A study of the effects of a rite of passage program on truancy

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ABSTRACT

SOCIAL WORK

WILLIAMS, LESLIE L.  B.A. LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, 1992

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF A RITES OF PASSAGE PROGRAM ON TRUANCY

Advisor: Dr. Sandra Foster

Thesis dated May, 1995

A single system design study examined the impact of a Rites of Passage program upon truant, black middle school students. SETCLAE, a model Rites of Passage program was utilized as the intervention. Data were solicited via facilitator's process notes, questionnaires, and pre and post tests. Baseline and intervention data were compared resulting in a pragmatic reduction of most subjects truancy rate. It was theorized that truant students exposed to their African-American heritage within the school system would result in the students eagerly attending school. The outcome of the program indicated the subjects improved on school attendance and arriving on time.
A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF A
RITES OF PASSAGE PROGRAM ON TRUANCY

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY

LESLIE LYNN WILLIAMS

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY 1995
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am pleased to acknowledge the following people who contributed guidance, support, and encouragement throughout the preparation of this thesis: Dr. Sandra Foster, my thesis advisor, my family and friends. I express my sincere thanks for their guidance and support to enable me to complete my work. Most of all, I give thanks to God, who gave me the strength and endurance to overcome obstacles and make it one day at a time.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Despite the substantial number of truants presently, more children and teenagers are in school today than have ever been in the past. For example, in 1870 only 55% of youngsters between the ages of 5 and 17 years were enrolled in school, with 60% of those actually attending. Both enrollment and attendance reached 90% by 1970. It is important to keep in perspective that truancy is a serious problem, but a clear majority of children and teens continue to attend their scheduled classes.¹

Incidence of unexcused absence is estimated at about 7% in the United States for adolescents ages 12 through 15. Nevertheless, in some areas of the United States as many as 30% of youngsters are out of school in violation of attendance laws.² Truancy has become a conspicuous problem among middle and high school adolescents. It is estimated that as many as 25% of the students who enter high school each year will not

²Ibid, 145.
In the 1985-86 school year alone, approximately 682,000 American teenagers dropped out of school... an average of 3,789 each day. A 1987 report by Orr stated that school population of the Atlanta Public Schools shrank from a peak of over 113,000 in the 1986-87 school year to less than 72,000 in 1980-81.

Factors related to truancy are many and varied. School officials generally recognize that no two truant youngsters have identical problems, nor are the same pupils necessarily truant at the same time for the same reason or reasons; but all truants are viewed as potential dropouts from school. For instance, inner-city schools are often characterized as having greater attendance problems, higher drop-out rates, insufficient curriculum offerings, and more emphasis on discipline. In addition, students may even have a low level

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of ambition and poor self-esteem.\textsuperscript{7}

A majority of black youths live in the metropolitan inner-city areas. These areas can characteristically be described as communities filled with poverty, single-parent families, inadequate health and medical care, child abuse and neglect including family violence.\textsuperscript{8} Black youths are constantly affected by their environment and the stereotypes faced within society. Also most of these communities lack the resources (social service and support systems) to buffer the impact of these stressors of the environment, which poses serious implications for the future of black youths even those who make a tremendous effort at obtaining an education.

Truancy can be thought of as an outcome of antecedent factors. Researchers may attempt to uncover these factors by assessing the characteristics of truants, their families, their environmental and social setting, and school variables.\textsuperscript{9} In addition, the typical student referred because of truancy is likely to be between 14 and 16 years old, in junior high or middle school, functioning considerably below grade level, and


\textsuperscript{8}Ibid.

from a single-parent family, according to Johnson.¹⁰

Truancy infers absence from each class, disrupting or destroying effective teacher instruction. Which is also known as cutting classes or in-school truancy. Teachman stated in-school truancy means that the student has no problem attending school; he just does not go to all of his classes.¹¹ Truant students stay away from certain classes because they want to and/or because they deceive authority figures. They tend to have a powerful influence on their peers to skip classes, as well. These students who walk the halls engage in destructive activities like disrupting classes or vandalizing school property.

The most obvious and immediate implication of truancy is reflected in the truant's academic deficits. Therefore, if students do not attend school, it is virtually impossible for them to receive the instruction necessary to keep up with the level of their classmates and earn passing grades (Birman & Natriello, 1978; Schultz, 1987). Other studies report findings that truancy is associated with juvenile and adult deviance including drug and alcohol abuse, criminal behavior, marital problems, violent behavior, loitering, and vandalism (Robins & Radcliffe, 1980; Schultz, 1987). Truancy is also


associated with lower-status occupations, less stable career patterns, and more unemployment in adulthood (Birman & Natriello, 1978; Farrington, 1985; Gray Smith, & Rutter, 1980). Therefore, the effects of truancy upon a student's future is detrimental. This is the reason why it's imperative that black youths realize the importance of their education for advancement in today's society.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Truancy represents the greatest obstacle to achievement in inner city schools within the black student population. Other conditions inner-city youths face are low financial support, poverty-stricken environments, drug-infested areas, and a breakdown of the family as a strong social unit.

Truancy is a symptom of several problems in society as stated above. Society's response to this problem has given a strong impetus to research to explore the causative factors for truancy more in depth. The causes have shifted from the individual, intellectual, personality, family, home, and/or school factors as determinants of absence from school (Galloway, 1985; Reid, 1987; Nielsen and Gerber, 1979; Sommer, 1985; Grant 1989; and Coleman, 1989).


13 Victoria La'Shon Hankerson, "Truancy: Student-Teacher Relationship Contributing Factor to Truancy" (Thesis, Clark Atlanta University, 1990), 14-15.
The family's attitude of school attendance has an impact on children as well. Levine (1984) and Galloway (1985), point out that the family's attitude toward school is a contributing factor to truancy. Further, Nielsen and Gerber (1979) found that families of truants were subject to multiple and serious stressors. These stressors included divorce or separation, single parent families, unemployment, serious illness, parental discord, and alcoholism. Moreover, absentees are more likely to come from the more disadvantaged home within any one social class, according to Galloway (1983) and Reid (1987).¹⁴

Factors within the school system may also generate truancy, according to Galloway (1983) and Reid (1987). These factors include rates of satisfaction with schooling (Reynolds, 1985) and student-teacher relationship (Nielsen and Gerber, 1979). Nielsen and Gerber also pointed out that school administrators did not attempt to understand the antecedents of truancy and responded primarily with punishment. Consequently, students may express that the school system is failing to meet their needs by not attending.¹⁵ Therefore, the previously mentioned causative factors demonstrates there is no one factor that accounts for truancy.

