

The Cycle of Violence and Disconnection Among Rural Middle School Students: Teacher Disconnection as a Consequence of Violence

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ABSTRACT. A hypothesized relationship between early violent behavior and subsequent connectedness in middle school was examined. Using self-report survey data and a hybrid structural model, the impact of violent behavior on connectedness to teachers and to school among 136 predominantly Caucasian, rural middle school students was examined. After accounting for parenting practices, which explained most of the variance in violence and connectedness, the data revealed a direct effect of violent behavior on connectedness. The data suggest that middle school students who have engaged in violent behavior are likely to experience disconnection from their teachers, and that this disconnection may provide a target for educators' efforts to prevent violence in schools. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service:*

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Schools across the country are experiencing a shortage of teachers, and one of the most common explanations for this shortage is the constraints that teachers experience with regard to how they can respond to students' misbehavior, especially students' violent behavior. Teachers often leave the field because the demands they experience outweigh the support they feel they receive from parents and administrators. This is especially the case in their efforts to deal with violent students. Whether teachers are fearful of lawsuits or of being targets of adolescent violence themselves, many teachers feel that their hands are tied when dealing with the range of students' violent behavior they witness in school. At the same time, in the wake of increasing episodes of multiple-victim youth violence in the schools, teachers find themselves being asked to deal with student violence, both preventively and reactively.

Increasingly, teachers are being given the responsibility for curbing, preventing, and addressing violence in the schools. One review of violence prevention efforts revealed that programs that used classroom teaching and teachers were the most common, and those involving the family were the least common (Cooper, Lutenbacher, & Faccia, 2000). Yet, many teachers fear their own students' violent behavior and feel unprepared to manage it, let alone to prevent it. In a recent survey conducted by Sheras, Cornell, and Bostain (1996), 130 teachers in Virginia, teachers were asked to rate how prepared they felt to "interact safely and effectively with an aggressive student," "manage violent crisis situations in school," and "address school violence problems." On a scale from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent) these teachers reported 5 or less on these and the other indicators of their preparedness to deal with violence in their schools. Clearly, despite the many efforts to provide social service and prevention programs into the schools (Carlson, Tharinger, Bricklin, DeMers, & Paavola, 1996; Dryfoos, 1991), much of the brunt of violence prevention falls on the shoulders of teachers who themselves feel

ill prepared to serve in this capacity, and who may be fearful of their own students' violent behavior.

It has been argued that, because it is so hard to predict school violence (Derzon, 2001; Mossman, 1994), a better approach to preventing violence in schools may be to promote a sense of connectedness to school and to teachers (Edwards, 2001; Mulvey & Cauffman, 2001). Yet, this has not been the typical response by schools to student violence (Antonucci, 1994).

Ironically, many schools appear to be taking the opposite approach. Instead of working to foster a sense of belonging, schools are implementing zero-tolerance policies that virtually guarantee an unreasoned response to any reported problem. For example, when a student is expelled or suspended . . . that student is likely to hold the school administration in contempt. . . . [Yet, several] studies suggest that a key factor in preventing school violence is students' positive relations to the school environment. Students who are committed to school, feel that they belong, and trust the administration are less likely to commit violent acts than those who are uninvolved, alienated, or distrustful. (Mulvey & Cauffman, 2001, p. 800)

Indeed, it appears that connectedness to family and to school is related positively to psychological and physical health (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Bonny, Britto, Klostermann, Hornung, & Slap, 2000; Hendry & Reid, 2000; Jacobson & Rowe, 1999) and negatively to risk-taking behaviors (Bogensneider, Wu, Raffaelli, & Tsay, 1998; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Resnick, Bearman, Blum, Bauman et al., 1997) among adolescents. These findings provide support for Mulvey and Cauffman's (2001) argument that promoting students' connectedness is an important goal for violence prevention efforts. They also highlight the intertwined relationships between adolescents' experiences in the family and their experiences at school.

