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Inventory: Willingness of adolescents to discuss personal concerns with adults and with peers

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Inventory: Willingness of adolescents to discuss personal concerns with adults and with peers

Abstract

Personal problems continue to be of overwhelming concern to high school students (Olson, 1979). Every year more students below age 18 run away from home. Millions of students abuse alcohol and other drugs. The Department of Health reports one teen in 20 has a drinking problem. Suicide is the second leading cause of death of people ages 15 to 24. Olson (1979) further states that unwanted pregnancies among teenagers have increased, and that about 25 percent of all babies born today are born to teenagers. Child abuse has become a major social problem.

INVENTORY: WILLINGNESS OF ADOLESCENTS TO DISCUSS PERSONAL
CONCERNS WITH ADULTS AND WITH PEERS

A Research Paper
Presented to
the Department of Educational Administration
and Counseling
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
Master of Arts in Education

by
Phyllis Ver Ploeg

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This Research Paper by: Phyllis Ver Ploeg

Entitled: Inventory: Willingness of Adolescents to Discuss Personal
Concerns with Peers and with Adults

has been approved as meeting the research paper requirement for the
Degree of Master of Arts (or Master of Arts in Education).

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July 7, 1983
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Table of Contents

	Page
List of Tables	iv
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Need for the Study	2
Assumptions.	2
Limitations of the Study	3
Definition of Terms.	3
2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.	4
Relationships of Peers to Each Other	5
Characteristics Unique to Adolescents.	6
Two Evaluation Tools	12
Summary.	13
3. METHOD.	14
Selection of Subjects.	14
Procedures	15
Development of Instrumentation	15
Statistical Treatment of Data.	16
4. RESULTS	17

Table of Contents, Continued

	Page
CHAPTER	
5. DISCUSSION.	53
6. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	56
Summary.	56
Conclusions.	57
Recommendations.	57
BIBLIOGRAPHY	59
APPENDIX A	64

List of Tables

	Page
TABLE 1 A.	19
TABLE 1 B.	25
TABLE 2.	32
TABLE 3.	34
TABLE 4.	36
TABLE 5.	38
TABLE 6.	42
TABLE 7.	44
TABLE 8.	47
TABLE 9.	50

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Personal problems continue to be of overwhelming concern to high school students (Olson, 1979). Every year more students below age 18 run away from home. Millions of students abuse alcohol and other drugs. The Department of Health reports one teen in 20 has a drinking problem. Suicide is the second leading cause of death of people ages 15 to 24. Olson (1979) further states that unwanted pregnancies among teenagers have increased, and that about 25 percent of all babies born today are born to teenagers. Child abuse has become a major social problem.

The Waterloo Courier's (June 3, 1983) survey of drug use among high school students in the metropolitan area states that nearly 40 percent of the drinking students report that they drive while intoxicated; also, 40 percent of the parents do not care if their sons and daughters drink as long as they stay out of trouble.

A recent DPI Dispatch (November 1979) article indicates that high school students relate better to peers than to older persons because they are hesitant to share personal problems with adults. Because of this fact, there are several Peer Helping Programs in high schools in the state of Iowa. Winterset, Charles City, Parkersburg, Buchanan, and West Central of Maynard are among 50 or more school systems which have instituted programs. Members of other school faculties, including the Cedar Falls High School counseling staff, have discussed the possibility of implementing a Peer Helping Program.

A review of the literature supports the contention that there is a need for Peer Helping Programs. Research is available on various programs and the areas that peers would be willing to discuss with other peers (Buck, 1977).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study is to determine with whom high school students would be willing to discuss situations about which they are concerned. Specifically, the study will attempt to determine what personal concern situations students would discuss with peers.

Need for the Study

There have been more than 50 schools in the state of Iowa that have established Peer Helping Programs. Information gained from the survey will give input to counseling staffs attempting to determine which content areas might be appropriate for inclusion in a Peer Helping Program.

A possible secondary benefit is that the instrument will have gone through its pilot study and might be useful to persons wishing to initiate Peer Helping Programs in their schools.

Assumptions

1. Peer helpers as well as counselees benefit from discussions of situations involving personal concerns.
2. The population will understand the inventory.
3. The population will respond honestly to the inventory.
4. The students can and will talk to peers about personal concerns.

Limitations of the Study

The following are limitations in the study:

1. The inventory was administered only to students in physical education and health classes during the spring semester, 1983.
2. The self-report inventory format assumes that students are honest in their responses.
3. This tool might be stronger if it were used with a larger, and possibly more diverse, population.
4. The instrument was constructed by researcher and no reliability and validity data are available. As such, the study should be treated as a pilot study.

Definition of Terms

Peer helping. A process wherein a variety of interpersonal-helping skills are performed by students who assume the role of a helper with other students.

Peer Helping Program. A program designed to help young people learn skills to deal with conflicts in their own lives and to pass these skills on to their fellow students, families, and others in the community (Olson, 1979).

Counselor. A professional individual who provides a confidential, secure, non-threatening setting for counseling with individuals and groups.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to determine with whom high school students would be willing to discuss situations about which they are concerned. In searching the literature on Peer Helping Programs, the following topics were examined: the relationship of peers to each other and characteristics unique to adolescents.

All situations dealt with in the instrument were also studied from the viewpoint of being an area of discussion among the adolescents. Careers, dating/sex, death/nuclear, home and family, school, self-concept and substance abuse were all considered as being concerns of youth, and were all investigated. A summary of the literature examined is presented here.

The use of Peer Helping Programs on the senior high school level as one of the best methods of improving the personal and school environment is substantiated by the literature. An example of a Peer Helping Program is the one in effect at Winterset, Iowa, High School. This program deals with the problems of death, drugs, and broken families (Olson, 1979). The Iowa Department of Public Instruction (1969) indicates specific problems affecting students in the senior high: family concerns--divorce, peer relationship concerns, suicide, substance abuse and health concerns, sexuality concerns, death and dying concerns, communicating sensitive issues, referral resources and confidentiality. The peers

have been found to offer more feasible alternatives to the before-mentioned situations than have adults (DPI Dispatch, November 1979).

Relationships of Peers to Each Other

The "helper principle" is an approach that employs the premise that people with a problem can help other people who have the same problem in a more severe form (Reisman, 1965). The helper principle has a great potential for schools, since helpers from the same age level and background can often find the right wording, the right example, and generally serve as communicator links between adults and youths (Vriend, 1969; Pearl and Reisman, 1965).

The rationale for peer counseling as a supplement to traditional health or counseling services assumes the following:

1. Peers model each other's behavior as well as establish norms and standards of conduct that can have a positive effect among peers.
2. Peers may have a greater capacity for empathy toward one another than professionals.
3. Peer counselors can bridge the gap between professional helping agents and the student population by facilitating communication and providing services the people in need of help are often reluctant to accept because of traditional counseling (Gruver, 1971). Vassos (1971) also supports the other researchers by stating that adolescents look to the opinions of friends on issues involving attitudes toward school and learning (Schweishheimer and Wallberg, 1976, p. 174).

Auster and Auster (1981) view the role of peers as increasing in

importance in our society, second only to parental influence. Peer influence for adolescents is likely to be of particular importance during periods of rapid social change.

The goals of the peer helping curriculum are to develop in students a high degree of self-respect, respect for each other, and respect for the school environment (Kealey, McDermott and Wasser, 1982). Peer helping is a double-level approach that can enhance personal growth in peer helpers as well as in counselees (Reisman, 1965).

