents out of the home for various reasons. This "unstructured family" was felt to create a very disorganized and frustrated child. It was suggested that corporal punishment could do little good for these children because it only gave them more of what they would be receiving at home, and

that would be pain and suffering.

All of the remaining administrators responded that they felt that the frequency of inappropriate behaviours had remained the same since the removal of corporal punishment. Three of the respondents explained how their school has taken on a more humane means of dealing with the individual needs of these children. Like Buechler (1989), they were under the impression that corporal punishment only contributed to further inappropriate behaviours. It was suggested that their schools had much to offer children in terms of extra-curricular activities, which was believed to give the children a greater appreciation for the school and its staff. This positive outlook on school life was said to greatly decrease the number of misbehaviours, and created an attitude which would then carry over into the classroom, a finding which clearly reflected the results of the research of Charles (1996).

Question #2.

Has the seriousness of inappropriate behaviours escalated since the removal of corporal punishment? Explain.

Responses to this question could be divided into three different categories. The first of these groups felt that the seriousness of inappropriate behaviours has not escalated because there are better trained teachers now available in the school to deal with the slower learner and disobedient child, those whom the strap was applied to on most occasions in years past. These teachers were thought to be more in touch and more knowledgeable of the special needs of these children, and thus are better equipped in how to deal with these children. Brophy and McCaslin (1998) had noted that this was often

not the case for teachers trained in earlier years. As a reflection of this, one of the administrators noted the unfortunate tendency of children who did not know their work being strapped for this reason. Today's teachers, she felt, because of their training, are more aware of the disabilities that children often suffer from which inhibit their learning, and understand that what these kids really need are supports rather than a "beating". Thompson and Sharp (1994) earlier commented on this same issue, reporting that violent methods of treatment only served to destroy the child's sense of self worth, only further increasing inappropriate behaviours.

The second group felt that misbehaviours have not escalated because of the resource people, such as special education teachers and guidance counsellors, who have been put in place to ease the frustrations and increase the academic opportunities for these individuals. It was noted that there is now a greater understanding of the fact that not all children can be educated in the same school setting nor in the same subject areas.

The third group felt that there has been an escalation in the seriousness of inappropriate behaviours. They felt that not only have these acts escalated, but they also reported a new boldness or lack of respect for the school in that acts that once occurred outside the school are now creeping into the school. Several of these administrators noted that fist fights existed when corporal punishment was frequently used, and that they still exist today. What they do see as being new, however, is the willingness of students to settle their fisticuffs inside the school, showing a total disrespect for the school organization.

Other contributing factors to this escalation in misbehaviours were believed to be

increased exposures to violent acts through various forms of media, the unstructured family, bigger school populations, an ineffective legal system, and the unwillingness of schools to fail students. There were examples of how the court gave very light sentences for very serious offences. There were examples of children who refused to do any work because they knew that they could not fail a grade more than once in their school life. There were stories of parents who openly admitted that they had no control of their children at home. As a result of these factors, many of the administrators were clearly fearful to just how serious these inappropriate acts will escalate in the future.

Question #3

With the removal of corporal punishment from schools, has the attitude of students towards the consequences of inappropriate behaviours changed? If yes, in what ways?

Several of the interviewees felt that the attitudes of students has changed for the better. These felt that it was not the removal of the strap, but instead was the mutual respect between teachers and students that had been developed in their schools, that could be credited with this positive result. One administrator commented that teachers spend much more time "talking to" students today than "talking at" students, and felt that this respect has broken down the walls of authority. It was said that this has created a new respect, a healthier respect, a respect that lasted.

Other administrators felt that the realization that the fishery has collapsed has resulted in a more serious attitude towards an education, which has brought with it less tendencies for misbehaviours. One commented on the fact that very few Newfoundlanders had gained employment at Hibernia because very few were qualified

for the high skilled jobs. As this administrator noted, "The school is their ticket". What was predicted to employ thousands of Newfoundlanders resulted in jobs for other parts of Canada.

Several more administrators claimed that consistency was responsible for maintaining good control in their schools. A team approach between teachers, parents, and administrators appeared to be greatly valued. One administrator commented, "There has to be belief in it (the need for discipline), you have to live it, there has to be nothing false about it".

The effects of the strap were thought to have little deterrent power for students. It was felt that the hard-core offender even gained a sense of pride in the fact that the school could do little more than give them a few minutes of pain for their misbehaviours. Its removal was thought to have an impact only on females and the younger students because they had been the ones who had feared the strap the most. There was a concern that more resources have to be made available to deal with these children in a more effective way than is now present.

Question #4

Do the teachers of the school feel comfortable with the alternatives to corporal punishment? Explain.

The alternatives to corporal punishment that were said to be used most frequently in Newfoundland schools included detention, time out, expulsion, removal of privileges, counselling, suspension, and "sit down" sessions with the administration of the school. Several of these were seen as better alternatives to corporal punishment by Richardson and Evans (1994). Many of these administrators felt that these alternatives were

sufficient in dealing with the discipline problems in their school, while others were not so enthusiastic, claiming that these alternatives gave them the ability to "merely cope" with the problems that they experience.