TEACHERS AS SURROGATE PARENTS IN THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE

Although it is understandable and immensely practical to involve teachers in violence prevention, parents make considerable contributions to both the promotion and prevention of violence. Many studies have identified parenting as a primary source of violent behavior, and some of the most effective prevention programs are those that target the family's patterns of communication, support, and discipline (Henry,

Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 2001). Similarly, children's connectedness to family develops when their parents are empathic and caring, consistent in their discipline and expectations, and soothing rather than confrontive with their children (Ainsworth, 1989; Kohut & Wolf, 1978). These parenting practices should protect youth from violence and their absence appears to put youth at risk for violence. One way family connectedness is a protective factor against violence is that youth who feel supported, understood, and more effectively disciplined develop stronger bonds and a sense of connectedness to family. This bond then generalizes to the school and specifically to teachers (Cooper, Grotevant, & Condon, 1983). Thus, teachers are likely to be more effective at promoting positive relations at school among those children who bring with them a positive sense of connectedness that developed within their families (Rook, 1984).

A second, relatively unresearched way in which family processes may play into teachers' efforts to prevent and manage violent behavior in the school is indirectly, through the way in which parents contribute to the violent behavior that is witnessed by teachers. Although prior research has examined peer rejection resulting from violence (e.g., Price & Dodge, 1989), little is known about teacher rejection in response to students' violence. Youth who are violent in school are likely to experience alienation, disengagement, and isolation from their peers as a result of their misbehavior. Violent students may also undermine their connectedness to school and to teachers as a function of the consequences of their misbehavior (Simmons-Morton, Crump, Haynie & Saylor, 1999). Therefore, given the research linking parenting practices and parental conflict to violence among youth, it is likely that those youth whose parents are less caring, who provide harsh or inconsistent expectations, and who engage in conflictive and combative interactions with their children are more likely to have children who, first, become violent in school, and second, whose violent behaviors undermine their connectedness to school and to teachers. Yet these two effects of parenting practices have not been explored simultaneously in prior research. It is possible that there is an indirect effect of poor parenting on children's disconnection from school and teachers that is mediated by the youths' violent behavior.

A Cycle of Violence from Poor Parenting to Violent Behavior to Further Disconnection

It is likely that children's violent behavior contributes to their own disconnection from school and undermines their teachers' ability to

connect with them. Violent behavior may lessen teachers' willingness to act toward violent students in ways that promote a sense of belonging. Sullivan (1953) suggested that achieving a sense of relatedness to teachers, to peers, and to school is a primary developmental achievement of preadolescence. Violent behavior, however, reflects a developmentally immature attempt to manage relationships and it reduces the support youth elicit from others. When children engage in uncommon forms of violent or aggressive behavior like stalking, using menacing language, being impulsively violent, or engage in forms of severe violence and menacing, these acts likely interfere with their ability to establish a consistent sense of relatedness with their teachers and with others at school. Their teachers may become fearful of them and react to violent students in ways that make school a place where such youth are less likely to experience support, belonging, and connectedness.

Although a great deal of research has attempted to explain or predict violence in schools, far less is known about the consequences of interpersonal violence for the student perpetrators. Many studies suggest that violence can be explained as a function of several immutable factors, such as socioeconomic status, gender, and parenting practices (Derzon, 2001). School violence also has been explained as a function of more mutable contextual, relational, and attitudinal variables (e.g., school bonding or connectedness; attitudes towards family, friends, and teachers) (Jessor, 1993; Hirschi, 1969). Although these attitudinal variables may serve as precursors to violence, it is just as likely that attitudinal changes, like diminished connectedness to school and to teachers, are both consequences of early violence and predictors of violence.

The current study examined the relationships between parenting practices, past violent behavior in elementary school, and feelings of connectedness to school and to teachers among middle school students. It was hypothesized that there would be direct effects of parenting practices on both children's violent behavior and on their children's connectedness to school. It also was expected that, in addition, there would be an indirect effect of parenting practices on children's disconnection from school and from their teachers as a function of the influence parenting practices have on youths' violent behavior. Based on prior research, sex differences were expected in levels of violence but not in relationships between violence and connectedness.

METHODS

Design

A correlational, within group approach was taken to estimate relationships among variables, including sex, age, socioeconomic status (SES), and the measures of parenting, violence, and connectedness. Between group multiple analyses of variance were conducted to test the effects of sex the connectedness, violence, and parenting measures. A latent variable, structural equations modeling approach was taken to test the direct and indirect effects of parenting on violence and connectedness. The analyses were conducted with EQS 5.6 for Macintosh (Bentler & Wu, 1995). In order to strengthen the argument of causality, the survey included time-specific measures of violent behavior in the past, misbehavior in elementary school, and current self-assessments of youths' connectedness to school and to teachers. Mediator analyses were conducted to provide further evidence that prior (rather than current) violence was a predictor of current connectedness (and not vice versa).