In a study by Kon and Losenkov (1978) students surveyed were asked to indicate how well different people understood them and the kinds of people with whom they would share intimate information. The students listed their best friends first, but mothers were a close second. Fathers were third for boys, behind favorite teacher for girls. Both boys and girls indicated stronger preference for spending time with their best friends than with their parents.

Characteristics Unique to Adolescents

Research studies of today's adolescents describe them as living in a society of their own, with peer approval being a major aspect of this adolescent culture (Coleman, 1961). The adolescent society controls its members through the giving of rewards and punishments. Students in school have friends who influence their behavior because students care about others' opinions. These friends provide approval, recognition, support and help (Vriend, 1969).

Douvan and Adelson (1966), Milan and Roll (1977), and Kon and Losenkov (1978) all indicate that friendship is widely regarded to be

an especially important relationship during adolescence. Douvan and Adelson (1966) point out the particular advantage of adolescent friendship is that it offers a climate of growth and self-knowledge that the family is not equipped to offer (p. 174).

According to a study by Wright and Keple (1981), girls have been found to differentiate among their relationships to their mothers, fathers, best same-sexed, or opposite-sexed friends to a greater degree than do boys. Girls also have been shown to attach more significance to their friends than to their parents, while the boys tended to attach more nearly equal significance to friends and parents. Support for these findings comes from general knowledge that girls mature emotionally and socially, as well as physically, at a faster rate than boys (Wright and Keple, 1981). Compared to boys the same age, 16- and 17-year-old girls may have reached a greater independence from parents and greater dependence upon friends (Wright and Keple, 1981).

Another factor of importance is that boys tend to respond favorably to their female friends and unfavorably to their male friends, while the girls respond quite favorably to both (Wright, 1969). Socialization practices encourage girls to be more sensitive to the quality of interpersonal relationships. Boys, on the other hand, are socialized to be task-oriented (Douvan and Adelson, 1966; Wright and Keple, 1981).

One area of concern to adolescents is death. According to Conley (1981), adolescents may find, at a time of bereavement, that peers offer the most support. Family members are working through their own grief and are not able to comfort the adolescent. Hence, the adolescent turns

to friends. Peer counselors who have experienced the same grief are able to give support and comfort.

The family is the first and foremost influence on an individual. The family is an influence in the development of aspirations, expectations, and opportunities. Research documenting this influence has been accumulating for several decades (Marini and Greenberger, 1971; Fetherman and Hauser, 1976; Sewell, Haller and Straus, 1957; Rosenberg, Suchman, and Goldsen, 1957). An examination of these studies leads to the conclusion that family influence on occupational choice is the result of active and passive, formal and informal, sociological, psychological, and economic factors.

The major family structure--family size and birth order--are linked to a wide variety of personality and behavior outcomes (Kidwell, 1981). It is frequently argued the link between these structures and child outcome arises from differences in parenting practices which are the result of different family sizes and children of different birth orders. Kidwell (1981) further states, in general, that the studies suggest the power and support dimensions of parenting are altered by the number and birth order of children.

Programs that foster peer group relations can improve task-oriented classroom behaviors among students, a key to basic skill mastery (Gow, 1978; McLaurin and Harrington, 1977). Studies have demonstrated that peers have assisted others in improving classroom skills, grades, and in raising vocational and educational aspirations (Vriend, 1969).

There is surprisingly little mention of the role of teachers in the evidence relating to the choice of student occupations. A large body of literature has accumulated concerning the role of Vocational Counselors. Several studies (Lopate, 1968; Ross, 1965) indicate that in the past counselors have played a negligible role in this area. However, peer counselors have helped the professionals, and have demonstrated self-help skills as well as peer-helping skills (Varenhorst, 1974).

Other studies conducted with small groups of high-achieving students teaching or tutoring low-achieving peers report better results than those groups that were helped by professional teachers (Crispin, 1966; Delaney, 1963). Counseling activities for college students which used the peer group approach yields significant positive changes in academic grade point averages (Buck, 1977).

The Iowa Department of Public Instruction study (1969) indicates that in order to increase counseling effectiveness, goals need to be established in the areas of school functions, class schedules, and vocational information. On academic performance, attendance, punctuality, and vocational and educational aspirations, Vriend (1969) found that students in a peer counseling group made significant gains while students in a control group suffered losses.

Adolescents' dependence on their peers for validation of personal worth can play an important role in their future plans, including the choice of an occupation. Lopate (1968) reports that at the elite Bronx High School of Science in New York, both male and female students

encourage one another to high-level expectations.

Martin, Beezley, Conway and Kemp (1974) and Martin and Rodeheffer (1976) describe the environment in which the abused child lives as one deprived of nurture and love and filled with fear-provoking events. Such perceptions inferred that abused children exhibit low self-esteem.

Group member identification with selected peers provides positive group growth. Hamburg and Varenhorst (1972) conclude that the peer helper training itself was a significant experience in personal growth for the students.

The Iowa Department of Public Instruction (1969) report in their study that peer helper students are more likely to be females from the sophomore or junior years. Interactions with students from different classes and opposite sex peers is cited as a beneficial learning experience.

Scott and Warner (1972) identify seven studies in peer counseling at the junior/senior high level. The authors found evidence of conflicting outcomes of Peer Helping Programs. They found little difference in self-concepts between students functioning as peer counselors and their clients. In contrast, they discovered significant changes in academic, social and personal areas of student concerns as a result of being involved in a Peer Helping Program.

Being a member of a group and acceptance by peers are very important to the adolescent (Erickson, 1968). The need for a best friend to share conversation is evident in the high school age group (Petrella, 1978).

Capone et al. (1976), Hamburg (1980), Pyle (1977), and Samuels and Samuels (1975) suggest the single most important areas to be included in a peer program are focused upon drug abuse awareness and prevention. Nationally known examples of highly regarded peer counseling programs include Alcoholics Anonymous and Synanon (Leibowitz and Rhoads, 1974). Frequently the training of peer counselors is minimal; the focus typically is information about the problem, drugs, alcohol, or crime (Leibowitz and Rhoads, 1974).

Many of today's problems that revolve around drug abuse, alienation, and sexual freedom have overburdened the professional personnel. Peer helpers have been recently viewed as a viable force in the intervention process (Goodman, 1969; Lippitt and Eisman, 1969; Mattson, 1970). Hamburg and Varenhorst (1972) discuss the use of high school students.

The most current information regarding teen problems in the Cedar Falls-Waterloo, Iowa, metro area was gathered from a series of articles published in the Waterloo Courier in June of 1983. Case histories were cited, mostly involving the problems of drugs and alcohol. School officials were also interviewed by Waterloo Courier editors.

Dunbar (1981) says the attitude of parents in the metro area about drinking is terrible. "Many parents don't care; they just keep buying kegs for their kids, thinking that's the thing to do." Parental approval or acceptance of drinking among high school students was apparent in the recent Waterloo Courier survey (1983). Among drinking students, more than 40 percent said their parents approved or didn't

mind about their drinking as long as they didn't get into trouble. The survey found nearly 40 percent of drinking students drove while intoxicated. Dunbar (1983) also notes that materials on drug education are outdated in the metropolitan area schools.

Two Evaluation Tools

The Mooney Problem Check List (1942) and a Needs Assessment Survey designed by Dr. Richard Strub (1981) of Price Laboratory guidance staff in Cedar Falls, Iowa, are appropriate to this study. Some ideas were incorporated into the instrument used for this paper; however, the Strub survey was not deemed relevant in its entirety for this study. The Mooney Problem Check List was outdated in several areas, although some issues were adapted for this inventory.