Despite the effectiveness that many of these methods are believed to have in the literature on school discipline (Radin, 1988; Pressman & Weinstein, 1990; Richardson & Evans, 1994), many of those interviewed felt that they did little in satisfying their intended purpose of controlling children with serious behaviour problems. It is important to note that each also believed that corporal punishment did not achieve control either, and when it did it was a very negative control because it was control forced by fear. What they seek is a control that Nelson, Lott and Glenn (1997) would refer to as, "nurturing, respectful, and conducive to learning" (p. 103).

There was a concern with many of the interviewees that there has been too much focus placed on reaction to these children than there has been on prevention of their actions. What they saw as needed were methods to teach children self-control and self-discipline. They echoed the opinion of Jones and Jones (1998), who felt that as organizations which intend to educate, schools need to make a greater effort in teaching these children new ways of control and expression, rather than simply inflicting pain in response to inappropriate behaviours.

In their response to this question, many administrators felt that their teachers were comfortable with the alternatives due to the strong parental support they had in dealing with disciplinary issues. However, others expressed a sense of helplessness because the home was doing very little to support their efforts. It was not felt that children given the

freedom to go outdoors and enjoy a suspension as a three day holiday was acceptable.

The administrators indicated a division in their staffs as to how comfortable they felt with the alternatives to corporal punishment. It was suggested that the older teachers often continue to have a sense of "loyalty" for the strap which the younger teachers do clearly not have. It was widely felt that this was due to the fact that the older teachers had worked in a system where corporal punishment had been highly regarded, whereas the younger teachers had not worked in a system where corporal punishment was accepted.

Question #5

In general, do the students who have been subjected to the alternatives to corporal punishment seem to have benefited as compared to those who were subjected to corporal punishment? Explain.

All of the interviewees, with the exception of three, claimed to be sure that students who had been subjected to alternate measures of discipline benefited as compared to those who had been subjected to corporal punishment. It was noted that many of the children who act in defiance of the rules often do so because they are dealing with a multitude of problems in their lives outside of the school. It was felt that corporal punishment only compounded these problems and often caused the student to again rebel against the system that had added to their pain.

Many administrators said they could remember the hate that some of the students they had strapped felt towards them. In their experiences with these children, the school then became the enemy in the eyes of the child, a conclusion which strongly correlated with the results of research by Rosen (1997) . Glasser (1988) had reported such a tendency because he had found that children who are robbed of their power strike back in

an attempt to gain some sense of power.

The alternatives were reported to have a lasting effect that corporal punishment did not have, mainly because it was felt that the alternatives went to a higher level of dealing with the issue of discipline which stressed helping the child discover the root of their trouble and helping them deal with the cause of their difficulties. As one respondent put it, "We need to remember that they are only children". As adults, they felt the school has to make all efforts possible to salvage the lives of these individuals.

Question #6

If given the opportunity, would you reinstate the use of corporal punishment in your school? Why or why not?

Of the fifteen administrators interviewed, fourteen said that they "definitely would not" reinstate corporal punishment if given the opportunity. The reasons for this decision were varied. Some of the respondents referred to the violence that is connected to the act of corporal punishment as undesirable. Others feared the possibility of the punishment being carried to extremes, and many justified their fears in recalling cases of abuse of corporal punishment in the past.

It was generally agreed upon that there was something very inhumane about corporal punishment. There seemed to be a feeling that corporal punishment was seen as being inconsistent with human values, a conclusion that Straus (1994) arrived at having studied its effects. Several interviewees expressed a shame and regret for having used this extreme measure of punishment in dealing with children and claimed that they "would not have the heart" to use it today. It was felt that corporal punishment survived

when it did because it was something that society believed in. It was respected and it was expected. There was a consensus that society has changed it's opinion on corporal punishment and that even though the alternatives have been poor solutions, that they remained as better means of handling children than was the act of strapping them.

The one administrator who held a value of having corporal punishment in schools respected it for the fear that it commanded in children. This respondent expressed concern that children today "fear nothing", and said that although the strap is excessive, it may nevertheless be the only method of effectively dealing with the hard-core offender.

DISCUSSION

General Perception of Corporal Punishment

It became evident in this study that the attitude of these interviewees clearly did reflect the findings in the literature on corporal punishment. All of the interviewees, including the one who felt that corporal punishment may have a place in schools as an intimidation source, admitted that corporal punishment was a very violent method of applying discipline. Most of the interviewees expressed a shame or regret for having used the strap and acknowledged that this treatment of children was very excessive. There were stories of abuse of corporal punishment, and there was a serious concern for children in schools where the practice of strapping was used frequently.