Participants

A rural sample of youth was chosen for two reasons. First, violence in rural schools is understudied (Kingerey, Pruitt, Heuberger, & Brizzolara, 1995). Second, it was assumed that rural youth would be less likely to be affected by other contributors to violent behavior found in urban settings, like exposure to violence in the community and economic strain. The sample included 136 middle-school-aged youth (83% Caucasian, .7% African-American, 3.7% Hispanic, 1.5% Asian-American, 2.9% Biracial, and 7.4% "other"), 49% of whom were female. Balanced numbers of youth from grades six ($n = 48$), seven ($n = 45$), and eight ($n = 43$) were included. The youth were from a rural town of 15,000 people in the Midwest. Full written parental consent and youths' assent to participate were obtained prior to data collection. Data collection included one self-report survey that was conducted during one class period in the Fall of 2000.

Measures

The Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC: version 3.5). This scale included 44 items measuring youths' involvement in and caring

for their social worlds and relationships with parents, siblings, teachers, peers, school, future, kids from other cultures, reading, religion, friends, neighborhood, cohesion, and self-esteem/identity. Only the connectedness to school and to teachers were included in the present study. Sample items reflecting connectedness to teachers included, (28) "I dislike the teachers in my school" and (38) "I try to get along with my teachers." Examples of connectedness to school include (6) "I work hard at school" and (16) "I enjoy being at school." The Likert-type response scale ranged from 1 (not at all) to 5 (always/very much). Reliability estimates for the current study are presented in parentheses in the diagonals in Table 1. All were satisfactory. Previous research (Karcher, 2001) reports internal consistency and one-month test-retest reliability estimates for the subscales of connectedness to school of .87 and .84, and for connectedness to teachers of .73 and .75, respectively.

Risk & Prevention Questionnaire-Revised (RAP-Q) (Nakkula & Karcher, 1999; Way, Stauber, Nakkula, & London, 1994). Three scales measuring parenting practices and one involving prior trouble and violence in elementary school were drawn from this Questionnaire. The scales used a 1 (never) to 5 (always) scale, and were computed as means of item scores. The two parenting scales each included six items, three for mother and three for father, including two reversed scored items to detect response bias. The Parental Expectations scale indicates how much parents convey their expectations to youth about behaviors such as substance use and school achievement ($\alpha = .74$). Parental Caring items measured how much affection and warmth parents convey to their children ($\alpha = .81$). The Parental Conflict scale included two items regarding how much youth argued with their parents (Pearson $r = .62$). The Past Trouble/Violence in Elementary School scale included two items: "When you were in elementary school how often did you fight with other kids?" and "When you were in elementary school how often did you get in trouble?" The two items were highly related ($r = .80$).

Adolescent Violence Survey (Kingery, 1998). This 41-item scale has six subscales measuring a range of violent behaviors. The scale was developed with a middle-school aged population, and measures lifetime involvement in frequently reported types of violence, including common violence, impulsive, and passive violence, and more severe forms of violent behavior, including menacing language, severe menacing behaviors, and inventive violence. Reliabilities (internal consistency) in prior research ranged from .75 to .91, with 1-week test-retest reliabilities between .76 and .88. Reliabilities for the present study are in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Zero Order and Partial Correlations Between Connectedness and Violence Subscales (n = 136)

Scales	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Connectedness to Teachers	3.82	1.03	(.81)	.63	-.29	-.24***	-.31	-.15	-.24***	-.27***	-.21***
2. Connectedness to School	4.22	.78	.64	(.75)	-.08	-.11	-.25***	-.00	-.13	-.26***	-.13
3. Common Violence	3.25	1.87	-.29	-.08	(.90)	.32	.69	.59	.66	.47	.40
4. Impulsive Violence	.71	.56	.28	.15	.37	(.78)	.37	.33	.30	.42	.40
5. Inventive Violence	.98	1.12	-.33	-.26***	.68	.39	(.80)	.60	.77	.74	.39
6. Menacing Language	2.98	1.77	-.18*	-.03	.59	.37	.61	(.69)	.69	.49	.26***
7. Passive Aggression	1.78	1.54	-.27	-.15	.66	.34	.77	.70	(.92)	.72	.46
8. Severe Menacing	.54	1.17	-.31	-.29	.49	.46	.75	.74	.51	(.77)	.41
9. Past Trouble in School	2.09	.95	-.24**	-.15	.48	.45	.40	.30	.49	.45	(.80)

Notes. Partial correlations, controlling for sex and SES, are above the diagonal. Zero-order correlations are below the diagonals. Internal consistency estimates are in parentheses along the diagonal.