Russ L. Mooney (1942) developed a high school students' Problem Check List. Areas of concern included health and physical development, finances, social and recreational activities, courtship, sex and marriage, social-psychological relations, morals and religion, home and family, personal-psychological relations, the future, adjustment to school work, and curriculum and teaching procedures. Each area contained 30 items. Students were asked simply to check areas of concern to them, thus giving expression to their personal problems. Simple phrases were used as items in the list, such as "not enough sleep," "too tall," "afraid of making mistakes," and "being in love."

Dr. Strub's instrument is a needs assessment questionnaire which was used to help the guidance department define areas of concern which the students at Price Laboratory (K-12) felt were not being met.

In researching for an instrument to use in this project, the present researcher found the already published materials not applicable. Outdated questions and inappropriate dialogues made these materials not useable. Therefore, an instrument was developed by the researcher in which some ideas and items were drawn from the Mooney and from the Strub instruments.

Summary

This chapter included a review of the literature in the areas of peer relationships, characteristics of adolescents, and concerns indicated in the instrument for the adolescent. The authors agreed that Peer Helping Programs benefit the students on the senior high level.

The instruments reviewed and the current metropolitan review of the problem of substance abuse were also discussed. Research indicates that Peer Helping Programs in the state of Iowa are growing. Peer Helping Programs allow individuals involved to grow in self-respect and trust of others. Methods used in the study will be presented in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The purpose of this study is to determine with whom the students at a particular public high school would be willing to discuss personal situations with other peers. The high school counseling department has considered adding a Peer Helping Program. Information from the survey will give input to the high school counseling staff to determine what content areas might be appropriate for a Peer Helping Program. The inventory was distributed to two groups on two different days. The first day the inventory was distributed to all seniors and the second day it was distributed to the sophomores and juniors.

Selection of Subjects

Subjects were students in Physical Education and Health classes at this particular public high school during Spring, 1983. Members of these intact coed classes were used in 10th grade required health, 11th grade physical education, and 12th grade physical education.

Although random selection was not used, the students were originally placed in classes in a non-systematic way so that each class had a cross section of students at each level of academic ability. The inventory was administered to 100 students, 50 boys and 50 girls. Approximately 17 boys and 17 girls in each grade completed the inventory.

Procedures

A self-reporting inventory was issued to students at the beginning of their physical education class. The inventory took about fifteen minutes to complete.

A counselor in the counseling department distributed the inventory, gave directions, monitored and collected all surveys. The same directions were read to all students before they took the inventory.

Each of you has been given an inventory. There are 34 statements about different situations. You are to indicate all of the persons with whom you would discuss each situation. There are no right or wrong answers to the statements.

Look at the top of the inventory. Check your grade in school and your sex. Do not write your name on the paper. Read the example closely. Notice you may check none, one, or several answers. Are there any questions?

Development of Instrumentation

Under the direct supervision of the guidance staff at the high school, a series of statements relating to student concerns was compiled and revised. The final inventory consisted of 34 statements (Appendix A).

Students were asked to indicate all persons with whom they would discuss a given concern. Choices were: parent, teacher, counselor, pastor/priest, boyfriend, girlfriend, brother, and sister. The inventory focused on the following seven main areas:

1. Career concerns
2. Dating/sex concerns

3. Death/nuclear concerns
4. Home and family concerns
5. School concerns
6. Self-concept concerns
7. Substance abuse concerns

Statements dealt with areas of concern such as school (questions 1, 10, 12, 22, 30), home life (questions 3, 9, 11, 14, 19, 24, 32), dating (questions 2, 18, 27, 28, 5d), substance abuse (questions 5, 13, 21, 31), death/nuclear (questions 4, 33, 34), career (questions 6, 7, 8, 15, 17), and personal skills (questions 16, 20, 23, 25, 26, 29).

Statistical Treatment of Data

A descriptive analysis of the collected data from the inventory was conducted. The responses were tabulated by the researcher. Responses to each question were charted by frequency of response as well as by percentage. Distributions were tabulated according to responses by males and by females at each grade level. A discussion of the findings will be presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study is to determine which personal concerns the students at a particular public high school would be willing to discuss with other peers. Information will be presented in this chapter that will identify which personal concerns/situations peers would be willing to discuss with other peers. Information presented will also identify which situations peers would be willing to discuss with adults rather than with peers. Then the seven main clusters of student concerns will be presented to determine which clusters peers would be willing to discuss with other peers.

One-hundred copies of the 34-item inventory developed by the researcher were distributed to students at the high school represented in this study. A total of eight categories of possible sources of help (4 peer and 4 adult) were listed for each item. A total of 98 students completed the inventory.

For each item, students were asked to indicate all those categories of helpers to whom they might turn with their personal concerns. Therefore, the range of possible responses for each item was from 0-8 per student. The total possible responses per item for all males was 200 ($n = 50 \times 4$) and for females was 192 ($n = 48 \times 4$). The total possible responses per item for the combined male and female groups was 392 (200 for the male group and 192 for the female group). The combined male and female groups chose item 3, ". . . thinking about quitting

school," most frequently as an item they would be willing to discuss with peers. This item received 138 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 35.2 (refer to Table 1 A, p. 19). The combined groups chose item 8, ". . . concerned about possible careers and the working world," most frequently as an item to discuss with adults. This item received 199 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 50.7 (refer to Table 1 B, p. 25). Item 33, ". . . concerned about death of family member/friend," was chosen most frequently as an item to discuss with peers and adults. This item received 114 and 126 of 392 responses from the respective male and female groups for percentages of 29.0 and 32.1 (refer to Table 1 A, p. 19 and Table 1 B, p. 25).

TABLE 1 A
 Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
 to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with peers			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of possible responses
I have been:					
1.	Thinking about quitting school	52	57	109	27.8
2.	"Dating" a person my family won't accept	59	65	124	31.6
3.	Wanting to leave home	59	79	138	35.2
4.	Wanting to understand more about death and dying	21	28	49	12.5
5.	Concerned about understanding my values in the areas of:				
	Alcohol	51	67	118	30.1
	Drugs	45	57	102	26.0
	Smoking cigarettes	48	66	114	29.0
	Sexual activity	48	59	107	27.2
6.	Concerned about military service	29	39	68	17.3

TABLE 1 A, Continued
 Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
 to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with peers			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent possible responses
I have been:					
7.	Wanting help in obtaining part-time and/or summer work	40	54	94	23.9
8.	Concerned about possible careers and the working world	25	30	55	14.0
9.	Wanting more freedom at home	30	52	82	20.9
10.	Concerned about how to deal with pressures of athletic competition	34	42	76	19.3
11.	Concerned about how I can deal with such family changes as:				
	Divorce	51	82	133	33.9
	Both parents working	38	55	93	23.7
	Divorced parent's new male/female friend	60	52	112	28.5

TABLE 1 A, Continued

Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness

to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with peers			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of possible responses
I have been:					
11.	Concerned about how I can deal with such family changes such as:				
	Divorced parent's new husband/wife	51	61	112	28.5
	Step-sister/brother	52	60	112	28.5
	Step-parents	55	64	119	30.1
12.	Wanting to become more involved in school activities (music, drama, athletics, etc.)	40	47	87	22.1
13.	Concerned about my drinking alcohol	49	47	96	24.4
14.	Unable to get along with my parents	55	82	137	34.9
15.	Concerned about borrowing money for college expenses	29	20	49	12.5