¹⁴Victoria La'Shon Hankerson, "Truancy: Student-Teacher Relationship Contributing Factor to Truancy" (Thesis, Clark Atlanta University, 1990), 16-17.

¹⁵Ibid, 18.
One factor that will be looked at in this study is cultural relativity. The focus will be on how cultural awareness and self-awareness enhance self-esteem. Black youth need to possess knowledge of self and culture to successfully address the problems they face in today's world. Youths who possess strong self-esteem will be motivated to control their fate. Therefore, black youth maintain the potential to try harder in achieving all endeavors.

The purpose of this single system study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a Rites of Passage Program on truant students. How can the SETCLAE curriculum which focuses on enhancing self-esteem, build upon children's eagerness to attend school? Therefore, the major focus of this study shall be derived from the question: What affect, if any will SETCLAE, A RITES OF PASSAGE PROGRAM have on truancy among black students.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Truancy, as defined by Tyerman is "unjustified absence on a child's own initiative without permission of parents or school".¹ Truancy is not merely a modern dilemma. As early as 1872, the problem of "early school leavers" was causing concern for school officials. In 1884, only one-third of the students required to attend public school actually did so. In 1933, more than two-thirds of all school absences were non-illness related.²

Compulsory-attendance legislation from mid-nineteenth century to about 1890 occurred in most states. However, these laws were unenforced and probably unenforceable due to compulsion going through an ideological phase. Eventually, states passed new laws with provisions for effective enforcement, including requirements for censuses to determine how many children there were, attendance officers, elaborate "pupil accounting", and often state financing of schools in

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proportion to average daily attendance. The enactment of the Compulsory School Attendance laws by the majority of the states was to address problems in society. The problems associated with poverty, immigration, child labor, and juvenile delinquency.

Advocacy for youths arose during the nineteenth century, as well, due to such social problems. Objections were raised by labor and child advocates to the exploitation of children in the workplace. Moreover, advocates of compulsory schooling often argued that families - or at least some families, like those of the poor or foreign-born were failing to carry out their traditional functions of moral and vocational training. Reformers complained that immigrant children in crowded cities were leading disorderly lives, schooled by the street and their peers more than by Christian nurture in the home. However, reformers used the powers of the state to intervene in families and to create alternative institutions of socialiation.

Social reform during the decades of the nineteenth century was a way to maintain order within the environment.

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This meant eradication of social problems, or that problems of the world become organized. Furthermore, state organization of schooling was the means of dealing with these problems. Therefore, schools were to be constituted as places of safety - havens for which would secure future generations from these external dangers.⁶

In the years after 1890, public attitudes toward compulsory schooling appeared to become more positive. In addition, school systems grew in size and complexity, new techniques of bureaucratic control emerged, ideological conflict over compulsion diminished, strong laws were passed, and school officials developed sophisticated techniques to bring truants into schools. This development in American education lead to various states requiring youth to attend high school by the 1920s and 1930s. Therefore, secondary-school attendance had become so customary by the 1950s that school-leavers were routinely seen as "dropouts".⁷

More importantly, the enactment of Compulsory School Attendance laws was due to education being viewed as "the means by which the state would support the family in preparing its children to become self-supporting, contributing members of the community and help children from poor families improve

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their standards of living".8

TRUANCY

Presently, in the 1990s the enactment of these laws still remain in existence, yet the problem of truancy has not been alleviated. Truancy is a social problem which impacts students' environment. Truancy also has significant consequences for the student. Truants receive lower grades and show less than expected learning gains.9 The truant typically has low self-esteem, feels powerless in school, and subsequently, may become resentful. He or she also does not engender much respect from other, better-attending students.10

However, the underlying causes of truancy gives a clearer perspective of the typical truant. The idea will suggest the link between truancy, poverty, and failure to achieve. Children believed to be involved in truancy are often viewed as endangered for truancy.11 According to Tyerman,


truanting children often wander away from school because they cannot cope satisfactorily with their difficulties. In addition, the typical persistent truant is unhappy at home, unpopular at school, and unsuccessful in his/her classwork.\textsuperscript{12}

Truanting children will tend to come from decaying inner city areas, live in overcrowded conditions, be poorly dressed, have broken homes or parents with unhappy marriages. Truants are likely to come from large families and to have at least one sibling who is also a truant. Truants living in these circumstances, may have parents who set a poor example, have low standards, neglect them and be ineffective in supervision. Nevertheless, the children tend to be intellectually and academically inferior to their peers and, though they may be sociable, are unreliable, showing little perseverance at school. Therefore, poor attendance increases the difficulties of keeping up with the work of other children. Thus a vicious cycle of failure and truancy is established.\textsuperscript{13}

Truancy problems can be blamed on ineffective school attendance policies. In some cases, the costs in time and energy to enforce compulsory education statutes seem to outweigh the benefits. As a result, schools will develop policies that devote the most energy to those students


expected to have the best chance of success. But, attention should be paid to executing effective policies since the schools are left with the burden of dealing with this issue. Furthermore, schools can have an impact on truancy when they give high priority to effective attendance policies.¹⁴

Programs

Responses to truancy generally are in the form of school-based programs, family counseling, or juvenile court programs. School programs dealing with truancy use one of four approaches. The first approach is policies that give academic incentives for good attendance. For example, a New York school district requires students to maintain an 85 percent attendance rate to participate in any cocurricular school activity. Generally, such policies have had only limited success in reducing chronic truancy. The next approach is policies that give administrative consequences for non-attendance, such as suspensions or detentions. This approach can help the occasional "class cutter" who is basically integrated into school. However, such punitive policies have not been effective with the chronic truant, since they provide no positive motivation to attend school. The third approach involves policies that give academic consequences for nonattendance, such as lowering grades or

removing students from the regular school program. For instance, in Virginia, truants are assigned to an alternative night school program. Thus, the truant student keeps up with schoolwork, but loses the social rewards of regular classes. The final approach is programs that provide supportive services. For example, an Illinois junior high school provides truants with counseling to develop strategies for changing their truant behavior.\textsuperscript{15}