All fifteen of the interviewees believed that the intention of corporal punishment was to deter inappropriate behaviours on the basis of instilling a fear in children. There is no definite answer as to which students corporal punishment best achieved it's intended

purpose, but it was generally felt that it worked best with the younger children and those children who caused problems in school on a very infrequent occasion. Corporal punishment often did little to deter the "hard core" offender. For many of these children corporal punishment was rather ineffective because it applied pain only for the moment and offered no intellectual reasoning for alternate ways of behaving in a manner which is more acceptable. It is widely accepted that for many of these children having corporal punishment inflicted upon them was a "rite of passage" that was carried with a certain level of esteem. For the "hard core" offender then, it achieved very little.

If corporal punishment did teach anything, it may be suggested that it taught that the correct and acceptable way of dealing with issues is to hit and inflict pain. This clearly corresponded with the findings in the literature. In addition, corporal punishment often creates in the student a hatred for the school and the school system. Based on their experience, many administrators felt that corporal punishment perhaps led to more inappropriate behaviours as children who had had this pain inflicted upon them searched for ways to strike back at the individual or system who had acted against them in such a violent manner.

Corporal punishment was often looked upon as being barbaric because of the inconsistencies that often came with it. Administrators were often very inconsistent in terms of when they administered corporal punishment and who they administered it to. For some the strap was usually their first choice of options in handing out punishment or dealing with students on days that were particularly busy or on days that they were in poor humour for some particular reason. This inconsistency was referred to in much of

the literature on corporal punishment and was listed as one of the reasons why corporal punishment should have been removed from the school system. That inconsistency was evident in the recollections of the administrators who participated in this study.

Many administrators are of the opinion that what any source of punishment should have as its central goal is the intention to teach children to practice self-control as a prevention to acts of inappropriate behaviours. It is felt that corporal punishment failed in that it was a reaction to negative behaviours rather than a deterrent to negative behaviours. It did very little to prepare students for society other than to teach them that they will serve a penalty when they act against the rules. In school that penalty was a strapping, in society that penalty may be a jail sentence. There was no lesson being learned that would prevent a future life of trouble and pain.

The review of the literature on this topic revealed that it was generally the case that corporal punishment was administered in a discriminatory way. Results of studies on corporal punishment found that it was most often applied to students who were slower learners and students who were learning disabled. This study did support the finding of an excessive amount of punishments for students who were slow learners, but it was also found that corporal punishment was inflicted on males much more than it was inflicted on females. In fact, when any of the respondents referred to using corporal punishment on either of the sexes it was always in the context of male punishment. Several of the interviewees openly admitted that they had used corporal punishment as a control for male students even though there were cases where female actions had been equally inappropriate and they chose not to use the strap because it was felt "too harsh" for

female students. Based on this it is clear that corporal punishment was used in an inappropriate manner in the sense that it did discriminate against children who had difficulties in learning and students who happened to be male.

Tendencies of Students Towards More or Less Frequent Acts of Inappropriate Behaviours

There is some disagreement as to whether the frequencies of inappropriate behaviours has increased or decreased since the removal of corporal punishment from the school system in Newfoundland and Labrador. Many of the administrators who claimed that their school staff had made a conscious effort to build a rapport with their students said that student behaviours had remained the same, if not decreased in the amounts of inappropriate behaviours, since the removal of corporal punishment. They said that their teachers get to know the students on a personal basis rather than as just another person in the school or in the classroom. They believed that these relationships developed a mutual respect for the student and the teacher/school.

Many schools in Newfoundland now experience a much greater involvement in extracurricular activities as compared to some fifteen years ago. This involvement in sports, clubs, teams, and other social functions gives many children a more positive perception of what the school means to them and what the school has to offer them, and this healthy image of the school tends to carry over into the classroom. For this reason many children abstain from causing disturbances in the school. Many schools are successful today because they have moved away from children coming to school being spoken to and controlled, to an atmosphere where the children are given many more

opportunities to interact with teachers in their learning and opportunities to become involved in activities where they are looked upon and feel to be an integral part.

Those who reported that there has been an increase in the frequencies of inappropriate behaviours feel that the increase has been experienced in acts of damage to property, physical confrontations between students, sassing teachers, skipping school, and abuse of both alcohol and drugs. Students are hesitant to control their disagreements with teachers and will frequently challenge teachers to try and force them to do their work. It is acknowledged that in many schools physical confrontations that would once be carried out outside the school grounds and school hours of operation are now being experienced more and more within the school grounds and within the school's hours of operation. Malicious damage of school property and the property of fellow students has been seen to have risen dramatically.

There was sufficient evidence from the experiences of many of these administrators to make the claim that there are two particular groups of students who are showing an increase in the number of inappropriate behaviours that they exhibit. The first of these groups is the younger students. This increase may be attributed to their exposure to poor role models on television shows and movies. Another argument stems from the belief that these younger students were the ones whom the strap made the greatest impression on. Once the strap was removed these children were believed to become less intimidated by the alternate methods of punishment, resulting in more willingness to disobey school rules. There is a genuine fear for the level of inappropriateness that today's elementary kids will carry with them into the high school,

especially since many of their actions today were once seen as actions that would be attributed to much older children. It is evident that there is a whole new and different generation of students evolving. They are coming up through the system with a different "arsenal of behaviours" that have never surfaced, nor have been dealt with before in Newfoundland schools.