TABLE 1 A, Continued
 Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
 to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with peers			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of responses possible
I have been:					
16.	Wanting to learn how to manage my money	26	9	35	8.9
17.	Trying to choose courses which will help me toward my career goals	19	16	35	8.9
18.	Concerned about my own pregnancy or that of a friend	41	61	102	26.0
19.	Concerned about how to handle the pressures my family puts on me	49	79	128	32.6
20.	Concerned about how to handle other students who put me down	46	58	104	29.0
21.	Concerned about how to help a friend who has an alcohol/drug dependency problem	41	55	96	24.4

TABLE 1 A, Continued
 Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
 to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with peers			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of possible responses
I have been:					
22.	Afraid of failing in school work	26	35	61	15.5
23.	Thinking about committing suicide	35	44	79	20.1
24.	A victim of child abuse	44	44	88	22.4
25.	Unable to express my own ideas, views and opinions	38	39	77	19.6
26.	Concerned that I don't have the courage to say "no" when people ask me to do something which is against my principles	46	60	106	27.0
27.	Concerned about my sexual involvement	59	65	124	31.6
28.	Wanting to know how to get along better with members of the other sex	48	66	115	29.3

TABLE 1 A, Continued

Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with peers			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of possible responses
I have been:					
29.	Concerned about how to manage my time better in order to meet deadlines and appointments	32	37	69	17.6
30.	Wanting to develop better study habits	27	31	58	14.7
31.	Wanting to know how to deal with an alcoholic and/or chemically dependent parent or family member	45	38	83	21.2
32.	Concerned about being able to get along better with my brother(s) and/or sister(s)	38	52	90	22.9
33.	Concerned about death of a family member/friend	46	68	114	29.0
34.	Concerned about nuclear weapons/war	53	34	87	22.1

* Four possible responses per item per subject.

TABLE 1 B

Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
to Discuss Personal Concerns with Adults*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with adults			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of possible responses
I have been:					
1.	Thinking about quitting school	78	54	132	33.6
2.	"Dating" a person my family won't accept	51	41	52	23.4
3.	Wanting to leave home	51	37	88	22.4
4.	Wanting to understand more about death and dying	78	70	148	16.0
5.	Concerned about understanding my values in the areas of:				
	Alcohol	37	44	81	20.6
	Drugs	31	46	77	19.6
	Smoking cigarettes	29	41	70	17.8
	Sexual activity	24	29	53	13.5
6.	Concerned about military service	61	67	128	32.6

TABLE 1 B, Continued
 Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
 to Discuss Personal Concerns with Adults*

		Willing to discuss with adults			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
Item No.	Content	Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of possible responses
I have been:					
7.	Wanting help in obtaining part-time and/or summer work	83	97	180	45.9
8.	Concerned about possible careers and the working world	91	108	199	50.7
9.	Wanting more freedom at home	48	55	103	26.2
10.	Concerned about how to deal with pressures of athletic competition	54	52	106	27.0
11.	Concerned about how I can deal with such family changes as:				
	Divorce	13	14	27	6.8
	Both parents working	35	31	66	16.8
	Divorced parent's new male/female friend	47	35	82	20.9

TABLE 1 B, Continued

Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
to Discuss Personal Concerns with Adults*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with adults			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Comnined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of responses
I have been:					
11.	Concerned about how I can deal with such family changes as:				
	Divorced parent's new husband/wife	41	32	73	18.6
	Step-sister/brother	37	34	71	18.1
	Step-parents	34	31	65	16.5
12.	Wanting to become more involved in school activities (music, drama, athletics, etc.)	73	73	146	37.2
13.	Concerned about my drinking alcohol	51	75	126	32.1
14.	Unable to get along with my parents	50	39	89	22.7
15.	Concerned about borrowing money for college expenses	72	75	147	37.5

TABLE 1 B, Continued

Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
to Discuss Personal Concerns with Adults*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with adults			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent possible responses
I have been:					
16.	Wanting to learn how to manage my money	63	65	128	32.6
17.	Trying to choose courses which will help me toward my career goals	88	102	190	48.4
18.	Concerned about my own pregnancy or that of a friend	34	39	73	18.6
19.	Concerned about how to handle the pressures my family puts on me	49	43	92	23.4
20.	Concerned about how to handle other students who put me down	49	50	99	25.2
21.	Concerned about how to help a friend who has an alcohol/drug dependency problem	54	53	107	27.2

TABLE 1 B, Continued
 Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
 to Discuss Personal Concerns with Adults*

Item No.	Content	Willing to discuss with adults			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
		Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of possible responses
I have been:					
22.	Afraid of failing in school work	73	68	141	35.9
23.	Thinking about committing suicide	53	34	87	22.1
24.	A victim of child abuse	48	41	89	22.7
25.	Unable to express my own ideas, views and opinions	53	43	96	24.4
26.	Concerned that I don't have the courage to say "no" when people ask me to do something which is against my principles	52	47	99	25.2
27.	Concerned about my sexual involvement	31	30	61	15.5
28.	Wanting to know how to get along better with members of the other sex	32	35	67	17.0

TABLE 1 B, Continued

Frequency of Distribution: Student Willingness
to Discuss Personal Concerns with Adults*

		Willing to discuss with adults			
		10th-12th grade males	10th-12th grade females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females	Combined 10th-12th grade males/females
Item No.	Content	Possible responses =200	Possible responses =192	Possible responses =392	Percent of possible responses
I have been:					
29.	Concerned about how to manage my time better in order to meet deadlines and appointments	32	37	69	17.6
30.	Wanting to develop better study habits	81	63	144	36.7
31.	Wanting to know how to deal with an alcoholic and/or chemically dependent parent or family member	64	46	110	28.0
32.	Concerned about being able to get along better with my brother(s) and/or sister(s)	52	46	98	25.0
33.	Concerned about death of a family member/friend	66	60	126	32.1
34.	Concerned about nuclear weapons/war	69	57	126	32.1

* Four possible responses per item per subject.

This section of the study deals with the seven clusters of student concerns: careers, dating/sex, death/nuclear, home/family, school, self and substance abuse. The frequency distribution of scores is by 10th, 11th and 12th grade males and females. Also, this section includes students' willingness to discuss personal concerns with peers.

In Table 2, Career Concerns (p. 32), the item most frequently chosen by the combined groups of 10th grade males and females as something they would be willing to discuss with peers was item 7, ". . . wanting help in obtaining part-time and/or summer work." This item received 28 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 7.1. The combined 11th and 12th grade male and female groups also chose item 7 most frequently as an item they would be willing to discuss with peers. This item received 66 out of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 16.8. The item chosen least frequently by the combined groups of males and females as something they would be willing to discuss with peers was, ". . . trying to choose courses which will help me toward my career goals." This item received 35 of 392 possible responses with a percentage of 8.9.