Correlations greater than .27 = $p < .001$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$.

RESULTS

The results suggest that, among this sample of rural middle school students, there is a negative relationship between violent behavior and connectedness to teachers. This effect of violent behavior is present even after accounting for the effects of parenting practices on both violent behavior and connectedness to school and to teachers. The relationships between connectedness and violence were similar for boys and for girls, although boys reported engaging in significantly more violent behaviors over their lifetimes. Only menacing language, which was the least reliable subscale of violent behavior, was not significantly related to either teacher or school connectedness. Finally, mediator models were used to ensure that the violent behaviors which youth were reporting were explaining the effects of misbehavior and violence in elementary school on later connectedness in middle school. These models provided additional support for the argument that violent behaviors affect children's connectedness to teachers.

First, correlations were examined between connectedness scales, violence scales, and parenting practices to see if the relationships were as predicted. Indeed, as presented in Table 1, violence and connectedness were negatively related. Prior violence was consistently and negatively related to connectedness to teachers, but only inventive violence and severe menacing were related to connectedness to school. The same pattern of correlations held for boys and for girls. Girls were found to be less violent than boys on all measures (see Table 2), but no differences were found between boys and girls on connectedness to school or to teachers. Neither age nor socioeconomic status (SES) were significantly correlated with any violence subscale, and there was only a trend towards greater connectedness to school among youth reporting higher SES. Finally, controlling for both sex and SES, the partial correlations between connectedness and violence remained much the same as the zero-order correlations (see Table 1).

A structural model was tested based on the hypothesis that beyond the effects of parenting on connectedness and violence, there would be an effect of violent behavior on school connectedness. The hypothesized model provided a satisfactory fit for the data. The χ^2 statistic tested the hypothesis that the model fit the data well. The χ^2 ($df = 17$) = 27.17 ($p > .05$) was not significant, suggesting the hypothesis could not be rejected. Other fit indices presented in Figure 1 provide further evidence of good model fit. This model shows a large effect of parenting

TABLE 2. Means, Standard Deviations, and Multiple Analyses of Covariance Estimates for Effects of Sex on Adolescent Connectedness, Violence, and Past Trouble/Fights in School

Scale	F	Beta ²	Sex Group (N = 136)			
			Males (n = 69)		Females (n = 67)	
			M	SD	M	SD
1. Common Violence	16.38****	.11	3.98	1.92	2.65	1.61
2. Impulsive Violence	11.46****	.08	.88	.56	.56	.53
3. Inventive Violence	2.67	.02	1.15	1.26	.83	.96
4. Menacing Language	4.14*	.03	3.31	1.93	2.70	1.56
5. Passive Aggression	5.74*	.04	2.11	1.66	1.49	1.37
6. Severe Menacing	8.62***	.06	.84	1.43	.26	.77
7. Past Trouble in Elementary	20.41***	.14	2.45	1.07	1.75	.68
8. Connectedness to School	.99	.01	4.15	1.05	4.29	.68
9. Connectedness to Teachers	2.19	.01	3.67	1.07	3.94	1.01

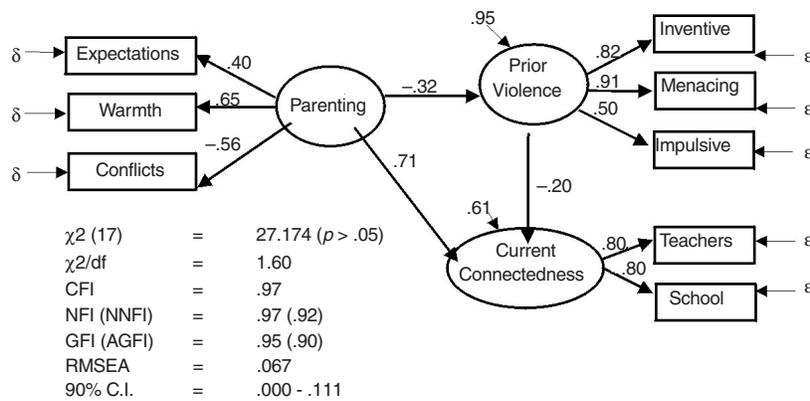
Note. F ratios are Wilks's approximation of Fs. For the MANOVA including the six violence scales, $F(5, 126) = 5.27$ ($p < .000$). For the MANOVA including Past Trouble and the Connectedness scales, $F(2, 132) = 6.80$ ($p < .000$).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$.