The second group which was believed to have experienced an increase in inappropriate behaviours are females. There is some disagreement here as to whether corporal punishment could have any impact on this increase because it was widely felt that corporal punishment was not administered to females at all. The argument then became whether a punishment that was never sentenced upon a group of people could have any effect upon these people in its removal. Most of the respondents said that there was no correlation, while several more said that they could not answer that question in confidence, but would think that the mere threat of the strap in years past worked to control their behaviours.

Strengths of Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment was effective in the sense that it could be administered rather quickly and did manage to control most of the students in the school most of the time. There was a consistency between the home and the school whereby a child could expect a physical beating of some type for inappropriate actions. Society believed in it. Parents believed in it. The legal system believed in it. Teachers and administrators were therefore granted the power to act "in loco parentis" and make use of corporal punishment in any situations where they felt it was necessary as a means of controlling some student.

It was because of this general belief in the benefits of corporal punishment that perhaps many of the teachers in schools today who worked as teachers in a day when corporal punishment was accepted feel that something has been lost since it's removal from the education system. These teachers saw corporal punishment as the correct means of dealing with discipline problems and were supported by society in this belief. It is because of this former perception of the value of corporal punishment that many of these same teachers continue to hold a respect for it's effectiveness.

Corporal punishment involved the infliction of pain and this was considered to be an effective control and the most time conserving manner with which to discipline students. The school was almost assured the cooperation of the home in reinforcing the consequences of inappropriate behaviours. Parents felt secure that their students were in the care of competent teachers and administrators who could gain control of students with a strapping of the hands. Administrators who could make this experience most painful for students were held in high esteem in the community and looked upon as people who had a solid control of the organization. Those who did not rule with this leather strap were looked upon as less of an individual and less an administrator. They were seen as weak.

Reasons for Abolishment of Corporal Punishment

All except one of the administrators interviewed agreed with the decision to remove corporal punishment from the schools of Newfoundland and Labrador. The one administrator who felt that it could be used as at least a threat for the hard core offender fell short of saying that corporal punishment has no place in schools, but did admit that

corporal punishment should not be used if any other means of disciplining students could be found to be effective.

Some of the reasons why the time had come for corporal punishment to be removed from schools have been referred to in previous pages. In addition to these reasons, it has been noted that society had perceived a need for change because it had become widely accepted that corporal punishment was excessively violent and often quite ineffective. Due to this change in society, increased public pressures would not allow for the strapping of students in response to any behaviours, no matter how severe the act. In times when corporal punishment was deemed acceptable, society looked upon it as a way of measuring how effective a teacher was in the classroom. As a complete contradiction to this notion, most of these administrators felt that any classroom that would require the use of corporal punishment today would be one in which the control had escaped from the hands of the teacher and into the hands of the students. Despite the fact that these same people once worked in a system where strapping was looked upon as a strength in the system, they now felt that it could be looked upon as a weakness in the system.

Improved training of teachers is believed to be one of the main reasons why corporal punishment was removed from schools. Many interviewees admitted that they, themselves, had been poorly trained to deal with children who caused discipline problems in school. In fact, many began their teaching having only achieved a high school graduation certificate with a maximum of one year university study. Most claim that much of what they exercised in the classroom or school had been picked up from watching how the senior teachers acted in similar situations. These were times when

schools were very rigid in the sense that they were operated in a bureaucratic style and the questioning or challenging of practices was unheard of. It was generally agreed upon that for this reason corporal punishment survived further into the 1980's in Newfoundland than it did in many other provinces. This explanation would make sense in explaining how many administrators continued to use the strap to discipline students even though they admit that they did not want to use it due to its violent nature, disregard for the human person, and ineffectiveness in the long term. To go against the system would be looked down upon.

Alternatives to Corporal Punishment in Newfoundland Schools

There are several alternate methods to corporal punishment that are being used in Newfoundland schools. The most common alternatives include detention, time out, expulsion, removal of privileges, suspension, counselling, and "sit down" sessions for discussion with either the principal or vice principal. It has been noted that many of these alternatives were in place before corporal punishment was fully removed from schools as was dictated by legislature. Despite this fact, they often remained as supports to corporal punishment rather than as replacements for it.

There is usually a sequence of steps in dealing with the disruptive child. Time out and detention are usually classroom based and handled by the classroom teacher. The removal of privileges and counselling are usually actions decided upon by the individual teacher and administration in conjunction with the child's parent. Suspension and expulsion, the more serious of the alternatives, usually are decided upon by the school's administration in conjunction with the school board. All methods are said to be

correlated to the seriousness of the behaviours and are documented on file.

Strengths of the Alternatives to Corporal Punishment

The alternatives to the strapping of children with a leather strap on the hands, the most common form of corporal punishment used in Newfoundland schools, are much more humane and much less violent than was the practice of strapping. The actions of counselling, giving time out from the classroom setting, and sit down conversations regarding the inappropriate act with a member of the school's administration are much more conducive to student growth than was the strap. These methods especially involve a deeper interpersonal level of having the teacher or administrator talk with the particular child with the goal of discovering what causes the child to repeatedly act out in such an unacceptable manner. Each serves to act as a negative reinforcement for the child while at the same time serves as an opportunity for the child to explain the reason for the actions, giving the administrator a starting point from which to deal with the individual. These administrators felt that these characteristics made the alternatives far less barbaric than was corporal punishment.