Another practical tactic for reducing truancy is family-based counseling. Many forms of therapy have been effective, but there is considerable disagreement about how soon truants should be returned to school. Some recommend an early return approach, assuming that the longer return to school is delayed, the more the student falls behind in school-work, is dependent upon family, and becomes socially isolated.\textsuperscript{16}

Others insist on an immediate return to school so as to create a crisis in the family. Therefore, the therapist can deal with the family's dysfunctional behavior. The family is then taught how to deal with conflicts in healthier ways. When the child does return to school, attendance should no longer be sabotaged by dysfunctional family behavior and the


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, 44.
truanting behavior is eliminated.\textsuperscript{17}

The community also attempts to respond to truancy effectively through providing services. Community agencies provide such resources as social workers, juvenile probation officers, law enforcement officers, and the courts. For instance, a truancy diversion program is used in Lake County, Indiana. This program was devised to keep truants in school and out of the court system. In addition, probation officers visit the truant's home and schedule informal hearings to develop a plan of intervention. If these steps are not effective, the case is brought to juvenile court.\textsuperscript{18}

Effective remedial efforts for the habitual truant are also described in the literature. Most of these are "pull-out" programs that attempt to change the students' behavior while they are away from the main population. In one Tennessee school, students with attendance problems attend a two-week individualized special program through which they catch up on regular class assignments and receive study help and counseling.

Another nine-week training program for chronic truants in another school teaches the skills students need to succeed in school. Diagnosis and remediation are the two major program components. After the program is completed, the students'

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.

attendance, behavior, and academic performance are closely monitored for a nine-week follow-up period.¹⁹

Historically, interventions for truant behavior have been targeted at three areas as stated above, the individual truant, the family of the truant, and the educational institution. The individual-based intervention targets the individual truant to alter or modify some characteristics such as low self-esteem, disruptive or disobedient behaviors. For instance, Miller (1986) used an in-school suspension program where the intervention consisted of counseling, biography-writing therapy, and contingency contracting. This therapeutic approach resulted in more positive attitudes toward school attendance, improved attendance, greater insight by the students into their attendance problems. However, the cause of the students more positive attitude is uncertain because the control group exhibited identical increases in these variables.²⁰

Another approach, investigated by Grala and McCauley (1976), indicated that supportive instruction (involving extra tutoring, acceptable places to do homework, and attention from the experimenter) was effective in improving attendance and increasing the amount of time the truant spent receiving


outside tutoring (Grala & McCauley, 1976). However, the sample here was drawn from a low income inner-city neighborhood where all the subjects were either black or Puerto Rican making the generalizability of these results unclear. The studies examined above proved to be effective in reducing truancy. Yet, truancy is a problem with multiple causes and impacts. So to effectively treat the problem of chronic truancy, one must look beyond the scope of the individual truant and focus also on the family and the school system.21

The familial-based interventions are effective in that it attempts to either alter a dysfunctional familial situation or simply achieve more parental involvement in the child's education. One particular strategy is family therapy. Bryce and Baird (1986) report that family therapy for truants enables young people and their families whose growth and development has come to a standstill to resume this development. As with individual-based interventions, interventions targeted strictly at the family might be more effective if they included measures targeted at the individual student and at the school.22

Lastly, school-base interventions focus on the truant student, the attendance policy, and teachers to reduce truancy. This type of intervention can be effective through

21Ibid.

22Ibid, 206-207.
the use of stringent attendance policies which impact the student and parent(s). Besides, just focusing on the truant and modifying the individual's behavior, both the student and parents can be forced to comply with attendance policies. However, truancy can no longer be regarded as only a school problem. Its scope is much broader than the educational institution, encompassing the individual student's characteristics, the familial situation, and societal contributions. Therefore, truancy intervention that encompasses and addresses all of these areas should be even more effective in reducing the incidences of truancy.23

Modern treatment of truancy should concentrate on the child, the family, and the school as involved in creating a context of truancy. The suggestion is intervention that addresses these issues of context and relationship offer the best possible outcome.24 Therefore, the previously mentioned differences between the types of interventions and/or programs to alleviate truancy need to be integrated as one. Furthermore, one approach can be more effective with multiple targets: individual truant, the parents, and the school system. A multimodal approach will not postulate a linear cause of truancy and be limited. In addition, a multimodal


intervention program will be more effective in reducing truancy rates by affecting the child, the family, and the school system.

**RITES OF PASSAGE**

Truancy is a national social problem crossing all ethnic and geographical boundaries, but is most acute among inner city black youth. Black American children nationwide comprise approximately only 17% of all children in public schools. In addition, a study conducted by Levine, Metzendorf, and VanBoskirk (1986) found a higher proportion of black students to be truant (73.9%) than white students (26.1%).

According to historical perspective, this modern attitude of education from most of the black race is ironic. Educational attainment among blacks was valued and seen as being the "way out" in the past. One of the latent facts regarding progress of educational attainment during the 1960s and 1970s is the extent to which black youth and their families took advantage of the opening in educational opportunity.

The public education system of the United States mirrors

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the essence of the dominant American culture's world view, values, mores, and behaviors and embodies capitalism, competitiveness, racism, sexism, and oppression. Black American parents and their offspring historically had participated in a public school system that values independence over interdependence and mutual aid, competition over cooperation, materialism over spiritualism, and youth worship over elder reverence. These values have confused black people and oriented them toward the American definitions of achievement and success and away from traditional African values. The educational system and socialization process devised by this dominant culture has proven to be dysfunctional and genocidal to the Black American community. As Woodson (1969) and Hale (1982) have asserted, public education for African Americans and European Americans historically has served different purposes: while European Americans are educated to assume positions of power in society, African Americans are educated to fill subordinate positions.28

However, independent (nonpublic) schooling has long been an option available to Black American communities. During the era of the civil rights movement, some blacks established "alternative" schools to enable their children to continue

their educational activities while school boycotts or teacher strikes were being staged in protest against the inequitable conditions in segregated schools. Other blacks established full-fledged private schools or after-school programs associated with public schools whose expressed purpose was to provide black youth with the cultural information and values they would need to counter the potentially detrimental effects of a Eurocentrically oriented society. Another means that has recently been adopted in Black American communities to serve this purpose is the independently functioning educational process called the adolescent rites of passage.29

The African American adolescent rites of passage process is aimed at instilling a strong, positive sense of self and achievement in Black American youth and returning a sense of empowerment to Black American families and communities. Rites of passage programs address needs that are not met by the traditional, secular, Eurocentric system of education that has produced most of the current theories of learning and development in the United States. Furthermore, it addresses the total person, not just the academic facilities used in the process of acquiring knowledge. Children are socialized and prepared for adulthood and adult status via the adolescent rites of passage process at the stage of puberty. Thus, the

adolescent rite of passage is a supervised developmental and
educational process whose goal is to assist young people in
attaining the knowledge and accepting the responsibilities,
privileges, and duties of an adult member of society. 

Contemporary rites of passage programs sponsored by
responsible adult men and women offer guidance, resources, and
information black youth need to make a successful transition
to adulthood. The emphasis is on academic achievement,
cultural and self-knowledge, character building, and virtue.
The rites of passage can thus be considered a social and
cultural "inoculation" process that facilitates healthy,
African-centered development among Black American youth and
protects them against the ravages of a racist, sexist,
capitalist, and oppressive society. Most importantly, it
prepares them physically, mentally, and spiritually for active
resistance and struggle against the seductive lure of the
American Way.

There are different types of models of adolescent rites
of passage programs: community-based, agency- or
organizationally based, school-based, church-based,
therapeutic, and family-based. Little or no research has been
conducted on the types and models of rites of passage programs

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30 Ibid.

31 Nsenga Warfield-Coppock, "The Rites of Passage
Movement: A Resurgence of African-Centered Practices for
Socializing African American Youth," Journal of Negro
presently operating in the United States. Many of the programs are community-based and ownership of their activities is tightly held within these organizations. Second, the diverse nature of communities makes the replication of practices difficult and sometimes undesirable. Third, due to their historically private nature, rites of passage programs do not easily lend themselves to evaluation.32

Africentricity

According to Hill, institutions are methods and ideas which sustain a social theory or in the vernacular, "continue a way of life". He suggests Africans worldwide continue to be trained by these institutions rather than educated. Training is defined as being manipulated to bring into the desired form of the oppressor. Education is defined as acquiring knowledge and developing the powers of reasoning in order to develop and sustain one's own people and culture.33 Furthermore, culture is defined as a system of socially standardized ideas, feelings, knowledge, and sentiments which makes the human group possible.34

32Ibid, 474-476.

33Paul Hill, Jr., Coming of Age: African American Male Rites-Of-Passage (Chicago: African American Images, 1992), 90.

Rites-Of-Passage is African-centered and synonymous with the socialization continuum. According to Hill, rites should be regarded as areas of reinforcement and elevated affirmation in the socialization process. In addition, Rites-Of-Passage and Africentricity exist as a way of life. The nearest equivalent to Rites-Of-Passage in Africa is the traditional African educational system. Rites-Of-Passage, as a part of the Africentric socialization model, is a confirmation/affirmation that recognizes who we are during our quest for identity at the various stages of life.\(^{35}\)

A noteworthy characteristic that is central to the African and African American worldview is that the group is much more important than the individual.\(^{36}\) Thus, success related to an Africentric socialization process, means Blacks must succeed as a people, not just as individuals. Moreover, a sense of peoplehood or collective social identity is necessary to institutionalize Africentricity. An Africentric institution in the United States is Kwanzaa, the African American celebration. Most Rites-Of-Passage efforts in our communities reflect an incorporation of the Nguzo Saba or seven principles of Kwanzaa. Kwanzaa reinforces Africentric


values and principles: unity, self determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith. It has become a prescription for living to many participants of the celebration.\textsuperscript{37}

The existing values and world view of Western society are contrary to the needs of Black Americans. We as a race of people should move to self-determination in our communities to redefine our reality or strategies to reaffirm and confirm our peoplehood in methods other than mainstream cultural context. Africentricity must be interpreted as an optimal or holistic conceptual system that functions to maximize positivity and the greatest good.\textsuperscript{38}

Definition of Terms:

The investigator operationally defines "truancy" as the dependent variable, and SETCLAE, a model type of Rites of Passage program as the independent variable. For better understanding, the following terms are defined:

\textbf{Compulsory School Attendance} - Mandatory elementary and secondary schooling for children six years old to sixteen.

\textbf{Excused Absence} - A student who has a valid reason(s) for not attending school that is approved by a school official.

\textsuperscript{37}Paul Hill, Jr., \textit{Coming of Age: African American Male Rites-Of-Passage} (Chicago: African American Images, 1992), 95-96; 99-100.

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid, 92.
Truancy or Unexcused Absence - A student who has been absent from school without the knowledge or justifiable consent of his parent or legal guardian; who is not exempt from attendance by virtue of being over the age of compulsory school attendance; and by not meeting the criteria for any other exemption.

Truants - Truants are identified as students who frequently or habitually absent from school without an acceptable excuse.

Statement of Hypothesis

In this study the following hypothesis will be tested: SETCLAE, a model type of Rites of Passage program will reduce the truancy rate among black middle school students.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at Kennedy Middle School which is located in the inner-city area of Atlanta. In speaking with Ms. Porter, she said the middle school shares a building with a community center. This building was designed to house branch offices of agencies for Vine City and surrounding areas. The school serves five public housing projects, as well. The middle school itself is reflective of its environment in that the building exhibits a dreary atmosphere.\(^1\) Overall, the teacher/student morale at this school is medial. The school suffers from several disruptive students disregard for learning and following rules. Quite clearly, the school is seen as and felt to be a dumping ground of behavior problem students and those that other schools refuse to accept due to their nonattendance.

The subjects who participated in the study are black 7th and 8th grade middle school students. The subjects range in age from 14-16. The students have exhibited poor attendance from school and truant behavior. These male and female students were referred to the School Social Worker for

\(^1\)Miriam Porter, School Social Worker, interview by author, 10 October 1994, Atlanta, conference, John F. Kennedy Middle School and Community Center, Atlanta.
frequent unexcused absences, tardiness, and class cutting.

The students come from single-parent households or live with a legal guardian. I will rename the five students who participated in the study. David is an 8th grade repeater who lives with his mother and two siblings, an older brother and younger sister. His parents are separated, but he maintains contact with his father. He was absent 20 days over a period of three months. He is also involved in an after school program.

Shelia an 8th grade student who lives with her mother has an older brother that lives on his own. She was absent 30 days over a period of three months. Shelia does not exhibit control over her attitude. She is usually suspended for inappropriate behavior and talk toward her teachers. She is also on probation with juvenile court.

Crystal is a 7th grade student who lives with her grandfather, the legal guardian. Her mother is deceased. She has two brothers, but one is deceased also. Crystal is pregnant as well. She was absent 30 days over a period of three months.

Lisa is an 8th grade repeater who lives with her mother and two sisters. Her father is incarcerated and she has no contact with him. She and her family live in one of the most dangerous housing projects in Atlanta. She lives a good distance from the school she attends, but receives tokens from the School Social Worker. She was absent 21 days over a
period of three months. Lisa is a disruptive student with a behavior problem.

Michael an 8th grade student lives with his mother and siblings. He is a hostile and disobedient student who cuts classes and roams the halls. He was absent 33 days over a three month period. He is usually suspended for fighting. A recommendation of expulsion is pending on Michael for assaulting another male student.

These students' parents or guardian were usually unaware of their children's absences. The School Social Worker had made previous contact with the parents via telephone or letters through the mail. One parent came to the school to have a conference with the School Social Worker about the student's attendance.

INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The study was conducted in the Spring of 1995 and examined if the implementation of a Rites of Passage program, SETCLAE had any impact on truant students. Two months prior to the program's initiation, a rapport was established between the facilitator and the students. The students were informed about the program in detail (eg.: the reasons it may be appropriate for them and the topics to be covered during the sessions) as a group. The program grew out of group work effort with these students referred by teachers to the School Social Worker for excessive absences and tardiness. The
parents or guardian were contacted and informed of their children's interest to participate in the program as well.

The subjects were selected according to the number of absences via the teacher referral. The students participated on a volunteer basis. Initially, there were five students participating in the program. However, frequent absences due to suspension or other circumstances, lack of interest, as well as missing sessions, eventually decreased from five to three.

The program was structured according to the following schedule. The students met with the facilitator twice a week (Mondays and Tuesdays) in group sessions for an half hour. The subjects were excused from class. There were eight sessions which spanned a period of six weeks.

The sessions covered the following topics: African history; presenting self before the group; rules, rights, and responsibilities; Black English; goal setting; family; public speaking; friendship; and music. The students also viewed a videotape, *From Pyramids to Slave Dungeons to Liberation* by Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu about Africa past and present. A typical session consisted of an opening ritual (a poem is recited by all praising a student who acted positively in any situation), the lesson or topic to be covered during Harambee (pull together) Time, and the closing ritual (sharing benefits received from Harambee Time and saying a pledge in call and
response fashion).²

The opening and closing rituals done at the beginning and end of each 30-minute session of Harambee Time is important. The reason is these value-instilling exercises include a song, a pledge, and an opportunity for students to praise each other and share newfound information with their classmates.³ The program began the last week in January and ran until the second week of March.

The major program goal was to reduce the truancy rate of each student through motivation to attend school. Students would develop self-motivation through enhancement of their self-esteem through cultural awareness. The subjects' goals were to come to school on time and attend each class. The facilitator also took appropriate time to meet with students on an individual basis to discuss their issues. The individual counseling sessions were utilized to enhance the students communication skills and express their concerns or "vent" their feelings about any situation and/or conflicts at school.

The facilitator maintained contact with the subjects' teachers about their behavior and academic performance during class. The parents were contacted to inform them of their children's progress and participation in the program via the

³Ibid, 4.
telephone. The subjects were asked to verbalize their perspective and give feedback of their participation in the program, and if improving their attendance, time arriving to school, and if attending each class. The facilitator reinforced session lessons with the student through their daily performance and experience. As well as, praised them for their daily participation.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The basic single-system design, termed the A-B design, A for baseline and B for intervention will be utilized in this study. This simple design will provide objective information on changes in the target problem. The target problem and/or dependent variable being truancy. The independent variable being SETCLAE, a model of Rites of Passage program.

Attendance records utilized in this baseline phase had been kept as standard operating procedure of the school, therefore baseline data were reliable. The attendance record was utilized as baseline data from the beginning of the school year through the intervention phase. The homeroom teacher recorded the students attendance daily and what time the student arrived, if tardy.

The students had to sign in late at the attendance office. It was the responsibility of the student to sign the tardy list of the time he or she arrived, homeroom teacher's name, grade, and signature. Once he or she filled out a tardy
slip, the student took a copy of it to his/her homeroom teacher to be admitted to the next class.

The facilitator monitored students' attendance by collecting the attendance record weekly during intervention. The students were asked for feedback as to whether or not they perceived changes in the their behavior in class, academic performance, and promptness to each class. The facilitator discussed with the subjects perception of their progress and feedback received from the teachers also.

DATA COLLECTION

A questionnaire was used to gather the data. During the first session, a pre-test was administered. The same test was also administered at the last session. The questions pertained to the student's feelings about school, family, friends, and the African heritage. The items were relevant to the variables being studied.

The SETCLAE Student Profile (questionnaire) was administered to the students at the onset of the program. The profile serves as a measuring device so that the initial self-esteem of the students can be determined and their progress measured. The profile was developed strictly for use with SETCLAE, but has validity in any setting as many of the self-esteem indicators that are measured in widely used inventories. The profile attempts to measure several items that fall outside the conventional areas believed to affect
self-esteem. Such areas as one's knowledge and perception of one's own family, African and African-American history, one's attitude toward school, values formed from television, radio, and other primary influences which have an effect on self-esteem. These factors are particularly crucial regarding the development of the African-American child.4

The facilitator also kept weekly process recordings of the individual and group sessions. A profile was kept on each student. The facilitator documented on the student's behavior, interactions, as well as active or observant participation during group sessions. The program variable was assessed by the subjects expressing their feelings about school and any conflicts they had during group sessions.

CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The two areas of focus was on the students attendance and absences before and during intervention. The students rate of attendance and/or truancy was charted for a period of seven months. The results indicated an improvement in four out of five subjects' attendance.

The baseline average attendance rate was computated for each subject. Subject one attended school 2.42% of the time. The subject's frequent absences were calculated also as follows: 5.3% illness-related, 4% suspension rate, and 2.6% other excused absence. The majority of Lisa's absences which included unexcused absences were due to her rate of truancy at 29.3%. Lisa was tardy twenty-nine days when she attended school during the baseline phase. The subject was absent a total of 31 days during the four month baseline phase: 4 out of 21 days in the month of September, 11 out of 21 school days in the month of October, 6 out of 18 days in November, and 10 out of 15 school days in December. The months of November and December had a minimum number of school days due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Intervention began the fifth or last week in January. Subject one attended school 3.67% of the time during intervention. The percentage of Lisa's attendance during intervention was higher than the baseline phase. The subject's absences were 3.0% illness-related. Lisa's
suspension rate dropped to zero during intervention, as well. The majority of subject one's absences were due to her rate of truancy at 24.2%. However, Lisa's truancy rate slightly declined as compared to the baseline phase. Lisa was tardy thirteen days during this phase which decreased as compared to baseline.

Figure 1. Lisa's monthly absences at baseline and intervention.

Subject two attended school 1.67% of the time. Michael's suspension rate was calculated at 13.3%. His frequent absences were due to a truancy rate of 46.7%. Michael was tardy seven days when he did attend school during the baseline
phase. The subject was absent a total of 45 days during the four month baseline phase: 12 out of 21 days in the month of September, 13 out of 21 school days in the month of October, 8 out of 18 days in November, and 12 out of 15 days in December.

Michael did show some improvement in attendance during the intervention phase until he dropped out of the study. His attendance rate during this phase was 2.54%. The subject's absences were related to truancy at a rate of 39.4%. However, his truancy rate did decrease slightly during the intervention phase as compared to baseline. Michael's suspension rate dropped to zero also. He was tardy only two days during intervention.
Subject three attended school 2.68% of the time. David's suspension rate was calculated at 8.0%. His frequent absences were due to a truancy rate of 29.3%. David was tardy eighteen days when he did attend school during the baseline phase. The subject was absent a total of 28 days during the four month baseline phase: 11 out of 21 days in the month of September, 5 out of 21 school days in the month of October, 4 out of 18 days in November, and 8 out of 15 school days in December.

David attended school 8.25% of the time during the intervention phase. The percentage of David's attendance during this phase was higher than the baseline phase. The
subject's absences were related to a decreased rate of truancy at 12.1% as compared to the baseline phase. The number of days he was tardy declined as well to four days during intervention.

![Figure 3. David's monthly absences at baseline and intervention.](image)

Subject four attended school 1.92% of the time during the baseline phase. Shelia's suspension rate was calculated at 10.7%. Her frequent absences were due to a truancy rate of 40%. The subject was tardy three days when she did attend school during baseline. Shelia was absent a total of 39 days
during the four month baseline phase: 13 out of 21 days in the month of September, 8 out of 21 days in the month of October, 10 out of 18 days in November, and 8 out of 15 days in December.

Shelia attended school 1.57% of the time during the intervention phase. The percentage of her attendance during this phase was minutely lower than at baseline. The subject's suspension rate increased to 51.5%. However, Shelia's truancy rate declined to 12.1% until she dropped out of the study. The subject was tardy only one day during the intervention phase when she did attend school.
Subject five attended school 2.27% of the time during the baseline phase. The subject was excessively absent during the school year thus far due to her being pregnant. Crystal's absences resulted in a truancy rate of 33.3%. She was also tardy eleven days when she attended school during the baseline phase. The subject was absent a total of 33 days during the four month baseline phase: 13 out of 21 days in the month of September, 10 out of 21 days in the month of October, 7 out of 18 school days in November, and 3 out of 15 days in December.
Crystal attended school 1.38% of the time during the intervention phase. The percentage of her attendance during this phase was slightly lower than at baseline. Crystal's condition resulted in her truancy rate increasing to 72.7%. Therefore, Crystal's truancy rate did not reduce because of her pregnancy. However, the subject's number of days tardy declined to two days when she did attend school during intervention.

Figure 5. Crystal's monthly absences at baseline and intervention.
The findings revealed a shift from baseline through intervention for subject one, subject two, subject three, and subject four in school attendance and a reduced rate of truancy. However, subject five's condition caused her to be excessively absent. Therefore, four out of five subjects did satisfy the program goal of attending school and decreasing their rate of truancy. All the subjects number of days tardy decreased during the intervention phase as compared to the baseline phase. The subjects did improve on their arriving at school on time during intervention, even subject five.

The subjective measure which was the facilitator's process notes suggested that certain subject's attitude toward school changed for the better. Each subject's pre and post-test results were compared also. The emphasis was on questions pertaining to school, the subject in relation to school, as well as the subject's self-esteem.

Five subjects were administered a pre-test. The baseline test scores indicated that all subjects had a positive self-esteem. Furthermore, the subjects' responses to the questions indicated their individual level of self-esteem which ranged from high to fair. The baseline test scores also suggested that most subjects were interested in school. Three questions in particular measured students value of education, feelings regarding himself or herself, and their future.

Question 1. Doing well in school. Answer, Important To Me or Not Important To Me.
Question 2. I have personal goals. Answer, Yes or No. 

Question 3. School will help me to accomplish my own goals. Answer, Yes or No.

Four subjects responded that doing well in school was important to them. Subject two, Michael was the only student to respond that doing well in school was not important to him. All the subjects responded yes to question 2. The subjects responses to question three varied: three subjects responded yes and two subjects responded no.

Three subjects were administered the post-test. Subject two, Michael was recommended for expulsion before the program ended. He could not attend school due to the pending issue. Subject four, Shelia was suspended from school before the program ended, as well. However, the post-test results did demonstrate a significant change for subject five, Crystal in relation to her attitude toward school. Her post-test response to question 3 was yes. Subject one and subject three responses to the three questions were the same, yes. The overall scores on these three subjects' pre and post-test indicate that the questionnaire was reliable, since the subjects' self-esteem was consistently positive from baseline to intervention.

The facilitator's process notes revealed that only two subjects attended the group sessions on a consistent basis. The subjects exhibited a lack of interest in the program and motivation in school at the beginning of intervention. The
subjects commented how school was boring.

However, certain subjects displayed an increased interest in school toward the end of intervention. The particular program sessions which sparked their motivation were the topics rules, rights, and responsibilities, and goal setting. These two topics were relevant in regards to the students understanding how their behavior and actions affect their lives.

The students who attended these sessions completed worksheets on the previously mentioned topics. For example, subject one wrote that she had the right to voice her opinion in class; but had the responsibility to raise her hand and listen to others, as well as obey the teacher. In addition, subject three completed a worksheet on goal setting to realize how to set a goal and determine the steps necessary to reach it. For instance, David's primary goal is to go to summer school so he can be promoted to the 10th grade. He understood that one way he could reach this goal was to get a summer job to help his mother pay for him to go to summer school.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION

As previously stated within the review of the literature, truancy is a social problem. The findings indicated that SETCLAE, a model Rites of Passage program did have some effect on middle school students' truancy rate.

The subjects within this study were identified as Black middle school students on the 7th and 8th grade level, ranging from ages 14-16. The data was collected through two objective measures and one subjective measure. These measures were used to ascertain whether or not the intervention had been responsible for the students change in rate of truancy. It was believed that if truant students were exposed to their culture and African heritage within the school, this would result in the students eagerly attending school. The program facilitator was seeking to discover whether or not the program's goals had been met, that is whether the subjects would be motivated to attend school and arrive on time.

It was observed that each subject's truancy rate decreased to some extent, except subject five. The subjects number of days tardy declined as well. Therefore, the majority of the subjects during intervention attended school more often and arrived on time occasionally. According to the
subjective measure of the facilitator's process notes, three out of five subjects exhibited an increased interest and motivation toward school by the end of the program. Therefore, a few subjects reached their own goals as well as the program's goals.

The study made a distinction between excused and unexcused absences to delineate each subject's rate of truancy at baseline and intervention for comparison. The utilization of the attendance records provided reliable and valid data since the homeroom teachers maintained the records.

Overall, the program did not experience any interruptions, except for the location of the sessions being in the main office. Other factors may have influenced the overall effectiveness of the program, or factors that were not controlled for. These factors may have been the fact that this was the facilitator's first time conducting a Rites of Passage program. Also there was no outside evaluator to observe the facilitator's effectiveness in implementing the program. Another concern was students class time being interrupted. The facilitator communicated these concerns with the subjects' homeroom teachers. Consequently, an appropriate early morning schedule was established for the program sessions.

The weekly program sessions involved group activities that were designed to encourage discussion. The group was comprised of five students at the beginning of intervention.
However, two participants dropped out of the study before the program was terminated. This extraneous variable of mortality was not controllable. Nevertheless, these participants absences did not have a notable effect on the study's findings. The small group of students did not create a suitable environment for discussion though. The facilitator fell short of certain session objectives because only one or two participants were in attendance.

The limited amount of time in which the study was conducted during the intervention phase may have influenced the program outcome. The six-week intervention may not have allowed students to further express their interest in program activities to relate what they learned into their daily experiences. Even though, three out of five subjects exhibited practical gains, a follow-up plan was not implemented to control for rival hypotheses. Additionally, there is no way to ensure that the changes were actually caused by intervention or if there were lasting changes, since there was no maintenance of the A-B design.

In conclusion, the study implies that African-American culture integrated into school curriculum may be a significant factor necessary within the school system to draw Black middle school students to school.

Limitations of the Study

The instrument utilized to measure subject's self-esteem
was a revised version of the SETCLAE Student Profile. The questionnaire in this study may not have been exhaustive or mutually exclusive in regards to the responses. Some responses may be considered biased in regards to gender. The study did not conduct a statistical analysis due to the small sample size. This study is not generalizable because of the small sample size and it may not be truly representative of a truant population.

Suggested Research Directions

Further research is necessary to determine the cause of truancy among black youth. Such research should investigate the motives and contributions of truancy in relation to the student's family, home, and school life. Perhaps, additional research investigating specifically what type of program may effectively respond to the different variables effecting truancy would be helpful.

Implications For Social Work Practice

Truancy has become a long-standing problem for the past several decades. According to the review of the literature, education and truancy developed one after the other in complexity. However, the latter had an adverse effect on the educational system and society in general. Furthermore, in the review of the literature, it is evident that society values education to have attempted to alleviate the social
problem of truancy.

Social work services grew out of concern for underprivileged pupils, now it is a necessary component for the school system for all students requiring individualized needs. Additionally, school social work services are essential to understanding the dynamics of the school, home, and family upon today's youth. The school social worker's role as a change agent is vital to assessing the students needs. They can be influential in providing services as well as solutions to truancy and other situations within the school system. The school social worker's knowledge and skills can be utilized creatively to propose and implement intervention strategies also.

The school social worker's role as a liaison between the school and home is relevant to foster fundamental communication between parents and school officials. Therefore, the process of developing change-oriented goals runs smoother to ensure the student's suitable functioning at school and home. This may have a ripple effect on how the student functions within his or her environment, as well. Furthermore, the school social worker's active involvement with the family has proven to be crucial.

Relative to the theoretical framework, the school social worker can assess the individual's socialization process and how it may impede the students functioning in regards to development. School social workers assessing student problems
or situation may lead to the understanding of any underlying problems. Therefore, the services school social workers provide such as individual counseling help to maximize student educational opportunity and social functioning which may influence their readiness as a contributing member of society.

School social workers also have a responsibility to represent the social work profession within the host school system. The school social worker implementing programs as a means of intervention definitely would benefit the school's educational objectives. Education would be the primary focus with intervention following to show an optimistic outcome.

The school social worker would be an influential force in enhancing the educational attainment of youth. In regards to a rites of passage program, the school social worker can work in collaboration with the principal, teachers, and counselors as a team to implement it in a school. For instance, it has been reported that over 90% of those schools selected as "Distinguished Schools" for their achievement and school climate by the California State Department of Education had programs in place to enhance the self-esteem of both staff and students. One self-esteem program in California reported attendance figures and achievement scores rose dramatically while vandalism, drugs, and teen pregnancy were virtually eliminated.¹

Furthermore, a study conducted of 20 rites of passage programs across the nation revealed that these programs are largely community-based, and most originated due to the belief that young Black Americans need more knowledge of their people and their culture. The questionnaire asked respondents to define and analyze their programs' success with the young people they served. The major indicators of success included improved cultural awareness and knowledge, self-esteem, and self-concept.  