TABLE 2

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,

by Areas: Career Concerns

		Male subjects: N = 50						Female subjects: N = 48							
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**
			Boysfriend	Girlsfriend	Brother	Sister				Boysfriend	Girlsfriend	Brother	Sister		
I have been:															
6.	Concerned about military service	10	1	4	3	1	9	4.5	10	3	0	3	2	8	4.1
		11	0	4	2	0	6	3.0	11	5	5	2	3	15	7.8
		12	2	6	4	2	14	7.0	12	3	4	5	4	16	8.3
7.	Wanting help in obtaining part-time and/or summer work	10	2	4	3	1	10	5.0	10	6	4	3	5	18	9.3
		11	3	8	5	3	19	9.5	11	4	4	1	2	11	5.7
		12	2	4	4	1	11	5.5	12	8	7	4	6	25	13.0
8.	Concerned about possible careers and the working world	10	1	3	5	4	13	6.5	10	1	2	2	1	6	3.1
		11	1	2	1	0	4	2.0	11	3	4	1	2	10	5.2
		12	2	3	2	1	8	4.0	12	4	4	2	4	14	7.2
15.	Concerned about borrowing money for college expenses	10	0	5	4	4	13	6.5	10	0	1	2	3	6	3.1
		11	2	6	1	3	12	6.0	11	2	3	2	2	9	4.6
		12	0	1	2	1	4	2.0	12	3	0	1	1	5	2.6
17.	Trying to choose courses which will help me toward my career goals	10	0	3	4	4	11	5.5	10	1	0	2	2	5	2.6
		11	1	3	0	0	4	2.0	11	0	1	1	1	3	1.5
		12	1	2	1	0	4	2.0	12	2	4	2	0	8	4.1

* Total available choices for males = 200 (50 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

** Total available choices for females = 192 (48 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

The 10th grade males and females chose item 28, ". . . wanting to know how to get along better with members of the other sex," as the item they would be most willing to discuss with peers in the Dating/Sex Concerns cluster (Table 3, p. 34). This item received 45 out of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 11.4. In Table 3, the 11th and 12th grade male and female combined groups chose item 2, ". . . wanting to learn more about how to improve my appearance," as the item they would be willing to discuss with peers. This item received 82 of the possible 392 responses for a combined percentage of 20.9. Of the four peers, girlfriends were chosen most frequently as the peer they would be willing to discuss dating/sex concerns with than the other peer choices. Item 27, ". . . concerned about my sexual involvement," received 120 responses of the possible 392 responses for a percentage of 30.6. Item 28, ". . . wanting to know how to get along better with members of the other sex," received 114 responses of the possible 392 responses for a percentage of 21.4. Item 18, ". . . concerned about my own pregnancy or that of a friend," received 102 of 392 possible responses for a percentage of 26.0 (refer to Table 3, p. 34).

TABLE 3

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,

by Areas: Dating/Sex Concerns

Male subjects: N = 50											Female subjects: N = 48				
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Peer discussants					Percent of Available Choices**	
			Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister			Grade Level	Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister		Total
I have been:															
2.	Wanting to learn more about how to improve my appearance	10	4	9	5	0	18	9.0	10	4	6	2	6	18	9.3
		11	3	8	4	6	21	10.5	11	4	9	3	6	22	11.4
		12	0	2	6	6	14	7.0	12	4	10	5	6	25	13.0
18.	Concerned about my own pregnancy or that of a friend	10	2	6	2	1	11	5.5	10	7	8	3	4	22	11.4
		11	1	12	2	2	17	8.5	11	6	9	0	3	18	9.3
		12	2	6	3	2	13	6.5	12	5	11	2	3	21	10.9
27.	Concerned about my sexual involvement	10	4	10	3	2	19	9.5	10	7	10	3	4	24	12.5
		11	2	14	0	0	16	8.0	11	7	10	1	5	23	11.9
		12	4	7	6	1	18	9.0	12	8	9	1	2	20	10.4
28.	Wanting to know how to get along better with members of the other sex	10	6	9	3	3	21	10.5	10	9	9	2	4	24	12.5
		11	1	10	1	4	16	8.0	11	4	7	4	4	19	9.8
		12	1	2	6	2	11	5.5	12	6	8	5	4	23	11.9

* Total available choices for males = 200 (50 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

** Total available choices for females = 192 (48 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

Table 4 presents data related to the willingness of the subjects to discuss Death/Nuclear Concerns with their peers. The combined male and female groups chose item 33, ". . . concerned about death of a family member/friend," most frequently as an item they would be willing to discuss with peers. This item received 114 of the possible 392 responses for a percentage of 29.0. The item chosen least frequently by the combined groups of males and females as something they would be willing to discuss with peers was item 4, ". . . wanting to understand more about death and dying." This item received 49 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 12.5 (refer to Table 4, p. 36).

TABLE 4

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,
by Areas: Death/Nuclear Concerns

Male subjects: N = 50													Female subjects: N = 48			
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**	
			Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister				Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister			
I have been:																
4.	Wanting to understand more about death and dying	10	2	2	0	0	4	2.0	10	2	3	0	1	6	3.1	
		11	2	6	1	1	10	5.0	11	3	3	0	4	10	5.2	
		12	2	3	1	1	7	3.5	12	2	5	2	3	12	6.2	
33.	Concerned about death of a family member/friend	10	2	7	6	2	17	8.5	10	6	6	5	6	23	11.9	
		11	0	9	3	5	17	8.5	11	7	9	3	6	25	13.0	
		12	1	5	3	3	12	6.2	12	6	7	3	4	20	10.4	
34.	Concerned about nuclear weapons/war	10	3	6	6	2	17	8.5	10	4	3	4	2	13	6.7	
		11	4	11	5	6	26	13.0	11	4	3	1	3	11	5.7	
		12	1	4	4	1	10	5.0	12	3	3	2	2	10	5.2	

* Total available choices for males = 200 (50 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

** Total available choices for females = 192 (48 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

In the Home/Family Concerns cluster, Table 5 (p. 38) indicates the combined group of 10th grade males and females chose item 14, ". . . unable to get along with my parents," most frequently as the item they would be most willing to discuss with peers. This item received 43 out of 392 possible responses for a percentage of 10.9. The 11th and 12th grade combined group of males and females chose item 3, ". . . wanting to leave home," most frequently as the item they would be willing to discuss with peers. This item received 97 out of 392 responses with a percentage of 24.7. Item 11a, ". . . concerned about how I can deal with such family changes as divorce," received 133 responses out of a possible 392 responses by the combined male and female group for a percentage of 33.9. The combined groups totaled 119 responses for item 11f, ". . . concerned about how I can deal with such family changes such as step-parents," for a percentage of 30.3. Items 11c, d, and e, ". . . concerned about how I can deal with such family changes such as divorced parent's new male/female friend, divorced parent's new husband/wife, step-brother/sister," each received 112 responses out of 392 possible responses for a percentage of 28.5 (refer to Table 5, p. 38).