The alternatives were highly regarded because it was felt that they actually did teach the children something. Alternative methods taught the children that there are ways to deal with issues that are not violent in nature. Many of the alternatives modelled for the children are methods whereby they come to realize that it is far more effective and socially acceptable to think through problems than to act out in frustration and confusion. These methods lead to prevention of problems because they get children to evaluate for themselves their actions, a skill that many of them did not before have as an option.

The insight of these administrators into the topic of corporal punishment revealed to this researcher one benefit of alternatives to corporal punishment that perhaps only they can truly see. On several occasions it was stressed that the removal of corporal punishment has saved the province of Newfoundland and Labrador thousands, perhaps even millions, of dollars. At first this may seem to be a rather negligent claim due to the fact that many dollars that have been invested in hiring student assistants, school guidance councillors, and special education teachers, all of whom have, as their duties, the role of dealing with children who were once believed to be the main reasons for the existence of corporal punishment. These dollars, however, are perhaps made available because of the tendency of children to stay in school and get an education, when years ago the strap may have pushed them out into the fishing boat. So too, has the government saved because many delinquents are salvaged from a life of crime and incarceration because they are now taught how to deal with their problems and frustrations in a more socially acceptable manner.

In the whole argument for and against corporal punishment, it may often go unnoticed that the alternatives more often result in a productive member of society who can contribute to society. In the bigger picture of life beyond the classroom, and beyond the boundaries of the school, these administrators pointed out, that should be the main objective of schooling.

Weaknesses of the Alternatives to Corporal Punishment

There was almost an equal three way split between the interviewees regarding the adequacy of the alternatives to corporal punishment. There were those who felt that they

were adequate, there were those who felt they were not adequate, and there those who felt that they achieved the very basic need of giving school personnel just enough options with which to survive in the school. Each of these groups however, even the group which felt that the alternatives were adequate, give particular weaknesses that they perceived the alternatives as having.

The main weakness of the alternatives that were meant to replace corporal punishment is that they merely serve as a substitution for something better. The shortcoming lies in the fact that it seems that the school system has failed in finding the better replacement and remains to equip teachers and administrators with rather weak solutions to deal with children who have become repeat offenders in the school. The alternatives work for the type of student who would not have been a candidate for a strapping some fifteen years ago, but often fail in adequately addressing the problem of dealing with students who have persisted in acting out in school.

Another weakness in the alternatives is that the resources that are meant to be readily accessible to individual schools are oftentimes unavailable or practically non-existent. Many of the smaller isolated schools are expressing confusion for having to share resource personnel such as guidance councillors and speech pathologists between schools. The importance of guidance councillors in dealing with children who are constant causes for disruptions in normal school life is apparent. Almost all of the administrators put forth a valid argument of how a shortage of resource people such as the speech pathologist can also contribute to an increase in inappropriate behaviours because they explain that when children have certain special needs that are not being met,

they often react by rebelling against the system of which they are a part. Administrators of the larger schools voice similar concerns because although they may have these resource people on hand, they are most often overwhelmed with an abundance of students who need their assistance in some way.

Significance of the Family in Dealing With Discipline In the School

The last two decades of this century have seen a dramatic change in the definition of "family" in many senses in Newfoundland. Up until that time it was widely accepted that this province remained relatively unaffected by changes that had been taking place in the rest of North America, and indeed, many other parts of the world. The 1980's brought to Newfoundland a whole new phenomena of single parent families, messy divorces, families with both parents out of the home working, and families with both parents home unemployed. People began to migrate in search of work and the greater family unit began to disintegrate. Basically, the home changed.

This change has brought with it, in many instances, a greater responsibility for the school in raising children to become socially accepted and productive members of society. The school is now expected to control students without crossing the boundary of imposing on their rights. Parents have complicated this tedious task by holding the school accountable for its actions and calling upon them for a justification of why they have dealt with a matter in the way that they have. Although many parents hold these high expectations of the school, many have failed to provide a consistency with the school which makes this task more manageable.

There are many reasons that may be suggested as to why parents have faltered in

their role of parenting in recent decades. One obvious reason is because we now have more single parent families than ever before. Not only do these parents not have the support of a second parent in the disciplining of their children, but in most cases they also do not have the support of the entire community in the raising of their children. At one time in Newfoundland this was a support that was present and felt, but as our society has changed, so too has the public sense of ownership for its youth changed. In short, the definition of community and the responsibilities of those in the community to each other has changed.