on connectedness to school and to teachers, a moderate size effect of parenting on the most intense forms of violence, and a small effect of past violence on current connectedness. The Wald test indicated that removing the path from violence to connectedness would not significantly increase model fit. The Lagrange Multiplier test indicated that an additional path between the violence factor and the parental expectations variable could improve model fit. This path was not included because it was not hypothesized and was unclear (i.e., violence could lead to increases in parental expectations or parental expectations could lead to more violence). This model suggested that parenting practices explained 10% of the variance in violent behaviors, and that, together, violent behaviors and (both directly and indirectly) parenting practices explained 63% of the variance in the participants' connectedness to school and to teachers in middle school.

In order to provide additional support for the interpretation that violence in elementary school predicts disconnection from teachers in middle school, mediator model analyses were conducted. Because the Adolescent Violence Survey asks for lifetime estimates of violent behavior, the mediator models were conducted to ensure that the six types of violence were indeed explaining the effects of past violence in

FIGURE 1. A hybrid structural model examining the effects of parenting and prior violence on subsequent adolescent connectedness to teachers and school (n = 144). All path coefficients are standardized. CFI = Comparative fit index, NFI = Bentler-Bonett normed fit index; NNFI = Nonnormed fit index; GFI = Lisrel goodness of fit index; AGFI = Adjusted GFI; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation; 90% C.I. = 90% confidence interval of RMSEA. Latent variables are shown in ellipses, and observed variables are shown in rectangles.



school. The two hypotheses were that (a) misbehavior/fights in elementary school would predict disconnection from teachers in middle school, and (b) that the violent behavior scales would serve as a proxy for misbehavior/fights in elementary school and therefore would completely explain the relationship between misbehavior in elementary school and disconnection from teachers in middle school. The three-step process described by Baron and Kenny (1986) was used which requires a sequence of three simple regression models. The first two test that the predictor variable (past trouble/fights in elementary school) was significantly related to both the mediator variable (types of violence) and to the criterion variable (connectedness to teachers). Both of these relationships were confirmed by the correlations in Table 1. The second regression model, which tests the relationship between the past trouble and connectedness in middle school, is presented in step 1 of Table 3, showing that past trouble/fights explains six percent of the variance in connectedness to teachers. The third regression analysis tests that, when the criterion variable is regressed on both the mediator and predictor

TABLE 3. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Models Testing the Mediating Role of Six Types of Violent Behaviors on the Relationship Between Behavior Problems in Elementary School and Connectedness to Teachers in Middle School

<i>Model</i>		<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	β	R^2	F^2_{Δ}
Models 1 - 6						
Step 1						
	Past Trouble	-.26	.09	-.24***	.06***	
Model 1						
	Step 2: Past Trouble	-.14	.10	-.13		
	Common Violence	-.13	.05	-.24*	.10****	.04*
Model 2						
	Step 2: Past Trouble	-.16	.10	-.15	.09***	.04*
	Impulsive Violence	-.36	.17	-.20*		
Model 3						
	Step 2: Past Trouble	-.13	.10	-.12	.13****	.06***
	Inventive Violence	-.26	.08	-.29***		
Model 4						
	Step 2: Past Trouble	-.22	.10	-.20*	.07**	.01
	Menacing Language	-.07	.05	-.12		
Model 5						
	Step 2: Past Trouble	-.15	.11	-.13	.09**	.03*
	Passive Aggression	-.14	.06	-.21*		
Model 6						
	Step 2: Past Trouble	-.13	.10	-.12	.11****	.05**
	Severe Menacing	-.23	.08	-.26**		

Notes. Past Trouble = Trouble and Fights in Elementary School;
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$.

variables simultaneously, the effect of past trouble/fights in elementary school (the predictor variable) is virtually eliminated. This series of analyses is presented in Table 3. A separate step 2 analysis was conducted for each type of violence. The second step of each regression model, including both predictor and mediator variables, demonstrated that, after accounting for the effects of lifetime violent behavior on subsequent connectedness to teachers, there is virtually no relationship between past trouble/fights in elementary school and connectedness to teachers in middle school. The only exception was for menacing language, which was not a significant predictor of connectedness to teach-

ers. It should be noted that only 6 to 13% of the variance in connectedness to teachers was explained by violent behaviors.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study suggest that adolescents' disconnection from school and from teachers may, in part, result from their prior violent behavior as well as from the children's experiences with their parents. Teachers who engage in efforts to prevent violent behavior among youth by promoting a sense of belonging and connectedness, as recommended by Mulvey and Cauffman (2001), will need to struggle with their own reactions to violent children as well as contend with the youths' sense of alienation and disconnection from school that has resulted from their violent behavior. Violence distances youth from others, undermines youths' relatedness, and attenuates the social support they receive from others in school. Therefore, a starting place for violence prevention efforts designed to create a sense of belonging may be to address the disconnection that has resulted from youths' prior transgressions against others.

The hypothesized model testing the effect of prior violence on subsequent connectedness provided a good fit to the data. This model suggested that there were direct effects of parenting practices on both youths' violent behavior and their connectedness to school and to teachers. There was a direct effect of youths' prior violent behavior on their subsequent connectedness to school and to teachers. Finally, there was an indirect effect of parenting on youth's disconnection from school and teachers through the impact that parenting had on violent behavior. Severe menacing behavior, impulsive violence, and menacing language reflect types of violence that are likely to undermine youths' subsequent involvement in school and feelings about teachers.

Mediator analyses were conducted to provide additional evidence that past misbehavior contributes to subsequent disconnection from teachers. Five of the six mediator models confirmed that the lifetime violence scales did measure much the same phenomena as the students' own recollection of getting into trouble and fights in elementary school. Once the violence scales were included as predictors of teacher connectedness, the effects of getting into trouble in elementary school were removed. This helps rule out the rival hypothesis that it was disconnection from school and teachers that led to violence. However, longitudinal research should test the possibility of a cycle of violence in

which disconnection is both the cause of and a consequence of violent behavior among youth.

What was not made clear through these analyses was how exactly students' violent behaviors affect their connectedness to school or to teachers. Was the disconnectedness from teachers, for example, a function of specific current teachers who responded harshly to students' recent violent behaviors? Did teachers reject the students based on the reputations of the students' prior violence in elementary school? Or was the disconnection a cognitive set the student developed in elementary school or early middle school and brought with him or her to each new experience with teachers in middle school? These questions pose significant limitations to the study. Without direct input from teachers, it is hard to know whether violent students' disconnection is a function of teachers' rejection of those students or whether it is due to those students' rejection of teachers based on their prior interactions with teachers, students' poor coping skills, or peer influences. What was made clear, however, is that children's disconnection from teachers is partly a function of the child's violence, even though a much larger proportion appears to be a function of youths' responses to parenting practices experienced in the home.

There are several implications of this study for violence prevention in the schools. First, clearly there is a significant effect of parenting practices on later violent behavior, such that prevention and intervention efforts that include parents are more likely to be most effective (e.g., Cunningham & Henggeler, 2001). Even if the effects of poor parenting on subsequent violence are mediated by involvement with antisocial peers, as some have argued (Dishion, Duncan, Eddy, & Fagot, 1994), this study illustrates that outreach to parents is crucial.

Second, teachers should be aware that youth who have been violent may be the least likely to welcome teachers' efforts to enhance their connectedness to teachers or to school. Clearly the findings suggest that connectedness and violence are related, such that promoting connectedness, a sense of belonging, and a nurturing environment in the school may provide a protective factor against violent behavior. Yet, teachers need to be aware that, in addition to the disconnection or rejection that violent students experience from their peers, it is likely that the more violent the youth has been, the more tenuous their connection to the school is likely to be.

Finally, these findings suggest that violence is more strongly related to interpersonal disconnection from teachers than to generalized disconnection from school. Teachers likely will need additional training to

deal with violent youth who have come to feel disconnected from and unsupported by teachers. Teachers also may need heightened security and protection from such youth. From a psychodynamic point of view, violent youth may expect from teachers the negative experiences they encountered with their own parents, but violent youth may also want teachers to care for them in empathic, supportive, and consistent ways that their parents did not. When teachers cannot provide this care, either because they are constrained in some way or are fearful of students, violent students may re-experience feelings of rejection and alienation that fuels their violence. Although this research has not fully factored in the many possible peer influences, the findings clearly suggest that when teachers are asked to prevent or react to types of violence that have their source outside the school, primarily in the home, the same experiences of rejection and disconnection that may have instigated the violence may also undermine the students' trust and openness to those teachers who try to reach out to connect with them.

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