TABLE 5

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,

by Areas: Home/Family Concerns

		Male subjects: N = 50					Female subjects: N = 48								
Item No.	Content	Peer discussants					Percent of Available Choices*	Peer discussants					Percent of Available Choices**		
		Grade Level	Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister		Grade Level	Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister		Total	
I have been:															
3.	Wanting to leave home	10	3	8	4	3	18	9.0	10	7	7	4	5	23	11.9
		11	3	12	3	4	22	11.0	11	6	12	3	5	26	13.5
		12	3	9	5	2	19	9.5	12	8	10	6	6	30	15.6
9.	Wanting more freedom at home	10	0	5	2	0	7	3.5	10	0	3	3	5	11	5.7
		11	1	5	5	5	16	8.0	11	4	7	2	4	17	8.8
		12	0	1	4	2	7	3.5	12	4	4	5	6	19	9.8
11.	Concerned about how I can deal with such family changes as:														
		Divorce													
		10	2	6	3	3	14	7.0	10	5	9	5	8	27	14.0
	11	2	11	4	5	22	11.0	11	5	11	4	7	27	14.0	
	12	2	7	4	2	15	7.5	12	4	5	4	5	18	9.3	
Both parents working															
	10	0	7	4	2	13	6.5	10	2	4	2	5	13	6.7	
	11	0	8	2	4	14	7.0	11	5	10	5	7	27	14.0	
	12	2	5	2	2	11	5.5	12	3	5	4	3	15	7.8	
Divorced parent's new male/female friend															
	10	0	5	5	5	15	7.5	10	3	2	5	6	16	8.3	
	11	1	10	3	3	17	8.5	11	5	11	5	6	27	14.0	
	12	2	9	5	4	20	10.0	12	2	5	5	5	17	8.8	

TABLE 5, Continued

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,

by Areas: Home/Family Concerns

		Male subjects: N = 50						Female subjects: N = 48							
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**
			Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister				Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister		
I have been:															
11.	Concerned about how I can deal with such family changes as:														
	Divorced parent's new husband/wife	10	0	5	4	3	12	6.0	10	3	2	3	6	14	7.2
		11	3	10	4	4	21	10.5	11	5	11	4	8	28	14.5
		12	2	6	6	4	18	9.0	12	4	4	5	6	19	9.8
	Step-sister/brother	10	2	5	5	4	16	8.0	10	5	1	3	6	14	7.8
		11	2	9	3	4	18	9.0	11	6	12	1	5	24	12.5
		12	2	5	6	5	18	9.0	12	3	5	5	8	21	10.9
	Step-parents	10	1	6	5	5	17	8.5	10	4	2	1	5	12	6.2
		11	2	10	3	4	19	9.5	11	6	11	6	7	20	15.6
		12	2	4	7	6	19	9.5	12	4	4	5	9	22	11.4
14.	Unable to get along with my parents	10	1	7	4	2	14	7.0	10	9	6	6	8	29	15.1
		11	2	11	6	8	27	13.5	11	5	11	4	7	27	14.0
		12	3	5	3	3	14	7.0	12	5	9	6	6	26	13.5
19.	Concerned about how to handle the pressures my family puts on me	10	5	8	4	2	19	9.5	10	9	6	2	4	21	10.9
		11	2	11	2	4	19	9.5	11	7	13	4	5	29	15.1
		12	1	5	4	1	11	5.5	12	8	13	4	4	29	15.1

TABLE 5, Continued

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,
by Areas: Home/Family Concerns

Male subjects: N = 50											Female subjects: N = 48				
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**
			Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister				Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister		
I have been:															
24.	A victim of child abuse	10	4	6	4	3	17	8.5	10	4	5	0	4	13	6.7
		11	3	8	4	0	15	7.5	11	2	8	1	1	12	6.2
		12	3	4	3	2	12	6.0	12	6	7	3	3	19	9.8
32.	Concerned about being able to get along better with my brother(s) and/or sister(s)	10	1	3	6	4	14	7.0	10	3	4	4	4	15	7.8
		11	0	7	4	4	15	7.5	11	4	9	1	5	19	9.8
		12	1	4	2	2	9	4.5	12	4	5	4	5	18	9.3

* Total available choices for males = 200 (50 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

** Total available choices for females = 192 (48 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

The item chosen most frequently by the combined group of males and females as something they would be willing to discuss with peers in the School Concerns cluster was item 1, ". . . thinking about quitting school." This item received 109 of the possible 392 responses for a percentage of 27.8. The combined group chose item 30, ". . . wanting to develop better study habits," least frequently as an item to discuss with peers. This item received 58 of the possible 392 responses for a percentage of 14.7. Item 12, ". . . wanting to become more involved in school activities (music, drama, athletics, etc.)," received 87 of the possible 392 responses with a percentage of 22.1. Item 10, ". . . concerned about how to deal with the pressures of athletic competition," received 76 of 392 possible responses for a percentage of 19.4. The percentage figure was 15.6 for item 22, ". . . afraid of failing in school work," which received 61 responses of the 392 possible responses (refer to Table 6, p. 42).

TABLE 6

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,

by Areas: School Concerns

Male subjects: N = 50													Female subjects: N = 48			
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**	
			Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister				Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister			
I have been:																
1.	Thinking about quitting school	10	4	9	5	0	18	9.0	10	4	6	2	6	18	9.3	
		11	2	9	2	4	17	8.5	11	5	9	3	6	23	11.9	
		12	2	6	4	5	17	8.5	12	5	5	3	3	16	8.3	
10.	Concerned about how to deal with the pressures of athletic competition	10	1	6	3	2	12	6.0	10	4	7	3	5	19	9.8	
		11	2	10	2	1	15	7.5	11	3	10	0	3	16	8.3	
		12	1	3	3	0	7	3.5	12	2	2	3	0	7	3.6	
12.	Wanting to become more involved in school activities (music, drama, athletics, etc.)	10	2	7	1	1	11	5.5	10	4	7	1	4	16	8.3	
		11	1	5	1	1	8	4.0	11	4	10	1	3	18	9.3	
		12	1	5	2	3	11	5.5	12	4	5	1	3	13	6.7	
22.	Afraid of failing in school work	10	2	3	2	2	9	4.5	10	5	4	2	3	14	7.2	
		11	2	7	0	2	11	5.5	11	3	7	0	1	11	5.7	
		12	2	1	2	1	6	3.0	12	3	4	2	1	10	5.2	
30.	Wanting to develop better study habits	10	1	4	4	3	12	6.0	10	3	3	4	2	12	6.2	
		11	0	3	1	2	6	3.0	11	2	3	2	2	9	4.6	
		12	2	4	2	1	9	4.5	12	4	3	1	2	10	5.2	

* Total available choices for males = 200 (50 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

** Total available choices for females = 192 (48 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

Table 7 presents data related to the willingness of the subjects to discuss Self-Concept Concerns with their peers. The combined male and female group chose item 20, ". . . concerned about how to handle other students who put me down," most frequently as an item they would be most willing to discuss with peers. This item received 104 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 26.5. The item chosen least frequently by the combined group of males and females as something they would be willing to discuss with peers was item 16, ". . . wanting to learn how to manage my money." Item 16 received 35 out of the possible 392 responses for a percentage of 8.9 (refer to Table 7, p. 44).

TABLE 7

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,
by Areas: Self-Concept Concerns

		Male subjects: N = 50						Female subjects: N = 48							
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**
			Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister				Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister		
I have been:															
16.	Wanting to learn how to manage my money	10	1	2	3	2	8	4.0	10	0	1	0	0	1	0.5
		11	2	6	1	3	12	6.0	11	1	0	1	1	3	1.5
		12	0	2	1	0	3	1.5	12	2	2	1	0	5	2.6
20.	Concerned about how to handle other students who put me down	10	4	7	5	4	20	10.0	10	5	7	2	3	17	8.8
		11	0	13	1	1	15	7.5	11	6	10	2	4	22	11.4
		12	1	3	5	2	11	5.5	12	5	8	2	4	19	9.8
23.	Thinking about committing suicide	10	1	7	2	1	11	5.5	10	9	4	1	2	16	8.3
		11	5	9	2	2	18	9.0	11	4	6	0	3	13	6.7
		12	2	3	1	0	6	3.0	12	3	6	2	4	15	7.8
25.	Unable to express my own ideas, views and opinions	10	3	4	3	3	13	6.5	10	4	3	1	2	11	5.7
		11	1	11	0	1	13	6.5	11	2	8	1	1	12	6.2
		12	3	4	3	2	12	6.0	12	5	5	3	3	16	8.3
26.	Concerned that I don't have the courage to say "no" when people ask me to do something which is against my principles	10	4	9	3	3	19	9.5	10	4	7	1	4	16	8.3
		11	1	13	1	1	16	8.0	11	4	10	3	5	22	11.4
		12	1	4	4	2	11	5.5	12	6	8	5	3	22	11.4