In addition to the problems often experienced in single parent families, there are more families where both parents work outside of the home, leaving children often unsupervised and uncorrected in their misbehaviours, and there are more frequent occasions of younger adults having children themselves. These younger, often immature parents, perhaps do not have the skills to deal with the delicacies of raising children. Many do not understand that disciplinary measures have to be in place and have to remain constant in a child's life if the child is to truly understand what expectations have to be met and what repercussions are to follow should they not be met.

Significance of Society in Dealing With Discipline in the School

There was a time in Newfoundland when the school and its teachers and administrators, like the clergy and law of the time, were held in high esteem and remained relatively unchallenged by "common folk". In fact, the citizens of the province eagerly supported and believed in the wisdom of all three institutions. That support and belief seems to have eroded substantially in the eyes of the public within the last two

decades. The reverence attributed to these institutions has dwindled.

In the case of the clergy and schools in particular, this fall from grace seems to have correlated with the cases of abuse that have occupied Newfoundland's courtrooms regarding charges against priests, Christian Brothers, and foster home operators. Although cases against teachers and administrators are few, if any, they were greatly impacted by court decisions that abuse against children is a crime and will not be tolerated in society.

This change in the law brought with it a change in society regarding the treatment of it's children. No longer was the school principal who used the strap looked upon as a person who forced control, but was instead now looked upon as a person who had lost control. They now were seen as the inflictors of pain, similar to those whom our judges gave serious periods of incarceration.

Although the interviewees agreed with the move that parents and society hold institutions such as their own more accountable for actions taken against children, they did, however, feel that "the pendulum had swung too far". What once was a respect that made the children and parents subservient to the school, has now been replaced with a total lack of respect for the education system and all those in that system in many cases.

Children of today are more willing to challenge the school system and the individual teachers. Children are "playing the system". What this means is that children feel that society and the courts have granted them the right to speak and be heard, and that nobody, not their teachers, principals, parents, or elders can take this right from them. For the most part children do exercise these rights, and often in defiance of what the

adults who help in raising them expect of them.

It has been legislated by government in this province that every child as the right to a free, public education. Children are aware of this right and are using this knowledge to defy the rules knowing that the system would be hard pressed to justify any reason calling for their removal from the school. Society does not welcome any attempt to have children removed from the classroom despite the fact that many of the children are not suited to regular classroom life. There are no alternate schools in Newfoundland other than reform schools, which have to have the approval of the courts before a child can be sentenced to a period of stay there. Administrators know that many children use this lack of alternatives to their favour, knowing that they will be dealt with at the school level.

The options for schools regarding the "hard core offender" are few. The responsibility is put on teachers and administrators to design a specific course to meet the individual needs of these children. School personnel are pressured into creating course expectations that require the bare minimum of objectives to allow the student to progress from one grade to the next. Failure is no longer socially accepted because it is felt that the stigmatism of failure hurts the social growth of the child.

For even the most disruptive child many administrators find their hands tied. It is because of the public perception that every child has the right to an education that failures and expulsions are not common. Even the courts have been pressured into giving individuals countless opportunities to pursue their education in community based schools. Schools are feeling the frustration of dealing with children whom the courts have passed back into their hands only after they had turned to the courts in need of support in

controlling the individual. Because of this it is widely felt that the education of the minority delinquent population is being placed before the education of the majority average school population. There is a resentment that the resources that are made available are often for those who are less willing to help themselves. There is an even greater resentment at the fact that society will "cry foul" if it is any other way.

Society also plays a role in the frequencies of inappropriate behaviours in that our children are being exposed to far more than they ever have before. There is a common concern that the right to have freedom of speech and expression has led to a deterioration of what society has considered adequate for school aged children. With this trend has come a greater acceptance of children as being mature beyond their years, which no doubt has lessened the influence that adults have over them. In addition, this has perhaps led to the recent copy cat cases of pipe bomb threats and hazing incidents in various Newfoundland schools. Children are being taught, through the various sources of media, new ways to misbehave and defy the rules of the school organization.

Effects of Amalgamation on School Discipline

As a result of the government decision in Newfoundland to cut funding for denominational schools, there has been a province wide effort to amalgamate schools that were once small, community based schools. The effects of this move has resulted in a greater student population coupled with a broadened student-teacher ratio. In many cases the professional staff at schools has not changed with the influx of additional students and the school staff find themselves overwhelmed with day to day operations because of the dramatic rise in population. This has a negative impact because the rise in population

often brings with it a rise in inappropriate behaviours, and there are many behaviours and individuals that do not receive the required attention that they may have received should the student-teacher ratio be lower. Resources become severely strained, sometimes to the point where they become quite ineffective.

Effects of Employment on School Discipline

The current decade has seen the people of Newfoundland and Labrador witness a dramatic change in the traditional fishing industry. The moratorium imposed in the early 1990's saw a great government push to attract members of the fishing community to an early retirement or some alternate school training that could lead to employment opportunities in other industries or organizations. This once stable industry had crumbled. The effects filtered down into the school system where many young Newfoundlanders had been awaiting the appropriate age to leave school and pursue a life on the water. Today that option has all but been removed permanently.

As a result of a decline in the fishery, many Newfoundlanders now realize that they will almost definitely require some form of secondary schooling to acquire employment. This realization has brought with it an increased pressure to not only take school more seriously, but also to experience higher levels of achievement. That need has seen a change in the attitude of students because they are now faced with the difficult task of gaining employment in an ever demanding job market. The media and government of the province has sounded the alarms that Hibernia is not Newfoundland's Klondike. It has been well publicized that very few Newfoundlanders had the qualifications to apply for the "skilled labour" positions because they did not have the

proper schooling. Neither is the oil industry going to see a dramatic increase in Newfoundland's employment rate. The simple fact is that many of Newfoundland's people do not have the education nor qualifications for many jobs, nor does this province have the industries to support all of it's people. The likelihood of having to leave the province has become a reality.

CONCLUSION

There is little doubt that the decision to remove corporal punishment from the school system of Newfoundland and Labrador was the correct decision. This method of disciplining children was excessively violent and achieved little. At its best, corporal punishment gained control for the moment with the least amount of effort and intellectual reasoning. At its worst, corporal punishment created a child who learned little from the exercise other than that violence was socially acceptable. Corporal punishment had no lasting effects and did little for the growth of the individual child.

The alternatives to corporal punishment have served only as a means by which to survive for the moment. That moment in Newfoundland has lasted some twenty years. There are many teachers and administrators in the education system of the province who have been ill prepared to deal with disruptive students in an effective way. Fortunately, there are some schools which have discovered techniques to maintain a reasonable level of control, but for the most part schools find themselves greatly confused as to how to deal with delinquent students.

As access to the outside world increases and the size of school populations increases it can be expected that so too, will the incidents of inappropriate behaviours increase. The student-teacher ratio can be expected to climb resulting in fewer opportunities for troubled children to receive the individual attention that they require.

The changes that are being experienced in the family unit and society at large will result in a further complexity in dealing with issues of discipline. The definition of parenting has been reinvented to adjust to the single parent family and the family where

both parents leave the home for reasons of employment. Divorces, separations, and family unemployment have further complicated the lives of the children and weakened the once strong family unit. The overall depletion in sense of community has caused a lack of support for the school.

Research on this topic has uncovered society's concern that not only is it physical abuse that must be stopped, but so too must acts of emotional and mental abuse. The technicalities involved in defining acts which fall under these terms will undoubtedly be causes for debate in court cases. These cases, and those involving the church organization, have focussed a spotlight on schools and their treatment of children. There are countless lists and rulings on what actions are inappropriate, however, there is very little of new information offered as to appropriate courses of action.

As the state of Newfoundland's economy continues to decline it is ever more essential that the vast majority of the province's youth gain a high school graduation that can be carried over to a post secondary education and hopefully, lead to the attainment of training in some particular occupation. In order to survive the recent trend of out migration the people of the province need to take more responsibility in being prepared to meet the demands that will be placed upon them. That preparation will require a solid educational background.

In present times when the situation in the school becomes too complex for the administration at both local and board level, the case of the delinquent child is most often handed over to the Department of Health and Community Services who hand it over to the legal system. Neither of these two departments has in place a reasonable means of

dealing with these troubled children. Unfortunately, the result is that many of these same kids are slipping through the cracks and continue to be a burden on society in their adult years.

What can and should be agreed upon is that Newfoundland needs a serious investment of both human resources and funding in an attempt to implement a program which can adequately deal with the cases of these children. All attempts must be made to salvage the individual from an unproductive and often painful life. There needs to be an innovative solution that can ease these children into "normality" in the regular classroom or remove them from the regular school setting. Legislation has granted every child in the province the right to a public education. The time has come to realize that not all children can operate effectively in such a system. Efforts have to tap into the individual differences and needs of the troubled child. No longer can it be acceptable to have these children merely exist in the regular school system. At the same time, it has to be realized that it is no longer acceptable to have these children jeopardise the educational growth and well-being of those in the regular school system. Surely society and educational systems have more to offer these children than a life of continuous turmoil and possible incarceration.

Recommendations

Based on what this study has revealed about the state of discipline in schools, the following recommendations are suggested for the Department of Education:

1. All teachers and administrators in Newfoundland's public education system

should be inserviced in innovative and effective methods of dealing with children who consistently cause school disruptions.

2. There needs to be greater collaboration between the Department of Education, the legal system, the Department of Health and Community Services, and the public in devising a plan that sees their main objective as the prevention of inappropriate behaviours from students first, and ways of dealing with cases of inappropriate behaviours second.

3. Teachers and school administrators need to be inserviced as to which actions are legally acceptable when handling children who act out in violent ways and who defy the rules of the school.

4. A greater effort has to be made to restore the healthy bond that once existed between the home and the school. Parents have to realize that the education of their children can only be achieved when there is a partnership between the home and the school. This need could be addressed in parent-teacher meetings early in the school year to ensure that all expectations of the school are clearly understood.

5. An effort has to be made to inform parents of the resources that are available in the school and the community which can help them learn how to cope with, and hopefully successfully deal with, their troubled child.

6. A greater effort must be felt in the sense of more monies from the government in providing schools with more on-site resources so that fewer of these childrens' cases escalate to the point where they need to be handled outside the immediate school setting.

7. The Newfoundland government needs to have a greater input of financial and

human resources to provide for the opportunity to study the alternatives to corporal punishment in other provinces of the country in the hopes that similar effective approaches may be adopted in the Newfoundland education system.

8. Teachers and administrators need to be provided with the most recent findings which report the lasting effects that different types of disciplinary actions can have on children.

9. There needs to be a greater effort to find ways of freeing up the time of school administrators so they can provide the adequate attention to disciplinary problems.

10. The entire Newfoundland community needs to be made more aware of the increasing importance of obtaining at least a high school graduation in the competitive work force of this province and indeed, the whole of Canada.

Recommendations for Further Research

The results of this study highlight the need for future research that is needed in several areas. Some recommendations for future research include:

1. Is there a correlation between single parent families and children who are consistent behaviour problems in school? If so, why?

2. Is there a relationship between the behaviour of children and their perceptions of their teachers?

3. Does an increase in the school population contribute to an increase in the frequency of inappropriate behaviours amongst students?

4. Does student involvement in extracurricular activities have any impact on their behaviours in school?

5. Is there a discrepancy in the disciplinary measures that are used to deal with female students as opposed to male students? If there is a difference, what can this be attributed to?

6. Are the methods of disciplining students with learning disabilities different from, and used more often than, the methods used with children who are normally well behaved in school?

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Appendix
(Letters of Consent)

Letter of Consent: School Administrator

1999

I am a graduate student from Memorial University of Newfoundland who is actively engaged in completing my masters program in Leadership in Education. I have completed all of the necessary course work and have conducted research on my topic, "The Removal of Corporal Punishment from Our Schools: Something Lost or Something Gained?" Briefly, I want to study the attitude of administrators concerning the removal of corporal punishment from our schools, and to get your insight as to the success/failures of alternate means of discipline. It is my hope that the results of this study will provide me with important information that will assist in my future teaching endeavours.

I am hoping that you will agree to a taped interview session that should take approximately one hour to complete so that I can use your responses as part of the data for my thesis paper. It is intended that all interviews will take place outside the physical setting of the school at a time of your convenience. All information gathered in this study will be strictly confidential and your identity will be kept anonymous. It is ensured that all interview tapes will be securely stored and will be destroyed when they are no longer needed for the purposes of this study. Your participation in this research is totally voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Also, I realize that should you deem it appropriate, you may refuse to answer any particular questions and may refuse the taping of the session. The study has been approved by the Faculty of Education's Ethics Review Committee.

The faculty supervisors for this study are Dr. Jerome Delaney (737-7614) and Dr. Marc Glassman (737-7627). If you wish to speak to a resource person not directly associated with this study, please contact Dr. Bruce Sheppard, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs and Research, Faculty of Education (737-3402).

I request that you sign the attached Consent Form and return it to me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Robin McGrath

Graduate Student - Educational Leadership

Faculty of Education

Consent Form: School Administrator

I, _____, hereby consent to participating in Robin McGrath's thesis project titled "The Removal of Corporal Punishment from the School System : Something Lost or Something Gained?" and to being one of the administrators interviewed in that study.

I understand that:

- a. that any information gathered in this study will be used only for educational purposes;
- b. that my participation in this study is voluntary, anonymous and confidential;
- c. that I have the right to refuse responding to any question that I wish;
- d. that I have the right to withdraw from this interview at any time.

Signature of Consenting Administrator

Signature of Witness (Optional)

Signature of Researcher

LETTER FOR PERMISSION: SCHOOL DISTRICT

P. O. Box 87
Dunville, P.B.
A0B 1S0
26 August 1999

Mr. X
Superintendent
School District X
ZOZ OZO
Nfld.

Dear Mr. X:

I am a graduate student from Memorial University of Newfoundland who is actively engaged in completing my masters program in Leadership in Education. I have completed all of the necessary course work and have conducted research on my topic. I am ready to commence my thesis and am requesting your consent to interview a total of fifteen high school administrators in School District X concerning my research topic "The Removal of Corporal Punishment from Our Schools: Something Lost or Something Gained?" Briefly, I want to study the attitude of administrators concerning the removal of corporal punishment from our schools, and to get their insight as to the success/failures of alternate means of discipline. Consent will be obtained from the administrators and I understand that anytime throughout the study the participants may refuse to participate and may refuse to answer any question if they so desire. The interviews will be

conducted outside the school setting and outside school hours. It is my hope that the results of this study will provide me with important information that will assist in my future teaching endeavours.

If you wish to discuss my proposal in detail, I may be contacted at 745-8104, or you may wish to contact my Thesis supervisors Dr. Jerome Delaney 737-7614 or Dr. Marc Glassman 737-7627. If at any time you wish to speak with a resource person not associated with this study, please contact Dr. Bruce Sheppard, Associate Dean of Graduate Programmes & Research Development at Memorial University, 737-3402. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,

Robin McGrath