The programs relied on informal group assessments or personal, family, and staff assessments of the initiates' self-concept, self-confidence, and progress, as well. These programs do indeed serve youth, families, and communities as a vehicle for healthy African-centered development. This preliminary research on African American adolescent rites of passage programs implies the need for such curriculum in schools as a means of reinforcement for today's black youth. Moreover, this means that social workers must practice self-awareness to be culturally/racially sensitive to clients they come in contact with.

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3Ibid.
APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

The SETCLAE Student Profile

Name ______________________________________

Grade/Teacher ___________________________ Date ____________

Instructions

Please answer the following questions on the answer sheet and think real hard about how you really feel before answering each one. THERE ARE NO RIGHT or WRONG ANSWERS. I want YOUR answers. Your answers will help me teach you the kinds of lessons you would enjoy and benefit from the most during Harambee Time! The profile is made up of three parts. Let's begin with Part I.

Part I

Read each statement or question. If it is true for you, circle the answer YES on the answer sheet. If it is not true for you, circle the answer NO. Answer every question even if it's hard to decide. (Just think about yourself and what's important to you.) Circle only one answer for each question. Circle them on the answer sheet only.

1. I like to be alone sometimes. Yes No

2. I like to stand in front of the class and speak. Yes No

3. School will help me to accomplish my own goals. Yes No

4. I enjoy looking for positive things to say about people. Yes No

5. I have personal goals. Yes No

6. I get upset when things don't go my way. Yes No

7. School is boring most of the time. Yes No

8. Do you speak slang and standard English? Yes No

9. My friends are more important to me than my family. Yes No
10. My neighborhood is a good place to live in. Yes No
11. I like me! Yes No
12. There are a lot of people in the world more important than I am. Yes No
13. African Americans have not made many achievements in math, science, technology, and business. Yes No
14. In my opinion, most Black people are lazy. Yes No
15. I want to be able to speak standard English in certain situations. Yes No

Part II

Read each item carefully. If it is something that is important to you, check the first box on the answer sheet. If it is not important to you (it doesn't really matter or have anything to do with you), check the second box. Take your time and think about it. There are no right or wrong answers. I want to know your feelings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important to Me</th>
<th>Not Important to Me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Helping Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What Others Think of Me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Reading</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Solving Problems by Fighting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Learning About My Family Members—Dead and Living</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Getting Along With Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Doing Whatever My Friends Do</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Doing Well in School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Speaking Up for Myself and My Ideas □ □

10. Being Positive Most of the Time □ □

Part III
Read the following statements and choices for answers carefully. Then pick the answer that most accurately describes your feelings. Write the letter in front of your answer on the answer sheet.

There are NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. Choose the answer that is right for YOU.

1. When my friends have fun without me, I
   a. am happy that they are having fun.
   b. don't even think about it.
   c. wish they weren't having fun without me.

2. When someone makes fun of me,
   a. I get upset.
   b. I am hurt.
   c. I laugh with them.
   d. I make a joke of it.

3. When I am talking to someone, most of the time I look
   a. at their hands.
   b. into their eyes.
   c. at the floor.
   d. all around.

4. I always make sure I am neat and clean in my appearance:
   a. never
   b. once in a while
   c. most of the time

5. If I had lots of money, I would
   a. be happy all the time.
   b. help others.
   c. need and want more money.
   d. save it.
6. A girl becomes a woman when
   a. she has a baby.
   b. her body becomes more developed (she has breasts &
      hair under her arms).
   c. she takes care of herself and her family.
   d. she can talk back to her mother.
   e. she has a boyfriend.

7. When I need help, I
   a. get frustrated.
   b. ask for it.
   c. try to figure it out for myself.

8. I pick my friends because
   a. they look good.
   b. they are cool.
   c. they are considerate.
   d. they give me things.

9. I am glad I am the race I am.
   a. Yes  
   b. No

10. I chose the answer above because
    a. I am proud of my heritage.
    b. I should be glad.
    c. I study my history and culture.
    d. my friends say it's important.

11. I like my favorite music because
    a. of its rhythm for dancing.
    b. of its positive messages.
    c. of its ability to help me relax.
    d. the rappers curse and insult women.
    e. the videos are nice.

12. A boy becomes a man when
    a. he can handle drugs and crime.
    b. he makes a baby.
    c. he can fight well.
13. When the teacher leaves the room, I
   a. talk.
   b. stop doing my work.
   c. look at who is being disobedient.
   d. find something quiet to do once I finish my work.

14. Answering these questions was
   a. very enjoyable.
   b. no big deal.
   c. a good way to take a closer look at my personal development.
February 13, 1995

Dear Parents,

I am pleased and excited to inform you of a new program I am using at school. It is called SETCLAE- Self-Esteem Through Culture Leads to Academic Excellence.

SETCLAE is a wonderful way to help your child feel good about him-/herself. Twice a week, during Harambee Time ("Harambee" means "Let's pull together" in Kiswahili), we will engage in activities that address the areas listed below while also enhancing your child's knowledge of African-American History and culture. This is sure to make them feel better about themselves and help all children understand the African-American experience much better and hence break down barriers and misunderstandings.

*Responsibility*  
*Respect for Self & Others*  
*Goal-Setting*  
*Family*

I look forward to getting you involved to help build your child's self-esteem. When children feel good about themselves, they

-do well in school  
-stay away from drugs  
-wait longer before having children  
-stay out of trouble  
-think for themselves  
-enjoy school and life more

Here are just a few ideas you may want to use:

Every day, ask your child to tell you two successes or GOOD THINGS that happened in school.

Make a goal-setting book like the one made at school and chose one day a week to check on progress.
We look forward to seeing you at the next PTA meeting.

Your child recently completed a profile and answered many questions that measured his/her self-esteem. Please come to school, review the profile and sign it. Find out what your child (really) thinks of him-/herself.

Together, we can really teach our children to love themselves.

Have you hugged your child today?

Sincerely,

Leslie Williams

lw:
Clark Atlanta University
MSW Intern
Kennedy Middle School
BIBLIOGRAPHY