TABLE 7, Continued

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,
by Areas: Self-Concept Concerns

Male subjects: N = 50										Female subjects: N = 48					
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**
			Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister				Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister		
I have been:															
29.	Concerned about how to manage my time better in order to meet deadlines and appointments	10	3	5	3	4	15	7.5	10	5	4	1	5	13	6.7
		11	0	7	1	0	8	4.0	11	1	5	0	3	9	4.6
		12	1	3	3	2	9	4.5	12	4	6	2	3	15	7.8

* Total available choices for males = 200 (50 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

** Total available choices for females = 192 (48 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

In the Substance Abuse Concerns cluster (Table 8), the combined group of males and females chose item 5a, ". . . concerned about understanding my values in the areas of alcohol," as an item they would be most willing to discuss with peers. This item received 118 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 30.1. Item 5b, ". . . concerned about understanding my values in the areas of drugs," received 102 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 26.0. Item 5c, ". . . concerned about understanding my values in the area of sexual activity," received 114 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 29.0. Item 5d, ". . . concerned about understanding my values in the area of smoking cigarettes," received 107 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 27.2. Item 13, ". . . concerned about my drinking alcohol," and item 21, ". . . concerned about how to help a friend who has an alcohol/drug problem," both received 96 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 24.4 (refer to Table 8, p. 47).

TABLE 8

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,
by Areas: Substance Abuse Concerns

		Male subjects: N = 50					Female subjects: N = 48								
Item No.	Content	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**		
		Grade Level	Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother			Sister	Grade Level	Boyfriend	Girlfriend			Brother	Sister
I have been:															
5.	Concerned about understanding my values in the areas of:														
	Alcohol	10	3	7	5	3	18	9.0	10	6	7	3	4	20	10.4
		11	1	10	2	3	16	8.0	11	5	13	2	3	23	11.9
		12	2	5	5	5	17	8.5	12	6	7	5	6	24	12.5
	Drugs	10	1	7	3	2	13	6.5	10	3	6	3	2	14	7.2
		11	2	9	2	2	15	7.5	11	5	10	2	3	20	10.4
		12	2	5	6	4	17	8.5	12	8	6	4	5	23	11.9
	Sexual activity	10	1	6	5	2	14	7.0	10	3	8	2	3	16	8.3
		11	3	9	2	3	17	8.5	11	5	10	2	3	20	10.4
		12	2	6	5	4	17	8.5	12	10	7	5	8	30	15.6
	Smoking cigarettes	10	0	13	3	1	17	8.5	10	5	8	1	2	16	8.3
		11	1	12	1	2	16	8.0	11	4	13	1	3	21	10.9
		12	2	6	5	2	15	7.5	12	9	5	3	5	22	11.4

* Total available choices for males = 200 (50 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

** Total available choices for females = 192 (48 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

TABLE 8, Continued

Student Willingness to Discuss Personal Concerns with Peers,
by Areas: Substance Abuse Concerns

		Male subjects: N = 50						Female subjects: N = 48							
Item No.	Content	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices*	Grade Level	Peer discussants				Total	Percent of Available Choices**
			Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister				Boyfriend	Girlfriend	Brother	Sister		
I have been:															
13.	Concerned about my drinking alcohol	10	2	7	6	3	18	9.0	10	4	7	1	4	16	8.3
		11	0	12	5	3	20	10.0	11	4	10	1	3	18	9.3
		12	1	5	2	3	11	5.5	12	4	5	1	3	13	6.7
21.	Concerned about how to help a friend who has an alcohol/drug problem	10	5	8	3	2	18	9.0	10	9	9	3	4	25	13.0
		11	2	8	2	2	14	7.0	11	2	8	2	2	14	7.2
		12	1	3	4	1	9	4.5	12	4	6	4	2	16	8.3
31.	Wanting to know how to deal with an alcoholic and/or chemically dependent parent or family member	10	3	5	4	3	15	7.5	10	4	3	5	3	15	7.8
		11	1	9	3	4	17	8.5	11	3	8	0	1	12	6.2
		12	2	5	4	2	13	6.5	12	3	6	1	1	11	5.7

* Total available choices for males = 200 (50 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

** Total available choices for females = 192 (48 subjects x 4 possible discussants per item.)

Table 9 (p. 50) indicates the items of the combined grade levels. The personal concerns are listed from highest frequency of total group responses to the least responses to other peers.

The item chosen most frequently by the combined groups of males and females as something they would be most willing to discuss with peers was item 3, ". . . wanting to leave home," in the Home/Family Concerns cluster. This item received 138 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 35.2. The combined groups chose item 17, ". . . trying to choose courses which will help me toward my career goals," in Career Concerns cluster, least frequently as an item to discuss with peers. This item received 35 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 8.9.

Item 8, ". . . concerned about possible careers in the working world," in Career Concerns cluster, was chosen most frequently by the combined male and female groups as an item they would be willing to discuss with adults. This item received 199 of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 50.7. The item chosen least frequently by the combined group of males and females as something they would be willing to discuss with adults, was item 11a, ". . . concerned about how I can deal with such family changes as divorce." This item received 27 out of a possible 392 responses for a percentage of 6.8 (refer to Table 9, p. 50).

TABLE 9
 Combined Male/Female Group Responses
 in Order of Frequency

N = 98 Possible responses (98 x 4 = 392)

Item No.	Number of responses to peers	Number of responses to adults
3	138	88
14	137	89
11a	133	27
19	128	92
2	124	92
27	120	61
11f	119	65
5a	118	81
33	114	126
5c	114	70
28	114	67
11c	112	82
11d	112	73
11e	112	71
1	109	132
5d	107	53
26	106	99

TABLE 9, Continued
 Combined Male/Female Group Responses
 in Order of Frequency

N = 98 Possible responses (98 x 4 = 392)

Item No.	Number of responses to peers	Number of responses to adults
20	104	99
5b	102	77
18	102	73
13	96	176
21	96	107
7	94	180
11b	93	66
32	90	98
24	88	89
12	87	146
34	87	126
31	83	110
9	82	103
23	79	87
25	77	96
10	76	106
29	69	133

TABLE 9, Continued
 Combined Male/Female Group Responses
 in Order of Frequency

N = 98 Possible responses (98 x 4 = 392)

Item No.	Number of responses to peers	Number of responses to adults
6	68	130
22	61	141
30	58	144
8	55	199
4	49	148
15	49	147
17	35	190
16	35	128

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to determine which situations students would be willing to discuss with other peers. Another purpose was to determine which situations would be appropriate to use in the implementation of Peer Helping Programs at the high school in this study. The results of this study will be discussed further in this chapter.

The survey consists of thirty-four situations representative of problems at the high school level. Respondents are asked to choose from a list of eight people, the persons they would most likely discuss concerns with.

One finding supported by this study indicates that students more frequently discussed wanting to leave home with peers rather than with adults. The percentage of students willing to discuss the item amounted to 35.2 percent, with a larger percentage discussing it with peers.

The item most frequently discussed with adults was an item on possible careers and the working world. Students are more willing to discuss this item with adults at a percentage rate of 50.7. In dealing with careers in course selections, students again rely heavily on adult discussion, with the percentage being 48.4.

Students are least willing to discuss money management with their peers rather than with adults. With a percentage of only 8.9 students willing to talk to peers, this item received the lowest frequency of response.

In response to the Career Concerns cluster, the students discussed careers with adults. This result could be expected since careers is an area usually discussed with parents and counselors. However, peer helpers can be of assistance in seeking out career information for other students from the materials available in the guidance office. Wanting help in obtaining part-time and/or summer work was more frequently discussed with peers in this cluster.

Students primarily chose peers to discuss dating and sex concerns. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents were wanting to know how to get along better with members of the other sex. Of the groupings of peers, students confided more in females, specifically girlfriends, than in males.

The adults were chosen more frequently than peers by the combined group of males and females on the topic of death and nuclear concerns. Being concerned about the death of a family member/friend had a high frequency response to peers. When students were concerned about the death of a family member/friend, girlfriends ranked higher than the adults. The counselor had the lowest response, as did the boyfriends.

The home and family concerns cluster indicates that students would be more likely to discuss concerns of this nature with their peers than with adults. Also, students indicated they would turn to females more frequently than to males. In particular, the item, "unable to get along with my parents," has a percentage of 27.5 of combined group responses, with males choosing peers at a percentage rate of 14.0 and females at a percentage rate of 42.7. In 9 of the 13 items, subjects indicated

willingness to discuss concerns with peers more frequently than with adults. "Wanting more freedom at home" had an adult response of 26.2 as compared to 10.9 for the peer responses.

In the school concerns cluster, "thinking about quitting school" ranked the highest of the five items with 27 percent. This item represents an area discussed equally with adults and with peers. However, in the other four items the peer responses received a low percentage, identifying this cluster as one openly discussed with adults.

Of the self concerns, the item ranking highest was "concerned about how to handle other students who put me down" with a percentage of 26. It was expected that "thinking about committing suicide" would rank higher among peers, but surprisingly the difference was very slight. When the male and female totals were combined, suicide was discussed with girlfriends.

Substance abuse is an area that students would be willing to discuss with other peers rather than with adults. Students were most willing to discuss values of drinking alcohol with peers. When a drug dependency problem of a friend was the issue, it was surprising to note that respondents were more willing to discuss this with adults than with other peers.

Item 3 had the highest frequency of response to other peers. Girlfriends were the ones that other peers chose to discuss personal situations. Another interesting thing that came out in the survey was of the three grade levels, 11th grade girls ranked highest in frequency of responses than the other two grade levels. Boyfriends and brothers were chosen the least in the peer category.

CHAPTER 6
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of the study was to determine what situations high school students would prefer to discuss with peers. Specifically, an effort was made to determine with whom the students at a particular high school would discuss matters of personal concerns.

A review of literature was conducted to determine how peers relate to others. The characteristics of adolescents and availability of research instruments was also discussed. Because an appropriate research instrument was not found in the literature, the researcher developed a survey instrument in the form of an inventory.

Information pertaining to the situations that peers would discuss with other peers was obtained by the use of the researcher-developed inventory. Copies of the inventory were distributed to 100 students in grades 10-12 in one public high school. Ninety-eight of the inventories were completed and returned. The inventory data was compiled and tabulated by the researcher.

The findings show that students were willing to discuss more situations with female peers than with male peers. Male peers were infrequently chosen to discuss situations, with girlfriends and parents ranking high for discussions of personal concern.

Thirty-six of the ninety-eight students did not respond to some of the situations on the inventory. This finding brings up questions

such as discomfort in revealing feelings, or a feeling of irrelevancy.

Clearly, the students were willing to discuss issues relating to dating/sex, family relationships, and substance abuse with peers much more frequently than with adults. This is supported by research in the literature review. These topics are recommended for inclusion in a Peer Helping Program.

Conclusions

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions can be made.

1. The students may prefer to discuss the following situations with peers: Dating and sex, drugs and alcohol, and situations relating to family relationships.
2. Female students are perceived as good peer helpers.
3. The students at this high school do discuss careers, death and nuclear, school, and situations dealing with self, with adults.
4. The situations dealing with dating/sex, drugs, alcohol, and family relationships would be good areas to train peer helpers.

Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. A follow-up study be conducted in three years to determine if students were willing to discuss the same situations with their peers as they were in this study.

2. An inventory be distributed two weeks apart to determine if the students' responses would be the same.
3. The study be replicated in other schools, particularly in schools having geographical proximity, and a comparison made.
4. A random sampling of the students be used rather than using intact classes.
5. A Peer Helping Program be established at the high school forming the population base in this study.

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APPENDIX A

Personal Concerns Inventory

Directions:

Please place a check mark in the appropriate column for identification purposes.

		Grade in school
_____ Female	_____ 10th	
	_____ 11th	
_____ Male	_____ 12th	

Sometimes situations arise that cause us to want to talk with someone else about our concerns. This inventory is designed for you as a high school student to indicate your preferences of persons with whom you would be willing to discuss selected situations. Would you please check all of the individuals or persons with whom you would consider discussing the situations listed below. The first two items are used as examples.

EXAMPLES:

- PARENT
- TEACHER
- COUNSELOR
- PASTOR/PRIEST
- BOYFRIEND
- GIRLFRIEND
- BROTHER
- SISTER

I have been:

1. Concerned about trying to get over my shyness. - - - - -
2. Wanting to learn more about how to improve my appearance. - - - - -

PARENT
TEACHER
COUNSELOR
PASTOR/PRIEST
BOYFRIEND
GIRLFRIEND
BROTHER
SISTER

I have been:

- 12. Wanting to become more involved in school activities (music, drama, athletics, etc.) . . . _ _ _ _ _
- 13. Concerned about my drinking alcohol _ _ _ _ _
- 14. Unable to get along with my parents _ _ _ _ _
- 15. Concerned about borrowing money for college expenses. _ _ _ _ _
- 16. Wanting to learn how to manage my money _ _ _ _ _
- 17. Trying to choose courses which will help me toward my career goals _ _ _ _ _
- 18. Concerned about my own pregnancy or that of a friend _ _ _ _ _
- 19. Concerned about how to handle the pressures my family puts on me. _ _ _ _ _
- 20. Concerned about how to handle other students who put me down. _ _ _ _ _
- 21. Concerned about how to help a friend who has an alcohol/drug dependency problem. _ _ _ _ _
- 22. Afraid of failing in school work. _ _ _ _ _
- 23. Thinking about committing suicide _ _ _ _ _
- 24. A victim of child abuse _ _ _ _ _
- 25. Unable to express my own ideas, views, and opinions. _ _ _ _ _
- 26. Concerned that I don't have the courage to say "no" when people ask me to do something which is against my principles. _ _ _ _ _

PARENT
 TEACHER
 COUNSELOR
 PASTOR/PRIEST
 BOYFRIEND
 GIRLFRIEND
 BROTHER
 SISTER

I have been:

- | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 27. Concerned about my sexual involvement | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 28. Wanting to know how to get along better
with members of the other sex | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 29. Concerned about how to manage my time
better in order to meet deadlines and
appointments. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 30. Wanting to develop better study habits. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 31. Wanting to know how to deal with an
alcoholic and/or chemically dependent
parent or family member | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 32. Concerned about being able to get along
better with my brother(s) and/or sister(s). . . | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 33. Concerned about death of a family member/
friend. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 34. Concerned about nuclear weapons/war | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |